worthy of their choice. Peace being made with Rome, hostilities were vigorously commenced against the kindred barbarians (418). The result of the war was the subjugation of the Suevi, the total destruction of the Alans, and the expulsion of the Vandals from Spain (427). But the restless and powerful Suevi were scotched, not killed. During the reign of Theodoric, Wallia’s successor, they be came formidable alike to the Romans and the Goths, and made many important conquests in the neighbouring pro vinces. Theodoric might easily have subdued them had he not been summoned to encounter a far more terrible antagonist, the renowned Attila, with his half million of mounted Huns. The death of the Gothic monarch on the plains of Chalons (451), the elevation of his son Thorismund to the vacant throne, his assassination by his brothers, and the elevation of the elder of the fratricides, Theodoric, were events which closely followed each other. The reign of the lastnamed prince was diversified by alternate suc cess and disaster. The Peninsula, become one great battle field to three contending hosts, the Goths, Romans, and Suevi, was plunged in misery, and, from the Pyrenees to the sea of Africa, was overspread with innumerable swarms, which, like so many locusts, utterly destroyed the spots on which they settled. While Theodoric was preparing to conduct an army across the Pyrenees against Remismund, king of the Suevi, he was assassinated by his brother Euric, in his capital of Toulouse (466).

The reign of Euric was unusually brilliant and successful. He rendered himself absolute lord of the country, by extinguishing the dominion of Rome in it, and completely subjecting the Suevi. Euric was the first legislator of his nation, and the founder of the Gothic kingdom of Spain ; for hitherto the country had rather been overrun than sub dued. This prince died at Arles, the capital of his em pire, a. D. 483. He was succeeded by his son Alaric, a weak sovereign, who, after submitting pusillanimously to many indignities, was overthrown in battle, and slain by Clovis, king of the Franks (506). Amalaric, the son of Alaric, being a minor, was for a time superseded by his natural brother Gensaleic, but ultimately ascended the throne (522). He was the first Gothic king who established his court in Spain. He fixed on the city of Seville. From the death of this prince (531) till Recared I. became king of the Goths (587), a few obscure royal names occur, regarding whom it would be a mere waste of space to enter into details. The chief act of this sovereign was to reclaim his subjects from the heresy of Arianism to orthodox Catholicism. He died in 601. Of eleven monarchs who followed, occupying a period of seventy years, none is in any way remarkable. In 673, Wamba, a man distinguished alike for wisdom, valour, and virtue, was raised, by the unanimous voice of the Gothic electors, to the throne, left vacant by the death of Receswind (672). The early part of his reign was spent in quelling intestine war. During the latter part of it he successfully cultivated the arts of peace, and built a fleet for the protection of the coast ; a very wise precaution, for the Saracens had already begun to swarm all over the sea of Africa. Had Wamba been succeeded by monarchs of equal prudence and activity, the scourge of Saracenic domination, the greatest perhaps that ever af­flicted any people, would probably have been for ever avert ed from Spain. In consequence of having sunk into a deathlike trance, in which state he was apparelled in the garments of the grave, Wamba was compelled to relinquish the crown (680).

One of the most celebrated names in the line of Gothic princes is that of Roderick, who ascended the throne in 709. He owed his elevation to a party which rose against his predecessor Witiza, whose two sons, with their relations, Count Julian, governor of the Gothic possessions in Africa, and Oppas, an archbishop, are supposed to have aided the

Saracens in their design of conquering the Peninsula. At all events, the party which they formed against Roderick weakened the Gothic monarchy, and thus gave encouragement to the Moors to make a descent on the country, which they effected in 711. Roderick marshalled a large army, amounting, it is said, to 90,000 men, and advanced against the audacious infidel. The hosts met upon the plains of Xeres, where was fought a battle, so bravely contested on either side that it seems scarcely unworthy to have decided the fate of a kingdom. For three days, from sunrise to sunset, the embattled squadrons fought with equal ardour and obstinacy, till victory at last declared for the Mahom medans. Roderick himself is believed to have perished in the conflict, as he was never heard of more. By this decisive battle the Moors made themselves masters of nearly the whole of Spain. The wretched remains of the Goths retired into the mountainous parts of Asturias, Burgos, and Biscay, where they maintained their independence, and perpetuated their monarchy. In a few years their power began to revive under the renowned Pelagio or Pelayo, a prince of the royal blood. But before noticing the exploits of this warrior, we shall take a brief view of the political, civil, and religious condition of the people subject to the Gothic monarchy.

The local divisions of Spain, as already laid down, under went little or no change until some time after the descent of the Mahommedans. The power possessed by the Gothic kings was considerable ; but its exercise was greatly controlled by the nobles, in general a fierce, turbulent, and haughty body. The jurisdiction of the monarch was not confined to affairs purely temporal. He nominated bishops, presided, if he chose, at ecclesiastical tribunals, convoked national councils, and regulated the discipline of the church. Next to the king in civil dignity were the dukes, who appear to have been governors of provinces. After them came the counts, whose jurisdiction is supposed to have been confined to particular cities. A number of other functionaries were subordinate to these ; and besides the officers of the crown, each city or town had its municipal council. Of course there were regular courts of law in stituted throughout the country, where justice was administered; the forms of procedure in these tribunals being much the same as those practised in the Spanish courts at the present day, but less tedious. There was a Visigoth code of laws, partly of Gothic, partly of Roman origin. If we pass from the civil to the military state of the country, we find that the Goths were a nation of soldiers, the obli gation of service being imperative on all freemen. After the Gothic power was established in Spain, the constitution of the church underwent important changes. The pope was acknowledged as supreme head, and metropolitan sees were formed, which exercised an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the suffragan bishops. The bishops possessed an irresponsible power over the rectors, displacing or removing them at pleasure. The cathedrals and parish churches were in general well endowed ; lay patronage existed, and monasteries were introduced. As in other countries, the ecclesiastical councils were of a threefold description, diocesan, provincial, and national, convoked respectively by the bishop, the metropolitan, and the king. The Goths present nothing of literature worthy of particular notice. If we pass to the domestic arts, we find still less to admire; in every thing they consulted the useful in preference to the beautiful or magnificent. It is therefore to be concluded, that however devout, temperate, honest, and sincere the Goths might have been, as many historians attest, yet Spain under their dominion made little advancement in civilization and the elegant arts.

The Moors under Tarik and Musa subdued the fairest portion of Spain, including the largest and strongest cities of the kingdom, with a rapidity which shows how complete