

Chapter XXVI: Progress of The Huns.--Part V.

Whatever may have been the just measure of the calamities of Europe, there was reason to fear that the same calamities would soon extend to the peaceful countries of Asia. The sons of the Goths had been judiciously distributed through the cities of the East; and the arts of education were employed to polish, and subdue, the native fierceness of their temper. In the space of about twelve years, their numbers had continually increased; and the children, who, in the first emigration, were sent over the Hellespont, had attained, with rapid growth, the strength and spirit of perfect manhood. [102] It was impossible to conceal from their knowledge the events of the Gothic war; and, as those daring youths had not studied the language of dissimulation, they betrayed their wish, their desire, perhaps their intention, to emulate the glorious example of their fathers. The danger of the times seemed to justify the jealous suspicions of the provincials; and these suspicions were admitted as unquestionable evidence, that the Goths of Asia had formed a secret and dangerous conspiracy against the public safety. The death of Valens had left the East without a sovereign; and Julius, who filled the important station of master-general of the troops, with a high reputation of diligence and ability, thought it his duty to consult the senate of Constantinople; which he considered, during the vacancy of the throne, as the representative council of the nation. As soon as he had obtained the discretionary power of acting as he should judge most expedient for the good of the republic, he assembled the principal officers, and privately concerted effectual measures for the execution

of his bloody design. An order was immediately promulgated, that, on a stated day, the Gothic youth should assemble in the capital cities of their respective provinces; and, as a report was industriously circulated, that they were summoned to receive a liberal gift of lands and money, the pleasing hope allayed the fury of their resentment, and, perhaps, suspended the motions of the conspiracy. On the appointed day, the unarmed crowd of the Gothic youth was carefully collected in the square or Forum; the streets and avenues were occupied by the Roman troops, and the roofs of the houses were covered with archers and slingers. At the same hour, in all the cities of the East, the signal was given of indiscriminate slaughter; and the provinces of Asia were delivered by the cruel prudence of Julius, from a domestic enemy, who, in a few months, might have carried fire and sword from the Hellespont to the Euphrates. [103] The urgent consideration of the public safety may undoubtedly authorize the violation of every positive law. How far that, or any other, consideration may operate to dissolve the natural obligations of humanity and justice, is a doctrine of which I still desire to remain ignorant.

[Footnote 102: Eunapius (in Excerpt. Legat. p. 20) foolishly supposes a praeternatural growth of the young Goths, that he may introduce Cadmus's armed men, who sprang from the dragon's teeth, &c. Such was the Greek eloquence of the times.]

[Footnote 103: Ammianus evidently approves this execution, *efficacia velox et salutaris*, which concludes his work, (xxxii. 16.) Zosimus, who

is curious and copious, (l. iv. p. 233--236,) mistakes the date, and labors to find the reason, why Julius did not consult the emperor Theodosius who had not yet ascended the throne of the East.]

The emperor Gratian was far advanced on his march towards the plains of Hadrianople, when he was informed, at first by the confused voice of fame, and afterwards by the more accurate reports of Victor and Richomer, that his impatient colleague had been slain in battle, and that two thirds of the Roman army were exterminated by the sword of the victorious Goths. Whatever resentment the rash and jealous vanity of his uncle might deserve, the resentment of a generous mind is easily subdued by the softer emotions of grief and compassion; and even the sense of pity was soon lost in the serious and alarming consideration of the state of the republic. Gratian was too late to assist, he was too weak to revenge, his unfortunate colleague; and the valiant and modest youth felt himself unequal to the support of a sinking world. A formidable tempest of the Barbarians of Germany seemed ready to burst over the provinces of Gaul; and the mind of Gratian was oppressed and distracted by the administration of the Western empire. In this important crisis, the government of the East, and the conduct of the Gothic war, required the undivided attention of a hero and a statesman. A subject invested with such ample command would not long have preserved his fidelity to a distant benefactor; and the Imperial council embraced the wise and manly resolution of conferring an obligation, rather than of yielding to an insult. It was the wish of Gratian to bestow the purple as the reward of virtue; but, at the age of nineteen, it is not easy for a prince,

educated in the supreme rank, to understand the true characters of his ministers and generals. He attempted to weigh, with an impartial hand, their various merits and defects; and, whilst he checked the rash confidence of ambition, he distrusted the cautious wisdom which despaired of the republic. As each moment of delay diminished something of the power and resources of the future sovereign of the East, the situation of the times would not allow a tedious debate. The choice of Gratian was soon declared in favor of an exile, whose father, only three years before, had suffered, under the sanction of his authority, an unjust and ignominious death. The great Theodosius, a name celebrated in history, and dear to the Catholic church, [104] was summoned to the Imperial court, which had gradually retreated from the confines of Thrace to the more secure station of Sirmium. Five months after the death of Valens, the emperor Gratian produced before the assembled troops his colleague and their master; who, after a modest, perhaps a sincere, resistance, was compelled to accept, amidst the general acclamations, the diadem, the purple, and the equal title of Augustus. [105] The provinces of Thrace, Asia, and Egypt, over which Valens had reigned, were resigned to the administration of the new emperor; but, as he was specially intrusted with the conduct of the Gothic war, the Illyrian praefecture was dismembered; and the two great dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia were added to the dominions of the Eastern empire. [106]

[Footnote 104: A life of Theodosius the Great was composed in the last century, (Paris, 1679, in 4to-1680, 12mo.,) to inflame the mind of

the young Dauphin with Catholic zeal. The author, Flechier, afterwards bishop of Nismes, was a celebrated preacher; and his history is adorned, or tainted, with pulpit eloquence; but he takes his learning from Baronius, and his principles from St. Ambrose and St Augustin.]

[Footnote 105: The birth, character, and elevation of Theodosius are marked in Pacatus, (in Panegy. Vet. xii. 10, 11, 12,) Themistius, (Orat. xiv. p. 182,) (Zosimus, l. iv. p. 231,) Augustin. (de Civitat. Dei. v. 25,) Orosius, (l. vii. c. 34,) Sozomen, (l. vii. c. 2,) Socrates, (l. v. c. 2,) Theodoret, (l. v. c. 5,) Philostorgius, (l. ix. c. 17, with Godefroy, p. 393,) the Epitome of Victor, and the Chronicles of Prosper, Idatius, and Marcellinus, in the Thesaurus Temporum of Scaliger. * Note: Add a hostile fragment of Eunapius. Mai, p. 273, in Niebuhr, p 178--M.]

[Footnote 106: Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. v. p. 716, &c.]

The same province, and perhaps the same city, [107] which had given to the throne the virtues of Trajan, and the talents of Hadrian, was the original seat of another family of Spaniards, who, in a less fortunate age, possessed, near fourscore years, the declining empire of Rome.

[108] They emerged from the obscurity of municipal honors by the active spirit of the elder Theodosius, a general whose exploits in Britain and Africa have formed one of the most splendid parts of the annals of Valentinian. The son of that general, who likewise bore the name of Theodosius, was educated, by skilful preceptors, in the liberal studies

of youth; but he was instructed in the art of war by the tender care and severe discipline of his father. [109] Under the standard of such a leader, young Theodosius sought glory and knowledge, in the most distant scenes of military action; inured his constitution to the difference of seasons and climates; distinguished his valor by sea and land; and observed the various warfare of the Scots, the Saxons, and the Moors. His own merit, and the recommendation of the conqueror of Africa, soon raised him to a separate command; and, in the station of Duke of Misaea, he vanquished an army of Sarmatians; saved the province; deserved the love of the soldiers; and provoked the envy of the court. [110] His rising fortunes were soon blasted by the disgrace and execution of his illustrious father; and Theodosius obtained, as a favor, the permission of retiring to a private life in his native province of Spain. He displayed a firm and temperate character in the ease with which he adapted himself to this new situation. His time was almost equally divided between the town and country; the spirit, which had animated his public conduct, was shown in the active and affectionate performance of every social duty; and the diligence of the soldier was profitably converted to the improvement of his ample patrimony, [111] which lay between Valladolid and Segovia, in the midst of a fruitful district, still famous for a most exquisite breed of sheep. [112] From the innocent, but humble labors of his farm, Theodosius was transported, in less than four months, to the throne of the Eastern empire; and the whole period of the history of the world will not perhaps afford a similar example, of an elevation at the same time so pure and so honorable. The princes who peaceably inherit the sceptre of their

fathers, claim and enjoy a legal right, the more secure as it is absolutely distinct from the merits of their personal characters. The subjects, who, in a monarchy, or a popular state, acquire the possession of supreme power, may have raised themselves, by the superiority either of genius or virtue, above the heads of their equals; but their virtue is seldom exempt from ambition; and the cause of the successful candidate is frequently stained by the guilt of conspiracy, or civil war. Even in those governments which allow the reigning monarch to declare a colleague or a successor, his partial choice, which may be influenced by the blindest passions, is often directed to an unworthy object. But the most suspicious malignity cannot ascribe to Theodosius, in his obscure solitude of Caesarea, the arts, the desires, or even the hopes, of an ambitious statesman; and the name of the Exile would long since have been forgotten, if his genuine and distinguished virtues had not left a deep impression in the Imperial court. During the season of prosperity, he had been neglected; but, in the public distress, his superior merit was universally felt and acknowledged. What confidence must have been reposed in his integrity, since Gratian could trust, that a pious son would forgive, for the sake of the republic, the murder of his father! What expectations must have been formed of his abilities to encourage the hope, that a single man could save, and restore, the empire of the East! Theodosius was invested with the purple in the thirty-third year of his age. The vulgar gazed with admiration on the manly beauty of his face, and the graceful majesty of his person, which they were pleased to compare with the pictures and medals of the emperor Trajan; whilst intelligent observers discovered, in the qualities of his

heart and understanding, a more important resemblance to the best and greatest of the Roman princes.

[Footnote 107: Italica, founded by Scipio Africanus for his wounded veterans of Italy. The ruins still appear, about a league above Seville, but on the opposite bank of the river. See the *Hispania Illustrata* of Nonius, a short though valuable treatise, c. xvii. p. 64--67.]

[Footnote 108: I agree with Tillemont (*Hist. des Empereurs*, tom. v. p. 726) in suspecting the royal pedigree, which remained a secret till the promotion of Theodosius. Even after that event, the silence of Pacatus outweighs the venal evidence of Themistius, Victor, and Claudian, who connect the family of Theodosius with the blood of Trajan and Hadrian.]

[Footnote 109: Pacatus compares, and consequently prefers, the youth of Theodosius to the military education of Alexander, Hannibal, and the second Africanus; who, like him, had served under their fathers, (xii. 8.)]

[Footnote 110: Ammianus (xxix. 6) mentions this victory of Theodosius Junior Dux Maesiae, *prima etiam tum lanugine juvenis, princeps postea perspectissimus*. The same fact is attested by Themistius and Zosimus but Theodoret, (l. v. c. 5,) who adds some curious circumstances, strangely applies it to the time of the interregnum.]

[Footnote 111: Pacatus (in *Panegy. Vet.* xii. 9) prefers the rustic life

of Theodosius to that of Cincinnatus; the one was the effect of choice, the other of poverty.]

[Footnote 112: M. D'Anville (*Geographie Ancienne*, tom. i. p. 25) has fixed the situation of Caucha, or Coca, in the old province of Gallicia, where Zosimus and Idatius have placed the birth, or patrimony, of Theodosius.]

It is not without the most sincere regret, that I must now take leave of an accurate and faithful guide, who has composed the history of his own times, without indulging the prejudices and passions, which usually affect the mind of a contemporary. Ammianus Marcellinus, who terminates his useful work with the defeat and death of Valens, recommends the more glorious subject of the ensuing reign to the youthful vigor and eloquence of the rising generation. [113] The rising generation was not disposed to accept his advice or to imitate his example; [114] and, in the study of the reign of Theodosius, we are reduced to illustrate the partial narrative of Zosimus, by the obscure hints of fragments and chronicles, by the figurative style of poetry or panegyric, and by the precarious assistance of the ecclesiastical writers, who, in the heat of religious faction, are apt to despise the profane virtues of sincerity and moderation. Conscious of these disadvantages, which will continue to involve a considerable portion of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, I shall proceed with doubtful and timorous steps. Yet I may boldly pronounce, that the battle of Hadrianople was never revenged by any signal or decisive victory of Theodosius over the Barbarians: and

the expressive silence of his venal orators may be confirmed by the observation of the condition and circumstances of the times. The fabric of a mighty state, which has been reared by the labors of successive ages, could not be overturned by the misfortune of a single day, if the fatal power of the imagination did not exaggerate the real measure of the calamity. The loss of forty thousand Romans, who fell in the plains of Hadrianople, might have been soon recruited in the populous provinces of the East, which contained so many millions of inhabitants. The courage of a soldier is found to be the cheapest, and most common, quality of human nature; and sufficient skill to encounter an undisciplined foe might have been speedily taught by the care of the surviving centurions. If the Barbarians were mounted on the horses, and equipped with the armor, of their vanquished enemies, the numerous studs of Cappadocia and Spain would have supplied new squadrons of cavalry; the thirty-four arsenals of the empire were plentifully stored with magazines of offensive and defensive arms: and the wealth of Asia might still have yielded an ample fund for the expenses of the war. But the effects which were produced by the battle of Hadrianople on the minds of the Barbarians and of the Romans, extended the victory of the former, and the defeat of the latter, far beyond the limits of a single day. A Gothic chief was heard to declare, with insolent moderation, that, for his own part, he was fatigued with slaughter: but that he was astonished how a people, who fled before him like a flock of sheep, could still presume to dispute the possession of their treasures and provinces.

[115] The same terrors which the name of the Huns had spread among the Gothic tribes, were inspired, by the formidable name of the Goths, among

the subjects and soldiers of the Roman empire. [116] If Theodosius, hastily collecting his scattered forces, had led them into the field to encounter a victorious enemy, his army would have been vanquished by their own fears; and his rashness could not have been excused by the chance of success. But the great Theodosius, an epithet which he honorably deserved on this momentous occasion, conducted himself as the firm and faithful guardian of the republic. He fixed his head-quarters at Thessalonica, the capital of the Macedonian diocese; [117] from whence he could watch the irregular motions of the Barbarians, and direct the operations of his lieutenants, from the gates of Constantinople to the shores of the Hadriatic. The fortifications and garrisons of the cities were strengthened; and the troops, among whom a sense of order and discipline was revived, were insensibly emboldened by the confidence of their own safety. From these secure stations, they were encouraged to make frequent sallies on the Barbarians, who infested the adjacent country; and, as they were seldom allowed to engage, without some decisive superiority, either of ground or of numbers, their enterprises were, for the most part, successful; and they were soon convinced, by their own experience, of the possibility of vanquishing their invincible enemies. The detachments of these separate garrisons were generally united into small armies; the same cautious measures were pursued, according to an extensive and well-concerted plan of operations; the events of each day added strength and spirit to the Roman arms; and the artful diligence of the emperor, who circulated the most favorable reports of the success of the war, contributed to subdue the pride of the Barbarians, and to animate the hopes and courage of

his subjects. If, instead of this faint and imperfect outline, we could accurately represent the counsels and actions of Theodosius, in four successive campaigns, there is reason to believe, that his consummate skill would deserve the applause of every military reader. The republic had formerly been saved by the delays of Fabius; and, while the splendid trophies of Scipio, in the field of Zama, attract the eyes of posterity, the camps and marches of the dictator among the hills of the Campania, may claim a juster proportion of the solid and independent fame, which the general is not compelled to share, either with fortune or with his troops. Such was likewise the merit of Theodosius; and the infirmities of his body, which most unseasonably languished under a long and dangerous disease, could not oppress the vigor of his mind, or divert his attention from the public service. [118]

[Footnote 113: Let us hear Ammianus himself. Haec, ut miles quondam et Graecus, a principatu Cassaris Nervae exorsus, adusque Valentis inter, pro virium explicavi mensura: opus veritatem professum nunquam, ut arbitror, sciens, silentio ausus corrumpere vel mendacio. Scribant reliqua potiores aetate, doctrinisque florentes. Quos id, si libuerit, aggressuros, procudere linguas ad majores moneo stilos. Ammian. xxxi. 16. The first thirteen books, a superficial epitome of two hundred and fifty-seven years, are now lost: the last eighteen, which contain no more than twenty-five years, still preserve the copious and authentic history of his own times.]

[Footnote 114: Ammianus was the last subject of Rome who composed a

profane history in the Latin language. The East, in the next century, produced some rhetorical historians, Zosimus, Olympiodorus, Malchus, Candidus &c. See Vossius de Historicis Graecis, l. ii. c. 18, de Historicis Latinis l. ii. c. 10, &c.]

[Footnote 115: Chrysostom, tom. i. p. 344, edit. Montfaucon. I have verified and examined this passage: but I should never, without the aid of Tillemont, (Hist. des Emp. tom. v. p. 152,) have detected an historical anecdote, in a strange medley of moral and mystic exhortations, addressed, by the preacher of Antioch, to a young widow.]

[Footnote 116: Eunapius, in Excerpt. Legation. p. 21.]

[Footnote 117: See Godefroy's Chronology of the Laws. Codex Theodos tom. 1. Prolegomen. p. xcix.--civ.]

[Footnote 118: Most writers insist on the illness, and long repose, of Theodosius, at Thessalonica: Zosimus, to diminish his glory; Jornandes, to favor the Goths; and the ecclesiastical writers, to introduce his baptism.]

The deliverance and peace of the Roman provinces [119] was the work of prudence, rather than of valor: the prudence of Theodosius was seconded by fortune: and the emperor never failed to seize, and to improve, every favorable circumstance. As long as the superior genius of Fritigern preserved the union, and directed the motions of the Barbarians, their

power was not inadequate to the conquest of a great empire. The death of that hero, the predecessor and master of the renowned Alaric, relieved an impatient multitude from the intolerable yoke of discipline and discretion. The Barbarians, who had been restrained by his authority, abandoned themselves to the dictates of their passions; and their passions were seldom uniform or consistent. An army of conquerors was broken into many disorderly bands of savage robbers; and their blind and irregular fury was not less pernicious to themselves, than to their enemies. Their mischievous disposition was shown in the destruction of every object which they wanted strength to remove, or taste to enjoy; and they often consumed, with improvident rage, the harvests, or the granaries, which soon afterwards became necessary for their own subsistence. A spirit of discord arose among the independent tribes and nations, which had been united only by the bands of a loose and voluntary alliance. The troops of the Huns and the Alani would naturally upbraid the flight of the Goths; who were not disposed to use with moderation the advantages of their fortune; the ancient jealousy of the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths could not long be suspended; and the haughty chiefs still remembered the insults and injuries, which they had reciprocally offered, or sustained, while the nation was seated in the countries beyond the Danube. The progress of domestic faction abated the more diffusive sentiment of national animosity; and the officers of Theodosius were instructed to purchase, with liberal gifts and promises, the retreat or service of the discontented party. The acquisition of Modar, a prince of the royal blood of the Amali, gave a bold and faithful champion to the cause of Rome. The illustrious deserter

soon obtained the rank of master-general, with an important command; surprised an army of his countrymen, who were immersed in wine and sleep; and, after a cruel slaughter of the astonished Goths, returned with an immense spoil, and four thousand wagons, to the Imperial camp. [120] In the hands of a skilful politician, the most different means may be successfully applied to the same ends; and the peace of the empire, which had been forwarded by the divisions, was accomplished by the reunion, of the Gothic nation. Athanaric, who had been a patient spectator of these extraordinary events, was at length driven, by the chance of arms, from the dark recesses of the woods of Caucauland. He no longer hesitated to pass the Danube; and a very considerable part of the subjects of Fritigern, who already felt the inconveniences of anarchy, were easily persuaded to acknowledge for their king a Gothic Judge, whose birth they respected, and whose abilities they had frequently experienced. But age had chilled the daring spirit of Athanaric; and, instead of leading his people to the field of battle and victory, he wisely listened to the fair proposal of an honorable and advantageous treaty. Theodosius, who was acquainted with the merit and power of his new ally, condescended to meet him at the distance of several miles from Constantinople; and entertained him in the Imperial city, with the confidence of a friend, and the magnificence of a monarch. "The Barbarian prince observed, with curious attention, the variety of objects which attracted his notice, and at last broke out into a sincere and passionate exclamation of wonder. I now behold (said he) what I never could believe, the glories of this stupendous capital! And as he cast his eyes around, he viewed, and he admired, the commanding

situation of the city, the strength and beauty of the walls and public edifices, the capacious harbor, crowded with innumerable vessels, the perpetual concourse of distant nations, and the arms and discipline of the troops. Indeed, (continued Athanaric,) the emperor of the Romans is a god upon earth; and the presumptuous man, who dares to lift his hand against him, is guilty of his own blood." [121] The Gothic king did not long enjoy this splendid and honorable reception; and, as temperance was not the virtue of his nation, it may justly be suspected, that his mortal disease was contracted amidst the pleasures of the Imperial banquets. But the policy of Theodosius derived more solid benefit from the death, than he could have expected from the most faithful services, of his ally. The funeral of Athanaric was performed with solemn rites in the capital of the East; a stately monument was erected to his memory; and his whole army, won by the liberal courtesy, and decent grief, of Theodosius, enlisted under the standard of the Roman empire. [122] The submission of so great a body of the Visigoths was productive of the most salutary consequences; and the mixed influence of force, of reason, and of corruption, became every day more powerful, and more extensive. Each independent chieftain hastened to obtain a separate treaty, from the apprehension that an obstinate delay might expose him, alone and unprotected, to the revenge, or justice, of the conqueror. The general, or rather the final, capitulation of the Goths, may be dated four years, one month, and twenty-five days, after the defeat and death of the emperor Valens. [123]

[Footnote 119: Compare Themistius (Orat, xiv. p. 181) with Zosimus (l.

iv. p. 232,) Jornandes, (c. xxvii. p. 649,) and the prolix Commentary of M. de Buat, (Hist. de Peuples, &c., tom. vi. p. 477--552.) The Chronicles of Idatius and Marcellinus allude, in general terms, to magna certamina, magna multaque praelia. The two epithets are not easily reconciled.]

[Footnote 120: Zosimus (l. iv. p. 232) styles him a Scythian, a name which the more recent Greeks seem to have appropriated to the Goths.]

[Footnote 121: The reader will not be displeased to see the original words of Jornandes, or the author whom he transcribed. Regiam urbem ingressus est, miransque, En, inquit, cerno quod saepe incredulus audiebam, famam videlicet tantae urbis. Et huc illuc oculos volvens, nunc situm urbis, commeatumque navium, nunc moenia clara pro spectans, miratur; populosque diversarum gentium, quasi fonte in uno e diversis partibus scaturiente unda, sic quoque militem ordinatum aspiciens; Deus, inquit, sine dubio est terrenus Imperator, et quisquis adversus eum manum moverit, ipse sui sanguinis reus existit Jornandes (c. xxviii. p. 650) proceeds to mention his death and funeral.]

[Footnote 122: Jornandes, c. xxviii. p. 650. Even Zosimus (l. v. p. 246) is compelled to approve the generosity of Theodosius, so honorable to himself, and so beneficial to the public.]

[Footnote 123: The short, but authentic, hints in the Fasti of Idatius (Chron. Scaliger. p. 52) are stained with contemporary passion. The

fourteenth oration of Themistius is a compliment to Peace, and the consul Saturninus, (A.D. 383.)]

The provinces of the Danube had been already relieved from the oppressive weight of the Gruthungi, or Ostrogoths, by the voluntary retreat of Alatheus and Saphrax, whose restless spirit had prompted them to seek new scenes of rapine and glory. Their destructive course was pointed towards the West; but we must be satisfied with a very obscure and imperfect knowledge of their various adventures. The Ostrogoths impelled several of the German tribes on the provinces of Gaul; concluded, and soon violated, a treaty with the emperor Gratian; advanced into the unknown countries of the North; and, after an interval of more than four years, returned, with accumulated force, to the banks of the Lower Danube. Their troops were recruited with the fiercest warriors of Germany and Scythia; and the soldiers, or at least the historians, of the empire, no longer recognized the name and countenances of their former enemies. [124] The general who commanded the military and naval powers of the Thracian frontier, soon perceived that his superiority would be disadvantageous to the public service; and that the Barbarians, awed by the presence of his fleet and legions, would probably defer the passage of the river till the approaching winter. The dexterity of the spies, whom he sent into the Gothic camp, allured the Barbarians into a fatal snare. They were persuaded that, by a bold attempt, they might surprise, in the silence and darkness of the night, the sleeping army of the Romans; and the whole multitude was hastily embarked in a fleet of three thousand canoes. [125] The bravest

of the Ostrogoths led the van; the main body consisted of the remainder of their subjects and soldiers; and the women and children securely followed in the rear. One of the nights without a moon had been selected for the execution of their design; and they had almost reached the southern bank of the Danube, in the firm confidence that they should find an easy landing and an unguarded camp. But the progress of the Barbarians was suddenly stopped by an unexpected obstacle a triple line of vessels, strongly connected with each other, and which formed an impenetrable chain of two miles and a half along the river. While they struggled to force their way in the unequal conflict, their right flank was overwhelmed by the irresistible attack of a fleet of galleys, which were urged down the stream by the united impulse of oars and of the tide. The weight and velocity of those ships of war broke, and sunk, and dispersed, the rude and feeble canoes of the Barbarians; their valor was ineffectual; and Alatheus, the king, or general, of the Ostrogoths, perished with his bravest troops, either by the sword of the Romans, or in the waves of the Danube. The last division of this unfortunate fleet might regain the opposite shore; but the distress and disorder of the multitude rendered them alike incapable, either of action or counsel; and they soon implored the clemency of the victorious enemy. On this occasion, as well as on many others, it is a difficult task to reconcile the passions and prejudices of the writers of the age of Theodosius. The partial and malignant historian, who misrepresents every action of his reign, affirms, that the emperor did not appear in the field of battle till the Barbarians had been vanquished by the valor and conduct of his lieutenant Promotus. [126] The flattering poet, who celebrated, in the

court of Honorius, the glory of the father and of the son, ascribes the victory to the personal prowess of Theodosius; and almost insinuates, that the king of the Ostrogoths was slain by the hand of the emperor. [127] The truth of history might perhaps be found in a just medium between these extreme and contradictory assertions.

[Footnote 124: Zosimus, l. iv. p. 252.]

[Footnote 125: I am justified, by reason and example, in applying this Indian name to the the Barbarians, the single trees hollowed into the shape of a boat. Zosimus, l. iv. p. 253. Ausi Danubium quondam tranare Gruthungi In lintres fregere nemus: ter mille ruebant Per fluvium plenae cuneis immanibus alni. Claudian, in iv. Cols. Hon. 623.]

[Footnote 126: Zosimus, l. iv. p. 252--255. He too frequently betrays his poverty of judgment by disgracing the most serious narratives with trifling and incredible circumstances.]

[Footnote 127:--Odothaei Regis opima Retulit--Ver. 632. The opima were the spoils which a Roman general could only win from the king, or general, of the enemy, whom he had slain with his own hands: and no more than three such examples are celebrated in the victorious ages of Rome.]

The original treaty which fixed the settlement of the Goths, ascertained their privileges, and stipulated their obligations, would illustrate the history of Theodosius and his successors. The series of their history

has imperfectly preserved the spirit and substance of this single agreement. [128] The ravages of war and tyranny had provided many large tracts of fertile but uncultivated land for the use of those Barbarians who might not disdain the practice of agriculture. A numerous colony of the Visigoths was seated in Thrace; the remains of the Ostrogoths were planted in Phrygia and Lydia; their immediate wants were supplied by a distribution of corn and cattle; and their future industry was encouraged by an exemption from tribute, during a certain term of years. The Barbarians would have deserved to feel the cruel and perfidious policy of the Imperial court, if they had suffered themselves to be dispersed through the provinces. They required, and they obtained, the sole possession of the villages and districts assigned for their residence; they still cherished and propagated their native manners and language; asserted, in the bosom of despotism, the freedom of their domestic government; and acknowledged the sovereignty of the emperor, without submitting to the inferior jurisdiction of the laws and magistrates of Rome. The hereditary chiefs of the tribes and families were still permitted to command their followers in peace and war; but the royal dignity was abolished; and the generals of the Goths were appointed and removed at the pleasure of the emperor. An army of forty thousand Goths was maintained for the perpetual service of the empire of the East; and those haughty troops, who assumed the title of *Foederati*, or allies, were distinguished by their gold collars, liberal pay, and licentious privileges. Their native courage was improved by the use of arms and the knowledge of discipline; and, while the republic was guarded, or threatened, by the doubtful sword of the Barbarians, the

last sparks of the military flame were finally extinguished in the minds of the Romans. [129] Theodosius had the address to persuade his allies, that the conditions of peace, which had been extorted from him by prudence and necessity, were the voluntary expressions of his sincere friendship for the Gothic nation. [130] A different mode of vindication or apology was opposed to the complaints of the people; who loudly censured these shameful and dangerous concessions. [131] The calamities of the war were painted in the most lively colors; and the first symptoms of the return of order, of plenty, and security, were diligently exaggerated. The advocates of Theodosius could affirm, with some appearance of truth and reason, that it was impossible to extirpate so many warlike tribes, who were rendered desperate by the loss of their native country; and that the exhausted provinces would be revived by a fresh supply of soldiers and husbandmen. The Barbarians still wore an angry and hostile aspect; but the experience of past times might encourage the hope, that they would acquire the habits of industry and obedience; that their manners would be polished by time, education, and the influence of Christianity; and that their posterity would insensibly blend with the great body of the Roman people. [132]

[Footnote 128: See Themistius, Orat. xvi. p. 211. Claudian (in Eutrop. l. ii. 112) mentions the Phrygian colony:----Ostrogothis colitur mistisque Gruthungis Phyrx ager----and then proceeds to name the rivers of Lydia, the Pactolus, and Herreus.]

[Footnote 129: Compare Jornandes, (c. xx. 27,) who marks the condition

and number of the Gothic Foederati, with Zosimus, (l. iv. p. 258,) who mentions their golden collars; and Pacatus, (in Panegy. Vet. xii. 37,) who applauds, with false or foolish joy, their bravery and discipline.]

[Footnote 130: *Amator pacis generisque Gothorum*, is the praise bestowed by the Gothic historian, (c. xxix.,) who represents his nation as innocent, peaceable men, slow to anger, and patient of injuries. According to Livy, the Romans conquered the world in their own defence.]

[Footnote 131: Besides the partial invectives of Zosimus, (always discontented with the Christian reigns,) see the grave representations which Synesius addresses to the emperor Arcadius, (de Regno, p. 25, 26, edit. Petav.) The philosophic bishop of Cyrene was near enough to judge; and he was sufficiently removed from the temptation of fear or flattery.]

[Footnote 132: Themistius (Orat. xvi. p. 211, 212) composes an elaborate and rational apology, which is not, however, exempt from the puerilities of Greek rhetoric. Orpheus could only charm the wild beasts of Thrace; but Theodosius enchanted the men and women, whose predecessors in the same country had torn Orpheus in pieces, &c.]

Notwithstanding these specious arguments, and these sanguine expectations, it was apparent to every discerning eye, that the Goths would long remain the enemies, and might soon become the conquerors of the Roman empire. Their rude and insolent behavior expressed their

contempt of the citizens and provincials, whom they insulted with impunity. [133] To the zeal and valor of the Barbarians Theodosius was indebted for the success of his arms: but their assistance was precarious; and they were sometimes seduced, by a treacherous and inconstant disposition, to abandon his standard, at the moment when their service was the most essential. During the civil war against Maximus, a great number of Gothic deserters retired into the morasses of Macedonia, wasted the adjacent provinces, and obliged the intrepid monarch to expose his person, and exert his power, to suppress the rising flame of rebellion. [134] The public apprehensions were fortified by the strong suspicion, that these tumults were not the effect of accidental passion, but the result of deep and premeditated design. It was generally believed, that the Goths had signed the treaty of peace with a hostile and insidious spirit; and that their chiefs had previously bound themselves, by a solemn and secret oath, never to keep faith with the Romans; to maintain the fairest show of loyalty and friendship, and to watch the favorable moment of rapine, of conquest, and of revenge. But as the minds of the Barbarians were not insensible to the power of gratitude, several of the Gothic leaders sincerely devoted themselves to the service of the empire, or, at least, of the emperor; the whole nation was insensibly divided into two opposite factions, and much sophistry was employed in conversation and dispute, to compare the obligations of their first, and second, engagements. The Goths, who considered themselves as the friends of peace, of justice, and of Rome, were directed by the authority of Fravitta, a valiant and honorable youth, distinguished above the rest of his countrymen by the

politeness of his manners, the liberality of his sentiments, and the mild virtues of social life. But the more numerous faction adhered to the fierce and faithless Priulf, [134a] who inflamed the passions, and asserted the independence, of his warlike followers. On one of the solemn festivals, when the chiefs of both parties were invited to the Imperial table, they were insensibly heated by wine, till they forgot the usual restraints of discretion and respect, and betrayed, in the presence of Theodosius, the fatal secret of their domestic disputes. The emperor, who had been the reluctant witness of this extraordinary controversy, dissembled his fears and resentment, and soon dismissed the tumultuous assembly. Fravitta, alarmed and exasperated by the insolence of his rival, whose departure from the palace might have been the signal of a civil war, boldly followed him; and, drawing his sword, laid Priulf dead at his feet. Their companions flew to arms; and the faithful champion of Rome would have been oppressed by superior numbers, if he had not been protected by the seasonable interposition of the Imperial guards. [135] Such were the scenes of Barbaric rage, which disgraced the palace and table of the Roman emperor; and, as the impatient Goths could only be restrained by the firm and temperate character of Theodosius, the public safety seemed to depend on the life and abilities of a single man. [136]

[Footnote 133: Constantinople was deprived half a day of the public allowance of bread, to expiate the murder of a Gothic soldier: was the guilt of the people. Libanius, Orat. xii. p. 394, edit. Morel.]

[Footnote 134: Zosimus, l. iv. p. 267-271. He tells a long and ridiculous story of the adventurous prince, who roved the country with only five horsemen, of a spy whom they detected, whipped, and killed in an old woman's cottage, &c.]

[Footnote 134a: Eunapius.--M.]

[Footnote 135: Compare Eunapius (in Excerpt. Legat. p. 21, 22) with Zosimus, (l. iv. p. 279.) The difference of circumstances and names must undoubtedly be applied to the same story. Fravitta, or Travitta, was afterwards consul, (A.D. 401.) and still continued his faithful services to the eldest son of Theodosius. (Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. v. p. 467.)]

[Footnote 136: Les Goths ravagerent tout depuis le Danube jusqu'au Bosphore; exterminerent Valens et son armee; et ne repasserent le Danube, que pour abandonner l'affreuse solitude qu'ils avoient faite, (Oeuvres de Montesquieu, tom. iii. p. 479. Considerations sur les Causes de la Grandeur et de la Decadence des Romains, c. xvii.) The president Montesquieu seems ignorant that the Goths, after the defeat of Valens, never abandoned the Roman territory. It is now thirty years, says Claudian, (de Bello Getico, 166, &c., A.D. 404,) Ex quo jam patrios gens haec oblita Triones, Atque Istrum transvecta semel, vestigia fixit Threicio funesta solo--the error is inexcusable; since it disguises the principal and immediate cause of the fall of the Western empire of Rome.]

