

2. A formidable enemy now appears on the scene, *Al'aric*, *King of the Visigoths*. Under him the Goths settled within the Danube had already overrun Macedonia and Greece, and in A.D. 402 Alaric attacked Italy in great force. Stilicho hurried to the rescue, and drove out the Visigoths, gaining decisive victories in two desperate battles (403). After his general's success Honorius, the emperor, celebrated at Rome the last *triumph* ever seen there, the event being sung in stirring verse (which has come down to us) by *Claudian*, the last of the Latin classic poets, a writer of pure style and real genius.

3. In A.D. 405 a leader named *Radagaisus* invaded Italy with a vast host of barbarians from the interior of Germany—*Suevi* and *Alemanni*, *Ala'ni* and *Vandals*, *Goths* and *Huns*. At *Fic'sulæ*, near Florence (in 406), Stilicho encountered and defeated the enemy. Stilicho was put to death in 408 on a charge of aspiring to the empire.

4. In A.D. 408 *Alaric* came again into Italy, this time with an irresistible force, and after extorting an enormous ransom on condition of sparing Rome, captured the city in 410, and gave it up to a six days' plunder by his warriors, without any cruel slaughter of the people. This was exactly 800 years after the taking of Rome by the Gauls under *Brennus*. Alaric died shortly afterwards.

5. Early in the fifth century the Roman forces were withdrawn from Britain, which was left open to conquest by the *Angles* and their kinsmen from north-west Germany. Soon after Alaric's time the *Visigoths* established themselves in the south of Gaul and the north of Spain, while hordes of *Suevi* and *Ala'ni*, *Vandals* and *Burgundians* (a German nation akin to the Goths) swarmed over the rest of both those great provinces. In 429 *Gen'seric*, *King of the Vandals*, passed over from Spain into Africa, and made himself master of the whole north-west of Rome's dominions there. His fleet swept the Mediterranean, conveying troops who conquered the chief islands, and made descents on the shores of Italy and Greece. The Western Empire was thus gradually absorbed and re-peopled by swarms of new inhabitants, many years before its formal and final extinction as a political fact.

6. We come next to the re-appearance of the savage and formidable *Huns*, under the most famous of barbarian con-