

HISTORICAL
HISTORY
OF THE
DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
R O M A N E M P I R E.

By EDWARD GIBBON, Esq;

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

L O N D O N :

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P R E F A C E.

I NOW discharge my promise, and complete my design, of writing the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, both in the West and the East. The whole period extends from the age of Trajan and the Antonines, to the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet the second; and includes a review of the Crusades and the state of Rome during the middle ages. Since the publication of the first volume, twelve years have elapsed; twelve years, according to my wish, “of health, of leisure, and of perseverance.” I may now congratulate my deliverance from a long and laborious service, and my sa-

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C H A P. XXXIX.

Zeno and Anastasius, Emperors of the East.—Birth, Education, and first Exploits of Theodoric the Ostrogoth.—His Invasion and Conquest of Italy.—The Gothic Kingdom of Italy.—State of the West.—Military and Civil Government.—The Senator Boethius.—Last Acts and Death of Theodoric.

AFTER the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, an interval of fifty years, till the memorable reign of Justinian, is faintly marked by the obscure names and imperfect annals of Zeno, Anastasius, and Justin, who successively ascended the throne of Constantinople. During the same period, Italy revived and flourished under the government of a Gothic king, who might

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C H A P.
XXXIX.
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476—527.