

Chapter XXXIX: Gothic Kingdom Of Italy.--Part III.

After the example of the last emperors, Theodoric preferred the residence of Ravenna, where he cultivated an orchard with his own hands. [69] As often as the peace of his kingdom was threatened (for it was never invaded) by the Barbarians, he removed his court to Verona [70] on the northern frontier, and the image of his palace, still extant on a coin, represents the oldest and most authentic model of Gothic architecture. These two capitals, as well as Pavia, Spoleto, Naples, and the rest of the Italian cities, acquired under his reign the useful or splendid decorations of churches, aqueducts, baths, porticos, and palaces. [71] But the happiness of the subject was more truly conspicuous in the busy scene of labor and luxury, in the rapid increase and bold enjoyment of national wealth. From the shades of Tibur and Praeneste, the Roman senators still retired in the winter season to the warm sun, and salubrious springs of Baiae; and their villas, which advanced on solid moles into the Bay of Naples, commanded the various prospect of the sky, the earth, and the water. On the eastern side of the Adriatic, a new Campania was formed in the fair and fruitful province of Istria, which communicated with the palace of Ravenna by an easy navigation of one hundred miles. The rich productions of Lucania and the adjacent provinces were exchanged at the Marcilian fountain, in a populous fair annually dedicated to trade, intemperance, and superstition. In the solitude of Comum, which had once been animated by the mild genius of Pliny, a transparent basin above sixty miles in length still reflected the rural seats which encompassed the margin of

the Larian lake; and the gradual ascent of the hills was covered by a triple plantation of olives, of vines, and of chestnut trees. [72] Agriculture revived under the shadow of peace, and the number of husbandmen was multiplied by the redemption of captives. [73] The iron mines of Dalmatia, a gold mine in Bruttium, were carefully explored, and the Pomptine marshes, as well as those of Spoleto, were drained and cultivated by private undertakers, whose distant reward must depend on the continuance of the public prosperity. [74] Whenever the seasons were less propitious, the doubtful precautions of forming magazines of corn, fixing the price, and prohibiting the exportation, attested at least the benevolence of the state; but such was the extraordinary plenty which an industrious people produced from a grateful soil, that a gallon of wine was sometimes sold in Italy for less than three farthings, and a quarter of wheat at about five shillings and sixpence. [75] A country possessed of so many valuable objects of exchange soon attracted the merchants of the world, whose beneficial traffic was encouraged and protected by the liberal spirit of Theodoric. The free intercourse of the provinces by land and water was restored and extended; the city gates were never shut either by day or by night; and the common saying, that a purse of gold might be safely left in the fields, was expressive of the conscious security of the inhabitants. [Footnote 69: See an epigram of Ennodius (ii. 3, p. 1893, 1894) on this garden and the royal gardener.]

[Footnote 70: His affection for that city is proved by the epithet of "Verona tua," and the legend of the hero; under the barbarous name of Dietrich of Bern, (Peringsciold and Cochloeum, p. 240,) Maffei traces

him with knowledge and pleasure in his native country, (l. ix. p. 230--236.)]

[Footnote 71: See Maffei, (Verona Illustrata, Part i. p. 231, 232, 308, &c.) His amputes Gothic architecture, like the corruption of language, writing &c., not to the Barbarians, but to the Italians themselves.

Compare his sentiments with those of Tiraboschi, (tom. iii. p. 61.)

* Note: Mr. Hallam (vol. iii. p. 432) observes that "the image of

Theodoric's palace" is represented in Maffei, not from a coin, but from a seal. Compare D'Agincourt (Storia dell'arte, Italian Transl., Arcitettura, Plate xvii. No. 2, and Pittura, Plate xvi. No. 15,)

where there is likewise an engraving from a mosaic in the church of St. Apollinaris in Ravenna, representing a building ascribed to Theodoric in that city. Neither of these, as Mr. Hallam justly observes, in the least approximates to what is called the Gothic style. They are evidently the degenerate Roman architecture, and more resemble the early attempts of our architects to get back from our national Gothic into a classical Greek style. One of them calls to mind Inigo Jones inner quadrangle in St. John's College Oxford. Compare Hallam and D'Agincon vol. i. p. 140--145.--M]

[Footnote 72: The villas, climate, and landscape of Baiae, (Var. ix. 6; see Cluver Italia Antiq. l. iv. c. 2, p. 1119, &c.,) Istria, (Var. xii. 22, 26,) and Comum, (Var. xi. 14; compare with Pliny's two villas, ix. 7,) are agreeably painted in the Epistles of Cassiodorus.]

[Footnote 73: In Liguria numerosa agricolarum progenies, (Ennodius, p. 1678, 1679, 1680.) St. Epiphanius of Pavia redeemed by prayer or ransom 6000 captives from the Burgundians of Lyons and Savoy. Such deeds are the best of miracles.]

[Footnote 74: The political economy of Theodoric (see Anonym. Vales. p. 721, and Cassiodorus, in Chron.) may be distinctly traced under the following heads: iron mine, (Var. iii. 23;) gold mine, (ix. 3;) Pomptine marshes, (ii. 32, 33;) Spoleto, (ii. 21;) corn, (i. 34, x. 27, 28, xi. 11, 12;) trade, (vi. 7, vii. 9, 23;) fair of Leucothoe or St. Cyprian in Lucania, (viii. 33;) plenty, (xii. 4;) the cursus, or public post, (i. 29, ii. 31, iv. 47, v. 5, vi. 6, vii. 33;) the Flaminian way, (xii. 18.)

* Note: The inscription commemorative of the draining of the Pomptine marshes may be found in many works; in Gruter, Inscript. Ant. Heidelberg, p. 152, No. 8. With variations, in Nicolai De' bonificamenti delle terre Pontine, p. 103. In Sartorius, in his prize essay on the reign of Theodoric, and Manse Beylage, xi.--M.]

[Footnote 75: LX modii tritici in solidum ipsius tempore fuerunt, et vinum xxx amphoras in solidum, (Fragment. Vales.) Corn was distributed from the granaries at xv or xxv modii for a piece of gold, and the price was still moderate.]

A difference of religion is always pernicious, and often fatal, to the harmony of the prince and people: the Gothic conqueror had been educated in the profession of Arianism, and Italy was devoutly attached to the

Nicene faith. But the persuasion of Theodoric was not infected by zeal; and he piously adhered to the heresy of his fathers, without condescending to balance the subtle arguments of theological metaphysics. Satisfied with the private toleration of his Arian sectaries, he justly conceived himself to be the guardian of the public worship, and his external reverence for a superstition which he despised, may have nourished in his mind the salutary indifference of a statesman or philosopher. The Catholics of his dominions acknowledged, perhaps with reluctance, the peace of the church; their clergy, according to the degrees of rank or merit, were honorably entertained in the palace of Theodoric; he esteemed the living sanctity of Caesarius [76] and Epiphanius, [77] the orthodox bishops of Arles and Pavia; and presented a decent offering on the tomb of St. Peter, without any scrupulous inquiry into the creed of the apostle. [78] His favorite Goths, and even his mother, were permitted to retain or embrace the Athanasian faith, and his long reign could not afford the example of an Italian Catholic, who, either from choice or compulsion, had deviated into the religion of the conqueror. [79] The people, and the Barbarians themselves, were edified by the pomp and order of religious worship; the magistrates were instructed to defend the just immunities of ecclesiastical persons and possessions; the bishops held their synods, the metropolitans exercised their jurisdiction, and the privileges of sanctuary were maintained or moderated according to the spirit of the Roman jurisprudence. [80] With the protection, Theodoric assumed the legal supremacy, of the church; and his firm administration restored or extended some useful prerogatives which had been neglected by the feeble

emperors of the West. He was not ignorant of the dignity and importance of the Roman pontiff, to whom the venerable name of Pope was now appropriated. The peace or the revolt of Italy might depend on the character of a wealthy and popular bishop, who claimed such ample dominion both in heaven and earth; who had been declared in a numerous synod to be pure from all sin, and exempt from all judgment. [81] When the chair of St. Peter was disputed by Symmachus and Laurence, they appeared at his summons before the tribunal of an Arian monarch, and he confirmed the election of the most worthy or the most obsequious candidate. At the end of his life, in a moment of jealousy and resentment, he prevented the choice of the Romans, by nominating a pope in the palace of Ravenna. The danger and furious contests of a schism were mildly restrained, and the last decree of the senate was enacted to extinguish, if it were possible, the scandalous venality of the papal elections. [82]

[Footnote 76: See the life of St. Caesarius in Baronius, (A.D. 508, No. 12, 13, 14.) The king presented him with 300 gold solidi, and a discus of silver of the weight of sixty pounds.]

[Footnote 77: Ennodius in Vit. St. Epiphani, in Sirmond, Op. tom. i. p. 1672--1690. Theodoric bestowed some important favors on this bishop, whom he used as a counsellor in peace and war.]

[Footnote 78: Devotissimus ac si Catholicus, (Anonym. Vales. p. 720;) yet his offering was no more than two silver candlesticks (cerostrata)

of the weight of seventy pounds, far inferior to the gold and gems of Constantinople and France, (Anastasius in Vit. Pont. in Hormisda, p. 34, edit. Paris.)]

[Footnote 79: The tolerating system of his reign (Ennodius, p. 1612. Anonym. Vales. p. 719. Procop. Goth. l. i. c. 1, l. ii. c. 6) may be studied in the Epistles of Cassiodorus, under the following heads: bishops, (Var. i. 9, vii. 15, 24, xi. 23;) immunities, (i. 26, ii. 29, 30;) church lands (iv. 17, 20;) sanctuaries, (ii. 11, iii. 47;) church plate, (xii. 20;) discipline, (iv. 44;) which prove, at the same time, that he was the head of the church as well as of the state. * Note: He recommended the same toleration to the emperor Justin.--M.]

[Footnote 80: We may reject a foolish tale of his beheading a Catholic deacon who turned Arian, (Theodor. Lector. No. 17.) Why is Theodoric surnamed After? From Vafer? (Vales. ad loc.) A light conjecture.]

[Footnote 81: Ennodius, p. 1621, 1622, 1636, 1638. His libel was approved and registered (synodaliter) by a Roman council, (Baronius, A.D. 503, No. 6, Franciscus Pagi in Breviar. Pont. Rom. tom. i. p. 242.)]

[Footnote 82: See Cassiodorus, (Var. viii. 15, ix. 15, 16,) Anastasius, (in Symmacho, p. 31,) and the xviiith Annotation of Mascou. Baronius, Pagi, and most of the Catholic doctors, confess, with an angry growl, this Gothic usurpation.]

I have descanted with pleasure on the fortunate condition of Italy; but our fancy must not hastily conceive that the golden age of the poets, a race of men without vice or misery, was realized under the Gothic conquest. The fair prospect was sometimes overcast with clouds; the wisdom of Theodoric might be deceived, his power might be resisted and the declining age of the monarch was sullied with popular hatred and patrician blood. In the first insolence of victory, he had been tempted to deprive the whole party of Odoacer of the civil and even the natural rights of society; [83] a tax unseasonably imposed after the calamities of war, would have crushed the rising agriculture of Liguria; a rigid preemption of corn, which was intended for the public relief, must have aggravated the distress of Campania. These dangerous projects were defeated by the virtue and eloquence of Epiphanius and Boethius, who, in the presence of Theodoric himself, successfully pleaded the cause of the people: [84] but if the royal ear was open to the voice of truth, a saint and a philosopher are not always to be found at the ear of kings.

The privileges of rank, or office, or favor, were too frequently abused by Italian fraud and Gothic violence, and the avarice of the king's nephew was publicly exposed, at first by the usurpation, and afterwards by the restitution of the estates which he had unjustly extorted from his Tuscan neighbors. Two hundred thousand Barbarians, formidable even to their master, were seated in the heart of Italy; they indignantly supported the restraints of peace and discipline; the disorders of their march were always felt and sometimes compensated; and where it was

dangerous to punish, it might be prudent to dissemble, the sallies of their native fierceness. When the indulgence of Theodoric had remitted two thirds of the Ligurian tribute, he condescended to explain the difficulties of his situation, and to lament the heavy though inevitable burdens which he imposed on his subjects for their own defence. [85] These ungrateful subjects could never be cordially reconciled to the origin, the religion, or even the virtues of the Gothic conqueror; past calamities were forgotten, and the sense or suspicion of injuries was rendered still more exquisite by the present felicity of the times.

[Footnote 83: He disabled them--alicentia testandi; and all Italy mourned--lamentabili justitio. I wish to believe, that these penalties were enacted against the rebels who had violated their oath of allegiance; but the testimony of Ennodius (p. 1675-1678) is the more weighty, as he lived and died under the reign of Theodoric.]

[Footnote 84: Ennodius, in Vit. Epiphan. p. 1589, 1690. Boethius de Consolatione Philosophiae, l. i. pros. iv. p. 45, 46, 47. Respect, but weigh the passions of the saint and the senator; and fortify and alleviate their complaints by the various hints of Cassiodorus, (ii. 8, iv. 36, viii. 5.)]

[Footnote 85: Immanium expensarum pondus...pro ipsorum salute, &c.; yet these are no more than words.]

Even the religious toleration which Theodoric had the glory of

introducing into the Christian world, was painful and offensive to the orthodox zeal of the Italians. They respected the armed heresy of the Goths; but their pious rage was safely pointed against the rich and defenceless Jews, who had formed their establishments at Naples, Rome, Ravenna, Milan, and Genoa, for the benefit of trade, and under the sanction of the laws. [86] Their persons were insulted, their effects were pillaged, and their synagogues were burned by the mad populace of Ravenna and Rome, inflamed, as it should seem, by the most frivolous or extravagant pretences. The government which could neglect, would have deserved such an outrage. A legal inquiry was instantly directed; and as the authors of the tumult had escaped in the crowd, the whole community was condemned to repair the damage; and the obstinate bigots, who refused their contributions, were whipped through the streets by the hand of the executioner. [8611] This simple act of justice exasperated the discontent of the Catholics, who applauded the merit and patience of these holy confessors. Three hundred pulpits deplored the persecution of the church; and if the chapel of St. Stephen at Verona was demolished by the command of Theodoric, it is probable that some miracle hostile to his name and dignity had been performed on that sacred theatre. At the close of a glorious life, the king of Italy discovered that he had excited the hatred of a people whose happiness he had so assiduously labored to promote; and his mind was soured by indignation, jealousy, and the bitterness of unrequited love. The Gothic conqueror condescended to disarm the unwarlike natives of Italy, interdicting all weapons of offence, and excepting only a small knife for domestic use. The deliverer of Rome was accused of conspiring with the vilest informers

against the lives of senators whom he suspected of a secret and treasonable correspondence with the Byzantine court. [87] After the death of Anastasius, the diadem had been placed on the head of a feeble old man; but the powers of government were assumed by his nephew Justinian, who already meditated the extirpation of heresy, and the conquest of Italy and Africa. A rigorous law, which was published at Constantinople, to reduce the Arians by the dread of punishment within the pale of the church, awakened the just resentment of Theodoric, who claimed for his distressed brethren of the East the same indulgence which he had so long granted to the Catholics of his dominions. [8711] At his stern command, the Roman pontiff, with four illustrious senators, embarked on an embassy, of which he must have alike dreaded the failure or the success. The singular veneration shown to the first pope who had visited Constantinople was punished as a crime by his jealous monarch; the artful or peremptory refusal of the Byzantine court might excuse an equal, and would provoke a larger, measure of retaliation; and a mandate was prepared in Italy, to prohibit, after a stated day, the exercise of the Catholic worship. By the bigotry of his subjects and enemies, the most tolerant of princes was driven to the brink of persecution; and the life of Theodoric was too long, since he lived to condemn the virtue of Boethius and Symmachus. [88]

[Footnote 86: The Jews were settled at Naples, (Procopius, Goth. 1. i. c. 8,) at Genoa, (Var. ii. 28, iv. 33,) Milan, (v. 37,) Rome, (iv. 43.) See likewise Basnage, Hist. des Juifs, tom. viii. c. 7, p. 254.]

[Footnote 8611: See History of the Jews vol. iii. p. 217.--M.]

[Footnote 87: Rex avidus communis exitii, &c., (Boethius, l. i. p. 59:)
rex colum Romanis tendebat, (Anonym. Vales. p. 723.) These are hard
words: they speak the passions of the Italians and those (I fear) of
Theodoric himself.]

[Footnote 8711: Gibbon should not have omitted the golden words of
Theodoric in a letter which he addressed to Justin: That to pretend to a
dominion over the conscience is to usurp the prerogative of God; that
by the nature of things the power of sovereigns is confined to external
government; that they have no right of punishment but over those who
disturb the public peace, of which they are the guardians; that the most
dangerous heresy is that of a sovereign who separates from himself a
part of his subjects because they believe not according to his belief.
Compare Le Beau, vol viii. p. 68.--M]

[Footnote 88: I have labored to extract a rational narrative from the
dark, concise, and various hints of the Valesian Fragment, (p. 722, 723,
724,) Theophanes, (p. 145,) Anastasius, (in Johanne, p. 35,) and
the Hist Miscella, (p. 103, edit. Muratori.) A gentle pressure and
paraphrase of their words is no violence. Consult likewise Muratori
(Annali d' Italia, tom. iv. p. 471-478,) with the Annals and Breviary
(tom. i. p. 259--263) of the two Pagis, the uncle and the nephew.]

The senator Boethius [89] is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully

could have acknowledged for their countryman. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honors of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age; and the appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the Capitol, and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the republic. In the youth of Boethius the studies of Rome were not totally abandoned; a Virgil [90] is now extant, corrected by the hand of a consul; and the professors of grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence, were maintained in their privileges and pensions by the liberality of the Goths. But the erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity: and Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, [91] which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. The reason and piety of their Roman pupil were fortunately saved from the contagion of mystery and magic, which polluted the groves of the academy; but he imbibed the spirit, and imitated the method, of his dead and living masters, who attempted to reconcile the strong and subtile sense of Aristotle with the devout contemplation and sublime fancy of Plato. After his return to Rome, and his marriage with the daughter of his friend, the patrician Symmachus, Boethius still continued, in a palace of ivory and marble, to prosecute the same studies. [92] The church was edified by his profound defence of the orthodox creed against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heresies; and the Catholic unity was explained or exposed in a formal treatise by the indifference of three distinct though consubstantial persons. For the benefit of his Latin

readers, his genius submitted to teach the first elements of the arts and sciences of Greece. The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable pen of the Roman senator. And he alone was esteemed capable of describing the wonders of art, a sun-dial, a water-clock, or a sphere which represented the motions of the planets. From these abstruse speculations, Boethius stooped, or, to speak more truly, he rose to the social duties of public and private life: the indigent were relieved by his liberality; and his eloquence, which flattery might compare to the voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, was uniformly exerted in the cause of innocence and humanity. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by a discerning prince: the dignity of Boethius was adorned with the titles of consul and patrician, and his talents were usefully employed in the important station of master of the offices. Notwithstanding the equal claims of the East and West, his two sons were created, in their tender youth, the consuls of the same year. [93] On the memorable day of their inauguration, they proceeded in solemn pomp from their palace to the forum amidst the applause of the senate and people; and their joyful father, the true consul of Rome, after pronouncing an oration in the praise of his royal benefactor, distributed a triumphal largess in the games of the circus. Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honors and private alliances, in the cultivation of science and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely

applied before the last term of the life of man.

[Footnote 89: Le Clerc has composed a critical and philosophical life of Anicius Manlius Severinus Boetius, (Bibliot. Choisie, tom. xvi. p. 168--275;) and both Tiraboschi (tom. iii.) and Fabricius (Bibliot Latin.) may be usefully consulted. The date of his birth may be placed about the year 470, and his death in 524, in a premature old age, (Consol. Phil. Metrica. i. p. 5.)]

[Footnote 90: For the age and value of this Ms., now in the Medicean library at Florence, see the Cenotaphia Pisana (p. 430-447) of Cardinal Noris.]

[Footnote 91: The Athenian studies of Boethius are doubtful, (Baronius, A.D. 510, No. 3, from a spurious tract, De Disciplina Scholarum,) and the term of eighteen years is doubtless too long: but the simple fact of a visit to Athens is justified by much internal evidence, (Brucker, Hist. Crit. Philosoph. tom. iii. p. 524--527,) and by an expression (though vague and ambiguous) of his friend Cassiodorus, (Var. i. 45,) "longe positas Athenas intrioisti."]

[Footnote 92: Bibliothecae comptos ebore ac vitro * parietes, &c., (Consol. Phil. l. i. pros. v. p. 74.) The Epistles of Ennodius (vi. 6, vii. 13, viii. 1 31, 37, 40) and Cassiodorus (Var. i. 39, iv. 6, ix. 21) afford many proofs of the high reputation which he enjoyed in his own times. It is true, that the bishop of Pavia wanted to purchase of him an

old house at Milan, and praise might be tendered and accepted in part of payment. * Note: Gibbon translated vitro, marble; under the impression, no doubt that glass was unknown.--M.]

[Footnote 93: Pagi, Muratori, &c., are agreed that Boethius himself was consul in the year 510, his two sons in 522, and in 487, perhaps, his father. A desire of ascribing the last of these consulships to the philosopher had perplexed the chronology of his life. In his honors, alliances, children, he celebrates his own felicity--his past felicity, (p. 109 110)]

A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment. And some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct he appeals to the memory of his country. His authority had restrained the pride and oppression of the royal officers, and his eloquence had delivered Paulianus from the dogs of the palace. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the Barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honorable contests his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence; and we may learn from the example of Cato, that a

character of pure and inflexible virtue is the most apt to be misled by prejudice, to be heated by enthusiasm, and to confound private enmities with public justice. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favor and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had only power over his life, he stood without arms and without fear against the face of an angry Barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The senator Albinus was accused and already convicted on the presumption of hoping, as it was said, the liberty of Rome. "If Albinus be criminal," exclaimed the orator, "the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws." These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; but they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. [94] The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger and perhaps the guilt of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honorable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. [95] Yet his innocence

must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate, at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the Barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. [96] A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude deserved the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence. [97]

[Footnote 94: Si ego scissem tu nescisses. Beothius adopts this answer (l. i. pros. 4, p. 53) of Julius Canus, whose philosophic death is described by Seneca, (De Tranquillitate Animi, c. 14.)]

[Footnote 95: The characters of his two delators, Basilius (Var. ii. 10, 11, iv. 22) and Opilio, (v. 41, viii. 16,) are illustrated, not much to their honor, in the Epistles of Cassiodorus, which likewise mention Decoratus, (v. 31,) the worthless colleague of Beothius, (l. iii. pros. 4, p. 193.)]

[Footnote 96: A severe inquiry was instituted into the crime of magic, (Var. iv 22, 23, ix. 18;) and it was believed that many necromancers had escaped by making their jailers mad: for mad I should read drunk.]

[Footnote 97: Boethius had composed his own Apology, (p. 53,) perhaps

more interesting than his Consolation. We must be content with the general view of his honors, principles, persecution, &c., (l. i. pros. 4, p. 42--62,) which may be compared with the short and weighty words of the Valesian Fragment, (p. 723.) An anonymous writer (Sinner, Catalog. Mss. Bibliot. Bern. tom. i. p. 287) charges him home with honorable and patriotic treason.]

While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed, in the tower of Pavia, the Consolation of Philosophy; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven in search of the Supreme Good; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free will, of time and eternity; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation so obvious, so vague, or

so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labor of thought; and the sage who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened, till his eyes almost started from their sockets; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. [98] But his genius survived to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings, [99] and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honorable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honors of martyrdom, and the fame of miracles. [100] In the last hours of Boethius, he derived some comfort from the safety of his two sons, of his wife, and of his father-in-law, the venerable Symmachus. But the grief of Symmachus was indiscreet, and perhaps disrespectful: he had presumed to lament, he might dare to revenge, the death of an injured friend. He was dragged in chains from Rome to the palace of Ravenna; and the suspicions of Theodoric could only be appeased by the blood of an innocent and aged senator. [101]

[Footnote 98: He was executed in Agro Calventiano, (Calvenzano, between Marignano and Pavia,) Anonym. Vales. p. 723, by order of Eusebius, count

of Ticinum or Pavia. This place of confinement is styled the baptistery, an edifice and name peculiar to cathedrals. It is claimed by the perpetual tradition of the church of Pavia. The tower of Boethius subsisted till the year 1584, and the draught is yet preserved, (Tiraboschi, tom. iii. p. 47, 48.)]

[Footnote 99: See the Biographia Britannica, Alfred, tom. i. p. 80, 2d edition. The work is still more honorable if performed under the learned eye of Alfred by his foreign and domestic doctors. For the reputation of Boethius in the middle ages, consult Brucker, (Hist. Crit. Philosoph. tom. iii. p. 565, 566.)]

[Footnote 100: The inscription on his new tomb was composed by the preceptor of Otho III., the learned Pope Silvester II., who, like Boethius himself, was styled a magician by the ignorance of the times. The Catholic martyr had carried his head in his hands a considerable way, (Baronius, A.D. 526, No. 17, 18;) and yet on a similar tale, a lady of my acquaintance once observed, "La distance n'y fait rien; il n'y a que lo remier pas qui coute." Note: Madame du Deffand. This witticism referred to the miracle of St. Denis.--G.]

[Footnote 101: Boethius applauds the virtues of his father-in-law, (l. i. pros. 4, p. 59, l. ii. pros. 4, p. 118.) Procopius, (Goth. l. i. c. i.,) the Valesian Fragment, (p. 724,) and the Historia Miscella, (l. xv. p. 105,) agree in praising the superior innocence or sanctity of Symmachus; and in the estimation of the legend, the guilt of his murder

is equal to the imprisonment of a pope.]

Humanity will be disposed to encourage any report which testifies the jurisdiction of conscience and the remorse of kings; and philosophy is not ignorant that the most horrid spectres are sometimes created by the powers of a disordered fancy, and the weakness of a distempered body. After a life of virtue and glory, Theodoric was now descending with shame and guilt into the grave; his mind was humbled by the contrast of the past, and justly alarmed by the invisible terrors of futurity. One evening, as it is related, when the head of a large fish was served on the royal table, [102] he suddenly exclaimed, that he beheld the angry countenance of Symmachus, his eyes glaring with fury and revenge, and his mouth armed with long sharp teeth, which threatened to devour him. The monarch instantly retired to his chamber, and, as he lay, trembling with aguish cold, under a weight of bed-clothes, he expressed, in broken murmurs to his physician Elpidius, his deep repentance for the murders of Boethius and Symmachus. [103] His malady increased, and after a dysentery which continued three days, he expired in the palace of Ravenna, in the thirty-third, or, if we compute from the invasion of Italy, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. Conscious of his approaching end, he divided his treasures and provinces between his two grandsons, and fixed the Rhone as their common boundary. [104] Amalaric was restored to the throne of Spain. Italy, with all the conquests of the Ostrogoths, was bequeathed to Athalaric; whose age did not exceed ten years, but who was cherished as the last male offspring of the line of Amali, by the short-lived marriage of his mother Amalasantha with

a royal fugitive of the same blood. [105] In the presence of the dying monarch, the Gothic chiefs and Italian magistrates mutually engaged their faith and loyalty to the young prince, and to his guardian mother; and received, in the same awful moment, his last salutary advice, to maintain the laws, to love the senate and people of Rome, and to cultivate with decent reverence the friendship of the emperor. [106]

The monument of Theodoric was erected by his daughter Amalasantha, in a conspicuous situation, which commanded the city of Ravenna, the harbor, and the adjacent coast. A chapel of a circular form, thirty feet in diameter, is crowned by a dome of one entire piece of granite: from the centre of the dome four columns arose, which supported, in a vase of porphyry, the remains of the Gothic king, surrounded by the brazen statues of the twelve apostles. [107] His spirit, after some previous expiation, might have been permitted to mingle with the benefactors of mankind, if an Italian hermit had not been witness, in a vision, to the damnation of Theodoric, [108] whose soul was plunged, by the ministers of divine vengeance, into the volcano of Lipari, one of the flaming mouths of the infernal world. [109]

[Footnote 102: In the fanciful eloquence of Cassiodorus, the variety of sea and river fish are an evidence of extensive dominion; and those of the Rhine, of Sicily, and of the Danube, were served on the table of Theodoric, (Var. xii. 14.) The monstrous turbot of Domitian (Juvenal Satir. iii. 39) had been caught on the shores of the Adriatic.]

[Footnote 103: Procopius, Goth. 1. i. c. 1. But he might have informed

us, whether he had received this curious anecdote from common report or from the mouth of the royal physician.]

[Footnote 104: Procopius, Goth. 1. i. c. 1, 2, 12, 13. This partition had been directed by Theodoric, though it was not executed till after his death, Regni hereditatem superstes reliquit, (Isidor. Chron. p. 721, edit. Grot.)]

[Footnote 105: Berimund, the third in descent from Hermanric, king of the Ostrogoths, had retired into Spain, where he lived and died in obscurity, (Jornandes, c. 33, p. 202, edit. Muratori.) See the discovery, nuptials, and death of his grandson Eutharic, (c. 58, p. 220.) His Roman games might render him popular, (Cassiodor. in Chron.,) but Eutharic was asper in religione, (Anonym. Vales. p. 723.)]

[Footnote 106: See the counsels of Theodoric, and the professions of his successor, in Procopius, (Goth. 1. i. c. 1, 2,) Jornandes, (c. 59, p. 220, 221,) and Cassiodorus, (Var. viii. 1--7.) These epistles are the triumph of his ministerial eloquence.]

[Footnote 107: Anonym. Vales. p. 724. Agnellus de Vitis. Pont. Raven. in Muratori Script. Rerum Ital. tom. ii. P. i. p. 67. Alberti Descrittione d' Italia, p. 311. * Note: The Mausoleum of Theodoric, now Sante Maria della Rotonda, is engraved in D'Agincourt, Histoire de l'Art, p xviii. of the Architectural Prints.--M]

[Footnote 108: This legend is related by Gregory I., (Dialog. iv. 36,) and approved by Baronius, (A.D. 526, No. 28;) and both the pope and cardinal are grave doctors, sufficient to establish a probable opinion.]

[Footnote 109: Theodoric himself, or rather Cassiodorus, had described in tragic strains the volcanos of Lipari (Cluver. Sicilia, p. 406--410) and Vesuvius, (v 50.)]