

THE VISIGOTHS

The Visigothic kingdom existed in Europe between about 476 to 711 A. D. and was unusual in its humane treatment of children. The primary difference from earlier statutes was that the Visigothic code stressed the **duties rather than the power** of the parent. Children could be punished or disinherited, but they could not be put to death or mutilated. The sale of children was forbidden. Parents were given authority to use reasonable physical discipline, but were not permitted to exceed what was considered reasonable. The law upheld concepts that children had statutory rights to life and to other legal protections.