Spain. The father was manifestly a man of great energy who cowed his unruly nobles by murder, forced the Orospedans to recognize his superiority, swept away the Suevic kingdom which had lingered in the north-west, and checked the raids of the Basques. To secure the succession in his family he associated his sons Hermenegild and Reccared with himself. He was the first Visigothic king who wore the crown, and it would appear that he threw off all pretence of allegiance to the empire. The series of the Visigothic gold coins begins with him, and it is to be noted that while the earliest are struck in the name of the emperor Justinian, the imperial superscription disappears in the later. Leovigild drove the imperial officers from Seville and Cordova, though they still retained control of the coast. His son Hermene- gild, to whom he entrusted the government of Baetica, was married to a Frankish princess. Intermarriages had not been uncommon between Frank and Visigoth, but they bad rarely led to any. other result than to subject the Arian ladies who were sent from Spain, or the Catholic ladies who came from France, to blows and murder by their husbands and their husbands’ families. Ingunda the Frankish wife of Hermenegild, with the help of Leandro, archbishop of Seville, the brother and pre­decessor of the more famous Isidore *(q.v.),* persuaded her husband to renounce Arianism. He revolted against his father, was reduced to submission and executed in prison.

The reign of Reccared (586-601) is famous in Spanish history for the establishment of Catholicism as the religion of the state. Reccared must have seen from the example of the Franks that the support of the Church was a great element of strength for the Crown. He made the change at the Third Council of Toledo. If Reccared hoped to secure the perpetuance of his dynasty he was mistaken. His son Liuva the second (601-603) was murdered by an Arian reaction headed by Witteric (603-610). The Catholics regained power by his overthrow, but they could not give stability to the state. A succession of obscure “ priests’ kings,” who are but names, followed: Gunthemar (610-612), Sisebut (612-620), Reccared II. (620-621), Swintella, associated with his son Reccimer (621-631), Sisinand (631-636), Chintila (636-640), Tulga (640-641), Chindaswinth(641-652), Recceswinth (649-672). The growing weakness of the Merovingians saved them from serious attack, though not from occasional invasion on the north. The prostration of the empire in the East by Avar and Persian invasions enabled them to drive the imperial officers from the coast towns. But the kingdom was growing internally weaker. The nobles were strong enough to prevent the monarchy from becoming hereditary. The Church seemed to exert great power, but it had itself become barbarized by contact with kings and nobles. Violent persecutions of heretics and of the numerous Jews brought in new elements of discord. Wamba (672-680) is credited with an attempt to reform the state, but he was tonsured while unconscious from illness or poison, and disappeared into a religious house. His successors again are but names, Euric (680-687) and Egica (687-701). Witiza (697-710) has more substance. He was in aftertimes denounced as a monster of vice, whose sins accounted for the Mahommedan conquest. Contemporaries speak of him with respect, and he appears to have been a well-meaning man who endeavoured to check the corruption of the clergy and the persecution of the Jews, and who resisted the dictation of the pope. His reign ended in turmoil, and perhaps by murder. With Roderic, whose “ tumultuous ” election was the work of Witiza’s enemies, the line of the Visigoth kings is considered to have ended.

The Visigoth kingdom presents an appearance of coherence which was very far from corresponding to the reality. At the head was the king, surrounded by his household of *leudes,* and aided by the palatines, great officers of state imitated from the imperial model. At the head of the provinces, eight in number, were dukes, and the cities were governed by counts. Both were, at least in theory, officers named by the king and removable by him. The king was advised by councils, made up by a combination of a senate of the great men, and of the ecclesiastical councils which had met under the Roman rule and that of the tolerant Arian kings. The formation of the council was not complete until the establishment of Catholicism as the state religion. But from the reign of Reccared till the Arab invasion they met sixteen times in all, generally at Toledo in the church of Santa Leocadia. Purely ecclesiastical matters were first discussed by the clergy alone. Then the great men, Visigoth and Roman, joined with the clergy, and the affairs of the kingdom were debated. The *Leges Wisigothorum* were elaborated in these councils (see Germanic Law). But there was more show than reality in this parade of government by free discussion and by law. There was no effective administration to enforce the law.

*The Mahommedan Conquest.—*How utterly weak it was can be seen from the fact that it was shattered by the feeble Moslem invasion of 711. The danger from Africa had been patent for half a century. During the reign of Witiza the Moslem masters of northern Africa had pressed the town of Ceuta, the last remnant of the Byzantine possessions, very closely, and it had been relieved by supplies from Spain. Only the want of ships had prevented the Mahom- medans from mastering the town, and crossing the straits, and now this deficiency was supplied by the Christians themselves. It seems to be certain that Julian, the imperial count or governor of Ceuta, acting in concert with the family and faction of Witiza, who sought his help against Roderic, provided vessels to trans- port the Berber Tarik (Tāriq) across the straits. Tarik, the general of the caliph’s governor in northern Africa, Mūsā b. Nosair, was invited as an ally by the conspirators, who hoped to make use of him and then send him back. He came with a small force, but with the certainty of finding allies, and on being joined by another detachment of Berbers marched inland. On the 19th of July 711 he met Roderic near the Lago de la Janda between Medina Sidonia and Vejer de la Frontera. He had perhaps already been joined by Spanish allies. It is at least certain that in the battle the enemies of Roderic passed over to the invader. The Visigoth king was routed and disappears from authentic history. There is some probability that he did not perish in the battle, but escaped to fall two years later, at Seguyjuela near Salamanca, in action with Merwan the son of Mūsã. A single blow delivered as much by Christian as by Moslem hands, sufficed to cut the bond which seemed to hold the kingdom together, and to scatter its fragments all over the soil of the Peninsula. Through these fragments Tarik marched without a single check of im- portance. Before the end of 711 he had advanced as far north as Alcalá. Cordova fell to a detachment of his army. In 712 Müsã joined his lieutenant, and the conquest of the south was completed. Mérida was the only town which offered an honourable resistance. During 713 and 714 the north was subdued to the foot of the mountains, and when Mūsā and Tarik were recalled to Damascus by the caliph the progress of the Moslems was not delayed. In 718 they crossed the Pyrenees, and con- tinued their invasions of Gaul till they met the solid power of the Austrasian Franks at Poitiers 732 (see Charles Martel and Caliphate, B. §§ 6, 10). The rush of the Mahommedan flood sent terror all over Europe, but the little opposition it encountered south of the Pyrenees is to be easily explained, and the victory, though genuine, was more specious than substantial. That the lieutenants of the caliph at Damascus should take the place of the Visigoth kings, their dukes and counts seemed to many no loss and to a still greater number a gain. The great landowners, to whom patriotism was unknown and whose religious faith was tepid, were as ready to pay tribute to the caliph as to render service to one of their own body who had become king by violence or intrigue. On the part of the Arabs, who, though a small minority of the invaders, were the ruling element, there was a marked absence of proselytizing zeal. They treated the occupa- tion of Spain as a financial speculation more than as a war for the faith. The Arab, though he produced Mahommedanism. was the least fanatical of the followers of the Prophet, and was not only willing but desirous to leave to all men who would pay tribute the free exercise of their religion. He cynically avowed a greater liking for the poll tax