

**FELICITAS: A TALE OF
THE GERMAN
MIGRATIONS, A. D. 476**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649582198

Felicitas: A Tale of the German Migrations, A. D. 476 by Felix Dahn

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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FELIX DAHN

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FELICITAS



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A TALE OF THE GERMAN MIGRATIONS

A.D. 476



BY
FELIX DAHN

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY
M. A. C. E.

London
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1883
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CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

Frederick Co.

FELICITAS.

INTRODUCTION.

SOME years ago I was at work in Salzburg : in the library among the old records, and in the Museum of Roman antiquities.

My studies were principally concerned with the fifth century: the time when the Germanic tribes invaded these regions, the Roman garrisons retiring with or without resistance, while many settlers remained in the land. Peasants, tradespeople, mechanics, would not forsake their homes, nor give up their lucrative occupations, would not quit their valued, long-cherished plots of ground, but stayed under the rule of the Barbarian; who, when the storm and battle of conquest were over, and the division of the country completed, did not molest them.

The work of the day over, I wandered in the beautiful, long-familiar country of the Salzach

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valley; the warm June evenings permitted long wanderings up to a late hour. Thought and fancy were filled with the pictures of the life and the changing fate of the latest Romans in these lands. My imagination was excited by the inscriptions, coins, and utensils, by the Roman monuments of every kind which are found in such rich abundance in and around Salzburg; for this town, with its prominent fortress, the "Capitolium," on the rocky hill dominating stream and valley, was for centuries, under the name of "Claudium Juvavum," a chief bulwark of the Roman rule and the seat of a flourishing and brilliant development of the Roman culture. The inscriptions testify to the official rank of many of the citizens, such as *Duumvirs*, *Decurions*, *Ædiles* of the markets and games; to the importance of the town as a place of trade, and to the encouragement given to the arts and manufactures.

That which had occupied me during the labours of the day was pictured by the play of fancy, when in the evening I wandered out through the gate of the town: stream and road, hill and valley, were then peopled for me with

forms of the Roman life; and from the distant north-west, like the driving clouds that often arose from the Bavarian plain, approached menacingly the invading Germans.

Most frequently, I preferred to saunter along the banks of the stream in the direction of the great Roman road, which passed the Chiemsee, and crossing its effluent, the Alz, at Siebruck (Bedaium), and the Inn (Oenus) at Pfünz (Pons Oeni), led towards the province of Vindelicia and its splendid capital, Augsburg (Augusta Vindellicorum). Many coins, fragments of pottery, urns, gravestones, and household utensils of every kind have been found in the level country which stretches on each side of the old high-road, and is now for the most part covered with forest and brushwood, and in some parts overgrown with thick ivy. It is evident that farms, and also stately villas of the rich citizens, were thickly scattered beyond the outer wall of the fortified town, thus filling and adorning the whole valley. I often wandered in the neighbourhood of this Roman road, the traces of which were still distinctly visible, watching the setting sun, and wondering what were the feelings of