side in tendencies to bigotry and persecution, but it was it the same time the means of giving Spain laws very far above the average ideas of a barbarous people,—laws indeed which in many respects were rational, humane, enlightened, often combining the wisdom of old Rome with the kindly spirit of Christianity. The West-Gothic code recognized the equality of all men in the eye of the law ; such bar­barisms as the assessment of a man’s value according to his rank and position, or judicial combat or trial by ordeal, find no place in it. It had certainly great merits ; its weakness seems to have been in leaving too much scope on one side to the king, on the other to the clergy. Between the royal and the ecclesiastical powers individual freedom was liable to disappear. There was a danger, too, of human thought and speculation being wholly absorbed into theology. In anything like general litera­ture Spain seems to have been decidedly poor during this period, while among her neighbours in the south of Gaul Greek philosophy was a fashionable study, testifying to the presence of considerable intellectual activity. Spain under its West-Gothic kings and its Catholic clergy may have been a fairly well governed country, but long before the end came there must have been languor and decay amongst its people. After the conquest of Africa by Belisarius for the emperor Justinian, it seemed possible that the country might be once again annexed to the empire as a province ; and an unsuccessful candidate for the throne,—which, it will be remembered, was elective,— went so far as to conclude a treaty of alliance, and actually to cede to the troops of the empire several towns on the Mediterranean coast. That a Gothic king should con­descend to ask support from such a quarter, and allow himself to be spoken of as in any sense the empire’s vassal, marks a very decided decline in the old inde­pendent spirit of the nation. We may certainly assume that repeated disputes as to the royal succession had undermined its power for resistance, and the numerous and not very well affected Jewish colony in their midst must have been a permanent source of danger. By the end of the 7th century northern Africa to the Straits of Gibraltar had passed wholly under Saracenic dominion. The struggle had been long and hard, and the West- Gothic kings, who had recovered the towns on the southern coasts, and even made some small conquests on the African shores, had done something to prolong it ; but in 710 a little band of Saracens landed unopposed at Gibraltar, returned in safety, and urged their brethren at once to cross the straits and take possession of the country. In the following year (711) Ṭáriḳ, at the head of about 5000 Saracen volunteers, entered Spain. A great Gothic army under Roderick, “ the last of the Goths,” was routed in the neighbourhood of Xeres on the Guadalete, and the Arab or Saracenic conquest of Spain, with the exception of the mountainous districts of the north, was accomplished with amazing ease and rapidity. Anything like a vigorous national resistance seems to have been too much for the Spaniards, enervated as they were by long familiarity with Roman civilization.@@1 (w. j. b.)

Section III.—Mediæval History.

The Arab invasion of Spain had been intended by Másá,

the governor of Africa, to be merely a plundering raid (compare Mohammedanism, vol. xvi. p. 573). A single

unexpected success turned it into a conquest. Ṭáriḳ had already made himself master of Cordova and Toledo when Másá arrived from Africa and rewarded his too successful lieutenant by consigning him to prison. But his military ability was too valuable to be dispensed with, and he was speedily released to aid in completing the conquest. Within four years the whole Peninsula, except the mountainous districts in the north, had submitted to the invaders. It was now Músá’s turn to suffer from the jealousy of his superior. Recalled to Damascus by Walíd, he arrived just after the caliph’s death, and at once fell under the dis­pleasure of his successor Suleimán. His sons, who had been left to rule in Spain, were involved in his disgrace, and the father died broken-hearted on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Few things in history are more remarkable than the ease with which Spain, a country naturally fitted for defence, was subdued by a mere handful of invaders. The usual causes assigned are the misgovernment of the Visigoths, the excessive influence enjoyed by the clerical caste, internal factions and jealousies, and the discontent of numerous classes, and especially of the Jews. All of these doubtless co-operated to facilitate the conquest and to weaken the power of resistance, but the real cause is to be sought in the fact that the Visigoths had never really amalgamated with the conquered population. The mass of the inhabitants regarded their rulers as aliens, and had no reason to resent a change of masters. This feeling was strengthened by the conduct of their new conquerors. The Arab invasion undoubtedly brought with it consider­able bloodshed and destruction of property, but it was merciful when compared with the previous inroads of the German tribes, and in the end it proved a blessing rather than a curse to the country. To all who submitted the Arabs left their laws and customs, and allowed them to be administered by their own officials. The cultivation of the fields was left to the natives, and the overthrow of the privileged classes gave rise to a system of small hold­ings or properties, which was one of the causes of the flourishing condition of agriculture under Arab rule. The slaves found their lot much improved under a religion which taught that the enfranchisement of a slave was a meritorious action. The Jews, as they had suffered most under the Visigoths, were the chief gainers from a con­quest which they had greatly contributed to bring about. But nothing was so influential in securing ready submission to the Arabs as their tolerance in religious matters. Even the most bigoted adherents of Islam found a practical check to their zeal for proselytism in the loss that would accrue to the exchequer. The Christians had to pay a poll-tax, which varied according to the class to which they belonged. All property was subject to the *kharáj,* a tax proportioned to the produce of the soil, but converts to Mohammedanism were excused from the poll-tax. A cleri­cal chronicler of the 8th century, while bewailing the sub­jection of Spain to an alien race, says nothing against the conquerors as the professors of a hostile religion. His silence is an eloquent testimony to the haughty tolerance of the Arabs.

As time went on, and the Arabs felt more secure in their position, their rule became not unnaturally harsher. Many of the treaties which had secured favourable terms to the conquered were broken, and the Christians were provoked to resistance by persecution. A notable instance of this was the edict making circumcision compulsory for Christians as well as Moslems. Greater hardships still were endured by the “ renegades,” most of whom had embraced Mohammedanism from a desire for safety or for temporal gain, and who found that return to the old faith was blocked both to themselves and to their children by

@@@1 For the West-Gothic kingdom in Spain, Gibbon’s Decline and Fall should be consulted, chapters 31, 36, 37, 38, 41, 51. In note 122 (ch. 38) he remarks on the obscurity of the subject, Spain having had during this period no chronicler like Bede for the Saxons or Gregory of Tours for the Franks. As to the West-Gothic laws, there is a good deal of easily accessible information in Guizot’s History of Civilization, lectures 3, 6, 10, 11. Compare Roman Law, vol. xx. p. 712, and Salic Law, vol. xxi. p. 216, section (11).