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which traces the trajectory of Western civilization (as well as the Islamic and Mongolian conquests) from the height of the Roman Empire to the fall of Byzantium. The work covers the history of the Roman Empire, Europe, and the Catholic Church from 98 to 1590 and discusses the decline of the Roman Empire in the East and West. I. The first period may be traced from the age of Trajan and the Antonines, when the Roman monarchy, having attained its full strength and maturity, began to verge towards its decline; and will extend to the subservition of the Western Empire, by the barbarians of Germany and Scythia, the rude ancestors of the most polished nations of modern Europe. This extraordinary revolution, which subjected Rome to the power of a Gothic conqueror, was completed about the beginning of the sixth century. II. The second period commences with the reign of Justinian, who, by his laws, as well as by his victories, restored a transient splendor to the Eastern Empire. It will comprehend the invasion of Italy by the Lombards; the conquest of the Asiatic and African provinces by the Arabs, who embraced the religion of Mahomet; the revolt of the Roman people against the feeble princes of Constantinople; and the elevation of Charlemagne, who, in the year eight hundred, established the second, or German Empire of the West III. The last and longest period includes about six centuries and a half; from the revival of the Western Empire, till the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, and the extinction of a degenerate race of princes. Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) was an English historian and Member of Parliament. An engaging, enthusiastic, sympathetic, funny "journey through French history from the New York Times-bestselling author of Absolute Monarchs (The Wall Street Journal). Beginning with Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul in the first century BC, this study of French history comprises a cast of legendary characters: 'Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Joan of Arc, and Marie Antoinette, to name a few.' As John Julius Norwich chronicles France's often violent, always fascinating history. From the French Revolution 'after which neither France nor the world would be the same again/to the storming of the Bastille, from the Vichy régime and the Resistance to the end of the Second World War, A History of France is packed with heroes and villains, battles and rebellion—written with both an expert command of detail and a lively appreciation for the subject matter by this "true master of narrative history." (Simon Sebag Montefiore).Provides an accessible overview of the achievement of Edward Gibbon (1737-94), one of the world's greatest historians. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work was reproduced from the original artifact, and remains as true to the original work as possible. Therefore, you will see the original copyright references, library stamps (as most of these works have been housed in our most important libraries around the world), and other notations in the work. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. As a reproduction of a historical artifact, this work may contain missing or blurred pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant. Constantine the Great moved the seat of Roman power to Constantinople in AD 330 and for eleven brutal, bloody centuries, the Byzantine Empire became a beacon of grand magnificence and depraved decadence . . . Here then are the centuries dominated by ferocious arguments over the nature of Christ and his Church. By knowledge, where scholars and scribes preserved the heritage of the ancient world. By emperors like Justinian the Great and Basil the Bulgar Slayer men pious, heroic or monstrous. By creativity, as art and architecture soared to new heights. In this abridgement of his celebrated trilogy, John Julius Norwich provides the definitive introduction to the savage, scintillating world of Byzantium. Norwich tells a remarkable story with boundless zest. He offers character sketches of the appalling personages who infest his narrative . . . with the assurance of a Macauley or a Gibbon.