Mgr Paul Guérin

LES PETITS BOLLANDISTES: LIVES OF THE SAINTS, VOLUME III

24 February – 25 March

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English translation

Contributed to Mind of the Church by a friend of the library who wishes to remain anonymous

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About this translation

Translated from Mgr Paul Guérin, *Les Petits Bollandistes. Vies des saints de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament, des martyrs, des pères, des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques, des vénérables et autres personnes mortes en odeur de sainteté*, seventh edition (Paris: Bloud et Barral), volume III, which covers 24 February – 25 March.

Guérin's work grew out of his re-edition, in 1858, of Father François Giry's seventeenth-century *Vies des saints*, enlarged from the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists — whence its name — and from the histories and propers of the French dioceses. Each day opens with the martyrologies: the Roman Martyrology, the Martyrology of France, the martyrologies of the religious orders, and additions from the Bollandists and other hagiographers. The lives of the saints of the day follow, each with its dates, its epigraph, and, at the end, the cult and relics of the saint and the sources Guérin used. His footnotes are kept.

The fourteen volumes run through the calendar from 1 January to 31 December. Here each day is one section.

Words and notes that the translation first left illegible or doubtful have been read from the printed volume and supplied.

24 February

Martyrologies

Twenty-fourth day of February.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

In Judaea, the birth into heaven of Saint Matthias, apostle, who, having been chosen by the Apostles in the place of the traitor Judas, after the Ascension of the Lord, suffered martyrdom for the preaching of the Gospel. 1st c. — At Rome, Saint Primitiva, martyr. — At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, Saint Sergius, martyr, of whom we have fine acts. 304. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Montanus, Lucius, Julian, Victoricus, Flavian and their companions, who were disciples of Saint Cyprian, and consummated their martyrdom under the empire of Valerian.[1] 259. — At Rouen, the passion of Saint Praetextatus,[2] bishop and martyr. 586. — At Trier, Saint Modestus,[3] bishop and confessor. About 489. — In England, Saint ETHELBERT, king of Kent, whom Saint Augustine, bishop of the English, converted to the faith of Christ. 616. — At Jerusalem, the first Finding of the head of the precursor of Our Lord.[4] 4th c.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Senlis, Saint Letard, bishop, who died in England, in the train of the queen Saint Bertha, only daughter of Charibert, king of Paris, and wife of Saint Ethelbert, to whom he had been given to maintain her in the Christian religion and strengthen her against the errors of paganism with which the king, her husband, and all the English people were then infected. He contributed also much to the conversion of the king and of the whole nation, which was consummated by Saint Augustine.[5] 7th c. — At Saint-Denis, in France, the miraculous dedication of the abbatial church made by Our Lord Jesus Christ, eternal priest. — At Auxerre, Saint Betto, bishop, who had been a monk of Sainte-Colombe of Sens. His body was found clothed with a hair-shirt seven hundred years after his death. 918. — At Orsan, in Berry, the decease of the venerable Robert of Arbrissel, priest, founder of the abbey of La Roë, near Craon, in Anjou, under the rule of Saint Augustine, and institutor of the Order of Fontevrault, under that of Saint Benedict. 1117.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Porto, in Italy, with Saint Primitiva, mentioned above, Saint Paul, martyr. — At Rome, Saint Demetrias, of the family of the Anicii, which has given to the world so many illustrious men: Justinian, Boethius, Saint Benedict of Monte Cassino, Saint Scholastica. Her mother Juliana was daughter of Saint Proba, whose virtue was praised by Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, Saint Chrysostom. The taking of Rome by Alaric had forced the young virgin to flee. How many times, in those calamitous times when the rich of the day before often became the poor of the next, must the young girl have repeated to herself these words: O vanity of vanities, all is vanity save to serve God: thus she refused a match suitable to her rank in order to engage herself to the heavenly Spouse. 425. — In Calabria, Saint John Theristes, monk of the Order of Saint Basil. The contact of his body restored health to Robert Guiscard, prince of Calabria. Year 1129.

Saint Matthias, Apostle

63. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Emperor: Nero.

Occisus Agnus a lupis, / Vos misit agnos ad lupos. — The Lamb slain by wolves sent you as lambs among wolves. — Santeul, Hymn iii for the Common of the Apostles.

Let us learn by the life of Saint Matthias to consult God in all our undertakings.

The Son of God, who had come into this world to draw the hearts of men to His love, wished to be followed by twelve poor men of little appearance, but powerful in works and in words, called Apostles, whom He animated with His spirit and His grace, in order that, as brave and valiant captains, they might make war on sin, on the prince of darkness and on all his henchmen.

Among these twelve Apostles there was one named Judas Iscariot, who, after having been raised to this eminent dignity of the apostolate, and having remained some time in the school of so good and so adorable a Master, preached and wrought several miracles in Judaea, being at last dominated by avarice, sold at a vile price the infinite Price of the Redemption of all men, delivering Him into the hands of His enemies; but, when he saw Him condemned to death, he added crime to crime, and, despairing of his pardon, hanged himself and strangled himself with his own hands. In truth there were none in all nature infamous enough to give death to this wretch. This child of perdition having made so unhappy an end, and being fallen from the rank which Jesus Christ had given him, the Apostles and all the other Disciples, after the Ascension of Our Lord into the heavens, assembled; Saint Peter, as head and universal pastor of the Church, took the word; and, after having set forth the impiety and the punishment of Judas, told them that “to fulfil the prophecy of David, one must choose one of those who were present and who had conversed with Jesus Christ from the baptism of Saint John until the day on which He Himself was taken up into heaven; that he who should be newly elected might be put in the place of that despairing man, to be a witness with the others of the miraculous life of their Master and of the triumphant victory which He had won over death.”[1] Such was this first pontifical allocution, of which the Roman Consistories have retained the solemn form and of which the Popes will preserve until the end of the ages the fraternal language.

The advice of Saint Peter was found good by the whole assembly, composed of about a hundred and twenty persons; and, by common accord, they chose two, namely: Joseph, called Barsabas, and, because of his holiness, surnamed the Just; and Matthias, both of the seventy-two Disciples. Then all set themselves to prayer and asked Him who penetrates the depth of hearts that it might please Him to declare which of the two He had chosen to succeed to the apostolate of the traitor Judas. “At once they cast lots: the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles.” Two things render legitimate the use which the Apostles made of the lot: they had to choose between two subjects of equal merit; but merit is not sufficient for the ecclesiastical ministry, vocation is required; it was a question therefore of knowing which, Joseph or Matthias, was called of God to the apostolate; it pleased God to declare this time His will by the lot, and it is He without doubt who inspired the Apostles to employ this means. Outside these extraordinary cases where,

the equal merit of the subjects casting into uncertainty, a supernatural light inspires recourse to the lot, the use of it is illegitimate. It would be to tempt God, who has left to His Church other marks to be assured of the vocation of her ministers, and who, afterwards, has often come to her help by miracles. It must be said also that all interpreters do not see in this passage of Scripture a use of the lot. Some, relying on other passages, give to the word lot another sense: that of vocation, of portion; so that one would have to translate: And it was Matthias who had, for vocation, for portion, the apostolate. However that may be, our Saint having been elected Apostle, received the Holy Ghost with the others, and began to preach to the peoples the ineffable mystery of the Cross, with a great sanctity of life and an admirable fervour of spirit; then, when the Apostles divided among themselves the provinces to know where each of them was to go to announce the Gospel, Judaea fell to Saint Matthias. He set himself at once to preach Jesus Christ there: he did it with so much ardour that he converted many to the faith, as Saint Isidore remarks in his life. According to the report of Saint Sophronius, of Nicephorus and of Dorotheus, he went, continuing always his preaching, to the depth of Ethiopia. Meanwhile the Jews ceased not to make war on him, because he showed them, by the Scriptures, the coming of the Messiah. The persecutions of these perfidious ones were harder to bear and to overcome than the most insupportable crosses of the world: for, after having preached the space of thirty-three years, he was beaten down by themselves and by the Gentiles with blows of stones, and afterwards beheaded. Some say that he was crucified, then taken down from the cross to have his head cut off. He died in the year 63 of our salvation, under the empire of Nero. His holy body was brought to Rome by Saint Helena, mother of Constantine, and a part of the bones of his head and of his other members is still seen today in the church of Saint Mary Major; the other part was given by this holy empress, as a rich present, to Saint Agritius, archbishop of Trier, who placed it in the ancient church of Saint Eucharius, outside the walls of the city: wherefore this church has changed its name, and has taken that of Saint Matthias. A great number of miracles have been wrought there by the merits of his intercession.

We do not wish to omit here that a part of the venerable head of this holy apostle, having been long kept very religiously at Barbezieux, in Saintonge, was not exempt there from the effects of the rage of the Calvinist heretics, who tore it from its reliquary, threw it into the fire and reduced it to ashes. I know that the learned German John Eck, who disputed against Luther and closed his mouth, writes that the body of Saint Matthias was brought from Rome to Augsburg; but this may be understood of a part, which the people take rather often for the whole. In groups formed of twelve or thirteen apostles, Saint Matthias is recognized by the axe or halberd, as Saint Peter is recognized by the keys, Saint Paul by the sword of the word, etc. Alone, he holds a cross with a long shaft, a memory of the kind of death which he endured for Our Lord Jesus Christ. For the rest, it is not well settled what kind of death he suffered. In the West, it is rather generally admitted that he was stoned, and that if he was crucified, he was finished by a blow of an axe. We have mentioned this attribute first. In consideration of his axe, Saint Matthias has been chosen as patron by carpenters and edge-tool makers.

We cannot explain why he has attracted the attention of repentant drinkers and revellers, of persons attacked by smallpox or who fear it, and has been taken for patron by this category of people. Trier and Goslar, in Hanover, count Saint Matthias among one of their patrons.

Raphael, Rubens, Lucas of Leyden, Albrecht Dürer, Lambert Suavius, Jacques Callot and others have put him in their series of Apostles.

Blessed Robert of Arbrissel

1055–1117. — Popes: Gregory VI; Paschal II. — Kings of France: Henry I; Louis VI the Fat.

Flee, servants of Christ, the vices manifest or hidden in shadow. Virtue has its seat between vicious extremes. Guard yourselves against excess, for all that is excessive is converted into a fault. Do not obey all kinds of inspirations, nor all kinds of persons… — Letter of Blessed Robert to a Lady of the world. Robert of

Arbrissel is one of the principal historical figures of the end of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth. The incredible power of his word, the countless conversions which he wrought among the masses, among persons of high society and above all the great ladies of his time, the new monastic institute which he founded, the immense influence which he exercised on his century, the very attacks of which he was the object, make of him one of the greatest geniuses of eloquence, and one of the most astonishing saints that the Church has produced.

He was born in Brittany, about the year 1045 or 1047, in a borough which was called Arbrissel, but which is now called Arbresec, seven leagues from the city of Rennes. His father was named Damalioc, and his mother Orguende. They were poor in the goods of the earth, but rich in those of heaven. Damalioc himself, being touched by God, embraced, it is said, the ecclesiastical state and became a priest, which must make one believe that if his wife was not dead, she had renounced the world and had become a religious by his permission. Robert received from their care so noble and so pious an education that he appeared a man from his tenderest youth. One saw in him nothing light and childish, but the wisdom and maturity of an old man. The modesty and decency which he showed in the least of his actions drew the eyes of everyone upon him, and, by making him loved by his parents, made him respected by all the persons of his acquaintance. At that epoch, the poor man could easily run the career of letters and attain the honours of the priesthood. The presbytery or the abbey of the neighbourhood received him into its school and sent him afterwards to finish his studies in some university. Robert followed this course. When he was of age to study, he was permitted to go in search of masters in divers cities of Brittany and of France, in the hope that God would not abandon him, but that, by His loving providence, He would provide as a Father for the expenses of his studies and his honest subsistence. In fact, he found everywhere the helps which were necessary to him; this gave him the courage to come as far as Paris, which was already the theatre of fine minds and had a famous University, where all the sciences were taught with reputation. Scarcely had he arrived there when he made shine forth the fine qualities with which grace and nature had adorned him. He was seen to unite so perfectly assiduity in the schools with true devotion that it was judged at once without difficulty that he would soon be one of the rarest ornaments of that so illustrious school. His quick and subtle mind, his continual application to the knowledge of truth, with the special assistance which he obtained from heaven by his prayers, made him penetrate the greatest secrets of philosophy and of theology. In short, his studies had so much success that, from a poor scholar as he was, he became a celebrated doctor and acquired an extraordinary reputation.

At the same time, that is, about the year 1085, the see of Rennes having become vacant by the decease of Méen, its twenty-second bishop, Sylvester de la Guerche, who had been chancellor to Conan II, duke of Brittany, was put in his place; there was doubtless, in this election, more regard to his birth and his credit than to his capacity for the episcopal functions. However, as he was a man of probity and fearing God, and did not wish to lose himself by neglecting the care of his flock, he applied himself above all to attracting into his diocese learned persons very versed in the Canons, to supply the capacity and experience which he lacked. He sought an ecclesiastic of great merit on whom he might discharge the ordinary cares of his bishopric. Robert was proposed to him, doctor of Paris; “he was a learned man, laborious, vigilant and of great example; besides, he was his diocesan and as it were his natural subject; there was therefore for Robert a strict obligation to serve him in ecclesiastical affairs.” No more was needed to be said to the bishop to determine him to make this choice. He wrote to Robert, by a messenger whom he sent expressly to Paris, begging him to repair as soon as possible to him, to assist him with his counsels and his lights in the conduct of the souls of which he had just been created pastor.

Robert had too much zeal and piety to refuse an employment in which, rendering to his prelate the obedience which he owed him, he could so usefully work for the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbour. He set out therefore from Paris, without delay, and went to Rennes. Sylvester, who recognized that his merit surpassed what had been told him of it and the idea which he had formed of it, made him his archpriest,

confided to him all his power and considered him as his conductor and guide in the government of his diocese. Robert, to answer this benevolence, applied himself entirely to the affairs and the necessities of the church of Rennes. He undertook to re-establish there ecclesiastical discipline: he declared war on all vices, and principally on those which caused scandal; he put peace into the families which he found in dissension; he withdrew the goods of the Church from the profane hands of laymen; he undertook to reform the clergy, in which simony and scandalous morals reigned. One would not understand the life of Robert of Arbrissel, which was entirely a combat against the abuses of his century, if one did not cast a glance at the wound which then afflicted the clergy: this wound was simony. Hence false vocations and the disorder of morals among those who had usurped the sanctuary without being called to it! Happily at that time the faith was lively; the Christian people understood that religion, good in itself, is not responsible for the scandals of some of its ministers.

Divine Providence having called Sylvester from this world, at the end of four years, the ecclesiastics, who ought to have seconded the zeal of our Saint and joined him to repress the disorders which afflicted the diocese, whether they were jealous of the high reputation which his merit had acquired him, or were irritated that he reproved them for their crimes, resolved to ruin him; and, seeing him without support, they persecuted him so strangely that, to prevent the scandal which might happen on his occasion, he was constrained to abandon Brittany and to go and exercise his zeal elsewhere. He withdrew therefore to Angers, where he taught theology for some time, with the more satisfaction as this excellent employment gave him the means of making piety flow into the hearts of his disciples. Meanwhile, he conceived unceasingly new desires to consecrate himself wholly to God, and, to do it with less hindrance, he practised austerities which might seem incredible: he ate very little and watched almost always; he wore for two entire years a cuirass of iron on his back, without taking it off. This kind of life, admirable as it was, not yet satisfying the zeal which he had to glorify Jesus Christ, he resolved to abandon the world and to withdraw into some solitude, to give himself entirely to the contemplation of heavenly things. He leaves therefore the city of Angers, with a priest whom he takes with him, as the prophet Elias associated with himself his disciple Eliseus, and goes and hides in the forest of Craon, on the confines of Brittany, Maine and Anjou.

The life which he led in this solitude is altogether admirable. He lived, the greater part of the time, only on herbs and wild roots, and never used, at his meals, either wine or meat. He would have thought himself too softly clothed if he had used a tunic of goat or lamb skins, according to the custom of solitaries; he would have only one, woven with swine’s bristle, in order to torment himself the more. When human infirmity constrained him to sleep, he lay on the hard earth, in order to make a torment of the very place of his rest. In a word, his historian says that there is no kind of penance which he did not invent to afflict his flesh. These austerities, nevertheless, however great they might be, were not comparable to the pains which he suffered interiorly: the trials by which God wished to purify him were sometimes so rude and so violent that, in the excess of his sorrow, he abandoned his heart to sobs and groans in a manner which it is not possible to represent.

The report of his sanctity having spread little by little around the forest, people ran thither from all sides to admire this new prodigy. As much rigour as he had for himself, so gentle and affable did he appear toward those who visited him. His very look inspired in libertines sentiments of penance and fear of God. When he spoke of holy things, he had a wholly heavenly eloquence, so that he ravished everyone by his discourses. Those who had heard him went back perfectly edified; and, as they published what they had seen and heard, they were the cause that others came from afar, in troops, to the Saint, to profit by his conversations. He was like the oracle of the Lord, and he so satisfied those who addressed themselves to him that one would have said his lips were the dispensers of the science of heaven. In effect, the greater part of those who had heard him renounced their past life and breathed only penance; several even, not being able to resolve to leave him, wished to be solitaries after his example. Thus the forest of Craon became in a short time all peopled with

anchorites, who, reviving the fervour of the ancient hermits of Egypt, led there an angelic life.

Among his disciples, the most considerable were Blessed Vitalis of Mortain, canon of the church of Saint-Evroult, in the diocese of Avranches, and afterwards institutor of the celebrated abbey of Savigny, in Normandy; and Blessed Raoul de la Futaie, religious of the abbey of Saint-Jouin, in the diocese of Poitiers, and, since, founder of the famous abbey of Saint-Sulpice of Rennes, in Brittany. The example of these two celebrated personages attracted so many others after them that the forest of Craon, spacious as it was, not being capable of containing these holy solitaries, Robert was constrained to disperse them in the neighbouring forests. Then, not being able any more to watch over so great a number of hermits, he divided them into three colonies: he kept one for himself, and gave the other two to Vitalis and to Raoul, whom he judged the most capable of this employment. It was a spectacle worthy of God and of the angels, to see all these solitaries dispersed in these woods, mingled among the wild beasts and lodged, some in caves, others in cabins made of bark or branches of trees, practising virtue in emulation and all aspiring to perfection.

After they had lived some years in separate cells, Robert, recognizing that several of them had an inclination for the cenobitic life, undertook to build them a kind of monastery in the forest of Craon, at the place called La Roë, and gave them the rule of Saint Augustine, which had been newly re-established in France by Blessed Ivo, bishop of Chartres: which made him call them canons regular. They lived in a fervour which surpassed, in some fashion, that of the Christians of the primitive Church; possessing neither rents nor revenues, they subsisted only on alms, and ate only roots. The Saint served, for some years, as father and abbot to these new religious, and established them so solidly in piety that it was maintained a long time in this monastery with much lustre. A holy bishop of Angers, writing to a Pope in its favour, says to him that this house was at once the poorest and the holiest of all the kingdom. The care which he took of this community did not hinder him from watching always over the anchorites, and from preaching the Gospel to those who came to him; for, as his charity was without bounds, he went indifferently where necessity called him, and he gave himself so to everyone that he seemed to be equally the father of the peoples and of the hermits.

As this holy Abbot laboured thus for the glory of his God, Urban II, formerly a religious of Cluny, whom the design of a crusade had drawn into France, finding himself at Angers, was begged to make the dedication of the church of the monastery of Saint-Nicholas, which Geoffrey Martel, count of Anjou, had caused to be built before becoming a religious. This Pope, who had heard of Robert as a prodigy and as the marvel of the province, wishing to know by himself whether his merit answered his reputation, ordered him to preach at this august ceremony, and to excite the peoples to take arms for the conquest of the Holy Land. Never did our Blessed appear on a finer occasion; the court of the Pope was full of cardinals, bishops and abbots, of princes and great lords who accompanied His Holiness for a Council which was to be held at Tours, and there was besides assembled so great a crowd at this extraordinary ceremony that one would have said all the cities of France had run thither. Yet this audience does not astonish him: he preaches with a zeal and a boldness of a prophet, and exhorts the peoples so powerfully to take the cross that the enrolments for the holy war are numerous. In a word, he fills the whole assembly with so much admiration that the Pope avowed that the Holy Ghost had spoken by his mouth, and, in proof of his esteem, he honoured him with the title of apostolic missionary, giving him power to preach the Gospel, not in a single part of the world, but on all sides and in all the extent of the earth.

The servant of God, seeing himself charged with so holy a mission, thought himself obliged to fulfil it; as his charge of abbot prevented him, he resigned it into the hands of the bishop of Angers, on whom the monastery of La Roë depended, and this with the consent of the canons, who had a mortal regret at losing so good a father. Robert, having bid them farewell, as well as the anchorites, took some disciples with him, and went from province to province announcing the Gospel. As he preached penance no less by the poverty of his garments and by the austerity of his life than by his discourses, he produced incredible fruits in all the places

where he passed: the peoples followed him in troops, admiring the words of grace which came from his mouth. The thing went even to this point, that the greater part of the men, women and children whom he had converted abandoned their country and their relatives, and went everywhere in his train. When he saw himself surrounded by this innumerable multitude of persons of one and the other sex, whom he had won to Jesus Christ, his charity which, after the example of that of the Son of God, won everyone, not permitting him to send them away, he was obliged, in order not to have them always around him, to seek for them a place of retreat where they might live in a regularity suited to their fervour.

On the confines of Anjou and Poitou, a short league from the city of Candes, so celebrated by the decease of the great Saint Martin, there are vast plains, which were then all covered with thorns and bushes, and which a little valley, watered by a stream, divided into two parts. This place is called Fontevrault. Some have believed that this name had been given it because of a notorious robber, named Evrault, who retired there, and who, having been at last won to Jesus Christ by the preachings of B. Robert, had abandoned it to him to establish there his Order. But Baudri, archbishop of Dol, in Brittany, who, being a contemporary of our Saint, could not err in a thing so common, says that from time immemorial this place was called Fontevrault. However that may be, it is this desert which our new Elias chose for himself to lodge there these troops of neophytes, and from which the religious Order which he instituted took its name, as the Orders of Cluny, of the Carthusians, of Prémontré, of Cîteaux and of Grandmont, all in France, have drawn theirs from the places of their first establishment.

The time of this foundation was toward the end of the eleventh century. Robert began by having built some cells or cabins, only to put his disciples under cover and defend them from the injuries of the air; but to avoid the scandal which might happen in this assembly of the two sexes, he judged it fitting to separate their dwellings. He put therefore the men in one canton, and the women in another more distant: for the latter, he made even a kind of enclosure, which was only of ditches or live hedges. He lodged God in the midst of these holy troops; for he had two oratories set up, one for the men, the other for the women, where each went in turn to make their prayers. The occupation of the women was to sing continually the praises of God; and that of the men, after their spiritual exercises, was to clear the land and to work with their hands at some trade for the needs of the one and the other. It was an admirable thing to see the order and the rule which were kept among so great a number of newly converted persons. Charity, silence, union, modesty and gentleness were observed there inviolably. They lived only on what the earth produced of itself, or on the alms which the neighbouring populations made them. Thus they were called nothing else than “the poor of Jesus Christ,” to be distinguished from other religious.

These examples of piety attracted into the forest an innumerable multitude of persons of all kinds of conditions, who, having heard the salutary exhortations of the Saint, were so touched by them that they no longer wished to return to the world. Whole families were seen coming, to be enrolled in this colony. He received all whom he judged to be called of God: the old, the poor and the commoners, as well as the young, the rich and the noble. The infirm, the crippled, the sick and even lepers were not sent away, and no other recommendation was needed, to be admitted there, than a true will to be converted and to give oneself to God. This concourse of persons of every age grew so much from day to day that one could not build enough cells to contain them: this is what made Robert resolve to build them divers monasteries. He built three for the women: one, to put the virgins and the widows, which was named the Grand-Moustier; another, for the lepers and the other infirm, which was called of Saint Lazarus; and the third, for sinful women, to which was given the name of Magdalen, because they were to imitate her penance. The same order was kept in proportion for the lodging of the men. This is what composed the famous house of Fontevrault, whose magnificence has been preserved to our days. The fine name which was given to the principal entrance of this house deserves to be remarked: it was called Athanasis, that is, “the gate of Eternity,” to show that the persons who retired there would have some assurance of their salvation.

Until then he had prescribed to the congregation no form of life peculiar to it; but, as charity pressed him to leave the desert to go and preach the Gospel, he wished, before departing, to declare the spirit of his institute. Here is in what it consists: the holy Patriarch, considering that there was as yet no congregation established in the Church in honour of the Virgin, had the thought of founding an Order to honour for ever her maternity, and to execute, in his person and in that of his disciples, the testament of the Son of God, by which this divine Saviour, dying on Calvary, made a mysterious alliance between His mother and Saint John, saying to the Virgin: *Woman, behold thy Son*; and to John: *Behold thy Mother*. For as, since that time, this Apostle rendered to Our Lady all the duties which the quality of Son could exact of him, and in a word regarded and revered her as his mother, so Robert, seeing himself surrounded by this multitude of men and women whom he had converted to God, wished that, in his congregation, composed of the two sexes, the one should represent the divine Mary, and fulfil the function of Mother, and the other should hold the place of John, and fulfil the function of son. And, as the mother, during the minority of her children, has the administration of their goods and an entire authority over their persons, he made his religious renounce the advantages of their sex and the disposal of their goods, which were before in common: by this means, subjecting them to the nuns, after having subjected himself first, he rendered them as the children, or rather as the wards of the Blessed Virgin. He enjoined them also to dedicate their particular chapels to Saint John the Evangelist, in order to take for patron of their churches him whom He had given them as model of their submission. As a head was needed to conduct this great troop of nuns and to watch over the affairs of the congregation, our Saint established Hersende of Champagne grand prioress of the monasteries of women. She was a near relative of the count of Anjou and widow of William, lord of Montsoreau, who held the rank of prince in the province. But, for fear that she could not attend alone to all the affairs, although she had an admirable mind, he gave her, as coadjutrix and assistant, Petronilla of Craon, widow of the lord of Chemillé, who was hardly inferior in birth or in sanctity to Hersende: she was sprung from one of the most ancient and flourishing families of Anjou, and she had so many fine qualities that she merited the esteem of everyone. Having thus discharged himself of the care of affairs on the wise conduct of these two illustrious religious, he set out to go from city to city and from parish to parish, to enlighten the peoples who were in the darkness of ignorance and error. Passing through the forest of Craon, where he had formerly tasted so many delights, he associated in his mission Vitalis, Bernard of Abbeville and Raoul, his former disciples, in order to labour together at the conquest of souls. He went into Brittany, to impart to his compatriots the graces of which he was the dispenser and the minister, and, after having traversed this province, he entered Normandy, which was then much decried because of the great crimes which were committed there. The zeal which he showed to abolish the disorders of that country acquired him such esteem that, after some persecutions which he had at first to endure, he was respected by princes, cherished by bishops, honoured by abbots and admired by all the world.

Meanwhile the enemy of our salvation, not being able to bear the progress which our holy missionary made with his disciples, raised up against him adversaries who spread divers rumours against his doctrine, his morals and his conduct. The heretic Roscelin, among others, published against him, under a borrowed name, a letter full of insults and calumnies: it is apparently that which some modern authors have too lightly attributed to Geoffrey, abbot of Vendôme; but all these calumnies, although capable of discouraging the strongest, in no way cooled his zeal. He continued always the functions of his apostolic ministry, and, as he suffered these injuries with an invincible patience, they turned to the confusion of his enemies, and served only to increase the esteem which his virtue inspired: those even who had been too credulous, having recognized the merit of Robert and the injustice of their proceeding, made themselves the protectors of the monasteries which he afterwards founded in divers places.

From Normandy, he made a round to Fontevrault, to conduct there a great troop of persons whom he had converted by his preachings, and, from there, he went to make a mission in Poitou. Peter, bishop of Poitiers, who knew the merit of the servant of God, received him with much joy; and, seeing the admirable fruits which he produced by his institute, he offered to go himself to Rome to ask its approval of the Pope: which

he happily executed. Robert, having traversed this province, that of Anjou and Touraine, establishing everywhere houses of his Order, did as much in Berry, Auvergne, Limousin, Angoumois, Périgord, Gascony and Languedoc. We do not undertake to report here, in detail, the marvels which he wrought in the course of this mission, nor the miraculous conversions which he made by the ardour of his zeal; but we cannot omit that of queen Bertrada, which happened a little after the return of our Saint to Fontevrault. This princess, whose beauty had been so fatal to France, since it had drawn on this kingdom the maledictions of heaven and the thunders of the Church, having well considered the vanities of the world and weighed, in her mind, the Christian sentiments which had been inspired in her by our learned preacher, in the visits which she had made him, resolved at last, although in the flower of her age and beauty, to leave the world and to retire into the monastery of Fontevrault, to do penance there for the sins of her past life. She came therefore to find blessed Robert, and, putting her crown at his feet, she asked him humbly a veil to hide her face, which had made so many idolaters and adulterers. In taking the religious habit, she gave to the Order a house called Haute-Bruyère, which she had eight leagues from Paris, to make a convent of it; and, for fear that the revenue which depended on it might not suffice for this design, she added to this gift what king Philip I, her husband, had assigned her in Touraine, to make part of her dower. As she could not dispose of this domain without the consent of king Louis VI, successor of Philip, she had this donation agreed to by this prince, who was delighted to contribute something to so holy a retreat of the queen, his step-mother.

The health of our Saint was much weakened by his great age, by the journeys which he had made in his missions and by the austerities which he practised continually. He fell dangerously ill in the abbey of Fontevrault; and, fearing to be surprised by death before having been able to perfect the spirit of his institute, which was, so to say, as yet only sketched, he had all his religious assembled around his bed, and said to them that, wishing to have the consolation of leaving them content in their vocation, he was glad to know from them whether they were resolved to remain in the dependence of the nuns to whom he had subjected them, in order that he might permit those who would not remain there to pass into another congregation. The religious having given him assurances and made protestations of persevering constantly in their state, he proposed to them the election of an abbess on whom they should depend particularly, and who should be as the head and general of the whole Order. This was a point of the last importance: it was a question of the repose of the Order and of the choice of a woman who should be capable of presiding over the one and the other sex: which was not easy to find. Therefore he assembled several prelates and doctors to consult them on it; in consequence of their advice, six months after, Petronilla of Chemillé, of whom we have already spoken, was elected abbess of Fontevrault, with the general consent of the nuns and of the religious: she was installed in this dignity, in spite of the reasons which her humility suggested to her to dispense herself, on 28 October of the year 1115.

Robert, having recovered health, had this election confirmed by Gerard, legate of the Holy See, who was at Angoulême; and having given, on his return, some constitutions to the new abbess, to have them kept in his Order, he went to take possession of the abbey of Haute-Bruyère, whither he had sent before queen Bertrada and some other nuns. But, having learned on the way that Bernier, abbot of Bonneval, was in dispute with Blessed Ivo, bishop of Chartres, he repaired to that city: he had so much power over the one and the other that he re-established between them a perfect friendship. This peace being concluded, he continued his journey to Haute-Bruyère; he had no sooner arrived there than word was sent him that Blessed Ivo was dead. This news surprised and afflicted him equally: although the holy bishop had formerly been somewhat contrary to him in the forest of Craon, Robert failed not to preserve for him the respect which he owed to a person of his merit; besides, this prelate had greatly changed his sentiment, as appears by the deference which he had for him in the reconciliation of which we have just spoken, and by the consent which he gave him for the establishment of the convent of Haute-Bruyère.

When Robert was ready to return to Fontevrault, after having passed the feasts of Christmas, and having put very good order into this new house, he saw himself, sick as he was, obliged to make another journey to Chartres, to appease the dispute of Thibaut, count of Champagne, with the clergy of the same city, on the election of a bishop in the place of Ivo (1116). The clergy had elected Geoffrey Deslieues, canon of the cathedral church of Chartres. But Thibaut, not agreeing to this election, although the elect was a very virtuous man and little inferior in merit and sanctity to him who had preceded him, drove out this new bishop, and treated very unworthily the canons who were of his party. Saint Bernard of Abbeville, abbot of Tiron, employed himself with much zeal to pacify these troubles; but it was without effect, although he had an eloquence capable of persuading the obstinate. This great work was reserved to Blessed Robert, to whom God had given a particular talent for reconciling minds. He charged himself therefore with speaking to the count, and he did it so happily that this prince consented to the election of Geoffrey, restored to the canons the goods which he had seized from them, and put himself again with them in perfect understanding.

This was not the only good office which the church of Chartres received from our Blessed. Simony reigned there; whatever effort blessed Ivo had made to destroy it, he had not been able to succeed. Robert undertook to make it disappear; and, after having reconciled the canons with their prince, to reconcile them with God he gave them a great horror of this sacrilege: not only did they promise him, by a solemn oath, never to fall into it again; but to prevent their successors from committing so detestable a crime, they decreed, by an inviolable statute which was long observed, that no canon should be received in future who did not make the same oath.

Since we have come to speak of the zeal which our new Elias displayed to abolish the abuses which had slipped in among Christians, we will relate here an illustrious example of it, which will also be found in the life of Blessed Bernard of Abbeville. In the year 1100, there was held a Council of a hundred and forty prelates of the kingdom, in the city of Poitiers, where the cardinals John and Benedict presided as legates of Pope Paschal II, and where it was a question of fulminating anathema against an adulterous prince and princess.[1] Robert, whose sanctity shone on all sides, received orders to come to this assembly, whether as Doctor, or as apostolic Missionary or as head of a Congregation. He was there with Bernard of Abbeville, who was then abbot of Saint-Cyprian of Poitiers. The sentence of excommunication was given by the Council; but all the prelates had not the courage to remain to publish it: laymen, doubtless at the instigation of William, count of Poitou, guilty of the same crimes as the king of France, caused a hail of stones to rain on the Fathers of the Council. Some prelates disappeared and sought their safety in retreat. But Robert and Bernard, who were accustomed to defend generously the honour of the Church, to sustain without fear the truth and to combat everywhere against impiety, were of those who remained firm in the midst of this riot, and, braving death, they read publicly the sentence of condemnation which the Council had rendered.

But let us resume the thread of our history. From Poitiers, blessed Robert, accompanied by blessed Bernard of Abbeville, went to Blois; on his arrival, he went to see William III, count of Nevers, who was there a prisoner of war. This prince had so much joy at this visit that, forgetting the tedium of his captivity, he said, in the excess of his joy, that he would willingly remain in prison the rest of his days, provided he saw often such consolers. In effect, he profited so well by this conversation that, set at liberty, he became a Carthusian in the humble condition of lay brothers, in which he died the very year of his novitiate. From Blois, Robert passed into Berry, to visit his house of Orsan. An accident happened to him on the way which, being able to serve for his glory, must not be omitted in this place. Two robbers having thrown themselves on him and on the religious who accompanied him, plundered their little baggage and vomited against them all kinds of insults. And, as his indisposition had obliged him to use a horse contrary to his custom, these inhuman men, without respecting his old age, or having regard for the relief which his infirmity deserved, threw him to the ground and treated him unworthily. But a religious of this company, having cried to these barbarians that it was Robert of Arbrissel (that great man whose reputation flew through all the world) whom they were thus maltreating, they were seized with such terror that, throwing themselves that very hour at his feet, they asked

his pardon and promised him to amend and to leave their brigandage. Robert, delighted at so fine a conversion, pardoned them heartily all the harm they had done him, and, raising them from the ground, he embraced them with a paternal tenderness and gave them the kiss of peace. Finally, by an excess of charity, as if he had been much obliged to them, he made them participants in the prayers and good works of all his congregation: which is ordinarily granted only to the founders and benefactors of monasteries; in this our Saint showed that he was the new Elias of the law of grace, whose mercy and charity far surpassed the rigorous zeal of the ancient Elias of the law of Moses.

Our traveller having got out of the hands of the robbers, or rather having changed into lambs these wolves who had wished to devour him, continued his road and arrived at last at Orsan. After having passed fifteen days there, he departed to go to the abbey of Bourgdieu, to console by his presence the religious who had asked him this grace. After having satisfied their desire, he set out again to go into the neighbouring towns and boroughs, where he was also ardently desired; but, on the very day of his departure, he fell into such a faintness that it was with much difficulty he was transported to Orsan, where he arrived on a Sunday, 18 February. As soon as he saw himself in that house, his first care was to provide himself with the last Sacraments of the Church; wherefore, the next day, after a very exact confession, he received the holy Viaticum: which did not hinder him from communicating every day, according to his custom, until the end of his life. On the Tuesday, he had himself given Extreme Unction. The following day, he was visited by the greatest lords of the country, and particularly by Leger, archbishop of Bourges. He recommended to this prelate the house of Orsan, of which he was the principal founder, and testified to him the desire which he had to be buried at Fontevrault, not in the church or in the cloister, because he believed that these places were too honourable for him, but in the mud of the cemetery, in order to rise again with the greatest part of his children, and not to be separated, even by death, from those whom he had so tenderly cherished during his life. After that, he had the crowd which pressed around his bed withdraw, in order to give himself to prayer and to raise his heart more freely to heaven. As soon as they were out of his room, he set himself to pray for the Pope, for the Doctors of the Church, for his Order, for his benefactors and for his enemies, of whom William, count of Poitou, was one of the principal; he asked with great instance of God that it might please Him to recall him to the way of salvation; which happened some time after his death, for this prince returned to his duty and received the absolution of his faults.

When the Saint had made all his prayers in the silence of the night of Thursday, he suffered a horrible temptation, raised by a troop of demons, who presented themselves to him to put him to the last trial; but he made them disappear at once, arming himself with the sign of the cross, and saying to them with a true faith: “What do you here, accursed troop; withdraw from me, I command you on behalf of God.” After this victory, he had brought back to him a relic of the true cross, which has been since carefully kept at Orsan, in order to be able to die at the foot of the cross of his Master, if he had not the happiness of dying upon it. The presence of this adorable instrument of our salvation inspired him with so great a sorrow for his sins that he made a general and public confession of those of which he had knowledge; and, although he had led a wholly holy and innocent life, he accused himself in such wise that, if he had not been well known, he would have been taken for some great sinner. In this he spoke the language of the Saints who recognize themselves as sinners, to bring true sinners to penance, and who never lose the memory of their sins, for fear of drawing vanity from the applause of men.

On the Friday, about two o’clock in the afternoon, having had his nuns and his religious called, he made them, on the spirit of their Order, a little exhortation in which he used the same words that the Saviour said on the cross, and which have served as foundation for the institute of Fontevrault; for, beginning with the abbess Petronilla, he said to her, showing his religious: “Woman, behold thy children”; and, turning to the religious, he said to them: “Children, behold your Mother.” Then, having imposed on them all a penance, he gave them his blessing. Immediately after, he rendered his spirit to God, on 25 February in the year 1116 or

1117. So that this divine man had the advantage of dying on the same day and at the same hour as the Saviour of the world, and while blessing his children: God having willed to render him conformable to His Son in the circumstances of death, as he had striven to imitate Him perfectly in those of life. This death caused a general affliction, not only in the Order of Fontevrault, but also in all France, where this prodigious man had given so many marks of his zeal and piety. There was no condition which did not testify sadness at it, because there was no one who did not lose much in losing him.

RELICS AND CULT OF BLESSED ROBERT OF ARBRISSEL His body was solemnly transported to Fontevrault, as he had desired. The archbishop of Bourges wished to render to him himself the last duties and to assist at the funeral. The archbishop of Tours, the bishop of Angers and the count of Anjou were also at this holy ceremony with several abbots and religious of the neighbouring monasteries, and a great number of priests, followed by all the nobility of the country and by an almost innumerable troop of people. All Fontevrault went to meet this celebrated convoy as far as Candes, barefoot and bareheaded, although in the midst of winter. The body having arrived, it was led as in triumph into all the churches, clothed in his priestly vestments. It was carried the first day into the choir of the great monastery, the next day into the church of Saint Lazarus, and the following day into that of the Magdalen, and in each of these monasteries a solemn service was held; then, to satisfy the devotion of the peoples, it was carried back to the great church. After having been exposed there several days to the piety of those who came to see it, it was interred by the same archbishop of Bourges, not in the cemetery as the Saint had desired, but at the right of the altar, as founder, everyone having concluded that it was more fitting to do him justice than to satisfy his humility. This prelate, passing through Orsan, rendered to the heart of the Saint, which had remained there, an honour like that which he had rendered to his body: for he had it placed also near the altar, in a pyramid of hard stone, which was erected in his honour; and this altar was afterwards in such veneration in the province that it was called nothing else than the altar of the Holy Heart, and people came there from all sides to make vows and prayers. This pyramid is no longer now entire, because, during the disorders of the war of the Calvinists, in the year 1562, a soldier of the army of the duke of Zweibrücken broke a part of it. He was even going to break it in pieces; but, by a marvellous power of God, scarcely had he struck some blows on the stone when he became blind and felt his arm immovable. For the rest, this impious man, in losing the sight of the body, happily opened that of the soul, recognized the truth of our religion and detested his errors; finally, to repair the outrage which he had done to the Saint, he made a novena on the same spot, after which he recovered the faculty of seeing which he had lost. This is what the inhabitants of Orsan cannot forget, having learned it from their fathers, who were the spectators of this marvel. Several other miraculous things were done by the merits of B. Robert, as may be seen in the authors whom we shall cite presently. There is still at Fontevrault a fountain which bears his name, and which he caused to spring from a place where no spring could be hoped; its waters continue still to work miracles. Persons worthy of credit have deposed that they remarked that a very agreeable odour sometimes exhaled from his heart. Several miraculous cures are reported made at his tomb and by his intercession: which obliged the bishop of Poitiers, in 1644, to make a juridical enquiry of it, to serve for the process of his canonization, for which the most Christian king and the queen of Eng[land]-land supplicated His Holiness to cause the work to be done.

But must one look for other miracles to prove the sanctity of Robert than the fine actions of his life? Is there anything more admirable than to see a poor man, far from his country and his friends, and supported by Providence alone, build, in the midst of a desert, great churches and fine monasteries, assemble there as many as two and three thousand persons of the one and the other sex, find them revenues sufficient to feed them, so that they had no other care than to praise unceasingly the most holy name of God, found an infinity of others in France and out of France, with so much success that they yield to none in riches or in magnificence; in a word, bring about, in a very short time, a design which kings and princes would have had difficulty to execute in a great number of years? One must not therefore be astonished if, since his decease, that is, for more than six hundred years, the title of Blessed and of Saint has been given him, and if, in this

quality, his name has been inserted in the Martyrology of his Order. We do not dwell here on the praises of this famous Institute of Fontevrault, which was the fruit of the fatigues, as well as of the prayers and tears of this holy institutor. Popes, legates, archbishops, bishops, kings and princes have given it an infinity of eulogies. The regular observance, which has always been kept there with the same fervour as it was kept at the beginning, is its continual panegyric. There are so many princesses and ladies of the first quality who have embraced it, without dispensing themselves from keeping its rules exactly, that one may say, without flattery, that it has found itself allied to all the crowns of Europe. No fewer holy girls than noble ones have been seen there, and all the houses of this congregation have been so fertile in great souls that they could furnish us long lists of them. What happiness for France that this Order, destroyed during the French Revolution, has been able to gather its remains and re-establish itself! In 1803, two Fontevrist nuns founded a boarding-school, and, in 1806, a community at Chemillé, in the Vendean bocage, the country of Petronilla, first abbess of Fontevrault: they resumed the habit of their Order in 1810. Soon there were, in this house, thirteen former Fontevrists; new religious increasing this number, a chapel was built in 1827. The precious remains of Robert of Arbrissel, which lay without honour in a corner of the ancient abbatial church of Fontevrault, were transferred to the chapel of the community of Chemillé in 1841, and received the cult which is due them. Besides this house of Chemillé (diocese of Angers), there exist two others today, all three consecrated to prayer and to the education of young girls: that of Brioude (diocese of Le Puy), and that of Boulaur (diocese of Auch).

As to the abbey of Fontevrault, marvel of Christian art, with its five churches and its three cloisters, it is today a house of detention, where two thousand prisoners occupy the remains of the vast buildings inhabited, until the last century, by the Order of Saint Robert of Arbrissel. The life of Blessed Robert was first written in Latin, at the request of Petronilla, first abbess of the whole Order, by Baudri, abbot of Bourgueil, and afterwards archbishop of Dol, in Brittany, who had been his intimate friend. Andrew, grand prior of Fontevrault, added to it what had happened most particularly during the last three years of his life. Father Sebastian Ganot, religious of the same Order, gave to the public these two works in our language, with observations which he dedicated to the queens of France and of England. Father Beurier, Celestine, speaks of him in his collection of the *Founders of Congregations*. Father Honoré Niquet, of the Society of Jesus, treated of it very amply in his *History of the Order of Fontevrault*. Finally, in 1666, Sieur Pavillon gave us his life, justified by several titles drawn from divers monasteries of France, of Spain and of England: it is a very curious work, which leaves nothing to be desired. We have principally made use of it to compose this history. Besides these authors, Father John de La Maintenue, professor of theology, of the same Order of Fontevrault, gave to the public, in the seventeenth century, two dissertations in which he shows evidently that the letter against Blessed Robert, attributed to Geoffrey of Vendôme, is not by him, but rather by the heretic Roscelin, as we have already remarked, and justifies, by invincible reasons, that it contains only calumnies and pure impostures. Everyone was already well persuaded of it, but one owes to this learned author to have so clearly proved it that no one, in the course of the ages, can any more let himself be deceived by it.

Saint Sergius, Martyr at Caesarea, in Cappadocia

At that time (304), Armenia and Cappadocia were governed by one named Saprice [Sapricius], a native of Malta. Going from Cappadocia into Armenia, he stopped at Caesarea. During his stay in that city, he had the Christians sought out and ordered all those who should be found to be brought to him. The disciples of Jesus Christ, who were few in number in the metropolis of Cappadocia, were not frightened by the menace of the atrocious torments which were being prepared for them; they were even consoled by the great number of pagans who joined them to embrace the faith; and God prepared for them in heaven crowns of justice.

In the midst of these terrors the day of the sacrifices arrived.

Now, not far from the city, there dwelt a holy monk named Sergius. He had at first exercised the magistracy under the princes of the empire; but, dreading the agitations of a sacrilegious world, he left all, distributed his goods to the poor and retired into a vast cavern at the foot of a neighbouring mountain, to follow in this destitution Jesus Christ poor. On the day of the annual feast of Jupiter, the prince of profane idols, he repaired, by an inspiration from on high, into the city and mingled with the crowd of the pagans, awaiting like them the preparations of the sacrifice.

At the moment when the priest was conjuring the great gods by certain magical words, Sergius set himself to pray to God, in his heart, to make shine forth before the eyes of this infidel people the greatness of His marvels, by paralysing the sacrilegious action of the sacrificer. And the thing happened thus: the unhappy minister of the idols could receive no answer from his gods. Exasperated, he announced that his gods were angry on account of the remnant of liberty which was left to the Christians. At these words, Sergius, transported with a holy zeal, cries out in the midst of the crowd: “Why, sacrilegious man, dost thou dare to feign the anger of thy gods? It is my Lord Jesus Christ who, hearing the prayer of me, His servant, has closed the lying mouth of thy demons; it is He who has chosen me to manifest thy error and to publish before all the people the truth of my religion.” The Flamen was stupefied at such language. The multitude seized Sergius and led him to the governor, overwhelming him with ill-treatment. The latter, after having treated as folly the admirable answers which the confessor of Jesus Christ made him, condemned him to beheading and to confiscation of his goods. The satellites at once seized his person and cut off his head. The following night the Christians gathered his body and buried it in the house of a pious matron.

In the course of time, his relics were transported into Spain, where they rest honourably near the city of Betula,[1] although today the precise place where they are is no longer known.

Thus speak the Acts of the martyrdom of Saint Sergius.

Saint Ethelbert, First Christian King of the Angles or English

Saint Ethelbert or Albert, king of Kent, ascended the throne in 560. The conquests which he made over the other kings rendered him the most powerful monarch of the Heptarchy, and he was ordinarily designated under the name of king of England. He married Bertha, only daughter of Charibert, king of Paris, and, as he was still an idolater, he obtained her only on condition that she should be free to profess Christianity as well as the bishop Letard, whom she took with her as almoner and director. Ethelbert, struck by the virtues of his spouse and the exemplary life of the holy bishop, felt his attachment to paganism diminish, and his heart was already in some manner prepared to receive the Gospel, when Saint Augustine came to preach it in his kingdom. Some time after, Ethelbert betook himself in person to Thanet and gave his audience in the open air. The missionaries having come near him set forth the aim of their coming and the advantages which would result from it for him and for his subjects. Ethelbert, after having listened to them with much attention, answered them: “Your words are fair and your promises magnificent. Never has anything like them been made to me, but they appear to me a little uncertain. However, since you have come from so far for the love of me, I will not suffer you to be molested, and I authorize you to preach in my States.” He assigned them whereof to subsist, and wished them to fix their residence at Canterbury, his capital. A short time after, he opened his eyes to the light and renounced publicly the worship of idols. The zeal and piety of Bertha seconded the instructions of Augustine, and contributed not a little to the conversion of her husband, which was soon followed by that of a great part of the nation. The king of Kent, become a Christian, appeared a wholly new man, and the twenty years which he lived after his baptism were entirely consecrated to extending religion and converting his subjects. He abolished the worship of idols, had their temples overthrown or preserved them to the true God. That which was at Canterbury was converted into a church which became later a cathedral. He founded also, outside the walls of the city, the monastery of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, which afterwards took the name of Saint Augustine. He had also built several churches,

among others that of Saint Andrew, that of Rochester and that of Saint Paul of London. A missionary in his turn, he laboured for the conversion of the neighbouring princes and won to Jesus Christ Sebert, king of the East Saxons, and Redwald, king of the East Angles; but the latter returned later to paganism.

Saint Gregory the Great sent him (600) several presents with a letter in which he congratulates him on his zeal for religion; he gives him excellent advice with regard to his salvation. Ethelbert had had at first rude combats to sustain against his passions, against the world and against the spirit of darkness; but he always came out of them victorious by employing the arms which the Gospel furnishes, that is, prayer, humility and mortification. Beneficence was also one of his principal virtues, and his subjects, above all those who were in need or in misfortune, felt its happy effects. He governed them as a father rather than as a master, and made peace, justice and piety reign in his States. He made laws so wise that they were still observed in England several centuries after his death, which happened in the year 616, at an advanced age, since he had been king of Kent for fifty-six years. He was buried in the church of the monastery of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and some time after his body was raised from the earth and placed under the high altar. He was patron of the church of Norwich and of several other churches of England, under the name of Saint Albert. A lamp was always kept lighted before his tomb, where miracles were wrought until the time of Henry VIII.

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[1] Their acts are found in the collection of Dom Ruinart and in the *Acts of the Martyrs*, translated and published in our days by the Benedictines of France.

[2] See 14 April.

[3] Modestus governed the church of Trier, after Miletus, in very difficult times. He ceased not to recall his peoples to better sentiments in order to make them accept, with submission, the trials which God sent them. After his death, the unanimous suffrage of the peoples ranked him among the holy bishops of Trier. He was buried in the church of Saint Matthew, and his head is kept in great veneration in the treasury of that same church. (*Proper of Trier*.)

[4] See 29 August.

[5] Saint Letard or Liotard, Lieutard, Lethard, Lothaire, Lothier. — He was buried under the porch of the ancient church of Saint Martin, at Canterbury, where he celebrated the divine mysteries for queen Bertha. He was formerly honoured in that city. His relics were kept there in the abbatial church of Saint Augustine, and they were carried in the procession of the Rogations. He was invoked above all in times of drought, and the effects of his intercession were often experienced. (See the life of Saint Ethelbert on this day.)

[6] Acts i.

[7] Philip I, king of France, who, after having repudiated queen Bertha, married Bertrada, already married to the count of Anjou. The conversion of this princess has been related above.

[8] Betula, Betulon or Bethulo, a city near which Scipio beat Massinissa. It is thought to be today the village of Úbeda la Vieja, in Andalusia.

25 February

Martyrologies

Twenty-fifth day of February.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

In Egypt, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Victorinus, Victor, Nicephorus, Claudian, Dioscorus, Serapion and Papias, under the emperor Numerian. The first two, having endured with constancy horrible torments for the defence of the faith, had their heads cut off; Nicephorus, after the gridiron and fire, was hacked in pieces; Claudian and Dioscorus were consumed by the flames; Serapion and Papias died by the edge of the sword. 3rd c. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Donatus, Justus, Herenas and their companions. — At Rome, the birthday of Saint Felix III, pope, who was the great-grandfather of Saint Gregory the Great; the latter relates of him that he appeared to Saint Tarsilla, his niece, and that he called her to the heavenly kingdom. 492. — At Constantinople, Saint Tarasius, bishop, remarkable for his learning and piety. There is still a letter which Pope Adrian I wrote him for the defence of the holy images. 806. — At Nazianzus, Saint

Caesarius, brother of Saint Gregory the Theologian, whom the same Gregory assures us he saw among the Blessed. 369.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Saintes, Saint Concordius, tenth known bishop of that city. About 510. — At Maubeuge, Saint ADELTRUDE or Aueltrude, virgin and abbess, who succeeded Saint Aldegund, her aunt, in the government of that house. 696. — At the monastery of Heidenheim, on the frontiers of Franconia and Bavaria, diocese of Eichstätt, the decease of Saint Walburga, English virgin, daughter of Saint Richard of Lucca, and sister of Saint Willibald and Saint Winnibald, first abbess of that place. Her relics have enriched a great number of churches of France and of the Low Countries, several of which bear the name of this Saint, among others that of Furnes, in Belgium, where is the principal part of her bones.[1] About 780. — At Girgenti, in Sicily, Saint Gerland, bishop, born in France, in the city of Besançon, whose relics, which are in his cathedral of Girgenti, have caused its former name of Saint James to be changed into that of Saint Gerland. 1101. — In Limousin, Saint Avertanus, confessor, of the Order of the Carmelites, born in France, whose body rests at Lucca, in Tuscany. 14th c.. — In Alsace, Saint Leobard, founder of Marmoutier, already mentioned on 18 January.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Constantinople, Saint Tarasius, bishop, of the Order of Saint Basil, etc., as in the Roman.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Rome, the birthday of Saint Felix III, pope, who was a regular cleric of the church of the Lateran, and great-grandfather of Saint Gregory the Great; the latter relates of him that he appeared to Saint Tarsilla, his niece, and called her to the heavenly kingdom.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict; of the Camaldolese. — In Italy only, Saint Margaret of Cortona, of whom mention is made on 22 February.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Ignatius, bishop and martyr, of whom mention is made on 1 February.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — Saint Polycarp, bishop and martyr, whose entry into heaven is honoured on 26 January.

Martyrology of the Discalced Trinitarians. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, whose memory is honoured on 22 February.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — At Angelopolis (Puebla), in the West Indies (America), Blessed Sebastian, surnamed d'Apparitio, of the Order of Minors, remarkable by the innocence of his morals, by his patience, his contemplation, his charity as well toward God as toward his neighbour, and by other heavenly gifts, who died in that city, glorious by his miracles and almost a centenarian. He was solemnly inscribed among the Blessed by the sovereign pontiff Pius VI. 1600.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — Saint Peter Damian, cardinal-bishop of Ostia and doctor of the Church, whose birth into heaven is honoured on 23 February.

Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites. — At Lucca, in Tuscany, Blessed Avertanus, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites, illustrious by the sanctity of his life, whose body, on account of several miracles due to his intercession, was buried with great solemnity.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — At Certaldo, a town of Tuscany, Blessed Julia, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Augustine, who, illustrious by the nobility of her race, but still more by her virtue of humility and her contempt of human things, went to her heavenly Spouse on 9 January.

Martyrology of the Order of Servites. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, whose memory is honoured on 22 February.

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Faenza, Saint Peter Damian, cardinal and bishop of Ostia, celebrated for his doctrine and his sanctity, whose memory is honoured today in our Order.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — Blessed Constant of Fabriano, of the Order of Friars Preachers, very illustrious by the austerity of his life, by the gift of continual prayer, whose body is religiously kept at Ascoli, and the head at Fabriano.[2]

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

Among the Greeks, Saint Anthony, martyr, who perished in the flames. — In Phoenicia, the saints Ananias, priest, Peter, doorkeeper, and seven soldiers, martyrs, in the persecution of Diocletian. — At Scopelos, in Greece, Saint Reginus, bishop and martyr. He assisted at the council of Sardica in 347. He was put to death by the order of Constantius, Arian emperor. About the year 355. — Among the Greeks, Saint Theodore Salus [the Fool], who, through humility, feigned folly and died in peace. — At Puebla, in Mexico, Blessed Sebastian of Apparitio, contractor of public works. Rich, he employed all his goods in good works. 1600. — At Lucca, in Italy, Blessed Romaeus, inseparable companion of Saint Avertanus, named in the martyrology of France. — In Berry, Blessed Robert of Arbrissel.[3] — At Diospolis, in Egypt, the holy martyrs Victoria, Victor, Nicephorus, Claudian, Diodorus, Serapion and Papias. The first three were crushed in a mortar; Claudian was cut in pieces before expiring; Diodorus perished in the flames, Serapion had his head cut off and Papias was drowned.[4] 284.

Saint Felix III, Pope

483–492. — Emperor of the East: Zeno; Kings of Italy: Odoacer and Theodoric.

The cross assures victory!

Saint Felix belonged to the Anician family, the most powerful, the richest and the noblest of Rome. His father had been married before being a priest. But, in engaging himself in the bonds of the priesthood, he had, according to the canonical rules, renounced those of marriage. Felix himself had been married before entering Orders and becoming Pope. Saint Gregory the Great, who was of the same patrician family of the Anicii, recalls this fact in these terms in a homily pronounced before the Roman people in the basilica of Saint Clement:

“My father had three sisters, Tharsilla, Gordiana and Amiliana, who, smitten with the same ardour of perfection, consecrated themselves on the same day to the Lord, took the veil of virgins and lived together in their house, observing the monastic rules. My aunt Tharsilla was distinguished by her assiduity in prayer, her mortifications, her abstinence and the edification of a life consummated in God. One night, in a vision, my great-great-grandfather the pontiff Felix who preceded me in this see of Rome appeared to her, and uncovering to her eyes the magnificent splendours of the kingdom of the heavens, said to her: My daughter, the hour is come when I must introduce thee into this abode of eternal glory. Some time after, Tharsilla was seized with a sudden illness, and soon it was understood that she was going to die. According to the custom in noble families, a considerable crowd filled the dwelling to assist the sick woman and console her relatives. My mother was at the bedside of the dying woman. She saw her suddenly raise her eyes to heaven, as in an ecstasy; then, turning toward those present, she said: Withdraw, withdraw, Jesus comes to me! At these words, this holy soul disengaged itself from the bonds of the body; a heavenly perfume spread through the apartment, as if the author of all sweetness who had just appeared to His humble servant had wished to leave to all this mark of His presence.”

Felix succeeded Simplicius and was elected on 8 March of the year 483, by the senate, the clergy and the people assembled in the basilica of Saint Peter. During the interregnum, which was of six days, according to some, of twenty-six days, according to others, Odoacer, in his quality of king of Italy, intrigued to direct the

affairs of the assembly and to arrogate to himself the right of confirming the election. The memorial which contained these pretensions was condemned twenty years later as impious and sacrilegious by a council of Rome: all ecclesiastical antiquity ratified this condemnation; as to the manoeuvres of Odoacer, they failed completely.

The beginning of the pontificate of Saint Felix coincided with the news brought to Rome of the re-establishment of the heretic Peter Mongus[1] on the episcopal see of Alexandria, by the influence of Acacius, archbishop of Constantinople. The venerable Felix cited Acacius to his tribunal and deposed Peter Mongus. He sent to Constantinople the two bishops Misenus and Vitalis, charging them to notify the sentence. But these legates were circumvented by the intrigues of the two schismatic prelates. They let themselves be corrupted, for a sum of money, and did not execute the orders of the Holy See. On their return to Italy, Felix assembled a synod where they were convicted of simony and excommunicated. After the deposition of the legates, the Fathers of the council pronounced anew the solemn deposition of Peter Mongus. The Pope did not wish yet to be severe against Acacius, whose bad faith the last events had made known to him. However, as he did not deign even to answer the paternal letters of the sovereign Pontiff and as he continued to remain in communion with Peter Mongus, Felix was obliged to rank him among the heretics and to separate him from Catholic communion. To carry this decree to Constantinople, the Pope made choice of the priest Tutus [Tutus]. He gave him besides two letters, one for the emperor Zeno, the other for the clergy and the people of Constantinople: this last was destined to repair the scandal publicly given by his preceding legates. Acacius refused obstinately to receive the decree of the Pope: that he might not be able to pretext ignorance of a sentence which excommunicated him, a monk of the convent where the legate had found a refuge was bold enough to fasten the decree to his pontifical cloak, one Sunday when he was entering the basilica to celebrate there. This act of courage drew the vengeance of Acacius on all the monks of Constantinople: a certain number of them were slaughtered by his henchmen. It is thus that Acacius had the sad honour of beginning the separation between Rome and Constantinople. This first schism lasted thirty-five years (484–519). Who could tell all the violences, all the persecutions, all the cruelties of the triumphant Eutychians against the Catholics? Three intruders, three apostates occupied the three great sees of the East: Peter the Fuller at Antioch, Peter Mongus at Alexandria, Acacius at Constantinople: all-powerful at the court of Zeno and united in their revolt against the Holy See, they must have believed they had triumphed and regarded Eutychianism as implanted for ever in the East. But God was about to confound their proud thoughts. Peter the Fuller died first in 488; Acacius followed him to the tomb some months after: he expired laden with the malediction of God and of men. As to Zeno, who had not had the courage to show himself what he was at bottom, a truly Catholic prince, he was buried alive by his own wife: he died in his tomb of hunger and rage. Felix was not content to give tender and benevolent cares to the interests of the Church of the East; he turned with compassion toward that unhappy Church of Africa trampled under foot by the Vandals. He wrote to the emperor that he might intervene with Huneric, their king, and engage him to cease his cruelties toward the Catholics. The persecuting king lived but a few years, and Gundamund, his successor, gave peace to the Church. Those who had fallen during the persecution asked to be restored to grace: Felix regulated the conditions of their penance and re-established the ancient Canons. In the political domain, the pontificate of Saint Felix III was marked by the invasion of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, into Italy, and the expulsion of Odoacer, king of the Heruli. The inhabitants of the provinces and of the cities, horribly oppressed by the barbarians, had no other resources than the charity of the bishops. The Church did not fail in her mission. Saint Felix died during this struggle which brought an Arian domination into Italy (492). Of an energetic, prudent and moderate character, he knew, in the midst of the difficulties of the East agitated by heresy, and of the West torn by bloody wars, how to maintain the authority of the Apostolic See, and to make it respected in spite of intrigues, in spite of defections. The talent, the capacity, the virtue which he displayed on the throne, won him the honours of canonization. He was buried in the basilica of blessed Paul, apostle.

ACTS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION He established that churches should be consecrated by bishops only. He forbade the rebaptizing of those who had been baptized once. He built the basilica of Saint Agapitus, near that of Saint Lawrence. He was the first to give to the emperors the name of Son. He was the first also to use as a date the indiction, that is, a manner of counting by periods of fifteen years, from the year 312 of Jesus Christ, epoch of the conversion of Constantine. Under his pontificate and in the third year of his reign [that of Zeno], Saint Barnabas, apostle, appeared to Anthemius, bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, holding in his hand the Gospel of Saint Matthew; this revelation was renewed three times and the body of Saint Barnabas was found with a copy of this Gospel. It is also under his pontificate that the inhabitants of Noricum, fleeing their country, brought into Italy the relics of the great Saint Severinus.

Chantrel, Artaud, Darras, etc.

Saint Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople

730–806. — Popes: Zachary; Leo III. — Emperors: Constantine IV (Copronymus); Nicephorus I.

To live holily is to do good and to suffer evil. — Fr. Jerome Savonarola, Sermon of 8 May 1496.

Paul III, patriarch of Constantinople, subscribed, through weakness, to the condemnation of the holy images, although in his soul he knew the truth very well; touched with a great repentance by the apprehension of death, with which he was threatened in a great illness, he secretly quitted the patriarchal throne which he had occupied for four years, and retired into the monastery of Florus, where he took the religious habit. This change surprised extraordinarily the emperor Constantine and the empress Irene, his mother, who went in person to visit him and to inquire from himself the causes of his retreat. They found him sick unto death, and he declared, in presence of Their Majesties, that he had been brought to it by a motive of conscience and to save himself, since, by his fall, he had become useless to the Church and could not remain pastor of a flock which he had made fall into heresy: “I prefer,” he added, “to shut myself in a sepulchre, than to be struck with anathema by the Holy See of Rome, not being able, in this state, to expect any other lot at the judgment of God than to be cast into the exterior darkness prepared for the demon and his angels.” Then he begged them to give his see to an orthodox bishop whom he named to them: it was Tarasius, their secretary of state, whom his virtues had raised to the dignity of consul. His father was called George, and had exercised with honour the charge of prefect of the city, and his mother Eucratia, sprung, like him, from patrician race. Some time after, Paul died and was regretted by everyone, on account of his charity and his illustrious penance.

Tarasius found himself much surprised at this choice: first, because he was not a cleric, then, because he saw the Church divided into divers factions on the subject of the holy images, the Orientals refusing to honour them: wherefore he refused at first to acquiesce in this election, alleging his insufficiency, and, if he consented at last, it was on condition that the emperor should assemble an oecumenical Council, to condemn the heresy of the iconoclasts and to lift the anathema which weighed on the Church of Constantinople; the promise of it was made him. After the reception of holy Orders he let himself be consecrated bishop of this patriarchal see, on 25 December 784. This election of a layman to the episcopate was made only by dispensation from ecclesiastical discipline, in the hope of a greater good; thus it brought all possible advantage to the Church, as we shall see in the sequel. The following year, the emperor Constantine and Irene, his mother, wrote to Pope Adrian, touching this election of Tarasius; these letters are found in Anastasius the Librarian, in the preamble of the second council of Nicaea; they begged the Holy Father to come to Constantinople to preside there at the council as first and sovereign Pastor, in the place of Saint Peter, or to send there someone who might preside in his name; and Tarasius wrote on his side, for this same design, to the three other patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.

Far from believing himself dispensed, by his dignity of patriarch, from practising religious virtues, he gave himself more than ever to prayer, humility and contempt of himself. He treated the poor magnificently and

served them himself an excellent food, although for himself he used an extreme frugality and was content with very little, as well for his food as for his clothing and for his bed, and he did not permit even his domestics to serve him. He had no less care to make modesty reign among the clerics; for, in place of the golden girdles and silken garments which they were accustomed to wear, he gave them girdles woven of goat's hair and garments of plain stuff, without any ornament. He himself catechized his people, particularly the soldiers, the greater part of whom were infected with the heresy of the Iconoclasts, and, in order to have helpers and coadjutors in so worthy a ministry, he had built a monastery on the left side of the Bosphorus of Thrace, where he put a good number of learned religious that they might serve him to support and sustain the Catholic faith. In the month of October of the same year, the Pope made his answer to the emperors; after having proved the veneration of images, he reproves them for having given the title of *universal* to the Patriarch of Constantinople; and, as for Tarasius in particular, he blames his promotion and his consecration, and promises nevertheless to ratify them, if he brings it about with the emperor that the honour of the holy images be re-established. This was to enter into the sentiments of our Saint, whose heart was inflamed with ardour for the Christian faith. On 7 August of the year 786, the oecumenical council was assembled in this capital of the empire, in the church of the holy Apostles, for the subject we have just said; but all was troubled and broken up there by the arms of the Iconoclasts, who were excited by the bishops of their party. Wherefore the emperors, using prudence, put it off to another time, and sent the bishops back to their sees. As for the legate of the sovereign Pontiff and those of the Eastern Patriarchs, the empress Irene kept them near her, and made them remain there until the following year; the council was transferred to the city of Nicaea, in Bithynia, where Saint Tarasius held the first rank after the legates of the Pope; it was at last concluded and decided, with the unanimous consent of all the Fathers assembled, who were no fewer than three hundred and fifty, that the cult of the holy images of Our Lord, of His divine Mother and of the Saints was a thing very pious, and that all those who should maintain the contrary should be struck with anathema.[1]

The council being finished, the holy Patriarch took again the road to his church, where all his cares were to bring back to the sheepfold of Jesus Christ the sheep who had strayed from it: he did it with a surprising gentleness, not depriving of their rank or of their benefices the clerics who had been ordained by the heretics, but requiring only of them that, in embracing the true faith, they should subscribe to the holy council of Nicaea. Nevertheless, this conduct was not taken in good part by the very persons who led a religious life, particularly by Sabas. This excellent personage, not being able to relish this manner of proceeding of Tarasius, which he judged too soft and even suspected of simony, withdrew from his communion; but the holy Patriarch cleared himself of this suspicion, by employing himself besides with all his power to extirpate this plague from the Eastern Church, for, for that purpose, he made an express ordinance: "That the promotions of priests and other ecclesiastics should be made without any payment." This same gentleness of the holy Patriarch appeared no less on the occasion which we are going to say. A magistrate was accused, before the emperor, of having stolen his finances. Extremely afflicted, and not knowing what to do, he fled into the church, as into a place of asylum: archers pursued him, and, not daring to violate the immunity of the Temples, they pressed him so closely that he could not go out for any necessity whatever. What did our holy Patriarch do? He had so much goodness that he took himself the care to bring food to this prisoner; more, when he was constrained to go out of that place, the Saint always accompanied him, in order to serve him as a sure protection. And as at last the guards, wearied with so long a wait, insolently snatched this sheep from the arms of his pastor, he excommunicated them, and did so much that his innocence was recognized, and that he was sent back free. Our Patriarch showed also his zeal for the house of God on another occasion.

The emperor Constantine, son of Irene, repudiated his lawful wife called Mary of Armenia, of low birth, indeed, but who was nevertheless esteemed for the sanctity of one of her uncles named Philaret, called the Merciful; and, in her place, he married a servant called Theodote, whom he had crowned empress. Having been unable to obtain the consent of the holy Prelate for this pretended marriage, he had it blessed by a priest named Joseph, steward of the church of Constantinople. Tarasius found himself much perplexed upon this,

justly fearing that, if he declared the emperor excommunicated, he would renew the war which his predecessors had made on the holy images; however, not being able to approve this illegitimate marriage, he reproved him for it severely, and threatened him even with anathema in case he persisted in his crime. Constantine, offended at it, carried his resentment to the point of having Tarasius arrested, whom he shut up closely, without permitting any of his people to approach him, under pain of the whip and banishment. The Saint suffered this persecution with an invincible constancy and without relaxing anything of his zeal, until at last, God Himself doing justice on sinners, permitted, by an equitable judgment, that Constantine should lose at once sight, life and empire, by the plots and intrigues of his mother Irene. Then Saint Tarasius drove from the Church that cowardly priest who had blessed the illegitimate nuptials of the emperor with Theodote, and, by this means, he was reconciled with the abbots Plato and Theodore, called the Studite, who had been offended that he had not fulminated anathema against the adulterer. For God, as we have said, having punished the guilty, discord ceased between these Saints, of whom the one is truly praiseworthy in his prudence, since it is sometimes good not to carry things to extremity; as it is also besides very useful to hold firm for the severity of justice: two conducts which tend to one and the same end, the glory of God. At last, the holy Patriarch, after having governed the church of Constantinople for twenty-two years with a singular purity of life and a constant confession of the Catholic faith, making great alms, and practising all the virtues required of a good pastor, fell into a great and painful illness, which made him judge that his end was near. He prepared himself for death by an inviolable fidelity to his pious exercises; his ardent love made him celebrate each day the most holy sacrifice of the Mass, according to his custom; and, as he had much difficulty in doing it, on account of his weakness, he had a wooden table placed before the altar, on which he leaned and supported his chest, to finish these august mysteries.

Some time before giving up his soul, he was tormented by the sight of demons, who reproached him with several crimes, of which they strove to convict him; but he, without being frightened, spoke to them with assurance, and convicted themselves of a thousand impostures: which was heard by those present, as the religious Ignatius, author of his life, reports. He adds besides that the Saint, no longer able to help himself with his tongue, drove away these spectres with his hand, as if he had fought against them, until his senses began to fail; and when in the church they sang at Vespers this verse: “Incline, O Lord, and hear my prayer,” he quitted this mortal life, to pass to a happier life, on 23 February, in the year 806. The regret for his death was general, and the emperor himself, who was then Nicephorus I, went to visit the holy body, threw himself upon it, covered it with his own robe, and, with plaints mingled with cries, called him his father, his pastor, his divine master, his aid in the conduct of the empire, the invincible defender of his armies and the conqueror of his enemies. He was carried with pomp into the church of the monastery of the holy Martyrs which he had built on the Bosphorus. God has shown, by several miracles, how favourable this holy Patriarch is to Catholics and terrible to heretics, even since his decease. Leo V, emperor of the East, called the Armenian and the Isaurian, having renewed the persecution against the holy images, was killed by Michael, surnamed the Stammerer, who seized the empire, according to the threats which the same Saint Tarasius had made him of it, appearing to him in his sleep. The life of Saint Tarasius was written very amply by Ignatius, religious of the monastery of the Bosphorus, eyewitness of his finest actions; Surius has faithfully reported it in his first volume. Cardinal Baronius makes memorial of him in his *Annals* and in his *Remarks on the Roman Martyrology*; it is from there that we have drawn what we have written of him.

Saint Gerland, Bishop of Girgenti

1101. — Popes: Urban II; Paschal II. — Sovereign of Sicily: Roger I, son of Robert Guiscard.

Ut moriens viveret vixit ut moriturus. — That in dying he might live, he lived as one about to die. — Epitaph of Cardinal Valentini at Santa Sabina in Rome.

Gerland belonged by his family to the nation of the Allobroges. He was born at Besançon at the beginning of the eleventh century, of parents distinguished by their fortune and their piety. While he lived tranquil under the paternal roof, two Norman princes to whom he was united by the bonds of blood, Robert Guiscard and Roger, embarked on a distant and perilous expedition: it was nothing less than a question of freeing Sicily from the yoke of the Arabs, who had made themselves masters of it in 828. This enterprise succeeded; little by little the two young conquerors had gained ground, and, from the year 1086, the Catholic worship began to flourish again in that unhappy country. It was then that Robert and Roger called our Saint to them; he might be of great use to them, whether on account of his eminent virtues, or by his talents. Gerland had a noble heart, large views, an admirable integrity of morals, an easy and strong speech. He had, besides, just been honoured with the priesthood, a circumstance which could only enlarge the circle of his influence and action. Immediately after his arrival in Sicily, count Robert attached him to the cathedral of Catania, in the quality of chaplain; a little later, he was primicerius of the chapter; finally, on the invitation which was made him by the first pastor, he left this new post to become precentor of the cathedral of Mileto. Our Saint did not remain long in that city; the frightful dissolution which reigned there inspired him with so profound a disgust for the world that he hastened to return to Burgundy, with the resolution of living in solitude. God, who had particular views on His servant, did not permit him to execute his design. Recalled to Sicily by count Roger, who made him great entreaties, he thought he ought to overcome his repugnances and put to sea again.

The sovereign Pontiff had then to provide a bishop for the church of Agrigento; Gerland was consecrated and sent immediately into that part of the vineyard of the Lord. This happened toward the end of the year 1088. One imagines without difficulty what there was to do in a diocese where barbarous oppressors, who were at the same time the sworn enemies of Christ, had sojourned for nearly three hundred years. The first care of the new bishop was to re-establish the ancient cathedral, which Libertinus, one of his predecessors, had caused to be built, and of which there remained only ruins. But as Sicily was not yet entirely delivered from the presence of the Saracens, Gerland took the precaution of transporting this church to the highest part of the town, beside a fortified castle, that it might henceforth be sheltered from their devastations. This important work, as well as the construction of the episcopal palace, occupied him no less than six years. Persuaded that he could not work effectively for the spiritual good of his diocese until he had cleared away all material embarrassments, Saint Gerland testified to Roger, about the same time, the desire to know in a certain manner the limits of his jurisdiction. The count, feeling himself of what importance it was to prevent conflicts, in the new circumscription with which he was occupied in the quality of legate, hastened to respond to his wish and had a diploma in due form delivered to him.

No more was needed to tranquillize our Saint; nevertheless, some years later, the Pope wrote to him again on this subject. His letter, dated the 6th of the ides of October 1099, is less an act of pontifical authority than a confidence and a testimony of esteem addressed to the bishop of Agrigento.

In the midst of all the solicitudes which the temporal administration of his diocese gave him, our Saint practised the zeal and charity of the good Pastor. Not content with announcing the word of God to those who had the right to receive it from him, he sought out everywhere the Saracens and the Jews, led them to private conversations, baptized them himself when he had converted them. His successes, whether in pastoral instructions or in conferences with infidels, were truly marvellous. Persuaded that the bishop, “placed like a sentinel on the walls of Jerusalem,”[1] has need to have eyes everywhere, he exercised over his flock a continual vigilance. Gerland knew also that the Apostle recommends to the bishop to be “the model of others in conversation, in manner of acting with the neighbour, in chastity and in faith”;[2] he had meditated this advice and practised it to the letter. But what seemed to lie at his heart more than all the rest was the duty of charity; one may say that he lavished alms rather than made them, and that his title of bishop was in a manner effaced before the touching title of foster-father of orphans and widows.

It was in the midst of these works and in the practice of all these virtues that our Saint died. He had governed the church of Agrigento eleven years when he was called to Rome, apparently by the illness of Urban II. After having assisted at the last moments of this great Pope, for whom he had a filial veneration, he hastened to regain Sicily. Passing through Balnearia, today Bagnara, a town of Calabria, he wished to visit the bishop of that diocese, called Dragon. This prelate received him with honour; he conceived even at first the hope of keeping him some days; but our Saint was in haste to see his flock again: he set out again almost at once, and said, on departing, to the bishop of Balnearia, to be so good as to pray for the soul of Gerland, when he should learn of his death. This word was a prophecy; on 25 February of the following year, Saint Gerland was to receive in heaven the reward promised to the faithful servant. A sweet odour which spread at once in the episcopal palace testified that his death had been precious in the eyes of God; the funeral honours which the bishops and priests of Sicily came in crowds to render him were in a manner the first-fruits of the cult which the Church has accorded him later. His body was deposited in the choir of the cathedral of Agrigento, and, some years after, this cathedral was placed under the invocation of Saint Gerland. Gerland is mentioned as a Saint, under the double title of bishop and confessor, in several martyrologies. We shall cite in particular those of Caietanus (*Lives of the Sicilian Saints*, Palermo, 1657) and of Molanus. The miracles which were wrought on his tomb augmented the devotion of the faithful toward him. A chapel was dedicated to him in the very church which he had built, and, each year, two days were consecrated especially to honour his memory: one, 25

February, which is that of his blessed death; on that day, his arm enclosed in a silver shrine and his pastoral staff were exposed; the other, 20 March: it recalled the solemn translation of his relics, which took place in the latter half of the eleventh century. Even today, particles of the body of Saint Gerland are venerated at Palermo, and the Sicilians have not ceased to give him marks of their confidence and love. In France, the Breviary of Besançon gives his office under the rite of semi-double. His name is found in the litanies of the diocese of Besançon.

Saint Caesarius, Physician

Saint Caesarius, brother of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus and of Saint Gorgonia, born about the year 320, went to study in the celebrated school of Alexandria, and applied himself with success to eloquence, philosophy, and above all to medicine, for which he had a remarkable taste and aptitude. Very young still, he already eclipsed the most famous physicians of his century. Before returning to his country, he wished to make some stay at Constantinople, in order to perfect himself more and more in the profession which he had chosen. His merit and fine qualities won him public esteem and consideration, to the point that the emperor Constantius caused to be offered him, if he would settle in the capital, an illustrious alliance, moreover the dignity of senator, and the title of his chief physician; but the desire to return to his country, joined to the entreaties of his brother Gregory, who had come to meet him as far as Constantinople, made him refuse these magnificent offers. He returned therefore to Nazianzus, and consecrated to the relief of his compatriots the first-fruits of his art. Afterwards, he formed the project of returning to Constantinople, but Saint Gregory, his father, Saint Nonna, his mother, and his brother tried to turn him from it, for fear that the air of the court might be prejudicial to his salvation. Caesarius did not think their apprehensions well founded, and repaired to the capital, where he acquired in a short time the most brilliant reputation. Julian the Apostate, who esteemed him singularly, made him his chief physician, and always excepted him in the edicts which he issued against the Christians. He would have been glad to win to his cause a man of such rare merit, and to tear him from Christianity; but Caesarius was unshakable in his attachment to the faith, he generously repelled the attempts at apostasy and the seductive caresses of the emperor. Meanwhile, the Christians of Nazianzus murmured at seeing the son of their bishop in a court full of idols and in the train of an apostate emperor. The father had so much grief at it that life seemed to him insupportable. As to the mother, all was carefully hidden from her, for fear she might be overwhelmed by it. Gregory wrote of it to his brother a touching letter to urge him to

return: following this letter, he left the court, where he did not reappear until under Jovian and Valens, who both honoured him with their confidence. The latter created him treasurer of his domain, then intendant of Bithynia. Saint Gregory, his brother, and Saint Basil, his friend, wrote to him often to engage him to quit the world, in order to live only for God. Caesarius received these counsels very well, but he did not hasten to put them into execution. Providence made use, to break the bonds which held him in the world, of the earthquake which happened, in 368, at Nicaea where he resided, and from which he escaped only by a kind of miracle, having been buried under ruins, from which he was drawn slightly wounded. Saint Gregory and Saint Basil profited by this occasion to renew their entreaties. The latter wrote him a very pressing letter, in which he tells him that he is obliged, more than any other, to give himself entirely to God, since He had just drawn him from death. Caesarius yielded at last, and prepared himself to receive the sacrament of regeneration, which he had not yet received, although he had already merited the glorious title of confessor of the faith. He wrote to his brother that he was going to quit the service of the king of the earth to serve solely the king of heaven; but the Lord contented Himself with his pious resolution and did not leave him time to execute it, having called him to Himself at the beginning of the year 369.

Saint Gregory pronounced his funeral oration, and in the detail which he gives of his virtues, he remarks that in the midst of honours he always regarded the advantage of being a Christian as the first of dignities and the most glorious of all titles. He dwells also on his disinterestedness and generosity. Not only did he relieve the poor, but he showed himself liberal toward everyone. The goodness of his heart and his obliging manners made him friends of all who knew him. He exercised his profession without any view of gain, even toward the rich. He was the father of the poor, and besides the gratuitous cares which he devoted to them in their maladies, he distributed to them still the greatest part of his revenues, and instituted them his heirs some time before his death.

Hagiographical Dictionary of Migne and Rohrbacher.

Saint Leobard or Leuvart, Abbot, Founder of the Abbey of Marmoutier, in Alsace

(618).

Nothing proves better how flourishing religion was in Alsace during the seventh and eighth centuries than the establishment of the numerous religious houses which were founded at that period in that province. Several pious solitaries, who had hastened from foreign countries, settled at the foot of the Vosges, in uncultivated valleys, covered with thick woods and stagnant waters, and bristling with rocks. The religious cleared the lands, drained the marshes, transformed into fertile gardens those fields struck until then with an eternal sterility, and thereby they favoured the progress of agriculture and of population. It is thus that they laid the foundations of that prosperity which developed later, and which makes of Alsace, in our days, one of the most beautiful countries of France.[1]

The abbey of Marmoutier was the most ancient of Alsace. It was situated at the foot of the Vosges, seven leagues from Strasbourg, in a borough of the same name, to which it gave birth. The historians agree in recognizing as its founder Saint Leobard, disciple of Saint Columban, who established it in honour of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and of Saint Martin, bishop of Tours. Childebert II, king of Austrasia, granted the founder, toward the end of the sixth century, the valley in which he had settled. This valley, as well as the environs, belonged to the royal domain, known then under the name of March of Aquileia. The territory of the abbey extended, in its origin, much farther than in the last times, and comprised a great quantity of villages and hamlets,[2] but of which a great number were afterwards alienated.

He was replaced in the administration of the abbey by Anastasius, Godfrey and Leobard II. Leobard II was succeeded by Maurus, who was also placed in the number of the Saints, and who must have been a disciple

of Saint Firminus.

A fire had reduced to ashes, under Leobard II, the church and all the buildings of the cloister. Maurus found means to rebuild everything: the sanctity of his life, joined to his zeal for the re-establishment of the monastery, won him the title of second founder, and, from that time, the abbey was called by his name, Maursmünster, Maurmoutier, and by corruption Marmoutier. Studies flourished at that epoch at Marmoutier, and the religious followed the movement given to the renaissance of letters by Charlemagne, when a fire came anew to consume, in 827, the abbey and all its archives. Celsus, who was abbot of it, neglected nothing to re-establish the monastery, and thought he ought to address himself to Louis the Debonair to obtain help from him. The latter charged with the restoration of the buildings Drogo, bishop of Metz, and his natural brother. This prelate acquitted himself of it with a zeal worthy of the greatest praise and the buildings were perfectly re-established. It appears that the western façade of the church, as it is still seen in our days, is that which was constructed by the orders of Drogo. In 833, on 7 May, Drogo solemnly transferred into the new church the bodies of two of his predecessors, Saint Celestis and Saint Auctor, bishops of Metz.[3] This church is built in very good taste, and bears the traces of a high antiquity. The nave appears to have undergone some changes in the thirteenth century; the choir, on the contrary, was rebuilt in the last century, but the Gothic architecture has been imitated to a certain point. Since Drogo, the abbey of Marmoutier was subject, for the temporal, to the bishopric of Metz. It was, until the days of our troubles, the abode of knowledge and of good studies. A quarter of a league from the abbey, one sees, on a hill, a pretty church, remains of a convent of women called Sindelsberg, founded about 1120 by Richwin, abbot of Marmoutier, and later of Neuwiller. This church was consecrated, in 1137, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and of Saint Blaise. The nuns occupied it for nearly three hundred years, but they were drawn from it in 1488 by the bishop of Strasbourg, Albert of Bavaria. The abbey of Marmoutier, which united the goods of Sindelsberg to its domains, then much damaged, engaged nevertheless to pay life pensions to the nuns. The church of Sindelsberg was ruined in the insurrection of the peasants, in 1525, but the abbot Gisbert re-established it. Another church, of an equally remarkable architecture, situated in the village of Zehnacker, near Reutenbourg, must likewise come from an ancient convent of nuns which depended on the abbey of Marmoutier. It is a much-frequented pilgrimage in honour of the Blessed Virgin. We must not omit here the famous grotto of Saint Vitus or Saint Guy, situated on a mountain, in the valley of the Zorn, opposite Hoh-Barr: it has more than sixty feet of depth; art and nature seem to have contributed to render it interesting. It was inhabited for a long time by religious. A chapel dedicated to Saint Vitus, situated at the top of the plateau by which this rock is surmounted, was falling into ruins, and the faithful placed his image in the grotto, which was thenceforth enlarged and arranged as a chapel. The Saint who is venerated there is a young hero of Christianity, who suffered martyrdom under Diocletian, at the beginning of the fourth century. The faithful invoke him for the cure of a malady called by his name, Saint Guy's dance [St Vitus's dance]. This malady, which the credulity of the fifteenth century attributed to the demon, had become very common in Alsace, and above all at Strasbourg, to the point that the magistrates sent to the chapel of Saint Guy all the unfortunates who were attacked by it, and furnished them with carriages and provisions. This grotto continues to be frequented by numerous pilgrims, and above all on the 1st of May. Iron toads are carried as an offering to the Saint, because it is pretended that the form of this hideous animal resembles the part of the body where sits the evil for the cure of which they implore. There was also in the village of Obersteigen a monastery of canons regular of Saint Augustine, which was transferred to Saverne and erected into a collegiate church. This translation took place in 1308, and the secularization in 1482: this chapter consisted of eight canons, a provost and a dean. The collegiate church, which was formerly the church of the castle which the bishops of Strasbourg had in that city, communicated with this castle by half-subterranean chapels. It offers nothing remarkable but a very high square tower: the choir appears to be more ancient than the nave. The parish church of Saint Margaret, situated outside the walls, was united to this collegiate church. A monastery, built at first for the religious of Obersteigen at Saverne, was given under bishop Albert, in 1486,

to the Recollects, who inhabited it until the French Revolution. The church, which is in very good taste, and the buildings of the cloister, are at present assigned to the college of the town.

Saints of Alsace, by Hunckler.

Saint Adeltrude, Abbess of Maubeuge

(696).

The name of this venerable virgin appears several times, whether in the life of her parents Saint Vincent and Saint Waldetrudis, of Saint Landry, bishop of Meaux, her brother, or finally in that of her aunt Saint Aldegundis, whom she followed with Madelberta, her sister, to Malbodium (Maubeuge) when she went there to found a monastery.

From her earliest years, one already remarked in her a lively desire to hear the word of God, and to meditate on it in silence: from then, too, she made continual efforts to practise all the virtues of her age. Her religious parents blessed the Lord unceasingly in considering these astonishing efforts of grace in a child so young still, and they brought all their care to make her produce still more abundant fruits. Saint Adeltrude, who had the happiness of growing up in a family where her eyes saw only good examples, where her ears heard only wise and honest words, advanced therefore rapidly in piety, and these happy dispositions, which had not escaped the vigilant eye of Saint Aldegundis, only developed further when this venerable abbess, retired in her monastery of Maubeuge, had charged herself specially with the conduct of her two virtuous nieces.

She had no trouble in making the young Adeltrude enter into the sublime ways of perfection, to which it appeared manifest that God called her. Occupied solely with the desire to please Jesus Christ, and to consecrate to Him all her affections and thoughts, she grew in wisdom and grace, and tasted an ineffable happiness in the accomplishment of the duties which were imposed on her. Nothing appeared painful to her fervour, and, far from accepting the mitigations which her young age demanded, she seemed on the contrary to wish to impose on herself new burdens and greater fatigues.

But as much as her love for God was lively and ardent, so much her charity toward the neighbour made her attentive to all their needs. This sweet sensibility for the sick and the poor, which she had sucked in with her milk, nourished and maintained in the midst of her family, seemed to increase in her with age, and each time that circumstances permitted her, she applied herself to give testimonies of it. Her companions above all felt the effects of this continual benevolence with which her soul was filled, and she rendered to them all, with a humility and modesty which still enhanced the price of it, all the offices of the most delicate thoughtfulness. Thus the young servant of Jesus Christ was cherished by her sisters, whom she edified by the continual and admirable examples of her virtues.

Among all those which shone in her, one remarked above all her obedience; this virtue, which is as it were the foundation of the religious life, had always had much attraction for her, and Saint Aldegundis, on her side, had taken particular care to exercise her in it. Perhaps it was in order to reward her efforts, and to give at the same time an example to her companions, that God permitted in her favour one of those facts in which are revealed all His goodness and the amiable familiarity with which He acts sometimes in the midst of holy souls.

One day then, relates the biographer, Saint Adeltrude was charged by Saint Aldegundis, her aunt, to gather up pieces of wax which had become detached, and from which it was wished to draw profit for the service of the altar. According to the order that had been given her, she placed them with others in a vessel exposed to the fire. But the flame of the hearth soon became so ardent that the melted and boiling wax escaped on all sides, and increased still its activity. The young virgin then, without dreading the inevitable accident to which she exposes herself, darts boldly toward the fire, and draws out the vessel without feeling the least harm.

This perfect obedience of Saint Adeltrude, and all the other virtues with which her soul was adorned, were rewarded even here below by angelic visions and revelations which filled her with ineffable consolations. One day one of her nuns saw at the corner of the altar the apostle Saint Peter who smiled and said to her: “Courage, Adeltrude, I will keep you, you and your daughters, in the peace of the Lord.”

Chosen to direct, after the death of her aunt, the already important community of Maubeuge, she acquitted herself of this charge with a wisdom and a prudence of conduct which one could not sufficiently admire. All the holy maidens who served the Lord there obeyed her with joy and continued to make rapid progress in perfection; so that it was thought that Saint Aldegundis was lost a second time when, twelve years later (696), the blessed Adeltrude went to rejoin her in heaven. Toward the end of her life, another nun had seen brilliant stars which mounted and descended upon the cell of the holy abbess, then the heavenly Virgin who seemed to invite her to the nuptials of her divine Son.

The memory of this holy abbess was preciously preserved in the nascent abbey which she had so long edified by her spirit of faith and religion, and her feast was celebrated there each year, on 25 February, with much solemnity. Her name, inseparable from that of the illustrious patroness of Maubeuge, is still dear today to the pious inhabitants, who have faithfully preserved the antique traditions left by their ancestors.

One saw formerly in that town an ancient painting representing Saint Adeltrude and Saint Aldegundis, with the white veil, a violet mantle strewn with flowers, and a red robe covered with a white tunic.

In his great work on the Religious Orders, Hélyot gives the drawing of a dress such as the abbesses of Maubeuge formerly wore; it does not appear to depart much from that which we have just pointed out. This drawing, he says, is found in an ancient manuscript of the abbey of Saint-Amand; it consisted of a dark white veil, a violet mantle strewn with flowers, a red robe bordered with miniver [petit-gris], falling to mid-leg, under which there was another, white, which descended to the heels. As for the mantle, he continues, Father Mabillon believes that the flowers with which it is strewn are the invention of the painter.[1]

Saint Avertanus, Carmelite Religious

(Fourteenth century).

Here is a flower of Carmel.

Avertanus was born at Limoges of parents who transmitted to him something more precious than the goods of the earth of which they were destitute: the fear of God, a sincere love for the good and a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Early he had the thought of offering himself as a victim to God: he prayed, he fasted to obtain from heaven the knowledge of his vocation. His perseverance was rewarded. Heaven sent an angel to manifest its will to him: Carmel was, in the designs of God, destined to sanctify Avertanus. The holy young man loses no time: he betakes himself to the Carmelites of Limoges, and he had scarcely put on the livery of the Order when the Lord favoured him with frequent ecstatic raptures.

His conduct was in harmony with these extraordinary graces: he accomplished with so much joy and promptitude the orders of his superiors that his brethren soon called him only the son of obedience.

He had proposed to himself as models Jesus Christ and the prophet Elias, the founder of his Order, in the practice of poverty: he would have thought he committed an imperfection not only in touching, but even in naming money. He went farther: he carefully turned away his sight from that metal which is the instrument of the loss of so many souls.

He passed whole days in the exercise of contemplation, without thinking of the needs of the body. He was then so absorbed in God that it was difficult to recall him to the sense of exterior things.

On the eve of certain feasts of the year, he imposed on himself to climb on his knees, during the night, the hills neighbouring the monastery: during this exercise, he prayed, wept and struck his breast with a pebble until he bruised it: he returned to the convent only at dawn. Heaven had inspired him with the desire to make a pilgrimage to the holy places. The superiors, lending themselves to the accomplishment of this desire, gave him for travelling companion Brother Romeo: they set out after All Saints for Italy. After having crossed the Alps, the passage of which was rendered difficult by cold, rain and snow, they saw close before them the gates of all the cities, on account of the plague which was ravaging the Peninsula. Avertanus arrived at Lucca exhausted with fatigue and sick unto death. He was received out of charity into the hospital of Saint Peter situated on the ramparts. There he struggled for some time against the evil which was undermining him. At last, one day Our Lord, accompanied by His divine Mother and numerous legions of angels, came to warn him to prepare for the last journey: he received the sacraments of the dying and ended a beautiful life by a more beautiful death. The miracles which were wrought before his scarcely cooled remains determined the Lucchese to give him magnificent funerals. From the church of the hospital where he was at first buried, his body was later borne in procession into the principal church of the town, with that of Saint Romeo, who had died a short time after. What remains here below of the two friends is enclosed in the same tomb and receives the same homage. Saint Romeo, whose office the Carmelite religious make on 4 March, was Italian by birth.

Breviary of the Discalced Carmelites.

Blessed Sebastian of Apparitio, Contractor of Public Works

(1600).

Sebastian was born of an honest family of Spain, at Gudiña, a town of Galicia, in the diocese of Orense. He was raised in piety from the most tender age. Charged from his earliest years with keeping flocks, it is reported that he did nothing that savoured of the child; and from then, seeing him preserved by a quite particular Providence of God, one could presage something great of him. A constant tradition reports that at the age of twelve, mortally attacked by a contagious malady, he was left alone in a ruined cottage; but a wolf, come from the forest, gave him a slight bite which, piercing an abscess, caused the purulent matter to come out. Then his mother, who was passing that way, led by the goodness of God, brought him back with her and finished curing him. On leaving childhood, the last years of which he employed piously in his father’s house, he quitted his country, and betook himself to Salamanca, where he put himself in the service of a master. Afterwards he went to work in the country, to relieve the poverty of his parents. There he was exposed to dangers of more than one sort: he had especially to resist three women who laid snares for his chastity, and whom he repelled victoriously. Frightened nevertheless by these perils, he resolved to set out for New Spain, where the evangelical faith had just been carried. He embarked therefore with other passengers who overwhelmed him with insults on the passage, without being able to exhaust his patience. At last, after a happy navigation, he landed at Puebla de los Angeles, whence he went to Mexico. He lost no time in giving in this city proofs of his rare charity toward the neighbour, employing in good works the resources which his industry and his love of work procured him, applying himself with untiring ardour to the still new art of construction, of means of transport, and to the making of roads, which had to be opened and aligned at the cost of a thousand pains through forests until then impassable. He worked chiefly on the public highway which leads from Mexico to Zacatecas. The considerable gains which he realized were consecrated by him to feeding widows and orphans, to dowering young girls, and to other works of mercy. Thus a man, charged with considerable debts, already seized by the agents of justice, Sebastian generously paid for him and gave him back his liberty. He acquired in this way such a reputation for virtue that he merited to see the Indians themselves, laying aside their natural ferocity, come to render him marks of honour and offer him their services. His love of chastity had made him at first refuse to engage in marriage. Later he determined to embrace that state, and he married in succession two honest girls, with whom, by their full consent, he kept

virginity. So much virtue excited the rage of the demon, who presented himself to him several times under the form of a furious bull, under that of an angry negro, and even under seductive figures. The Saint then armed himself with the sign of the cross, and triumphed over all the efforts of the enemy. After the death of his second wife, he asked to be admitted into the Seraphic Order of Saint Francis. Arrived at the summit of his wishes, he left all his goods to the nuns of Saint Clare, and entered the Third Order of the Franciscans, being already more than seventy years old. When he had made the solemn vows, he distinguished himself marvellously in all kinds of virtues, and practised in perfection simplicity, candour, meekness, obedience, poverty. He joined to a patience without bounds in bearing tribulations the virtues of temperance and fortitude to a degree so remarkable that, besides prolonged fasts and corporal macerations, he often passed whole nights in holy vigils, well worthy thereby of the extraordinary things with which it is related that he was favoured. He was a prey in a desert to the torment of hunger, and could receive no help from men; angels, it is said, served him food; finding him overwhelmed with fatigue, they refreshed him, they surrounded him during his sleep with a heavenly splendour; they sheltered him, on the way, from rain and snow; from the place where he had strayed they put him back on his road, transporting him from one place to another. Sebastian had also knowledge of future events; he penetrated even the mysteries of hearts, those secrets which are known to God alone, and he never ceased to exercise an absolute empire over wild beasts. In his last illness, the vomiting to which he was subject not permitting him to receive the Holy Eucharist, he asked that this adorable sacrament be brought to him, to contemplate it only, and he rendered it his homage, lying on the ground, melting in tears with the sentiments of an inexpressible devotion. At last, overwhelmed with old age and almost a centenarian, he ended his life peacefully at Puebla. His body, wasted and undone by penance, assumed after death a ravishing beauty and exhaled a sweet odour. The brilliance of his virtues and of his miracles caused Sebastian to be solemnly placed among the blessed by Pope Pius VI.

Proper of Spain.

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[1] See on 6 [May?].

[2] The masters of Blessed Constant of Fabriano in the spiritual life were Conradin of Brescia and Saint Antoninus, afterwards archbishop of Florence. He made himself famous by his virtues and the signal graces which he obtained from the Lord. One day he was asked to recite his breviary for the Greeks, who were about to succumb under the blows of the Turks. “I have already done so several times,” answered the Blessed; “but God, in punishment of their schism, has irrevocably condemned them.” He announced the day of the death of Saint Antoninus, and expired himself on 25 February 1481. Pius VII approved his cult in 1831.

[3] See on 24 February.

[4] Cf. Assemani, *Acta martyrum orientalium*.

[5] His heresy was Eutychianism. See on this question the council of Chalcedon in the *General and Particular Councils*, by Mgr Guérin, vol. i, p. 313, and notably pp. 335, 336.

[6] See the *General and Particular Councils*, by Mgr Guérin, vol. ii, p. 39. The decrees of the council are reported there in Latin and in French, preceded by a very detailed historical exposition.

[7] Isaiah lxii [6].

[8] I Tim. iv [12].

[9] We continue to consider Alsace and Lorraine as forming part of France, so much confidence have we that the separation is only momentary.

[10] The domain of the abbey extended from the bridge of Schweinheim to the road to Saverne and that of Marlenheim; from the stream called Griesbach to the Zinsel; from the village of Kugelberg, near Neuwiller, to Ottersthal, near Saverne; from Ottersthal, by the Sorr, to a small distance from Hegenheim, and from there to the walls of the abbey.

[11] Saint Celestis, successor of Saint Clement, lived at the beginning of the second century, and Saint Auctor governed the church of Metz when the Huns sacked that city in 451. The relics of these two bishops remained exposed to the veneration of the faithful until 1525, the epoch at which they were drawn from their shrines and thrown on the pavement by the peasants of Alsace, during their insurrection. Since then it has not been possible to distinguish them and to know what belongs to each in particular.

[12] See the *Dictionary of the Religious Orders*, art. Nivelles. Migne edition.

26 February

Martyrologies

Twenty-sixth day of February.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Perge, in Pamphylia, the birth into heaven of Saint Nestor, bishop, who, during the persecution of Decius, persevered day and night in prayer, and asked God that it might please Him to preserve his flock; arrested, he confessed the name of the Lord with an admirable liberty and joy, and was cruelly tortured on the rack by order of the president Pollio; finally, as he did not cease to declare that he would remain always attached to Christ, he completed his victory suspended on a cross, and flew away glorious to heaven. 251. — In the same place, the passion of the holy Papias, Diodorus, Conon and Claudian, who preceded Saint Nestor in martyrdom. 251. — On the same day, the holy martyrs Fortunatus, Felix and twenty-seven others. — At Alexandria, Saint Alexander, bishop, a glorious old man who, following the example of Saint Peter, one of his predecessors, drove from the church Arius, one of his priests, infected with impiety and heresy, although convinced of the divine truth. He was afterwards one of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers who condemned him at the council of Nicaea.[1] 326. — At Cologne, Saint Faustinianus, bishop, who, by the force of his preaching, strengthened and even augmented that church, which had been much agitated during the persecution of Diocletian. 4th c. — At Gaza, in Palestine, Saint Porphyry, bishop, who, in the time of the emperor Arcadius, overthrew the idol of Marnas and its temple, and, after having suffered much, reposed in Our Lord. 420. — At Florence, Saint Andrew, bishop and confessor.[2] 5th c. — In the territory of Arcis, Saint Victor, commonly Vitre, confessor, of whom Saint Bernard has made the eulogy. 6th c.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Nevers, Saint Eulalius [Eolade], bishop of that city, who assisted at the Council of Lyons in 570.[3] — Again at Nevers, Saint Arilius, bishop, who succeeded Saint Eulalius. 594. — At Buch, near Fürstenfeld, in Bavaria, the Blessed Edigna, born in France, who is invoked for lost things.[4] 1109. — At Troyes, Saint Justinian, martyr, born in England, whose head shone forth in miracles at Menevia.[5] — At Rouen, the feast of Saint Praetextatus, bishop and martyr, named in the Roman martyrology on 24 February. — At Meaux, Saint Eartongatha, virgin, born in England, daughter of Ercombert, king of Kent, who became a nun, under the direction of her aunts, Saint Sethrida and Saint Ethelburga, in the celebrated monastery of Sainte-Fare, and whose holy soul was seen, at the moment of her death, surrounded by a dazzling light, and mounting to the heavenly kingdoms. — At Mainz, Saint Hilary, bishop of that city and martyr.[6] — At Toul, Saint Auspicius, fifth bishop of that see, a man eminently learned and pious, as appears from the epistle in rhymed prose [*sic*: “en prose alignée”] which he wrote to Arbogast, governor of Trier, to instruct him in his duties as a Christian.[7] 5th c. — The Blessed Leo, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Bertin. 1163.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese, of Vallombrosa and of Cîteaux. — Saint Martina, virgin and martyr, of whom mention is made on 30 January.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — Saint Ignatius, bishop and martyr, whose passion is related on 1 February.

Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, whose memory is recorded on 22 February.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, etc.

Martyrology of the Order of the Servites. — Saint Titus, disciple of the blessed apostle Paul, and bishop of the Cretans, whose memory is recalled on 4 January.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Verona, Saint Servulus, bishop. About the 6th c. — At Gaza, in Palestine, Saint Irene, virgin, of whom mention is made in the life of Saint Porphyry. — At Augsburg, Saint Dionysius, bishop of that city and martyr. He was also called Zosimus, and perished by fire in the persecution of Diocletian.[8] A.D. 303. — At Spanheim, in the diocese of Mainz, Saint Mathilda or Mahaut, virgin. At thirteen years she made, with the consent of her parents, the vow of perpetual continence, then shut herself in a little chamber near the church of Saint Alban, to which none had access, and from which she herself could not go out. At the end of some years, her brother, who was abbot of Spanheim, desiring to have his sister near him, caused to be built on the slope of a mountain, not far from his monastery, a recluse's cell, where, with the permission of the archbishop, he enclosed her. Several virgins came to place themselves under her direction; others, imitating her manner of life, became saints like her. One cites, at Mainz, the venerable Sophia; at Spanheim, the blessed Gerlinde, Demode, Lutgarde and Gertrude. The Lord transplanted Saint Mathilda to the flower-bed of virgins on 26 February 1154. — At Antwerp, Saint Paschal, Roman martyr, whose body, found in the cemetery of Saint Callistus with that of Saint Cyprian, was given to the house of the Jesuits of that city, in 1646. — At Bologna, Saint Philip, bishop and martyr: his remains, drawn from the catacombs, were sent to the Repentant Women of that city by Pope Gregory XV. — In several places, memory of the flight into Egypt of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saint Porphyry, Bishop of Gaza, and Saint Irene, Virgin

353–420. — Popes: Saint Liberius; Saint Boniface I. — Emperors: Constantius II; Theodosius II the Younger.

Men are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. — Heb. xi, 13.

Saint Porphyry was born at Thessalonica, in the year of Our Lord 353, of very rich and virtuous parents, who took great care to raise him in piety, in the fear of God and in the divine and human sciences. At the age of twenty-five, divine love made him abandon all the riches of the earth, quit his country and his parents, to embrace the religious life in the monastery of Scete, in Egypt. He remained there five years, at the end of which he visited the holy places of Jerusalem, then retired into a cave near the Jordan, where he passed five other years with so many discomforts, on account of the inclemency of the place, that he fell into a great sickness, which obliged him to have himself carried to Jerusalem. Weakened as he was, he did not cease to visit the holy places every day; and he so greatly despised the evil he suffered that one would have said another endured it, and not he: the confidence which he had in God set him above all sufferings. As he had not been able to make a division with his brothers, on account of their youth, he had not yet carried out the precept of the Gospel, to sell all his goods and distribute them to the poor: he resolved therefore to fulfil it. For this purpose he sent to Thessalonica a young man named Mark, with whom he had made acquaintance, and who was afterwards his faithful disciple, that he might proceed to this partition: the Saint's lot amounted to the sum of four thousand four hundred gold crowns, which Mark brought him with a quantity of precious furniture.

Mark was much surprised, on his return, to find Porphyry in very good health, and without any appearance of having been ill; having asked him the cause, the Saint answered that he had been miraculously cured on Calvary, where he had dragged himself with much pain, so weak was he; there, Jesus Christ, fastened to the cross, had appeared to him in an ecstasy and had placed a cross upon his shoulders; after which he had felt no more pain. The recital of this marvel so touched the heart of this young man that he put himself in the service of Porphyry to profit by the examples of his virtues: and it is to him that we owe the life of this great servant of God. The considerable treasures which had been brought him did not remain long in his hands, for he distributed them all to the poor of Jerusalem and of the other neighbouring cities, and to the monasteries

which were in necessity, without reserving anything for himself; thus he was himself obliged, to earn his living, in imitation of the Apostle of the Gentiles, to exercise the trade of currier. At the age of forty, Praylius [Praylios], patriarch of Jerusalem, ordained him priest, and entrusted to him the keeping of the adorable wood of the Saviour's cross. Three years after, he was made bishop of Gaza, in Palestine, by John, archbishop of Caesarea, metropolitan of the province, a holy man, to whom the clergy and the people had remitted this election, because they had not been able to agree (the ecclesiastics proposing one, and the seculars another). Thus, instead of thinking only of expiating his sins, as he said himself, he found himself engaged to work at the expiation of those of others. As soon as he was consecrated, he betook himself to Gaza, where the idolaters, with whom that city was quite filled, regarded him as the greatest enemy of their gods.

One day when he had been obliged to leave his episcopal house to escape the fury of the idolaters, he took refuge with one of his priests in a little house inhabited by a poor woman and her little girl. The latter was called Irene; she was fourteen years old. Recognizing the bishop, the girl, who found herself alone at that moment, threw herself at his feet and venerated him. The bishop asked her the name of her parents. "I have neither father nor mother any more," answered Irene; "I have only an old grandmother whom I feed with myself by my work." "Are you a Christian, my child?" "No, but I desire to become one." "How inclined to good this people is," cried the holy bishop, "if the enemy did not put an obstacle to it! but God will be the master." Then he begged the child to lend them a place on the terrace of the house to rest, and not to tell anyone that they were there. Irene placed a mat on the terrace, gave them of the little she possessed, bread and olives. The holy bishop, considering the good heart with which this girl offered them what had cost her a painful labour, began to shed tears and told her that she would become a servant of the good God. The child went down to her grandmother and the two fugitives fell asleep; it was summer. When the tumult was calmed, they retired secretly into the church, then regained the episcopal dwelling, which the pagan populace had pillaged and where it had left dead one of the bishop's servants.

Meanwhile heaven was about to intervene in favour of the Christian cause: a great drought reigned at that time in Palestine: the pagans attributed it naturally to the maleficent arts of the bishop. Jupiter, they said, had indeed predicted that the arrival of Porphyry would be the signal of a great number of evils. They sacrificed uselessly to their idols to obtain rain from them; but the Saint, after having made, with his little company of Christians, public prayers in several churches, to which he led them in procession, caused a great abundance of it to fall from heaven, as formerly the prophet Elias: many pagans, touched by this miracle, were converted to the Christian religion; and, in order to arrest the fury and obstinacy of the others, he wrote to Saint John Chrysostom, at Constantinople, to beg him to ask the emperor Arcadius for the destruction of the temples of the false gods in Gaza. Porphyry had taken this affair so much to heart that he had fallen sick of it; but the joy which he had in learning that the blessed patriarch had obtained from the prince what he desired with so much ardour restored his health. In effect, some time after, an officer, called Hilary, arrived at Gaza with an edict of the emperor, to overthrow the idols and close the temples of the false gods. Nevertheless the latter, having let himself be won by a great sum of money, suffered the statue of Jupiter to be adored in secret. Porphyry, seeing the hardness of these infidels, who did not cease to do every day new outrages to the Christians, was so greatly afflicted that he resolved to quit his bishopric, and went to Caesarea to pray the archbishop to permit it; but the latter revived the courage of the good prelate, and both agreed to go together to Constantinople to obtain from the emperor the entire ruin of the temples of these idolaters. They were strengthened in this good design by the blessed Procopius, anchorite at Rhodes, who had had a revelation that they would succeed, and that the empress Eudoxia would happily bring into the world a son, if she granted them what they asked. The day after their arrival they repaired to the imperial audience; and as soon as this princess saw them, she saluted them first, asked their blessing, gave them herself money for their journey, and promised to assist them with all her power. Saint John Chrysostom, although he was in ill odour with the emperor through the artifices of Eudoxia, who wished to avenge herself for his having reproved her for

having seized a property which did not belong to her, did not fail to serve them by means of Amantius, his friend, who was in great credit with that princess.

Arcadius made great difficulties about granting what the holy bishops asked, because he drew very great tributes from the idolaters of Gaza; he consented only that their temples should be closed and that they should be deprived of all offices, in order to oblige them thereby to be converted. Meanwhile, the empress having brought into the world a son, according to the assurance which the holy prelates had given her of it, following upon the holy anchorite, she bethought herself of the following expedient to win the emperor. She had a petition drawn up, containing what Saint Porphyry asked, and told the Saint to give it, after the ceremony of the baptism of the young prince, who was named Theodosius like his grandfather, to the lord of the court who should carry him, and whom she had instructed what he was to do. The latter received it, opened it, and having caused silence to be made, read something of it, then folded it again, made the child bow his head and said afterwards in a loud voice: “His imperial majesty orders that all that is in this petition be executed.” When the young prince had been carried back to the palace, the empress, availing herself of the occasion, said to the emperor that she foresaw a happy future for her little one: “Let us know,” she added, “what this petition contains, that it may be entirely executed.” The emperor, having heard it read, said: “This demand is a little vexing; but it would be still more vexing to refuse it, since it is the first favour which our son has granted.” “Not only which he has granted,” replied the empress, “but which he has granted being clothed in his robe of innocence, and which has been obtained only for a motive of piety and by holy prelates.” Thus the emperor could not refuse to ratify the petition, and committed the execution of it to a certain Cynegius, a man of great virtue and zealous for the faith.

The holy prelates, extremely satisfied and laden with the considerable presents which Arcadius and Eudoxia made them, embarked to return to their dioceses, and they arrived in twelve days at Majuma, which is only a league from Gaza, after having, nevertheless, avoided a furious tempest, which ceased as soon as the pilot, an Arian by religion, had abjured his errors by the exhortations of the Saint, following the counsel which the blessed Procopius, that anchorite of whom we have spoken, had given him in a dream. The Christians advanced to meet them with the cross and singing hymns. When they entered Gaza, a statue of Venus, which was of marble, which the pagans and particularly the women held in great veneration, fell to the ground in presence of the cross, broke into a thousand pieces, and some of the fragments broke the head of an idolater and wounded another who had before mocked at them: which was the cause of the conversion of several of these infidels.

It was only ten days since the Saint had arrived at Gaza when Cynegius came there with a great number of soldiers, to execute the orders of the emperor. He overthrew therefore entirely the temples of the Sun, of Venus, of Apollo, of Jupiter and of the other false gods, and burned an infinity of idols and of superstitious books. A marvel is related which happened when they wished to destroy the temple of Jupiter: a child of seven years, inspired of God, speaking in tongues which he had never learned, gave the manner of burning the doors, which were of brass, and which the sacrificers of this false god had so well barricaded within, with great stones, that they could not be opened. The empress Eudoxia had given the Saint a great sum of money to build a church in the form of a cross in the place of this temple. It was named Eudoxian, and it was so superb that people came from all sides to see it; it was even said that no other, in that time, equalled it in grandeur and beauty.

While all the people, that is to say men and women, old men and children, worked with extreme activity to lay its foundations, these words were often heard: “Jesus Christ has conquered.” There happened also a strange accident, but which afterwards made the mercy of God and the virtue of the holy prelate shine forth the more. Three children of six or seven years fell into an extremely deep well. At once the Saint prostrated himself on the earth for an hour in front of all the people, and made his prayer to God, while they were descending into this well. Admirable thing! these three children were found seated on a stone, without having

received the least harm, and, to render this miracle yet more celebrated, they had all three a cross of equal size, and red as the finest vermilion, perfectly well imprinted: one on the forehead, another on the shoulder and the third on the hand. Since we are on the miracles which our Saint worked, we shall say again that he delivered a noble woman who had been seven days in labour, on condition that she would become a Christian; and that he struck dumb a Manichaean woman who had wished to dispute against him to maintain her errors.

Meanwhile Porphyry had not forgotten Irene, his little benefactress. When the emperor had caused good order to be set in the city, he sent for her by his priest. Irene came in company with one of her aunts: when she was in the presence of the bishop, she threw herself at his knees, beseeching him to grant her baptism. The bishop raised her, gave her some money to aid her in her poverty, and sent her away promising not to forget her. He took care to have her instructed, as well as her grandmother and her aunt, and baptized all three. When they had laid aside the baptismal robe, Saint Porphyry called Irene again and asked her if she did not think of settling herself; that in that case he would procure her a dowry and a Christian husband. “But, holy Father,” said the new Christian, “you have already given me a Spouse, and you will not wish me to accept another.” “And what spouse, my daughter?” “The Saviour of my soul, the Spouse of virgins.” The good prelate began to weep for joy. He sent her back therefore to her house, recommending her to lead a conduct worthy of the vocation which she wished to choose. Some time after, her grandmother having come to die, the holy bishop entrusted the young virgin to the care of the deaconess Manaris [Manaris]. A great number of young girls, drawn on by her example, embraced the glorious state of virginity. Irene died in her baptismal innocence about the year 490. But let us return to Saint Porphyry, who for long years had preceded Irene to heaven. It is not possible to express the zeal with which this zealous pastor laboured to establish the faith in his diocese, whether in confirming the faithful in the truth of the Gospel, or in bringing back heretics to the bosom of the Church, or in converting idolaters to the Christian religion; the sanctity of his life was a powerful means to bring about so great an enterprise: the brilliance of his virtues was capable of winning everyone. He was extremely affable, good-natured, humble, sincere, charitable toward the poor, loving them with all his heart and helping them in all their needs; and he had so mortified his passions that he had arrived at a kind of insensibility. He lived only on brown bread and vegetables, eating only after sunset, except on feast days; on those days he ate at midday, and, besides vegetables, he used oil and cheese, and took a little wine mixed with much water, because he suffered from the stomach; and he lived in this way during all the time of his life. At last, after having endured numerous outrages on the part of the idolaters, during the twenty-four years that he governed the church of Gaza, with all the virtue that can be desired in a true pastor, he rendered his soul to God on 26 February, in the year of Our Lord 420.

The Roman martyrology and the menology of the Greeks make honourable memory of Saint Porphyry. Mark, his disciple, who was an eyewitness of all his actions, wrote his life, of which we have made this abridgment. It may be seen at greater length in Surius and in Bollandus, on 26 February.

Saint Auspicius, Fifth Bishop of Toul

5th century.

Saint Auspicius died about the year 487 or 490 and was buried in the cemetery of the abbey of Saint-Mansuy, in the suburb of Toul, where his body was found under the episcopate of Pibo, forty-second bishop of the same city. At the prayer of this prelate, Richard, legate of the Holy See, made the elevation of it in 1107 and placed it in a decent place with great solemnity. These venerable relics were, anew, recognized and deposited in a new shrine in 1401.

The most ancient breviaries have given Auspicius the title of Saint, and his office is marked there on 8 July, among those of the diocese. In the present liturgy of Nancy, a Roman liturgy with the particular Proper, he is placed on 26 February.

The Centuriators of Magdeburg have spoken of Saint Auspicius with praise. There existed in Gaul, wrote these Protestant historians, a bishop in the church of Toul, named Auspicius; he was a man eminently learned and pious, as appears from the epistle in measured numbers [verse] which he wrote to Arbogast, count of Trier, whom he turned from avarice and cupidity.

Writings of Saint Auspicius

The date of the writings of Auspicius which have come down to us can help to determine the time of his episcopate. He governed the church of Toul about the middle of the fifth century. The rare merit and holiness of this prelate drew upon him the esteem of all the persons who knew him or who heard speak of him. Sidonius Apollinaris, who was bishop of Clermont, loads him with praises in a letter which he wrote to count Arbogast, governor of the city of Trier and grandson of Arbogast, a Gaulish count, general of the army of Valentinian II, with whom Baronius had confounded him. This count had begged Sidonius Apollinaris to instruct him in his duties. The bishop of Clermont advised him to address himself rather to Lupus of Troyes and to Auspicius of Toul, from whom he could draw the more help because they were his neighbours and because, moreover, they possessed all the qualities which befit their character.

Arbogast addressed himself to the bishop of the Leuci. He received from him an answer, in rhymed [lit. “aligned”] prose [*sic*; verse], which tradition has preserved and of which the thoughts and the style, in inspiring piety, perfectly justify the idea which Apollinaris had given of his illustrious friend.

Notice due to the kindness of the Abbé Guillaume, chaplain of the ducal chapel at Nancy, author of a learned history of the diocese of Toul, in 5 vols. 8vo.

Saint Victor of Plancy, Priest and Hermit

6th century.

Like Saint Victor, let us put a bridle on our tongue and on our temper; let us sleep little, pray much. — Saint Bernard, Serm.

Victor, whose beautiful name accords very well with his triumphs, has this advantage of having had a great Saint who laboured to make him known; it is the pious Saint Bernard, of whom we have two panegyrics pronounced in his praise. He was born at Troyes, in Champagne. While he was still in his mother’s womb, a man possessed by the demon cried out publicly: “Victor, the saint of God, why dost thou torment us before thy birth?” From his childhood, his actions were accompanied by a great maturity of mind, and he was so charitable toward the poor that often he distributed to them the best part of what was given him for his food and his maintenance. As soon as he had the age prescribed by the Canons for receiving sacred Orders, he was ordained deacon, and then priest. He employed himself at first in preaching; but, wishing to renounce the world entirely, he abandoned his parents, and retired to the territory of Arcis, near a village called Saturniac, in the same diocese of Troyes. There he made himself a hermitage, in which he began a life so holy that he passed the days and nights in prayers, fasts and penances. His reputation, running through all France, came to the ears of the king, who resolved to go to find him even in his solitude, to have the consolation of seeing so holy a man. Victor, warned of his visit, came to meet him, and, after both had saluted each other with a kiss of peace, they entered the hermitage, where the Saint begged the prince to take some refreshment; but as he found only a little water, he had recourse to God, and kneeling: “Lord,” he said, “whose power is infinite, bless this vessel, and fill it with Thy heavenly dew, that, as our fathers were filled with the manna in the desert, so we may be filled with the gift of Thy blessing”; then he made the sign of the cross on the vessel, which was at the same moment filled with most excellent wine; the king drank of it with his escort, who could not weary of admiring the goodness of the Almighty.[1]

The whole life of Saint Victor was a continual succession of miraculous actions, which Saint Bernard has related briefly in the first sermon which he made for the day of his feast. One day when he had sent labourers to sow wheat in a field, one of them hid two bushels of it to steal them; at once he was possessed by the demon with so much fury that smoke mixed with flames came out of his throat, to show that, by his sin, his body and his soul had become as a hell. The Saint, seeing him come to him, had compassion on him, and, making over him the sign of the cross, delivered him. This poor man, recognizing that this misfortune had befallen him on account of his theft, confessed his fault with tears, and made restitution. The historians of his life report that God granted him an extraordinary favour. He had formerly held at the baptismal font the young lord of Cupidini, today Queudes (Marne), four and a half leagues from Plancy. For a long time the noble gentleman had been pressing Victor to honour with his presence his ancient castle: the holy priest ended by yielding to his reiterated instances. It was a Sunday: Victor was directing his steps toward the neighbouring church to assist at the divine office. Suddenly he stopped: the heavens had just opened before him; he enjoyed the beatific vision and he heard something of those angelic harmonies such as the ear of man has not heard since the apostle Saint Paul. It is doubtless in memory of this marvellous fact that the church of Queudes has chosen him for patron and that there is held for him the greatest veneration.

Another time, during his prayer, which he commonly made at night, he saw the heavens open, and, in the midst, a beautiful golden cross, enriched with several precious stones more brilliant than the stars of the firmament. As he was considering this marvel, he heard a voice which said to him: “The diamonds that thou seest are the souls of the Saints who, for the love of their Lord, have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.” From that time, his soul was so far removed from the earth and ravished into heaven that he renounced absolutely every sort of communication and commerce with the world, in order to attach himself solely to his sovereign good.

After having continued the rest of his days in a perfect recollection of his senses, he rendered at last his soul into the hands of his Creator, on 25 [*sic*; the feast is the 26th] February, in the sixth or seventh century, and, to use the terms of Saint Bernard: “It was then that Saint Victor mounted victorious into heaven, to receive from the hand of his Lord the crown of victory. Placed in heaven, he now contemplates God unveiled. He swims in an ocean of delights; but he still occupies himself with us. The land of the saints which he inhabits is not a land of forgetfulness. Heaven does not chill hearts; it renders them, on the contrary, both more tender and more compassionate; it communicates a new activity to their affections. The angels, although they see unceasingly the heavenly Father, fly none the less to our succour. How then should we be forgotten by those who were like us, and who have passed through the miseries under the weight of which we groan? No, no, I know that the just await me till I receive my reward.[2] Victor is not like the cupbearer of Pharaoh, who thought no more of Joseph when he was out of prison. He has not taken the crown of glory to close his bowels to our ills.”

Relics and traditions

He was buried at Saturniac, today the chapel of Saint-Vitre, which is a corruption of the word Victor: a church was built on his tomb. In 837, his body was transferred to the monastery of Montiéramey,[3] in the diocese of Troyes, then in 1791 to Arcis-sur-Aube. His relics are found, today, 1872, in the church of the village of Montiéramey. His tomb has been celebrated for several miracles. It is related, among other things, that a prisoner, having escaped from his dungeon, all laden with irons, and having approached the sepulchre of the Saint, his chains broke in an instant and he found himself at liberty.

Such was the confidence of the peoples in Saint Victor that they commended themselves to him in the slightest indispositions. They went to drink of the water of the river near his hermitage, and often the sick returned cured. People wished Saint Victor to be the protector of each family: thus care was taken to give his name to one of the children. There is not even a farm or a wood, situated in the environs of the hermitage,

and even a street of Plancy, which is not under his protection. The statue of his chapel has received a place of honour in the parish church, and, to satisfy still more completely the devotion of all, a notable relic (the right arm of the Saint, detached from the rest of the body) is exposed each year to the veneration of the faithful. We had asked M. de Jubainville, archivist of the department of the Aube, whether the Vitrys which exist in France and particularly Vitry-le-François should not owe their denomination to Saints of the name of Victor.

This scholar answered us: “The Gallo-Roman form of the name of the so numerous Vitrys which exist in France is *Victoriacum*, that is to say, property of Victor or of Victorius. Vitré, Vitrey are variants of Vitry. There is no reason to suppose that these Roman proprietors of the name of Victor or Victorius were identical with the Saint venerated in the Aube.” It did not seem to us doubtful nevertheless that Saturniac, where was the hermitage of Saint Victor and which afterwards took the name of Saint-Vitre, and the commune of Villeneuve-Saint-Vistre owed this denomination to the alteration of the word Victor. This filiation seemed to us the more evident as our Saint is commonly called Vitre and formerly Victre. We referred it to M. Lalore, professor at the Grand Seminary of Troyes, who had the kindness to transmit to us the following information, under date of 12 February 1872:

“1st. Saturniacus is a destroyed village, unless this village is Saint-Saturnin (Marne).

“2nd. Villeneuve-Saint-Vistre (Marne, eleven kilometres from Sézanne) has precisely for patron Saint Victor.

“3rd. The Saint-Vitre or Victor, of whom Baillet and Migne speak, and whom they place at three leagues from Arcis, is a little chapel which is called the Penance of Saint-Victre, one kilometre from Plancy-sur-Aube and three leagues from Arcis. The chapel of Saint-Vitre must not be confounded with the village of Villeneuve-Saint-Vistre, which is rather far from it, as you can assure yourself by casting a glance at the Staff map.

“4th. You know the reason which has caused some moderns to give Saint Victor the surname of Plancy: it is because the chapel or Penance of Saint-Victre is placed one kilometre from the territory of Plancy, toward the village of Saint-Saturnin.

“5th. One finds still in the church of Montiéramey the head of Saint Victor. The abbey is completely destroyed: there are, besides, fragments of his relics at Chervey, at Prugny, at Neuville, etc.”

Saint Bernard composed a proper office of Saint Victor, at the instance of the abbot Guy and of the other religious of Montiéramey, as he says himself in letter cccxii, addressed to the same abbot. The Roman martyrology, with that of Usuard, and the additions of Molanus, make mention of him on this day. His life, written by a very ancient anonymous author, is found in Bollandus; and Le Peuple [? “le Fleur”] des Guerrois relates it in French in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

Saint Arigle or Arille (Agricola), Bishop of Nevers

(594).

He was born at Sainte-Reine, of distinguished parents, and was the friend of the poet Fortunatus. Gontran, king of Burgundy, had named him governor of the country; but at the death of Saint Eulalius [Eolade], his reputation for holiness caused him to be chosen to mount the episcopal see of Nevers. One remarked in him above all the care with which he watched over his words: “Now,” says Saint James, “he who offends not by the tongue is perfect.” After having borne with devotion for thirteen years the episcopal burden, he fell asleep in the Lord on 26 February 594. His body was deposited in the church of Saint-Vincent, which he had founded, and where he established a monastery of girls, the first known in the diocese of Nevers. The church of Saint-Vincent bore in the ninth century the name of Saint-Arigle, and was erected into a parish toward the end of the eleventh century (1075). In 1590, his bones were drawn from his tomb, and placed in a shrine. The

revolutionary storm saw the demolition of the church of Saint-Arigle and the dispersion of its relics.

There was the good fortune, however, to preserve a considerable portion of them, which is found today in the church of Saint-Étienne of Nevers. The inhabitants of that city still in our days have recourse to the powerful intercession of their holy bishop.

When, in 1832 and 1848, cholera exercised cruel ravages at Nevers, the shrine of Saint Arigle was brought down and exposed to the veneration of the faithful.

Meaning of the seven crosses, the three crosses and the one cross on Christian sarcophagi. — The tomb of Saint Arigle had for ornament seven crosses in relief. Why this number 7? Let us recall above all that the sacraments draw their value and virtue from the cross of the Saviour. The bishop, possessing the plenitude of the priesthood, has the power to administer all the sacraments. This is what the number seven, placed on the tombs of bishops, was meant to indicate. The power of the priest is less extended, and as he is ordinary minister of five sacraments, the coffins adorned with five crosses were reserved for priests. Finally, on the tomb of a simple faithful, only one cross was placed, to indicate the presence of a disciple of Jesus Christ, or three crosses to recall that it is in the name of the three persons of the Trinity and by the virtue of the Cross that he was admitted to the number of the children of God.

Mgr Crosnier, Hagiology of Nevers.

Saint Eartongatha, Nun of Sainte-Fare

(8th century).

Ercongota, at Meaux Eartongatha, was born in the county of Kent, about the middle of the seventh century. She had for father king Ercombert, who first destroyed the idols in the country and caused the Lenten fast to be observed; for mother Sexburga, daughter of Anna, the very pious king of the East Angles. Her sister Ermenilda, and several of her relatives, of both sexes, have obtained the glory of the Blessed. She was brought, while still quite young, to the celebrated monastery of Sainte-Fare, to be raised under the direction of her aunts Sethrida and Ethelburga. In imitation of these holy women, she vowed her virginity to Jesus Christ, and resolved to lead a life absolutely hidden in Him. Her divine Spouse took her as agreeable, and He deigned to make known to her that the time of reward drew near. In effect, the virgin saw in a dream a crowd of persons clothed in white who entered the monastery, saying that they came to seek, to carry it to heaven, the piece of gold brought from England to this place. Eartongatha, understanding thereby that her end was not far off, began to go through the cells of the servants of Christ, above all of those who were old and infirm, and to commend herself to their prayers. A few days after, she left this world about the dawn of day. Heavenly concerts were heard around the house where her body was, and her holy soul was seen to mount to the abode of joy, all dazzling with light. The spouse of Christ was buried in the church of Saint Stephen, the first martyr. Three days after, the stone which covered the tomb was lifted and lowered to a greater depth in the same place. During this operation the sweetest odour rose from the bottom of the sepulchre, and spread through all the monument. God honoured her with several miracles, which were told in the time of the venerable Bede.

Proper of Meaux.

Blessed Leo, Abbot of Saint-Bertin

(1163).

Among the personages of eminent virtue who have directed the important abbey of Saint-Bertin, one distinguishes particularly the blessed Leo, who occupies the fortieth place in the catalogue of the abbots. He was born in the neighbourhood of the town of Furnes, in Flanders, of an illustrious family, in the bosom of

which he received a brilliant education. He was, say several ancient authors, very versed in the knowledge of letters sacred and profane. These advantages, joined to a sincere piety and a solid virtue, caused him to be called to the court of the count of Flanders, near whom he enjoyed great credit. The quality of almoner, which is sometimes given him, would seem to make one believe that he had already taken, at that epoch, an engagement in the clergy, although he was still only twenty years old.

But soon the honours with which he saw himself surrounded frightened his humility and made him fear that the praises of men and their favours might render him less agreeable in the eyes of God. These thoughts made so lively an impression on the mind of the blessed Leo that he formed the project of quitting all the advantages of the world to bury himself in the obscurity of the cloister. Having therefore abandoned all his charges and all his dignities, his friends and his relatives, he went to ask the last place in the abbey of Anchin.

That house, then directed by the wise and venerable Alvisus, enjoyed a great reputation for regularity. The religious formed themselves there, in a short time, to the practice of all the monastic virtues. The blessed Leo above all distinguished himself there so much by his prudence and his other qualities that he was soon called to direct himself the abbey of Lobbes, in the diocese of Cambrai. He promptly re-established, by a wise administration, the affairs of this monastery, which were in a bad state, in consequence of long and obstinate wars which had desolated the country. In the course of the year 1138, the abbot Leo was called to the government of the monastery of Saint-Bertin, to which its importance, its celebrity and its prosperity had caused the name of Monastery of monasteries to be given. The name of the new abbot is seen to figure in several acts of that epoch, but concerning which there are no details. The very year of his election to Saint-Bertin, he assisted at the synod held at Arras by Alvisus, appointed a short time before bishop of that diocese. The synod ended, both repaired to Rome, to the sovereign Pontiff. The design of the blessed Leo, in undertaking this journey, was to render his abbey entirely free in regard to that of Cluny, which pretended to have rights over it. Further, in the year 1145, Leo assisted at another synod held at Thérouanne by Milo, bishop of that diocese, in which was the abbey of Saint-Bertin. One meets, in the works of Saint Bernard, two letters addressed by that illustrious abbot of Clairvaux to the dear and venerable Leo and to all his community. The marks of affection and respect given by Saint Bernard to the blessed Leo and to his community are the finest eulogy of the virtues and qualities which distinguished them. When, in 1146, the count of Flanders, Thierry of Alsace, set out for the crusade, he was accompanied by several prelates and abbots, among whom was the blessed Leo. Alvisus, bishop of Arras, who also formed part of this expedition, died in the city of Philippi, in Macedonia. As for the abbot of Saint-Bertin, he had the consolation of arriving as far as Jerusalem; but the particulars of his journey and of his sojourn in the Holy Land are not known. One sees only that on his return he carried himself to Bruges, to the church of Saint Blaise, the precious relic of the Holy Blood which the count of Flanders had obtained and which is still preserved today in that religious city.

A short time after, the blessed Leo made with Natalis, abbot of the monastery of Rebais, a promise by which they engaged, they and their religious, to pray mutually and in a special manner the ones for the others. These communities of prayer were rather frequent in the ancient abbeys, and they were very proper to maintain there the spirit of fervour and charity. The venerable abbot, already advanced in age, thought only of ending in peace his holy career, when a frightful fire came to consume almost entirely his monastery (1152). Far from letting himself be cast down by such an accident, he set himself at once to repair it, and with the help of a noble personage called William of Ypres, he raised this abbey from its ruins. Providence left him the consolation of seeing this work finished before his death, which happened in the year 1163, on the 26th day of February. He was buried in the chapel of the Most Holy Virgin, rebuilt by his care after the fire which had consumed it.

Lives of the Saints of Arras and of Cambrai, by the Abbé Destombes.

[1] The life of Saint Alexander was entirely consecrated to combating Arius. See, on the labours of this great bishop: 1st, the life of Saint Athanasius, on 2 May, and 2nd, the history of the council of Nicaea, in the *General and Particular Councils*, by Mgr Guérin, vol. i, p. 62.

[2] He succeeded Saint Zenobius and continued the work of the conversion of the idolaters, who, under his episcopate, ended by disappearing entirely from the diocese of Florence.

[3] The ancient books of the Church of Nevers indicate the feast and the death of Saint Eulalius for 28 August (680 or 681). Recourse was had to the tomb of this holy bishop to obtain the cure of fever; there was even in the church of Saint-Étienne of Nevers a confraternity established for this intention.

[4] Of royal blood, she quitted her country to be able to serve God better. She arrived poor in Bavaria and chose her dwelling in the hollow of a great lime-tree. Her name has always been blessed in the country where she lived. She is believed to be a natural daughter of Philip I, king of France.

[5] See his life on 14 April.

[6] Saint Hilary, says the Proper of Mainz, presided over the destinies of this church about the year 150. He was martyred under the pontificate of Saint Pius I and in the reign of Antoninus Pius. There existed formerly a church dedicated to Saint Hilary on the site of the ancient bishopric: one still saw there, in the eighteenth century, the history of his martyrdom painted on the walls.

[7] See his life on this day.

[8] He was converted, with Saint Afra, his aunt, Saint Hilaria, his sister, Saint Digna, Saint Eunomia and Saint Eutropia, their servants, all five courtesans, by Saint Narcissus, bishop of Gerona, in Spain, and apostle of Augsburg.

[9] This king might be Chilperic, who died in 584, or Childeric, son of Clovis II, killed in 673. Le Cointe believes that it was Clotaire II, who died in 628.

[10] Ps. cxli, 8.

[11] *Monasterium Arremarense*, Montier-Ramey; Montiéramey is the modern orthography. (Note of M. d'Arbois de Jubainville, letter of 30 December 1871.)

27 February

Martyrologies

Twenty-seventh day of February.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Alexander, Abundius, Antigonus and Fortunatus. — At Alexandria, the punishment of Saint Julian, martyr.[1] He was so tormented with gout that, being able neither to walk nor to stand, two of his servants carried him in a chair, to present him to the judge, at the same time that they presented themselves. One denied the faith, and the other, named Eunus, persevered with Julian in the confession of Jesus Christ. They were put therefore both on camels, and thus led through the whole city, being torn with blows of whips; finally, a pyre was lighted,[2] where they were burned in the sight of all the people. 250. — In the same place, Saint Besas, soldier, who, for having driven away those who wished to insult the preceding martyrs, was denounced to the judge, confessed the faith generously and had his head cut off. — At Seville, in Spain, the birthday of Saint Leander, bishop of that city, by the preaching and activity of whom the nation of the Visigoths was converted, with the aid of king Recared, from the Arian impiety to the Catholic faith. 596. — At Constantinople, the holy confessors Basil and Procopius, who, in the time of the emperor Leo, fought vigorously for the cult of the holy images. 750. — At Lyon, Saint Baldomer or Galmier, man of God, whose tomb is illustrious by frequent miracles. About 660.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Graville, between Harfleur and Le Havre-de-Grâce, diocese of Rouen, Saint Honorina, virgin and martyr, whose body, in the time of the ravages of the Normans, was brought to Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, near the mouth of the Oise, in the diocese of Paris, where a priory was founded which was given to the religious of Le Bec. Her cult was formerly very celebrated in France. She was invoked above all for the deliverance of prisoners.[3] 303. — In the Ardennes, Saint Marvard (Marcovardus), monk of Ferrières-en-Gâtinais, then

abbot of Prüm, on the frontiers of Luxembourg. 855. — In the diocese of Metz, the Blessed John, abbot of Gorze, of the Order of Saint Benedict. 973. — At Cremona, the venerable Emmanuel, monk, of the Order of Cîteaux, of the monastery of Saint-Bernard-en-Frise. About 700 [*sic*].

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Messina, in Sicily, Saint Lucas, abbot, of the Order of Saint Benedict, first archimandrite of that city.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Seville, in Spain, Saint Leander, clerk regular and bishop of that city, etc., as in the Roman.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — At Seville, in Spain, Saint Leander, etc., as in the Roman.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At Seville, in Spain, Saint Leander, taken from the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Claude-de-León, to be raised to the chair of Seville, by the preaching, etc., as in the Roman.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — At Messina, in Sicily, the Blessed Eustochia, virgin, who, sprung from an illustrious family of Catania, founded at Messina a new monastery, under the ancient rule of Saint Clare, of which she was the first abbess, and which she governed most holily; after which, illustrious by her eminent virtues and by her striking miracles, she migrated to heaven on 20 [*sic*] January. 1484.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers and confessor, mentioned on 14 January.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — Saint Dorothea, virgin and martyr, mentioned on 6 February.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Heliopolis, in Phoenicia, Saint Gelasius or Gelasinus, mime, who, in parodying on the stage of that city the sacred ceremonies of baptism, had his eyes opened by a heavenly apparition, and was really baptized. Driven from the stage, he was stoned, still clothed in the white robe, and died a martyr, in the year 297. — Among the Greeks, Saint Nesius, martyr. — At Thessalonica of Macedonia, with the holy Alexander, Abundius, Antigonus and Fortunatus, mentioned above, the holy Titian, Macarius, Severian, Calan and Januarius, martyred at this same time, under Diocletian probably. — In Africa, Saint Dionysius and twenty-four others, martyrs with him. — At Smyrna, the holy Servilian, Gratian and Leander, martyrs. — At Genoa, Saint Pontiana, martyr, and Saint Chrysogonus, confessor. — In Syria, Saint Thalelaeus, anchorite, who lived near Gabala, and converted his idolatrous neighbours. About 460. — At Cologne, Saint Onesime, virgin. *Quo tempore aut loco vixerit,* say the Bollandists, *needum legimus* [At what time or place she lived, we have not yet read]. — At Maastricht, Saint Eucherius, bishop of that city. He was the nineteenth successor of Saint Maternus, disciple of Saint Peter. 6th c. — In Ireland, Saint Cogman, abbot of Glenussen. He closed the eyes of Saint Ita. About 569. — Among the Greeks, Saint Stephen, officer of the court of the emperor Maurice. About 614. — In England, Saint Alnoth, hermit and martyr. About 700.

Saint Leander, Archbishop of Seville

596. — Pope: Saint Gregory the Great. — King of the Visigoths of Spain: Recared I.

Qui lucem tenebris mutavit amaris. — He has exchanged the darkness of this life for the eternal light. — Rossi, i, 76. Epitaph from the catacombs, of the year 354.

Born in that Andalusia where the Vandals had happily left only their name, Leander was the son of a duke of probably Greco-Roman race,[1] but whose eldest daughter married the king of the Visigoths, Leovigild. He

embraced the monastic life early, and drew from it the spirit of devotion and discipline which was to win him the honour of exercising a preponderant influence on the future of his country. He was a monk at Seville itself, which had been until then the capital of the Visigothic kings, and of which he became metropolitan bishop in 579.[2]

In this city, which passed for the holy city, the Jerusalem of the south of Spain, he created, in the shadow of his metropolitan church, a school destined to propagate, together with the orthodox faith, the study of all the sciences and of all the arts. He presided himself over the exercises of the learned masters and of the numerous pupils whom he knew how to attract there. Among the pupils were the two sons of the king, his nephews, Hermenegild and Recared. He succeeded in making the elder of the two abdicate Arianism, and this example was followed by many others.

Hermenegild was confirmed in the faith of Nicaea by his wife, Ingunthis, a Frankish princess of the orthodox race of Clovis, daughter of king Sigebert and of the celebrated Brunhilda, who was herself the daughter of a Visigothic king. The young Ingunthis knew how to resist heroically the brutal violences which her mother-in-law employed against her to make her embrace Arianism, and thus gave to her husband the example of the constancy which was to lead him to martyrdom. Leovigild, in transferring from Seville to Toledo the capital of the kingdom of the Visigoths, had associated his eldest son in the royalty and had assigned Seville to him as residence. But soon the persecution of Arianism against Catholicism broke out, and with it civil war. Leovigild shrank from no means to make the heresy prevail: he won over even some bishops and condemned to prison or exile those who, like Leander, held head against his violences. He made about the same time the conquest of the kingdom of the Suevi, which had scarcely returned to orthodoxy, and carried there the persecution with all its furies. The holy abbot Vincent was immolated with twelve of his religious before the door of his monastery, at León, for not having been willing to deny the divinity of the Son of God, formulated by the Creed of Nicaea. The tyrant respected no more civic liberty than liberty of conscience, no more the Visigothic nobility than the conquered people; he struck by confiscation, by exile or by tortures all the considerable personages of his kingdom.

Leander, in describing the state of his country under the yoke of the persecutor, says that one no longer saw there a truly free man, and that by a just judgment of God, the earth itself, taken from its legitimate proprietors, no longer recovered its ancient fecundity. The unnatural father ended by besieging his son in Seville; the young king, made prisoner after a long resistance, and put under the necessity of communicating from the hands of an Arian bishop, preferred to die and was slain in his prison, on Holy Saturday of the year 586. It was during this struggle between father and son, which lasted several years, and before he was himself exiled, that Leander was sent by Hermenegild to Constantinople, to claim there the help of the Byzantine emperor, who had still preserved some possessions with their garrisons in Spain. At Constantinople, the monk-bishop, envoy of a prince martyr of orthodoxy, met another monk, reserved for the highest destinies; from then there formed between Saint Gregory the Great and Leander one of those tender and strong friendships of which one loves to find so many examples in the lives of the Saints. The fraternal entreaties of Leander imposed upon the holy Doctor the vastest of his works, the Commentary on Job, which is also called the *Morals* of Saint Gregory. The intimate and persevering tenderness which united these two great men, and which was prolonged through the precocious infirmities of which both were the victims, bursts forth in various places of the correspondence of Gregory, and dictates to him those accents which preserve through the centuries the immortal perfume of true love. “Absent in body,” wrote the Pope to his friend, “you are always present to my eyes, for I bear engraved in the depth of my heart the features of your face… You will know how to read in your own heart what an ardent thirst I have to see you, for you love me enough for that. What a cruel distance separates us! I send you my books. Read them with care and then weep for my sins, since I seem to know so well what I do so ill. My letter is very short; it will let you see how crushed I am by the lawsuits and the storms of my church, since I write so little to him whom I love most in

this world." And later: "I have received your letter written with the pen of charity. It is in your heart that you dipped your pen. The wise and honest persons who heard it read were on the instant moved to the depth of their bowels. Each began to stretch out to you the hand of love; one seemed not merely to hear you, but to see you with the sweetness of your soul. All felt themselves inflamed with admiration, and this flame of your hearers demonstrated yours: for one does not kindle the sacred fire in others without being oneself consumed by it."

He sent him also the Pallium with these words: "I send you the Pallium to use at solemn Masses. I ought, at the same time, to prescribe to you rules for living holily; but as you anticipate my words by your virtuous actions, I shall keep silence on this subject." It is believed in Spain that it was the same Pope who made a present to Saint Leander of the celebrated image of Our Lady, made by the hands of Saint Luke, which is so honoured and frequented by pilgrims at Guadalupe, on account of the signal favours which they receive there from Our Lord, through the intercession of His most holy Mother.

Meanwhile the excess of the evil announced its end, and the Church was about to carry off a sudden and complete triumph. The tyrant Leovigild, the parricide king, struck with a mortal sickness, had remorse; on the bed where he lay dying, he ordered the recall of Leander, and gave him as guide to his son and successor Recared, recommending to the latter to embrace the Catholic faith. The new king, who had been like his brother the pupil of Leander, hastened to obey. He made himself at once a Catholic and undertook the conversion of his people. After long controversies with the Arian clergy, he succeeded in overcoming all resistances, but by discussion and not by force. Four years after his accession, having sanctioned his reign by brilliant victories over the Franks, he caused to be proclaimed, at the third council of Toledo, the abjuration of Arianism by the assembled people of the Goths and Suevi. The king declared there that the illustrious nation of the Goths, separated until then from the universal Church by the malice of its doctors, returned to unity and asked to be instructed in all the orthodoxy of Catholic doctrine. He placed in the hands of the bishops his profession of faith, written with his own hand, with that of eight Arian bishops, of his nobility and of all his people. As may be well thought, Leander, in quality of legate of the Pope, presided at this great assembly, where seventy-eight bishops sat, and whose deliberations were enlightened also by another monk, Eutropius, abbot of the monastery of Servitanum, which passed for the most ancient of Spain. A third religious, John, exiled like Leander, and who had consoled himself for his exile by founding a great monastery under the rule of Saint Benedict, in Catalonia, recorded the immense transformation of which he was witness, in a chronicle which opens the series of the monastic historians of Spain.

Thus was effected in the Peninsula, under the auspices of a great Pope and a great Bishop, both monks and both friends, the triumph of that orthodoxy of which the Spanish people was for ten centuries the knight, and of which it has kept, even in the midst of its decay, the instinct and the tradition. Leander hastened to announce the triumph of the truth and the solid conversion of the king his nephew to Gregory, who showed himself always affectionately preoccupied with the new conquest of the Church in the episcopate. Spain has always honoured in him her doctor and her apostle, the principal author of her return to unity.

All his family was associated with this work. His father and mother had been like himself exiled for the faith, and died in that exile. His brother Fulgentius, bishop like him, shared his combats and his victory. His sister, Florentina, embraced the monastic life, became superior of forty convents and of a thousand nuns, and merited by her learning, her virtues, and even by her sacred songs, to figure at the head of all those illustrious religious women whom the fatherland of Saint Teresa has given to the Church. Leander, who loved her tenderly, wrote for her a special rule.

One loves above all to find in this great spirit the trace of his fraternal affection and of his domestic memories. "Seek not," he says to her, playing on the name of their mother, Turtur [Turtle-dove], who had also ended her life in the cloister, "seek not to fly away from the roof where the turtle-dove lays her young. Thou art a daughter of innocence and of candour, thou who hadst the turtle-dove for mother. But love still

more the Church, that other mystical turtle-dove, who begets thee every day to Jesus Christ. Rest thine old age on her bosom, as thou didst sleep formerly on the heart of her who tended thy childhood…

"Ah! beloved sister, understand then the ardent desire which inflames the heart of thy brother to see thee with Christ!… Thou art the better part of myself… Woe to me if another were to steal thy crown! Thou art my bulwark with Christ, my cherished pledge, my holy victim, by which I shall merit to come out of the abyss of my sins."

This vigilant Prelate, having happily come to the end of the conversion of the Visigoths to the Catholic faith, retired to Seville to govern his flock there, and to prepare himself to go to render account to Him who had entrusted it to him. He continued therefore there the exercises of a holy Bishop, mortifying his passions by fasts and penances; nourishing his spirit with prayer and with the study of the holy letters; succouring the poor, exhorting the rich to alms and bringing everyone to virtue, until at last it pleased God to give him the reward of all his labours, in the year of Our Lord 596. His body was buried at Seville, in the church of the holy virgins Justa and Rufina, martyrs. Several translations of it have since been made, and at present it rests in a chapel of Our Lady in the cathedral church, with the body of the glorious Ferdinand, who had the glory of tearing that city from the domination of the Moors.

Ways in which Saint Leander is represented:

> *One sees him sometimes, but rarely, holding in his hand a flaming heart, symbol doubtless of the zeal which made him convert the Visigoths; 2. united with his brothers Saint Fulgentius and Saint Isidore and his sister Saint Florentina; 3. holding a pen in his hand: this attribute characterizes the Saints who have signalized themselves chiefly by their writings; 4. instructing the young king Recared the Catholic; 5. accompanied by some symbol representing the three persons of the Holy Trinity, to recall his struggle against Arianism; 6. kneeling before an image of the Blessed Virgin, that of Our Lady of Guadalupe, doubtless, for it is believed in Spain, as we have already said, that Saint Gregory the Great made a present to Saint Leander of the celebrated image of the Mother of God, made by the hands of Saint Luke, which is so honoured by the numerous pilgrims who go to Guadalupe.*

Liturgy and writings of Saint Leander

One owes to Saint Leander a reform of the liturgy of the Church of Spain. This liturgy prescribed the recitation of the Nicene Creed at Mass, in conformity with what was already practised in the East, to make an express declaration that one did not adhere to Arianism. A short time after, this precious custom passed into the Church of Rome and the rest of the West. Spain received from Rome the first lights of the faith, as we learn from the letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius, and it is for that reason that Saint Isidore says, bk. i, ch. 15, *Offic. eccl.*, that the office of the churches of Spain was instituted by Saint Peter. The ceremonies and discipline of the same churches had a Roman origin: it is a fact of which one may convince oneself by reading their ancient councils. The Arian Goths substituted for the liturgy of Rome that which Ulphilas had composed after the Oriental liturgies. It is believed that Saint Leander made a new one after these two first and after that of the Gauls. Saint Isidore and Saint Ildephonsus gave it afterwards a new degree of perfection. Spain having passed under the domination of the Saracens or Arabs, the Christians of that kingdom were called *mixti Arabes*, that is to say, mingled Arabs, whence their liturgy took the name of Mozarabic. It gave place to that of Rome in the eleventh and in the twelfth centuries. Cardinal Ximenes re-established the Mozarabic liturgy in a chapel of the cathedral of Toledo; it is also in use in seven churches of the same city, but only for the day of the feast of the patron.[3]

Father Flórez thinks that the liturgy of Saint Leander was not different from the Mozarabic, and that, with the exception of some rites of little importance, it had nothing in common with that of the Orientals. See his *España sagrada*, vol. iii, diss. on the *Missa antiqua de España*, pp. 181, 198, etc. But, although these liturgies had much conformity among themselves, they had nevertheless considerable differences in some points. We learn this from a letter which Father Burriel, a learned Jesuit, has given on the literary monuments

found in Spain. Great lights will be drawn on this article, as on several other particulars concerning the ecclesiastical antiquity of Spain, from the collection of the Gothic manuscripts which Father Flórez has given to the public. The curious will also consult with pleasure the new edition of the liturgies of the Christian churches which MM. Assemani have given at Rome in 15 vols. folio. The Mozarabic liturgy has been printed at Rome, in folio, by the care of Father Lesley, a Scottish Jesuit. Volume lxxxv of the *Patrologia Latina* of M. Migne, and the following, comprise the Mozarabic liturgies. There remain to us of Saint Leander: 1. a letter to his sister Florentina, under this title: *On the Institution of Virgins and the Contempt of the World* (vol. lxxxii of the Patrology of M. Migne); 2. a *Discourse on the Conversion of the Goths*: it forms part of the third Council of Toledo, in the year 589 (vol. lxxii of the Patrology of M. Migne).

Saint John of Vandières, Abbot of Gorze in Lorraine

973. — Pope: Benedict VI. — King of France: Lothair.

Te duce, transeamus per bona temporalia, ut non amittamus aeterna. — May we, under Thy guidance, O my God, pass through temporal goods in such a way as not to lose eternal goods. — Sacramentary of Saint Gregory, prayer of the 6th week after Pentecost, where comes the account of the multiplication of the loaves, according to Saint Mark.

John was born toward the end of the ninth century, in the village of Vandières, an ancient royal house, near Pont-à-Mousson, and passed his youth in the world. His father being dead, he was obliged to replace him in governing his family, whose goods were considerable; this administration, of which he acquitted himself with great talent, put him in relation with distinguished persons of Church and State, whose example taught him the good manner of living; the bishop of Verdun often employed his skill in affairs, and would gladly have attached him to himself for ever. Having received in benefice the church of Vandières and that of Saint Lawrence, in the village of Fontenoy, near Gondreville, he adorned them with all possible care and piety, above all that of Saint Lawrence, in which he passed in succession several days and several nights in prayer, when his occupations allowed him. Although he still appeared to take pleasure in the world, he knew how to give himself in time and place to the meditation of spiritual things: besides, an old priest who had a particular devotion to the recitation of the divine office, and the deacon Bernacer, who was distinguished by an exemplary chastity, gave him counsels, sometimes even rather severe, on the faults of levity which might escape him. As the church and monastery with which he was provided depended on the monastery of Saint Peter of Metz, he was obliged to serve at the altar there every week. It was a monastery of nuns, to whom bishop Adalbero had made resume the rule of Saint Benedict. Among the boarders of the monastery was found a very young person, named Geisa, raised with great care by her aunt, who was a nun; she applied herself with zeal to the practice of all the virtues, and mortified her body by holy austerities. One day when John was conversing with her, he thought he perceived something dark on her shoulders, which her dress did not cover enough: he put his hand to it and felt I know not what very rough; he was so astonished at it that he shuddered in all his body, and asked urgently what garment that was. The girl blushed, remained for some time confounded, and at last told him that it was a hair-shirt, adding: “Do you not know that we ought not to live for this world? the pleasures which the most seek are the perdition of souls; as for me, I wish to save mine!”

At these words John, as if awakened from a long sleep, cried out with a deep sigh: “Woe to me, coward that I am, who for so long drag a life not only sterile, but lost! What! I, a man, must this frail sex outstrip me in virtue! but, what is the height of opprobrium, not only do I not overtake it in its march, I have not even the courage to rise from the ground and take a step!” From that moment he began seriously a more perfect life: he read and learned by heart all the Old and the New Testament, the books of the divine offices, the decrees of the Councils, the rules of penance, the ceremonies and the chant of the Church, ecclesiastical jurisprudence, the civil laws, the homilies of the Fathers and the lives of the Saints, to such a point that he

spoke of them with as much facility as if he read in the book; to these labours he joined fasting, vigils, frequent prayers and macerations, aspiring with all his heart to quit the world and all its goods. To disencumber his soul of all that it might still have retained from the long sojourn it had made there, he confessed all the sins of his life to a holy hermit of Verdun, named Humbert, who contributed not a little to augment his love of mortification. It is from this epoch that he forbade himself the use of meat and began to fast very rigorously; he made afterwards the journey to Rome, to honour the tomb of the holy Apostles, visited Mount Gargano, Monte Cassino, Mount Vesuvius; there he found servants of God, whose conversations and examples served much for his spiritual advancement. Returned to Lorraine, he became a religious at the abbey of Gorze, situated fourteen leagues from Metz; and his entrance into that house contributed much to revive there discipline and fervour: nevertheless he wished always to be considered as the last of the house and as the servant of all. He carried his austerities so far that his abbot saw himself often obliged to moderate them. The emperor Otto I having asked two religious of Gorze, to send them to Abderrahman III, king of the Moors of Spain, our Saint was named head of this embassy; he fulfilled this mission with so much wisdom and courage that he excited the admiration of the infidel king. On his return, he was named abbot of Gorze, about the year 960. We regret not to have been able to find other details on so holy a life, which ceased on earth to continue glorious in heaven, in the year 973.

Cf. History of the Diocese of Toul, by the Abbé Guillaume, vol. i, p. 168.

Saint Baldomer or Saint Galmier, Locksmith and Subdeacon at Lyon

(about 660).

Baldomer or Galmier,[1] born in France, in the country of Forez, retired to Lyon in his youth, and served God there with much zeal and fidelity. He lived poorly and in great simplicity, always occupied with prayer and other good works, exercising the trade of locksmith, always feeding some poor with him on what the labour of his hands produced for him, and giving them sometimes even his tools, when he had nothing else. The favourite saying which he had continually in his mouth was: *Always thanks to God,* exciting all those with whom he had to do to repeat it often with him, to remain in a perpetual gratitude toward God. He was upright, sincere, obliging, affable, prompt to do all the good that depended on him, of an inviolable purity of soul and body. He was much applied to reading, especially that of Holy Scripture, and he lived in a general mortification of the senses. Which did not prevent him from being very gay in conversation, but always very edifying, fertile in ingenious turns to bring everyone to bless God continually, adroit in blaming vice without wounding the vicious, learned even and agreeable in his talk: which appeared chiefly since he had retired into a monastery. The abbot Viventius, who governed then the monastery of Saint-Just of Lyon, and who was afterwards bishop of that city, having gone one day to the village of Ouvac or Auditiac, to make his prayer in a church where there was some public devotion, saw our Saint there under an exterior so poor, but at the same time so grave and so recollected, that he would not return without knowing and conversing with him. He had no difficulty in judging that he was a great servant of God; and, without permitting him to return to the forge, he took him with him and lodged him in his monastery of Saint-Just, that he might attend with less distraction to prayer and to the meditation of divine truths. Saint Galmier was in no way a burden to the house there; but he lived there on the alms of pious persons who had known his sanctity in the world, and he contented himself with so little that he seemed to receive these charities only to distribute them to the poor. The bishop Gaudricus, predecessor of Viventius, was so touched by the eminence of his virtue that, to procure a new ornament for his clergy, he made him subdeacon, and wished that he should have part in the ministry of the altars. The humility of our Saint had not yet had so rude a trial as on this occasion. He had recourse to tears and to the most pressing supplications, to oblige his bishop to leave him in the rank of the laity, of whom he believed himself the last before God, as he had always affected to be in the eyes of men. He was heard by no one; but he took such just measures to prevent his being raised higher that they were

obliged to leave him the rest of his days in his subdiaconate, where God made known how agreeable he was to Him by the virtue of miracles which He communicated to him, and which He deigned to continue to him after his death, to confirm the opinion which had been held of his sanctity during his life. It is commonly believed that he died on 27 February, the day on which his name is marked in almost all the martyrologies which make mention of him. But the year is not exactly agreed on, although in general it is held that it was about the middle of the seventh century, between 642 and 660. His body was buried in the church of Saint-Just, by the care of the abbot Viventius; and his relics were always there in very great veneration with the people, until, in the sixteenth century, they were taken up and dispersed with those of some other Saints by the Huguenots. So that there remains only an arm which had been detached from the body, and which was already kept at Saint-Galmier in Lyonnais, a town which bears his name, and which is a day's journey from Lyon, on the side of the Loire.

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[2] *Translation of the relics of Saint Julian, of Saint Pelagia and of Saint Macarius.* — About 1463, the bodies of Saint Julian of Alexandria, of Saint Pelagia, penitent, and of Saint Macarius of Egypt were brought from the East by the counts of Armagnac, and deposited in the church of Mont-Saint-Jean, then of the diocese of Autun, today of the diocese of Dijon. Pope Clement XI, suffering for a long time from gout, hoped to obtain some relief through the intercession of Saint Julian, specially invoked in this malady. On 12 December 1707, His Holiness sent word to the bishop of Autun that, proposing to build an altar in honour of Saint Julian, he desired to place there a portion of his relics. Mgr de Roquette, to conform to the wishes of the sovereign Pontiff, repaired to Mont-Saint-Jean, and, in spite of the murmurs of the people, detached a bone of Saint Julian which he sent to the sovereign Pontiff. Clement XI, in gratitude, made him a gift, on 3 May 1709, of a portion of the true Cross, which was borne in public procession to implore the divine mercy in the frightful dearth occasioned by the rigorous winter of 1709.

[3] The penalty of fire was that which the Roman laws ordained for magicians (Paul, bk. v, *Sentences*, tit. 25). Many Christians were burned as such, on account of the miracles which God worked in their favour.

[4] A tradition, based on a chapel built in a valley which bears the name of Fond and of Côte Sainte-Honorine, pretends that Saint Honorina was put to death at Mélomare, on the ancient Roman road from Lillebonne to Harfleur. It is added that her body was carried as far as the Seine, where it was thrown, and that afterwards it came to be stranded on the shore of Graville: it was buried on the hill where the abbey of Sainte-Honorine was later raised. — M. l'abbé Cochet, *Seine-Inférieure*. Honfleur (*Honorinae Fanum*) also pretends to draw its name from Saint Honorina. Let us say with Baillet that this saint is better known by her cult than by her history.

[5] This is what must be supposed from his name, Severianus, and that of all his children, Leander, Isidore, Fulgentius, Theodore, Florentina. The Byzantine emperors still had some possessions in Spain.

[6] He was so also for some time at Saint-Claude of León, in the north of Spain. (Yepes, ant. ii. Cf. AA. SS. O. B., vol. i, p. 372.)

[7] Cf. *The Monks of the West*, by M. de Montalembert. — See Father Le Brun, *Liturgy*, vol. ii, p. 27.

[1] Other variants: Waldimer, Garmier, Germier, Gaumier, Geaumier.

28 February

Martyrologies

Twenty-eighth day of February.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Macarius, Rufinus, Justus and Theophilus. — At Alexandria, the martyrdom of the holy Cerealis, Populus, Caius and Serapion. — In the same place, the memory of the holy Priests, Deacons and others in great number who, during a cruel plague with which that city was afflicted, in the time of the emperor Valerian, exposed themselves of their own accord to death in the assistance which they rendered to the plague-stricken, and for that are honoured as martyrs, by a custom which the piety of the faithful has introduced. 3rd c. — In the territory of Lyon, on Mount Jura, the obsequies of Saint Romanus, abbot, who first led the eremitical life in that place, and, having acquired a high reputation by the great number of his virtues and miracles, became afterwards the father of numerous monks. About 460. — At Pavia, the translation into that city of the body of Saint Augustine, from the island of Sardinia, by the care of Liutprand, king of the Lombards. 722.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, Saint Oswald,[1] religious of that monastery, who was raised, for his great merits, first to the bishopric of Worcester, then to the archbishopric of York, in England. 922 [*sic*]. — At Reims, Saint Romanus, bishop and confessor. About the year 533. — At Quimper, the feast of Saint Ruellinus,[2] bishop, disciple of Saint Tugdual. About 650. — At Tours, the feast of Saint William Firmatus, confessor. 1103. — At Mainz, the feast of Saint Martin, bishop of that city and confessor. Saint Martin of Mainz distinguished himself by the vigour with which he combated the Arianism which Euphrates, bishop of Cologne, favoured. About 350. — In the Boulonnais, Saint Condedus, English priest, who came to preach the faith in France. His first stage had been on the edge of the forest of Hardelot. After his death, a church and several houses were built there, which soon formed a village to which his name was given, and which is still called today Condette. He lived afterwards some years at the abbey of Fontenelle, and passed at last to an island of the Seine, where he died as a solitary. 651. — In the same place, Saint Herembert, lord of Ambert.[3] Born at Poissy, he was first a religious of Fontenelle and afterwards bishop of Toulouse; but he had such an apprehension of the judgments of God that he resigned his charge to go and hide himself anew in the cloister. 671. — At Algiers, feast of the translation of the relics of Saint Augustine.[4] — At Ajaccio, feast of Saint Fortunata.[5]

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Constantinople, the holy confessors Basil and Procopius, of the Order of Saint Basil, who, in the time of the emperor Leo, fought vigorously for the cult of the holy images. — At Pavia, the translation of the body of our father Saint Augustine, which, brought from the island of Sardinia, was deposited with great honours in the church of Saint Peter, called *in Caelo Aureo*, in the presence of several bishops and of Liutprand, king of the Lombards; on this occasion God worked great miracles.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict. — The Blessed Beatrice II of Este, virgin, of whom mention is made on 18 January.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — The Blessed Alexis Falconieri, confessor, of whom mention is made on 17 February.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, of whom mention is made on 22 February.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — At Florence, the Blessed Villana, woman, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, whose life was remarkable for her love of Jesus crucified, for an admirable patience, for self-renunciation, for contempt of the things of earth and for her other virtues. 1360.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — Near Civitella, in Latium, in the territory of Subiaco, the Blessed Thomas of Cori, confessor, of the Order of Minors, remarkable for the austerity of his life and for his excellent charity toward God and neighbour; illustrious by his preaching and his miracles, he was beatified by the sovereign pontiff Pius VI [*sic*; Pius VI beatified him in 1786]. 1729.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — At Pavia, the translation of the body of our father Saint Augustine, from the island of Sardinia, by the care of Liutprand, king of the Lombards, which rests, surrounded by the veneration of the peoples, in the church of Saint Peter, called *in Caelo Aureo*, today the church of Saint Augustine.

Martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Pavia, the translation of the body of Saint Augustine, doctor of the Church, from the island of Sardinia, by the care of Liutprand, king of the Lombards.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Aquila, in the Abruzzi, the Blessed Antonia of Florence, abbess, of the Order of Saint Clare. 1472. — At Laodicea and at Rome, the holy Nymphas and Eubulus, qualified with the title of apostles, because they were the familiars of Saint Paul, of Saint Pudens, and of other illustrious persons of the nascent Church. 1st c. — At Hierapolis, in Phrygia, Saint Abercius, martyr. — At Antwerp, the holy Symphorian, Macarius, Victorinus, Maurus or Maurice, Anicetus, Modestus, Cyriacus, Faustus, Placidus, Rochus, Alexander, Genesius, Eulalia, Irene, all Roman martyrs, whose relics were transported in part from the cemetery of Saint Callistus into Belgium, in the year 1650. — At Damascus, Saint Darsus, bishop of that city. Epoch uncertain. — At Verona, Saint Vindemialis, bishop. 5th c. — At Alexandria, Saint Proterius, patriarch and martyr. He was assassinated with six others, then cut in pieces and burned during the Easter festivities, by the orders of Aelurus, intruded bishop, partisan of Eutyches, who afterwards poisoned himself. A.D. 457. — At Cologne, Saint Ruline [Rulina], virgin, whom one often associates with Saint Onesime, another virgin of the same country.

Saint Romanus, Abbot of Condat and Founder of the Monasteries of Mount Jura

460. — Pope: Saint Leo the Great. — King of the first kingdom of Burgundy: Gundioc.

Saint Romanus and Saint Lupicinus were born of an honest family toward the end of the fourth century, in that part of the ancient province of the Sequani now known under the name of Haut-Bugey. Some authors think that the town of Izernore, a considerable town at that period, was the native place of these two brothers, whose cradle is consequently placed today in the diocese of Belley.

Romanus preceded his brother in the career of evangelical perfection. He was prevented from childhood by the grace of Jesus Christ, which preserved him from the disorders ordinary to youth, and which made him make great progress in virtue as he grew in age. Little care was taken to cultivate his mind by the study of human letters, but he became very skilful in another science, incomparably more estimable, which is that of charity. He renounced marriage with the resolution of giving himself entirely to the service of God who, being the sole author of his design, led him Himself as by the hand in the ways of salvation.

Before engaging in the practices of the monastic life, of which there existed as yet no master in the mountains of the Jura, he went to put himself for some time under the direction of the abbot Sabinus, who governed at Lyon the monastery of Ainay, built at the confluence of the Rhône and the Saône, near the place where the martyrs of Lyon had suffered. Romanus studied there all the practices of the cenobitic life, and obtained from this abbot a copy of the *Lives of the Fathers*, and another of the *Institutions* of Cassian, which were then quite recently written. With these helps and the lessons he had received, he retired, at the age of thirty-five, into the forests of Mount Jura which separate today Franche-Comté from the country of Gex, and fixed himself, about the year 425, in a place named Condat,[1] where, between three mountains, he found a space of ground fit for cultivation, a fountain which offered him limpid water, and trees which furnished him with wild fruits. His time was divided between prayer, reading and the work of his hands. He passed thus some years in this solitude, in the midst of wild beasts, forgotten by the world which he had been the first to forget. Meanwhile behold that God, after having formed him Himself in silence and retreat, is about to place him at the head of the holy nation which He has chosen in the mountains of the Jura, to be its guide and model.

Romanus had left in the world a brother named Lupicinus, who had like him from his childhood lived in innocence and the fear of God, but whom his father had, in spite of him, engaged in marriage. Providence soon broke his bonds by the death of his wife and by that of his father; so that, having only a mother and a sister to consider, he made them find it good that he should leave them to go and join Romanus, his brother, whom he had seen in a dream calling him into his desert. They animated one another by their mutual

example to the practice of the most austere virtues, and, still more united by the desire of sanctifying themselves than by the ties of blood, they had no differences between them but those which humility gave birth to.

The ordinary enemy of salvation tried to destroy so holy a union, and it wanted little that by the violence of temptations he should succeed in making them abandon their solitude and their first resolutions.[2] God having at last delivered them by His grace from the secret and humiliating insults of their enemy, they walked with more ardour than before in the narrow and painful way which leads to eternal life. Their renewal became a source of graces and blessings for many others; for the odour of their virtues, spreading far in a short time, drew into their desert several persons who fled the world to come and put themselves under their direction. The first who discovered with much pain the retreat of our Saints were two young ecclesiastics of that part of Burgundy which forms today the country of Gex; others followed them there, and the number of their disciples increased in such a way that they saw themselves obliged to build a regular monastery. They began from then to bring them sick and possessed: and the marvels which they worked on the bodies of these unfortunates produced still greater ones on their souls, for those who found themselves cured by the virtue of their prayers commonly remained in the monastery, to exercise themselves under their discipline in vigils, fasts and the other practices of the spiritual life. Such were the beginnings of the celebrated abbey of Condat.

The sterility of the mountains which surrounded the valley, and the great number of solitaries who increased every day, constrained the two brothers to extend beyond and to build a monastery in a neighbouring place named Lauconne. They governed these two communities jointly with a union and concord that one could regard as the particular work of the Holy Spirit, who knows how to ally things opposed to one another and to form as it pleases Him a salutary mixture of the contrary humours of men for the execution of His designs. Grace seems sometimes in effect to take pleasure in varying its works and diversifying the fruits of holiness which it produces.

Romanus and Lupicinus, though brothers and animated by the same spirit, were of a quite different character. The first was naturally gentle, peaceful and accommodating; the second, on the contrary, was firm and rigid; severity always presided over his counsels, and his actions always savoured of a rigorism which would have appeared excessive, if Lupicinus had not been still harder toward himself than toward others. But the grace which had associated these two Saints, even more than fraternity, tempered so happily the weakness of the one by the rigidity of the other that there resulted an excellent conduct for the salvation of those they governed. Romanus always forestalled with his clemency those who found themselves in fault, without even waiting for them to acknowledge themselves guilty and ask pardon. Lupicinus, without absolutely opposing this indulgence of his brother, restrained it as much as he could, for fear that it would open the door to relaxation and authorize relapses. Romanus did not think he ought to impose on his disciples a yoke heavier than that which they appeared voluntarily disposed to bear; Lupicinus, esteeming that religious ought to tend to perfection, did not judge it too much to exact of them to press them by discourses which were only a simple exposition of what he himself and his brother practised to give them the example. Romanus made no acceptance of persons, and received indifferently all who presented themselves; Lupicinus showed himself difficult in the choice of those who were to be admitted, and used great circumspection toward novices. But as this contrariety, which might have produced division between persons less united, was always accompanied by a perfect understanding in these two Saints, who acted by one same principle and for one same end, one always found in the one wherewith to supply what was wanting in the other. Saint Romanus, though the elder, often yielded to Saint Lupicinus, whether by reason, or temperament, or virtue; but God did not fail to declare Himself from time to time by sensible effects in favour of his meekness, and one saw admirable conversions of religious who had more than once gone out of the monastery and whom he had received as often as they asked to re-enter. One of the ancient religious of his community, of the spirit and character of Saint Lupicinus, reproved him one day rather strongly for this facility in receiving postulants,

and because, having filled the monastery with people who appeared rather gathered than chosen, there remained no room for worthier subjects when they should present themselves; he urged him even to send away all those in whom the least defect was found, and to keep only those who gave proofs of a solid virtue and a well-tried vocation. Saint Romanus, without showing that he found this remonstrance misplaced from an inferior, contented himself with answering him: That it was not easy to make the discernment he desired; that God alone knew the depth and disposition of hearts; that among his disciples there had been found some who had begun with fervour and who afterwards had fallen into relaxation; that others had left him two or three times, and that, having re-entered the monastery, they had served God there the rest of their days with an exemplary piety; that among even those who had quite separated to return to the world, some, far from abandoning themselves to vice, had religiously practised the maxims they had learned at the monastery; that others even, raised to the priesthood, were actually governing churches and monasteries with edification.

One year when the fruits were more abundant, the monks of Condat took occasion of it to relax their abstinence, and they rose with pride against Saint Romanus, who reproved them for it with his ordinary gentleness. The holy abbot called to his help his brother Lupicinus, who, to re-establish the first austerity, caused to be served at first only a porridge made with barley, without salt and without oil. A food so insipid was not to the taste of the relaxed monks: they murmured, and when they saw their murmurs useless, twelve took the course of leaving the monastery, leaving there by their flight peace and regularity.

Saint Romanus, afflicted to see that the severity of his brother had obliged these religious to quit their state, could not help making some complaints of it to him. The austere abbot of Lauconne remonstrated that he ought not to be saddened by the departure of these persons, since the threshing-floor of the Lord had been purged, and the light straw having been blown outside by the wind of pride, only the good grain had remained. This answer, however conformable it appeared to the spirit of the Gospel, could not console Saint Romanus for the loss of his brethren, because he could not extinguish in his heart that tender charity which made him fear for their salvation; he wept for them, but with the confidence that He who had deigned to die for them would make them live again and re-enter into grace: in effect, he obtained their conversion by the ardour and perseverance of his prayers; all returned, some sooner, others later, and, touched with a salutary repentance, they did an edifying penance. In the meanwhile, Saint Hilary, bishop of Arles, following the pretension which his church had to the supremacy of the Gauls, since the emperor Honorius had transferred there the seat of the praetorian prefecture, after the ruin of Trier by the Barbarians, had gone to Besançon in the year 444, to inquire against Celidonius, bishop of that city, accused of having married a widow, and who was deposed.[3] Saint Hilary heard speak of the virtues and merits which made the two abbots of the Jura celebrated; he sent clerics to Saint Romanus, to beg him to come and find him at Besançon. The humble religious repaired there, and the holy bishop, to honour his person and give him more authority, ordained him priest, in spite of his resistance. This honour produced no change in the conduct of Saint Romanus, who was then about fifty-four years old, but it gave a new lustre to his humility and to the judicious simplicity of his conduct. He did not think that the dignity of the priesthood ought to distinguish him from his brethren, except at the time of the sacrifice; he was always simple, familiar with them, and sought never to surpass them but in regularity and mortifications.

The reputation of Saint Romanus spread farther and farther from day to day, and drew to him so great a number of disciples that he was obliged to build other monasteries, in the Vosges and even in Germany. One of the most celebrated was that which he founded in the diocese of Lausanne, and which gave birth to a borough known today under the name of Romainmôtier, in the Pays de Vaud.

Our two Saints had a sister who wished to imitate their manner of life; they built her a monastery on a rock near Lauconne, full of caverns, which caused this convent to be called La Baume, a name which signifies cavern in the Celtic language, and which has passed into the patois of the country, where the grottoes which are found in great quantity in the mountains of Bugey are called *Balmes*.[4] This new community became so

numerous that at the death of Saint Romanus there were counted in it a hundred and five nuns, who kept so exact an enclosure that they left the precincts of the monastery only to be carried to burial. Although several of them had their brothers or even their sons in the monastery of Lauconne, which was so near, they never spoke to them: the ones and the others already regarded themselves as buried.

Saint Romanus had drawn the rule which he established in these monasteries from the *Observances* of Lérins and the *Institutions* of

Cassian. He had also taken from the Oriental monks, and above all from the rule of Saint Basil and that of Saint Pachomius, the usages which might suit the climate and temperament of the Gauls. His monks tilled the earth to live; they never ate flesh, unless they were sick; but they ate eggs and dairy produce.

All the monasteries established by Saint Romanus and Saint Lupicinus recognized them for their fathers and directors, and the house of Condat for their mother and the source of their origin. Thus the rule was preserved there much longer than elsewhere in its purity and exactness.

The two brothers visited frequently and by turns the distant houses, and often they profited by these journeys to make pilgrimages of piety to neighbouring places consecrated by the devotion of the faithful. On this occasion, let us cite a fact reported by Saint Gregory of Tours; it is the spiritual bouquet which we present to our readers, in ending this notice.

Saint Romanus, going to visit the tomb of Saint Maurice, at Agaune, with Palladius, his companion, was surprised by night near Geneva. He took shelter in a hut of lepers, who gave him hospitality, with the more eagerness because he showed not the least repugnance on seeing the frightful malady, the horror of which had caused them to be sequestered from society. But what was not their surprise the next day on awaking to see themselves entirely cured! Their benefactor had left the cottage very early in the morning: knowing that he had taken the road to Geneva, they ran after him to express their gratitude; they could not overtake him, but this gratitude broke out in public demonstrations, and soon the whole city of Geneva, where these two lepers were known, was informed of the miracle which had just been worked in their favour.

On his return from Agaunum, Saint Romanus was received with great pomp by the clergy, the magistrates and the people of Geneva, who led him in triumph, followed by the two cured lepers whom they regarded as his conquest. The confusion which all these honours caused him was great, but it did not prevent him from profiting by this occasion to exhort the Genevans to remain firm in the faith, so fertile in miracles. Saint Romanus, unable to bear the praises of men, went promptly to shut himself in his monastery of Condat, where he died holily some time after, aged seventy years, in the presence of Saint Lupicinus, his brother, and of his sister, abbess of La Baume, to whom he recommended, in the name of Jesus Christ, all the religious men and women of the houses which he had founded. His death is placed on 28 February 460.

His body was carried to the monastery of La Baume, as he had granted to his sister. God continued to honour him with the gift of miracles after his death, to attest his sanctity and make his glory shine forth. His relics were preserved with care in these places until 1522, the epoch at which they were in part consumed in a fire with those of Saint Lupicinus. Today the last remains of the holy abbot are preserved in the church of Saint-Romain-de-Roche which has replaced the ancient monastery of La Baume; they are enclosed in a fine shrine which has the form of a mausoleum of the thirteenth century. The church, which appears to be of the sixteenth century, is built on the edge of a frightful precipice and isolated on the rock of La Balme. Each year, on certain feast days, the inhabitants of Saint-Lupicin repair in procession to this solitary temple. Ado and Usuard, writers of the ninth century, mentioned him on 28 February in their Martyrology; they have been followed in the modern Roman; the church of Lyon and that of Belley make on that day the office of the simple rite for him.[5]

Ways in which Saint Romanus and Saint Lupicinus are represented. — Saint Romanus and Saint Lupicinus are represented kneeling and in prayer, while the demon makes a hail of pebbles rain upon them. Discouraged, they leave the place of their retreat; a pious woman, of whom they ask hospitality after a day's march, reproaches them with yielding the ground to the enemy. The scene of the departure, of the halt in this villager's cottage, and of their return, can furnish other motifs. They are also figured as abbots, with a crozier in the hand and a little church; washing the feet of pilgrims or of the sick; working the earth.

The life of Saint Romanus and of Saint Lupicinus, his brother, has been written by Saint Gregory of Tours and by a religious of Condat; the Bollandists, Tillemont, Father Gonod of Bourg, in his work entitled *Vitae et Sententiae patrum occidentis,* Longueval, in his *History of the Gallican Church,* and almost all the authors of collections of Lives of Saints have spoken of these two brothers, celebrated in the annals of the Church of the West. It is from these sources that Mgr Depéry, hagiographer of Belley, has drawn what he has reported of them for the instruction and edification of the faithful.

Saint William Firmatus

1103. — Pope: Paschal II. — King of France: Philip I.

Dulcis est una patria, et vera una patria, sola patria: praeter illam quidquid nobis est, peregrinatio est.

There is but one true and sweet fatherland: outside of that, all is but displacement and pilgrimage. — Aug. on Ps. xli.

Saint William Firmatus was born at Tours in 1026. From his childhood he was prevented by the graces of God and responded to them with a fidelity rarely met at that age. Endowed with an open mind, a sure judgment, a happy memory, he had a conversation as attractive as it was serious; his rare modesty enhanced its charm still more and added to all his other virtues an inestimable price.

The world would have wished to keep this young man whose brilliant qualities would have done it honour, but God called him to a more perfect life. He solicited and obtained the favour of forming part of the Chapter of Saint-Venant. There he gave the example of the most entire obedience and the most unalterable charity. Having become very skilful in the art of medicine, he soon acquired a great reputation, and the sick came in crowds to consult him. At that epoch the practice of medicine and the ecclesiastical profession were in no way incompatible.

The demon profited by his successes, his fortune and his other exterior advantages, to murmur in his ear some words of pride and to make shine before his eyes a brilliant future in the world. William knew how to baffle the wiles of the enemy; knowing all the extent of human frailty, he had recourse to prayer, and he heard this divine voice resound in his heart: "Sell all that thou hast, give the price to the poor and follow Me."[1] Strongly shaken by grace, he went to find his mother and made known to her his design in these terms:

"You know, mother, that the world passes and that to lean upon it is to lean upon a reed. God has made us to His image and He wills that we become partakers of His divine nature. Let us exchange then the goods of earth for those of heaven. Of all the riches that God has given us, take all you desire and let the rest become the good of the poor. As for me, with your consent, I think of entering religion." "What! my son," replied the mother, melting in tears, "what! thou thinkest of leaving me! who will now be the support of my old age and the consolation of my widowhood? Why then, if thou wilt serve thy God, not associate me in thy design? If thou wilt live in solitude, canst thou not admit me, me alone, with thee, me who was thy devoted nurse and who would now be thy humble servant? Permit this, my son, that she who, at thy entrance into this corruptible life, showed thee the road, may today follow thee, when thou crossest the road to heaven. My son, thou canst dispose of thy goods as thou wilt."

After these touching words, mother and son, in a holy transport of joy, mingle their tears and embraces: both sell at once their goods, distribute the price to the poor, and quit the city to retire into a hermitage called the Seven Brothers.[2]

While the mother prepared for her son the food of each day, the son gave to his mother, and abundantly, the spiritual feast of the divine word. As long as the mother lived, Saint William remained in that place; but at her death, having no more reason to stay there, being besides importuned by the numerous visits that were paid him, he quitted his country and retired into the depth of the forest of Concise, near Laval.

The Saint found not in this place the tranquillity he hoped for. Some young libertines concerted with a woman of ill life to deliver an assault upon his virtue. She came during the night to knock at the door of his cell and put everything in play to seduce him. But Firmatus, in her presence, took a flaming brand, applied it to his own arm so strongly that he kept the traces of the burn the rest of his days. Touched by this heroic action, the unhappy woman threw herself at the knees of the solitary and asked his pardon. Those who had advised her had followed her into the forest to see what would happen. The courage of the Saint triumphed over their perversity; in sign of repentance, they published everywhere the infamous project they had conceived and how the Saint had known how to baffle it. This action made the virtue of our solitary shine with a greater lustre, and the crowd was more eager than ever to seek his counsels and implore the help of his prayers.

The concourse became such that his humility took alarm at it: he left his solitude and went to Palestine to visit the places sanctified by the Saviour of the world.

God assisted him in a sensible manner in his pilgrimage: He made, at his prayer, a spring gush forth in the midst of the desert, whose aridity caused him frightful sufferings.

Another time he strayed, and as he could not find his road, God sent him a raven to guide him. This bird preceded him, and, by its voice and its repeated beating of wings, it engaged him to follow it. He was also visited by trials, but the Saints receive them as favours. Taken by the enemies of the Christian name, he was chained, beaten with rods and put in prison. He was drawn from it only to be laden with heavy burdens and obliged then to walk after the fashion of quadrupeds. The courageous athlete of Christ bore all this with joy, and, if he had not then the glory of martyrdom, one may affirm that he acquired all the merit of it. Set at liberty, he returned to France and betook himself to Vitré, in Brittany, where he remained very little time. At Dordenay, he made a spring of water gush miraculously by fixing his staff in the earth, and the inhabitants, in memory of this miracle, called this place the fountain of Saint-Firmat.

This prodigy having drawn a great number of persons to his hermitage, he returned toward Maine and dwelt in the forest of Mayenne, at Fontaine-Géhard. After having wandered in several other places, he established himself definitively at Mantilly, near Passais, in the diocese of Le Mans. There he gave himself to all sorts of austerities and to rigorous fasts; he often ate only in the evening, and even then took only a few roots. He had for bed only some pieces of rush on which he stretched himself, granting only two or three hours to a sleep which nature imperiously claimed. Detached from the goods of the earth, he accepted only what was indispensable for his food, and he distributed to the poor all the offerings which came to him from the piety of the faithful.

William lived in peace in solitude, when a circumstance came again to remove him from it. His clerk having been the object of ill-treatment on the part of certain workmen of the country, he fled furtively and went to hide on the banks of the Rhône in a place called Eosne.

He returned a second time to Jerusalem and came back anew to his solitude.

However the inhabitants of Mantilly could not console themselves for his departure, and they deputed two of their fellow-citizens to go in search of him. These set out barefoot, quite resolved not to return without

having discovered the retreat of the Saint and without bringing him back with them. They besought God to guide them and put them on the traces of the pious solitary. Arrived on the banks of the Rhône, they questioned a fisherman who seemed to be there expressly to discover to them the retreat of Saint Firmatus. The Saint enjoyed already in this place a great reputation, and the sick betook themselves there eagerly. Having at last found him, the two travellers threw themselves at his knees and besought him with tears to return to Mantilly. The Saint let himself be moved by their entreaties and consented to return to his ancient solitude.

William kept his word, and as soon as the day of his arrival was known, all the people went to meet him and gave him a reception worthy of his virtue and of the love that was borne him.

He was scarcely arrived in his solitude when one of his relatives from Tours came to find him and solicited the help of his prayers for the deliverance of her son who was a prisoner. The Saint had her told that she might be tranquil, that her son would be set at liberty. The poor mother had scarcely re-entered her dwelling when her son, free and joyous, threw himself on her neck and affirmed that the prayer alone of William had delivered him.

Our Saint, as we read in the life of some of the privileged servants of God, exercised a great empire over animals. It is related that the birds, even the most wild, approached him without fear, came to eat in his hand or take refuge under his garments to shelter themselves from the cold. When he sat on the bank of the pond near his cell, the fish came to his feet and let themselves be taken willingly by the servant of God, who put them back in the water without having done them any harm.

One day his clerk runs up, all in agitation, and announces to him that a wild boar is making great ravages in the garden and destroying almost all the vegetables. William goes then toward this terrible animal, takes it gently by the ear, and the boar, gentle as a lamb, lets itself be led, follows the Saint into his cell, passes the night there and recovers its liberty only the next day very early, but after a charitable warning not to ravage henceforth the garden of his clerk.

In his last years, this holy old man was as the oracle of the inhabitants of Mayenne, of Domfront, of Passais, and of all the neighbouring countries. All his words were listened to with sovereign respect, and he knew how to use his influence for the relief of the poor. Delicata, wife of Grimald, lord of Landivy, did not share the sentiments of liberality of her husband, who was possessor of immense riches. The saint reproved her energetically for her avarice, and predicted to her that she would be condemned one day to beg her bread. Delicata profited by the warnings of the servant of God, and became as generous as she had been avaricious.

His life was full before God, and the hour of reward was about to strike. One day when he was at Mortain, in the diocese of Avranches, where he often went to pray, he fell sick, and a few days after, with joyous spirit, his face radiant with serenity, he expired gently. His death happened on 24 April of the year 1103.

His body was buried in the church of Saint-Evroul, which has since taken the name of Saint-William. His tomb was illustrated by numerous miracles, and a great concourse of pilgrims was made there. He is the patron of Mortain.[3] The church of Tours celebrates each year the feast of its illustrious citizen on 28 February.

Painters and sculptors may range Saint William Firmatus among the hermits, and give him all the attributes which characterize the inhabitants of solitude: hut, knotted cord, staff, cross formed of branches, wild animals in the landscape, cowl, great beard, etc. The solicitations of the shameless woman, the sermon in action on the hell to which forbidden pleasures lead, would furnish the subject of a fine picture to some painter of imagination. One must not forget, as an attribute of Saint William, the wild boar which he obliged to fast a whole night in his cell.

M. l'abbé Rolland, honorary canon, chaplain of the Boarding-school of the Brothers, at Tours.

Blessed Villana de' Botti

1360. — Pope: Innocent VI. — Emperor of Germany: Charles IV.

We follow a holy and straight way when our conversion leads us to the religious life. — Saint Gregory the Great, Commentary on the 1st Book of Kings, bk. v.

Villana, born at Florence at the beginning of the fourteenth century, of the honest family of de' Botti, appeared from her childhood entirely given to heavenly desires and to the holiest works of penance. Sighing after the divine spouse, she quitted her father's house to go and hide in a convent of nuns. But it was in vain that she fled, for God wished to make the riches of His mercy shine forth in her in a more striking manner. She married against her will, to obey her father, and soon, seduced by the pomps and vanities of the world, she abandoned little by little the exercises of the spiritual life to which she had at first given herself. But Jesus, the good shepherd, who would not have the straying sheep perish, permitted that at a certain moment when she took much care to adorn herself, and admired before a mirror the charms of her face, she saw herself twice like a demon. All frightened by this vision, which made her know the ugliness of her soul, she quitted her rich garments, left her ornaments, and ran, very simply clothed, to the Friars Preachers of Santa Maria Novella, shedding abundant tears, by which she purified her soul of its former stains.

Thus changed by the right hand of the Most High, Villana, in order to redeem the time, gave herself ardently to fasts, to prayer, to all the works of penance and to the contempt of perishable things. Not only did she return to that degree of fervour which she had lately abandoned; but she was soon inflamed with the fires of divine love, and merited graces so abundant that often she was ravished in ecstasy, principally during the holy Sacrifice, and when she took part in a spiritual reading or conference. When she was warned to put bounds to her austerities, she answered that the sweetness of the divine love with which she was filled made her find bodily food distasteful. The poor excited her charity so keenly that it needed the authority of her parents and of her husband to turn her from going to beg from door to door wherewith to feed them. Jealous of becoming more and more conformed to Jesus crucified, she had to bear injuries, calumnies, outrages, long and cruel infirmities, the insults of demons and the snares laid for her. All these trials were so far from vanquishing her courage that she ardently desired to see them increase still more.

In the midst of her holy practices and her other works of penance, courage and piety, it is certain that Villana merited to enjoy, on several occasions, heavenly apparitions and conversations. Her cell shone sometimes with supernatural brightness; often also she predicted the future. At last, when the time approached to receive the prize of her virtues, exhausted by her glorious labours, victorious over the artifices of the demon, she received with lively devotion the sacraments of the Church. She had read to her afterwards the passion of the Lord, and when they came to these words: *Bowing his head, he gave up the ghost*, she put her hands in the form of a cross on her breast, and rendered to God her holy soul, in the year 1360. Her body, clothed in the habit of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, exhaling a heavenly perfume, was from then the object of the unceasing veneration of the faithful, to the point that, for a month and more, it was not possible to celebrate her funeral. The admiration was general; many persons contended for shreds of her garments. The writers of the time say that the holiness of Villana was attested by miracles. One must not be astonished therefore if the cult of this servant of God has been maintained for several centuries, and if it has come down to us increasing from day to day. It is after having known all these facts, and having canonically examined them, that Pope Leo XII, on the favourable opinion of the Congregation of Rites, deigned to permit the Order of Friars Preachers and the clergy, both secular and regular, of the diocese of Florence, to celebrate the office and the Mass in honour of the Blessed Villana.

Dominican Breviary.

Blessed Thomas of Cori, Friar Minor of the Observance

1729. — Pope: Benedict XIII.

Blessed is the desolate religious for whom the world is but an exile, heaven the fatherland, the cell paradise. — Thomas à Kempis, *Prose.*

Cori, formerly Cora, a very ancient little town of ancient Latium, and forming today part of the Roman Campagna, was the native place of the Blessed Thomas. He was born there on 4 June 1655, and was named Francis Antony at baptism. His father, called Noël Placidi, and his mother Angela Cardilli, were poor people who earned their living painfully by taking care of a flock. But if they were destitute of the goods of the earth, they possessed a treasure more precious than all the riches of the world, the fear of God, which they transmitted to their son by giving him a Christian education. Their solicitude to lead him in the way of virtue was crowned with the happiest success. This child joined to a happy disposition a great innocence and an inclination to piety which announced, from his first years, the progress he was to make in the way of perfection.

When he was of age to receive education, his parents entrusted him to a canon of the town, who taught a rather large number of children and who soon admired, as did all his pupils, the precocious virtue of his new disciple. It was already so solid that one never saw him fall, as it were, into a fault. He joined to this advantage an assiduous application to work and possessed a faithful memory; thus he was regarded as the first of his class. To sanctify and develop in him the gifts which God granted him, he watched continually over himself, fled the companies which were merely for pleasure, passed in the exercises of Christian piety the days consecrated to the Lord, and frequented the sacraments in an edifying manner.

It would have been to be desired that this child, who showed so many good qualities and dispositions so happy for the sciences, could continue his studies; the poverty of his parents did not permit them to leave him long at school. It was necessary therefore that he should himself give his care to his father’s flock and occupy himself in keeping it; he submitted to the will of the authors of his days; but in this employment he lost nothing of his attraction for piety; he sought the most desert places to give himself to reading and prayer. It was in this solitude that he formed himself above all to the holy exercise of meditation and that he was inflamed with the fire of divine love with which he burned all his life.

While this young servant of God was thus working at his sanctification, the Lord called his parents to Himself. This death leaving him free to follow his wishes, and his attraction carrying him toward the religious state, he provided for the settlement of two sisters whom he had, then he solicited and obtained his admission among the Franciscans of the Observance, who had a convent near Cori. He took the religious habit at the age of twenty-two, on 7 February 1677, in the house of Orvieto, and he was then given the name of Thomas, under which he has been known since that moment. With the garments of a friar minor, the new novice received the spirit of this holy Order in so abundant a manner that he soon possessed all the virtues of a worthy disciple of Saint Francis. His obedience, his modesty, his detachment from all created things, his zeal to instruct himself in his duties soon made him regarded as a model of regularity by the religious, who gave him unanimously their votes for the profession to which he was admitted on 8 February 1678. So striking a merit could not escape the attention of the superiors. They resolved therefore to have Brother Thomas continue his studies, and they sent him for that purpose to the convent of Viterbo, then to that of Velletri. He gave himself with ardour to work to acquire the knowledge of the sciences which were taught him; but he took care to nourish his piety so well that, during all the time that his course lasted, he lost nothing of his first fervour. At the end of his theology, he received the sacred order of priesthood. His sentiments of devotion were so lively when he celebrated his first Mass that he shed tears in abundance. These precious dispositions did not pass with the occasion which had given them birth, the servant of God preserved them all his life and showed constantly, thenceforth, the same respect which he had manifested at first for our august mysteries.

The edification which the holy religious had given at Orvieto, during his novitiate, determined the superiors to send him back to that house with the charge of master of novices. He repaired thither and was received there with joy, on account of the advantageous idea that was held of his virtue and capacity. The expectation in which they were of the good he would work was not deceived; he directed the novices with so much charity, prudence, zeal and discretion that he promptly proved his talent for the employment entrusted to him. He formed his disciples with extreme care to religious perfection, treating them nevertheless with great gentleness and having compassion on their weakness. If he inflicted on them some penance, he shared it with them. His custom was to prescribe to others only the acts of virtue which he had himself practised first. This manner of acting, so wise and so charitable, made him cherished by all the novices, to whom he rendered the yoke of religion lighter; thus they keenly desired to keep him; but he was soon called to a new kind of life.

It is an ancient usage of the Order of Saint Francis to have in each province some convents of retreat and recollection in which the religious who inhabit them lead a more retired, more penitent and more austere life than in the other houses. This pious usage no longer subsisted in Italy in the seventeenth century, when Pope Innocent XI, of venerable memory, zealous for religious perfection, manifested the desire that it should be re-established. The superiors of the Franciscans of the Observance hastened to fulfil the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff and designated, among other convents of retreat, that of Saint Francis, situated on the territory of the celebrated abbey of Subiaco, near Civitella, in a place surrounded by mountains covered with thick forests. Several good religious asked their superiors for permission to retire there; and of this number was Father Thomas, who obtained the permission without difficulty, because they wished to people these houses with solidly virtuous subjects. He ran thither therefore, carrying with him only his breviary, which was the most precious object that he had for his use. The aspect of this abode was fit to satisfy his attraction for penance. In the midst of thick woods, one found a poor house, which was like a hermitage placed in a desert. Such was, for several years, the dwelling of the servant of God. He led there an extremely poor and mortified life, gave himself to prayer, an exercise to which he consecrated a part of the day and even of the night. He joined to it the most fatiguing exterior labours and those most fitted to humble him. Thus he acquired in this solitude new degrees of perfection.

But in occupying himself with his own sanctification with so much zeal and success, the Blessed Thomas thought often of procuring that of the neighbour. He was especially touched by the deplorable state in which so many unhappy countries find themselves which have not the happiness of possessing the inestimable treasure of the faith. He believed therefore that he ought to tear himself from his dear retreat to go and carry this divine torch to the nations which still sleep in the darkness of unbelief. In consequence, he offered himself to his superiors for the mission of China. God, who wished to content Himself with the good will and devotion of His servant, did not permit his offers to be accepted. Two of his confrères, Fathers Antony Linasco, a Spaniard, apostolic missionary, who died in the odour of sanctity, and John Baptist of Illicito, afterwards martyred by the infidels, assured him likewise that he would work a greater good among Christians than in foreign missions. They counselled him both to labour at the sanctification of the peoples of the country in which he lived. Humbly deferring to this counsel, the servant of God applied himself with all his power to win souls by his preaching, his missions, his charitable exhortations, his good care and his assiduity in the confessional, joined to fervent prayers which he addressed with tears to the Lord. So many efforts were not fruitless; he won to God a very great number of sinners and even of the most criminal; he prevented an infinity of faults, at the same time that he became a model for the religious, and that he established in Italy a Recollection much more austere for the Order of Saint Francis than that which had until then been practised.

Providence furnished the Blessed Thomas with the means of establishing definitively this Recollection, by permitting that he should be elected guardian of the convent of Civitella, in the year 1686. As soon as he saw himself at the head of his brethren, he made all his efforts to bring back among them that spirit of penance

and mortification which originally distinguished the Order of Saint Francis. To attain this end, he made several severe regulations which were at first observed with fervour by the good religious who inhabited this house; but a certain number of them having departed for China as missionaries, those who remained lost courage, and although their holy superior excited them to perfection by his words and examples, although he employed himself with all his power to relieve them, even to filling the offices of porter and questor, they ended by abandoning him all and by retiring into mitigated convents. He remained thus alone for eight months, supporting himself only by patience and prayer; but at the end of that time he began to be disconcerted. One day when he was quite cast down, he made this prayer to the Lord: “Help me, O my God, bodily strength abandons me; I can no longer resist this so painful state. I bear it willingly for Thy greater glory, as much as I can; but I am reduced henceforth to such a point that, if Thy help does not strengthen me, I shall have to depart from this convent and abandon the enterprise.” The Lord often afflicts His servants only to try their virtue and to reward it even from this life; the prayer of the Blessed obtained promptly its effect. Subjects came from divers places to the convent of Civitella to range themselves there under the direction of the holy superior. He formed them to perfection, and several became afterwards models; such were among others Father Francis Boyvin, French by nation, and the venerable Father Theophilus of Corte, in Corsica, whose canonization is being pursued at Rome.

Although at the head of a community become numerous, the Blessed Thomas did not neglect his works of zeal toward seculars, whom he assisted in all their spiritual needs. He took also particular care of the poor and wished that alms should always be given them, however poor the house itself might be. God was pleased to show, by two events which border on the miraculous, how agreeable the charity of His servant was to Him. Once when wine was wanting for the table of the religious, the holy superior had water put there, and almost at the same instant a barrel was seen to arrive which furnished wine sufficiently, not only for the brethren, but also for the guests and the poor. Another time the religious, entering the refectory, found nothing there to eat. The servant of God leads them to the church to recite the graces; while they were making this prayer, the door-bell rang: it was benefactors who sent bread and wine for the whole community.

The edification which the convent of Civitella gave made the superiors desire to form a second house of Recollection, similar to the first. They chose for that purpose that of Palombara, and sent there, in 1703, Father Thomas with some of his religious. Others went there likewise; and at the end of some years, the new house was found full. The demon, jealous of this holy work, set the inhabitants of the country against the man of God, who caused him several vexations, because he had begun by destroying some abuses; but, by his gentleness, his patience and the reputation of holiness which he acquired, he made them so well return from their prejudices that they gave him entirely their confidence and professed for him a particular veneration.

The Blessed, having consolidated the establishment of Palombara, obtained from his superiors permission to return to his dear solitude of Civitella; he lived there twenty years, during which he was several times chosen to govern this house. He did not cease either, during all this time, to labour at the salvation of souls, and merited the title of apostle of Subiaco. Afflicted, in his last years, with a deep ulcer in the leg and several other very painful infirmities, he would neither exempt himself from any of the practices of his rule, nor abandon any of his works of zeal. When he was urged to take some care of his health, he answered: “My son, I am at the end of my career; I must run to the end to carry off the prize.” Such were the sentiments and the conduct of this man of God to his last moments. After a morning spent in the confessional, on 4 January 1729, he was seized with fever, to which was soon joined a spitting of blood. The progress of the disease warning him of the danger he ran, he wished to confess several times and asked then for the Holy Eucharist; when it was brought to him, he knelt on his bed, and with a profound humility asked pardon for all the bad examples which he pretended to have given. After he had communicated, his face became all inflamed and then returned to its ordinary state. When he approached his end, he took a smiling air which announced the

satisfaction of his soul. The guardian of the convent having presented him with the crucifix, the holy dying man kissed with joy the image of the Saviour and then expired tranquilly on 11 January 1729. He was nearly seventy-four years old and had passed more than fifty in religion. His body remained fresh and rosy until the moment it was put in the earth. He appeared to several pious persons, a short time after his decease, and miraculous graces have been obtained through his intercession. Pope Pius VI placed, on 18 August 1786, the servant of God among the blessed whom the Church honours with a public cult. The brief of this Pontiff makes a fine eulogy of the charity and zeal of Thomas for the salvation of the neighbour. — *Godescard, Brussels edition.*

Several Ecclesiastics and Laymen Saints Who Died in Assisting the Plague-Stricken

265. — Pope: Saint Dionysius. — Roman Emperor: Gallienus.

Succour your brethren in the day of tribulation; the mercy which you shall have exercised toward them shall be your salvation. — Ecclus..

We shall relate here only what Saint Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to another bishop of a church of Egypt, named Hierax, touching these holy Ecclesiastics, martyrs of charity; we thought ourselves obliged to say it for the consolation of so many generous persons, who still expose themselves every day, to assist their brethren in the fatal conflagration of contagious maladies.

In the time of the emperor Gallienus, there arose, in the city of Alexandria, a sedition so horrible that it would have been easier to run through all parts of the world than to go from one end of the city to the other without danger to one's life: murders and assassinations were there so frequent that the streets and public squares seemed to be a new Red Sea; there followed a furious plague which reaped the greatest part of the inhabitants, and the river Nile was more infected by it than it had been in the time of Pharaoh; the air there became so contagious by the winds which blew from the side of the sea, and by the vapours which rose from the rivers, that the dew which fell in the morning resembled absolutely the corrupt blood which flows from corpses thrown on the dunghill. Meanwhile several ecclesiastics, followed by some laymen, inflamed with the holy zeal of Christian charity and brotherly love, so excited one another to love God, and to labour for the salvation of souls, that they gave themselves most willingly to the service of the sick and dead, taking equal care of both. They served assiduously the former, so long as they still saw in them some hope of recovery; and in effect they saved several who returned to perfect health. As for those who died, after having assisted them to their last breath and helped them to make a good death, whether in bringing them to contrition for their sins, or in administering to them the last Sacraments, they took care to bury their bodies with all the honour possible to them. It was not so with the pagans and idolaters; they no sooner discovered one of their own attacked by the disease than they drove him from their house, and even, if they could, from the enclosure of the city. Friends abandoned their friends, children their fathers, fathers their children, and exposed them half dead in the streets and on the highways, leaving their bodies to be devoured by dogs, instead of giving them burial. Thus the faithful who, by this work of mercy, drew upon themselves the sickness of their brethren, and who, afterwards, lost their lives there, won so much glory from this heroic action that their death was esteemed to approach martyrdom; thus the Church has always made memory of them on this day in her Martyrology, like other martyrs, following what our divine Saviour said in His Gospel: "That no one can show a greater charity than to expose his life for his friends." For who are our greatest friends, if not our brethren, for whom the Son of God gave His blood and His life, "when we were still His enemies"? It is not that one must believe that those who die of the plague in the assistance of the plague-stricken have at death the privilege of true martyrs, who are justified by the virtue of their action, and exempt from all pain, as if they came out of the baptismal font; an author has very well demonstrated it in a special treatise on martyrdom by plague; but what is meant is that the ardour of the charity, which appears in

their death, can supply for the virtue of martyrdom, and give them, *ex opere operantis*, as the theologians speak, that is, by the excellence of their merit, what true Martyrs have, *ex opere operato*, that is, by the efficacy of their action.

Blessed Antoinette or Antonia, Poor Clare

(1472).

The blessed Antoinette was born at Florence in the year 1400. Married young by the will of her parents, she had a son and became a widow early. Attempts were made, but in vain, to make her contract new engagements. She entered a house of tertiary sisters of Saint Francis, named Sant'Onofrio, then governed by the Blessed Angela of Foligno. Having been named superior of the convent of Aquila, in the Abruzzi, after some years' sojourn in that city, she solicited from the inhabitants the convent of Corpus Domini, to establish there the rule of Saint Clare, which was granted her. She had from that day much to suffer; God permitted that she should be tried by temptations which troubled her soul without altering her piety. Her son, who had compromised his own fortune, gave her only griefs. Saint John Capistran, whom she had found at Aquila on her arrival, and who had strongly supported her with his credit, had gone away. The confrères did not share her solicitude for the new monastery of Poor Clares: the virtuous abbess sustained herself alone with the help of God. At the end of seven years, painful infirmities obliged her to renounce her charge. Despite her sufferings, this worthy spouse of Jesus Christ passed a considerable time in the church, even during the night. Several times a globe of fire was seen suspended above her head, which, in the darkness, filled the holy temple with light; several times also she was seen suspended between heaven and earth while she prayed. For a long time she sighed only after heaven: the Lord granted at last her ardent wishes. She was seventy-two years old when she gave up her spirit into the hands of her Creator, on 28 February 1472. She was buried in the cemetery of the monastery; but some time after, her body having been found incorrupt, it was carried into the church. Pius IX approved, on 11 September 1847, the cult which had begun to be paid her from the day of her first translation.

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[1] See on 15 October [*sic*; Oswald's life is given on 15 October in the printed work].

[2] Ruellinus, disciple of Saint Tugdual, was designated by his master to be his successor. He was remarkable for the purity of his morals, for his learning, his charity and his gentleness. He assisted Saint Tugdual and, like him, fulfilled all the duties of an excellent pastor. He fell asleep in the Lord about the middle of the seventh century. There existed formerly in the town of Tréguier a chapel dedicated to Saint Ruellinus, and the faithful of that ancient diocese have at all times honoured his memory. (Proper of Quimper.)

[3] *Herus Amberti.* [Lord of Ambert.]

[4] See on 28 August, at the end of the life.

[5] See on 14 October.

[6] Condat, in the Celtic language, means confluence. The Tacon and the Bienne in fact unite at this spot.

[7] See the life of Saint Lupicinus, on 21 March.

[8] This fact may be seen at greater length in the *History of the Gallican Church*, by Longueval, bk. iv.

[9] The village which formed near this monastery bears today the name of Saint-Romain-de-Roche.

[10] As for the nuns whom Saint Romanus had established at La Balme, they were dispersed some time after his death. From then La Balme was only a simple priory dependent on Condat, and which was commonly called Saint-Romain-de-Roche, because Saint Romanus had chosen his burial there. As for the abbey of Condat, first foundation of Saint Romanus, it took the name of Saint-Oyend [Saint Eugendus], when that abbot had been buried there; it kept it until the thirteenth century. At that epoch, the cult of Saint Claudius became so famous that the abbey which possessed his body was no longer called anything but the Abbey of Saint-Claude; the town which had formed around it took this name too. The monastery was of the Order of the Benedictines. A great road which crossed the enclosure and a fountain in the court where the public went to draw water introduced dissipation among the monks, who had themselves secularized in 1742 and became canons of the cathedral which Benedict XIV erected that same year at Saint-Claude by creating this new bishopric. The town of Saint-Claude was entirely destroyed on 19 June 1799 by a frightful fire which spared only the house where was hidden the forearm of Saint Claudius, drawn from the fire by a woman when the holy body was delivered to the flames by the revolutionaries, in February 1794.

[11] Matt. xix, 21.

[12] We do not know what place is designated under this title of the Seven Brothers. Might it not be the grotto of the Seven Sleepers, or else of the Hermits? *Acta Sanctorum*, 25 April.

[13] On 24 December 1793, the relics of the Saint, preserved in the collegiate church of Mortain, were destroyed by the revolutionaries, with the exception of his head, which was carried off from the church at the moment of the profanation. This notable relic was transferred, in 1864, by Mgr Bravard, bishop of Coutances, into a magnificent shrine of gilt copper. There is also shown at Mortain a fountain, named the Fountain of Saint William, which the pilgrims do not forget to visit. They attribute to its waters the virtue of curing certain maladies. On the side of the road from Mortain to Le Teilleul, one sees another fountain, near which the Saint came to rest in his journeys from Mantilly to Mortain. At the foot of the church of Saint-Evroul, one still sees the place where the Saint came to pray, that where his tomb was, and his altar above which is a fine window in which he is represented in the costume of a bishop. On 27 April, he is honoured in the whole diocese of Coutances. The church of Mantilly, in the diocese of Séez, possesses a particle of his relics. Near this church one sees the fountain where the Saint drew water; the sick go there to drink with confidence, to recover health. — *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Séez*, by the Abbé Blin.

29 February

Saint Dositheus, Solitary

6th century.

Obey your prelates and be subject to them; for they watch, as having to render an account of your souls. — Saint Paul, Heb. xiii, 17.

Neither the place nor the time of the birth of Saint Dositheus is known. It is known only that he was raised young near one of the principal officers of the army of the emperor of the East, either as a page or as a relative; and that the latter loved him as tenderly as if he had been his son. He gave him nevertheless only a worldly education, and took no care to have him instructed in the principles of religion. Meanwhile the young Dositheus had a rich nature and a heart capable of receiving the impressions of piety; but he was not in a good school, and he risked becoming there the prey of the corrupt world, had he remained longer.

Providence provided for his salvation in the manner we are going to tell. Being one day in company, the conversation fell upon the city of Jerusalem, which was called the holy city, and what was said gave him a desire to make a journey there. He asked permission of his officer, who knew not how to refuse him anything; the latter begged one of his intimate friends who was to go there to take him with him, and recommended him to him as another self.

After they had visited the holy Places of Jerusalem, they passed to Gethsemane. It was there that Dositheus happily met, among the curiosities of the place, a picture which represented the torments with which the justice of God punishes sinners in hell. This object arrested his eyes and struck his mind with astonishment and fright. He asked himself, in considering it with attention, what these terrible torments might signify, which were expressed there in a very lively manner. While he thus contemplated it, he perceived near him a lady of extraordinary majesty and beauty, who explained to him all that this picture represented, entering into the detail of the pains of the reprobate, which he listened to in silence and with a new surprise; for it was the first time that he had heard speak of judgment and hell.

The discourse of this lady touched him extremely, and the fear of falling one day into the misfortune of those whose sad images he saw, led him to pray this lady to tell him what he must do to avoid it. She gave him a lesson which showed sufficiently his vocation to the monastic life. “You must,” she said to him, “fast, abstain from eating flesh, and apply yourself to assiduous prayer.” She who spoke to him thus was not a mortal creature, for after this lesson she disappeared.

Dositheus, since this apparition, was changed into another man, and began to put into practice the counsels which he had just received. So sudden a change gave uneasiness to the man to whom he had been entrusted. When it was seen that he persevered, those of his company said to him: “The manner of living which you have taken up does not suit a man of the world. If you are resolved to continue it, you would do better to

retire into a monastery to work there at your salvation." Dositheus, who knew not what a monastery was, begged those who gave him this counsel to point one out to him. He was led to that of the abbot Seridus, which was in the territory of Gaza, in Palestine.

The abbot, seeing a young man well made, delicate, clothed in court dress, made difficulty about receiving him; he feared that it was a pretence, or at most a movement of passing fervour. He had him examined by Saint Dorotheus, one of his monks, who had charge of the sick, a man of great discernment and very advanced in perfection. The monk put several questions to Dositheus, to which he knew how to answer only these two words: "I wish to be saved." He went to make his report to the abbot, telling him that this young man appeared to have no vice, and that he could be received without fear. The abbot, not yet judging that he should admit him to the exercises of the community, ordered Dorotheus to take him under his direction.

He forced him to abstinence by degrees. He told him first to eat as much as he wished and to give him an account of the quantity of bread he should have eaten. Dositheus told him the first time that he had eaten a loaf and a half, which amounted to five pounds. "That is very well," answered Saint Dorotheus. A few days after he ordered him to cut off a part, and asked him then whether he had found himself satisfied. "Not entirely," answered Dositheus; "I was nevertheless well." Some time after, he told him to cut off still something; and seeing that he did not find himself ill for it, he reduced him at last to eat only six ounces of bread a day, and some small leavings of fish or other things that were served to the sick. He took him as assistant in the infirmary with which Saint Seridus had charged him: and as his morals were excellent and his character gentle, he acquitted himself of this employment with a cleanliness and charity which consoled extremely the sick and edified all who were witnesses of it. His attention to it was so great that, if some rather rough word escaped him, or if he perceived that he had failed in something that had been ordered him, he conceived an extreme sorrow for it, retired into his cell, and, prostrate with his face against the ground, melted into tears, deploring his frailty. Those who served the sick with him tried to console him; but they could stop his tears only by calling Saint Dorotheus. Then this Saint came to find him and said to him, with that charity of which he was full: "What is the matter then, Dositheus? Why do you weep thus?" "Pardon me, my Father," the humble disciple would then answer, "I let myself go to anger against my brother, and I spoke to him very unseasonably." "What! my brother," Saint Dorotheus would reply, "you are then impatient? Do you not know that those whom you serve are the members of Jesus Christ, and that it is He Himself whom you serve in their persons? Why then do you do it so ill? Do you wish to afflict this divine Saviour, who regards as done to Himself what is done to His servants?"

The humble Dositheus answered this gentle correction only by his sighs and tears, and Saint Dorotheus, who saw his contrition, added: "Rise then and take courage. You must begin anew and do better than before; but take care not to fall into similar faults; I hope that God, by His mercy, will grant you the grace of it." The confidence which Saint Dositheus had in the word of this Saint made him receive it from his mouth as if it had been from that of Jesus Christ. He rose at once and resumed his employment with as much contentment and tranquillity of mind as if God Himself had assured him of the pardon of his fault.

We have remarked that Saint Dorotheus had not thought fit that he should practise bodily austerities as the other religious did, because he was of a delicate complexion; he contented himself with having reduced him to the sobriety we have told, and obliged him to attend at night only the last part of the office. But he trained him to a perfect obedience, to detachment from the smallest things, and to give him an exact account of his thoughts and of all that passed in his interior; and Dositheus acquitted himself of it not only with great fidelity, but even with joy, never showing the least repugnance and never forming a difficulty. It is not that Saint Dorotheus always treated him with gentleness and flattered him in the smallest faults; on the contrary, he reproved him continually; he humbled him on all occasions; and as soon as he could recognize in him some attachment to the smallest thing, he obliged him to renounce it.

One day when this Saint visited the infirmary ward to see whether all was in good order, Dositheus said to him: “It comes into my mind, my Father, that you must find I make the beds of the sick with skill and cleanliness.” To which he answered: “It is true, my brother, that you have become a good infirmarian; but I do not see that you have become a good religious.” Another time, reproving him because he spoke sometimes a little brusquely, through a remnant of worldly habit, he said to him as a proverb: There is wanting here only a bottle of wine; go and fetch one. At once he obeyed to the letter and brought him a bottle full of wine with a loaf. The Saint, who had had quite another thought than that, was surprised at it and asked him what he wished him to do with it: “You told me to bring it to you,” answered Dositheus; “give me, I pray you, your blessing.” “O fool,” replied the holy abbot, “I said that to you because you speak like the Goths, who have a rough tone, and cry out for the least thing. Take this bottle for yourself, since you cry out like them.” At once Dositheus prostrated himself, said his fault and carried back the bottle where he had taken it.

When Saint Dorotheus saw that he had need of a robe, he gave him the stuff to sew it; and when he had made it, instead of leaving him to wear it, he ordered him to give it to another brother and to make another for himself, which he obliged him again to give to someone when he had put it in condition; and this holy disciple obeyed not only without complaining, but even with diligence and joy, never finding it bad, and rejoicing rather that his spiritual father thwarted his will. The procurator of the monastery brought a knife for the service of the infirmary, which was very good and very neat, and gave it to Dositheus. When he had received it, he presented it to Saint Dorotheus to ask permission to use it. The Saint said to him: “Show it to me that I may see whether it is good.” “Yes,” answered Dositheus, “it will serve me well for the use I wish to make of it.” At these words, Saint Dorotheus thought that he took pleasure in using it, and wishing to tear from his heart the least attachment, he replied: “It is thus then that you put your satisfaction in things of nothing? Do you wish to be the slave of a knife, or the servant of God? Have you no shame, O Dositheus, to wish that a knife, rather than God, should be master of your heart?” The holy disciple lowered his eyes, and testified by his air and his silence that he was ready to do without it to obey him, and Saint Dorotheus added: “Go and put this knife back with the others and take care not to touch it.” He obeyed on the spot, and saw afterwards with a tranquil and peaceful air that all the others used it before him, without its even coming to his thought that what was forbidden to him alone was permitted to the others, thinking only of obeying with a perfect simplicity. Saint Dorotheus put him another time to a much stronger trial, which he sustained with no less submission and equality of mind. He had been permitted to read Holy Scripture, and as he did so with a pure heart, he began to understand its hidden sense, God rewarding his piety with His divine lights. But he was stopped at certain places, and he went then to seek the explanation of them from his spiritual father. The latter, who laboured only to establish him in a profound humility, instead of satisfying him, answered that he had nothing to tell him, and Dositheus contented himself with this dry answer, without its disgusting him from continuing to have recourse to him. One day when he came to beg him to give him the explanation of a passage which he did not understand well, Saint Dorotheus answered him to go and ask it of Saint Seridus; but he had already forewarned this holy abbot, that if his disciple came to beg him to explain some passage of Scripture, he should scold him much instead of teaching him the sense of it, and give him even some little blows the better to humble him.

Dositheus went therefore simply to find the abbot as his master had ordered him, and Saint Seridus, instead of answering the question which he put to him, said to him in a severe tone: “It becomes you well, ignorant as you are, to speak of things so lofty. Think rather of your sins and of the quite worldly life which you led in the world.” He added other words equally mortifying, and sent him away giving him two blows on the face. The pious Dositheus suffered this humiliating correction with the gentleness of an angel. He returned to his holy master without showing him any pain that he had not reproved him himself rather than sending him back to the abbot who had treated him so roughly, and he behaved in the same manner in all the trials to which Saint Dorotheus put him, paying no attention to what they had of humiliating or painful, and seeing in them only the obedience which he had to practise.

Our Saint passed five years in these exercises of obedience, exactitude and humility, in a continual union with God, and in the exercises of a tender devotion. A spitting of blood was the cause of his death. The uneasiness and pains which this malady caused him could never wring from him the least sign of impatience. His ordinary prayer was: “My God and my Lord, have pity on me; my sweet Jesus, assist me; Holy Virgin, my dear mother, refuse me not your assistance.” One of the brothers having said to him that fresh eggs might relieve him, the desire which he had for them appeared to him a fault; he condemned it, and accused himself of it to the abbot as of a temptation to which he had listened.

His pain increasing, his patience and perfect resignation increased also. Weakness reduced him to being no longer able to move. Saint Dorotheus having asked him whether he still made his prayer: “Alas! my father,” he answered him, “it is the only exercise possible to me.” This holy young man feeling himself fail, asked his director whether he would not soon see his sufferings end with his life. “Have yet a little patience, my son,” the Saint answered him, “for the mercy of God is near!” He passed yet some hours in an intimate union with God. Toward evening, addressing Saint Dorotheus: “My father,” he said to him, “permit me to go out of my exile.” Then Saint Dorotheus, a tear in his eye, said to him: “Go in peace, my son; present yourself with confidence to your God, who wills to make you a partaker of His glory, and pray Him for us.” At the same instant the holy young man expired, as if he had wished to die only by obedience. Some of the religious testified astonishment at the opinion which the holy abbot had of the holiness of his young disciple. Dositheus, they said among themselves, did not fast; he was dispensed from the most painful exercises of religion, and much indulgence was shown him. But God willed to show to what holiness one may arrive in a short time by the exercise of a perfect obedience. As soon as Saint Dositheus was dead, Saint Dorotheus had a revelation of the sublime degree of glory to which his disciple had been raised. And this holy old man, asking God one day that He would give him the grace to know those of this monastery who were the highest in heaven, saw, in the midst of a troop of saints, the blessed Dositheus resplendent with light and glory.

Lives of the Fathers of the Eastern Deserts.

END OF THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY.

1 March

Martyrologies

First day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, two hundred and sixty blessed martyrs, condemned for the name of Jesus Christ, whom Claudius first caused to draw sand outside the Salarian Gate, and whom afterwards he caused to perish by the arrows of the soldiers in the amphitheatre. 269. — In the same place, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Leo, Donatus, Abundantius, Nicephorus and nine others. — At Marseille, the holy martyrs Hermes and Adrian. 290. — At Heliopolis, Saint Eudoxia, martyr, who, in the persecution of Trajan, having been baptized and prepared for the combat by the bishop Theodotus, received, struck by the sword by order of the president Vincent, the crown of martyrdom. 114. — The same day, Saint Antonina, martyr, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, having mocked at the gods of the Gentiles, was, after various torments, shut in a vessel and submerged in a marsh of the city of Nicaea. 4th c. — In the city of Werden, which sleeps today beneath the waves [*sic*], Saint Suitbert or Swithbert, bishop, who, in the time of Pope Sergius, preached the Gospel among the Frisians, the Batavians and other peoples of Germany. 713. — At Angers, Saint Albinus, bishop and confessor, a man of very striking virtue and holiness. 550. — At Le Mans, Saint Siviard, abbot. 687. — At Perugia, the translation of Saint Herculanus, bishop and martyr, who was beheaded by order of Totila, king of the Goths. His body, according to the report of Saint Gregory, pope, was found, forty days after his

torment, as united to its head and as intact as if the steel had not touched it. 547.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Nîmes, Saint John I and Saint Remessarius, bishops of that city. The first sat from the year 511 to the year 550. Gregory of Tours said of him: “John was a very pious man.” Remessarius assisted at the Council of Toledo.[1] 633. — At Bayonne, Saint Leo, apostle of that country and martyr, who, having left the archbishopric of Rouen, with which he was canonically provided, in order to carry as far as the Pyrenees, by order of the Pope, the light of the Gospel, was finally massacred near that city by pirates who could not bear the change of morals which his preaching had produced in that place of their retreat. His two brothers, Gervasius and Philip, who had accompanied him on his journey, and had also a share in his labours and combats, had a share, though diversely, in his triumph. About 900. — At Marseille, the holy martyrs Gittaeus, Felix, Eunuculus, Januarius and others, to the number of twenty-four, companions of Saint Hermes and Saint Adrian. — In the same place, Saint Abdalong, bishop and confessor. 8th c. — At the monastery of Saint-Riquier, Saint Gervinus, abbot. 1075. — At Bourges, the Blessed Roger. Born at Ternes, in Limousin, he was successively bishop of Orléans, of Limoges and of Bourges. He founded the monastery of Ternes on the lands of his father and called the Celestines to Limoges; he established the feast of the Immaculate Conception in his various dioceses, and destined at his death all his goods to the education of poor children. 1368. — In the same place, Saint Simplicius, bishop, chosen by Saint Sidonius to govern the church of Bourges. After a glorious episcopate of seven years, Simplicius was taken from the love of his people on 1 March 477, and buried in a church which he had built. — At Tours, Saint Simple, confessor, whose body was deposited in a parish church of that city, dedicated in his honour, and which has given its name to one of the gates of the city. 7th c. — At Beaulieu,[2] between Bar-le-Duc and Sainte-Menehould, Saint Rovinter; it is under his government that the bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, Arnulf I, introduced the rule of Saint Benedict into the abbey. — At Langres, the feast of the holy martyrs Neon and Turbo.[3] 2nd c. — At Sens and at Paris, Saint Gombert.[4] 7th c. — At Embrun and at Gap, Saint Albinus or Aubin, archbishop. 437. — At Cologne, the holy Constantius and Faustus, Roman martyrs, whose bodies, found in the cemetery of Saint Callistus, were given to that city in 1660.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil the Great. — At Corillon, in Sicily, Saint Leo-Luke, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil, founder of the monastery of Monteleone, protector and special patron of that city, illustrious by the austerity of his life, by the gift of prophecy and the glory of miracles. 900.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Perugia, the translation of Saint Herculanus, bishop, who, having embraced at the same place the institute of the canons regular, was raised to the dignity of the episcopate, and formed his clerics according to the ancient discipline.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — At the monastery of Cella-Nueva, in Galicia, Saint Budesindus or Rosendus, bishop, illustrious by his holiness and the glory of his miracles. — At Werden, Saint Suitbert. — At Bassano, in the monastery of Saint Benedict, the birth into heaven of the Blessed Joan Mary Bonomi, illustrious by her humility and her miracles.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — At Werden, Saint Suitbert.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Matelica, in the March of Ancona, the Blessed Mathia or Mathiasa [read: Matthia], virgin, illustrious by her virtues and by her miracles, from whose body was seen, after centuries, to flow a sweat of blood. 1513.

Martyrology of the Conventual Minors. — At the castle of Muccia, near Camerino, the Blessed Rizerius, confessor, disciple of our father Saint Francis, illustrious by his virtues and miracles.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The memory of all the Saints whose relics are preserved in the churches of our Order.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Cazorla, in Spain, Saint Hesychius or Iscius, bishop and martyr. He was sent to Spain by Saint Peter, with six other preachers of the Gospel, and was stoned near that city after having spread in the country the first gleams of the faith. About the year 60. — Among the Greeks, the holy Sylvester and Sophronius, martyrs. — At Bologna, Saint Adrian, Roman martyr, transported to that city in 1623. — At Antwerp, the holy Silvius, Maximus, Benignus, Fidelis, Herculanus, Primus, Pelagius, Julius, Philemon, Justus, Procopius, Donatus, Pius and Felician, Roman martyrs, whose relics were transported to that city in 1650. — In Africa, the holy Adrian, Victor, Secundilla, martyrs. — At Carthage, Saint Donitus, martyr. — At Eichstätt, in Germany, the holy Venerius, Castus, Livo and Saint Leontia, virgin, Roman martyrs, whose relics were given in 1618 to the Jesuits established in that city. — In Syria, in the ancient diocese of Cyrrhus, Saint Domnina, virgin, and her companions. Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, who in a few lines has traced for us her edifying biography, teaches us that Domnina obtained from her mother to have, in the garden of her paternal house, a cell covered with thatch, where she retired to attend to prayer. From the dawn, wrapped in a long veil which prevented her from seeing and being seen, she went to prostrate herself on the pavement of the sanctuary; rich in the goods of this world, all her labour was for the churches and the poor: after her example, her mother and her sisters worked for the same end: a loving and pious daughter or sister has so much power in a house! Soon the public veneration attached itself to this chosen soul; people came to visit her to receive her spiritual counsels. Oh! what graces are attached to this timid apostolate of Christian virgins. Always reserved and modest, Domnina spoke low and often her words were interrupted by tears of compunction over her own miseries, or of compassion over the misfortunes of others. Heaven opened for this lover of solitude about the year 460. — At Menevia, in Wales, Saint David, archbishop. He made a journey to Jerusalem, after having raised in his diocese a great number of monasteries. It is reported that one day, water failing him to administer the sacrament of baptism, a spring gushed forth suddenly at his feet, and that another time, transcribing the Gospel according to Saint John, he left a letter unfinished to go where the holy bell called him; on his return, an angel had completed the sacred text in letters of gold. A.D. 544. — In Scotland, Saint Maman [Mamman], bishop of Aberdeen. About the 7th c. — At Saint Andrews, in Scotland, Saint Monan, archdeacon. A.D. 870. — In Portugal, Saint Rosendus, bishop of Dume, a see today destroyed, not far from Braga. During the Muslim occupation, the bishops of Portugal and of the south of Spain no longer bore anything but the title of their see, and were obliged to live in monasteries of the North. Saint Rosendus, who was of royal race, caused to be built in Galicia a monastery called Cella-Nueva, of which he was abbot. His mother, Aldara or Ildaura, is likewise honoured as a saint. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the cult of Saint Rosendus was still very popular beyond the Pyrenees. There was shown at the monastery of Cella-Nueva a delightful garden where was a chapel dedicated to Saint Michael. It was claimed that the Saint had planted it with his own hands.[5] 10th c.. — At Lugo, in Italy [*sic*], the Blessed Bonavita, wheelwright, of the Third Order of Saint Francis. A new Tobias, he buried the poor. A.D. 1375. — At Bassano, in Italy, the Blessed Joan Mary Bonomi, virgin, abbess of the Benedictines of that city, deceased on 22 February 1670, beatified by Pius VI on 2 June 1783.

MOVABLE FEASTS OF MARCH

The Friday after Ash Wednesday, Commemoration of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Friday after Passion Sunday, feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin.

Saint Albinus, Archbishop of Embrun

437. — Pope: Saint Sixtus III. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian III.

The acts of this prelate are little known, although the duration of his episcopate was rather long: but his striking merit caused him to be invoked as a Saint for several centuries. He had received episcopal consecration from the hands of Proculus, bishop of Marseille.

Saint Albinus directed his flock with much zeal in the ways of the Lord, when a great tribulation came to throw him into the liveliest alarms. The Ostrogoths, too confined in the Alps, where they had established themselves, had asked to pass into some provinces of the empire. Languedoc, where a colony of Visigoths had already settled, was assigned them for residence. They were directing themselves therefore without mistrust toward that province, when snares laid in the defiles of Upper Dauphiné, to harass their march, put them in fury and carried them to extreme violences against the inhabitants of the mountains which they crossed. This devastation was not the last: in their turn, the Vandals, mingled with other peoples come from the North of Europe, like the Goths, invaded the Gauls and committed everywhere a thousand atrocities. Embrun, although in the heart of the mountains, was not sheltered from their irruptions. They formed the siege of it in 433. Consternation reigned among the Christians who had believed to find a refuge in this fortified place. Salvation and life were at stake for all; but before this cloud of enemies resistance appeared impossible. All hope had been lost, when Saint Albinus leads his people before the relics of Saint Marcellinus: Pastor and faithful conjure with tears this powerful protector to succour the children of those whom he has regenerated. The enemies were already gaining the top of the ramparts when Marcellinus, says history, appears in the air, advances against the enemy, with threatening face, and shows them with his hand a flaming cross ready to consume them. Then an invisible force precipitates the first assailants from the walls; the darts turn back against those who throw them and fall into their ranks. At the sight of these prodigies, the Barbarians, struck with terror, disband, flee in disorder and raise the siege of the city from which they withdraw, while songs of joy and gratitude resound in its miraculously preserved enclosure. But the chalice was not exhausted for our Saint.

To these events succeeded sacrilegious intrigues of certain rich and powerful laymen, who, after the example of the turbulent Arians, meddled with the affairs of the Church to the detriment of the clergy and of discipline. The pious old man could not survive so many emotions, to which were joined a thousand preoccupations over the future of his church. He fell sick, and scarcely had he closed his eyes to the light when division and scandal broke out in the bosom of his episcopal city, over the choice of his successor. The unhappy consequences of this discussion made the people of Embrun feel yet more bitterly how much they had lost by the death of their first pastor. Thus they hastened to proclaim the merits of Saint Albinus, and the public voice placed him in the rank of the Blessed.

Cult and relics of Saint Albinus

His body was raised from the earth and honoured with a public cult. Three centuries later, the head of the venerated prelate was ceded to the convent of the Benedictines, founded near Carcassonne by Charlemagne, and known under the name of Notre-Dame-de-Crasse.

Until the pillage of the church of Embrun by the Huguenots, in 1585, it possessed an arm of the holy bishop. His office was found under the double rite, on the first day of March, in the missal of the metropolitan church printed in 1512, and in the Breviary printed in 1520. These liturgical books were used until the publication of the Bull of Pius V, dated 1570, by which this great restorer of ecclesiastical discipline abolished every liturgy which did not go back two hundred years. It was at this epoch that the public cult of Saint Albinus ceased.[1] Here is the prayer that is read in the missal of 1512:

Beati confessoris tui atque pontificis Albini, Domine Deus noster, gloriosa merita recolentes; praesta quaesumus, ut cujus hodierna gaudemus festivitate, assidua quoque ipsius muniamur intercessione. Per Dominum, etc.

[Lord our God, honouring today the glorious merits of Thy blessed confessor and pontiff Albinus, grant, we beseech Thee, that, celebrating his feast with joy, we may be protected by his continual intercession. Through our Lord, etc.]

Saint David, Archbishop and Patron of the Country of Wales

About 544. — Pope: Vigilius.

Saint David was the son of Xantus, prince of Ceretica [Ceredigion], today Cardiganshire. He received a very Christian education, which influenced the whole course of his life. After having been ordained priest, he retired into the Isle of Wight, where he lived under the direction of the pious and learned Paulinus, who had been a disciple of Saint Germanus of Auxerre. God rewarded the eminent virtues of David with the gift of miracles. By making the sign of the cross, this saint restored sight to his master, who had become blind either through great age or as an effect of the abundant tears which he shed in prayer. When he had prepared himself well for the functions of the holy ministry, he quitted his solitude, and like another John the Baptist come out of the desert, he went to preach to the Britons the word of eternal life. He built a chapel at Glastonbury, a place which the first apostles of Great Britain had consecrated to the worship of the true God. He founded also twelve monasteries, of which the principal was in the valley of Ross near Menevia.[1] There were seen formed in this monastery a great number of Saints, several of whom governed the Church as first pastors.

The rule which David gave to his monks was very austere. They worked continually with their hands in a spirit of penance, never making use of the animals fit for ploughing, and that in order that their labour might be more painful. Necessity alone could authorize them to break silence. An uninterrupted prayer, at least mental, sanctified all their exterior actions. Toward the end of the day, they re-entered the monastery to attend to reading and vocal prayer. Bread and roots, of which salt was the only seasoning, made all their food, and they had no other drink than water mixed with a little milk. After their meal, they passed three hours in prayer; they gave then some time to sleep. They rose at the crowing of the cock, and set themselves again to pray until the time of work had come. Their garments were coarse and made of the skins of beasts. When anyone asked to be received in the monastery, he remained ten days at the door; and during that time he was tried by harsh words, by repeated refusals and by painful labours, in order to accustom him to die to himself. If he bore this trial with constancy and humility, he was admitted into the house. As for his goods, he left them in the world, the rule of the monastery forbidding the receiving of anything for entrance into religion. All the brethren were obliged to make known their interior to the abbot and to disclose to him their most secret thoughts and temptations.

Pelagianism having shown itself a second time in Great Britain, the bishops, to root it out entirely, assembled in 512, or rather in 519, at Brevi, in Cardiganshire. Saint David was invited to be present at the synod. He appeared there with éclat, and confounded the heresy by the united force of his knowledge, his eloquence and his miracles.[2] Saint Dubricius, archbishop of Caerleon, profited by this circumstance to resign to him the government of his church. David, alarmed at the proposition made to him, melted into tears, and protested that he would never charge himself with a burden which was far above his strength. In vain were the most pressing reasons alleged to determine him: he would never have yielded, if the Fathers of the council had not expressly ordered him to acquiesce in the choice of Dubricius. He obtained nevertheless to transfer the see from Caerleon, a city then very populous, to Menevia, today Saint-David's, a retired and solitary place.[3] A short time after, he assembled a synod at Victoria [Llanddewi Brefi], where the acts of the preceding synod were confirmed. Several canons of discipline were also made there, to which the Roman Church afterwards put the seal of her approbation. It was in these two synods that the churches of Great Britain formerly drew rules of conduct.

Meanwhile the reputation of our Saint increased from day to day: he was at once the ornament and the model of the pastors of his century. He possessed the talent of speech in an eminent degree; but his eloquence had still far less efficacy than the force of his examples; thus he has been regarded at all times as one of the most brilliant lights of the British Church. He was, by the foundation of his various monasteries, the spiritual father of a great number of Saints who illustrated England and Ireland their country. At last, after a long and laborious episcopate, he died in peace, about the year 544, at a very advanced age. Saint Kentigern saw angels bear his soul to heaven. His body was buried in the church of Saint Andrew, which has since taken the name of Saint David, as have the city and the diocese of Menevia. Near this church are several chapels to which devotion drew in the Middle Ages a great concourse of people. The principal is that of Saint Nun, mother of our Saint. Another is dedicated under the invocation of Saint Lily [Teilo?], surnamed Gwas-Dewy, that is to say the man of Saint David, because he was one of his dearest disciples. He is honoured there on the 3rd of March. As for Saint Nun, who had formed to perfection several women retired from the world, she is honoured on the 2nd of the same month. Formerly the southern Welsh celebrated the first three days of March, in honour of Saint David, of Saint Nun and of Saint Lily; today only the first is celebrated in all the country of Wales. In 962, the relics of our Saint were solemnly transferred to Glastonbury, with a part of those of Saint Stephen the first martyr.

Alban Butler. — See in the martyrology, on this day, some marvellous facts which this author, according to his custom, has passed over in silence.

Saint Albinus (Aubin), Bishop of Angers

470–550. — Popes: Saint Simplicius; Vigilius. — Kings of France: Childeric I; Childebert I.

Legis aeternae columen salusque, / temporis morum scelerumque vindex, / … gravi gentem cruciant dolore / vulnera curat.

The world groaned under the weight of its crimes, / And vice reigned in the palace of the great; / But, tearing its victims from evil by his courage, / He heals and saves his children. — Mazelin, *Life of Saint Aubin.*

This most worthy French prelate was born in Lower Brittany, in the diocese of Vannes. His father belonged to one of the noblest houses of the parish of Languidic, two leagues from the town of Hennebont; his mother was also of an illustrious family. Although their brilliant nobility was sustained by very great wealth, our Saint, far from letting himself be charmed by this vain splendour of the world, retired early, against their will, to the monastery of Nantilly, near Saumur, to embrace there the religious life under the rule of Saint Augustine; and, without regard to the greatness of his race, he made himself there the humblest and most obedient of all. He took a singular pleasure in the humblest and most despised functions, and mortified his flesh, the better to subject it to the spirit, by vigils, abstinences, long prayers and other mortifications. God showed, from his novitiate, how agreeable this conduct was to Him, by a favour which deserves to be signalled.

One day his abbot sent him into the village to fulfil a message to a peasant. While he executed the order he had received, so prodigious a rain fell on the building where he was in company with several other persons that it pierced the roof and broke it open on all sides, so that one was no less wet there than in the open country; but this marvel happened, that all the others were drenched, and Aubin alone was spared: there fell not a single drop of water on his garments; the rain, says his historian, not daring to touch him out of respect for the ardour of faith which inflamed his heart, as the fire could not touch the three children in the furnace of Babylon.

The history of his life furnishes us no details on the first years of his profession and priesthood; it contents itself with telling us that the rare examples of his virtue caused him to be elected abbot of this monastery, at the age of twenty-five, others say thirty-five (504), and that he conducted himself in this new charge with so

much prudence, that, uniting severity with gentleness, he re-established at last the regular discipline to the highest point that could be desired for the glory of this holy house. His first historian, Saint Fortunatus, compares the situation of the monastery under this admirable master to a delightful garden embellished by the sweetest, the most varied, the most ravishing flowers of spring.

But God, who would not have so brilliant a light remain longer in a cloister, ordained by His Providence that, having exercised this charge twenty-five other years, he should be raised, by his merits, to a more eminent degree to enlighten the whole Church. The city of Angers, after the death of Adulphus, eleventh known bishop of that see, asked for Aubin to succeed him. He resisted at first strongly his election, excusing himself on his incapacity, which he pretended to be very great; but seeing that it was the will of God, he accepted at last this heavy charge (529).

The bishops of the province, who had been able to appreciate his talent, his character and his virtue, applauded the choice of the people and clergy of Anjou. But no one conceived more joy of it than Saint Melanius, bishop of Rennes. This pontiff was, in the sixth century, the light of western Gaul and one of the greatest prelates of his time. He was a friend, compatriot, and perhaps relative of Saint Aubin. It is probable that it was he who conferred on him episcopal consecration; he was accompanied, on this occasion, by three other prelates equally friends of our Saint: these were Saint Lô [Laudus] of Coutances, Saint Victorius II of Le Mans, and Saint Marcus of Nantes. The holy friends separated after having celebrated for the last time the holy mysteries in a crypt venerated since, and situated in the basilica so well known later under the name of Notre-Dame de la Charité or du Ronceray. Of these five bishops, the first to go down into the tomb was Saint Melanius. Warned by an angel, Saint Aubin and the bishops of Le Mans and of Nantes went to assist him on his death-bed and to celebrate his obsequies. Let us follow now Saint Aubin, become bishop, in the laborious exercises of his private life.

The fruit of grace working in him was such that the city of Angers appeared quite other than it was before his promotion to this bishopric; this new prelate was not content to preach on the most solemn feasts; he did not let a day pass without teaching his people, whether in public or in private, holding as a constant maxim that the soul has no less need of a daily refection than the body of its ordinary nourishment. He took an admirable care of the poor of his diocese; he visited the sick, consoled the afflicted, and relieved with all his power the widows whom he knew to be charged with a great number of children.

But another class of unfortunates fixed his attention above all: these were the unhappy Christians fallen into slavery in consequence of the invasions of the barbarians, and very numerous at that epoch. Saint Aubin employed, to ransom those of his diocese, all the resources which the goods of his church, his own savings and the liberality of pious souls could furnish him. He restored thus to liberty a great number of inhabitants of Anjou. Saint Aubin preceded by eleven centuries Saint Vincent de Paul in this admirable apostolate.

To the grace of charity the Blessed joined that of miracles. Let us cite first a fact which paints the manners of the sixth century. There was in the village of Douillé, near Angers, a young and noble damsel, named Etheria, whose extraordinary beauty had excited the covetousness of king Childebert. At once, on his order, she was seized and kept under watch.

Saint Aubin had so much pity on her that he went himself to the prison, and had her go out of it by the authority which his charge and the reputation of his holiness gave him. A rash soldier wished to oppose it, and vomited a thousand injuries against him; but he did no more than breathe on the face of this insolent man, and he fell stark dead at his feet.

The prince, terrified by this manifestation of the wrath of God, consented to abandon his projects regarding Etheria and asked only a compensation in money. The generous prelate charged himself with this ransom, too happy to contribute thus to the preservation of the virtue of others. But if a single breath of Saint Aubin was powerful enough on this occasion to take away life from him who was unworthy of it, his word was not

less strong in other circumstances to restore it to those who had lost it through no fault of theirs; this is what happened to a young child, called Alabaudus, of the borough of Gené, near Segré, whom he raised from the dead by the force of his prayers. In a word, one would have said that his power extended to the point of making death and life subsist together: for one of his servants having died at Vannes in his absence, when they wished to carry him to burial, his body, as if it had been animated, remained quite immovable, until the holy prelate, having arrived on the spot, and having given him his blessing, it allowed itself to be carried very easily.

We do not speak of his other prodigies and of the miraculous cures he wrought: he restored sight to five blind men and the use of their limbs to several paralytics, among others to a lady of Angers, named Grata. God had given him a quite particular power for the deliverance of prisoners. Several criminals, detained in the tower of Angers, begged the Saint to be willing to employ himself with the judge for their deliverance; his charity made him undertake it most willingly; but the judge, inclined to severity, having refused him this grace, the bishop said simply that God would not be so inexorable, and that they must address themselves to Him. In effect, having persevered in prayer until the middle of the night, a great stone detached itself of itself from the wall, and gave passage to the prisoners; they came at once to find the Saint who was praying in the church of Saint Maurilius, and, prostrating themselves at his feet, promised him to return no more to their former crimes. But one must not be astonished that Saint Aubin thus prevailed over a man clothed with a body, since his power extended even over spirits: for the demon having placed himself in the eye of a woman whom he possessed, which made her face monstrous, so swollen was this eye, Saint Aubin conjured him for some time, and, having forbidden him, in the name of Jesus Christ, to harm this servant of God, he drove him out shamefully, and the woman was delivered.

These striking virtues of our Saint, accompanied and sustained by so many miracles, easily carried his name into all parts of the kingdom of the Franks. King Childebert, eldest son of the great Clovis [*sic*], had so great a veneration for this illustrious prelate that he went to meet him when he came to Paris; and the Saint, making seasonable use of the credit he had with the king, as of a precious talent which God put in his hands, procured the assembling of the third Council of Orléans, where, to root out abuses which had crept into France, several points of great importance were settled: among others, that the Jews who mocked at the Christian ceremonies practised by the Church during Holy Week should be shut up in their houses from Holy Thursday till the Monday of the feast of Easter; that priests living in concubinage should be excommunicated, and, if they persevered in their evil life, that they should be degraded and shut up in a monastery; that marriages between relatives should be null, and that those who contracted them should be struck with anathema.

Saint Aubin made himself so zealous an observer of all these articles, particularly the last, that he had no regard either to the quality of persons or to the damages that might arise from it. And, as once certain bishops, cowardly complaisant toward a lord who had contracted marriage with one of his relatives, and had fallen for that reason under anathema, wished to force Saint Aubin to absolve him and to send him eulogiae (these were blessed things which bishops formerly sent as a mark of union and benevolence), this generous Prelate answered them with a spirit all full of zeal: “You wish to force me to subscribe to this absolution; but God is powerful enough to sustain the cause which you refuse to defend.” In effect, this excommunicated man was struck with sudden death before receiving the eulogiae.

Nevertheless, the Saint, fearing not to have shown enough firmness and energy toward the bishops his confrères, went to the city of Arles to consult Saint Caesarius, and to learn from him what was to be done to expiate this fault of which he judged himself guilty. We do not know what advice he received from the holy archbishop; but we see, by the sequel, that regret and sadness, joined to the fatigues of a journey of three hundred leagues, carried him off from this life immediately after his return to Angers, at the age of seventy years, according to the reckoning of Father Albert le Grand, of Morlaix, in his *History of the Saints of Brittany*. Others give him eighty; but this diversity comes only from this, that some make him abbot at the

age of thirty-five and the others at twenty-five. He had happily governed his bishopric for the space of twenty-one years and six months, and he died on the first of March, about the middle of the sixth century, leaving after him an eternal memory of his virtues, and an immense regret to all his people at losing so good a father and so worthy a prelate.

He is often represented clothed in armour or with this insignia near him, to express that he had renounced the honours of the world by adopting the monastic life. He is also figured healing the blind, among other sick and afflicted. He is again seen holding chains and causing the doors of a prison to open. Finally, he is often painted in the pulpit, because his indefatigable zeal for the instruction of his flock made him adopt the custom of preaching every day.

Cult of Saint Aubin. — Pilgrimage of Moeslain

His body was solemnly buried in a chapel of the church of Saint Maurilius, his predecessor in the see of Angers. Some time afterwards, Saint Germanus, bishop of Paris, finding himself at Angers with other bishops of the province, they resolved to draw it from this place and to transport it to a church newly erected in his honour. But as there was much difficulty in succeeding, because the sepulchre was extremely narrow, three stones detaching themselves of themselves furnished the means: everything resounded with the praises and hymns that were sung to the Creator, who made Himself seen admirable in His Saints. He was carried with a general joy of all the city of Angers into this new church. This translation was celebrated by several miracles which were wrought in it: three paralytics were perfectly cured, and two blind men, having asked to be put in the shadow of the holy body, received there the full enjoyment of light. This first translation took place on 30 June 556: a feast was established to recall this memorable event. Soon after a monastery arose near the church which possessed the precious remains of the holy bishop: the church and the abbey exchanged their primitive name for that of Saint-Aubin.

Few Saints have worked as many miracles during their life and after their death. In the middle of the ninth century, the town of Guérande, in Brittany, was delivered from the Norman invasion by the intercession of Saint Aubin: he was solemnly proclaimed the principal patron of the Breton city. There were made in the course of ages three other translations of the body of Saint Aubin, which were all celebrated in a special manner. The Anglican church still makes memory of the first, on 17 June, in her heretical liturgy.

There are some relics from Angers at Louvencourt of Amiens, at Plessier-Rozainvillers, and at Saint-Aubin-Rivière.

Saint Aubin was one of those extraordinary men whose influence has passed beyond the bounds of the province which was witness of his striking life. A great number of churches made, before the Revolution, memory of him at least twice a year, on 1 July and on 1 March. His name has been known in the universe and his cult spread in all the kingdoms of Europe. France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Poland even have specially honoured his memory. All the martyrologies make mention of him, and his name is found inscribed in the most ancient litanies known. It would be too long to enumerate the parishes of the divers dioceses of France which are still today under the title of Saint-Aubin: in Anjou alone, more than twenty-five are counted. Let us nevertheless accord a mention to the pilgrimage of Saint-Aubin at Moeslain.[1] Moeslain is a little village of a little over two hundred inhabitants, situated one kilometre from Saint-Dizier, in Haute-Marne, on the road to Vassy. The origin of the devotion to Saint Aubin in this locality goes back to the year 1490, an epoch at which a bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, come from the monastery of Saint-Aubin of Angers, made a gift to the parish of Moeslain of a finger of the hand of the Saint. This relic escaped the disasters of the revolutions, and three times a year, on 1 March, Easter Monday and Whit Monday, numerous pilgrims go to venerate it in the modest sanctuary of the village. Not far from the chapel of Saint-Aubin of Moeslain is found a fountain of living water, an object of confidence of the inhabitants of the place and even of strangers: this spring has never dried up, even in the greatest droughts.

This fountain of Saint Aubin is not the only one dedicated to him: there is another in a village of the department of the Aisne which bears the name of our Saint, still more remarkable by the effects it produces. The mothers of families of this latter parish assure that generally their sick children experience an extraordinary agitation, prelude of their cure, at the moment when their swaddling-clothes are dipped in the fountain.

One admires in the chapel of Moeslain a statue of Saint Aubin which, in the judgment of artists, is a masterpiece: it is of stone and all of one block: it is attributed to Ligier Richier, the renowned author of the tomb of Saint-Mihiel.

May we be permitted to offer to the piety of the numerous devotees of Saint Aubin the invocation which serves as preface, on the day of his feast, in a manuscript missal of the tenth century preserved in the library of Angers:

"Eternal God, deliver us from the chains which hold our souls captive; we beseech Thee by Our Lord Jesus Christ who gave to His Church, in the person of the blessed pontiff Aubin, a model as accomplished as admirable. The Catholic Church, spread over all points of the globe, glories and rejoices in the excellent works and the so praiseworthy life of this faithful servant. His glorious death and his triumphant entrance into the heavens form today the subject of the divine harmonies of the nine choirs of the blessed spirits. Permit us then to unite ourselves to these innumerable concerts and to raise our hearts to Thee, O our God and our reward for eternity! Amen." His life was first written by a holy priest, Fortunatus, who was extremely devoted to him: it is found in Surius. Saint Gregory of Tours, the venerable Bede and Usuard also make honourable memory of him: the Roman martyrology names him on the 1st day of March. At this place, Baronius remarks that Saint Aubin lived in the time of Childebert, king of France, and that he assisted at the third Council of Orléans, celebrated in the year 540 of our salvation; and that thus the abbot Trithemius was mistaken when, speaking of Saint Aubin of Angers, in his third book of the *Illustrious Men of the Order of Saint Benedict*, he puts him in the year 720. The same Baronius remarks also that there is another Saint Aubin, much more ancient than this one, in whose honour Saint Maximus, bishop of Riez, in Provence, caused a church to be built, and who might well be Saint Aubin VIII, bishop of Châlons, of whom mention is made in the Acts of Saint Lupus, archbishop [*sic*] of Troyes. There is yet a third Saint Aubin, archbishop of Lyon, later than ours, and who is marked in the Ecclesiastical Tables, on 17 September; there is a fourth. This is Aubin or Albinus of Embrun, whose life we give today: it appears to us more probable that it is in honour of Saint Albinus of Embrun that Saint Maximus caused a church to be raised. We have consulted, to complete this life of Saint Aubin: the *Lives of the Holy Personages of Anjou*, by Dom Chamard, Paris, 1863; the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*, by Dom Lobineau, Paris, 1836 [*sic*; the work is of 1725; the date is as printed]; the *Hagiological Annals of France*, vol. vii; *Saint Aubin*, by the Abbé Mazelin; the *Characteristics* of Father Cahier, without speaking of the common sources.

Saint Siviard, Abbot of Saint-Calais

687. — Pope: Sergius I. — King of France: Theodoric III.

His last word to his religious was: "Persevere."

Saint Siviard was born in the country of Maine, in the first half of the seventh century, of parents equally illustrious by the nobility of their race and the brilliance of their virtue. His father, who was grand-nephew of Saint Bertrand, bishop of Le Mans, was called Sigiramnus, and his mother Adda. He gave, from his youth, great marks of the holiness for which God had destined him; for, far from passing his time in the ordinary amusements of that age, he employed it in prayer, retirement and study; and, however young he was, one saw in all his actions only the maturity of an old man. He knew so well from then how to ally the spirit of devotion with the application which human letters demand that he was filled with the lights of divine wisdom

at the same time that he learned human sciences. It is remarked nevertheless that, enlightened as he was, he never followed his own thoughts until he had had them approved by the ablest masters he could consult: he showed, by this submission, the low sentiment which he had of himself, and how eminent his humility must be, since he established it on so solid a foundation.

All the fine knowledge of this young man served only to convince him more strongly of the vanity of the things of earth, and of the sweetness which those taste who consecrate themselves entirely to the service of Jesus Christ. He resolved to follow to the letter the counsel of the Gospel, and to embrace the religious state in the monastery which Saint Calais had founded in the preceding century, on the river Anisole, in the country of Maine: preferring to live hidden in a cloister, to please God alone, to being exposed to the tempests in which persons of high condition so often suffer shipwreck. As soon as he saw himself clothed with the holy habit of religion, he redoubled his fervour still more, and he made so great a progress in virtue that the religious, who regarded him as a model of perfection, chose him to be ordained priest, that he might serve them all as spiritual father. In effect, an extreme gentleness, joined to a profound humility, rendered him amiable to God and to men. He was always of an even temper, composed in all his actions, edifying in his conversation, zealous for the observance of the rule, and prompt to render service to everyone; he sympathized with the pains of his brethren, and tried to console those whom he knew to be in sadness; he was assiduous at prayer, and made it with so much fervour that he sometimes shed torrents of tears at it; he visited the sick and so encouraged them to patience that they remained quite consoled by his pious conversations; his abstinence was almost continual; he often passed nights in prayer; he was so reserved in all he said that he never offended anyone in his words. His care to keep his chastity inviolable was so great that it may be compared to that of the angels. Finally, to use the terms of his historian, all the virtues, like so many precious stones, seemed to be united in him, to make his holiness shine. Whatever effort the blessed Siviard made to remain hidden from the eyes of men, the great graces with which God had prevented him were not left undiscovered, nor the talents which rendered him capable of governing others; wherefore, after the death of Saint Sigiramnus, his father, who was abbot of this same monastery, where he had retired after the decease of his wife, and where he had lived so holily that his memory has since been marked in the Martyrologies of several churches of France, on 4 December, the religious cast their eyes on our Saint to give him the conduct of this house. History teaches us nothing particular of what he did during this superiorship; but it tells us in general that he acquitted himself of it most worthily, in nourishing the souls of his brethren with a wholly heavenly meat, and in embellishing the monastery by the splendour of a very exact observance. It is in the exercise of these holy functions that he happily finished the course of his life, at a very advanced age. At his death, one of the brothers saw his holy soul, all brilliant with light, between the princes of the Apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, who conducted it to heaven.

He died on 1 March, in the 8th year of the reign of Theodoric III, son of Clovis II, and of Our Lord 687.

The body of Saint Siviard was buried at the monastery of Savonnières which he had founded, in the place where was seen long after a chapel which bore his name, at the southern extremity of Saint-Georges-de-Couée. As for his relics, they were transported to Sens at the epoch of the invasion of the Normans. Saint Siviard distinguished himself by his taste for letters; he has left a life of Saint Calais, a remarkable monument among all the legends written in the seventh century, and one of the finest pages of the history of Maine.[1] The Roman martyrology and those of several churches and monasteries make mention of Saint Siviard on this day. His life was written by a religious of Saint-Calais, who had been an eyewitness of his virtues. Surius has reported it in his second volume of the *Lives of the Saints;* and the continuators of Bollandus on the 1st of the month of March.

Saint Leo, Archbishop of Rouen and Martyr, Patron of the Diocese of Bayonne, and His Two Brothers Gervasius and Philip

900. — Pope: John IX. — King of France: Charles III the Simple.

Saint Leo is one of those bishops who may be called apostolic, not only on account of his holy life, but also for the ardour and immensity of his zeal. He was born at Carentan, a little town of Normandy. History teaches us that an angel having promised him to his parents, they received him as a gift from heaven; his mother, named Alice, brought him into the world without suffering the ordinary pains of childbirth. His father, one of the first lords of the province, discontented, it is said, with king Charles the Bald, went to settle, with his family, toward the Rhine, in the lands which obeyed the brothers of that prince. As soon as Leo had reached the age of twelve, he was sent to the court of Louis called of Germany or of Bavaria, who, after the death of Louis the Debonair, his father, occupied the part of the French empire beyond the Rhine. But seeing that the atmosphere of the court and the contact of the German people did not suit his son, he caused him to return to France, to study in the new school which Charlemagne had founded at Paris. Leo made great progress there, and acquired so much reputation by the vivacity of his mind, by his eloquence and still more by the brilliance of his virtues, particularly of his zeal for charity, and of his fervour in the service of God, that he drew upon himself the admiration of everyone. His merit appeared still more when he was raised to the priesthood: for, his heart burning with an ardent desire for the salvation of souls, he applied himself to preaching with all the success that could be expected of a man all fire for the glory of his God. This great zeal, which is the character of a good pastor, caused eyes to be cast on him to elect him archbishop of Rouen.[1] He did what he could not to be charged with this burden, which he judged above his strength; but he dared not resist the will of God. The pope (Stephen V) having confirmed this election, our Saint acquiesced at last in spite of the repugnances of his humility. All this passed while he was at Rome, whither his zeal had led him, to ask the sovereign Pontiff for the quality of apostolic preacher. However his episcopate did not make him renounce this glorious ministry: for, having betaken himself in a short time to Rouen and having there disposed all things and established two vicars in his place, he went to Labourd and Navarre, where the incursions of the Saracens and the Normans had almost extinguished the torch of the faith. He took for companions of this generous enterprise his two brothers Philip and Gervasius, in whom he had inspired a like design; and, beginning to preach the Gospel in a village of the Landes, called Labouheyre, he converted first Argarus, who was the lord of it, and baptized him with all his family. From there he went to Bayonne to preach in the public square, and converted in one day seven hundred and eighteen persons; the next day he went to the temple and took for subject of his preaching the idol of the god Mars, who was adored by these inhabitants, born in arms and accustomed to war. He addressed himself first to him who performed the office of sacrificer, and had with him some conversations to try to convince him; but, seeing his obstinacy, he turned toward the people, who let themselves be abused by impious superstitions and by the artifice of this minister of Satan. When he began to speak and to represent how unreasonable it was to give the title of gods to creatures who did not deserve even the name of men, which he showed by demonstrations and irrefutable reasonings, these priests interrupted his discourse and excited a great sedition against him, to impose silence on him. That obliged him to cease, because he saw well that they were not then disposed to listen to him; but he made his prayer ascend to God, and besought Him to have pity on this people, and to make a stroke of His power to undeceive them. After his prayer, as if he had received a new spirit, he approached the statue of Mars, threw it to the ground with a breath of his mouth and reduced it to powder: which was the cause of the conversion of the priests and of some persons of divers conditions.

Since then, this city has always preserved the purity of the faith and persevered in the knowledge of the Gospel: thus we may call him the Apostle of Bayonne; some even put him in the rank of the bishops of that city. Our Saint, having employed some time in this enterprise, did not think he had fulfilled enough all the duties of his ministry to be permitted to rest. Wherefore, taking leave of his children whom he had begotten in Jesus Christ by preaching, he passed into Spain, to evangelize Biscay and Navarre; he found everywhere wherewith to exercise his virtue and make his talent valued, because these peoples whom nature has hidden in the recesses of the Pyrenees had scarcely seen the day of the Gospel, and few persons had gone as far as

them to enlighten them. Meanwhile the pirates of Bayonne, returning, after a long absence, to that city, were surprised to see it all changed and the temples overthrown. They entered into a great fury, especially on learning that they must renounce their piracies and do penance, and on seeing their relatives and friends obey the Gospel. They conspired against the author of this revolution, and went to wait for him in ambush on his return from Spain. The Saint was preaching on the banks of the Nive, when these madmen throw themselves upon him, strike him roughly, slaughter before his eyes his brother Gervasius, and finally massacre himself. It is related that his blood, touching the ground, made an abundant spring gush forth from it, and that his trunk, seizing his fallen head, carried it more than a mile to the place where he was buried, and where a chapel was afterwards built in his honour. His relics received there the homage of public veneration until 1537. The fear of the Protestants, who were then desolating Labourd, caused them to be transferred into the cathedral, and the chapel itself was pulled down when the Marshal de Vauban raised the ramparts of the citadel. They were kept there before 1793 in a magnificent silver reliquary which cost 3,000 livres. A canon, M. de Laclaux, bequeathed 1,000 of it; the rest was furnished by the city and the chapter. According to an ancient usage which dates at least from the eleventh century and which was preserved almost down to us, on the day of Pentecost, the syndic of Bayonne, setting out from the town hall, went alone to the chapel, and, after the destruction of the chapel, to the nearest house, and returned with a lighted candle in his hand. On his return, the corporation, preceded by the governor and followed by the principal citizens, made the same pilgrimage, and returned like the syndic with lighted candles which were placed in the choir of the cathedral: pious symbol of the evangelical light brought into these countries by Saint Leo.

It is remarked that, a little before his death, he asked God that the women who should have recourse to him during their pregnancy might be preserved from all sorts of accidents, and that he recommended to Him particularly the preservation of the city of Bayonne. He appeared immediately after his martyrdom to his vicars-general of Rouen, and these betook themselves at once to the place of his decease, where they learned all that we have just reported. His feast was formerly celebrated at Rouen; the new Proper has excluded him.[2] His life, drawn from the archives of the cathedral church of Bayonne, is reported in the first volume of the Acts of the Saints for the month of March by the continuators of Bollandus.

Saint Eudoxia of Heliopolis, Penitent

(114).

Eudoxia was born at Samaria; she passed for one of the most beautiful and most witty women of her time. Her eyes carried poison into hearts; rarely did a woman cast so much brilliance, make more noise, sow as many scandals. Eudoxia was a courtesan, and by her infamous commerce she had gained immense sums. Now, one evening when she was in a house adjoining another house inhabited by Christians, she heard a frightful picture drawn of the eternal torments reserved for souls who die without having done penance for their sins. This poor soul was seized with terror. The next day, Eudoxia went to find a priest to be instructed in the truths of the faith. At the end of a week, the sincere penitent was ravished in ecstasy and saw in heaven her place marked among the blessed.

After having received baptism, she buried herself in a house of retreat. Those who had loved Eudoxia the sinner could not bear her as penitent. A young libertine, hiding under a pious disguise, resolved to carry her off. The holy girl avoided the snare, and the insolent man fell dead at her feet; she obtained the return to life for this wretch, who also went to do penance for his disorders. The governor of the province, learning of her numerous miracles, and fearing a riot among the people, whose affection she had won by her benefactions, had her head cut off secretly.

Saint Adrian, Saint Hermes and Their Companions, Martyrs at Marseille

(290). — Saint Abdalong, Bishop of the Same City *(8th century).*

While the persecution of Diocletian and Maximian raged against the Church of God, Marseille was reddened with the blood of numerous martyrs. Besides Saint Victor, whose cult is very well known in the whole universe, the memory is still preserved of Saint Adrian and Saint Hermes, who presented their heads very courageously to the executioners, after having resisted divers torments for the faith of Jesus Christ. Several others, concerning whose number and names there is no agreement, suffered with them. Their bodies were formerly honoured in the church of Saint-Victor. An arm of Saint Adrian, enclosed in a silver shrine, was preserved until the French Revolution. There exists at present at Marseille, on the beautiful promenade of the Prado, a parish church erected in 1855 under the title of the holy Hermes and Adrian.

The Gallican martyrology adds, in some old editions: “The same day, and in the same city, the feast of Saint Abdalong, bishop and confessor, who, having succeeded Serenus, illustrated the see on which he had been placed by his sacred learning, and by the eminent virtues of an episcopal life. After having given his flock admirable examples of holiness, he passed at last into the blessed eternity which he had always desired.” Saint Abdalong was a contemporary of Charles Martel.

See the *History of the Bishops of Marseille,* by the Abbé A. Ricard, and the *Life of Saint Serenus,* on 9 August.

Saint Suitbert, Apostle of the Frisians

(713).

Saint Suitbert the Elder was born in England. Saint Egbert, his master, who saw with grief that a first mission and the apostolic labours of Wigbert, thwarted by prince Radbod, had failed almost completely among the Frisians, sent, to preach the Gospel anew to this people, twelve missionaries, among whom was Suitbert. They began the exercise of their ministry at Utrecht. They were powerfully supported by Pepin of Héristal, who had made Radbod his tributary.

The country which bore the name of Frisia extended from the mouth of the Rhine to Denmark and ancient Saxony; but our Saint exercised his zeal chiefly in Hither Frisia, which comprised the southern part of Holland, the northern part of Brabant and the countries of Guelders and Cleves. He had the consolation of seeing an innumerable multitude of men abjure paganism and renounce their disorders. He was consecrated bishop in England, by his compatriot Wilfrid of York, some time after the year 697. He reappeared in the midst of his people with a greater authority and a zeal not less. He established the best order in the churches which he had previously founded. Then, confiding his sheep to the care of Willibrord and his companions, he penetrated into the country of the Boructuarii, known today under the name of the duchy of Berg and the county of the Mark, and converted a great number of them to the faith. Unhappily, the success of his labours was arrested by an irruption of the Saxons, who seized all that country after having exercised the most frightful ravages there.

The holy bishop, to prepare himself for death, retired into a little island of which Pepin had made him a present, and situated in the midst of the waters of the Rhine. He founded there a monastery, where he died in the exercise of penance, on 1 March 713. This monastery was very celebrated during several centuries; there formed around it a town, long named Saint-Suitbert, but which has resumed its ancient name of Kaiserswerth; we have a panegyric in honour of this Saint, by Radbod, bishop of Utrecht, who died in 917. In 1626, the relics of Saint Suitbert were found at Kaiserswerth; they were enclosed in a silver shrine with those of Saint Willeicus, his successor in the government of the abbey. They are still in the same place, with the exception of some small parts which the archbishop of Cologne has given to several churches. His feast was formerly kept with great solemnity in Holland and the other countries of which he had been the apostle.

Saint Gervinus, Abbot of Saint-Riquier

(1075).

Gervinus was born at the beginning of the eleventh century, in the country of Reims. It is believed that his family was related to Bruno, who, after having occupied the see of Toul, became pope under the name of Leo IX. He made his studies in the episcopal school annexed to the metropolitan church of Reims. Seduced by the reading of the poets of antiquity, he let his imagination be so inflamed that he was not far from putting into practice the licentious maxims on which he had fed his mind. The grace of God caused him nevertheless to triumph over these temptations, and to renounce completely bad reading.

First canon of the church of Reims, then religious at Saint-Vanne of Verdun, he made himself remarked in the world as in the cloister by the abundance of his knowledge, the sweet eloquence of his words, his obedience, his devotion, his humility. In 1027, he went with the blessed Richard, abbot of Saint-Vanne, and six hundred other pilgrims, to visit the Holy Places. The pious caravan passed by Hungary, where it received a cordial welcome from king Saint Stephen.

In 1045, Henry I, king of England [*sic*; of France], named him abbot of Saint-Riquier and gave him as successor to the venerable Enguerrand, who had become infirm. The monk of Verdun would accept this charge only on condition that he should be invested with it by the suffrages of the religious. He signalized his administration by the construction of several chapels and sanctuaries, by a management worthy and careful at once of the temporal goods of the abbey, and above all by the zeal which he put into enriching the library with a great number of Greek and Latin manuscripts. Pilgrims flocked to the church of the monastery: Gervinus passed whole days in receiving their confessions. Carried away by his zeal, he went to preach and to hear confessions not only through Picardy, but in Normandy, Flanders, Aquitaine, and as far as Thuringia and Hungary. In 1050, he made the journey to Rome in company with Saint Leo IX, who had come to Reims to consecrate the church of Saint-Remi and preside at a council. He went also several times to England, where the abbey of Saint-Riquier possessed considerable goods. Each time he sanctified his journey by visiting the renowned sanctuaries and sowing everywhere the word of God. In one of these journeys, he calmed a horrible tempest which, fifteen days running, prevented the passengers from embarking.

His virtues merited for him, even before his death, the name of holy abbot. While his monks, after the night office, went to complete the time reserved for sleep, he resumed his meditations. He took great care to hide from the eyes of all his extraordinary devotions. During Lent, he redoubled his austerities. Business, journeys, indispositions, nothing could furnish him a pretext to shorten the recitation of the psalms and canons. He abstained from all food and sang the whole Psalter on the eve of the great feasts.

God rewarded by miracles so great a religious fervour. One day, a poor sick woman was cured by drinking the water in which the monk who accompanied her had dipped his crozier. During the last four years of his life, Gervinus was a prey to a horrible leprosy. Blessing God for having sent him this trial, he none the less fulfilled all the duties of monastic life.

On 2 February of the year 1075, he said his last Mass in the underground chapel of Notre-Dame-de-la-Voûte, which he had caused to be built. He could scarcely finish the holy mysteries; when he had been carried to his cell, he said to his consternated religious: “Learn, my children, that the Blessed Virgin has today given me leave of life.” Then he wished, after the example of Saint Germanus of Auxerre, to make public avowal of his faults.

Feeling the approach of the agony, he had himself carried to the church, where he expired, stretched on his hair-shirt, before the altar of Saint John the Baptist, to whom he had always had a great devotion. It was on 3 March 1075 [*sic*; the feast is 1 March].

When, according to the monastic usage, the body of the deceased was washed, no trace of leprosy was found on it, a sweet odour exhaled from his pure and polished members. The burial took place in the crypt of

Notre-Dame.

The trace of the relics of Saint Gervinus has been lost: he was honoured with the cult of Saints soon after his death.

The Abbé Corblet, Hagiography of Amiens.

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[1] Breviary of Nîmes of the twelfth century. The variants of the name of Saint Remessarius are: Remezarius, Ramissarius, Remassarius. — We owe this addition to the Abbé Goiffon, chaplain of the Sisters of Saint Joseph (Nîmes).

[2] The abbey of Beaulieu was founded in 640 by one named Anstrasinus. The donation consisted of twelve leagues of wood which the religious cleared and of which were formed the eighteen villages included under the name of Terre de Beaulieu.

[3] See, on 17 January, in the Acts of the three holy Twins. The Proper of Langres consecrates a lesson to them today.

[4] We said, on 21 February, that Saint Gombert or Gundelbert, bishop of Sens (*Senonae*), was the founder of the abbey of Senones, in the Vosges: what we said is the opinion of Saint Peter Damian, of the Bollandists, of Godescard, of the *Hagiography* of Migne, of all the hagiographers of Nancy and Saint-Dié, whose works we consulted or whom we questioned directly. Only the *France pontificale* of M. Fisquet disputes the fact. We shall permit ourselves to put these simple questions to M. Fisquet, who seems to us not to have put himself sufficiently on guard against certain of the Gallican or Jansenist opinions which were current at the time of the *Gallia christiana*, but are generally considered today as devoid of foundation: 1. If Saint Gombert of Sens is not the founder of Senones, whence came the latter? 2. You say that he lived a century earlier: have you proved it? 3. Why this name of Senones given to the abbey of the Vosges? Is this appellation, yes or no, the reproduction of the Latin name of Sens? (See on 21 February.)

[5] Here are some charming verses which a religious of Cella-Nueva addressed to the novices who cultivated this garden: *Hic vos, hic tenera sensim adolescite caelo, / Virtutumque horto florida serta date. / Tempus adest verni: moneo vos, crescite et ante / Quam fervorem animi frigida tollat hiems.* [The French gloss runs:] “Here, here, tender plants, grow up for heaven; put forth for the heavenly garden the flowers of virtues. Children, it is spring, I tell you: grow before the cold of winter has frozen the sap of your soul.”

[6] See *France pontificale*, Paris, 1869, and *Hagiological History of the Diocese of Gap*, by Mgr Depéry, Gap, 1852.

[7] This valley has taken its name from the territory in which it is enclosed and which is called Ross. The monastery of Ross is often spoken of in the Acts of several Irish Saints, under the name of the monastery of Rosnat or Rosnan.

[8] A church was afterwards built at the place where the council had been held, and it was called Llan-Dewi-Brevi, that is, the church of David near the river Brevi.

[9] This place was almost entirely separated from the island; there is today a communication by Milford Haven.

[10] Moeslain, *mediolanense castrum* in Latin; *medillan* in Celtic, a language in which *med* signifies fertile and *llan* land, is probably of Gaulish origin, like *Mediolanum*, Milan, in Italy. It is known that Saintes was also called *Mediolanum Santonum.* One finds at Moeslain no vestige of Roman antiquities, but some remains of castles of the Middle Ages.

[11] Cf. Dom Piolin, *History of Le Mans.*

[12] M. Fisquet, in the *France pontificale,* energetically refuses to Saint Leo the title of archbishop of Rouen, in which he is again in contradiction with all the monuments and all the local traditions. Cf. Cochet, *Seine-Inférieure,* p. 118; the Propers of divers dioceses; Monlezun, *History of Gascony;* the Bollandists, etc. It seems to us impossible that anything serious can be opposed to the constant tradition and to the monuments of the church of Bayonne, which declare Saint Leo archbishop of Rouen.

[13] Was Saint Leo the founder of the bishopric of Bayonne? The Abbé Dupuy, professor at Pau, was good enough to address to us, on 24 March 1872, the following lines, which will clear up, as far as that is possible, a question which seems to us insoluble: “I do not think that the question of Saint Leo of Bayonne has been treated *ex professo* anywhere. What I have found most complete on this Saint is the dozen pages which M. de Monlezun consecrates to him in his *History of Gascony.* He has placed the existence of Saint Leo toward the end of the ninth century. Marca, in the *Gallia christiana* and in the *History of Béarn* (bk. i, § 7), says that Saint Leo lived about the year 900. These authors do not speak of the opinion which makes Saint Leo live in apostolic times. I must avow that M. de Monlezun cannot be very sure of the time — at least of the precise date — when Saint Leo lived, since lower down he says, speaking of Arsias, third successor of Saint Leo, who sat in 982: ‘This is the first certain date that we can assign for the bishops of Bayonne.’ Marca and Monlezun believe — and that from reasons of fitness which they develop and which give their opinion a great probability — that Saint Leo is not the first bishop of Bayonne. This bishopric existed long before Saint Leo. He would have been, according to these historians, only its restorer. The authors of the time speak of an invasion of the Normans which put to fire and blood Labourd, Béarn and the country of Acqs [Dax]. All the bishoprics of this region were destroyed, as Marca says: Saint Leo would have come after these sad events, after the ruin of this bishopric, which he had in common with all the others of Gascony. Nevertheless, adds the historian, there remains a subject of astonishment, that the bishop of the city of the Boiates did not attend in person or by proxy the council of Agde, held under Alaric, in the year 506. However that may be, in the ninth century the church was constituted. (Monlezun, pp. 385, 386.) This is what I have been able to collect on Saint Leo. With Marca, Monlezun, etc., I believe that the bishopric of Bayonne is more ancient than Saint Leo; that this Saint was only its restorer; that he lived toward the end of the ninth century, about the year 900, as Marca says.”

2 March

Martyrologies

Second day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, on the Latin Way, the holy martyrs Jovius and Basilea, who suffered death under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus. About 258. — At Rome again, several holy martyrs, who, under the emperor Alexander and the prefect Ulpian, were, after long tortures, at last condemned to capital punishment. — At Porto, the holy martyrs Paul, Heraclius, Secundilla and Januaria.[1] — At Caesarea of Cappadocia, the holy martyrs Lucius, bishop, Absalom and Lorge [George?].[2] — In Campania, the memory of eighty blessed martyrs,[3] who, wishing neither to eat meats offered to idols, nor to adore a goat's head, were most cruelly massacred by the Lombards. About 629. — At Rome, Saint Simplicius, pope and confessor. 483. — In England, Saint Ceadda [Chad],[4] bishop of the Mercians and the

Lindisfari, whose admirable virtues Bede relates. About 672.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Bruges, in Flanders, Saint Charles the Good, count of the province and martyr. 1127. — At Saint-Paul-de-Léon, Saint Joavan or Joevin. — At Werden, Saint Willeicus, priest, disciple of Saint Suitbert. There are relics of him at Düsseldorf and at Saint Margaret's of Cologne. 726. — At Fismes, in the diocese of Reims, the martyrdom of Saint Macra.[5] — At Neuilly-sur-Marne, in the diocese of Paris, the venerable Fulk, curé of that place. — At Nancy, Saint Jacob, twenty-fifth bishop of Toul. About 768.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — Saint Eustochius, monk, of the Order of Saint Basil, of whom mention is made on 21 March, with Saint Convuldius and his companions.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Saint Aubin.

Martyrology of the Premonstratensians. — The Blessed Frederick, confessor, founder and abbot of the monastery of the Garden of Mary [Mariengaarde], of the canons of the Order of Premontré, who obtained from the Virgin Mary life for a child dead without baptism, and, full of virtues and merits, shone by numerous miracles.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict. — Saint Suitbert, bishop.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — In England, Saint Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx, of the Order of Cîteaux, who, celebrated by the knowledge which he had of the sacred letters, by the integrity of his morals, by his contempt of self, by an admirable patience, by the spirit of prophecy which was in him, by his assiduous commerce with heaven, and finally by his great miracles, departed this life on 12 January.

Martyrology of Saint Dominic. — At Ulm, in Germany, the Blessed Henry Suso, of Saxony [*sic*], confessor of our Order, celebrated for his observance of the rules, for the holiness of his life and for the renown of his miracles. He died on 25 January, but his feast is celebrated today. 1365.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Martina, virgin and martyr; the memory of her birth into heaven is made on 1 [*sic*; 30] January.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order for the use of the Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — At Messina, in Sicily, the Blessed Eustochia, virgin, who, sprung from an illustrious race, founded, in the city of Messina, a new monastery under the primitive rule of Saint Clare, and who, elected first abbess of that house, governed it most holily and, all brilliant with the merit of her virtues and the renown of her miracles, flew away to heaven on 20 January. 1484.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Perge, in Pamphylia, the holy Nestor and Tribimius, martyrs. 251. — In Aeolis, Saint Quintus, wonder-worker. About 253. — In Sicily, Saint Luke, abbot of Agira, at an uncertain epoch. It is reported that, preaching one day before unruly monks whom he had been charged to bring back to good, these did not answer Amen at the end of the sermon, as was the custom: which the stones of the church did for them. Terrified, the monks were converted. His body was found again in this monastery and solemnly raised in 1596.

Saint Simplicius, Pope

483. — Emperor: Zeno. — King of France: Clovis I.

The rule of Catholic doctrine remains always the same in the successors of him to whom the Lord entrusted the care of his fold and to whom he promised his immortal assistance until the consummation of the ages. — Letter of Saint Simplicius to the Emperor Zeno.

Simplicius, son of Castinus, was a native of Tibur, in the country of ancient Latium, today Tivoli, in the Roman campagna. He passed his early youth in great simplicity, or uprightness, of heart, living in innocence and in the fear of the Lord. Having been received into the clergy of Rome, he conducted himself there in so irreproachable a manner that, when the Holy See fell vacant by the death of Saint Hilary,[1] he was raised to it by a common voice, as the most worthy to fill it. He was ordained on 5 March of the year 467 [*sic*], which was the second Sunday of Lent, the first year of the reign of the emperor Anthemius in the West, and the eleventh of that of Leo in the East. On his accession he found that the heretics, above all those who were called Macedonians,[2] whom the emperor Anthemius had brought to Rome the year before, were trying to take advantage of the death of Hilary, his predecessor, who had generously opposed their undertakings. It is this which made him watch over them particularly, to prevent their making progress; and, by his firmness, he rendered useless the protection which Anthemius granted them. The emperor Leo, having learned of his election, wrote to him to rejoice with him, and at the same time made every effort to obtain from him the confirmation of the decree of the Council of Chalcedon, made in favour of the patriarch of Constantinople, whom it was proposed to raise to the second rank in the Church, above those of Alexandria and Antioch. Simplicius, walking boldly in the footsteps of Saint Leo the Great and of Saint Hilary, who had strongly opposed these new pretensions, resisted the wishes of this emperor with a constancy equal to theirs. He deputed, for this affair, a bishop named Probus to Constantinople, and this prince, judging from the discourse of this legate that Simplicius would abate nothing of his resolution, saw himself obliged to renounce his own.

Simplicius governed the Church fairly tranquilly during the reign of Anthemius, who, although favourable to various heresies, nevertheless did not dare to trouble this vigilant pastor in the precautions he took to guard the flock of Jesus Christ from the invasion of wolves. He had been five years on the throne of Saint Peter when this emperor was assassinated in Rome by the hired killers of his son-in-law Ricimer, a barbarian by birth, an Arian in religion, chief of the armies of the Western empire, who had already put to death two other emperors in succession, Majorian and Severus. As he disposed of the empire as absolute master, he put Olybrius in the place of his father-in-law, and, having contented himself till then with taking from the Catholics a church of Saint Agatha in Rome in order to give it to the Arians, he promised himself to give them still more room and to maintain them in Italy, against the laws of the orthodox emperors. But God did not permit this scoundrel to cause such an affliction to his Church, and, to put an end to so many crimes, he took him from the world forty days after the death of Anthemius.

Simplicius, delivered from the apprehensions and troubles which this wicked man had given him, seemed to be able to breathe and to have more liberty to provide for all the needs of the Church; but, as the situation of

ecclesiastical affairs could not leave him indifferent to the interests of the empire, he could not be insensible to the public misfortunes of its decline and of the overthrow which followed. Four emperors after Anthemius, dethroned successively in the West in less than three years, gave occasion to the barbarians, led by Odoacer, to invade what remained of the empire in Italy, after the dismemberments which the Franks, the Burgundians, the Goths and the Vandals had already made of it, who had made themselves masters of the Gauls, of Spain and of Africa. Times so difficult and so full of troubles contributed not a little to make shine forth the prudence and wisdom with which Simplicius knew how to conduct the Church, like a very experienced pilot, on a stormy sea. One saw above all, and admired, his untiring application and his vigilance in that pastoral solicitude which he displayed, to ward off all the dangers which threatened the Church at a time when not one prince was Catholic. Odoacer, who had at last made himself master of Italy, after overthrowing the Western empire, was an Arian, as were all the kings of the Goths, Burgundians and Vandals who then reigned. Those of the Franks were still in the darkness of paganism; the emperor Zeno and the tyrant Basiliscus, in the East, favoured the Eutychians.[3] Thus the Pope, far from being able to hope for help from any secular power, had reason to regard all these princes as so many enemies whom he had to combat, in order to deliver from oppression and uphold the Catholic Church which was spread through their states and which groaned under their domination.

Zeno had been reigning two years in the East when the Roman empire in the West was seen to end; and as this prince affected in the beginning to take some care of the affairs of the Catholic Church, through a spirit of dissimulation, Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, thought he could make use of this conjuncture to renew with Simplicius the solicitations which he had already made in vain in the time of the emperor Leo, concerning the pretensions of his see. But the bishop of Rome showed himself always equal in the firmness which he brought to repress the passion of this ambitious prelate. Meanwhile Zeno was driven from his throne by Basiliscus, who, having seized the empire of the East, re-established the Eutychian prelates who had been banished for their heresies and for other crimes in the time of the emperor Leo. By this means, one saw return to Alexandria Timothy Aelurus, author of the death of the patriarch Saint Proterius, of whom we spoke at the end of February, and usurper of his see; and Peter the Fuller, another heretic, mounted again the patriarchal throne of Antioch, where he had formerly installed himself after driving out the lawful bishop Martyrius. Aelurus, having driven out of Alexandria the Catholic bishop named Timothy Salophaciolus, and committed violences on the clergy and the faithful like those he had exercised in the time of Saint Proterius, returned to Constantinople to establish his heresy there with the help of the tyrant Basiliscus. He brought him to give a kind of edict to abrogate the ecumenical Council of Chalcedon;[4] and it is claimed that nearly five hundred prelates subscribed to it, so great was the desertion of the pastors of the Church, who, much less attached to the religion of the Gospel than to that of the court, the ordinary source of the fears and hopes of hirelings, made no difficulty of betraying the orthodox faith which they had followed under the emperor Leo, because he was Catholic. Acacius of Constantinople was beginning to let himself be carried away by the torrent which swept along the others, when the clergy of his church and the monks of the city leagued together for the defence of the Council of Chalcedon. They wrote to Pope Simplicius to inform him of what was passing and to ask help of him. They made at the same time such strong remonstrances to Acacius, their patriarch, that, having intimidated him by their resolution, they made him resume sentiments conformable to his duties, prevented him from receiving and publishing the edict of Basiliscus, and obliged him even to speak from the pulpit in defence of the Council of Chalcedon. Simplicius, seeking to remedy the evils which thus threatened the whole Church of the East, wrote first to the clergy of Constantinople, then to Acacius, whose silence he was willing to take as an effect of prudence and discretion, in order to excite him, by these testimonies of his confidence, to the episcopal vigour which was necessary to him for opposing the efforts of Basiliscus and of Timothy Aelurus. Acacius, animated by the exhortations and counsels of this holy Pope, resisted Basiliscus so openly, and made so considerable a party of the clerics, the monks, the senate and the orthodox laity in Constantinople, that this tyrant was forced to revoke his edict and to publish another in

which Eutyches was condemned along with Nestorius. What obliged him chiefly to this retraction was the fear of the emperor Zeno, who was coming back on him with an army, and from whose party he wished to detach the Catholics. But this means became useless to him: he was abandoned by everyone when Zeno was seen approaching, to whom he was afterwards delivered by Acacius himself, who had him taken in the baptistery of the church, where he had taken refuge.

As soon as Zeno saw himself re-established on the throne, he believed that his interests required that he should counterfeit the Catholic, and he wrote at once to Pope Simplicius to assure him of the integrity of his faith. Our Saint made him an excellent reply, in which he remarked that it was glorious to him to have had for enemies those who were enemies of God, and to see the Church re-established at the same time as his enemy had been cast down; so that, his cause being common with that of the Lord, he ought to employ his authority to drive from the Church the tyrants who oppressed it, as the Lord had assisted him to vanquish his own. He exhorted him then to deliver the church of Alexandria from the cruelties of the parricide Timothy Aelurus, who had shed there so much innocent blood and exercised a shameful brigandage, and to re-establish there the lawful bishop. He conjured him at the same time to drive all the heretical prelates from their sees, and to support with all his power the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon. Meanwhile he assembled a Council in Rome, where he pronounced anathema against Eutyches the heresiarch, Dioscorus of Alexandria, and Timothy Aelurus. Zeno, who had engaged himself by his own hypocrisy, could not honourably refuse the advice of the Pope. He therefore annulled all the edicts made by Basiliscus against the orthodox faith, drove Peter the Fuller from Antioch, and seven or eight other Eutychian prelates from their sees. The bishops of Asia Minor, fearing the same treatment, sent to the patriarch Acacius a humble declaration by which they protested that they had subscribed by force to the edict of Basiliscus against the Council of Chalcedon, whose decisions they professed to embrace. Timothy Aelurus was deceived by it like the others, and, believing that Zeno was Catholic in earnest, he would not wait to be driven from his see, and he poisoned himself, through the fear of dying by another hand than his own. The Alexandrians, on the news of his death, put in his place Peter Mongus, of his faction, who had formerly joined with him against Saint Proterius. Zeno, irritated by this election, put to death those who were the authors of it and who had consecrated him, drove out Peter and re-established Timothy Salophaciolus, to satisfy the desire of the Pope. Meanwhile Acacius of Constantinople, an artful and inconstant prelate, who knew better than anyone how to make religion serve his private interests, secretly favoured Peter Mongus, who had hidden himself in Alexandria instead of carrying out his banishment. This is what made him skilfully elude the pressing requests which Pope Simplicius made to him in two or three of his letters, to act with the emperor so that this Peter, whom he had himself formerly depicted to him as a great scoundrel, should absolutely leave the city of Alexandria, where he was secretly intriguing against the Catholic bishop Salophaciolus.

Simplicius had the same solicitude for the Church of Antioch, where a Catholic bishop, Stephen, had been substituted for Peter the Fuller, who behaved in that city as Peter Mongus did in Alexandria. Stephen, being dead, had for successor another Stephen, for whom the Eutychians, instructed and animated by the secret practices of Peter the Fuller, laid continual snares. The Pope, informed of what was passing, urgently solicited the emperor Zeno to drive Peter the Fuller from the city of Antioch; but the latter again found a protector, like Peter Mongus, in the person of the patriarch of Constantinople. A few days after, his partisans went and assassinated Stephen in the baptistery of the church of the martyr Saint Barlaam. Zeno and Acacius reflected, though a little late, on the remonstrances of Simplicius. But, without disturbing Peter the Fuller, they contented themselves with seeking out the ministers of the murder of Stephen, to punish them. And the emperor, seeing the whole city of Antioch in trouble from the agitations of the Eutychians, had the election of the bishop of Antioch made at Constantinople, by Acacius, because the ordinary rules of the Church could not be observed without danger. Calendion having been elected in this way, the emperor and the patriarch Acacius notified his election separately to Pope Simplicius, to have it approved by him. The Pope, believing that, for the good of the peace of the Church, one might in this conjuncture relax something of its discipline,

wrote back to both that he approved this election, provided it had no sequel; and that, when the see of the church of Antioch should fall vacant, they should return to the observance of the decrees of the Council of Nicaea, in proceeding to the ordination of the bishop. He warned Acacius in particular to take care that no further necessity should arise of going against the Canons. The cares of our holy Pope extended next to the church of Alexandria, which fell vacant the same year by the death of the patriarch Timothy Salophaciolus, whom one finds surnamed Leucus [*sic*] in some authors. The Catholics elected in his place John of Tabennisi, surnamed Talaia, a very orthodox and very enlightened man, to whom Simplicius promised his communion as well as to Calendion. But this man displeased Zeno, who had been prejudiced against him; so that this prince, at the instigation of Acacius of Constantinople, who did not like Talaia, wished to re-establish Peter Mongus, and sent him back to Alexandria, recommending to him only to maintain the communion of the church of Rome with Simplicius, and that of the church of Constantinople with Acacius. Simplicius complained loudly of this conduct in a letter which he wrote to the latter, and he pointed out to him how far he was from receiving into his communion an excommunicate who put himself at the head of the heretics. He was preparing, on the contrary, to confirm the election of John, when there came to Rome an express messenger from the emperor Zeno, with a letter which accused the new prelate of perjury, on the ground that he claimed that John had promised him with an oath that he would not accept the bishopric of Alexandria when it should be offered to him. On this incident, Simplicius suspended the confirmation of John: and, to remove this new obstacle, he wrote again to Acacius, who, by the affectation of his silence, at last opened the eyes of this holy Pope to his evil dispositions. Some months after, there arrived at Rome the new patriarch of Alexandria, John, who was received by the Pope with all the testimonies of honour and esteem that were due to his virtue. He found there the asylum which he had come to seek with the Holy See; and he was preparing to clear himself, in due form, of the accusation of perjury with which he was charged by the emperor Zeno, who had caused him to be driven from his church provisionally, to bring back Peter Mongus into it, as he removed Calendion from Antioch to re-establish Peter the Fuller.

But Simplicius fell ill in this interval, and died on 10 February of the year 483, after having holily governed the Church for fifteen years, eleven months and six days.

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, he dedicated the basilica of Saint Stephen on the Caelian Hill; that of the blessed Andrew, apostle, near Saint Mary Major; another basilica of Saint Stephen near the church of Saint Lawrence; and a fourth within Rome, near the palace of Licinianus, over the tomb of the blessed martyr Bibiana. — The basilica of Saint Andrew, raised by Pope Simplicius, is today replaced by the church, convent and hospital of Saint Anthony opposite Saint Mary Major, on the Esquiline square. From the inscription which had been placed on the pontifical monument in the fifth century, and which has been preserved to us, it results that the site of the new basilica had been bequeathed to Pope Simplicius and to the Roman Church by a legal testament. Tradition has preserved the memory of the noble patrician, Catabarbara, who made this bequest.

Various useful regulations are attributed to Saint Simplicius, among others the division of the revenues and goods of the churches into four portions: the first for the bishop; the second for the clerics; the third for the buildings; the fourth for the poor; and the establishment of weekly priests, to administer baptism and penance in the churches of Saint Peter, Saint Paul and Saint Lawrence. He was buried in the first of these churches on the second day of March, on which the Roman martyrology marks his feast, although some others have put it sometimes on the first, sometimes on the third day of the same month. The inhabitants of Tivoli, the place of his birth, believe themselves in possession of his relics and make a great solemnity of his feast.

The day of his death, which some have taken for 1 March, may have served as the occasion for the feast of Saint Simplicius, confessor at Tours, whom the common people of the country call Saint Simple.

Father Giry.

The Blessed Charles the Good, Count of Amiens and of Flanders

1127. — Pope: Honorius II. — Emperor: Lothair II. — King of France: Louis VI, called the Fat.

Karole, gemma comitum, / Dux inclyte, flos militum. Charles, the pearl of counts, the glory of dukes, the flower of soldiers. — *Lamentatio,* in Boll[andists].

The Blessed Charles was the son of Saint Canute, king of Denmark, who was martyred by his own subjects in the year 1086, and of Adela or Alice of Flanders, daughter of Robert the Frisian and maternal aunt of Louis the Fat, king of France. After the bloody death of the king his father, when he was five years old, his mother led him to Bruges, to the court of Robert the Frisian, count of Flanders, his grandfather. There he was to be brought up and to win the rank of knight. A legend relates that he was armed knight with the very sword which Saint Canute carried the day he received martyrdom in the temple of Saint Alban. Ivend Trundsen, who had received this sword in deposit, was in the prisons of Bruges as a hostage, when one day Charles, still a mere child, visited him at the moment when he was still in bed. The young prince saw the famous sword which Ivend had put under his pillow and girded himself with it. “It is right that you keep it,” said Ivend; “it is the sword of your father.” Charles ran at once to his grandfather, showed him the magnificent gift he had just received, and begged that liberty be granted to the prisoner, as well as to his companion in misfortune; which was done.

Charles made his first arms under his uncle Robert of Jerusalem, whom he accompanied to the Holy Land: it was a worthy beginning of the career. After having, for several years, taken part in the heroic fatigues of the Crusaders, he returned to Europe covered with noble scars. Baldwin of the Hatchet [Baldwin VII], who succeeded Robert of Jerusalem as count of Flanders in 1111, having no children, turned his eyes to his first cousin, Charles, to appoint him one day the heir of his county. He gave him first the land of Ancre, the same which Louis XIII gave in 1620 to Albert de Luynes: this is why Charles the Good is sometimes designated under the name of Charles of Ancre.

To recognize his services still better, Baldwin of the Hatchet had him marry Margaret, daughter of Renaud, count of Clermont, who brought him as dowry the county of Amiens. He even confided to him the administration of his States; so that the peoples, accustomed to the gentleness and equity of our Saint, received him at his accession as their father and protector. But this public joy was troubled by the countess Clemence, mother of the late count Baldwin: this princess, in order to put on the head of William of Ypres, to whom she had married her niece, the crown of our Saint, formed against him a league into which entered Geoffrey the Bearded, count of Louvain and duke of Brabant and of Lower Lorraine; Hugh of Camp-d’Avesnes, count of Saint-Pol, and Baldwin III, count of Hainaut. They declared war on Charles. He had God on his side; who can be vanquished with such an ally? The count of Flanders beats down his enemies and dictates the law to them; he reduces to the same impotence the counts Walter of Hesdin and Thomas of Coucy, who tried to trouble the repose of his subjects; so that as much as he made himself lovable to these, so much did he become redoubtable to strangers. When the emperor Charles V [*sic*; Henry V] invaded Champagne in 1123 [*sic*; 1124], Charles the Good, as count of Amiens and vassal of the king of France, hastened to his aid followed by ten thousand soldiers. The emperor, frightened by a prodigious armament in which Picardy, Champagne and the Île-de-France had furnished two hundred thousand men, did not dare to join battle: the war thus ended before being begun.

Delivered from the wars which had saddened the beginning of his reign, Charles devoted himself wholly to making peace and justice flourish in his States. After having proclaimed the Truce of God, he proscribed the custom that his subjects had of being constantly armed, which favoured brawls in a country where men were so strongly enamoured of independence and liberty. It was by his examples, even more than by his ordinances, that he strove to civilize the peoples he governed. Simple and modest in his ways, he detested flattery. His austerities equalled those of religious. An enemy of display, he reduced his expenses in order to

diminish the taxes of the people and lower the dues of his farmers. Full of solicitude for the needs of the poor, he went so far as to strip himself of his clothes to clothe them with them. He remained barefoot, from devotion, when he performed his daily acts of charity, and kissed the hands of each poor man whom he relieved.

A chronicle of Flanders[1] reports to us a trait of goodness which recalls an episode of the life of Fénelon. One day when Charles was attending Vespers at Saint Peter's of Ghent, a poor woman came to set before him her grief at having seen a cow taken from her by a soldier. The count begged her to wait at the door so that he might do her justice after Vespers: the poor woman having observed to him that he would then be engaged with graver affairs and would forget her humble petition, the count gave her his mantle as a pledge of his promise. When Charles came out of the church, his officers wished to speak to him at once of various important affairs; but he declared that he would answer no one until a cow which had been stolen from a poor woman should have been returned to her. The animal was at last found, and everyone blessed the goodness of the prince.

Charles showed himself always full of respect and attentiveness for secular priests and for religious, whose advice he solicited and gathered with the most sincere humility; he thanked them when they pointed out to him faults to be corrected, and rewarded them by a quite special protection. He wished the affairs of religious to be despatched before all others, so that they might not lose their time in audiences and might be absent from their monastery as short a time as possible. Iperius relates, in this connexion, the following anecdote: John, abbot of Saint-Bertin, having presented himself at the court of Bruges, on the day of the Epiphany, to complain of a knight who wanted to seize a land belonging to his abbey for sixty years, the count said to him: "Lord abbot, who sings the high Mass today in your monastery?" — "Count, there are a hundred monks among whom one can choose an officiant." — "But you ought, on such a day, to share the offices and meals with your monks, and procure for them the lawful rejoicings for which my ancestors assigned you revenues." — "It is necessity that has constrained me to leave my brethren, to come and warn you that one of our lords oppresses us." — "It would have sufficed to warn me of it by a message: for your duty is to pray to God, as mine is to protect you." — Then he sent for the offender and said to him: "If ever I hear complaints again about you, I will have you thrown into a cauldron of boiling water." The knight held himself warned, and the abbot, reassured, hastened to return to his monastery.

In all circumstances, Charles's conduct was dictated by a profound love of justice and by a special predilection for the weak and the oppressed; when he was reproached for his sympathies, he answered: "It is that I know how many needs the poor have and how much pride the rich."

We complete this picture of the character and virtues of the count of Flanders by letting the naive chronicle of Oudegherst speak:[2] one will find in it some indications which are not met with in the other biographers of Charles the Good: "He had three religious, doctors in theology, who, daily after supper, proposed and explained to him a chapter or two of the Bible, in which he took a singular pleasure. He forbade everyone, under pain of losing a limb, to swear by the name of God, or by anything which touched God and his saints, and when any of his household was found in this fault, he made him, besides, fast forty days on bread and water … he ordained that all those who are condemned to the last punishment should be confessed and that, a day before the execution, the Blessed Sacrament should be administered to them, which before was not accustomed to be observed. He was marvellously severe and rigorous against witches, enchanters, necromancers and others who helped themselves with like arts … He had ordinarily, at dinner, in his hall, thirteen poor men, whom he had served in the same way as his knights and lords … He ordained that no one should lodge lads or vagabonds, on pain of making good the damages and interest they should have done to others; that no one, of whatever quality or condition he might be, should have the boldness to carry off or cause to be carried off children without the consent of father, mother, guardians or other relatives … He was a marvellously good justiciar, so that he constrained those who had been accustomed to oppress poor folk to

desist from it, against whom he used such rigour that the poor folk lived in good peace and tranquillity."

This tranquillity was to be troubled by a terrible famine which in 1125 desolated chiefly Flanders and Picardy. From the preceding year the superstitious populations expected a grave event, because, on the 11th of the month of August, a partial eclipse of the sun had darkened the skies. The winter which followed was so rigorous and so long that the sowings did not come up. Then broke out one of those disastrous famines which decimated the populations of the middle ages.

Some died for want of food; others threw themselves greedily on the provisions which chance procured for them and caused themselves mortal indigestions. Bread was wholly lacking: so the inhabitants of Bruges, of Ghent, of the banks of the Lys and the Scheldt were reduced to eating only meat, even during Lent. The villagers hoped in vain to obtain bread in the towns and castles; they found only death at the end of their wanderings. Those who survived were so emaciated that they would have been taken for walking skeletons.

This public disaster gave occasion to the Blessed Charles to display all the activity of his solicitude and of his charity. Each day he fed a hundred poor at Bruges, and order was given that it should be the same in each of his castles. It is told that, being at Ypres, he distributed at one time seven thousand eight hundred loaves of two pounds. Each day also he clothed completely five poor persons, giving each a shirt, a tunic, furs, a cape, boots, buskins and shoes. After this generous distribution, he went to hear Mass at the church, sang psalms there, and ended his devotions by distributing pence to the beggars.

He devoted the rest of his day to making regulations which might soften the present evils and prevent their return. He reprimanded some inhabitants of Ghent who had let starving people die before their door;[3] he forbade the brewing of beer, so as not to exhaust the little grain that had been harvested;[4] he prescribed to the bakers to knead loaves of oats and fixed at six écus the price of the quarter-cask of wine. By his orders, all the dogs were killed,[5] and the lands were sown in the proportion of two-thirds in wheat and one-third in beans or peas, vegetables which grow quickly and whose prompt harvest could shorten the time of the famine. Certain rich families, among others that of Bertulf,[6] add certain Flemish chroniclers, hoarded the grain and sold it at an exorbitant price: Charles is said then to have charged his almoner Tancmar to constrain all the owners to sell their grain at a reasonable price; this would be one of the causes which led to the bloody drama of which we shall soon relate the horrors.[7]

Thanks to these wise dispositions, the hoardings ceased, money circulated, and the dearth made its ravages less felt, until it should disappear with the next harvest.

Henry V, emperor of the Romans, had just died without an heir (1125). The electors turned their eyes to the prince who, in these times of dearth and anarchy, had shown for his people that boundless devotion which is the most popular virtue of kings. The chancellor of the bishop of Cologne and count Godfrey of Namur were charged to go and sound the intentions of Charles, who at once took counsel of the barons of Flanders; some of them, those very ones who had long sworn his ruin, urged him to accept the imperial sceptre, in order to be rid of a prince whose virtues were a burden to them; the others, and they were the greater number, begged him not to abandon the work he had begun, and not to rob Flanders of a true father. The Blessed Charles the Good followed their counsel and refused the glorious title of king of the Romans.

A short time after,[8] he received from the crusader princes of Jerusalem a letter which offered him the throne of the Holy City, because Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, had been taken prisoner by the Turks. Charles likewise declined this honour, declaring that he wished to devote himself wholly to the happiness of Flanders.

He turned to profit the years of peace and plenty to fill reserve granaries and prevent the return of dearths. He wished also to strengthen the feudal regime, which was far from being as solidly established as in France; for the burghers proclaimed themselves the equals of the nobles, and many serfs had freed themselves.

Among these last were the members of a family to which various Flemish chroniclers have wrongly given the name of Van der Straten, instead of that of Erembald.[9] Two brothers had long forgotten the serfdom of their ancestors: one, Bertulf, had usurped the provostship of the Chapter of Saint Donatian of Bruges, to which was attached the dignity of hereditary chancellor of Flanders;[10] the other, Désiré Haket, was castellan of Bruges and had a son, named Burchard,[11] who distinguished himself by his turbulence and ambition.

The head of the Erembald family, Bertulf, was animated by an intolerable pride, and affected to be ignorant of the names of people whom he believed beneath him. He so dominated the Chapter that none of the canons dared complain of his misdeeds. He had made his nephews embrace the career of arms and urged them to take part in all those neighbourhood quarrels which were so common in the Flanders of the twelfth century.

The provost of Bruges, who by his riches and his influence held the first rank after the lord of Flanders, had married his nieces to nobles, hoping thus to bring his family one day out of the servile condition. One of them, Robert, having challenged another knight to a judicial duel, the latter reminded him that, according to the law re-established by Charles, every free man who married a serf-woman shared, one year after his marriage, the same condition as his wife, and that consequently he could not, a knight, accept a single combat which would not take place between peers. The provost was greatly mortified to see thus revealed to the public this servile condition which was unknown to most, and he denied the count's rights of property: "This Charles of Denmark," he cried, "would never have attained the dignity of count if I had not wished it, and now he forgets the good I did him; he inquires among the old men whether I am a serf and wants to reduce me to slavery with all my family: but what matter! we shall always be free, and there is no one in the world who can make us serfs." The conflict was referred to the judgment of the count of Flanders. The provost appeared before him, at Cassel, accompanied by his son-in-law Robert and five hundred knights who seemed to have more confidence in their sword than in the justice of their cause. The Blessed Charles, out of prudence, put the affair off till later and asked that, according to the law, twelve witnesses should affirm on oath that the niece of Bertulf was not of servile origin. The assembly of the nobility was convoked later at Saint-Omer, and, in the absence of the testimonies vainly demanded, it was decided that Robert of Kaeskerke was in the wrong and that the Erembald family was composed only of "men of the body" who belonged to the domain of the count. Robert, who had himself been misled because, like many others, he thought that Bertulf's family had been emancipated, became one of the most bitter enemies of the provost.

Another incident came still further to embitter the provost's animosity against Charles. The members of Bertulf's family could not forgive Tancmar, chaplain of the count and head of the family "Van der Straten," for having had their hoarded grain sold during the dearth. They tried to avenge themselves for it by violences. So they profited by a journey which Charles was making in France to ravage the domain of Bourbourg where Tancmar had fortified himself. When Charles was back at Ypres, the villagers came to complain that pillagers had put them to ransom. The count of Flanders, after taking the advice of his counsellors, had the house of Burchard burned, who had been the principal promoter of the disorders.

The provost, who affected to have remained a stranger to this affair, sent Guy of Steenvoorde and other negotiators to the count, under pretext of obtaining pardon for his nephews. Charles showed himself indulgent, promised to give another house to Burchard, but forbade him to rebuild the ruins of the one that had been burned, because its proximity to that of Tancmar might bring new conflicts. Charles dismissed the envoys, making them drink the wine of departure.

Guy of Steenvoorde went immediately to find the Erembald family, which was gathered, with its principal partisans, at the lodging of Bertulf. Faithful to the lesson which had been given him beforehand by the provost, he told that the count was furious and that no pardon was to be hoped from him. Then the conspirators joined hands in sign of alliance. Only a nephew of the provost, named Robert, opposed the pact of treason which they wished to weave, and his silence could be bought only by persuading him that it had been merely a jest.

When evening came, the conspirators gathered in the house of a knight named Walter, and passed the night in planning the execution of their attempt, which they fixed for the next morning, 2 March 1127.

The count's palace was contiguous to the church of Saint Donatian,[12] and communicated by a vaulted passage with one of the upper galleries:[13] there was a chapel there where the count came to hear Mass every morning. That day, Charles had risen very early, and, having distributed to the poor his customary alms, had gone to the chapel, accompanied by his seneschal, his chamberlain and some other personages of his court. He had passed a very agitated night. He had often been warned of the dangers which threatened him, but he had always answered: "We are ceaselessly surrounded by perils; to be reassured, it suffices that we have the happiness to belong to God. If besides it is his will that we lose our life, could we lose it for a better cause than that of justice and truth?" Burchard, warned by his confidants, hastened to the gallery with his accomplices, who hid their swords under their cloaks. They saw Charles kneeling on a prie-Dieu, reading aloud the penitential psalms and distributing pence to the poor. The conspirators divided into two bands to guard the two issues and let no one escape. Burchard, advancing slowly toward the count, pricked his neck lightly with the point of his sword; at that moment a poor woman cried out in alarm: "Lord count, beware!" The prince had raised his head; Burchard broke his skull with his sword, and the brains spurted on the flagstones. The other assassins finished him and cut off his right arm. The murderers immolated to their vengeance, in the church, in the town of Bruges and in the castle, all those whom they considered adversaries of the provost and friends of the count. Tancmar's family did not escape this horrible butchery.

"A wonderful thing!" says the chronicler Galbert; "the count having been killed on Wednesday morning, the report of this abominable death struck the ear of the citizens of the city of London on the following Friday, about the first hour of the day; and, toward evening, this news went and cast consternation into the city of Laon, which, situated in France, is at a very considerable distance from Bruges. This is what we learned from our scholars who were then studying at Laon and from our merchants who the same day were trading in London. No one, either on horseback or by sea, could have crossed so quickly the interval of times and places of which we have just spoken." Meanwhile the body of Charles lay for a long time in the choir of the church of Saint Donatian, and no one dared render him the duties of burial. The provost pretended to permit his obsequies to be proceeded with; but he secretly begged the abbot of Saint Peter's of Ghent to have the body removed and buried in that city. In the meantime, he sent to ask Simon, bishop of Noyon, to come and reconcile the church, defiled by a murder of which he proclaimed himself innocent. But the bearer, thrown from his horse, could not reach Noyon. Some days later, the bishop of that city learned the murder of his brother-in-law Charles the Good, and pronounced anathema against all who had accomplished or favoured it.

The abbot of Saint Peter's of Ghent, to fulfil the desire of the provost, wished to carry off the body of Charles in a coffin; but the poor, the canons and numerous citizens opposed it; they went to find Bertulf, to whom an old man said: "Lord provost, if you had wished to act with justice, you would not have given away, without the consent and counsel of the brethren, the mortal remains of so great a prince, which will be a true treasure for our church. This prince was brought up among us, he passed the greater part of his life here; it is in our midst that he perished for justice. If he is taken from us, we have to fear the destruction of the town and of this church; if he remains with us, he will protect us against the chastisements which the treason of which he was the victim may draw down." These supplications only irritated the provost: men ran to arms and the town was about to be bloodied anew, when all parties were appeased by the healing of a paralytic child who had invoked the intercession of the Blessed Charles. Men then hastened to come and venerate the mortal remains of the Blessed; they were eager to dip linen in his blood, to take some fragments of his garments or his hair, the touch of which worked various cures.

The provost could not but let the funeral be carried out; the service took place, on Friday 4 March, in the church of Saint Peter outside the Walls;[14] the mutilated body of Charles was put in a coffin and afterwards deposited in a vault of the church of Saint Donatian.

The punishment of the murderers of Charles was not long delayed. We could not, without leaving our subject, reproduce here the moving accounts which the chroniclers of the time give of it; but we cannot dispense ourselves from relating, in a few words, the miserable end of the count's enemies, since it was considered by all contemporaries as a striking testimony rendered by Providence to the memory of the Blessed Charles.

The provost had favourably received the candidacy of William of Ypres, from whom he hoped impunity; he won him partisans, but the faithful subjects of Charles the Good, under the leadership of the knight Gervase, who had been chamberlain to the count, plotted a conspiracy against the provost and his partisans, and besieged his castle. They were soon seconded by various lords of Flanders and by the countess of Holland, who coveted for her son the succession to the vacant throne. The provost and his brother the castellan Haket, understanding the fate reserved for them, asked to make juridical proof of their personal innocence, and claimed their lives safe for their nephews, whom they consented to see banished for ever. These proposals were scorned, and the siege went on more ardent than ever. The provost was obliged to take refuge in the church of Saint Donatian, from which he succeeded in fleeing into the neighbouring marshes.

During the horrors of this siege, the Ghentois tried to seize by ruse the body of Charles the Good; but they failed in their enterprise. The lords of Flanders, influenced by the counsels of Louis the Fat, chose for their sovereign William Clito, son of the duke of Normandy. On 5 April, the king of France and the new count of Flanders arrived at Bruges; on the 11th, the provost Bertulf was delivered up by William of Ypres, who hoped by that to clear himself of all suspicion of complicity; the murderer, condemned to the gibbet, perished at Ypres amid the most cruel tortures.

The accomplices of the provost, who sustained the siege in the great tower of Saint Donatian, surrendered only on 19 April. All who had been steeped in the conspiracy had already undergone, or then underwent, a punishment proportioned to their degree of guilt. Guy of Steenvoorde was hanged at Ypres; Eustace of Steenvoorde was burned alive in the flames of a house where he had sought asylum; Wilfrid Knop, brother of the provost, was hurled from the top of a tower with twenty-eight of his accomplices; Isaac was strangled on the market place of Bruges; Robert had his head cut off at Cassel; Burchard underwent the torture of the wheel, repenting of his crime.

The chroniclers add that those who escaped the punishments were banished from Flanders and had a sad end.

RELICS, CULT, ICONOGRAPHY

When the church of Saint Donatian of Bruges, where the assassins of Charles had taken refuge as in a fortress, had been taken by assault by Louis the Fat, men hastened to render to the relics of the Blessed Charles the honours which had been lacking to them till then. On 20 April the body was raised, which was in no way decomposed, although it had been there seven weeks. According to the custom of the country, it was sewn into a stag's skin and exposed on a platform in the middle of the choir. On the 21st it was transferred to the church of Saint Christopher, where the funeral Mass was sung in the presence of King Louis the Fat, the Flemish barons and the people.

The church of Saint Donatian was reconciled and purified some days after by Simon, bishop of Noyon; on the 25th the body of the Blessed Charles was brought back into it.[15] Philip of Rodoan IV, bishop of Bruges, raised the body in 1606 and deposited it in a shrine which was placed on the altar of Our Lady. These relics were transferred first into a chapel consecrated to the Blessed Charles (19 January 1782), then into the treasury of the chapter of the cathedral of Bruges. They are preserved today in a chapel of that church, where one reads, near the shrine, this inscription: *Ossa sanctissimi principis Caroli Boni, S. Canuti regis Daniae filii, Flandriae comitis XIII, nefandae S. Donatiani Basilicae vastationi feliciter subtracta, Brugensium pietate erga optimum principem post annos 700 ab ejus morte non imminuta, nec imminuenda unquam, hic denuo recondita. 1827*

It is claimed that the inspection of the bones explains the exaggeration of the Flemish chroniclers who pretended that the Blessed Charles was nine feet tall. Various laments were composed, either in Flemish or in Latin, a short time after the death of Charles: they may be seen in the Bollandists.

The chapter of Bruges, in 1610, decided that, each year, on 2 March, a solemn Mass of the Holy Trinity should be celebrated at the cathedral in honour of the Blessed Charles the Good. Fever-sufferers, to obtain their healing, drank from the skull of the Blessed. No public cult is rendered to him today.

Several martyrologies qualify Charles the Good as Saint and Martyr. He is inscribed on 2 March as Blessed in the martyrologies of Molanus, Galesinius, Canisius, Willot, Greven, Du Saussay, etc., and in the old spiritual calendars of the diocese of Amiens. Charles the Good is ordinarily represented massacred by his rebel subjects. At the cathedral of Bruges, an old painting on wood represents him full length. For a long time his statue has no longer been seen there.

He figures on 2 March in the engravings of Sébastien Leclerc; in volume iv, fol. 24, of the *Collection des Saints* of the Cabinet des estampes (Bibl. nat.), and in the *Iconographia sancta*, given by M. Guénebault to the Mazarine library (no. 4778).

His image has been engraved by Balthasar in the *Généalogies des forestiers et comtes de Flandres* (page 79). He bears the sceptre and the royal mantle bordered with ermine. A dog, which is at his side, symbolizes his vigilance and his fidelity.

A manuscript of the Bibliothèque nationale, the *Anciennes Chroniques de Flandres* (no. 8308), contains a miniature representing the assassination of Charles the Good. On his seals he is figured on horseback, clad in a coat of mail, holding in the left hand a shield, and in the right a sword, with this legend: *Karolus, comes Flandriae et filius regis Daciae* [Charles, count of Flanders and son of the king of Denmark]. That is the title he ordinarily took in his charters.[16] Charles the Good bore *or, a lion sable, langued and armed gules.*[17] There is preserved in the diocesan museum of Bruges a tile of the pavement of the gallery where this prince was assassinated, and on which, it is assured, his blood spurted. We have borrowed nearly the whole of this narrative from M. Corblet, the eminent author of the *Hagiographie d'Amiens.*

The Blessed Henry Suso, of the Order of Friars Preachers

1365. — Pope: Urban V. — Emperor: Charles IV.

The Lord chastises those whom he loves, and he strikes those whom he adopts.

In the spiritual life, sweetness is acquired by bitterness. — Maxim of the Blessed Henry Suso.

This faithful lover of eternal Wisdom was born in the year 1300, in Swabia; he was sprung from the illustrious family of Berg and of the Süssen. God called him from his childhood to the religious state and clothed him, at the age of thirteen, with the habit of Saint Dominic, in the city of Constance.[1] The Church named him Brother Henry, and the world Suso.[2] He was not at first sufficiently detached from the trifles of the earth, although he avoided grave sins and whatever could have tarnished his reputation. God did not abandon him during five years of a not very exemplary novitiate: he assisted him, he saved him by mercifully troubling his soul. There was no peace and tranquillity for Suso whenever he let himself be too much captivated by family affections, by the society of his friends, or by pleasure and material enjoyments: his heart had need of something else, and this interior torment, this disgust, this painful remorse tormented him until Our Lord, in his goodness, wounded his heart so lovingly that he detached it from all creatures. The demon made every effort to stop our Blessed in his resolution to leave the world and conquer himself; he whispered to him ceaselessly: "Remember that to begin is very easy, but to persevere is truly impossible." Henry answered: "The Holy Spirit who calls me and who is all-powerful can do in me what is easy and what is difficult." The tempter, far from holding himself vanquished, continued: "Yes! one cannot doubt the power

of God; but what is very uncertain is the correspondence with grace; can you count on it?" — "Since God has called me," replied Henry, "it is that he does not wish to abandon me. I feel him inviting me to serve him and promising me his help. How, when he draws me and I give myself to him, when I throw myself into his arms, how would he withdraw to let me fall?" Then the evil spirit counselled him, at least, not to change his way of life too abruptly; that it was by moderating his ardour that he could succeed; that no one became a saint all at once, because violent things are not lasting; that, if he wished to be so hard on himself in his interior, he ought in public to confine himself within wise limits and not revolt everybody. But, on the other hand, the divine Wisdom, who wished to possess his heart, said to him: "He who can vanquish his rebel body and hold it under the law of the spirit, while living in the midst of delicacies and sensual satisfactions, is a fool; it is impossible to enjoy the world and serve God. If you wish to serve me, you must begin with courage, renouncing the world and yourself."

He was not only sustained by his interior aspirations; to console his soul, thus deprived of the happiness of the earth, God showed him the heavenly happiness in a vision, one day when he was weeping alone in the church; his memory kept the taste of this ecstasy, as the vase keeps the odour of a perfume, and this remembrance delivered him more and more from human affections. Seeing in the holy Scriptures that eternal Wisdom, who is none other than Our Lord, offers herself to men as a tender Virgin with incomparable charms, he groaned, sighed, burned for her with the most ardent flames. "My young and ardent heart," he said to himself, "is borne to love; it is impossible for me to live without loving: creatures cannot please me and cannot give me peace; yes, I will try my fortune and strive to obtain the good graces of this divine and holy friend, of whom such admirable and sublime things are told." He savoured with a holy intoxication these words: "Wisdom is more brilliant than the sun, she is more beautiful than the harmony of the heavens, and when she is compared with light, she is found preferable. So I have loved her, I have sought her from my childhood, I have asked her for my bride and I have become the adorer of her charms … When this heavenly spouse shall come to dwell in my heart, how gently will my soul rest in her! Her presence and her conversations can cause neither weariness nor bitterness; she brings always, on the contrary, a continual peace and joy … Oh! he who loves this Wisdom, who embraces her, possesses her and follows her in her paths, has no wanderings or falls to fear! When he wishes to sleep, he will not be awakened by phantoms of terror; his rest will be assured and his sleep always delightful."

But the infernal serpent strove to defile with his venom these pure joys of which the soul of our Saint drank. "What are you doing," he often said to him, "what folly to wish to love what you do not know, what you have never seen! Is it not better to possess a small certain thing than to attempt a great one which is very doubtful? Besides, your so-called eternal Wisdom demands that her lovers be enemies of themselves, that they deprive themselves of sleep, of food, of wine, of recreations, of pleasures." Our Saint answered: "It is a law of love that he who wishes to love resign himself to pain: see what fatigues, what disgusts and what disappointments the lovers of the world endure! — 'I have found woman more bitter than death,' says Ecclesiastes; 'she is like the snare of the hunter, her heart is a net spread and her hands are veritable chains: the friend of God will flee her, but the sinner will become her prey.'"

However he would have greatly desired to see at least once the divine Spouse whose love he preferred to all those of earth; as he tended toward her with all the impulses of his heart, she appeared to him afar off, raised on a column of cloud and on a throne of ivory, with a majesty brighter than the morning, more dazzling than the sun: her crown was eternity; her veil and her garment felicity; her speech sweetness, and her embraces abundance and possession of every good; she appeared at once far and near, sublime and humble, evident and hidden, simple and yet incomprehensible, higher than the heights of the heavens, deeper than the abysses of the sea; she was like a queen who reigned with power to the limits of the earth, and who governed every creature with gentleness; at one moment she seemed to him a pure and charming virgin, at another a young man of exquisite beauty; at one moment a mistress learned in all things, at another a tender friend who turned

gently toward him and smiled at him with grace and majesty, saying: *Fili, praebe mihi cor tuum* — "My son, give me thy heart." Then he threw himself at her feet and rendered her the humblest, most loving thanksgivings: "Yes," he cried, "I want you, I choose you for my beloved, for the sovereign of my heart." Who could say how many times, from that epoch, he embraced her in the depth of his heart! He clung to her as the little child who, in its mother's arms, clings to her breasts and hides in her bosom; this weak creature moves its head and its little body to reach her who nourishes it and to testify to her, by caresses and kisses, the joy of its heart; thus the soul of Henry stirred and tormented itself, in the presence of the divine Wisdom, quite intoxicated as it was by the torrent of heavenly consolations.

One day, he took a penknife, and, love guiding his hand, he cut himself, he lacerated his breast until he had formed the letters of the holy name of Jesus on his heart; then he cried: "O sole love of my soul, O my Jesus! see then the ardour of my passion for you! I have imprinted you in my flesh; but I am not satisfied, I would go further and reach the very centre of my heart; I cannot; but may your tenderness receive my prayer; may it supply what is lacking to me, and, since you can, engrave yourself your holy name in the depth of this heart, and that, with eternal letters which nothing can efface or destroy in me." These letters, wounds of love, appeared on his breast until his death, and at each beat of his heart, the name of Jesus made itself felt in a quite particular manner. We cannot relate all the other consolations which he received from heaven: one day, in ecstasy, he saw come forth from his heart a ray of pure light, and, in his very heart, shine and glitter a magnificent golden cross.

Another time when he was saluting, in the morning, his star of love, the sovereign Queen of heaven, and was singing to her in his soul a delightful canticle, as the little birds do in summer at the rising of the sun, a melodious voice answered him interiorly with these words: *Maria, Stella maris, hodie processit ad ortum* — "Behold Mary, the star of the sea, who rises." Then this sweet Queen, bending with kindness toward her child, said to him: "The more lovingly thou embracest me on earth, the more tenderly I shall embrace thee in paradise; the more thy soul shall have pursued me with a chaste love, disengaged from the senses, the more also, on the day of eternal brightness, shalt thou reign united and attached to my heart." At carnival time, as he had passed a whole night in prayer, in the morning, at the instant when day was about to appear, the angels descended into his cell and sang: *Surge, illuminare, Jerusalem, quia venit lumen tuum, et gloria Domini super te orta est* — "Arise, be enlightened, Jerusalem, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." This song excited such a joy in the soul of our Saint that his body, no longer having strength to bear such happiness, the heavenly voices were obliged to be silent.

The souls of the dead appeared to him like the angels, to reveal to him their state, their joys or their pains; he saw, among others, the soul of a holy man named Eckhart; it told him that it was in heaven, happy, flooded with an ineffable glory and truly all transformed into God. Henry asked it what, in our pilgrimage, was the most efficacious spiritual exercise for arriving at this perfect beatitude. The soul answered: "It is to renounce oneself and all property, confiding oneself blindly to God; it is to receive all that happens as coming from the Creator, and not from the creature; it is to be patient and gentle with those who pursue us like furious wolves." He asked another inhabitant of the heavenly abode what was the greatest suffering that the just man could bear and the most meritorious for obtaining eternal glory; it was answered him: "It is to find oneself abandoned by God, to forget oneself and do oneself violence, to the point of resigning oneself through love to remain deprived of God, as long as it pleases God himself." These visits from the other world strengthened him greatly in the service of God. Let us see now how he performed his actions: at table, he imagined that he was in front of or beside Jesus, and that this divine guest was granting him a quite particular grace by honouring him with his presence. So he kept the eyes of his soul ceaselessly fixed on him, and he sometimes humbly bowed his head as if to lean and rest on that breast pierced by a lance on account of our crimes. He offered his food, he presented his glass to Jesus Christ, praying him to bless them; the little that was necessary to him to quench his thirst, he took in five draughts to honour the five wounds of the Redeemer,

and the last time was divided into two sips, because from the side of Our Lord water and blood had flowed. Likewise, at each mouthful, he busied himself with some pious thought; but he always took the first and the last in union with the ardent charity of the highest Seraph of heaven and in participation with the most inflamed heart on earth, and he begged God to be pleased to penetrate his soul with these two loves. When he found some dish disagreeable, he put it first into the bleeding heart of Jesus and then ate it with courage.

It is impossible to say with what sensible devotion he celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass and how much he was inflamed with love. One day, at these words: *Sursum corda, gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro* — "Let us lift up our hearts and give thanks to the Lord," he was rapt in ecstasy, and the bystanders, having perceived it, asked him what were then his thoughts. Our Saint answered: "Three thoughts above all agitate and inflame my heart. First I contemplate in spirit my whole being, my soul, my body, my strengths, my powers, and around me all the creatures with which the Almighty has peopled the heaven, the earth and the elements, the angels of heaven, the beasts of the forests, the inhabitants of the waters, the plants of the earth, the sand of the sea, the atoms that fly in the air in the sunbeam, the snowflakes, the drops of the rain and the pearls of the dew. I think that, to the farthest extremities of the world, all creatures obey God and contribute as much as they can to that mysterious harmony which rises ceaselessly to praise and bless the Creator. I picture myself then to be in the midst of this concert like a choirmaster: I apply all my faculties to marking the beat; I invite, I excite, by the liveliest movements of my heart, the most intimate of my soul, to sing joyfully with me: *Sursum … habemus ad Dominum; gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro* — Lift up your hearts! We have them toward the Lord; let us render a thousand thanks to the Lord our God. 'I consider next my heart and those of all men; I think of the joy, the love, the peace of those who consecrate themselves solely to God; then of the misfortunes, the tortures, the remorse, the agitation of those who are impassioned for the world with so much solicitude and ardour. Then I call with all my strength all the men who people the earth to rise with me up to God to praise and bless him. I cry out: O poor hearts of men, surmount then the flood which carries you away, come out at last from vice and death, break the chains of your hard prison, shake off the sleep of your apathy; may a holy and true conversion lead you to God to thank him and serve him! *Sursum corda; gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.*

"Finally, I address myself to those innumerable souls who have good will but who do not abandon themselves entirely to God. I weep and groan bitterly over them, because, in their deplorable error, they can enjoy neither God nor creatures, but go astray in the vain pursuit of the things of earth. I invite them, I excite them to scorn courageously the frivolous love of creatures, to give themselves to God for ever, to love him with confidence, and to thank him, saying: *Sursum corda; gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.*"

Our Saint has also left a fine model of the manner in which we ought to celebrate piously the feasts which recall to us the great mysteries of our religion. At the time of the Purification of the Virgin, to prepare himself devoutly to receive her in the Temple, Brother Henry chose the three days which preceded this feast, and he honoured symbolically the virginity, the humility, the maternity of Mary, by burning a three-branched candle and reciting, each day, the *Magnificat* three times. On the morning of the solemnity, before the people came to church, he went and prostrated himself before the high altar, and there meditated on the glories of Mary, until the moment when she came to bring her dear Son to the Temple; then he rose, and, imagining that she had arrived at the door of the church, he called all the friends of God and went with them to the door and onto the square, to meet the holy woman who had given birth. When he had found her, he begged her to be pleased to stop a little with her cortège, to hear a canticle which his heart wished to sing to her in the silence of his soul, with the help of all those who loved her; and he intoned tenderly this spiritual hymn: *Inviolata, integra et casta es, Maria, quae effecta es fulgida caeli porta: suscipe pia laudum praeconia, o benigna! quae sola inviolata permansisti* — "Thou art pure, thou art chaste and without stain, O Mary! so thou hast become the dazzling gate of heaven; receive the pious tribute of our praises, O compassionate Virgin who alone hast kept thy purity!" At these last words he humbly bowed his head, and begged Mary to

have compassion on his heart so poor and so laden with sins, then he rose and, directing himself toward the altar, he followed her holding his candle, whose mysterious light he made shine, to ask Mary never to let the light of eternal Wisdom and the flame of divine love be extinguished in his heart. He addressed himself to all the friends of God, engaging them to sing with him the hymn *Adorna thalamum* — "Adorn the bridal bed," etc., and to receive the Saviour and his Mother with the liveliest sentiments of love and praise.

Arrived at the altar, at the moment when Mary was about to offer her dear Son to the old man Simeon, he begged her, humbly prostrate on the ground, eyes and hands raised to heaven, to show him her Child, to permit him to embrace his feet, his hands, to confide him for an instant to his soul. Mary consented, and Brother Henry, all trembling with joy and love, took Jesus in his arms, pressed him to his heart, embraced him and embraced him again, as if he had really possessed him. He contemplated with happiness his dazzling eyes, his face pure as milk, his ravishing mouth, his little hands, his body white as snow, his childish limbs divinized by something heavenly. In his rapture and ecstasy, he was quite moved and astonished to see the Creator of all things, at once so great and so small, so beautiful and sublime in heaven, so weak and poor on earth. It was amid these songs, these tears, these thanksgivings that he gave the divine Child back to Mary and accompanied her to the choir and in the ceremonies of the feast.

At carnival time, he bitterly wept for all the sins and injuries that are committed against God, and he chastised his body more than usual. As reward, he had an ecstasy, in which he heard the melodious voice of a child of twelve years, who sang with such sweetness that no human music was comparable to it; and, after having sung, the beautiful child, without showing himself, presented to him a branch of fruits which resembled strawberries; then, at his desire, he showed himself to our enraptured Saint: it was Our Lord. He had a ravishing beauty; looking affectionately at Henry, he blessed him and disappeared. In the month of May, as the young people of the world carried, singing and dancing, a green and flowering branch which they called the May, Brother Henry chose for his May the holy Cross, thinking that never had fields or forests produced a tree so beautiful and so rich in flowers, in leaves and in fruits; he sang: *Salve, Crux sancta! salve, mundi gloria!* — "Hail, holy Cross! hail, glory of the world!" And he added: *Salve, caelestis arbor salutis perpetuae, in qua crevit fructus sapientiae!* — "Hail, heavenly tree of eternal salvation, on which the fruit of wisdom has ripened!"

Our Lord warned Henry that he would arrive at his divinity only by following the rough and sorrowful way of his humanity; from then on, every night, after Matins, he retired into a corner of the Chapter to exercise himself on the Passion of his Saviour and to take part in all his sorrows by meditating on them and compassionating them. Beginning at the Last Supper, he followed Jesus Christ from one place to another, was present at his judgment, carried his cross, kissed the traces of his sorrowful journey up to Calvary: he excited himself to abandon, after the example of this divine Model, his friends, his goods and all temporal enjoyments; to trample honours under foot; when the cortège of death passed before him, he saluted the holy Victim, asking to die with him: *Ave, Rex noster, Fili David*, etc. — "Hail, O our King, Son of David …"; then, considering the poor Mother who consented, for us, to so great a sacrifice, he said to her: *Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae* — "Hail, O our Queen, O Mother of mercy!" After the sorrowful funeral, he consoled her, he led her back from Calvary to her house.

In the evening, while the *Salve, Regina* was being sung, he saluted her at the entrance of Jerusalem with these words: *Eia ergo, Advocata nostra* — "Console yourself, console yourself; is it not by this precious blood that you become our Advocate? Ah! in the name of Jesus dead before our eyes and laid on your knees, cast a kindly look upon my soul"; at the door of her house, with these last words: *O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria* — "O clement, O tender, O sweet Virgin Mary, defend me against the assaults of the demon, save me at the hour of death."

He took part above all in the Passion of Our Lord by a rigorous silence and by mortifications which surpass all that can be imagined: he wore a hair-shirt, an iron chain, which he replaced later by a garment woven of

cords, in which were a hundred and fifty iron points so sharp that they made of his whole body as it were a single wound; he let himself be devoured by vermin, in order, he said, to die every minute without ever dying entirely; during the night, his hands and arms were held in leather rings and closed with padlocks. Later he left his hands free, but he covered them with two gloves furnished with iron points, so that they resembled curry-combs or cards. Thus his hands tore him like the claws of a bear, if he touched his body while sleeping. He also placed on his shoulders a wooden cross a palm long, with thirty nails, in honour and recognition of all the wounds that Jesus Christ suffered to prove his love to us. He scourged himself with all kinds of instruments, with more cruelty than his most bitter enemy would have done. A miraculous thing happened in this connexion: a holy nun named Anne, who was in prayer in a distant town, was transported in vision to the place where our Saint was macerating his body with a holy fury. Having seen the cruel blows he gave himself, she had compassion on him and put forth her arm to receive the blow which Henry destined for himself. It seemed to her that she was struck herself, so that, on coming out of her ecstasy, she saw her arm all livid and black, and she kept it sore for some time. His bed was an old door on which he spread a little mat of rushes which reached him only to the knees; his pillow, a sack full of oat straw; he lay down clothed as he was during the day, with all his instruments of torture. For twenty-five years, he never approached the fire; he took only one very frugal meal a day, never ate fish, meat, eggs, content with bread, vegetables and fruit. He drank wine only on Easter day; he allowed himself only a little water, and that at dinner only; he never wished to relieve his thirst by taking a few drops more than usual: this torment was one of the hardest he endured. One day when he was groaning over it, he heard a voice from on high which said in his heart: “Remember, Henry, how terrible was my thirst when I was on the cross, in the last agonies of death. Although I was the Creator of all the fountains, I could not then obtain, to relieve me, anything but gall and vinegar. Bear still with patience the thirst you feel, if you wish to follow my steps.” He merited, by this hard privation, to receive in ecstasy, from the hands of Jesus and Mary, a vessel full of a heavenly drink, of a sweetness and virtue so great that, after drinking of it, his thirst was calmed, and he found himself quite refreshed, quite consoled.

When he had practised for twenty-two years these excessive mortifications, which had so worn him down and exhausted him that nothing remained to him but to die, God commanded him to give them up in order to enter on a way still more perfect. Rapt in ecstasy, he saw a young man who wore a knight’s armour and who clothed him with it, saying: “Thou hast fought as a foot-soldier; henceforth God wishes thee to serve him as a generous knight.” Then it was explained to him that he would have to sustain more terrible wars, to win more brilliant victories than the Hectors, the Achilleses and the Caesars. He was told how his bodily mortifications were to be replaced by spiritual ones: “I will,” said Our Lord to him, “disclose to thee three crosses among those I am preparing for thee. The first cross will be this: Formerly, thou didst strike thyself with thine own hands as much as thou wouldst, and thou didst stop when thou hadst pity on thyself; now, thou shalt be in the hands of others, thou shalt be ill-treated and struck without being able to defend thyself: moreover, thou shalt lose the esteem and consideration of many, and that will be more painful to thee than that cross full of nails which tore thy flesh and shoulders. Thou wast praised, admired in thy voluntary mortifications; but when thou shalt suffer henceforth, thou shalt be abased, despised and turned to ridicule by everybody. The second cross will be this: Although thou hast martyred thyself by numerous and cruel tortures, thou hast kept thy man’s heart and thy loving nature: thou enjoyest the affection of many; but, where thou hadst found confidence, esteem and love, thou shalt henceforth meet everywhere with signal disloyalty; thou shalt be so tricked and overwhelmed that thou shalt become the grief and despair of the few who remain faithful to thee. Here is the third cross: Till now I have nourished thee as a little child with the milk of my divine grace, and that with such abundance that thou didst often feel thyself plunged in an ocean of delights; henceforth, I shall withdraw my graces and my consolations; I shall deliver thee to poverty, to spiritual aridity; thou shalt be abandoned by God and by men, tormented in every way by thy friends and thy enemies, and what thou shalt seek, what thou shalt attempt to console and relieve thee in thy anguish, will always turn against thee.”

And as our Saint trembled with terror at the sight of such combats, a voice said to him interiorly: “Take good courage, for I shall be with thee and I shall make thee victorious in all thy combats.” He was often discouraged, but he was at once strengthened by Our Lord; when he was insulted by his own and turned away his head from disgust and indignation, he heard in the depth of his soul these reproaches: “Did I turn away my head when men insulted me and spat in my face?” Then he corrected himself, went to find those who had ill-treated him and spoke to them with gentleness. God seemed to have permitted all the demons of hell to torment him day and night: they deliberated once before him on the means of making him suffer more, and one of them, putting a sword in his mouth, so tore his gums and caused him so great a toothache that, for three days, he could absolutely eat nothing. The heaviest interior crosses he had to bear were a continual temptation against the faith and the principal mysteries; a profound sadness which, for eight years, weighed on his soul like a heavy mountain; a temptation to despair: he was pursued everywhere by the thought that he was reprobate. God was preparing for him others still very hard in the apostolate, for he did not wish that this lamp should burn always in obscurity; he sent him into the world to labour for the salvation of souls.

One day he had a vision. It seemed to him that he was near a city, in the midst of a great number of angels. — Then an angel, who was near him, said to him: “Stretch out your hand.” And when he had stretched out his hand, behold there rose in it a beautiful rose, with beautiful green leaves. The rose grew to such a point as to cover the whole hand, to the ends of the fingers, and moreover it was so beautiful and so brilliant that it was ravishing to see. And having turned the hand over, on both sides he saw admirable things. Then he said to his companion: “My dear guardian angel, what does this vision mean?” — The angel answered: “The two roses which you have in the hands, and the two roses which you have in the feet, signify that you are going to have to undergo misfortune upon misfortune.” Then Suso said, sighing: “My good angel, it is an admirable thing to see that tribulations, which make the body and heart suffer so much, are for us an ornament before God.”

And so it was. Soon through all the town, and through all the country, calumnious rumours spread about him. There was then in the city of Constance a convent where there was a stone cross, and on this cross was a Christ which, it was said, had exactly the stature of Our Lord. Now one day, during Lent, fresh blood was found on this Christ, at the place of the wound in the side. Suso, having heard speak of this prodigy, went also, with many others, to see it. And when he was there, he approached very close, and took some of this blood on his finger to examine it. Then the crowd that surrounded him pressed about him and summoned him to say what he thought of this miracle. He said frankly and sincerely that it was not possible for him to say whether this extraordinary fact was to be attributed to God or to men. Thereupon his enemies spread the rumour that Suso had cut his finger to make blood come, and thus make the simple believe that the blood had been produced by the Christ of the stone cross. It was added that he had acted thus from avarice, to have money given him by the crowd. And these calumnious rumours spread through all the region. Then the inhabitants of Constance mobbed against him, so that he fled during the night, otherwise they would have killed him. Impelled by hatred, they offered a large sum of money to whoever should bring him back dead or alive. In this manner, his name was covered with shame and opprobrium in all the surrounding countries, and when his friends, who knew his innocence, wished to undertake his defence, they were reduced to silence and overwhelmed with insults. A pious woman of Constance, moved to compassion by all that was passing, went to find him, and counselled him to have given him by those who were convinced of his innocence, and who were very numerous, an authentic document in his favour, and then to go and dwell in another town. Suso answered her: “Ah! my good lady, if I had only that to suffer, I would willingly do what you counsel me; but my whole life is a tissue of tribulations: I prefer then to rely on God.”

One day, he was on the road to the Low Countries, where he was to attend a chapter of his Order. There again he found his cross: two considerable men preceded him there, to overwhelm him with odious imputations. He was formally put on accusation before the superiors of his Order. One of the heads of accusation was the following: he was reproached with writing books filled with errors, by which the poison

of heresy was spreading everywhere around him. He was on this score severely reprimanded, and threatened with the greatest evils, although everyone knew that he was entirely innocent. That was not all: God permitted that on his return he should be seized with a violent fever. All that was not yet enough: besides the fever, he had an abscess near the heart; so that to the pains of the soul there came to be added also the poignant sufferings of the body. His state was at times so grave that his companion, looking at him with commiseration, believed him near expiring.

Now, one night, lying in a strange convent, and unable to sleep because of his pains, he entered into a reckoning with God, and said: “Ah! just God, why then have you thus overwhelmed me with ills of every sort, with pains of heart, sickness and physical sufferings? When then will you cease, good Father, to strike me thus on all sides at once? …” And after he had spoken thus, he felt his whole body covered with a cold sweat, like that of the agony of Jesus in the garden of Olives. And as it was impossible for him to remain in bed, because of the abscess, he let himself slide into an armchair which was quite near. Then he had a vision: it seemed to him that his cell was filled with a legion of heavenly spirits who, to console him, set about singing ineffable songs. And these songs did him so much good that he was as if healed. And while they were thus singing, an angel detached himself from the heavenly choir, approached Suso, and said to him gently: “Why do you not sing with us? you know well enough these beautiful heavenly songs! …” Suso answered, sighing: “Do you not see how I suffer? Have you ever seen a dying man sing? Formerly I sang also, and with joy; but now I am going to die! …” The angel resumed, in an encouraging tone: *Esto fortis, et viriliter age!* — “Take courage, and do not despair! You will not die yet; you will live again, and then you will intone songs in which God will rejoice in heaven, and by which men will be consoled on earth.” At that very moment, his eyes filled with tears, and he wept abundantly. The abscess which he had within opened, and he was healed on the spot.

When he had returned home, a man of God came to visit him, and said to him: “My Father, although you were distant from here by nearly two hundred leagues, I knew all that you had to suffer. I saw one day, with the eyes of my spirit, how the Lord permitted Satan to enter into the bodies of your two powerful accusers, to overwhelm you with afflictions. Then I cried out full of sorrow: Ah! my God, how can you permit your faithful servant to be thus tormented by the devil and by his emissaries? And God answered me thus: He has been chosen to be a faithful image of my Son by his sufferings; and yet those who consented to be the instruments of the wills of the demon shall be punished by a sudden death.” And in effect, his two detractors died a short time after. Another time, as he was going on a journey, there was given him for companion a lay brother who was not animated by the best sentiments, and whom Suso took with him only through obedience, because often already he had experienced on his account all sorts of unpleasantnesses. Now, very early in the morning, they arrived together, fasting, in a village where, because of the fair which was held there that day, there was already a crowd of people. On arriving, they were both wet with the rain; the brother then said to Suso that he might well go and do his business alone; that he preferred to go and warm and dry himself near a good fire; that, his business finished, he need only come and fetch him at such a house. But scarcely had Suso gone when the brother went and sat down at table with coarse people and merchants who had come to the fair. These, seeing that the wine had gone to his head, and that he had posted himself under the carriage gate to look at the passers-by, went and took him by the collar, saying that he had stolen a cheese from them. While he was struggling with them, behold four or five wicked soldiers came up and arrested him, saying that he was a poisoner. At that time there reigned in different countries of Europe epidemic diseases which were falsely attributed to poisoning. And this affair made so much noise that all the inhabitants of the village, as well as the fair people, gathered in a crowd before the house where the monk had been arrested.

He, seeing then that things were taking a bad turn, imagined a means of getting out of this embarrassment; he turned toward them and spoke to them thus: “Leave me in peace a moment and listen to me, I will confess

everything to you. — You see that I am a simple man, a fool, not very clever. Well, at the convent, since they have more confidence in my companion, who is very skilful in all sorts of things, he has been charged to bring here little bags full of poison, with orders to throw them into the wells, from here as far as Alsace; and everywhere he passes he poisons the water of the wells. Try then to arrest him as quickly as possible, otherwise he will infallibly make you all die; this morning, on arriving here, he took one of the bags, and he threw it into the great well which is in the middle of the market place, so that all who drink of it shall die poisoned. And it is for that I did not wish to go with him, because I do not wish to take part in his crime. As proof of the truth of what I tell you, you will find in his possession a great book-bag, in which he hides the poisoned bags and the money which, by virtue of a contract passed between the heads of the Order and the Jews, he receives from these for poisoning the wells."

After hearing this speech, the mobbed crowd cried death and malediction against the poor Dominican; and they cried out full of rage: "At the murderer, at the poisoner! and let us hasten, lest he escape us!" Thereupon they ran to seek him, armed with pikes, halberds, maces, etc. They went through all the houses, forcing the doors which they found shut, searching with their sabres the beds and the heaps of straw. Among the strangers who had come there on occasion of the fair, there were some who knew Suso, and who, having heard his name pronounced, had the courage to undertake his defence in the presence of the irritated crowd. They told them not to put faith in this black calumny, that Suso was a holy man, incapable of such an action. Not having found him, the crowd ceased to seek him, and it led the lay brother before the bailiff, who had him put in prison. Suso, ignorant of what had passed, came at last to breakfast. But scarcely was he arrived when those who were there hastened to inform him of everything. At once he ran to the bailiff to beg him to release the brother prisoner. But the bailiff formally refused. Then the holy man wished to have him released for money; and as he had not enough, he ran hither and thither to borrow, but without success. At last, by dint of insisting with the bailiff, he nevertheless succeeded in having his companion set at liberty, by sacrificing a large sum of money.

He thought then that all was over; but the worst was only about to begin. Toward the hour of Vespers, as he was going away from the bailiff's to leave the village, behold the crowd, mobbed anew by some bad characters, ran after him, shouting: "Here is the assassin! here is the poisoner of wells! … He must not be let go; let us knock him on the head, and let us not be corrupted by his money, as he corrupted the bailiff! …" Suso withdrew to go and hide somewhere in the village, but they all ran after him crying out and threatening more and more. Some said: "Let us throw him into the Rhine!" Others replied: "No, this monk-bandit would defile the waters of the river: let us burn him!" — A peasant of gigantic stature, dressed in a dirty jacket and armed with a pike, parted the crowd, placed himself in the midst of them and harangued them in these terms: "Listen to me! We could not better avenge ourselves on this brigand than in the following manner: with this long pike I am going to pierce him through and through, as one spits a vile toad! I want to strip him quite naked, this accursed poisoner! then I shall transfix him with my pike, and plant him firmly in the middle of this hedge. There he shall be left to rot and dry at the top of the pike, as on a gibbet, so that all who shall happen to pass by here, on seeing him, shall shake their heads and curse him as a vile assassin, and thus his memory shall be for ever infamous before God and before men! It will be the just chastisement of his crimes."

The unfortunate Suso, hearing this speech, melted into tears and trembled in all his limbs. Those who were nearest him, moved with pity, beat their breasts and raised their hands to heaven; but they did not dare undertake the monk's defence, because they dreaded the rage of the others. Night having come on, Suso went to different houses, begging with tears the inhabitants to offer him a lodging; but this charity was refused him everywhere. Not knowing then what to do to escape death, driven away from everywhere, and pursued like a malefactor, worn out with weariness and hunger, he let himself at last drop beside a hedge, and he raised to heaven his eyes swollen with tears, saying: "O merciful Father, will you not soon come to succour me in this

misery and extreme danger? Good Heart of Jesus, have you then entirely forgotten me? Merciful Father, and you, my sweet Jesus, come to my help. You see it: I am to be drowned, or burned alive, or pierced with a pike; come then and succour me! Those who wish my death press me on all sides, like wild beasts: have pity then on me and save me! …" At last, a priest of the place, knowing what was passing, and having heard speak of Suso's sad complaints, came and tore him from the hands of the murderers, and led him to his house, where he kept him until the next morning. Then he procured him the means of leaving the village, safe and sound.

These tears are nothing beside those which he shed over his sister: she had fled from a convent where she was a nun, to run in the world after evil pleasures and the loss of her soul. Our Saint, at this news, went, his face upset and unrecognizable, through the convent, taking information and above all asking counsel of the religious, his brothers; but all repulsed him and shunned him. He did not for that lose courage, offering to God his abandonment, his dishonour: he sets out, ready to face all precipices, to traverse the whole world to follow the traces of the straying sheep; the roads are full of mud and quite broken by the rains, the journey is painful, our Saint even falls into a ditch; but the love of his sister raises him up, makes him brave all fatigues. He finds her at last, he faints with grief at her feet; come to himself, he embraces her sobbing, he conjures her, in a heart-rending voice, to abandon sin: he brings her back converted to a more regular and more severe convent, where she lived holily until her death. We should never have done if we wished to relate all the other dangers that he ran, all the afflictions with which his soul was drenched: he was so accustomed to trials that he was astonished when God left him some truce; he said then that his affairs were going badly. The contempt, the outrages, the insults with which he was overwhelmed were sometimes so bitter that, no longer able to bear them, he fled to his oratory all in tears, and there complained lovingly: "O my sweet Master!" said he one day, "you who are the father of all men, cast your eyes on your poor servant, and be pleased, I beg you, to explain yourself with me. I know well that your sovereign majesty has toward me no obligations great or small; but it seems to me that your infinite goodness must console afflicted souls, and that you will not be offended if a heart overwhelmed and abandoned hopes in your grace and addresses its complaints to you. Lord, you know all things, and I can invoke your testimony: How have I served you? Did I not begin, from my mother's womb, to show a tender and sensitive heart? Have I ever been able to see one of my brethren in affliction without being moved to the depth of myself? How then could I have voluntarily saddened anyone? Those with whom I have lived know it well: never have I thought ill of anyone, never have I misinterpreted the actions of others: I have always excused them, on the contrary, and, when I could not do so and say good of them, I have kept silence and withdrawn. When I knew that someone had been wounded in his honour, not only did I have compassion on him, but I made myself his friend that he might easily recover the esteem he had lost. Was I not called the sure father of the unfortunate, the ardent friend of the friends of God? All the afflicted who addressed themselves to me left me joyful and consoled, for I weep with those who weep, I mingle my groans with their groans, I receive them all with a mother's tenderness, and I always succeed in restoring joy and tranquillity to them. When someone offended me, I forgave him on the spot, as if he had not had the intention of doing it. But why speak of men, since I have never been able to see an animal, even a lamb, an insect, suffer without being truly moved, and without asking you, my God, who are all-powerful, to be pleased to relieve it? Yes, every living being has found in me a sentiment of tenderness and love. How then, merciful Jesus, do you permit so often that I be despised, insulted, outraged by those who surround me? See, Lord, my affliction, console me, since you can."

When Brother Henry had thus relieved his heart in the bosom of his God, peace returned, and he heard in himself these heavenly words: "Henry, the complaints that thou addressest to me are quite childish, and that is not surprising, for thou hast never well meditated the words and actions of Jesus Christ thy Saviour. It does not suffice for God that thou have a tender and sensitive heart, it is courage and perfection that he asks of thee; it is not enough that thou suffer offences with resignation, he wishes further that thou truly die to thyself, and that, when thou hast been insulted, thou never lie down without having gone to find him who

offended thee, to bend his anger and calm his harshness by the sweetness of thy words, the serenity of thy face, and by thy tender and affectionate manners. This humble and patient conduct disarms hatred and fury, and nothing can stop its triumph. This is the eternal way of perfection taught by Jesus Christ, when he said to his disciples: 'Behold I send you as lambs in the midst of wolves.'"

One day he addressed himself to God and begged him to be pleased to reveal to him the graces which he poured out in this life on the afflicted. God answered him in a vision: "My friends whom I afflict live in gladness and bear everything for my love with generous courage, because they know well that their patience will have its day of triumph and that their reward will be of infinite price. Is it not just that those who suffer much and who are ceaselessly unhappy in the midst of the world should become the delights of my heart and live in an ocean of graces, in the bosom of a spiritual and unalterable joy? Learn then that all my servants, who are dead and risen with me, enjoy above all three particular graces. The first is the permission to desire and to ask all they will in heaven and on earth. I grant all to their intercession. The second is an interior and delicious peace which neither angels, nor men, nor any creature can ravish from them. The third is an abundance of divine sweetness and caresses which I lavish on them interiorly, so that they are one and the same thing with me. Ceaselessly they live in me, and I live in them. Thus, for this moment of affliction so short and so passing, the love that binds me to the suffering soul will never be extinguished; it began in this life and lasts in the other eternally."

The fathers of the Order of Saint Dominic, knowing the eminent wisdom, the great virtue of Brother Henry and the quite particular grace he had to convert and save souls, hastened to send him into the different towns and countries of Germany, that he might devote his talent to the edification of the peoples. The Blessed fulfilled his mission with so much zeal and wisdom that he soon became the most celebrated preacher of his time. His heavenly words triumphed over all hearts, tore them from the love of the world and made even those who were soiled with the most shameful vices embrace an exemplary life; the demon, who saw all his conquests torn from him, fell into fury and raised a crowd of obstacles against the Blessed. A holy nun, named Anne, whom Brother Henry directed, saw him in an ecstasy surrounded entirely by a multitude of demons who cried, roaring: "Accursed monk, come, what must be done to him? Let us unite, let us trample him under foot, let us throw ourselves on him and massacre him"; and they swore, amid their blasphemies, to avenge themselves and to torment him in his body, in his honour, in his reputation, by all sorts of means and violences. When Brother Henry learned of this conjuration of hell, he feared a new trial and withdrew into his chapel, round which he went nine times, praying and invoking the help of the nine choirs of angels against so many cruel enemies who were bent on his honour and his life. The angels appeared to him and said to him to console him: "Fear nothing, Henry, because the Lord is with thee and will not abandon thee at the moment of peril. Pursue thine enterprise and recall souls to truth and to virtue." The Saint, consoled, devoted anew all his strength to exhorting, preaching, confessing; and wherever there was a lost soul, he ran at once to conquer it.

We shall cite only one example of the numerous miracles which accompanied these missions: A lady of high birth, who had unhappily fallen into sin, had repented of it bitterly, but without confessing it to a confessor; she wept in the secret of her soul, and commended herself to the Blessed Virgin, who deigned to appear to her and order her to go and confess to Brother Henry. This lady answered that she did not know him; then the Blessed Virgin opened her mantle and said to her: "It is this religious that thou seest under my mantle; look at him and thou shalt recognize him. I love him and protect him: address thyself to him, for he is the father of the unfortunate, and he will console thee." This lady, having made inquiries, went to find Brother Henry and recognized him as the religious of her vision. Our Saint heard her, confessed her and restored her to her first virtue. But he did not pluck the roses of the apostolate without meeting cruel thorns. Having learned that a wicked woman, of whom he was the director and whom he fed with his alms, deceived him by an odious hypocrisy and continued her disorders, he thought himself obliged to abandon her. This wicked woman, to

avenge herself, went and published through all the convents and through all the town that a child whom she had just had was Brother Henry's. This infamous calumny, which spread rapidly, did not prevent him from taking in his arms this poor abandoned child; the child smiled at him, the Blessed embracing it and pressing it to his heart, said: "Poor little child, thy cruel mother abandons thee, and God wills that I serve as father to thee; I am happy to obey him, and I receive thee, not from men, for I am innocent, but from the very hands of God. Yes, thou shalt be the child of God and mine, though thou shouldst cause me a thousand torments. The Lord will bless thee, the angels will protect thee. The same bread shall serve us, and I shall do thee all the good possible for the honour and glory of God." From that day, he caused the needs of this child to be provided for, whom he took from its mother. This woman, surprised at so much holiness, blushed with shame and disappeared. However, this lie gaining credit, the superiors of our Saint learned of it, and this was the cruellest blow for his heart; he was tempted to despair and to distrust of God, who seemed to abandon him and make sport of his pains; then he ceased not to groan and complain to the heart of his tender Jesus, who at last made his innocence shine forth.

It was chiefly for the salvation of religious persons that Suso faced all difficulties, passed over all obstacles, and God granted him the grace to draw out of vice, sometimes in a miraculous manner, those strayed souls given over to guilty affections, in spite of the bonds which bound them indissolubly to the heavenly Spouse. Here is one of these surprising conversions: In a convent there was a nun of high birth, who led a dissolute life. She abhorred and detested the Saint, in fear that he would draw her out of the mire in which she was sunk, and in which she delighted as in a paradise. A child of darkness, she fled the light. Her sister, who was of great virtue, begged Brother Henry to be pleased to help her and bring her back to a more honest life. The Saint answered her: "I feel that it would be easier for me to lower the heavens than to convert this unhappy woman." — "Nevertheless," said the sister to him, "if you intercede well with God, you will not be repulsed." The Servant of God prayed for the sinner, and presented himself once to speak to her; but she, furious, cast threatening looks at him, and cried to him: "What do you want? Go back to your cell, and never speak to me of changing life; I would rather lose my head than confess: I would rather be buried alive than obey you and leave my habits." Her sister always sought to make her consent and to listen to Brother Henry. At last, she found an occasion to put her in the impossibility of avoiding him. Then the Saint said to her, shedding tears: "O you who are all beautiful, you the chosen spouse of God, how long will you leave this so noble soul and this so perfect body under the power of the demon? God made you so lovable and so gracious only that you should give yourself to him who is the flower of lovers. Do not the roses of spring belong to him who made them come forth? Remember that chaste love which begins on earth and lasts all eternity; taste a little of that sweet peace which a holy and pure life gives, and then reflect on the miseries, the infidelities, the sorrows, the pains, the loss of fortune, of health, of honour, of soul, all the misfortunes in short which drench those who drink of the poisoned cup of profane love. Think above all of the eternal torments which await them in the other life. Come, my daughter, so gentle and so charming, give all you have in you of good and lovable to that God who was from all eternity your good master, and I promise you that you will be his beloved, and that he will be faithful to you in this life and in the other."

While he spoke in so touching a manner, the nun wept, and when he had finished, she raised her eyes to heaven and declared aloud that she entrusted herself to his care; then, turning toward her companions, she said: "Farewell, my sisters, I detach myself from you and from the world, to consecrate myself until death to Jesus Christ, and to weep for my faults in solitude. Alas! how foolishly I have until now squandered my days!" Brother Henry directed her, and for several years saw her advance with great strides in perfection. Long after, she fell ill, and the Saint undertook a journey to assist and console her. The road was long, and as he was overcome with fatigue, his companion advised him to ask God to be pleased to send him the help of some mount. "Let us implore his divine goodness," he answered, asking this favour himself. As they were in prayer, they saw coming out of a forest, which was on their right, a horse without master, all saddled, all bridled, and it approached Brother Henry as if to invite him to mount on its back. Brother Henry understood

that it was a present from heaven and accepted it; he soon arrived at the monastery where his ardent charity called him, and when he had dismounted, the horse disappeared without its being possible to discover to whom it belonged.

It was not just that a director so skilful in leading souls to God should use this heavenly gift only outside his convent, nor that there should be lacking to his trials the roughest of all for the humble, the charge of superior. The Fathers of the house where our Saint lived elected him prior; it was a charge the heavier as the religious had chosen him, not that he should restore the rule, but that he should sustain the house, which was overburdened with debts and needs. Brother Henry accepted this dignity groaning, and declared in the first Chapter that, for the temporal, he would do nothing else than confide himself to Father Saint Dominic, since in dying he had promised to assist his religious; he ordered prayers for the house and the office of the glorious founder to be sung the next morning. The religious murmured at his confidence; but the next day, while Mass was being sung and the prior was still in choir, a canon who was his friend had him called and gave him a large sum of money, telling him that God had ordered him in the night to help him, and that, to obey, he brought him money and would bring him more, because he knew the poverty of the house and his little experience in temporal affairs. Thus the Blessed, from the first days of his charge, provided the house for the whole year with grain and wine, and the religious were confounded.

He continued all the time of his charge to bear a thousand sufferings and to be assisted from heaven in proportion. Our Lord wished to teach him, in the school of afflictions, to console the afflicted who ran from all sides to him, sometimes sent by their holy patrons or their guardian angels. The miracles which God worked by his means, and the surprising effects of his preachings, would fill a whole book, and his Order did not note them, perhaps because his whole life was a great marvel. Preaching one day at Cologne, his face became three times resplendent as the sun, and all the people who saw this light were struck with astonishment. He arrived one day at an inn where wine was lacking; a little had been given him through charity; he blessed it and multiplied it so much that twenty persons who were with him took as much as they would. The great journeys that he made, most often on foot, the number and gravity of the pains he experienced, brought him twice to the agony, and twice Jesus Christ and his guardian angel, whom he invoked, revived him and healed him in an instant. Finally he restored health to a crowd of sick, for all that he asked of Jesus Christ was granted him.

After having, for long years, holily laboured in the service of God and of the Church, after having shed torrents of tears in continually meditating the Passion and death of Jesus Christ, after having addressed to his divine majesty the impulses of the purest love, after having been the lover of eternal Wisdom, and having submitted himself to solitude, fasts, hair-shirts, chains, ice, nails and crosses; after having been pursued by a thousand temptations exterior and interior, defamed by everybody, despised, insulted, outraged by strangers and by his own, tried by God in a thousand ways and crucified with Jesus Christ, Brother Henry, sated with life, and burning with desires for heaven, ended his career amid universal regrets, and died in the convent of Ulm in Germany, rich in graces, armed with the sacraments of the Church and with eyes raised to heaven. He passed from this mortal life to the glory of paradise on 25 January 1365. His body was buried in the church of his convent, before the altar of Saint Peter Martyr, and God attested by numerous miracles the glory and felicity of his servant. His Order presented him to the sovereign Pontiff at the same time as Saint Thomas, that his name might be inscribed in the Catalogue of the Saints.

In 1613, workmen working in the old cloister of the Dominicans at Ulm discovered his body, perfectly preserved and giving off a sweet odour. The Protestant magistrates of the town had the tomb closed again, and the trace of it was lost.

The feast of our Blessed is celebrated on 2 March in the Order of Saint Dominic, with the approbation of Gregory XVI, given on 16 April 1831. It will be remembered that the Blessed Henry embroidered, so to speak, with the help of a cutting instrument, the name of Jesus on his own flesh: so he is represented with this

divine name on his breast.

WRITINGS OF THE BLESSED HENRY SUSO

His eminent piety, his vast science, his assiduous study of the ways of God in souls, made him one of the most skilful masters in mystical theology, in preaching and in the art of bringing back the most strayed souls.

We have from the Blessed Henry Suso several precious works. The principal, that which, in the middle ages, was spread, it is said, as the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* is in our days, is the *Book of Eternal Wisdom*, formerly called *Horologium Sapientiae aeternae*. It is a delightful collection of admirable teachings on the various phases of the spiritual life. We possess also from him a *Treatise on the Union of the Soul with God*, very remarkable likewise for the unction and the clarity with which he presents the most sublime truths of religion. The *Colloquy of the Nine Rocks*, under an allegorical form very difficult to grasp, some *Spiritual Discourses*, very interesting *Letters*, written with an unction and a tenderness of soul that ravish the reader; finally, opuscules containing *Meditations on the three hours of agony of Jesus Christ on the cross*; a *Soliloquy on the mercy of the Virgin Mary, and on the sorrows of Jesus and Mary*; a *Spiritual Exercise of Eternal Wisdom*; *Sentences drawn from the holy Fathers*, and the *Office of Eternal Wisdom*. These various opuscules come quite within the genre of books of offices or prayers.[3] Henry Suso had a pious familiarity with one of his spiritual daughters, named Elizabeth: he related to her naively, to encourage her herself, his own life, the trials and graces that God sent him; this holy friend put in writing the confidences of our Blessed; the Bollandists inserted them in the *Acta Sanctorum*; finally, they were translated with the works of Henry Suso by MM. Cartier and Chavin de Malan. It is on this that we have composed this narrative. Thirty years ago, M. Pustet of Regensburg published *The Life and Writings of Henry Suso, surnamed Amandus*. In this book, the Blessed Suso relates his own life, and his style, full of charm and unction, resembles a sweet song.

Saint Joevin, Coadjutor of Saint Paul of Léon (6th century)

This Saint was a disciple of Saint Paul of Léon, in Great Britain, his native land, and passed with him into Armorica. He led the anchoretic life in the country of Ack [Ac'h], then in the isle of Batz. He died a year after Saint Paul, who had chosen him as coadjutor in the government of his church. He is titular patron of two parishes of the old diocese of Saint-Paul-de-Léon: he flourished in the middle of the sixth century. The body of the holy bishop was carried to Plouguin, a parish situated ten leagues from Saint-Paul, and his tomb is still shown there, on which one sees his statue lying, clothed in pontifical ornaments. This tomb, an object of great veneration, has long been empty: it is said that the relics of Saint Jovin were deposited in the cathedral of Léon; but it no longer possesses them.

Saint Jacob, Twenty-fifth Bishop of Toul (about 768)

One cannot call in question the birth of Jacob in the diocese of Toul itself, and in the village of Bertigny (Haute-Marne) where his parents had properties which he inherited. What is more difficult to establish is whether he was first a religious at the monastery of Gémonde on the Saar, then bishop of Toul, or whether he retired to that abbey only after his abdication of the episcopate. However that may be, raised to the episcopal see which he was to render still more respectable and holy, Jacob attended as bishop the council of Compiègne, in the year 757; he subscribed its acts in this manner: *Jacobus peccator subscripsi*: "I, Jacob, sinner, have subscribed." Only some years after, according to Father Benedict Picard, Jacob is said to have retired to Gémonde, from whence he went in 765 to the council of Attigny, convoked at the request of King Pepin. His name is found among those of the prelates who attended it, and as follows: *Jacobus episcopus de monasterio Gamundias*.

Saint Peter Damian says plainly that Saint Jacob, bishop of Toul, first chose a successor to replace him, and that afterwards he built a monastery to retire to it. This holy prelate was called, in 761, to the dedication of the church of Gorze. Later, he made the journey to Rome. On his return, he passed through Dijon, to venerate there the relics of Saint Benignus, in the church of the monastery of that name. Received with honour by the religious, he was attacked there by a violent illness which in a few days led him to death, in the year 767 or 768. In conformity with the desire which he had previously manifested, he was buried near the tomb of the holy Martyr whom he had come to visit.

M. l'abbé Guillaume, of Nancy.

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[1] The Bollandists add Luciosa.

[2] The Bollandists add Herolus, Primitivus and Januarius: according to them one could read George instead of Lorge, and instead of Lucius, Bede writes Luke.

[3] The Lombards, a barbarous and pagan people, having gone out of Scandinavia and Pomerania, established themselves at first in the countries known today under the names of Austria and Bavaria. Some years after, that is to say about the middle of the sixth century, they turned their arms against Italy, the northern part of which fell into their hands. They carried everywhere ravage and desolation, and wished moreover to take away the faith from those whom they had despoiled of their goods. The persecution began with forty peasants, whom they ordered to eat meats offered to idols; but these faithful servants of Jesus Christ, having refused to obey, were inhumanly massacred about the year 579. The same barbarians tried also to pervert another company of prisoners, by obliging them to adore their favourite idol: it was a goat's head which they carried in procession and which they honoured by songs and genuflexions. The Christians constantly refused to render a religious cult to so contemptible an object, and they preferred to lose their life rather than preserve it by a criminal apostasy. It is believed that the holy Martyrs of whom we have just spoken were to the number of four hundred. Saint Gregory the Great says that these poor peasants had prepared themselves to receive the crown of martyrdom by the exercises of penance and prayer, and by an invincible patience in afflictions; and he adds that the courage which they showed came from the divine love which reigned in their hearts.

[4] His body was buried at Lichfield, in the church of Our Lady; but it was transported a short time after into that of Saint Peter. His relics were afterwards transferred into the church built, in 1443, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and of Saint Chad, which is today the cathedral of Lichfield. They were venerated there by the faithful until the so-called reformation. Lichfield means the field of the dead bodies. This city was so named on account of the multitude of Martyrs who shed their blood there for the faith, and who were buried there under Maximian Hercules.

[5] See the life of Saint Macra on 11 June.

[6] See 27 February.

[7] Macedonians: see *Conciles généraux et particuliers*, by Mgr Guérin, 3 large vols. in-8°.

[8] See *Conciles généraux et particuliers*, by Mgr Guérin, 3 large vols. in-8°. *Lives of the Saints*, vol. III. *(Running head/signature fragment removed.)*

[9] See *Conciles généraux et particuliers*, by Mgr Guérin.

[10] Apud Smet, *Recueil des chroniques de Flandre*, I, 71; II, 50.

[11] *Annales de Flandres*, c. 61.

[12] An allusion to the Jews, whom he drove out of his States on account of the usuries of which they made themselves guilty.

[13] It is quite wrongly that M. H. Martin (*Hist. de France*, III, 378) blamed Charles for "having changed the hop-fields into wheat-lands, as if the people who were dying of hunger could have waited for the harvest"; the author doubtless forgot that the famines of the middle ages sometimes lasted two years in a row, and that it was very prudent to think of the future.

[14] This circumstance is mentioned only by some chroniclers; there are others, little judicious moreover in the whole of their narratives, who join the calves to the dogs, which would have been a bad measure.

[15] Bertulphus, Bertoulphe, Bertoul, Berthout, Bertaud.

[16] This hoarding of grain is mentioned by certain annalists of Flanders as the principal cause of the murder of Charles the Good, and this opinion has been followed by our modern historians Sismondi, Anquetil, Ségur, Lavallée, H. Martin. This anecdote is contestable, for we find no trace of it in the contemporary authors.

[17] Or in 1123, according to some chroniclers.

[18] These Flemish chroniclers, imitated by Mézeray, Daniel, Velly, Boulainvilliers, Th. Lavallée, have wrongly given the name of Van der Straten to the family that assassinated Charles. Galbert, Walter, Suger and all the contemporaries call it Erembald. — See the pamphlet of the Count Van der Straten, entitled: *Charles le Bon, ses vrais meurtriers*.

[19] The provostship was the first capitular dignity; the deanship was only the second.

[20] Burchardus, Burkhard, Bordsiard [*sic*], Burdziard [*sic*], Burcard, Bruchard, Bossard, Boussaert, Bouchart.

[21] Commonly Saint-Donat. The *Martyrologium gallicanum* wrongly calls it *sancti Domitiani*.

[22] *In solarium.* M. Guizot, in a note of his *Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, believes that it was a tribune. We think that it is one of those great galleries which, in Romanesque churches, run above the side aisles, as at Saint-Remi of Reims.

[23] This church was situated at the place where the tavern *Het Keersken* is found today. The ceremony could not be performed at the church of Saint Donatian, interdicted from worship since it had been polluted by a homicide.

[24] This church was entirely demolished in 1799.

[25] Olivier de Wree, *Sceaux des comtes de Flandres*, pl. g.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] From the window of his cell, the blessed man's view extended over the Lake of Constance. He found there these two conditions so favourable to contemplation: the beauty of the works of God and the distance from the tumult of men. The Dominican convent of Constance has become a brewery!

[28] His true name was John of Berg of Montezc; Suso was the name of his pious mother.

[29] M. l'abbé Grimes, *Esprit des Saints*.

3 March

Martyrologies

Third day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Caesarea in Palestine, Saint Marinus, soldier, and Saint Asterius, senator, martyrs in the persecution of Valerian: the first, accused by his companions of being a Christian, and interrogated by the judge, having declared aloud that he was a Christian, had his head cut off and thus received the crown of martyrdom; Asterius, having lent his shoulders and spread the garment he wore, to receive the body of the martyr, received at once, a martyr himself, the honour which he rendered to a martyr. 260. — In Spain, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Emeterius, or Madir [*sic*], and Chelidonius, who, being soldiers in the army encamped at León, a city of Galicia, when the tempest of persecution arose, set out to confess the name of Jesus Christ as far as Calahorra, where, tried by many torments, they received the crown of martyrdom. — The same day, the passion of the holy Felix, Luciola, Fortunatus, Marcia and their companions. — Moreover, the martyrdom of the holy Cleonicus, Eutropius and Basiliscus,[1] soldiers, who, in the persecution of Maximian, and under the governor Asclepiades, triumphed happily by the punishment of the cross. 308. — At Brescia, Saint Titian, bishop and confessor. 526. — At Bamberg, Saint Cunegund, empress, who, married to the emperor Henry I [*sic*; II], kept, with the consent of her husband, her virginity, and, filled with merits and good works, ended her life holily and tranquilly; after her death, she shone by her miracles. 1040.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Montreuil-sur-Mer, Saint Guénolé or Guingalois, confessor, who died abbot of Landévennec in Lower Brittany, but whose body was transported to the town of Montreuil at the time of the invasion of the Normans. 504. — At Clermont in Auvergne, Saint Calupan, recluse. 516 [*sic*; the life's heading gives 576]. — The same day, Saint Alan, native of Aquitaine and abbot of the celebrated monastery of Farfa, in Italy. — At Ecouliyes [Escolives], near Auxerre, Saint Camilla, virgin. Saint Germanus of Auxerre had a numerous family of spiritual daughters: Saint Genevieve of Paris, Saint Magnentia, Saint Palladia or Pallaye, Saint Maxima, Saint Porcaria, Saint Camilla, etc. The last five pass for sisters or cousins: they dwelt at Centumcellae [Civitavecchia],[2] in Italy, when they were attracted to Ravenna by the report of the preachings of Saint Germanus: they assisted the holy bishop in his last moments and piously accompanied his body into France. Saint Camilla died at Escolives, near Auxerre, where a church was dedicated to her: the Calvinists burned her relics as well as those of Saint Palladia, who gave her name to the commune of Sainte-Pallaye, in the canton of Vermenton. 437 [*sic*]. — At Saint-Riquier, in Ponthieu, Saint Gervinus, abbot of this monastery, who had been a canon of Our Lady of Reims. — At Bayeux, Saint Contestus, at first a solitary, then bishop of that city. His relics were transported, on 3 March 1162, to the abbey of Fécamp; in 1683, a

portion of these precious remains was given to the priory of Saint-Vigor. 4th century. — In the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Saint Jacut, brother of Saint Guénolé. 5th century.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrologies of the Benedictines, Camaldolese, Vallombrosans and Cistercians. — At Nonantola, on the confines of Emilia, Saint Anselm,[3] founder of this monastery, who advanced monastic discipline less by precepts and rules than by the practice of all the virtues. 803. — At Bamberg, Saint Cunegund, etc. — At Nonantola, etc., as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Palermo, Saint Bernard of Corleone, confessor, of the Order of Minor Capuchins, who, illustrious by his heroic charity and admirable patience, was still glorious by his miracles.

Martyrology of the Friars Minor and the Poor Clares. — Saint Titus, disciple of the holy apostle and bishop of the Cretans, whose memory is recalled on 4 January.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — At Vercelli, the Blessed Jacobinus, confessor, layman of the Order of Mount Carmel, illustrious by his love of prayer and penance.[4] 1408.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Bologna, the Blessed Albergati, Carthusian monk, bishop of the same city and cardinal of the holy Roman Church, celebrated for his holiness and for his apostolic missions. His blessed death occurred on 10 May, at Siena, in the monastery of Saint Augustine. However it is celebrated on this day in our Order, of which he was the protector. 1443.

At the village of Hallum, in Friesland, the Blessed Frederick, of the Order of Premontré, and abbot of Mariengaarde, in the diocese of Utrecht. 1175.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Egypt, Saint Piamun, virgin, who was favoured with the gift of prophecy, and whose prayers rendered an army motionless. Piamun was only a poor girl of the people who passed her life near her mother, spinning and praying; but such is the influence of holiness that she was chosen as arbiter and messenger of peace between the various villages, when, at the time of the floods, quarrels arose about the sharing of the waters of the Nile. — At Benevento, Saint Arthelaida, virgin, niece of the patrician Narses. Seduced by her beauty, the emperor Justinian had asked her in marriage: the virgin of Christ left Constantinople, her native city, with three servants and came to end her days at Benevento. About 510 [*sic*]. — In Scotland, Saint Lamalisse, who lived in the island of Arran. A small neighbouring island took afterwards the name of the Saint, which it still bears. 7th century. — At Mariengaarde or Garden-of-Mary, in Friesland, the Blessed Frederick, abbot, of the Order of Premontré. He had been curé at Hallum. 1175. — At Palermo, the Blessed Peter Geremia, of the Order of Friars Preachers. His eloquent preachings stirred Italy. He was a friend of Saint Vincent Ferrer. 1452. — In Egypt, Saint Paphnutius, solitary, and Saint Thaïs, penitent. 4th century.

Saint Paphnutius, Solitary, and Saint Thaïs, Penitent

4th century.

O admirable power of the works of mercy!

Paphnutius had established his monastery at the extremity of the territory of Heracleopolis, in Lower Thebaid. The life he led was so holy that he was regarded less as a man than as an angel.

One day Paphnutius had, while praying, the desire to know whether he had made progress in virtue. A spirit then told him that he could compare himself to a certain musician who earned his living by singing in a neighbouring village.

This parallel astonished and humbled him. He hastened, in the desire to instruct himself further, to go and see this man of a profession which seemed to have nothing in common with perfect virtue, and which heaven nevertheless placed on the level of a solitary. The surprise of Paphnutius was still greater when, having found the musician, he learned from him that he was a great sinner, who had lived only on thefts before exercising his present trade. Paphnutius pressed him to say at least whether, in the time of his brigandages, he had not done at least some good work. He answered that he remembered only two good actions: first, finding himself one day with other robbers, a consecrated virgin had fallen into their hands; his companions wishing to outrage her, he had snatched her from their arms and had led her back to her home in the night, without any harm having befallen her. Secondly, having found in the desert a desolate woman whom creditors, who had cast her husband and children into prison, were seeking also, he had been touched with so lively a pity that he had led her to his cave, had repaired her strength exhausted by four days of fasting and had given her the money necessary to pay her debts. Paphnutius admired these acts of charity in a robber, and took occasion from them to exhort him to profit by the mercy of God. “In truth,” he said to him, “I have done nothing like it, and yet I am called Paphnutius; God has revealed to me concerning you that he regards you no less than me. You see, my brother, you do not occupy one of the last places with his divine majesty: do not neglect then to take care of your soul.”

These words touched the heart of the musician and penetrated him with gratitude toward the divine mercy. He cast away on the spot the flutes which he had in his hand, followed the Saint into the desert and conformed so faithfully to all that he prescribed to him for the conduct he should keep that, after three years spent in the practice of religious virtues, he gave up his soul amid the choirs of the blessed spirits.

Since the happy end of this pious penitent, Paphnutius had been piqued with a holy emulation to advance more than ever in the way of perfection; and in order to know better what God asked of him, he prayed him a second time to make known to him to whom he could compare himself. It was answered him that he resembled the chief inhabitant of the neighbouring village. He went there at once, and had no trouble in finding him, for the latter came to meet him, led him into his house, washed his feet and invited him to a magnificently served table.

During the meal, Paphnutius inquired of him what was his manner of life; but he found him more inclined to declare his faults than to display the good he did, and he would have learned nothing of his virtues if he had not made known to him that it was God who had sent him to learn from his mouth what he did for his service, and that he had even found him worthy to pass the rest of his life among the solitaries. “Assuredly,” said this man to him then, “I know no good that I have done; but since you assure me that God has revealed to you what concerns me, I could not hide myself before him to whom all things are known. I shall tell you then how I have been accustomed to conduct myself toward those with whom I find myself.

“I have never refused hospitality to anyone, and I have never suffered anyone to forestall me in going to meet strangers and receiving them in my house. I have never let any guest go out without giving him wherewith to make the rest of his journey. For thirty years I have lived with my wife as a brother with his sister. I have despised no poor man, nor failed to succour him in his need. When it was a matter of justice and equity, I would not have favoured my own son to the prejudice of my neighbour. The fruit of another’s labour has never entered my house. When I knew that some persons were in dispute, I always tried to bring them to agreement. I have not suffered my children to give anyone occasion to complain of them, nor my flocks to cause damage in the goods of others. I have not prevented others from sowing in my lands, and I have contented myself with sowing the fields which they left me free. I have tried, as much as I could, to sustain the weak against the unjust oppression of the more powerful. I have taken care never to vex anyone; and when I have presided at any judgment, I did my best to reconcile the parties rather than condemn any. That, by the mercy of God, is how I have lived until now.”

A conduct so charitable dazzled Paphnutius; he could not help embracing him tenderly, and understanding that he might be one of the richest ornaments of solitude, he told him that, since he had accomplished all these things, nothing remained but to add to them the real renunciation of all the goods of this world, to bear the cross of Jesus Christ and walk with more perfection in the following of this divine Master. He found his heart fully disposed to follow this advice; so they went together without delay into the desert, where the Saint lodged him in the cell that the musician had occupied; he gave him besides the advice necessary to make him enter into the designs of mercy which God had upon him; and this second disciple walked so faithfully in the footsteps of the first that in a short time he filled the measure of his holiness, and went at last to receive the crown of glory in eternity amid the acclamations of the angels, as God revealed to the Saint.

This new example served still as a spur to Paphnutius to make him advance more rapidly in the perfection of his state. “For,” he said to himself, “if those who are in the world do excellent works, how am I obliged, being a solitary, to strive to outstrip them in the exercises of a penitent life?” So he added to his former austerities, and persevered more than ever in holy prayer.

He desired a third time that God should make known to him the state of his soul, and he heard again the voice from heaven, which told him that he was like a merchant who was coming to see him, and that he should hasten to go to meet him. He came down at once from the mountain and met on his path this merchant, who had come down by the Nile from the Upper Thebaid, whence he had conducted several vessels laden with merchandise which he distributed to the poor; and he was coming to his monastery with some servants laden with vegetables of which he wished to make him a present.

Paphnutius had no sooner seen him than he said to him: “O soul precious in the eyes of God, why do you busy yourself with the things of earth, being destined to busy yourself only with those of heaven? Leave to those who have no thoughts but of earth to busy themselves with it as much as they will; but you, have no other object than to render yourself a merchant of the kingdom of God, and follow faithfully Jesus Christ who calls you to serve him alone.”

These words had the same effect on this man as on the others. The merchant ordered his servants to give to the poor all that remained to him of goods, followed the Saint to the cell where the two others had lived in succession, and had died in the peace of the Lord, made himself there the imitator of their holy life, and in a short time consummated his course in an equal holiness. God thus made use of his servant Paphnutius in the admirable works of his mercy, and they turned no less to the spiritual advantage of this holy Solitary than to that of the others. But one may say that the most precious fruit of his mission, and that in which the magnificence of God’s goodness shone out most, was the conversion of Thaïs, still more celebrated in the Church for her penance than she had been in the world for her disorders. It is not said what was the native country of Thaïs, nor the city that served as theatre to her disorders: one knows only that it was in Egypt. She had the misfortune to be born of a mother as wicked as she herself became; for, far from watching over the preservation of her innocence, she gave her only lessons to lose it, and this domestic seduction, strengthened by a beauty which may be called the murderess of souls, made her fall into the greatest faults.

The scandal must indeed have been great, since the report of it spread even into the solitudes; but this was not without a disposition of Providence, which made the zeal of Paphnutius serve to bring back this sheep into the fold of the sovereign Shepherd of souls.

The means that this servant of God took to succeed in it makes it sufficiently apparent that it came to him from on high, for the very reason that he succeeded against the rules of ordinary prudence. Paphnutius left his solitary’s habit, took a worldly one, provided himself with a sum of money, and in this equipage came and presented himself before Thaïs as if to swell the number of her courtiers.

The first principles of religion were not completely effaced from the soul of Thaïs. She believed in God, and was convinced that there is another life, where he rewards the good and punishes the wicked; but these truths

were stifled in her soul by the love of pleasures and riches, and her faith served only to make her more guilty by the crimes with which she dishonoured it.

It was precisely these truths that Paphnutius used to make her return to good. He asked her first to introduce him into a place where he could hide not only from the eyes of creatures, but from the eyes of God himself; as she answered him that the thing was impossible, God being present everywhere, he took occasion to represent to her how horrible it was to dare to sin under the eyes of God, and what a terrible account she would have to render at his tribunal for the loss of so many souls which her conduct drew every day into the abyss of sin.

At these words, Thaïs, recognizing that he who spoke to her was nothing less than what she had believed, and God acting in the depth of her heart by his grace, threw herself at the feet of Paphnutius and said to him, melting into tears, these few words: “My father, order me whatever penance it shall please you; for I hope God will have mercy on me through your prayers; I ask of you only three hours of time, after which I shall betake myself where you shall find good, and I shall carry out all that you shall prescribe to me.”

The delay she asked was only to prove in a more striking manner how sincere her change was. She gathered all that she had acquired by her sins, furniture and precious effects; she had everything carried to the public square, set fire to it in the presence of all the people, and, raising her voice that it might be heard by the accomplices of her crimes, she invited them to imitate her conversion.

After this sacrifice, she betook herself to the place where Paphnutius awaited her, who led her to a convent of virgins, and shut her in a particular cell whose door he sealed with lead, so that no one should have the temerity to open it without his permission. He left her only a very small window from which food could be given her, and recommended to the sisters to bring her each day only a little bread and water.

Thaïs, thus shut in, without being able to go out for any reason whatever, begged Paphnutius to tell her, when he was on the point of leaving her, in what manner she should pray to God. He answered that she was not worthy to pronounce his holy name, nor to raise toward heaven her hands soiled with so many crimes; but that she should content herself with turning toward the East, and often repeating these words: *You who have formed me, have pity on me.* She submitted humbly to this penance, and practised it very faithfully. Three years after, Paphnutius had compassion on her. He went to find Saint Anthony to learn from him whether God had remitted her sins. He did not tell him, however, the subject for which he came to consult him, hoping that God would make it known to him.

Saint Anthony, having assembled his disciples, ordered them to pass the night each separately in prayer, to see whether God would reveal to any of them the cause of Paphnutius’s arrival.

Saint Paul the Simple, one of the disciples of Saint Anthony, was he to whom God manifested it. He showed him in heaven a magnificent bed guarded by three virgins, and told him that it was reserved for Thaïs. The next day, Paul gave an account of this vision to his blessed father Anthony; Paphnutius having known thereby that God had pardoned Thaïs, he came to the place where he had shut her up and opened the door to her.

The sublime penitent manifested the desire to end her days there; she told her spiritual father that she had done nothing else, since her entry into the cell, than to put her sins as in a heap before her eyes, to regard them ceaselessly, and to weep for them while considering them. Paphnutius answered her: “And it is for that, and not for the rigour of your penance, that God has remitted them to you.”

Thaïs scarcely survived her departure from this kind of prison: fifteen days after, her soul was delivered from that of her body and went to enjoy the felicity which God had prepared for her. It is thought that it was in the year 350 of our redemption. The Greeks honour her memory on 8 October.

As for Paphnutius, the precise epoch at which he died is not known: one knows only that God had called him to himself when Rufinus, his historian, visited the monastery of Heracleopolis, in 390. — He persevered to the end in the most austere penance. The day before his death, an angel appeared to him and invited him to follow him into the eternal tabernacles where the prophets were preparing to receive him.

Some Latins make mention of Saint Paphnutius on 3 March; others on 29 November. His name is not found in the Ritual of the Greeks. In the images which have been made of Saint Paphnutius, an angel shows him a player of an instrument.

Saint Thaïs is represented with a banderole bearing these words, which were her sole prayer for three years: "*Qui plasmasti me, miserere mei*; You who have formed me, take pity on me." She is recognized also by a mirror which the artist has cast at her feet with various objects of feminine toilet: necklaces, perfume-boxes, etc.

Vies des Pères des déserts d'Orient, by Father Michel-Ange Marin; *Caractéristiques des Saints*, by Father Cahier, p. 7.

Saint Guénolé or Guingalois, Abbot and Founder of the Monastery of Landévennec

504. — Pope: Symmachus. — King of the Franks: Clovis I.[1]

Full of austerity toward himself, he was not hard toward others: he had an easy character, an ever-equal temper: his face, stamped with sweetness, did not undergo the vicissitudes of mirth and sadness. — Proper of Quimper, 1531.

The father of Saint Guénolé, named Fragan, or Fracan, close kinsman of Conan Meriadoc,[2] withdrew into Armorica with his family, at the epoch when the Romans abandoned Great Britain. Fracan landed at Bréhat, an island on the northern coast of the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, and sought on all sides a pleasant and convenient place in which to fix his dwelling. The quarter where is the parish which, because of him, bears the name of Plou-Fragan, on the river Gouet,[3] was the one that pleased him most, and where he established himself. It was there that Saint Guénolé was born, about the year 418, a few months after the arrival of his parents in this country. Saint Guethenoc and Saint Jacut, his brothers, had been born in insular Britain; but their sister, Creirvie, was an Armorican Breton, like Guénolé, and much younger; for it is said that when he healed her miraculously, he was about twenty years old, and she was still a little girl. Fracan, their father, and Guen,[4] their mother, had made a vow to offer their third boy to the Lord; but seeing him beautiful, intelligent, gentle and of a nature which gave great hopes, they thought of nothing less than discharging their promise, although Guénolé, who knew of it, often begged them to fulfil it. One day when Fracan was walking in the country, to oversee some servants who were working there, his shepherds and his flocks, and was resisting within himself the inspiration which pressed him to consecrate to God this dear child, as he had promised, the sky was suddenly covered with thick clouds, and Fracan was surprised by a frightful storm. He was struck down by a thunderbolt which took from him the use of his senses, and his servants having run to raise and succour him, heard him heave deep sighs, and say to God, as in a kind of ecstasy: "Lord! they are all yours, and I consecrate them all to you, without excepting any; not only Guénolé, Lord, but also his two elder brothers, and Creirvie, their sister; not only the children, but the father and the mother also." Come back from this transport, and returned to his house, where the shepherds had carried the terror, he disclosed to his wife the event which had just struck him, and the resolution he had taken to go at the earliest to offer his son Guénolé to the holy man Budoc, who dwelt in an island named the Isle of Laurels.[5] Guen, who had no less religion and piety than her husband, generously overcame all the natural sentiments which opposed this sacrifice; so that, eight days after, the young Guénolé was led by his father to the monastery of Saint Budoc,[6] situated in the Isle of Laurels.

This new disciple, though still very young, testified so much wisdom and piety in the answers he made to Budoc's questions, and so much joy at seeing himself in this holy school, that his master from then on drew happy omens of the good he should expect from him. He knew in a very short time all of Holy Scripture, for his memory was happy, and it has been remarked that he learned perfectly, in a single day, the whole Latin alphabet. His fervour in singing the praises of God, his charity in instructing and relieving the poor, his activity in serving his companions, his assiduity in prayer, his vigils and his other mortifications soon made him the admiration of his superior himself, who saw only with astonishment the astonishing progress of his disciple, at which he was the more surprised as the gift of miracles was even given him.

This gift, in a young man like Guénolé, would have been a subject of dangerous and delicate temptation, had not his humility made him refer all the glory of it to God. If his historian is to be believed, he worked at every hour surprising miracles, witness the sight which he restored to his sister, and the life to his father's squire. If he had some weakness on this occasion, it was that of wishing to hide himself, and of being afflicted that God made use of him to work marvels which drew to him esteem and respect, so that he needed the wise counsels of Budoc to conform, on this point, to the divine will.

He felt one day a pressing desire to go to Hibernia to see the great Saint Patrick, with the design of profiting by the examples and instructions of this apostolic man, whose great reputation spread everywhere. Having fallen asleep in the resolution of speaking of it in the morning to his master, and of profiting by the opportunity of some Breton-Cambrian merchants who were then in the roadstead, he saw in a dream a venerable old man, shining with light, who said to him "that it was not the will of God that he should pass into Hibernia; that he was that Patrick whom he so wished to see; and that without making so long a voyage, he could learn, in his very solitude, the road to the highest perfection, of which one of the most important points was stability; that he must nevertheless soon leave the monastery of Budoc, his master, and go and seek elsewhere a solitude, to complete his sanctification there." The saint, on waking, uncertain whether this vision was only a dream formed by his imagination, went to find his master who, divinely instructed of what had befallen him, assured him at once that what he had seen was a true revelation; that he must consequently obey the command of Patrick, and that the time had come when he must labour on his own side in the vineyard of the Lord.

From the next day, Saint Budoc, who was extremely old, chose for him, among all his disciples, eleven of the most perfect, of whom he made him the superior, though he was as yet only twenty-one years old; and, after having tenderly embraced them all, and given them weeping his last instructions and his blessing, he abandoned them to divine Providence, without knowing where he was sending them, nor what place that adorable Providence had destined for them. Having passed from the Isle of Laurels to the mainland, they traversed the whole of Domnonea,[7] and arrived at last at the edge of the gulf which the sea makes at the mouth of the river Aven,[8] where, having discovered a small uninhabited island, which is today called Ti-bidi,[9] they withdrew there, and built huts there to shelter themselves from the sea winds, which are furious there. This holy community passed three whole years there, destitute of every kind of convenience, and subsisting only on herbs and roots which the religious cultivated in their garden, and on the little barley which the small extent of the island allowed them to sow. The earth, watered with the sweat and tears of these saints, answered quite abundantly to their labour; but the sea winds were so violent there, and the storms so frequent, that Saint Guénolé judged that it was necessary to transfer their dwelling to the other side of the river or gulf, to put themselves under shelter in the valley where afterwards was the abbey of Landévennec, three leagues from Brest; which he did about the year 442. The penitent and solitary life which Guénolé led in this new retreat, the silence which he kept continually, diminished nothing, however, of his sweetness and affability toward all the world; the rigours which he exercised against himself did not prevent him from appearing always cheerful; and as this joy came from the depth of his charity, it did no harm to his reserve and his modesty. Obliging and serviceable to all who had recourse to him, he drew to himself the

love and admiration of all the world. King Gradlon wished to know him; he saw him, conversed with him, and was so charmed by his conversation, and so penetrated by his holy instructions, that the ferocity of his natural temper was at last changed into an evangelical gentleness, for the zeal of this prince for justice came as much from an imperious and rigid spirit as from a foundation of uprightness.

When this life, so precious before God, so dear to the disciples of the holy abbot, so useful to all Lower Brittany, and so glorious to the Church, was near its end, an angel warned him to prepare for death, of which he marked for him the day and the hour. The saint made this news known to his religious, and after having exhorted them to patience and perseverance, to the love of God, to mutual charity, to humility, and given them the advice necessary for the election of his successor, he clothed himself in his priestly vestments, celebrated Holy Mass, took the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and, having wished his disciples every kind of blessing, he stood before the altar, supported by two of his religious, and surrounded by the others, who all together sang with him psalms and canticles of praise to God. He expired amid these sacred canticles, without having felt the least attack of illness, full of merits and of days, on the Wednesday of the first week of Lent, the third day of March; which agrees with the year 504, in which, according to the Victorian Cycle, Easter was on 11 April. Saint Guénolé was about eighty-five years old, which was a great age for a man who, from his tenderest youth, had thought of preserving his life only to prolong his penance and austerities. He is represented: 1° praying, while a fleet of pirates advances, or else while troops come to blows. He had predicted to the Bretons a descent of pirates: after the landing, his prayers obtained the defeat of the invaders; — 2° carried from the altar on the arms of his disciples after his death; — 3° crossing, dry-shod, the sea between the island of Sein and the Armorican mainland; — 4° in the dress of a hermit preaching to thieves who had got into the granary of his monks and whom he converted to the point of bringing them to become religious; — 5° he is given also for attribute a wild goose, to recall the following strange miracle: his young sister running after wild geese, one of these birds tore out one of her eyes and swallowed it. The Saint disembowelled the beast to find the eye and put it back in place. The legend adds that neither the bird nor Saint Guénolé's sister was any the worse for the double accident; — 6° old paintings, which doubtless no longer exist, represented him also holding in his left hand the abbatial crosier, and in his right a little bell which was long popular: below this bell one saw fishes whose heads, emerging from the water, seemed to indicate that these creatures obeyed the call of the holy man.

Saint Guénolé is specially honoured at Concarneau, at Landévennec and at Le Croisic, in Brittany, and at Montreuil-sur-Mer, in Picardy.

RELICS OF SAINT GUÉNOLÉ. — HIS DISCIPLES

His body, buried in the church of his abbey, built at that time at the place which was afterwards called the Penity, and where the abbatial house was, was afterwards transferred, on 28 April, into the church which subsisted to our days. The relics of Saint Guénolé, scattered at the epoch of the Norman invasions in various churches of the north of France and of Belgium, have everywhere procured by numerous miracles a great renown of holiness for the illustrious abbot of Landévennec. A part of these relics was long preserved at Montreuil-sur-Mer where a church was dedicated to him under the name of Saint-Waloy. His tomb was still seen in the church of Landévennec at the beginning of the nineteenth century; but it has been destroyed, and the church itself offers only ruins. In the English litanies of the end of the seventh century, which Father Mabillon published, the name of Saint Guénolé is distinguished among those of the other Saints who are invoked there. The father and mother of Saint Guénolé, of whom nothing more is known than what we have said, are recognized as Saints in Brittany; Fracan, his father, was formerly patron of the parish of Plou-Fragan, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc,[10] of which it is said that he was lord; and Guen, mother of Saint Guénolé, whom they commonly call Saint Blanche, is likewise honoured with a public cult. There is, in the diocese of Quimper, a parish of her name, which formerly bore that of Léon, it is called Ploe-Guen, and another of the same diocese named Saint-Frégan. The two brothers of Saint Guénolé are also in the liturgical

calendars of the Bretons: Saint Jacut or Jacques, on 8 February or on 3 March; Saint Guethenoc, on 5 November, and both together on 5 July. Almost nothing can be said of them, because no details are known of their life. The feast of Saint Guénolé is marked with twelve lessons in the old Breviary of Saint-Méen, and with three in that of Saint-Brieuc, on 3 March. At Château-du-Loir there was a priory dependent on Marmoutier, which bore the name of Saint-Guingualoé. The diocese of Quimper had a succursal church which bore the name of Saint-Guénolé, and a parish of the same diocese is called Loc-Guénolé. The church of Quimper now honours this Saint on 28 April, the day of the translation of his relics. His feast, re-established in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc by M. de Bellescize, in 1782, was suppressed by M. Caffarelli, his successor, although there were strong reasons for honouring so celebrated a Saint born in the country.

Here are the principal disciples of Saint Guénolé:

Saint Guenhael, his successor.

Saint Rioc. The *Memoirs of Landévennec* say nothing else of him, except that he was a priest when he became a religious in this monastery, and that he afterwards restored life to his mother, by casting on her body water which Saint Guénolé had blessed.

Saint Idunet or Yonnet, who lived in a grotto of the mountain called in that time Nin.[11] He might well be the same as Saint Guethenoc, brother of Saint Guénolé; which is said only by conjecture. This conjecture is founded on these words of the cartulary of the abbey of Landévennec: “Saint Guénolé went to see his brother Saint Ediunet.”[12] For although by this word *brother* one may understand a brother in Jesus Christ, it seems more just here to understand a brother according to the flesh; and the name Ediunet is not so far from that of Guethenoc as several other names, which are nevertheless of one same person, are different from one another. What is certain is that he is more ancient than Saint Ethbin, with whom they have nevertheless wished to confuse him. Saint Idunet is patron of Pluzunet, a parish of the old diocese of Tréguier, today of that of Saint-Brieuc. His feast is celebrated there on the fifth Sunday after Easter. Saint Balay or Walay and Saint Martin are, in the cartulary of Landévennec, qualified with the title of disciples of Saint Guénolé. They withdrew, with the permission of their abbot, to live in the solitude of Ploërmellac near Le Faou; before their profession they were lords of Ros-Meur and of Ros-Madeuc. The first had a chapel and a fountain of his name near the abbatial house; and it is probable that it is his name also that the parishes of Plou-Balai and of Lan-Valai bear, in the old diocese of Saint-Malo, and whose body was at Montreuil-sur-Mer. Saint Deï, who dwelt at the place which, because of him, is called Loc-Taï or Loc-Daï, near Châteaulin.

Saint Ratian or Ratiau, who dwelt at the place named Plé-Turch, and of whom it is said in the cartulary of Landévennec that he preserved by his prayers the neighbours of his hermitage from the contagious malady which afflicted the whole province.

Saint Wincon, Saint Gozien, Saint Winwoud, Saint Harnul, Saint Petran and Saint Berthwald are all mentioned in the same cartulary, and formerly memory was made of most of them in the proper office of the monastery, though they are almost all unknown elsewhere. It is not thought, however, necessary to say that all these Saints of Landévennec lived in the time of Saint Guénolé, though the cartulary of his abbey insinuates it; and the reason for doubting it is that one sees that it speaks in the same manner of Saint Morbret, who was contemporary with Even, surnamed the Great, count of Léon, posterior by several centuries to the Saint, founder of the abbey.

As for Saint Conocan, who united and associated a monastery which he had built to that of Landévennec, on which he even wished that it should depend, and ceded to Saint Guénolé all the lands which King Childebert had given him, there is no doubt that he lived in the time of Saint Guénolé himself, and was as ancient as Saint Conocan or Conogan, bishop of Quimper, if he is not the same.

Saints de Bretagne, by Dom Lobineau; Father Cahier and the *Acta Sanctorum*.

Saint Cunegund, Empress

1040. — Pope: Benedict IX. — Emperor: Henry III.

Timentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum. All things turn to the advantage of those who fear God. — Rom. viii, 28.

This illustrious princess was the daughter of Siegfried or Sigefroi, first count of Luxembourg, of the house of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine or of the Moselle. Having been married to the emperor Henry,[1] son of another Henry, duke of Bavaria, she consecrated her virginity to the King of heaven and preserved it until death, with the consent of her chaste spouse. God alone, at the beginning, was witness of it; but as he did not wish that an action so brilliant in his eyes should remain buried in darkness, he permitted it to be known to all the world, and confounded, by this same means, the wickedness of those who dared to accuse the innocence of this virgin of Jesus Christ. She walked barefoot, and without receiving any harm, on ploughshares all aflame; thus everyone knew the merit of her continence, which she strove to hide under the imperial purple, in order to be able to carry out, with more facility, the good works that God made her undertake for his glory.

After having built and superbly adorned, with the emperor her spouse, the church of Bamberg, which they consecrated to the Prince of the Apostles and to Saint George, martyr, she employed herself, with equal care, in founding, in honour of Saint Michael, a monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict; and, from the money of her dowry, she built another, less large, to which she gave as patron Saint Stephen, first martyr, and where she placed canons; finally, she built still a third, with much magnificence, in honour of the holy and victorious Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, at a place named the Refuge [Kaufungen? — “le Refuge”], where she established nuns to live there according to the rule of the same Saint Benedict. But these holy Spouses did not limit their liberality toward churches to that: they showed it in so many other ways that they carried everywhere, even outside their empire, the good odour of Jesus Christ. O happy marriage, whose bond was not voluptuousness but charity! O holy union, where there met the same desire of an inviolable chastity, the same spirit of compassion toward the poor, the same affection for truth, the same love for virtue, the same hatred against vice, the same will in all things, and finally so marvellous a conformity that one could remark no difference of sentiments in this great number of actions which have made their life so agreeable in the eyes of God, and so admirable before men! When the emperor Henry, who had always been the faithful guardian of the chastity of this happy princess, had left her a virgin in the hands of Jesus Christ, as he had received her from him, and had gone to enjoy the eternal felicities toward which he had always sighed, this admirable widow continued with the same application, on the one hand to protect the churches which she had founded, and the religious persons whom she had gathered there for the service of God, and on the other to perfect herself by the victory she won over her appetites, and by the acquisition of the most eminent virtues. It was to this that her vigils and prayers tended, and as during the day she imitated the active life of Martha, she exercised herself during the night in the contemplative life with Mary.

A year after the death of her holy spouse, seeing herself discharged of all the cares of earth by the election of Conrad, who was raised to the empire, she had the church of the Refuge which she had founded consecrated by archbishops; and, in the midst of the Mass, being clothed as empress and adorned with all the ornaments which befit so eminent a dignity, she offered, on the high altar, a piece of the true Cross, which, although small, was nevertheless one of the greatest treasures she could have offered. After the Gospel was read, in which mention is made of Zacchaeus, who climbed a tree to see Jesus Christ, and who merited to receive him in his house and to be honoured with his blessing, she stripped herself of her superb ornaments, received the episcopal blessing, and clothed herself with the religious habit which she had made with her own hands. Her hair was cut off, which was kept with great veneration in this monastery; the bishop put the veil on her head and gave her the ring as pledge of the fidelity she was to keep inviolably to her divine Spouse. None of those present could see what was passing without shedding tears of joy for this princess and of sorrow for himself.

Thus the wife of an emperor became the spouse of God and the companion of those whom she could consider as her daughters; but, far from preferring herself to them as their mother, she served them humbly and wished to pass for the least of the whole monastery, so much did she flee ostentation, for fear of receiving her reward in this life. She worked with her hands, because she knew that it is written that “he who does not work must not eat”; she spoke to her divine Spouse, either by fervent prayers or by canticles of praise; she often went to the church without being seen by anyone; she was grave and serious; but her gravity was always accompanied by cheerfulness; she had ceaselessly in mind the brevity of this life; she found her rest in prayer; her manner of acting was uniform; she neglected the care of her body, because she did not believe that a flesh which was to be, in so short a time, the food of worms should be treated delicately; she was often seen reading or listening to others read; she loved her companions perfectly, visited the sick and took extreme care to assist and console the poor.

Among several miracles which are attributed to this saint during her life, we shall relate only one, which is quite remarkable. One night, after long prayers, sleep beginning to overcome her, she had lain down on her bed, which was only a simple straw mattress covered with a hair-shirt; the nun who was accustomed to read Holy Scripture to her fell asleep also, and let fall the candle which she had in her hands. The fire having reached the mattress, took hold of it at once and soon began, by the noise it made, to awaken the other nuns. The Saint, having likewise awakened, found herself in the midst of the flames; she had recourse to her ordinary arms, prayer, made the sign of the cross, and the fire went out that very instant, without having touched in the least her garments.

When she had thus passed fifteen years in religion, with so much humility and piety that she was admired by all the world, her extreme abstinence, her prayers and continual vigils made her at last fall into such a languor, and afterwards into so great an illness, that no strength remained to her. But the more her body weakened outwardly, the more her spirit grew strong within, and the praises of God were continually in her mouth. When she saw herself in this state, she implored the help of the holy Angels whose purity she had imitated on earth, that of the Apostles and the Confessors whose faith she had always professed, and of the Virgins, companions of the spotless Lamb, after whose example, having lived in a mortal body as if she had had no body, she had preserved inviolably her virginity, even in marriage.

The report of the extremity in which she was filled with sorrow not only all her good nuns, but also persons of every condition in the town. When she was near yielding up her spirit, and the prayers of the dying were already being recited, having perceived that a funeral pall embroidered with gold was being prepared to put on her coffin, she was so surprised to see herself treated as an empress, and not as a poor nun, that her face, which appeared cheerful because of the joy she felt at the coming of Jesus Christ, her Spouse, changed at once; she made a sign with her hand and said: “This ornament does not befit me; take it away from here. When I married a mortal man, I wore rich garments; but the poor habit I have now is that of a spouse of Jesus Christ; seek then no other ornaments to cover my body, and bury it beside that of my brother and my lord the emperor Henry, who calls me, I see him.” Her life ended with these words, and she gave her soul to God. The sorrow at her death was so great and so general that men came in crowds from all sides to assist at her funeral; and scarcely could her holy body be carried, through such a press, into the church of Saint Peter of Bamberg. It was buried there with the honour that was due to it, beside that of the emperor Henry, her husband, as she had ordained. It has since worked a quantity of miracles.

She is represented hanging her mantle on a sunbeam; walking barefoot on red-hot irons, perceptibly in the form of ploughshares; carrying on her hand the monastery of Kaufungen, in Hesse, which she had caused to be built and where she took the veil, etc. — When she is in company with Saint Henry, the monument which she carries represents the cathedral of Bamberg. She is, with Our Lady and Saint Henry, the patroness of this town.[2]

Father Cahier.

The Saints Emeterius and Celedonius, Martyrs in Spain

Emeterius and Celedonius, called also Madir and Chelidonius, born at León, in Spain, were sons of the centurion Marcellus, who died for the faith, and relatives of several other distinguished martyrs, whose blood was shed at various times and in various places. After having long served as valiant soldiers under the Roman eagles, in a cruel persecution which arose against the Christians, they encouraged each other, and together took the generous resolution to abandon the secular militia in order to enrol under the standards of Jesus Christ. Inflamed by the ardour of their faith, while other Christians succumbed under the trial, they ran courageously to martyrdom, knowing well that to lose one's soul is to save it, that to shed one's blood is to sanctify it, and that the Christian triumphs by receiving, and not by inflicting wounds. They confessed Christ then publicly, cursed the idols, and preached in all freedom the true God. For which reason they were led to the military tribunal, and afterwards were plunged, laden with heavy chains, into a fetid and dark dungeon. There, in spite of the prostration in which they were, neither threats, nor chains, nor promises, nor the multiplied tortures to which they were subjected, could shake them in their holy resolution. The tyrant had them tormented by various kinds of punishments, of which he would not even that the people should have knowledge; for he forbade, under severe penalties, that their acts be published, the narrative of their trials and the miracles that they accomplished. But, although the malice of the pagans tried to abolish the memory of this glorious combat, nevertheless the piety of the faithful has taken it upon itself to preserve the remembrance of it. What was most memorable is that, a moment after the pronouncing of the capital sentence, when the Saints had arrived at the place of punishment, before receiving the death-blow, they sent before them pledges of their faith to the place where they were themselves soon to arrive. Emeterius cast his ring into the air, Celedonius his *orarium* (a handkerchief which was used to wipe the face); and, by the favour of a gentle zephyr, these objects rose toward heaven, in sight of the spectators, who distinguished the brilliance of the gold and the whiteness of the linen. The executioner, admiring this prodigy, held back for some moments his hesitating and dismayed arm. But at last he consummated the triumph of the martyrs. They were struck with the axe near Calahorra, on 3 March: they were buried not far from that city. Afterwards they were transferred to the cathedral church, on 31 August, the day on which these holy Patrons of the city, illustrious by their miracles, receive every year the striking testimonies of public veneration.

What has just been read is taken from the *Proper of Spain*. Here is the summary of the *Commentaries* with which the Bollandists precede the acts of Saint Emeterius and Saint Celedonius: Prudentius sang their glory and Gregory of Tours celebrated their praise. Saint Isidore of Seville made their panegyric, and the Mozarabic liturgy long repeated their combats. Their primitive acts perished by the hand of the executioners, who did not wish to let the remembrance of their cruelties pass to posterity; so that the precise epoch of their martyrdom is not known. Prudentius, who wrote his *Peristephanon* about 400, could have taught us the date, but figures rarely find a place in poems. Ribadeneira fixes the date of their martyrdom at the year 300; but the Bollandists do not adopt this saying. According to tradition, they began their martyrdom at León, but were neither natives nor inhabitants of it. Their bodies rest today in the cathedral of Calahorra, of which they are the patrons. Their venerable heads, found at the port of Saint-André, are said to have caused this place to be called the port of Saint Emeterius. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, on the 3rd of March.

Saint Calupan, Recluse in Auvergne (576)

From the beginning of his life, Calupan always sought the happiness that is obtained by obedience to the Church and found it. Having betaken himself to the monastery of Méallet,[1] in Auvergne, he conducted himself there with great humility toward his brethren.

He kept an excessive abstinence, so that, having become very weakened by it, he could not accomplish the daily work with the other brethren, in consequence of which, according to the custom of monks, he was sharply reproached, the provost especially, who said to him: "He who will not work does not deserve to

eat."[2] Finding himself therefore every day the butt of reproaches of this kind, our Saint cast his eyes on a valley situated not far from the monastery and in the middle of which rose a natural rock, more than five hundred feet high, and completely isolated from the neighbouring mountains. This valley was crossed by a stream which gently bathed the foot of the rock. It was in an opening of this rock, which had formerly served as retreat in case of invasion by enemies, that the holy hermit withdrew and established his dwelling.

He built himself there a little oratory, where, as he was accustomed to relate, weeping, often serpents fell upon his head and, coiling around his neck, filled him with fright. Now, as the devil passes for taking the form of this cunning animal, it is not doubtful that it was he who laid snares for him. In effect, as he remained immovable in spite of this, and was not moved by the attacks of the little serpents, one day two enormous dragons directed themselves toward him and stopped at a short distance. One of them, stronger than the other, raised its breast and lifted its mouth to the height of the Saint's mouth, as if it had wished to say something to him. He was so terrified that he became stiff as bronze, daring neither to move a limb, nor to raise his hand to make the sign of the cross. And after they had both remained in a long silence, it came into the Saint's mind to say in his heart, since he could not move his lips, the Lord's prayer. While he did it in silence, his limbs, which had been chained by the art of his enemy, were loosened little by little, and when he felt his right hand free, he made the sign of the cross on his face, then, turning toward the hydra, he made again against it the sign of the cross, saying: "Art thou not he who drove the first man out of paradise, who reddened the hand of a brother with the blood of his brother, who armed Pharaoh to persecute the people of God, and who finally roused the Hebrew people to pursue the Lord with a blind fury?

"Depart from the servants of God, by whom thou hast been so many times vanquished and covered with confusion; for thou wast driven out in Cain and supplanted in the person of Esau; thou wast cast down in Goliath; thou wast hanged in the person of the traitor Judas, and it is in the very cross where the virtue of Our Lord shone that thou wast vanquished and struck down with thy powers and thy dominations. Hide then thy head, enemy of God, and humble thyself under the sign of the divine cross, because thou hast no part with the servants of God, whose inheritance is the kingdom of Jesus Christ."

While the Saint was saying these things and others like them, and at each word made the sign of the cross, the dragon, vanquished by the virtue of this emblem, went and hid in the depths of the earth.

But, while these things were passing, the other serpent coiled insidiously around the feet and legs of the Saint. He, seeing it rolled at his feet, made his prayer and ordered it to withdraw, saying: "Begone, Satan, thou canst no more harm me in the name of Christ, my Lord." In effect, this demon withdrew with a great noise; and, since then, the Saint saw neither serpent nor dragon.

He was assiduous in the work of God and did nothing else than pray, and even when he took a little nourishment, he still prayed.

He fished from time to time, but very rarely, a fish in the river, and when he desired one, the fish presented itself at once, by the will of God. As for bread, he received it only from the monastery: if some devout person brought him loaves or wine, he destined the whole to the nourishment of the poor, of those at least who asked to receive from him either the salutary sign of the cross, or the relief of their infirmities; that is to say, to those to whom he had restored health by his prayers, he gave also to eat, remembering what the Lord says in the Gospel to that crowd which he had healed of various maladies: "I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way."[3] And we do not think we ought to hide the benefit which the divine goodness bestowed on him in this place. As water was brought to him from the bottom of the valley, from a distance of nearly ten stadia, he prayed the Lord that it might please him to make a spring come forth in the very place where his cell was. He was assisted in this circumstance by the heavenly virtue which formerly made water gush from a rock to appease the thirst of a whole people; for, at the instant, a spring bursting from the rock spread over the earth and formed rivulets on all sides. The Saint, delighted with this gift of heaven, hollowed

in the stone a little basin which served him as cistern and which held nearly two *congii*,[4] in order to preserve the water divinely given him, of which he received each day only the quantity necessary for him and for the boy who had been charged to serve him. “We went also to this place,” says Saint Gregory of Tours, his historian, “with the blessed bishop Avitus, bishop of Clermont, and of all the things that we have related, we hold some from the Saint himself, and the others we saw with our own eyes.” Calupan was ordained deacon and priest by the pontiff we have just named. He gave many salutary remedies to those who were afflicted with various maladies. He never went out, however, from his cell to show himself to anyone whatever, but he stretched out his hand through a little window to give his blessing with the sign of the cross, and if he was visited by anyone, he approached this window and allowed him to pray and speak with him. At last, he finished the course of his life in this religious practice, in the fiftieth year of his age, to go to the Lord.[5]

The Blessed Nicholas Albergati, Cardinal (1443)

Nicholas Albergati, cardinal of the title of the Holy Cross and bishop of Bologna, was born in that city in the year 1375. After studying law, he entered the Order of the Carthusians, among whom he was prior at Florence. He was then raised, in the year 1417, to the bishopric of Bologna, and reconciled his diocesans with Pope Martin V. Afterwards, he was sent as nuncio into France, in the year 1423, and acquitted himself so well of this employment that he was rewarded in 1426 by the cardinal’s hat, which he was forced to accept. Pope Martin V named him legate in due form in the year 1431, and Eugenius IV gave him order to go and preside at the council of Basel. But the bishops assembled in that city not having wished to recognize him, he withdrew to the Pontiff, who gave him again the legation of France. He reconciled the duke of Burgundy, Philip, with Charles VII. A miracle which he worked in the presence of Philip contributed much to this reconciliation so happy for France. The Pope took him to the council of Ferrara. He disputed learnedly there against the Greeks. He was again legate in Germany, and, on his return, was named grand penitentiary of the Church. He died a short time after at Siena, on 10 May 1443. This holy prelate practised, under the purple, the austerities of the Carthusians. His humility was as sincere as profound, his character firm and lofty, full of candour and prudence; his charity toward all the world, and principally toward the poor, was admirable. He loved letters, and, at his death, he bequeathed to various monasteries a considerable library.

The Blessed Albergati is represented with an olive branch in his hand, as symbol of the missions of peace which he accomplished either in France or in Germany; carrying a little shrine: it is the reliquary containing a part of the skull of Saint Anne which was given him in France and which he deposited with the Carthusians of Bologna; appearing in dream, after his death, to the canon Thomas Parentucelli, his friend, and announcing to him that he will soon be Pope. In memory of this vision, the former canon of Bologna took the name of Nicholas.[1] — The Blessed Albergati is one of the titular patrons of Bologna.

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[2] The towns of Amasea and Comana, in Pontus, are indicated as the scene of their martyrdom.

[3] See the life of Saint Germanus of Auxerre and the *Acta* at the various articles concerning Saint Camilla and her sisters.

[4] The Benedictine abbey of Nonantola formerly possessed a rich library filled with ancient manuscripts, among which was shown a Breviary of the Countess Matilda. The church was no less rich in relics: there were seven holy bodies, among others those of Saint Adrian and Saint Sylvester, popes. Nonantola is in the (former) duchy of Modena.

[5] The cult of the Blessed Jacobinus was approved by Gregory XVI.

[6] Alias: Wennolé, Guignolé, Waloy.

[7] Several authors name Cathoun, Caton or Coton the first king of armorican Brittany; it is now proved that these are various names which were given to Conan Meriadoc.

[8] An ancient Gaulish and Breton term, which signifies *blood*.

[9] This word is Breton and signifies *white* in French.

[10] Laureaca, which is commonly believed to be that which is today called the Île Verte, situated north of the mouth of the river Trieu, rather near the island of Bréhat.

[11] See Saint Budoc, on 9 December.

[12] This is the name that was given to the northern coast of Brittany.

[13] This is the river of Châteaulin.

[14] Breton words which signify *house of prayers*.

[15] It is Saint Peter, apostle, who is now patron of this parish, as of nearly all those of this country whose name begins with the letter P. We conjecture that the ecclesiastical authority prescribed this disposition to put an end to the cult of several ancient patrons who were no longer known and whom men hardly sought to know.

[16] This is the mountain of Châteaulin, on the river Auff or Aven. Châteaulin is a small town of which Saint Idunet is patron, and where there was formerly a priory of this Saint's name.

[17] *S. Guingaloeus iter edidit ad fratrem suum Edjunetum.* ["Saint Guingaloeus made a journey to his brother Edjunetus."]

[18] Henry, duke of Bavaria, was elected king of the Romans after the death of the emperor Otto III, and crowned emperor at Mainz, on 6 June 1002 [*sic*; crowned king; emperor 1014]. Cunegund was crowned empress at Paderborn, on the feast of Saint Lawrence; she accompanied her husband to Rome, in 1014, and received there with him the imperial crown from the hands of Benedict VIII.

[19] See the Bull of her canonization, made by Pope Innocent III, in the year 1200: it is reported by Surius on 3 March, and by the learned Gretser, in his opuscule on the *Saints of Bamberg*. The Roman Martyrology also makes honourable mention of this holy Empress.

[20] *Monasterium Heletense*: for a long time no trace of it remains.

[21] Saint Paul.

[22] Saint Matthew xv, 32.

[23] The *congius*, a measure for liquids (among the Romans), contained the eighth part of an amphora or six sextarii.

[24] About the year 578. — See Saint Gregory of Tours: *Hist.*, book v, ch. 9.

[1] Nicholas V.

4 March

Martyrologies

Fourth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Vilnius, in Lithuania, the Blessed Casimir, son of King Casimir, whom the Roman pontiff Leo X placed in the rank of the Saints. 1483. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, the birth into heaven of Saint Lucius, pope and martyr, who, first exiled for the Christian faith in the persecution of Valerian, then having, by a secret order of God, obtained leave to return to his church, was beheaded, after having laboured much against the Novatians, and thus accomplished his martyrdom. Saint Cyprian gave him the greatest praises. 254. — Again at Rome, on the Appian Way, nine hundred blessed martyrs, who were buried in the same cemetery as Saint Cecilia and near this Saint.[1] 265. — The same day, Saint Caius, palatine,[2] drowned in the sea with twenty-seven others. — At Nicomedia, Saint Adrian, martyr, and twenty-three others, who all consummated their martyrdom under the emperor Diocletian, having their legs broken; his memory is honoured more particularly on 8 September, the day of the translation of his body to Rome.[3] — Moreover, the passion of the holy Archelaus, Cyril and Photius. — In the Chersonese, the martyrdom of the holy bishops Basil, Eugenius, Agathodorus, Elpidius, Aetherius, Capito, Ephraem, Nestor and Arcadius.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Trier, Saint Basinus, first abbot of Saint-Maximin of Trier, then archbishop of that see. 700. — At Compiègne, the translation of the relics of Saint Cornelius, pope, and of Saint Cyprian, bishop, which were brought there from Rome. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Victor of Mouzon, honoured as martyr in that place on 9 February. — In the diocese of Arras, Saint Nicasius, religious of Elnone, friend of Saint Amandus, whom he accompanied to Rome. — At Avranches, Saint Leodewald or Leonard, bishop.[4] 630. — At Naples, apparition of Saint Francis Xavier to the Reverend Father Marcello Mastrilli, of the Society of Jesus, and beginning of the devotion of the miraculous novena in honour of Saint Francis Xavier.[5] 1633.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Order of Carmelites. — At Lucca, in Tuscany, the Blessed Romeo, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites.[6] — At Vilnius, in Lithuania, Saint Casimir, etc.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Rome, the holy Julius, bishop, Rote [Rhodes?], and twenty-seven other martyrs, mentioned in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Ptolemais, in Phoenicia, the holy Codratus, Acacius and Stratonice, who, after having made martyrs in their quality of executioners, became martyrs themselves. Reign of Aurelian.[7] 213 [*sic*]. — Among the Greeks, with the holy Archelaus, Cyril and Photius, Saint Heraclides, and a hundred and fifty others of their companions, likewise martyrs. — At Brescia, Saint Paulinus, bishop of that city. About 540. — At Lichfield, in England, Saint Owin, monk, who gathered the last words of Saint Ceadda, bishop of that place. There is a church under his invocation at Gloucester. End of the 7th century. — At Pavia, Saint Apian, Benedictine monk of Saint-Peter-in-the-Golden-Heaven. His body was buried at Comacchio and later transferred to Pavia. About 800. — On May, an island of Scotland, the holy Adrian, bishop of Saint Andrews, Stolbrand, bishop of Glodian, Caius, and several other martyrs to the number of six thousand six hundred, according to the Breviary of Aberdeen. The first, who was of royal race, was put to death by Danish pirates, while he was evangelizing the Picts. About 870. — At La Cava, in Sicily [*sic*; Salerno], Saint Peter, first bishop of Policastro. He was nephew of Saint Alferius,[8] founder of the celebrated convent of La Cava, in the province of Salerno, and was brought up under the eyes of that holy man. Having heard speak of Cluny, he resolved to go there to perfect himself in virtue. After his return, which took place at the end of five years, he was elected bishop of Policastro; but the love of solitude soon brought him back to La Cava, whose religious named him abbot. He wished to reform the Order according to the rule of Cluny; but this measure irritated spirits: to avoid dissensions, he withdrew to another convent. However the religious recognized their wrong and begged him to return, promising to obey him in every point. The churches and convents of this new congregation spread rapidly in the south of Italy: as many as three hundred and thirty-three were counted, convents, abbeys, priories and cures together. Saint Peter died at the age of eighty-five years: he is patron of Policastro. 1123. — At Brussels, the Venerable Anne of Jesus, companion and coadjutrix of Saint Teresa in the reform of Carmel. 1621.

Saint Lucius I, Pope and Martyr

252–254. — Emperor: Valerian.

Lucius papa … quasi splendor solis clarissimi rutilat. The name of Lucius, pope, shines forth like the brilliance of a cloudless sun. — Breviary of Stesaig [*sic*; as printed].

“Lucius was a Tuscan by origin; he was born at Lucca and had for father Licinius … He sat from the consulate of Gallus and Volusianus (252) until that of Valerian III and Gallienus II (254). After having been exiled for the faith, God permitted him to return to his church. He prescribed by a decree that two priests and three deacons should accompany the bishop everywhere, to constitute about his person a kind of ecclesiastical court. He was beheaded on 3 March 254, by order of Valerian. On his way to the place of punishment, he entrusted the government of the church to Stephen, his archdeacon. In two ordinations, in the month of December, he laid hands on four priests, four deacons and three bishops, destined for various churches. He was buried in the cemetery of Callistus on the Appian Way.[1] After him the episcopal see remained vacant for thirty-five days.”

It is in these terms that the *Liber Pontificalis*, or chronicle of the Popes, sums up the acts of the pontificate of Saint Lucius: let us enter into some details. Lucius had already accompanied into exile Pope Saint Cornelius, his predecessor. His promotion to the pontifical throne only designated him more specially for the

proscription of the Caesar Gallus, whose policy with regard to the Christians struck by preference the pastors, the better to reach the flock. Saint Lucius I was therefore exiled as Saint Cornelius had been, and received, at the place of his banishment, letters from Saint Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who congratulated him on his glorious confession. The place of his second exile has remained unknown to us. It is known that the time of his first banishment had been passed at Civitavecchia.

The plague was then knocking at the gates of the Empire. Decius the Younger [*sic*], who had just put Saint Cornelius to death, was at Rome one of its first victims. But it was in Africa above all that the scourge raged with a horrible intensity. The courage of the faithful wavered an instant before this new kind of peril. Saint Cyprian then addressed to his clergy and his people, to raise their fallen courage, his magnificent book *On the Mortality*. The contrast between the conduct of the faithful and that of the idolaters, during the duration of the scourge, was one of the most striking proofs of the divinity of Christianity. The Christians were everywhere where help was needed: they tended the plague-stricken without distinction of family or of cult. Far from opening their eyes and at least blessing this heroism, the official Roman world profited by the occasion to spread a new calumny. If the Christians showed themselves everywhere, it was said, it was to propagate the plague: under pretext of succouring the population, they poisoned it. One of the most ardent of these infamous denouncers was, in Africa, Demetrianus, fellow-student and school rival of Saint Cyprian. The latter, who called him a barker, answered his outrages proudly and branded the covetous cowardice of the pagans in face of the scourge. The pamphlets of Demetrianus have perished for ever: the victorious epistle which Cyprian wrote to him in refutation will remain as an eternal monument of the degradation of the pagans of the third century, veritable monsters with human faces, who profited by a public calamity to enrich themselves and to intoxicate themselves with lust or with wine on the corpses of the victims. What happened at Carthage took place likewise in Asia, in Greece, in Italy, in the Gauls. It was at this epoch that Saint Reine was martyred in Burgundy. It was in this plague that Saint Gregory of Neocaesarea won and justified his glorious surname of Thaumaturge. He went through all the houses invaded by the scourge. Wherever he presented himself, he invoked the name of Jesus Christ and the plague fled.

In spite of the plague, in spite of the invasions of the Numidians in the South, of the Scythians in the North, Gallus, who then reigned over the world, had only one preoccupation, that of annihilating the Christians. This dream, caressed by so many others before and after him, was not as easy to realize as he imagined. He perished miserably in a combat which he had to deliver to one of his rebel captains. Valerian succeeded him.

In the interval, the sovereign of the catacombs, the exiled pontiff, Saint Lucius, profited by these political revolutions to return, amid the acclamations of the faithful people, to his episcopal city.

Saint Cyprian, informed of this happy event, wrote him a letter of congratulation, in agreement with the other bishops of Africa. Here is a fragment of this letter: “Some time ago, beloved brother, we wrote to you to congratulate you on the double honour for which divine mercy reserved you, in calling you to direct the Church, and to illustrate it at the same time by your glorious confession. Today I address to you again my congratulations, to you, to your companions, to all Christendom. Blessed be the Lord who has brought you back from exile. The shepherd is restored to his flock, the pilot to the helm, the head to his people. It seems then that your banishment was managed by Providence, not that the Church should remain a widow of her bishop, but that the bishop should return to his Church greater and more honoured. If the days of trial have been shortened for you, the authority of your episcopate has only increased. A pontiff, in mounting to the altar of our God, you will no longer need words to confirm the faith of the people; your past is eloquent enough … And would to God, beloved brother, that it were given me, at this moment, to mingle with the pious throng that acclaims your return! what joy among all the brethren! What an immense concourse of all the faithful of Rome to receive and embrace you! All eyes are fixed on you. All hearts fly on your passage; such is the spectacle which I contemplate in spirit, and which makes me think of the unspeakable joys of which the second coming of Jesus Christ will be the signal. As John the precursor announced the coming of

Christ, so the confessor Pontiff who returns to us today appears to us as the precursor of the sovereign Judge. — My colleagues, as well as the Christian communities of our provinces, charge me to transmit to you by this epistle their sentiments of joy and faithful attachment. In our sacrifices and our prayers, we cease not to give thanks to God the Father and to Jesus Christ his Son, Our Lord, asking him to preserve you and to increase still the glory you have acquired by this first confession of his holy name. Perhaps God has recalled you to Rome only to give your future martyrdom a more striking theatre …"

The prediction of Saint Cyprian was soon to be verified. — Saint Lucius I, in presence of the disasters caused by the plague, multiplied the efforts of his charity, and sent help to all the Christian communities of the world. A zeal so striking could not pass unnoticed. The people of Rome was getting used little by little to turn its hopes toward the vicars of Jesus Christ as toward its true chiefs. These tendencies were bound to excite pagan jealousy. The priests of Capitoline Jupiter, the idolatrous senators, the official majority, the satellites of power, in a word, organized a veritable riot against Saint Lucius. Dragged before the tribunals and summoned to sacrifice to the gods of the Empire, the Pope answered by a generous refusal. At once the hired populace, which filled the praetorium, burst out in insults and vociferations. Men rushed upon the venerable Pontiff; they dragged him along, overwhelming him with outrages. Lucius let himself be led like a docile lamb, and after having undergone numerous tortures, he had his head cut off by the executioner's sword on 4 March of the year 254.

There remain to us from Saint Lucius I a few decrees which Gratian has collected. They are found in the first volume of the councils, and all, as Saint Cyprian, who loved the Holy See particularly, wrote to Pope Stephen, are worthy of veneration and respect.

Pope Paschal I raised his body from the earth, with those of Saint Urban, pope, of Saint Cecilia, of Saint Valerian, of Saint Tiburtius and of Saint Maximus: he transported them from the cemetery into the city in the year 822, and placed them under the altar of Saint Cecilia where they remained buried for nearly eight centuries, until, in 1599, they were again discovered under the pontificate of Clement VIII, by the care of Cardinal Sfondrato, titular of Saint Cecilia. They were exposed, from 20 October, to public veneration for a whole month, then enclosed in new shrines, and replaced solemnly on the day of the feast of Saint Cecilia, 22 November.

Saint Lucius is honoured as patron at Copenhagen, at Roskilde and in Zealand in Denmark.

The first translation of Saint Lucius by Pope Paschal I coincides precisely with the departure of the first mission which, under the leadership of Saint Anschar of Corbie, went to evangelize Denmark. Several churches of that kingdom have had Saint Lucius for patron. The reason for this is assuredly that the Pope will have given relics of his holy predecessor to the missionaries of the North. Besides, it is certain that the church of Roskilde formerly possessed the head of Saint Lucius, given by Pope Gregory VII. But the temple with great towers, with splendid naves, has long been empty; no more tombs, no more relics, no more songs, no more faithful. The cold of death, that is what has replaced the cult of the living God and of his saints. — Saint Lucius, pray for Denmark! One of his relics is preserved at the Carmel of Amiens.

Various histories of the Church and *History of the Catholic Church in Denmark*, by the abbé G. J. Karup.

Saint Casimir, Duke of Lithuania

1458–1483. — Popes: Pius II; Sixtus IV. — Emperor of Germany: Frederick III.

Chastity is the virtue which represents here below the glorious state of immortality. — S. Jerome, Ep. xliii [*sic*], to Henry, archbishop of Sens.

Although virginity is a very delicate flower, and is not ordinarily found in the courts of princes, where corruption slips in very easily, it is not, however, so rare there that one cannot remark several examples of it

in the history of the Saints. We have already seen two which excited our admiration, in the sacred persons of Saint Cunegund, empress, and of her most chaste spouse Saint Henry; here is a third in the person of Saint Casimir.

This prince was the second son of Casimir III [*sic*; IV], king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, and of Elizabeth of Austria, daughter of the emperor Albert, whom Martin Chromer, bishop of Ermland, in Prussia, calls a most holy and most religious princess. This pious mother took a marvellous care to have him instructed and brought up in the love and fear of God, with her other children, who were to the number of twelve: six boys on the one side, and on the other six girls, who were married into the houses of Bavaria, of Saxony and of Brandenburg. The eldest of the sons was elected king of Hungary and Bohemia, after Matthias Corvinus: three others were successively kings of Poland, and the last was Cardinal-archbishop of Gniezno and bishop of Cracow.

As for our Saint, he made great progress in letters and in virtue, under the good governors whom the queen gave him; from his earliest years, he despised pleasures, amusements and delicacies which other children seek with passion, to give himself entirely to the exercises of the spiritual life. He was the sworn enemy, not only of vice, but also of the least liberty and of the very shadow of sin. He studied with such ardour and obtained such happy successes that he was admired by all the world. He joined piety to his studies, for his themes, his poems and his speeches turned only on sacred subjects. He macerated his body, still tender and delicate, by fasting and the frequent use of the discipline; under his rich garments, he ordinarily wore the hair-shirt and the cilice. Often he passed whole nights on the hard ground or at the door of churches, where he prayed long with his face against the earth. He lived in extreme austerity amid the honours due to his birth and his rank: although he was son, brother and uncle of kings of Poland, one may say of him what Panigarola, bishop of Asti, said of the great Saint Charles Borromeo, cardinal and archbishop of Milan: that he was like a poor dog in the house of his master, eating only a little bread, drinking only a little water and sleeping only on a little straw.

He often exhorted the king, his father, to govern his subjects according to the rule of justice. If it sometimes happened that he departed from it, he did not fail to warn him of it gently, remaining always within the bounds of the respect that a son owes to his father. The king listened to him willingly; and as, besides uprightness of heart, he remarked in him a great foundation of judgment and a penetration of mind above his age, he followed his counsels with pleasure in the government of his States.

Some Hungarians, discontented with Matthias, their king, wished to raise our Saint to his throne in 1471; they sent for this purpose a deputation to the king of Poland, his father. The young Casimir, who had not yet completed thirteen years, would gladly have refused the crown that was offered him; but out of complaisance for his father, he set out at the head of an army to sustain the right of his election. Having arrived on the frontiers of Hungary, he learned that Matthias had just gathered sixteen thousand men to go to meet the Poles and that he had won back the hearts of his subjects. He knew also that Pope Sixtus IV had declared for the dethroned king and had sent an embassy to his father to make him abandon his enterprise. All these circumstances together gave a secret joy to the young prince. He asked his father permission to return on his steps; which was granted him only with great difficulty; but in order not to increase the grief that his father felt at having seen his designs fail, he avoided at first appearing in his presence; so, instead of going straight to Cracow, he withdrew to the castle of Dobzki [Dobczyce], which is a league from it, and he passed three months there in the practices of an austere penance. Having recognized afterwards the injustice of the expedition which he had been forced to undertake against the king of Hungary, he constantly refused to comply with a second invitation which the Hungarians made him, and that in spite of the solicitations and reiterated orders of his father. He was so devout to the Passion of Our Lord and to the holy sacrifice of the altar that often, when he heard speak of the sorrows and torments which Jesus Christ suffered for us in the garden of Olives and on the mount of Calvary, or when he assisted at holy Mass, he fell into ecstasy and

rapture.

His purity and chastity were, from his childhood, quite virginal and quite angelic; they appeared so admirably in all his actions that they rendered chaste and continent those who, in conversing with him, looked at him; so he took great care to preserve them inviolable all the time of his life: being ill of a languor, he preferred death (which the philosopher calls the most terrible of all things in the world) to health and life, rejecting with a heroic constancy the advice of the physicians, who strove to persuade him to lose his virginity in order to prolong his years and to marry that he might reign after the king, his father. For, although in the Polish nation, which is not less jealous of its liberty than proud and generous, the kings mounted the throne by election, and succession did not take place in this kingdom, nevertheless, if the son of the king rendered himself worthy, by his virtues and by his fine actions, to bear the sceptre of his father, the Orders of the kingdom ordinarily elected him, as was seen for Ladislas IV and for Casimir V, who succeeded their father Sigismund. Those who shall consider the conduct of our prince, the honour and glory of the royal house of the Jagiellons, which governed nearly two entire centuries the kingdom of Poland, will no longer be astonished that, in the midst of the sweetnesses and delights of the court, he led so holy and so chaste a life, in view of the tender devotion which he bore to Our Lady, Virgin of virgins and Mother of God. He composed in her honour a long prayer in Latin, which he recited every day, and with which he wished to be buried; for, when in the year 1604 his tomb was opened, in the church of Vilnius, his body was found fresh and entire, and the hymn between his hands. Here it is:

“Each day, O my soul, render thy homage to Mary, solemnize her feasts and celebrate her shining virtues;

“Contemplate and admire her elevation; proclaim her happiness both as Mother and as Virgin;

“Honour her that she may deliver thee from the weight of thy sins; invoke her that thou be not carried away by the torrent of the passions;

“I know it, no one can honour Mary worthily; yet he is senseless who is silent about her praises;

“All men must exalt and love her specially, and never must we cease to venerate her and to pray to her;

“O Mary, the honour and glory of all women, thou whom God hath raised above all creatures;

“O merciful Virgin, hear the vows of those who cease not to praise thee;

“Purify the guilty, and render them worthy of all heavenly goods;

“Hail, O holy Virgin, thou by whom the gates of heaven have been opened to the wretched, thou whom the wiles of the ancient serpent have never seduced;

“Thou, the repairer, the consoler of souls in despair, preserve us from the evils that will fall on the wicked;

“Ask for me that I may enjoy an eternal peace, and that I may not have the misfortune to be a prey to the flames of the lake of fire;

“Ask that I may be chaste and modest, gentle, good, sober, pious, prudent, upright and an enemy of lying;

“Obtain for me meekness and the love of concord and of purity; render me firm and constant in the way of good.”

Saint Casimir is particularly praised for having been extremely an enemy of detraction, very modest and reserved in his speech. He never spoke, even with his most familiar friends, of the faults of his neighbour, nor of the imperfections of others, but only of the affairs of his conscience, of the contempt and vanity of the world, of the misery of this perishable life, of the horror of vice and sin, of the beauty of virtue and of the happy and holy state of grace. His palace was a nursery where grew all the plants of the virtues, a flower-bed where all the flowers of devotion bloomed, and as it were a temple where men did nothing but pray to God. In effect, prayer was as perfectly practised there as in the monasteries and the most strict and most reformed

religious houses. All his servants were, after his example, so full of goodness that, when they were at the court of the king of Poland, or at that of Ladislas, king of Hungary, his elder brother, one recognized those who belonged to his household rather by the exercise of an extraordinary virtue than by his colours and liveries. He was full of attachment to the Catholic religion, and his zeal made him employ all the means at his disposal to extirpate the schism of the Russians. He had so much love and charity for all the poor, the widows and the orphans of his lands that he acquired by this virtue the fine surname of “Father and defender of the poor and the unfortunate.”

The holy duke having led a life so pure, so virtuous and so innocent, God granted him the grace to reveal to him the day and the hour of his departure from this world. It was about 4 March of the year 1483, and the twenty-fifth of his age, after he had received, with great fervour and great devotion, the holy Viaticum, in presence of several priests and religious whom he cherished and honoured extremely.

The angels came to seek his virginal soul to lead it to heaven; which a contemporary panegyrist has expressed by these verses (given in Latin with a French rendering): *Far be lamentations; let there be songs. Lilies on the tomb! For this tomb let there be chaste flowers and a virginal fragrance; one heap shall hold them all. For behold, from the heights of heaven descends the holy troop of heavenly spirits, to assist at the funeral of a brother, as at a feast. Once more, cease your tears, lend your ear to the harmonies from on high: see how many flowers and perfumes the Angels scatter on the tomb of one who resembles them!*

His body was borne, with a quite royal funeral pomp, to the cathedral church of Vilnius, capital city of his duchy of Lithuania, where it received the honours of burial.

One sees, in a chapel of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, in Paris, the portrait of Saint Casimir, taken from nature. This chapel was built by Casimir, king of Poland, and last prince of the house of Vasa, who, after abdicating the crown, retired to Paris, where he died abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, in 1668.

The crown that is placed at his feet announces that he desisted from his claims to the throne of Hungary, when he saw King Matthias supported by the Pope. — The lily which he carries in his hand is the indication of the inviolable chastity he preserved until death. There is sometimes placed beside him a writing, because he wished to be buried with the prose *Omni die, die Mariae mea laudes anima*, often called the hymn of Saint Casimir.[1]

CULT OF SAINT CASIMIR

Some time after his death, the grand duke of Muscovy entered Lithuania with a powerful army: which put all these peoples in disorder and confusion; but, having recourse to heaven, they made a vow at the tomb of their holy duke, and, a few days after, a small troop of Lithuanians cut to pieces the army of the Muscovites; which was not done without miracle, for the Saint appeared in the air, fighting for his subjects against these schismatics. Several persons afflicted with various maladies obtained a perfect healing at his sepulchre: a young girl, named Ursula, who had died at Vilnius, having been carried by her parents to the tomb of this prince, recovered life there before a great assembly, and she lived several years more.

These miracles, and others like them, caused Pope Leo X to declare him Blessed, at the prayer of Sigismund I, king of Poland, his brother; and, since, Pope Paul V has commanded that his memory be celebrated throughout the whole church and the feast made with a semi-double office. His help is implored to surmount temptations against chastity, to be preserved or delivered from the scourge of the plague, and to repress the cruelty of the Turks. He is the patron of Poland. A hundred and twenty years after his death, his body was found without corruption. The rich stuffs in which it had been wrapped were also found entire, in spite of the excessive humidity of the vault where he had been buried; a magnificent marble chapel was built to deposit his relics.

Zacharias Ferrerius of Vicenza, bishop of Guardia and nuncio of the Pope in Poland, wrote his life and composed his office with the authority of the Holy See, and it is from that that we have extracted this. But we do not wish to omit that the two last kings of Poland, Ladislas and Casimir, who married one after the other the princess Marie-Louise de Gonzaga, of the house of Mantua, were great-nephews [*sic*] of this great Saint, being sons of Sigismund III, king of Poland and of Sweden, who had for mother Catherine Jagellon, queen of Sweden and daughter of Sigismund I, king of Poland, brother of Saint Casimir. And to make a more particular remark on the house of this blessed prince, our most Christian king, Louis XIV, was also one of his great-nephews, for Ladislas Jagellon, king of Hungary and of Bohemia, elder brother of Saint Casimir, married Anne of Foix, of the house of Candale, of whom he had Jagellon [Anne], queen of Hungary and of Bohemia, wife of the emperor Ferdinand I, from whom several children are issued, and, among others, Anne of Austria, grand duchess of Tuscany [*sic*], mother of the queen Marie de' Medici, wife of King Henry the Great and mother of King Louis XIII, who had by the queen Anne of Austria the king Louis the Great.

Saint Leonard or Leodewald, Bishop of Avranches, invoked by Carters (630)

At the western extremity of the great parish of Vains, in the canton of Avranches (Manche), on a hillock which dominates the coast of Brittany and the shores of the Ocean, is found a borough, a village of the middle ages, with its church, its ancient priory and its monumental tower, from the heights of which there unrolls before the eyes of the spectator one of the vastest and most beautiful horizons! … This village, this ancient borough which one perceives from afar, is Saint-Léonard, the place consecrated to Saint Leodewald.[1]

The ancient and primitive history of this borough, before its Christian name, is completely unknown. However a modern historian has believed he saw in it the site of the capital of the Veneti, who struggled so energetically against Caesar at the conquest of the Gauls. But we leave to other collections the solution of this problem: the township which occupies us draws from a holy bishop of Avranches of the sixth century its modern name of Saint-Léonard.[2] This Saint was born there about 540 and was its most glorious child. It is said that his Merovingian castle once stood on the hillock where later was raised to him the temple which is still seen today. From his birth to his episcopate, we have nothing written, nothing that can resist a severe criticism; but tradition comes to fill the gaps of history, and poetry to supply authentic documents.

The young Leodewald, according to the oral testimony of our fathers, and of the old men who still tell it, belonged to a rich and pious family, but to whose wise instructions his youth did not answer. Born with a lively and impetuous character, and endowed with a Herculean strength and a majestic stature, he fell into all the excesses to which the youth of that time too often gave themselves. The abuse of his strength and power soon made him the scourge of the country, and men trembled at the approach of this man who, as his name indicates, resembled rather closely a lion come out of his savage forests.

His mother, his pious mother, ceased not, however, to call him back to a more moderate and more Christian life; but the time fixed by Providence for touching and converting this young heart, which the fire of the passions carried away, had not yet arrived. Nevertheless, in the midst of his excesses, the good still floated on the surface, and several times one could recognize in it the element of a good heart and the principle of a good action. So it was pleasant to relate that many times he had been seen bringing help to the carters of the neighbourhood, and drawing out, by the strength of his arm, their wagons stuck in the hollows of the road or the sands of the strands. Meanwhile his pious mother prayed always, and like another Monica waited, full of hope, for his sincere return to God. A child who had cost so many tears and prayers could not perish, and this tender mother soon saw arrive the happy moment after which she sighed: it was the striking conversion of her dear son. How was it effected? History cannot tell us; but this interior sentiment, or rather this divine grace which touched the heart of the lord Leodewald and brought him back to the spiritual life which he had lost, is delightfully expressed by a charming popular legend: it is the legend of the Apple, which the old men of Saint-Léonard still tell to whoever wishes to hear:

“Pensive and solitary, Leodewald was descending one day the green slopes of his domains, and under the shade of the orchards, was turning over in his mind the pressing entreaties of his mother and the acts of his past life. Suddenly, a branch of an apple tree laden with fruit tears him from his reveries. He stops to pluck one, the vermilion colour and charming shape of which have struck him. But scarcely has he carried it to his mouth than the apple, sour and still too green, soon disgusts him. He casts it away at once, and almost angry, lays it on the forked branches of the tree. Some time after, passing again by the same place, he finds the apple where he had left it. This time it seems to him still more delightful; its green and purple colour has taken that of gold, and he stops to taste it again. He finds it delicious, and its taste, lately so bitter, has become most agreeable. This simple adventure, this happy encounter inspires him then with the most salutary reflections: ‘Everything changes,’ he says to himself,

‘everything improves, everything is perfected; shall I be the only one not to change, shall I always be the green fruit that is rejected or the barren tree that produces nothing? … No,’ he cried, ‘it shall not be so …’ At that very instant God touched his heart, and Leodewald was converted. The light had been made in his soul, he had been ashamed of his past, and the proud lord had found himself small before God. But in his humiliation, it was humility that triumphed, and this man, struck down by the passions, raised himself up again like the tree laid low by the storm, and the more he had leaned toward the earth, the more his soul, having regained its spring, rose again toward the heavens.”

His conversion was sincere, and learning went hand in hand with holiness, for in 578, Saint Severus having resigned his episcopal functions to retire into the forest which since bears his name, the clergy and the people elected Leodewald to succeed the holy bishop become a monk. It was assuredly necessary that eminent qualities should be recognized in him, since, as the first of the Frankish leudes of his diocese, he was chosen as pontiff, and that in preference to the Gallo-Romans who were still in great number in Neustria, and who, by their learning and virtues, had hitherto been at the head of the bishoprics and abbeys.

The episcopate of Saint Leonard did not pass unnoticed, and the father of the history of France, Gregory of Tours, in his second book of the miracles of Saint Martin, consecrates a whole chapter, the thirty-sixth, to recall the confidence of our holy bishop in the illustrious apostle of the Gauls. Saint Leonard had, in effect, for a long time nourished in his heart a great devotion to Saint Martin, whom he recognized, doubtless, as one of the first apostles of his diocese, evangelized by one of those missionaries whom the holy bishop of Tours drew from Marmoutier, and sent, at the peril of their lives, to labour for the conversion of peoples. This profound veneration for this holy pontiff gave birth, in the bishop of Avranches, to the desire to have relics of him. He sent therefore, for this purpose, one of his priests, who made the pilgrimage to Tours to obtain what he so ardently wished. The envoy of Saint Leonard, having visited the tomb of Saint Martin, in the notable basilica which his successors had raised to him, and having obtained what he had come to ask, hastened to return, as quickly as possible, toward the city of the Abrincatui. When the inhabitants of Avranches knew of his arrival, each of them hastened to betake himself to his passage, and among the crowd that surrounded him was a poor paralytic who, carried on the arms of his friends, came piously to commend himself to Saint Martin, kissing with confidence the veil which covered the reliquary. At once, says the Latin text, he felt himself healed, and standing, he went back himself to his house. On the spot where this miracle had happened, Saint Leonard had a temple built to Saint Martin, of which he himself made the solemn dedication.

This blessed ground, where Saint Leonard had just raised a temple, was at the extremity of a suburb of Avranches, at the place where, in 1845, a vase was discovered containing five hundred pieces of silver struck before the Roman domination.

The erection of this church, which no longer exists, contributed powerfully to spread in the country of Avranches the cult of Saint Martin, so that it could be said:

Saint Martin and Saint Mary / Share Normandy between them.

Around the new church of Avranches, which became from then on as it were a centre of devotion, other temples were seen to rise, which, in imitation of their elder sister, also put themselves under the patronage of Saint Martin. In the sixteenth century, Robert Cenalis counted thirty-one of them in the diocese, and he does not fear to trace most of them back to Saint Leodewald, and to give to all of them, as reason of being, the mother and primitive church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs.[3] History is silent on the rest of Saint Leonard's episcopate. After having grown white under the pastoral burden, he fell asleep in the Lord at the age of ninety years, about 630. Saint Leonard has always been regarded as a saint. The faithful hastened to raise to him a temple at the place of his birth, and it is believed that his remains were transported into this venerable church.

What leads us to think so is that within the enclosure of this church is concentrated all the devotion, and, so to speak, all the cult rendered to Saint Leodewald. It is there, under its ancient vaults, that a pilgrimage was formed which contributed not a little to spread, even far off, the profound veneration with which his name was surrounded. From time immemorial, on the steps of his altar, a crowd of pilgrims knelt, travellers or drivers of wagons, who came to claim his protection against the dangers of the road or nocturnal surprises. Today when the means of communication are so easy and so safe, such a devotion is less understood; but let one carry oneself back to the middle ages, let one go over what remains of the old roads of lower Normandy, and one will no longer be astonished that men felt the need of invoking a saint, special protector of the pilgrim, the traveller, the carter.

The men of our generation have still been able to question the old men who, with such happiness, relate the memories of the past: those of the following generation will no longer be able to. The author of these lines still remembers some of their tales, in which the old men repeated the tutelary protection of Saint Leonard, and the dramatic incidents of the miraculous deliverance of some unfortunate driver.

The priory of Saint-Léonard still exists in the commune of Vains, as well as its fine Romanesque church, which has become private property. It is in the centre of a charming village whose inhabitants still venerate the statue of their patron, richly decorated and very well kept. Mgr Bravard visited it lately and encouraged this devotion.

M. l'abbé Pigeon, chaplain of the lycée of Coutances. — 15 March 1872.

Saint Basinus, Bishop of Trier (700)

Basinus, of the illustrious family of the dukes of Austrasia, was first received in the monastery of Saint-Maximin, as a simple religious; he was afterwards raised to the dignity of abbot, because of the holiness of his life. Later, Saint Numerian, archbishop of Trier, being dead, he was forced to gird the mitre in his place. He held this see under the reign of Childebert II, king of Austrasia. He was the friend of Saint Willibrord, whose studies and progress he favoured. He governed his church so well and acquitted himself so perfectly of the duties of the episcopate that he passed for a Saint even in his lifetime, and after his death he was honoured as such. He had for successor his nephew Lutwin, who showed himself worthy to replace him. His body, first deposited in the basilica of Saint-Maximin, on the right side of the crypt, under the high altar, was in 1621 placed in a more fitting place. He formerly received many honours.

The Venerable Anne of Jesus (1621)

Anne de Lobera, in religion Anne of Jesus, was born at Medina del Campo, of an illustrious family of Spain, in 1545. She was deaf and dumb until the age of seven. Scarcely ten years old, she pronounced the vow of perpetual chastity, to thank the Lord for having given her speech. She advanced so far in Christian piety that her confessor afterwards testified he had never heard the avowal of any great venial sin. She embraced the institute of Saint Teresa at the age of twenty-four. After having founded divers monasteries in Spain, Mother

Anne of Jesus was called, for the same purpose, into France and the Low Countries. In France, the houses of the Carmelites multiplied rapidly; there were already sixty-two at the end of the seventeenth century. Anne of Jesus died at Brussels, in the odour of sanctity, on 4 March 1621, in her convent of the Park, near the Namur gate.

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[1] The Bollandists think that this glorious phalanx was led to martyrdom by Saint Aristion and Saint Licinius, bishops.

[2] That is to say, officer of the palace. There existed at the court of the emperors a particular order of palatine militia. Those who belonged to it took rank after the counts and after the officers called *agentes in rebus*. They were sent into the provinces for different missions, sometimes for the levying of taxes. (Baronius.)

[3] See 8 September.

[4] This Saint may be considered as a native of the country: this is why we believed we could transfer him here without inconvenience, although the *Neustria sancta* assigns him 4 January.

[5] Father Marcello Mastrilli, a Jesuit at Naples, was about to die of the consequences of a wound which a hammer had made on his head in falling from a height of more than a hundred feet, when Saint Francis Xavier, to whom he had always been very devout, appeared to him, his face all radiant with glory, holding the pilgrim's staff in his hand and wearing the pilgrim's cloak over his Jesuit habit. He ordered the sick man to apply to his wound a reliquary enclosing a precious piece of the holy Cross which the sick man carried on him; made him vow to go to Japan to receive there the crown of martyrdom which heaven destined for him, and assured him that all those who should implore his intercession with God during the space of nine days, beginning on the fourth of March, would confess and communicate on one of the days of this novena, would infallibly feel the effects of his protection and credit, and would obtain from God all that they should ask for their salvation and for his glory. Suddenly the sick man sits up, raises his hands and eyes to heaven, and, turning then toward the assembly, cries out: "My brothers, I am healed, and it is to Saint Francis Xavier that I owe this miracle! Let my clothes be given me, that I may rise at once and go with you to the church to sing the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving." Father Mastrilli set out at once for his mission and had his head cut off on 17 October of the year 1638, four years after his miraculous cure by the Apostle of the Indies. It was immediately after his cure that Father Mastrilli published, at Naples, the promise which Saint Francis Xavier had made him, of obtaining for those who should make this novena all that they should ask of Jesus Christ for their salvation, through his intercession. The report of this promise, joined to the miracle which had just been worked, contributed greatly to spread this practice of devotion, and the particular favours which were obtained from heaven during these nine days soon made it celebrated. From Naples it passed through all Italy; it spread into Catalonia and into the kingdoms of Valencia and Aragon. The astonishing conversions, the graces and unusual blessings which were its fruit made it established also in Spain, in Portugal, in France, in Poland and in Germany. The miraculous cure of Father John Baptist Onraet made it especially celebrated in the Low Countries. The malady from which he suffered was a strange haemorrhage, which made him lose blood all at once by the mouth, the nostrils, the eyes and the ears; a new malady and unknown until then. The most skilful physicians having uselessly exhausted all human remedies, Father Onraet had recourse to the intercession of Saint Francis Xavier. The solemn Novena of the month of March was being celebrated then at Mechlin, in the church of the Society of Jesus, and in spite of the deplorable state in which he found himself, he had himself carried from Louvain to make it with the others. His confidence was not vain; it merited for him several apparitions of the Saint, and on 11 March 1707 he suddenly recovered health. This miracle was attested by the rector of the college, by three physicians, and Mgr Humbert de Precipiano, archbishop of Mechlin, after juridical inquiries, confirmed it by a solemn decree. All times of the year are proper for this holy exercise, and it depends only on the need and piety of each faithful in particular to choose the days when he believes he can acquit himself of it better. The same is true of the place. This Novena can be of as great merit made in private, before an image of the Saint, as in public, especially when one is kept at home by some bodily infirmity. However the most common usage is to begin it on the fourth of March and to end it on the twelfth, which is the day on which the blessed Apostle of the Indies was solemnly placed in the rank of the Saints. It is also advised to choose by preference a church where there is a chapel or an altar consecrated to God under the invocation of Saint Francis Xavier.

[6] We spoke of Saint Romeo at the same time as of Saint Avertanus on 25 February.

[7] See Saint Paul and Saint Juliana, his sister, in the Roman martyrology of 17 August.

[8] See 12 April.

[9] M. Rossi [De Rossi] has found again the funerary inscription of Saint Lucius: the name is inscribed in Greek in the following way: ΛΟΥΚΙ□. This termination in IC is a further argument to demonstrate the contemporaneity of the epitaphs and burials in the catacombs. In effect, whatever be the origin, probably Graeco-Egyptian, of the IC, it is certain that the ordinary use of this ending in the inscriptions is anterior to the fourth century: only two later examples are known.

[10] Hagiographers are not agreed on the question whether Saint Casimir is really the author of this prose. Baillet and Godescard give the thing as doubtful. Father Cahier is for the negative. The Bollandists do not pronounce in a very clear manner: it seems to result from their observations on this subject that Saint Casimir, by reciting this hymn every day, would only have contributed to popularize it; "for," they say, "it was in the hands of pious persons before the opening of his tomb, where a copy of it was found on his breast."

[11] Robert Cenalis: *Fanum sancti Leodovaldi.*

[12] His primitive name was *Leodovaldus*, which softened later into *Leodenaldus*, and finally into *Leonardus*, as Robert Cenalis tells us. The people, who in their so often picturesque language commonly abbreviate names, pronounce Saint Lieubaud, Saint Lionard, and in a still briefer manner Saint Liona and Saint Lena. But spelled as the historian of the sixth century writes it, Leodovald is a hybrid word

which came from the Latin *leo*, lion, and the Teutonic *wald*, forest, and signifies the lion of the forest. This termination *wald* is found again in two other names of bishops of Avranches: Wald-bert (Walbert), the brilliant of the woods, Child-wald, the child of the woods, all Saxon and Teutonic names, which recall to us those fair-haired Franks who descended from the wild forests of Germania. Saint Leonard thus reveals to us the name of an ancient Frankish family which must have enjoyed a high rank in the country, to judge by the episcopal dignity with which one of its members was clothed.

[13] The church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs became, in the middle ages, a place of pilgrimage in imitation of that of Saint-Martin of Tours, and we have known some old men who went there to pray as pilgrims. In the eleventh or twelfth century, the primitive edifice was rebuilt and enlarged, and those who knew it tell us that with its square tower and its conical roof it resembled rather the present churches of Notre-Dame-des-Champs and Saint-Saturnin. In the seventeenth century, Charles Boislève, bishop of Avranches, annexed to it the great Seminary (primitively established at Brouains, near Mortain, under the episcopate of Roger d'Aumont, 1650), and the curé of the place, M. Gombert, was its first superior about 1660. This church, which, as a cure and a collegiate chapter, had had several priests commendable for their learning and piety, was transformed into a barracks during the Revolution, and finally destroyed in 1806. Today no trace of it remains, and the stranger who walks the boulevard Saint-Martin or the rue du Séminaire hardly suspects that he treads a miraculous soil, and that at the junction of these two roads there once rose a Merovingian temple which, after the cathedral, was the most ancient and venerable church of the city! … The southern boulevard or Chaussée Saint-Martin was, before '93, only a fine solitary alley, planted with poplars, and leading from the college to the church of the Seminary. The college, reputed one of the best and most famous in Normandy, served at the same time as a minor seminary, and there were seventeen priest professors for the two establishments.

5 March

Martyrologies

Fifth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Antioch, the birth into heaven of Saint Phocas, martyr, who, after many ill-treatments suffered for the name of the Redeemer, triumphed over the ancient serpent, a victory which a miracle still attests today to the people. Those, indeed, who have been bitten by a serpent have only to approach with lively faith the door of the martyr's basilica, and at once the venom loses its force and the sick are healed.[1] About 320. — At Caesarea in Palestine, Saint Adrian, martyr, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, was, by the order of the governor Firmilian, first exposed to a lion for the faith of Christ, and afterwards, pierced in the throat by a sword-stroke, received the crown of martyrdom. 308. — The same day, the passion of Saint Eusebius, officer of the palace, and of nine other martyrs. — At Caesarea in Palestine, Saint Theophilus,[2] bishop, who, under the emperor Severus, distinguished himself by the brilliance of his wisdom and the integrity of his life. 200. — Again in Palestine, on the banks of the Jordan, Saint Gerasimus, anchorite, who flourished in the time of the emperor Zeno. 475. — At Naples, the decease of Saint John Joseph of the Cross, of the Order of Discalced Minors, founder of the Italian family of Saint Peter of Alcántara and its first provincial. Emulator of Saint Francis of Assisi and of Peter of Alcántara, he added great lustre to the glory of the Seraphic Order and was put in the canon of the Saints by Pope Gregory XVI. 1734.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Soissons, Saint Drausinus, bishop and confessor, founder of the celebrated monastery of Our Lady in the same city and of the abbey of La Rethonde, of the Order of Saint Benedict. 674. — At Arles, Saint Virgil, bishop. 610. — At Tarbes, the feast of Saint Lupercus,[3] bishop of Eauze and martyr. 3rd century. — At Tours, Saint Sigiramnus, abbot. 7th century. — At Lille and at Ypres, the Blessed Zegher [Siger], Dominican religious, whose preachings contributed much to the propagation of his Order in Flanders. The Lord revealed to him the conversion and future holiness of the Blessed Margaret of Ypres, one day when he saw her at church for the first time.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — In Palestine, on the banks of the Jordan, Saint Gerasimus, etc.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The solemnity of all the Saints of the Order of Canons Regular of Saint Augustine.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict and of the Camaldolese. — Saint Cunegund, virgin, of whom mention is made on 3 March.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — In Narbonese Gaul, at Saint-Gilles, the martyrdom of Saint Peter of Castelnau, Cistercian monk, and, by apostolic authority, first inquisitor of the faith against the perversity of the heretics, who, first, decorated and consecrated so high an office with the purple of his glorious blood.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Naples, the decease of Saint John Joseph of the Cross.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — Saint Casimir, confessor, whose feast is made the day before this one.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — At Recanati, in the March of Ancona, the Blessed Jerome Ghirarduce [Girolamo Ghirardutio?], confessor of our Order, who shone greatly by his efforts to re-establish peace and concord among relatives.

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Naples, etc., as in the Roman-Seraphic.

Martyrology of Saint Jerome. — Saint Eusebius, confessor, disciple of our father Saint Jerome.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Casimir, etc., as above.

ADDITIONS MADE ACCORDING TO THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Bida, in Isauria, Saint Conon, martyr. Apostolic times. — In Palestine, Saint Eulogius, martyr. — At Brescia, Saint Olive, virgin and martyr. Her relics are preserved in that city and in that of Salò, which is near. Reign of Hadrian. — In Pamphylia, Saint Conon, gardener, martyr. He had his feet nailed and perished by that torture. The year 251. He was born at Nazareth, in Palestine.[4] — In Egypt, Saint Mark, solitary. He lived with Saint Moses and Saint Macarius, and passed the age of a hundred years. It is reported that he received the Eucharist from the hands of an angel.[5] About 400. — In Cyprus, Saint Gregory, bishop of Constantia, metropolis of that island. — At Bethlehem, Saint Eusebius of Cremona. He was the friend of Saint Jerome who, at the moment of his death, chose him as superior of his monastery. He is the author of several remarkable writings. About 423. — In Ireland, Saint Kieran, and Saint Cartach, his disciple, abbots and bishops of Saighir.[6] — At Syracuse, in Sicily, Saint Clement, abbot, whose body was transported to Constantinople, in 1040. — At Todi, in Umbria, the Blessed Roger, disciple of Saint Francis of Assisi.[7] The year 1236.

Saint Virgil, Religious of Lérins, Abbot of Saint-Symphorian and Metropolitan Bishop of Arles

610. — Pope: Boniface IV. — King of France: Clotaire II.

After the example of God, pastors must use indulgence and govern by love. — Proper of Fréjus. Prayer of Saint Virgil.

About the year 530, there was born in Aquitaine a child of benediction named Virgil. His parents, rich Gallo-Romans, whose virtue and piety equalled their opulence and nobility, gave him the most brilliant education, but also the most Christian. Their cares were not lost: they had the consolation of seeing developed in their son, from earliest childhood, the happiest qualities of mind and heart. Growing in wisdom as in age, Virgil, after having been an admirable child, became the most accomplished young man, and all the

hopes which he had caused to be conceived were surpassed by the reality. At that epoch of life when the passions boil, when all is seduction and danger, he preserved, says his biographer, in all its freshness the angelic virtue which his name expressed.[1] In him the amiable candour of innocence was united to that precocious maturity, that gentle gravity which reserve, modesty, continual vigilance, the practice of all the virtues and serious habits give. Eager for study and never ceasing to cultivate his remarkable intelligence, he soon distinguished himself by the extent of his knowledge and the superiority of his talents. The reading of the holy letters was above all dear to him: each day he gathered there the heavenly food destined for the nourishment of his soul. Accustomed by his sublime meditations and his conversations with God to live in a higher sphere, he had a pious and noble disdain for all the material things of here below, esteemed only the invisible goods, and treated his body, though ever innocent, as the natural enemy of evangelical perfection, compressing it ceaselessly under the weight of austerities, in order to prevent or at once stop any revolt of the flesh against the spirit. To this love of study, of prayer and of the beautiful virtue which ennobles, enlarges and in some way spiritualizes the lowest part of our being, the holy young man joined a magnanimous and generous heart, a strong soul, a lovable meekness, a calm, a tranquillity, a patience proof against every trial. Who will be astonished at it? Is not piety useful for everything? So many fine qualities, so many virtues seemed still enhanced by the charms of his person: he had a remarkably beautiful face, an air ever amiable and prepossessing, affable manners, a noble and serene brow where one saw the elevation of his thoughts together with the peace of his conscience; and from his gracious lips, where often a benevolent smile blossomed, fell a word always sweet and caressing.

With all these exterior advantages, with talents, birth and fortune, Virgil might have shone in the world. But his great soul aspired to mount higher: he wished to be perfect, and he knew that to rise to the perfection of which the evangelical counsels are the goal, the Christian must renounce everything and break all the bonds which can chain him to the earth. This is why he ran at once to shelter in a pious asylum his young virtue, alarmed by the dangers of the age. The celebrated monastery of Lérins opened its doors to him. Happy to live with brethren in this holy community, the novice showed for all an admirable charity and soon drew the general affection. Scrupulously exact in observing the ancient rule in its primitive rigour, he was soon the model of all the religious. Free at last of every earthly preoccupation, he seemed to have no conversation but with heaven.

After having formed himself in all the religious virtues under those famous cloisters which have seen so many illustrious men, Virgil was called to the government of the abbey of Saint-Symphorian of Autun: a holy and famous school also, where, as at Lérins, under the influence of the rule of the oriental monks, learning and virtue flourished, happy mother of great men and great saints who were likewise the light of the clergy, the glory of the Church. The new abbot soon justified the great idea that had been formed of his merit and showed always that he was at least on a level with that reputation of talent and holiness which had caused him to be put at the head of an institution so important. Never did pastor guard his flock with a more active solicitude, conduct it with more skill, love it with a more tender affection. Like a father, or rather like an ever-anxious mother, he watched by day, he watched by night: and while the religious, his children, tasted the sweetness of sleep, he never failed to go through the monastery, making everywhere the most exact visit. Once, on one of these occasions, the demon tried to frighten him by showing himself to him in a horrible form. The holy abbot made the sign of the cross, and the infernal phantom disappeared. One of the young men brought up in the house also saw the frightful spectre and was so terrified that fright gave him a burning fever. Virgil went to him, reassured him with a paternal kindness, and made a prayer. It was enough: the young sick man rose at once perfectly healed. Meanwhile Licerius, archbishop of Arles, died. Now it was of extreme importance that this see, the first of the Gauls at that epoch, should be occupied by a pontiff of eminent merit. Saint Syagrius, bishop of Autun, understood this better than anyone. This illustrious prelate, whose zeal, as enlightened as it was vast and active, was ceaselessly preoccupied with the salvation of souls, the good of the Church and the glory of God, turned therefore all his attention to this great affair, and

believed he ought to use his powerful influence to procure for the metropolis of Arles a worthy pastor. Having been able to know perfectly all the merit of the abbot of Saint-Symphorian, he proposed him. No one seemed to him more capable of rising to the height of the sublime functions of the episcopate. And besides, Virgil had a very great reputation, especially in the southern provinces: his nomination would therefore infallibly be received there with general assent. Syagrius, a just appraiser of men and things, had not been mistaken. The clergy and people, accepting eagerly the proposition of the bishop of Autun, asked with one voice for the illustrious religious. He tried indeed to offer a lively resistance to a choice against which there was but one protest, that of his humility; but he was obliged to yield to wishes and to a call no less obstinate than his resistance itself. Vanquished by this sort of moral violence, torn in spite of himself, like Saint Germanus, from the pious calm of his dear abbey, acclaimed with an irresistible enthusiasm which no longer left him his liberty, he consented at last to receive episcopal consecration, and gave himself wholly to his people, as he had given himself wholly to his religious (580). The monastery of Saint-Symphorian, though honoured with the glory of furnishing bishops to the principal churches of the Gauls, must have been very sensible to this new and so great loss, though doubtless a new abbot worthy of its reputation and importance was given it. Scarcely had Virgil taken possession of his diocese when, devoured with zeal for the house of God, he reformed his clergy, gave great goods to his Church and built in his episcopal city a basilica in honour of Saint Stephen, first martyr. Later, he raised yet another under the title of the Saviour and of Saint Honoratus, the illustrious founder of Lérins, and one of his predecessors on the see of Arles. To this latter church he annexed a monastery, so that the praises of God might be sung there day and night. He was happy in the midst of this community of brethren which recalled to him his old family of Saint-Symphorian of Autun and was to furnish his diocese with a pious and instructed clergy.

The reputation of Virgil was not confined within the limits of Gaul; it crossed the mountains and arrived as far as Rome. The great Pope Saint Gregory, whose judgment was so enlightened and so just, rendered the most striking homage to the merit of the holy archbishop by frequent letters, by esteem, by the singular affection with which he honoured him, and did not fear to share in some sort with him the authority of the supreme pontificate, by naming him his vicar in the states of Childebert. Here is what the Holy Father wrote to Virgil a short time after the nomination of this worthy abbot of Saint-Symphorian to the archbishopric of Arles: “Gregory, to Virgil, bishop of Arles. — I regret that I have not yet been able to write to your Fraternity to return the greeting which I owe it. But today I am going, in one and the same letter, to testify to you my fraternal affection and at the same time to speak to you of the manner in which one must act with regard to the Jews. Some of them, who are established in your province and who go to Marseille for their commercial affairs, have informed us that several of their coreligionists were receiving baptism rather by force than by conviction. Now such a conduct proceeds doubtless from a good intention; it is dictated by love for Our Lord Jesus Christ. But I much fear that this zeal, less enlightened than ardent, will not obtain the results it promises itself, and will cause, which God forbid, the loss of the souls it would wish to save. For men who have not been brought by an inward conviction, but who have been dragged by force to baptism, return to their old superstitions and find by their apostasy death where they should have found life. Let your Fraternity therefore make to these poor blind men frequent exhortations, in order to engage them gently to ask of themselves the sacrament which opens the door of the Church …”

The illustrious Pontiff, answering a new letter of the holy archbishop, who according to custom had made the request for the pallium, says to him: “What an admirable thing is charity! … How right the great Apostle was to call it the bond of perfection! Indeed, the other virtues adorn the soul, but it is charity that fastens them there. Now, my very dear brother, I know by the testimony of those who come from the Gauls that you are a model of this excellent virtue; and besides your letters would suffice to give the proof of it. So I am far from suspecting that in asking, according to the custom of your predecessors, the pallium and the apostolic vicariate, you had for motive the vainglory of reaching the summit of passing dignities and adorning yourself with an exterior ornament. You know very well, — besides no one is ignorant of it, — that the faith came

from the Roman Church into the Gauls; in addressing yourself to the Holy See, according to ancient custom, you wished to show that it is the source of all favour and all authority. Does not a good son love to have recourse to the bosom of his mother? This is why we grant you very willingly what you ask of us. We should not wish to deprive you of a distinction which you so well deserve, nor to despise the request of our most illustrious son, King Childebert. But redouble also your zeal, so that your solicitude and vigilance may grow in proportion to your dignity; serve as model to all those who are subject to your authority, and seek, not the temporal advantages attached to honours, but the goods of the eternal fatherland. For your Fraternity is not ignorant of what the Apostle says groaning: 'All seek their own interests, and not those of Jesus Christ.'" Then the sovereign Pontiff excites particularly the zeal of Virgil against two abuses which he stigmatizes with force and indignation: simony and the hasty ordinations of subjects unworthy or incapable of ecclesiastical functions. His letter ends thus: "It is necessary then that your Fraternity hasten to recommend to our most illustrious son, King Childebert II, to extirpate from his kingdom the disorders which we have just pointed out, so that this prince may receive the reward promised to those who love what God loves and who hate what God hates. Finally we charge you, in the name of God, to exercise, according to the ancient custom, the functions of vicar of the Holy See in all the States of our most illustrious son, King Childebert, saving however the right of the metropolitans. We send you at the same time the pallium which your Fraternity shall wear in the church to celebrate Mass solemnly. No bishop may leave his diocese without the permission of your Holiness. If discussions arise on the faith or on some other difficult point, let the question be discussed and resolved in a council of twelve bishops. If the thing, after mature examination, is not decided in this assembly, let it be referred to the tribunal of this apostolic See. May almighty God cover you with his protection and grant you the grace to rise always by your virtues to the height of the dignity with which you are invested (595)." Nothing escaped the vast solicitude, the prodigious activity of the great Pope; and he recommended everything to the zeal of our Saint, his worthy vicar in the Gauls.

It is known that he had sent the monk Augustine and several other evangelical workers to labour for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons who had settled in the island of Britain (England). This was his favourite work: so he failed not to recommend with quite paternal care the new apostles to the charity of Virgil. Here is what he wrote to him on this occasion: "I judge of the affection with which you will welcome brethren who are to go to you spontaneously, by that which you testify to those whom you have more than once invited. I do not doubt then that you will receive Augustine and his companions with a sweet benevolence which will fill them with consolation. Examine at the same time these missionaries, and if you remark in them anything reprehensible, warn them, correct them, so that they may be better fitted to work the conversion of the peoples. May God have you in his holy keeping, my most reverend brother." Augustine, strengthened by the encouragements of Virgil, set out for England where he wrought numerous conversions. But, to be better able to govern the new church he had just formed, the apostle of the English returned to Gaul to receive from the hands of the holy archbishop of Arles, vicar of Saint Gregory, episcopal ordination (597), and went and established his see at Canterbury. Thus Saint Virgil was the consecrator of Augustine, apostle of England; and as he had dwelt at Lérins, the isle of Saints, he is as it were the link between the isle of Saints of the Mediterranean and the isle of Saints of the Ocean. How glorious this memory is for the abbey of Saint-Symphorian, but also how sad it is!

One sees likewise by this correspondence what account the Holy Father made of Virgil. But Our Lord wished himself to honour by the gift of miracles him whom his vicar honoured so justly with his esteem and confidence. Here, then, is what old legends relate.

A deacon, named Aurelian, had an orphan nephew to whom he served as father and whom he loved tenderly. Now this child, playing one Saturday evening with his little comrades on the ramparts of the town, fell, broke his head and died. The deacon, inconsolable at the loss of this dear nephew, took the corpse at once and carried it to the feet of Virgil. The holy archbishop, who was then attending the office in the new basilica of

Saint Stephen, happy to have been able to consecrate to God this beautiful edifice and thanking him for the success of this great work, told Aurelian to lay the dead child in his room and to have confidence. After the office, the desolate deacon, having thrown himself at his knees and holding them embraced, said to him: “Lord, I will not let you go until you have obtained for me the grace which I implore.” Touched by so great a sorrow and yielding to such lively entreaties, the venerable bishop went, followed by all the people who were in the church, to the dead child and addressed an ardent prayer to heaven. Then taking the child by the hand he gave him back full of life to his uncle. At once all the crowd that surrounded him burst into transports and cried: “O God, glory to you!”

During the construction of the superb basilica which the man of God had raised outside the walls of the town in honour of the Saviour and of Saint Honoratus, it happened one day that the workmen, in spite of all their efforts, could not erect those magnificent marble columns which one sees today, adds the legend. In vain did they employ all means; in vain did they call to their aid a great number of men in all the vigour of age; always the same resistance, the same impossibility of imparting to the columns the slightest movement. Then they were frightened and ran to warn the archbishop. He arrived and, recognizing there an intervention of that wicked spirit, enemy of God and of man, who always seeks to do evil and to hinder good, he said: “My children, do not give yourselves so much trouble; it would be useless, you would not succeed. To a supernatural resistance, a supernatural force must be opposed also.” Then, falling on his knees, he implored the help of the Almighty and cried, after finishing his prayer: “Wretch! how couldst thou have the audacity to oppose the work of God? Flee far from here.” At once the workmen resumed work, and the columns were erected without the least difficulty. Another time, as the holy bishop was celebrating Mass, a desolate widow, who had just lost an only daughter, her consolation, her hope, had the coffin containing the remains of her whom she wept carried near him, before the altar, and besought him by her tears, even more than by her words, to be pleased to obtain from God the life of her beloved child. Virgil, whose heart could not hold out against this tenderness and this maternal sorrow, approached the coffin, prostrated himself humbly, raised his hands to heaven, and, addressing himself to Him who has the sovereign goodness as well as the sovereign power, prayed him, with all the ardour of his charity, to console a poor mother by giving back her only daughter. He was heard. Suddenly the dead girl opened her eyes: she seemed to come out as from a deep sleep. “Arise,” said the saint to her then. She arose, and her mother received her in her arms, bathing her with the sweet tears of joy mixed with the bitter tears of sorrow which were not yet dried. “Miracle! miracle!” cried all the people, transported with admiration, while the holy Pontiff, whose humility was alarmed at the homage rendered to his credit with God, hastened to escape from it by flight. But he was surrounded on all sides, the greater part of his garments was torn off, and the piety of the faithful, says the biographer, still preciously preserves these shreds as relics of a great servant of God.

A blind man, who had great confidence in the merits of the servant of God, begged a subdeacon, named Fulgentius, to lead him during the night into the vestibule of the basilica of Saint Stephen. “There,” he said, “I shall not fail to find the archbishop at the moment he comes out of the office of Matins, I shall implore his assistance, he will intercede for me and I shall be healed.” In effect, when Virgil withdrew to take a little rest, the blind man who was awaiting him attentive and motionless threw himself at his knees, stopped him as he passed and did not let go until he had obtained the promise of a prayer. The Saint, touched by so naive a confidence and so lively a faith, implored then for this unfortunate man the divine goodness by a fervent supplication, made the sign of the cross on those dead eyes which for fifteen years had not seen the light, and at once they opened. Then, embracing tenderly the poor blind man who thanked him with transport, the humble prelate recommended him to keep the most inviolable secret about all that had just passed. But this man was too happy not to betray his benefactor: his joy and gratitude burst forth in spite of himself. Soon all the town knew and proclaimed the new miracle wrought by the holy pontiff.

We could still relate a great number of prodigies due to the charity and prayers of the holy archbishop, for the Holy Spirit who dwelt in his soul, adds the historian, refused him no favour. But it is time to speak of the blessed death which crowned a life all of labours and virtues. He knew by revelation and predicted the day of his passage to another life; this day was very near. The sad news soon spread and the desolation was general. He, on the contrary, happy to go and be reunited to the good master whom he had always so well served and so much loved, gave calmly all the orders relating to his burial, not forgetting to recommend that he be buried with the hair-shirt which he always wore on his flesh like a cuirass against the attacks of the impure spirit. Then, when the day of his death had come, he lay down quietly in bed, as if to take his rest, began the holy office and went to finish it in heaven. His last words, which were praises of God, mingled on his lips with his last sigh. At the same instant a delicious odour exhaled from the holy body; one thought, says the legend, to breathe the perfumes of all the flowers of spring. Saint Virgil died in the first years of the seventh century. His funeral drew an immense concourse of people. All wished to approach the coffin and touch at least the end of the hangings that adorned the funeral bier. This confidence of the faithful was not vain: God wished himself to justify it by attesting by a striking prodigy the holiness of his servant. The procession was arriving near the place of burial, and they were about to cover the venerated remains of the holy pontiff to lay them in the tomb, when suddenly people were seen running up carrying a corpse. It was that of a young girl who had just died in a neighbouring village. The hope of obtaining by the intercession of the great servant of God that life should be restored to her hastened their steps. At last they arrive out of breath, throw themselves on their knees all in tears and beg the clergy to permit that the coffin of the Saint touch the body of the deceased. Their lively entreaties are yielded to. At the signal given the whole multitude falls likewise on its knees, praying, silent, motionless, in expectation of what was about to happen. Soon the *Kyrie eleison* is intoned: a thousand voices repeat it, and at the seventh time the young girl rises, full of life. At once a shudder of religious terror runs through and makes the immense assembly tremble. At first all remain mute with stupor, admiration and respect. But a sentiment which dominates all others does not delay to appear: joy bursts forth and replaces the sadness of the funeral. To the lugubrious and plaintive songs there succeed canticles of gladness, and the ceremony of the obsequies is changed into a triumphal march. Those who had brought the young woman raised to life hasten to strip her of the shrouds of death to adorn her in festive garments; and there she walks, drunk with happiness, in the midst of the pressed ranks of this innumerable crowd, and crying, in the transports of her gratitude: “O blessed bishop! O good and holy pastor! how much I owe you! how powerful your merits are! Yes, you have well shown, by restoring me to life, that you yourself live the eternal life.”

Meanwhile the procession had entered this superb basilica of Saint Honoratus which the illustrious archbishop had built outside the city and chosen as the place of his burial. The ceremony of the obsequies was completed there with great solemnity, and the holy body was deposited in that tomb which so many miracles, says the biographer, have since made so celebrated. So the church of Arles soon celebrated each year, on the 10th of October, the feast of the holy prelate. The monastery of Lérins, where Virgil had passed his youth and learned virtue, did not remain behind and consecrated 5 March to honouring annually a memory so holy and so dear.

We have borrowed this legend from the work of M. Dinet: *Saint Symphorien d’Autun.*

Saint Drausinus, Bishop of Soissons, Founder of the Abbey of Our Lady

674. — Pope: Adeodatus. — King of France: Theodoric III.

Drausinus was a native of Soissons; his father was called Leudomar, and his mother Rachilda or Richilda, both of a very illustrious family which had allied itself to the greatest lords of the court, ever since the city of Soissons had become the capital of a kingdom, by the division of France into tetrarchies in favour of the children of our first kings. But their eminent virtue made them still more considerable, for they passed their

life in continual exercises of piety; the church was the place they frequented most; their house was the ordinary retreat of the poor and of travellers. They sought out the afflicted to console them, they were delighted to find needy persons in order to succour them, they often visited the sick and the prisoners, to exhort them to make good use of their pains. It is not to be wondered at then, says the author who wrote this history, if so great a Saint was born of a father so virtuous and of so holy a mother: it was to reward the merit of their holy life that God gave them a child who, by following their good examples, was to be an excellent model of holiness in the whole Church.

It is easy to judge by this what was the education of our Saint, and what care his parents took to inspire in him early the fear of God and the love of virtue. So he began, from his tenderest years, to labour at perfection, and to give marks of an extraordinary holiness. One admired in him, when he was still only in the little schools, an extreme patience in suffering the injuries and ill-treatment which his companions sometimes did him; a profound humility in submitting to everything; an inviolable fidelity in performing his devotional exercises, a modesty, a gentleness and an affability that won the heart of everyone. Finally, as if God had given him the sciences by infusion, he learned, almost in a moment, what others can learn only in several years.

Such happy beginnings in the practice of virtue and in the knowledge of letters determined his parents to put him under the guidance of Saint Ansericus, bishop of Soissons. This prelate was not long in remarking in the young Drausinus great dispositions to piety; this is why he applied himself with much affection to cultivating his heart as well as his mind, imprinting in the one the divine love and zeal for the glory of God; in the other, the lights of faith, and those of the holy Scriptures and of the human sciences. Our Saint made such great progress under such a master that Bettolenus, who succeeded this blessed bishop, made him at first his archdeacon; and, having afterwards renounced the episcopate to re-enter his cloister, after declaring, in presence of the clergy and the people, that he had not been raised to this supreme dignity by a lawful way, he brought it about that Saint Drausinus should be elected in his place: this choice caused extreme joy, not only to the inhabitants of Soissons, but also to the king and to all his court (638).

As soon as he was consecrated, zeal, that spiritual fire which burns in the heart of a true minister of Jesus Christ, made him undertake, with an untiring ardour and care, the conduct of his diocese: he cut off the abuses which had slipped into it; he upheld ecclesiastical discipline; in a word, he spared nothing to satisfy the obligations of his charge. And, because the bishop must be the light and as it were the sun of his people, he believed that he ought to enlighten and warm all those whom God had confided to him. He therefore busied himself ceaselessly in winning souls to Jesus Christ, either by his preachings, which he made with an incredible fervour, or by his familiar exhortations, in which, by a marvellous skill, he brought the most insensible persons to the love of devotion. In effect, it was difficult to resist the force of his word, since it was confirmed by the example of his virtues. He employed the revenues of his church in succouring the poor in their miseries, in clothing the naked, in feeding the famished and in receiving pilgrims. His time was passed in consoling the afflicted, in visiting the sick and in exhorting the prisoners; and, after having been occupied during the day in these pious duties, he passed the nights in praying and singing the praises of his God. His abstinence was so great that one may say his life was only a continual fast. He had an admirable patience, not only in the vexatious accidents that befell him, but also in the very acute maladies with which he was tormented almost all his life; for, far from complaining at the height of his pains, nothing was heard to come from his mouth but thanksgivings to the majesty of God, and he rejoiced that he had the happiness of suffering something for his love; so, not content with his infirmities, he afflicted his flesh further by several kinds of mortification; so that one may apply to him these words of the Apostle: “That the more he was infirm, the more courage he displayed.” However, these frequent maladies did not prevent this admirable servant of Jesus Christ from watching unceasingly over his flock; and, to make evangelical holiness and perfection flourish more and more in his diocese, he resolved to have two monasteries built in it, one of

religious and the other of nuns, as open places of asylum against the tempests of the age, for those who should wish to consecrate themselves to God, and so that the life of these angels of earth should draw down without ceasing the blessings of heaven and the grace of sanctification on all his people. For this purpose, he bought from Bettolenus, of whom we have spoken, and who was abbot of Choisy, a place called Rethondes, situated along the river Aisne, where he built the monastery of religious to which he assigned very great revenues. This edifice was no sooner finished than it was filled with a great number of persons who retired there to give themselves entirely to Jesus Christ.[1]

For the monastery of nuns, he would have much wished to have it built within the enclosure of his episcopal city; but, not having been able to execute this design, because Soissons, ordinary residence of one of the Frankish kings, was too full of people, he was obliged to seek a place in the suburbs. Leutrude, wife of Ebroin, mayor of the palace, helped him much, either by obtaining from her husband the permission necessary to build near the town,[2] or by engaging him to furnish the expense of the buildings. This house was not long either in being peopled by virtuous maidens, who would have no other Spouse than the Spouse of virgins, under the abbess Etheria, whom they had drawn from Jouarre to govern this new community.

The odour of their virtues drew so great a number of nuns that the place, being too small to hold them all, and being besides extremely inconvenient and exposed to the frequent floods of the river, Saint Drausinus thought of having another monastery built in the city: he carried out this design happily, thanks to the generosity and liberality of Ebroin, whom Leutrude engaged by her prayers and tears to this pious enterprise. Saint Ouen, archbishop of Rouen, who was then at court, contributed not a little, by his solicitations, to making him condescend to it. In effect, this minister who, besides, was very glad to give marks of a piety, at least apparent, granted what our Saint asked, and offered even his palace to make a religious house of it. A historian of Soissons, who lived more than nine hundred years ago, says that this was executed only four years after the death of Saint Drausinus; but it is certain that this writer was mistaken, as the author of the *History of Our Lady of Soissons* shows very well.

As soon as the new monastery was finished, the holy Bishop transferred to it the greater part of the nuns who dwelt in that of the suburb. In order to make this ceremony more august, he invited several prelates to be witnesses of this action, and to assist at the dedication of the church, which was made very solemnly and under the invocation of Our Lady, in the year 664, the tenth of the reign of Clotaire III [*sic*]. He also had two other churches built, following the custom of those times of building three in the great abbeys: one in honour of Saint Peter, for the religious who directed the community; the other, in honour of Saint Genevieve and of all the Saints, for the sick nuns, for the guests and for the poor who were received in the monastery. This new colony of virgins was no sooner established at Soissons than several noble persons, attracted by their good examples, asked to be received in their company; so that one saw in that place princesses of the blood renounce the vain amusements of the age, to busy themselves only with the affair of their salvation. It seems that Saint Drausinus remained in the world only to give the last perfection to this great work: for, after having finished the establishment of this religious house, as much for the temporal as for the spiritual, he went to receive in heaven the reward of his labours, passing from this life to immortality, on the 5th of March, about the year

The report of his death threw consternation among the people: a universal groan was heard through all the town, each believing he had lost in him what he had most dear in the world. The widows and the orphans wept for him as their protector; the poor, as their father; the ecclesiastics, as their head; the religious, as their benefactor. In a word, there was no one who was not touched by the loss of so holy a man.

This great Saint is invoked when one is obliged to combat against the enemies of the Faith, of the Church or of the State. Saint Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, had recourse to him before returning to England, where he foresaw, by a prophetic spirit, that he was to endure martyrdom in defence of ecclesiastical liberties; he hoped to obtain, by his intercession, the graces and strengths which were necessary to him in

such a combat. It is said that those who passed the night in prayer before his tomb became invincible to all their enemies. So, formerly, the Italians and the Burgundians, when they had war in their country, often made this pilgrimage to triumph over their adversaries: Robert of Montfort passed the night in prayer there, before giving battle to Henry, count of Essex.

RELICS AND CULT OF SAINT DRAUSINUS

His sacred body was buried with pomp in the church of the old monastery, as he had desired. But if he abandoned his daughters for some time, he showed afterwards that it was only to give them more sensible marks of his protection: for the miracles which God worked at his tomb drew there so many sick and pilgrims that the church could scarcely hold them, the nuns of the new monastery, who besides were extremely afflicted to see themselves removed from their holy founder, engaged Leutrude to procure the translation of his holy body into the new church, that it might be honoured there with more decency. For this purpose, Adalbert, twenty-fourth bishop of Soissons (whom some confound wrongly with Bettolenus, predecessor of our Saint, and others with Aubert, who was never bishop of this town, but only abbot of Saint-Médard), Adalbert, I say, betook himself to the tomb of Saint Drausinus, and performed the ceremony of this translation. His body was found fresh and entire, and without any appearance of corruption, though it had been buried more than four years. This translation, which was made on the second day of June, about the year 680, was so august and accompanied by so many miracles that the church of Soissons has since celebrated its memory.

Among the marvels which took place there, it is related that a woman wishing, out of devotion, to have some relic of the Saint, drew a tooth from him, and that at once blood came from the same place: which so astonished the bystanders that, no longer daring to expose themselves to taking anything themselves, they humbly begged that at least they might be given either some of his hair or parings of his nails, so great was the confidence they had in his intercession. Miracles have continued at his tomb, in the church of the new monastery. An infinity of sick have received perfect health there. A blind man of Reims recovered sight there, after learning by revelation that he was to receive this grace only at the Saint’s sepulchre. The burning lamp that was kept there in his honour has sometimes relit miraculously in sight of the nuns. The oil has also been very often seen multiplied there. A light has also been perceived several times above this holy place, so brilliant that it dazzled the eyes of those who looked at it. Finally, vapours have been seen to issue which spread a very sweet odour. All these prodigies, adds the historian of his life, are so many illustrious testimonies of the ardent charity with which the great Saint Drausinus seemed still all inflamed, even after his death.

Information furnished by M. Henri Congnet, titular canon of Soissons, on 30 November 1862:

1° *Translation of the relics of Saint Drausinus.*

For several centuries, the church of Soissons, by gratitude for the numerous miracles worked at the translation of the relics of Saint Drausinus, believed it ought to celebrate the memory of this translation, on the anniversary day on which it had taken place (2 June). What is certain is that D. Michel Germain, that Benedictine who wrote learnedly the history of the royal abbey of Our Lady of Soissons, and had it printed in 1675, in one vol. in-4°, attests formally that the church of Soissons made the memory of this translation on 2 June. — Lastly, the abbey of Our Lady alone made this translation on 18 June, as one can be convinced by consulting manuscript no. 99, which is found in the communal library of Soissons. Nevertheless, either it must be said with Baillet that this feast was particular to the abbey, or that it had fallen into desuetude by lapse of time, since, in the same year 1675, the epoch when the bishop Charles de Bourlon edited his breviary, reformed *ad normam Breviarii romani*, no mention is made of this memory, either in the calendar or in the body of the volume, on 2 June. — It is the same in the new breviary, published in 1742 by the bishop François de Fitzjames, who had nevertheless taken it as a task to let none of the ancient usages perish.

The *Proper of Soissons*, approved in 1851 by the sacred Congregation of Rites, has kept no trace of this ancient custom.

2° *His present cult.* His feast, which was only of the semi-double rite, from 1675 to 1851, since the return to the Roman liturgy, is celebrated of the double rite.

3° Of the three churches of the abbey: Saint-Pierre, at the parvis, Sainte-Geneviève, and the great church, there remains only the collegiate church called Saint-Pierre, at the parvis of Notre-Dame, which was served by a college of canons. Even this is not entire: the choir and apse have been demolished. The portal and its façade remain, as well as the nave. It is the most ancient and curious monument of Soissons, Romanesque style in its whole, in its windows, frieze, etc. The portal belongs to the epoch of transition, and the ogive begins to appear there. — This building is rented by the municipal administration, to serve as a warehouse for merchandise; but its preservation is watched over. — Of the church of Sainte-Geneviève, no vestige. As for the great church whose portal, giving on the Grande-Rue or rue du Commerce, was surmounted by two fine towers, in the manner of those of Notre-Dame of Paris, it was demolished entirely during the Revolution. On its site the market Saint-Pierre is held, once a week. — There remain, however, two magnificent arcades or Romanesque windows, carefully sculptured. They are preserved because they belong to a private person. Archaeologists and tourists do not fail to visit them.

The buildings serving for the use of the community had been rebuilt in the years which immediately preceded the Revolution of 1789. It is today the great barracks of the town.

4° "The tomb of Saint Drausinus," says the author of the *History of the abbey of Our Lady*, "is one of the rarest pieces of antiquity that remain in the country. It is made of a great very hard stone, hollowed as much as was necessary to contain the body of a man, and covered outside with works wrought in the antique manner, and bordered with vine leaves. In the middle is the name of Our Lord in Greek letters. On the two sides are several stories of the Old and New Testament. The length of the tomb is five and a half feet. It is supported by two pillars of black marble four feet high, and is covered by another piece in the form of a canopy and also wrought in the antique manner. This tomb was placed in the chapel which bears the name of the Saint; but the body was enclosed in a shrine artistically wrought, which was put above the great grille of the choir."

The shrine which enclosed the body of Saint Drausinus was destroyed at the great Revolution. His relics were scattered at the same Revolution. Nothing of them remains. But the Gallo-Roman tomb of which we have just spoken, after having formed part of the museum of the Petits-Augustins, at Paris, is found today in the museum of the Louvre, where everyone can easily visit it.

5° Perhaps it will be agreeable to you to know that five remains of the great church of the abbey of Our Lady are today at the cathedral of Soissons, namely: the tabernacle, of white marble, surmounted by a dome supported by columns of very precious marble. Two beautiful statues, of white marble, representing the Annunciation. The Virgin is on the Gospel side, the angel on the Epistle side, at the two corners of the high altar; two beautiful statues in marble, one of white marble, the other of black, representing two abbesses of Our Lady. These are two masterpieces of sculpture. They are placed inside the church, under the organs.

Soissons, 30 November 1862. Henri Congnet, titular canon.

The memory of Saint Drausinus is very celebrated in the town of Soissons, and several martyrologies of France and of Flanders make an honourable mention of him on 5 March. We have drawn what we have said of him from his life written by a Soissons man who lived in the tenth century, and which the continuator of Bollandus reports in the first volume of March. One may see there the fine privilege which our Saint granted to the abbey of Our Lady; it had been communicated only very imperfectly to this learned historian when the first volume of that month was being printed; but he reports it at great length in the supplement which he

added at the end of the same volume. Dom Michel

Germain, Benedictine of the congregation of Saint-Maur, gave it to us in its purity, in the history which he composed of this holy house, by order of Armande-Henriette de Lorraine d'Harcourt, worthy abbess; in-4°, 1675. This author shows, with much erudition, that the abbey of Our Lady of Soissons is one of the most ancient that the Order of Saint Benedict has possessed up to the present in France. Nine hundred years ago it was put in parallel with the famous abbey of Corbie, and Paschasius Radbertus, who flourished then, testifies that, in his time, no community was found that was comparable to it in holiness and in prerogatives. — Cf. *Annales du diocèse de Soissons*, vol. 2, in-8°, 1863.

Saint John-Joseph of the Cross

1654–1734. — Popes: Innocent X; Clement XII. — Kings of the Two Sicilies: Philip IV; Charles IV.

The word of the cross is foolishness to those who perish; but to those who are saved, it is the power of God. — 1 Cor. i, 18.

He alone is a perfect Christian who is crucified to the world and to whom the world is crucified, and who glories in nothing else than in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. On our entry into life we are marked with the sign of the cross, and we die pressing the cross to our lips; the cross is engraved on our tomb to bear witness to our faith and our hope. "If any man will be my disciple," our Lord has said, "let him take up his cross and follow me"; that is to say, that of all the things of the earth, in order to follow Jesus Christ well, one must take only the pains and tribulations; our hearts must be, like our divine Saviour, fastened to the cross and raised from the earth; they must be for this world as if they were dead. Among the Saints who have shone most brightly by this love, by this folly of the cross, we cannot forget Saint John-Joseph of the Cross, whose very name invites us to love the cross.

He was born on the day of the feast of the Assumption in the year of our Lord 1634, in the town of Ischia, on the island of that name which forms part of the kingdom of Naples, of respectable parents, Joseph Calosirto and Laura Garguilo, and received, the same day, at the sacred font of baptism, the names Charles-Cajetan. Distinguished by his piety above his brothers, of whom at least five consecrated themselves to the service of God, he early let appear the seeds of the virtues which sanctified his life in the religious state: we mean humility, gentleness, obedience and an incomparable modesty; he likewise showed a marvellous inclination for silence, retirement and prayer. So, from his childhood, he chose a room in the most retired part of his father's house; he set up there a little altar in honour of the Blessed Virgin, on whose great feast he had had the happiness to be born, and for whom he kept up all his life a tender and wholly filial devotion. He spent all his time in study and exercises of piety; he showed no less early his love for the cross, sleeping on a narrow, hard bed, and fasting on certain days of the week; to this premature mortification of the flesh he joined a great zeal for stifling every sentiment of pride, constantly wearing very common clothes, in spite of his birth, his position, and the remonstrances and reproaches that were made to him about it. His horror of sin equalled in him the love of virtue, so that his heart, from the first dawn of reason, knew how to withdraw itself, like a delicate plant, from the very shadow of sin, and found itself wholly penetrated with zeal for the glory of God. So he was not content with fleeing with the greatest care the company of young people of his own age, for fear of soiling his innocence there; he sought out also every occasion of inspiring in others the hatred and fear of sin, the slightest appearance of which roused his indignation and drew complaints from him. Idleness, levity, vanity and lying, in the least important things, were in his eyes faults worthy of a severe reprimand. When his efforts to destroy sin drew persecutions upon him from others, far from losing patience, he saw in it only a new occasion of practising virtue. One day, having tried out of charity to stop a quarrel, he received a blow in the face in the open street: at once he fell on his knees and began to pray for the man who had struck him. His tenderness for the poor surpassed all that can be said: he kept for them the best portion of his meals and gave to our Lord, in their persons, the money which he received for his small pleasures.

The holiness of his early years won him the grace of being called to a holy state: feeling himself inwardly urged to leave the world, he took great care to take counsel of the Father of lights; for this he multiplied his prayers and his mortifications; he was heard: God inspired him with the desire to enter the Order of Saint Francis of Assisi, as reformed by Saint Peter of Alcantara. He was admitted to the novitiate in the house of Naples. He showed so much ardour that the superiors judged it fitting to clothe him with the holy habit before the expiration of the prescribed time. While he was still in his sixteenth year, on the feast of Saint John the Baptist, in the year of our Redeemer 1671, he took the name John-Joseph of the Cross. He nevertheless prolonged the exercises of his novitiate and continued above all to practise, for three years, an extraordinary mortification. At the age of nineteen, his superiors sent him to direct the erection of a convent at Piedimonte d'Alife (the monastery of "Aûla") at the foot of the Apennines. Not content with giving his monastery a simple and poor exterior and narrow dimensions in proportion, our Saint took care that the rule should be strictly observed. He required the greatest silence, the most profound recollection, an exact submission to orders and recommendations. He did not think that the two and a half hours devoted to mental prayer were sufficient; he wished the divine office to be recited with more attention and solemnity. Nothing could stop him in the rapid construction of this house; he did not hesitate to employ himself in the lowest and most painful offices, carrying on his own shoulders bricks and mortar to the workmen. His zeal did not go unrewarded: it was on this occasion that he experienced for the first time those ecstasies and raptures with which he was afterwards so singularly favoured. One day, after having sought him in vain through the whole monastery, he was found at last in the chapel, rapt in ecstasy, and so raised from the ground that he touched the ceiling with his head.

Out of obedience, he consented to receive the order of priesthood and was charged with hearing confessions; it was there that he showed his theological science, his experience in the spiritual life, which he had acquired, like Saint Bonaventure, Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Teresa, by studying the crucifix, the most useful of all books. So that his soul, without being distracted by foreign objects, might have its gaze ceaselessly fixed upon the cross, and draw from it each day new treasures of grace by new austerities and continual prayers, he resolved to make for himself, in a wood adjoining his monastery, a kind of solitude, after the manner of the ancient Fathers of the desert. God blessed this holy undertaking by making it produce the most abundant fruits, and won to him the hearts of those who were far as of those who were near; there was discovered in the wood a delightful spring, whose waters healed the sick; near this spring he raised a little church, and all around, at certain distances, five small hermitages, where, together with his companions, he renewed the austere and wholly heavenly life of the ancient anchorites; so that no earthly care might trouble it, the monastery supplied them each day with the food they needed. But the superiors, who knew what a rich treasure they possessed in the person of our Saint, chose him as master of novices as soon as he had reached his twenty-fourth year. In this new post, far from allowing himself the slightest dispensation, he was always the first to give the example of a scrupulous observance of all the rules, of assiduity in choir, of fidelity to silence, to prayer and to recollection: he took care to make penetrate into the heart of those under his guidance an ardent love for our Lord Jesus Christ, a great desire to imitate him in everything, and, moreover, a special veneration and a tender attachment for the Blessed Virgin, his mother. He was a zealous monitor, but full of gentleness, without violence as without caprice, vigilant without being fussy or irksome; discreet, kind, of an ever even temper, he sought out and discovered faults only to remedy them with tender charity; he led others to virtue far more by his examples than by reprimands that are often ill-timed. He conducted himself in this way above all when he was invested with the charge of guardian at Piedimonte: he took care to make his prescriptions relished by others by showing himself the first to observe them, imitating the captain who encourages his soldiers by braving dangers himself and overcoming obstacles, or the bird which, to teach its young to take their flight and soar into the air, measures the distance first, and stimulates their inexperienced flight. He soon won the hearts of all the religious, who under his guidance advanced by great strides towards perfection. However, his humility groaned under so heavy a charge; having obtained, at the

end of two years, the repose to which he aspired, he turned his zeal towards the direction of souls, the assistance and relief of the dying and the unfortunate, and the conversion of sinners. He did not long enjoy this holy liberty. He had the grief of seeing himself re-established in the charge of guardian by the provincial chapter of 1684; and, far from making this cross light for him, it pleased our Lord to wrap his soul in darkness, dryness and desolation; he regarded himself as on the brink of the abyss, incapable of preventing others from falling into it. But the good Saviour, who seemed to abandon him for an instant only that he might turn towards him with more strength, as a child about to perish throws itself into its mother's arms, restored calm to his mind by a most consoling vision.

It seemed to our Saint that he saw the soul of a brother, dead a short time before, who calmed his alarms by giving him the sweet assurance that all the religious of Saint Peter of Alcantara who had come to Naples, or who had made profession there, had led a life so holy that not one of them had been lost. This gave him courage and emboldened him to embrace the duties which his charge imposed on him, and God deigned to glorify him more than once by miracles. Supernatural helps came to relieve the needs and privations to which the monastery found itself reduced; so that, in a time of famine, all the bread having been distributed to the poor, so that there remained none at all for the community, at that very moment an unknown person brought and left at the door of the monastery precisely as many loaves as there were members of the community. This marvellous event was renewed on two occasions of the same kind; moreover, the bread was seen more than once to multiply miraculously, and wine that had turned sour to return to its natural state, and the same herbs which, one day, had been gathered to be given to the poor, grew again during the night and in greater abundance.

When he was again relieved of his office of guardian, it was only to resume the place of master of novices, which he held for four consecutive years, and which he exercised partly at Naples, partly at Piedimonte. At this time, he was called to his native place, Ischia, to receive the last breath of his mother; at his sight, all the vital powers rallied round their expiring flame, which from then on burned joyfully in the lamp to the end. She could not bear that he should deprive her for a moment of his dear company, being unable to satisfy her maternal eyes, until death closed them, with gazing on the fruit of her womb, and not ceasing for an instant to recommend herself to his prayers. She died full of hope and calm, in the presence of this beloved son. He, shutting up within his heart the feelings of sorrow, accompanied her mortal remains to the church and offered the sacrifice of propitiation for the repose of her soul. Who could form a just idea of what was passing in him then? How the waves of his grief pierced through the holy thoughts which occupied his soul and his brow! how he saw in spirit his mother's suppliant soul rejoice at each prayer that came from the mouth of her son! how he saw her face shine with a greater brightness, as her temporal pain was remitted to her by the blood of the Lamb of God! with what happiness, at the end of the sacrifice, he saw that grateful soul mount to the abode of eternal felicity, and there exercise at once its credit, praying in its turn for its beloved son!

Thus he behaved on that great occasion; he needed no less courage when the dryness and perpetual desolation returned to torment his soul. The devil mingled another bitterness with this cup of tribulations; our Saint feared that he was not procuring the glory of God by the austerities which he practised himself, or recommended to those under his direction, and dreaded that they might be the effect of a deceptive illusion. A vision consoled him again in this trial: a novice who had died appeared to him surrounded with heavenly glory and assured him in formal terms that it was solely to his direction that he owed this glory: which at last restored calm to his soul. The provincial chapter of 1690 charged him with the office of definitor, without relieving him of the charge he already had; the difficulties attached to these two functions required the union of the virtues of the active life with those of the contemplative: our Saint overcame them all in a manner as admirable as it was happy; he had occasion to show that he was the firmest support of his Order. The religious of Saint Peter of Alcantara in Spain, having had some disputes with those of Italy, obtained from the Holy See to be separated from them: those of Italy thus saw themselves abandoned; in a congregation

held in 1702, the cardinals and bishops were all disposed to order their suppression; John of the Cross made them change their opinion, so that, on the day after the feast of the apostle Saint Thomas, a decree was published by virtue of which the Order was established in Italy, under the form of a province. A chapter entrusted the government of it, or rather imposed it, upon our Saint, who, through incredible difficulties and obstacles, established it in a firm and solid manner. The more he avoided dignities, the more his Order imposed them on him; he obtained at last from the Pope a brief which exempted him from all charges and even took from him his active and passive voice in the Chapter. In the course of the year 1722, another Brief gave up to the religious of Saint John of Alcantara the monastery of Saint Lucy at Naples; and it was there that our Saint withdrew, no longer to appear henceforth in the broad daylight which he fled with so much care, and that he remained to edify his brethren for the rest of his life and to raise the edifice of his virtues, of which we are now going to trace a feeble sketch.

He bowed with entire submission before the truths of faith, without lifting with a rash or profane hand the veil of that sanctuary. One day when he saw someone murmuring against Providence, he cried out sharply, putting his hand on his forehead: “What can a bone three fingers broad understand of the impenetrable designs of God?” From this virtue of faith flowed, as from their source, a great zeal for instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of religion, the force, the fervour and the prodigious clearness with which he expounded the sublime dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and even of predestination and grace; the gift he possessed of calming apprehensions and appeasing doubts relating to the faith; and finally that continual exercise of the presence of God, which he practised without interruption and never ceased to recommend, saying: “He who always walks in the presence of God will never commit sins, but will keep his innocence and become a great Saint.” From this too came that interior recollection which neither intercourse with the world, nor the exercise of different duties that put him in contact with others, could disturb; hence the habit of referring to God all his thoughts, all his words and all his actions; a blind submission and an entire conformity to the will of God amid the countless crosses with which he was visited, and finally that warmth of feeling which broke out in these terms: “To die for Jesus! may I be worthy to shed my blood for him! Oh! with what ardour I desire to shed my blood to bear witness to the holy faith!” He kept a serene and joyful countenance in the midst of the most horrible pains; he blessed God for all his ills. Among the many illnesses he had to undergo, there was one which lasted twenty-three days, during which he was obliged to remain with his head propped on pillows and his arms stretched out without moving. But not a word of murmur or complaint escaped his lips; he answered with joy and patience all who came to visit him: which caused him to be called “the Job of modern times, a man exempt from human frailties.” What sustained him thus was the hope he had in God. He was accustomed to say to his companions, when they were discouraged at the sight of the persecutions they had to undergo: “Let us hope in God, and we shall certainly be consoled”; and to the unfortunate who flocked to him: “God is a tender father who loves and succours all his children”; or else: “Do not doubt it; hope in God, he will provide for your needs.” Knowing that God destined him for an eternal kingdom, he did not doubt that he would furnish him the means necessary to arrive there; all that passes seemed to him contemptible beside what lasts for ever. “What is this earth,” he would say, “but mud, a piece of dust, a pure nothing! Paradise, heaven: God is all. Do not attach yourselves to the goods of this world, fix your affections on high; think of that happiness which will last eternally, while the shadow of this world will vanish.”

Although his hope, in view of the merits of our Lord’s holy Passion, was without bounds, he thought nevertheless only with dread of the gravity of sins and of the fearful severity of God’s judgments; he had the keenest regret for the slightest faults, he lamented ceaselessly his want of correspondence with divine grace, he proclaimed himself everywhere a sinner and recommended himself to the prayers of others.

God rewarded the confidence of his servant by several miracles; here is one which happened eight years before his death: in the month of February, a Neapolitan merchant waited for him until evening at the gate of

his garden, and, at the moment when he was returning, accosted him, begging him to pray for his wife, who was then in great danger, being seized with a violent desire for peaches, which it was impossible to procure at that time of year. The Saint ordered him to keep in peace and to console himself, telling him that the next morning the Lord, Saint Peter of Alcantara and Saint Paschal would satisfy her desire. Perceiving then, as he was going up the steps, some chestnut branches, he turned to his companion and said to him: “Brother Michael, take three of these branches and plant them; if you do so, the Lord, Saint Peter of Alcantara and Saint Paschal will have regard to the needs of this poor woman.” The lay brother cried out, quite amazed: “What, Father, can chestnut branches bear peaches?” — “Leave it all,” replied the Saint, “in the hands of Providence and of Saint Peter of Alcantara.” The brother therefore obeyed and planted the chestnut branches in a flower-pot outside the Saint’s window, and behold, in the morning they were found covered with green leaves, and each of these branches bore a superb peach. The merchant’s wife ate of them and thus escaped death.

The love of God burned so ardently in his heart that it shone out even in his features, where it spread a supernatural and heavenly light, and gave his discourses a particular unction. “Though there were neither heaven nor hell,” he used to say, “I should nevertheless wish to love God always.” Or: “Let us love our Lord, let us love him really and in truth; for the love of God is a great treasure. Happy is he who loves God!” He made every effort to kindle in the hearts of others the fire which consumed his own. Loving thus God whom he did not see, could he fail to have the bowels of a father for his neighbour whom he saw? All his life he made it a duty to feed the poor; and, when he had been chosen superior, he forbade sending a single beggar away from the door of the monastery without giving him alms. In a time of scarcity, he devoted to the relief of the unfortunate his own portion and that of his community, relying on Providence for the care of providing for the needs of his house; when he was only a simple monk, he strongly recommended this act of charity to his superiors. He obtained for the poor and for the tradesmen, who often had recourse to him for this purpose, the payment of the things that were owed to them. But it was above all towards the sick that his charity knew no bounds; he visited not only those of the monastery, but also those outside, in the most rigorous seasons. He even went so far as to pray God to transfer to himself the sufferings of others, and his prayer was granted. Thus Father Michael, afterwards archbishop of Cosenza, suffering greatly from two ulcers on the legs, for which a painful incision had become necessary, recommended himself to the prayers of our Saint, who prayed God generously to transfer this affliction to himself: at once the limbs of the sick man were delivered from their infirmity, and those of the Saint were infected with two horrible ulcers which caused him frightful pains. Just as God makes his sun shine upon the wicked as well as upon the good, so our Saint did not exclude even his enemies from the benefits of his boundless charity. He set everything in motion to procure an advantageous post for a man who had insulted him; and, when he was warned that this man was his enemy, he answered that he had consequently a graver obligation to do him service. His charity redoubled in ardour when works of spiritual mercy were to be performed. When in his old age he was advised to spare himself, on account of his infirmities: “I have no infirmity,” he answered, “that prevents me from working; but even so, ought I not to sacrifice my life for the same end for which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified?” So God made use of him to effect a great number of conversions. The same spirit of charity which made him take upon himself the illnesses of others led him likewise to take charge of their spiritual pains. A servant of a prince had lived for five years far from the Sacraments and plunged without restraint into every kind of disorder: overcome at last by the remorse of his conscience, he made a general confession to our Saint, who, in consideration of the sincerity of his sentiments, and touched with compassion for his weakness, imposed on him only a light penance, charging himself with performing the rest of the punishment due to his sins. Besides these general virtues, he possessed in a high degree those proper to the religious state, above all a prompt and unlimited obedience to all the orders of his superiors, however painful or difficult they might be. One day when he had to make a very long journey, he set out with joy, although his limbs were afflicted with grave ulcers; arrived at a town which lay on his road, the physician of the place pressed him strongly not to

go further, for the reason that his sores were inflamed and the weather excessively cold; and, seeing that his love of obedience prevented the Saint from yielding to his reasons, he proposed to him to write to his superior; but the Saint refused invincibly, though politely, and continued his road without any delay. A little way off, having slipped on the ice, he fell and cruelly tore his diseased limbs, so that he could hardly stand; nevertheless, with a courage and perseverance truly heroic, he pursued his task and accomplished it.

This obedience which he practised himself, he took great care to require of others, when his quality as superior made it a duty for him: for he regarded this virtue as essential to a religious. So when he discovered, by a supernatural light, some secret transgression of this precept on the part of one of the novices, he punished on the spot, and severely, this fault, stripping the offender of the holy habit. His love of poverty was no less remarkable. A seat and a table of the commonest sort; a bed composed of two narrow planks, with two sheepskins and a poor woollen cover, a stool to support his ulcerated legs, then his Breviary: that was all the furniture of his cell. Although the Order permitted each of the religious to have two suits of clothes, he had none other, during the forty-six years that he was a member of it, than that with which he was clothed at the novitiate. Yet it was in the care he took to keep guard over his chastity that he appeared most admirable. His continual mortifications, his extreme modesty, and the perpetual vigilance he exercised over all his senses, preserved him from the slightest breath of corruption: never, during the sixty years that he lived, was he seen to look in the face a person of the other sex; all his words and all his actions commended purity and inspired the love of it: in the streets, he politely returned the salutations he received from all whom he met, but without raising his eyes from the ground, and he never conversed with persons of a different sex without necessity or without observing the greatest reserve. When he went to a convent of nuns, he always took a companion with him; and all the time he spent there, he made so little use of his eyes that it would have been impossible for him to say anything of what was there, even of objects which had been pointed out to his attention. With the members of his own Order, he did not think he ought to depart from this singular modesty of conduct: conversing with them at a distance, and always keeping his eyes lowered towards the ground. To accustom the novices to this restraint of the senses, he forbade them to raise their eyes, even to examine holy images. His love of this virtue was always so constant and so delicate that, on his deathbed, when one of his brethren lifted the cover from his legs to dress the sores with which they were affected, the Saint, dying as he was, made an effort to draw it back. As a reward for that virginal purity which he preserved without stain from his baptism, as his confessor afterwards attested, God willed that his body, in spite of his age, his infirmities and the sores from which he was never free, should give forth a sweet and delicious odour, which was perceived by all who approached him. This virtue, so solidly rooted in our Saint, was not separated from its sole and true foundation: humility. He took pleasure in filling the domestic offices of the monastery, and, when his own task was finished, he showed himself eager to fill that of others. This same virtue led him to hide skilfully his extraordinary mortifications. Having lived, for a very long time, only on a little bread and fruit, he took pleasure in repeating that he was greedy of fruit, and that he was satisfying his sensuality. This too it was that made him flee all posts and all honours, at least as far as his vow of obedience could allow. When he travelled through Italy as provincial, he would not make himself known at the inns where he lodged, for fear of becoming the object of some distinction. To the same cause may be attributed the aversion he always had to returning to visit his native country; the repugnance he had to finding himself in the company of the great, when their spiritual interests did not require it; the refusal to accept the invitations which the viceroy of Naples and his wife addressed to him to come to the palace; the habit he had of calling himself the greatest sinner in the world, an ingrate who answered the benefits of God only with a criminal ingratitude, a worm on the face of the earth; the custom he had of frequently kissing the hands of priests; his reluctance to declare his opinion in councils; the care he took to abstain from speaking of his birth and his friends, to thank God for enlightening those who despised him, never to be scandalized at the sins of others, however great they might be, and finally never to show the smallest resentment of the insults or outrages he received. He studied to hide and dissemble the gift of miracles and of prophecy with which God had

favoured him in so high a degree, attributing the miracles he worked to the faith of those in whose favour they were worked, or else to the intercession of the Saints. Often he ordered those whom he restored to health to take some medicine, so that the cure might be attributed to a purely natural remedy. As for his prophecies, which are numerous, he affected to judge by analogy and experience. Thus, during the frightful earthquake which took place on Saint Andrew's day (1732), as the nuns of several convents dared not go to their dormitories, he reassured them, telling them that after a few shocks only, it would cease without causing the slightest harm to the city or its inhabitants. Someone having asked him what reason he had for expressing himself in so positive a manner: "I am sure," he answered, "that it will happen so, because that is how it happened before." The event justified his prediction, and, on the day before the earthquake, he had warned his companions in this manner: "My brothers, if an earthquake should come, where should we find a sure refuge?" No one making any answer: "It is in the refectory," he added, "because it is placed further into the mountain." Let us speak now of his extraordinary mortifications. To the many penances and austerities prescribed by the rules of his Order, he added as many as an ingenious self-denial can imagine. He watched in a very particular way over the guard of his senses; even in his youth, he did not allow himself to raise his eyes to the ceiling of his cell, and when he had been raised to the priesthood, he made it a rule to look no one in the face. He mortified his ears by refusing them the pleasure of hearing music; he would not even smell a flower.

Keeping silence as long as possible, he spoke only in a low voice. He went bareheaded in all seasons; and, under his clothes, which were coarse and heavy, he wore various hair-shirts and various chains, which he took care to vary so as to awaken always the sense of pain. Moreover, he gave himself severe disciplines; and when, at the age of forty, his superiors obliged him to wear sandals, he put between them and his feet a quantity of small nails; but the most frightful instrument of penance he invented against himself was a cross about a foot long, furnished with sharp points, which he fastened so firmly on his shoulders that a wound formed there which never closed again. He wore also fastened on his breast another cross of the same kind, but smaller. He cut short his sleep to a degree that is truly prodigious; and the little he took, he took only sitting on the ground, or with his body huddled on his couch, too small for him to stretch out on it, and his head often leaning against a piece of timber that stuck out of the wall. His abstinence was no less extraordinary. For the last thirty years of his life, he entirely overcame the most insatiable of all needs, thirst, abstaining not only from wine and water, but even from every kind of liquid. One day when his confessor asked him how he had come to master so imperious a need of nature, he answered that it had cost him terrible struggles; that nevertheless the reflection he made on the sufferings to which men voluntarily devote themselves for motives that are not worth the trouble, had made him persevere in his design. Assuredly, all this would seem incredible to us, if we did not remember that Saint John-Joseph of the Cross had charged himself with the instrument of the holy Passion of our Lord Jesus, and that he was miraculously sustained under its weight. If we are not endowed with so great a courage, we are all capable at least of suffering far more than is asked of us to gain heaven.

Ecstatic raptures and heavenly visions were something habitual for our Saint. In this state he was dead to all that passed around him: seeing, hearing and feeling nothing more, he remained motionless as a statue of marble; and, on awaking, his face shone like a burning coal. In a state so like that of the Blessed, he shared from time to time in their glory. Thus, while he was at prayer, his head often appeared surrounded with a circle of light; and, while he said Mass, his face beamed with a supernatural brilliance. He was believed to have declared, in a moment of rapture, that the Blessed Virgin had appeared to him and spoken to him. On Christmas night and on other occasions too, the child Jesus came down into his arms and stayed there several hours together. His frequent raptures, in which he no longer touched the earth, but remained suspended in the air, were perfectly well known; several persons who were present at his Mass were witnesses of them; the same thing happened also in a very extraordinary manner in the course of a procession.

God did not refuse him either that singular prerogative with which he has sometimes favoured his Saints, of being present in several places at once, or of passing, with the swiftness of heavenly spirits, from one place to another. It is related that, at a time when he had remained gravely ill in his cell, a lady sent for him to come and hear her in church. “You see,” he said to the messenger, “the state I am in: I cannot move.” But when the servant came to report this answer to his mistress, who, during his absence, had conversed with the Saint, she refused to believe his words, until she had acquired the certainty that the Saint was really in the position he said. Francisco Viveros, who was the servant of a certain duchess, came to beg the Saint to accompany him to his mistress, who wished to see him, and, finding him entirely unable to stir, he hastened to go and tell the duchess of this circumstance, at whose bedside he found the Saint busy consoling her.

Nothing can exceed the astonishment which then seized him, and he expressed it in a very lively manner; but the Saint said to him, with an air not at all embarrassed: “How simple you are; I passed quite close to you, and you did not see me!” In the same way too, Madame Artemisia, mother of the marchioness of Rugiano, finding herself seized with the horrible pains to which she was subject, and having no means of calling the Saint to her aid, let escape this plaintive exclamation: “O Father John-Joseph, you are far from me in my distress, and I have no one to do me the service of bringing you here.” She was still speaking when he appeared suddenly and said to her with the air of kindness habitual to him: “It is nothing, it is nothing!” then he blessed her, cured her, and disappeared at once.

The secrets of hearts had nothing hidden for him. Thus he made known to a brother of his Order his knowledge of the desire which he secretly cherished to go to infidel countries to suffer martyrdom there. Another time, having been introduced to a lady whom he had never seen before: “Ah! here,” he said, “is this lady who has so much to suffer from the bad conduct of her husband!” Then, addressing her, he said to her: “Why do you give him the occasion for it?” and he began to reproach her with her faults on this point.

Now we shall add a few traits relating to the knowledge he had of distant and future events. He predicted the recovery of a lady who had been given up by the physicians, and who, in fact, returned to health. A nun who was gravely ill was recommended to his prayers: “Fear not,” he said, “she will be well”; and so it came about. On the contrary, he predicted the death of several persons who were not suspected to be so near the end. Having been called to assist a nun who was expiring, he perceived beside her bed a young person who was her niece: “You have called me here,” he said, “to be present at the death of the aunt whose life is yet to be prolonged, while it is the niece who is on the edge of eternity.” Soon after, indeed, the nun recovered perfect health, and the young person was carried off suddenly by an attack of apoplexy.

But a very striking example of his prophetic truthfulness is what happened to three young men to whom he foretold their various destinies, in his own house at Ischia, in 1694. Their names were Gabriel, Antony and Sabato; all three manifested the desire to enter the Order of Saint Peter of Alcantara. When the first of the three opened his design to him, our Saint cried out with compassion: “Alas! my son, a religious order is not your vocation: you have the look of the gallows.” When the second consulted him, he said to him: “Be on your guard, my son, for you are threatened with a great peril.” Then the third, who was only a simple peasant, having heard in part what had already passed, answered the questions the Saint put to him as to what he desired, by saying that “his parents being dead, and finding nothing better, he desired to join his lot to that of the other two, who proposed to become monks.” — “Sabato,” said the Saint, “pray the Blessed Virgin fervently, do your duty often, and God will assist you.” Following this advice, the honest peasant became a lay brother among the Discalced Franciscans, and found himself often in contact with our Saint. He led a holy life, bore with a truly Christian courage the horrible sufferings of his last illness, and died with the reputation of a great servant of God. But, before his death, he had occasion to be witness of the fulfilment of the two other predictions of our Saint; for, passing one day in the neighbourhood of Pozzuoli, he was shown a place on the surrounding mountains where Antony had been killed and reduced to ashes by a thunderbolt, when he had come into the neighbourhood to marry and settle. By a truly strange coincidence, he met, about

the same time, in the environs of the island of Ischia, the third whose destiny the Saint had foretold, Gabriel Martin, armed and equipped like a brigand. He learned from his own mouth that having committed a murder, he had been condemned to be executed, but that he had escaped from prison in a moment of insurrection, when all the prisons had been opened, and that now he wandered as a fugitive, in continual apprehension of being prosecuted for another homicide of which he was guilty.

It remains to speak of the miracles of our Saint, the number of which is incalculable. First, he had a sovereign empire over evil spirits, whom he drove out of several persons. The part of the monastery of Saint Lucy-on-the-Mount called the Novitiate was infested by night by these wicked spirits; but our Saint dislodged them from it for ever, by blessing the apartment. Strange thing! after his death they tried to return to it, but were driven back by the simple invocation of his name. The elements themselves obeyed him: the rain ceased to fall at his command, when it fell hard enough to oblige him to seek shelter. Another time, travelling with a companion under an incessant rain, their garments were found dry, when they had arrived at their destination, as if they had had sunshine all along the journey. All nature was subject to him and served his wishes. The air brought back to him on its wings his staff which he had left behind, and plants, as we have seen, grew supernaturally to second the aims of his charity. Sometimes he worked miracles by a simple prayer; often, by making the sign of the cross, or by using relics or holy images, or the oil of the lamps that burned before them.

No fewer cures are cited as worked by the contact of things belonging to him, or by that of his own person. A cloak for his use delivered an individual from a furious madness which was judged incurable; the manner in which this cure was effected is truly extraordinary. The mother of this sick man holding his cloak stretched out before him, he leaped from a very high window into the street, and, when he was expected to be found dead and all mangled, he was raised up full of life and restored to his right mind; he remained in this state until the moment of his death. With a piece of the Saint's habit, Casimir Avellon cured his wife, in London, of a spasmodic affection of the shoulders, against which every remedy had been tried in vain until then. A gentleman was delivered from an acute pain in the head by the mere touch of his person; he strengthened the limbs of a child three years old, and restored sight to a young man who had become blind, by simply touching them with his hands.

It was thus, in the practice of all the virtues, and favoured with wholly privileged graces, that our Saint passed the days of his pilgrimage, glorifying God, giving alms and doing good, until the moment when it pleased the Lord to put an end to his earthly career, not without having made known to him beforehand the time and circumstances of his death. In the year when it happened, his nephew having written to him from Vienna that he would return home in the month of May, he answered [him] that by then he would no longer find him alive. One week only before his departure, conversing with his brother Francis, he said to him: "Until now I have asked you nothing; do me the charity to pray the Almighty for me next Friday; you understand? next Friday, remember it, do not forget." It was the very day of his death. Two days before his last mortal attack, he said to Vincent Laine, accosting him: "We shall not see each other again on earth." Now, on the last day of February, after having heard Mass and received communion with extraordinary fervour, he retired to his room to address his last paternal admonitions to the crowd that pressed around him. He continued without interruption until noon; and, at noon precisely, turning to the lay brother who took care of him, he said to him: "In a little while a clap of thunder will strike me to the ground; you will raise me up, but it will be for the last time." In fact, two and a half hours after sunset, an attack of apoplexy struck him to the ground; he was alone at that moment; but a lay brother having entered his apartment soon after, raised him up and put him on his bed. While he was rendering him this service, the Saint said to him gently: "I commend to you this image of the Blessed Virgin"; then, with a face full of joy and serenity, he lay down with his eyes turned towards the image of the Mother of God. At first, the nature of his illness was mistaken; it was thought that excess of fatigue had caused a swoon; but, the next day, alarming symptoms showed

themselves, the progress of which resisted all remedies. The Theatine Fathers, by whom he was tenderly loved, having learned of the accident that had befallen him, came to visit him, bringing with them their so renowned relic, the staff of Saint Cajetan. When his head was touched with it, a remarkable thing happened, which we shall relate by quoting the very words of Father Michael, by whom the relic in question was applied to the head of the sick man: “By virtue,” he says, “of the reciprocal love that existed between Father John-Joseph of the Cross and myself, and also of my profound respect and my particular obligations towards him, I had no sooner learned that he had been struck with an attack of apoplexy and that his life was feared for, than I carried to him the staff of Saint Cajetan. As I touched his head with it, a prodigy occurred which has had no equal, before or since, although the relic has been continually, and still is, carried to a great number of sick persons.” Here is the fact: “When I had entered the cell of the aforesaid servant of God, who was dying, and had laid the aforesaid relic on his head, the staff, at that very instant, made certain leaps and bounds corresponding to a melodious sound which was heard by all who were present; and, in spite of all my efforts, I could not prevent it from moving in my hands, to my great astonishment and my great satisfaction, which were shared by all who were with me witnesses of so unheard-of a prodigy. At the very moment when this prodigy was being accomplished, the servant of God was seen to raise his hand slowly and point with his forefinger to heaven. Struck with astonishment at what was happening, and what is more, seeing that the Saint, by the violence of his illness, was beside himself, I was preparing to bring the relic near him a second time, when the staff began to leap as the first time and the melodious sound was heard again; a second time again the servant of God raised his hand and showed heaven with his forefinger: which made me understand that Saint Cajetan was inviting him to paradise. All this was for us, for all who were present and for me, a great subject of consolation and a superabundance of spiritual joy; and the report of this great miracle suddenly spreading through the whole monastery, there came to the sick man’s bedside a crowd of religious and of persons of distinction, who joined their voices to beg me to apply the relic once more, so that they too might be witnesses of this prodigy. At first I remained undecided, thinking that this would be in some sort to tempt God; but, yielding at last to their importunity, I lent myself to their wishes, saying to myself: Perhaps God wishes to glorify his servant still more. Drawing the relic, then, from its wrapping, while all those around me examined with pious curiosity what the result would be, I applied the relic to the sick man, on two different occasions, and each time the leapings and the sounds of which I have spoken were renewed; each time also the servant of God raised his hand and showed heaven as the first times; which fully confirmed me in the persuasion that this was an invitation by which Saint Cajetan was calling him to heavenly bliss, and to which the Saint answered by this sign. This is a point worthy of serious attention, when one reflects that the servant of God had been struck with apoplexy and that he was deprived of feeling.”

This is what Father Michael tells us. Although he thus appeared, to all appearances, deprived of feeling during the five days that he survived, one cannot doubt that his soul was entirely given up to ecstasies and to a profound contemplation; this, in fact, was what his face, his lips and his gestures indicated, which had the expression of the tenderest devotion. His eyes, generally closed, opened frequently to rest on the sweet image of Our Lady, of which he had a picture facing him; sometimes also he turned them towards his confessor, as if to ask absolution, as had been previously agreed between them. One noticed also a closing of the eyes and an inclination of the head, and he was seen to strike his breast when, for the last time, he received sacramental absolution from the hands of the superior. In the same way, when his dear friend, Innocent Valetta, threw himself on his knees at the edge of his bed and poured out his soul to him, secretly commending himself and his family to the prayers of the holy man, and conjuring him not to forget them when he should be in Paradise, the servant of God cast upon him a look of ineffable sweetness and kindness, pressing his hand tenderly in sign that he promised to do what he desired of him. It was then that Extreme Unction was given him, in the presence of his community and, besides, of several persons of distinction, ecclesiastics and laymen, all of whom were on their knees around the wretched pallet of the expiring Saint. Now, when, following the custom observed among the religious of Saint Peter of Alcantara, the father

guardian addressed the community, to declare to all the religious that their dying brother asked, in the name of charity, to be buried in a poor habit, the servant of God made a sign with his head to mark his assent, and touched the garment of the one who was speaking. Then all who were present could not help being keenly affected, seeing that the habit which the humble Saint had just chosen was the poorest there was, having been worn for sixty years, and being so patched that it was no longer possible to make out its shape.

At last, the dawn brought back the day, and the so desired sun was seen to rise which was to light our Saint's passage from this vale of tears and this land of sorrows to a better life: it was Friday, 5 March, a day which was not yet occupied in the calendar, as if it had been reserved for him on purpose. He had passed the preceding night in continual and fervent acts of contrition, resignation, love and gratitude, as could be judged from seeing him frequently strike his breast, raise his hands to heaven and make the sign of the cross upon himself. At an early hour of this last day, addressing a lay brother who was attending him, as if he were coming out of an ecstasy, he said to him: "I have only a few moments left to live." Then the lay brother ran in all haste to warn the superior, who, with the whole community, which was at that moment in choir, repaired promptly to the dying man's cell. The commendation of the soul was recited amid torrents of tears, and our Saint kept himself so profoundly recollected during this solemn moment that, when Brother Bartholomew, seeing that he had twice made efforts to raise himself, passed his arm under his head, the servant of God waved his hand to warn him to desist, so that his union with God might not be interrupted. The father guardian, perceiving that he was in his agony, gave him the last sacramental absolution; the Saint inclined his head to receive it and raised it again at once; then he opened his eyes for the last time, seeming to swim in joy and intoxicated with heavenly delights, fixed them, at the very moment when they closed, with a look of ineffable tenderness, on the image of the Blessed Virgin; and finally, giving his lips the expression of a sweet smile, with no other movement and no other demonstration, he ceased to breathe.

Thus expired, without effort and without even any repugnance of nature, John-Joseph of the Cross, the mirror of the religious life, the father of the poor, the consoler of the afflicted and the invincible Christian hero. Scarcely had he rendered up his soul when he began to manifest himself to several persons in a glorious state. At the very hour of his departure for the other life, Diego Pignatelli, duke of Monteleone, who was then walking in his apartment, perceived Father John-Joseph of the Cross, who seemed to him in perfect health (although he had left him ill at Naples a few days before), and all surrounded with supernatural light. Struck with astonishment at this sight, the duke cried out: "What! Father John-Joseph, are you then so suddenly restored?" To which the Saint answered: "I am well and happy"; then he disappeared. The duke then sent to Naples, and learned that he had died at the hour when he had gloriously appeared to him. He manifested himself in a still more remarkable manner to Innocent Valetta; for, being asleep at the moment of our Saint's decease, he felt himself pulled by the arm, and heard himself called aloud by his name. Awaking then, seized with a lively fright, he perceived a cloud of glory, and, standing in the midst of this cloud, a religious of the Order of Saint Peter of Alcantara, advanced in age, whose features, however, he could not distinguish on account of the multitude of rays of light which ceaselessly escaped from him and which, by their vivid brilliance, dazzled his eyes. The religious who thus appeared to him having asked him if he knew him, he answered that he did not; he then said to him: "I am the soul of Father John-Joseph of the Cross, delivered this very instant from the bonds of the flesh and on my way to paradise, where I shall not cease to pray for thee and for thy house. If thou desirest to see my body, thou wilt find it in the infirmary of Saint Lucy-on-the-Mount." At these words, he disappeared with the cloud, leaving him whom he had favoured with this visit melting in tears and filled with a holy joy. He dressed at once in all haste and went to Saint Lucy's, where he found a great crowd, which announced to him the death of the Saint, and which he struck with astonishment by the account of what he had himself seen. Falling then upon the body of the Saint, he expressed his regret by torrents of tears and went back inconsolable at this loss: this is what he attested himself thirty years later, when it was a question of drawing up the process for his beatification. In the same way, three days after, he appeared to Father Buono, a religious of his own community, enjoining him to tell

the superior to order a Gloria Patri to be recited before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, to give thanks to the most holy Trinity for the favours he had received from it. A little later, Madame Marie-Anne Boulei de Verme was visited by the Saint, from whom, at that moment, she ardently desired to receive spiritual help. Baron Bassano, whom a mortal illness kept in bed, was favoured with a like vision and so completely cured that he lived several years more; and when he died, it was of a quite different illness from the one with which he was then afflicted. Having therefore sent for Father Buono, he told him how the Saint had cured him, recommending him to send for him, and to conduct himself in all things according to his spiritual advice: which he faithfully did.

Besides these facts, which had only a few persons for witnesses, there is another, more public proof of our Saint's elevation to eternal glory. His body, which, by reason of the season of his death and of the illness that had caused it, ought naturally to have stiffened almost immediately, kept all its flexibility, and presented a most surprising spectacle when, to wrap it in the shroud, it was set upright. The face was very beautiful and freshly coloured, although during his life it had been of a swarthy complexion; and there breathed from it so sweet a peace that the Saint seemed to be only asleep. From his sores flowed a warm and vermilion blood which exhaled a sweet odour; many persons dipped their handkerchiefs in it and carried them off as relics. When the body was transferred from the church to the sacristy, it seemed less to be carried by the bearers than to carry them itself.

The news of the Saint's death had no sooner spread through Naples than people flocked in crowds to where the body was, to see it; and, to obviate all violence, it was judged fitting to post guards all around. It was in vain: the people overcame all obstacles, and, in a few moments, no trace remained of the garment in which he was wrapped; they seized it eagerly as a relic of great price. The bier was torn to pieces, as well as the veil which covered it, and three times the body had to be taken back into the sacristy to be decently clothed. Crosses and rosaries were brought to be touched to his sacred person; natives and foreigners, all pressed in crowds to kiss his feet. Even before the body had received the honours of burial, heaven glorified the sacred remains of our Saint by miracles. Brother Michael of San Pasquale, wishing to resist the curiosity and the indiscreet devotion of the crowd, received a wound in the head, having been struck by the point of a halberd. The blood, which flowed abundantly from it, was staunched by applying to it a piece of the Saint's habit. But the most striking prodigy was the miracle worked in favour of Charles Carafalo. During the funeral, at which he was present, he commended himself to the Saint in a moment of fervour, promising him that, if he were cured of the epilepsy with which he had been afflicted for twenty-five years, he would publish this miracle throughout the universe. The disease left him at that very instant. But the sequel was still more extraordinary; for having, by a culpable ingratitude, neglected to fulfil his engagement, he suffered a relapse at the end of a year: which led him to go and throw himself at the feet of the Saint; he implored his pardon, repaired his fault and was cured again. Hyacinths thrown upon the body of the Saint cured the daughter of Girolamo Politi of a violent inflammation in the eye; and, not to speak of an innumerable multitude of facts of this kind, two small fragments of his garments cured Anne di Matia and Paschal Christiano: the first, of a violent stitch in the side, which had until then resisted all remedies; and the other, of frightful colics which had not left him for six years and kept him in continual agony. These favours so excited the ardour and piety of the people that all efforts to shelter the body from indiscreet zeal were useless; and the superiors thought it prudent to hasten the burial. Wherefore, in spite of the resolution previously taken to leave these precious remains exposed for three days to public veneration, the next day, very early in the morning, before the crowd could enter the church, the funeral was celebrated, and the body was piously laid in the tomb. Nothing could depict the disappointment of the people at the moment when the doors of the church were opened; the violence to which it gave way is beyond all that can be said: it rushed in crowds upon the stone which covered the precious remains of the Saint, kissing it and bathing it with its tears. Margaret di Fraja obtained, on this occasion, the cure of her nephew, who was dying, as a result of wounds he had received in a fall; and the same day Vincenza Aldava was cured of a contraction of the knee, which made her unable to walk, by simply

sitting on the chair which had belonged to our Saint, and reciting the Ave Maria in honour of Our Lady.

Likewise, after his burial, countless miracles attested the virtues and the glory of our Saint. Fevers, spasms, attacks of apoplexy and epilepsy, and different illnesses judged incurable, were cured with his relics. These prodigies determined Pope Pius VI to inscribe him in the Catalogue of the blessed, on 15 May 1789. Pius VII recognized, on 27 April 1818, the authenticity of two new miracles. Leo XII issued, on 29 September 1824, a decree by which he decided that one could, in all assurance, proceed to his canonization, and Gregory XVI performed the solemn ceremony on 26 May 1839.

His life was written in Italian by Father Diodato, and printed at Naples in 1794. The one we give here is taken from the works of Cardinal

Wiseman, vol. xvi of the *Démonstrations évangéliques* of Abbé Migne.

Saint Gerasimus, Solitary in Palestine

Gerasimus first embraced the monastic state in Lycia, of which he was a native; he then passed into Palestine, when the errors of Eutyches were beginning to spread there. He had the misfortune to follow the party of the heretics; but the holy abbot Euthymius, whom he visited, opened his eyes and brought him back to the centre of unity. Keenly touched by his fault, he expiated it by a rigorous penance. He always afterwards kept a very close friendship with Saint Euthymius, Saint John the Silent, Saint Sabas, Saint Theoctistus and Saint Anastasius, patriarch of Jerusalem. A great number of disciples having come to place themselves under his guidance, he built near the Jordan a laura composed of seventy cells; in the middle was a monastery intended for the lodging of those who were to lead the cenobitic life. It was there that subjects fit for the laura were formed. Those who dwelt in it were bound to the most rigorous silence; they fed only on bread, dates and water. On Saturday and Sunday they came to church to take part in the holy mysteries. On those two days they might eat together something cooked and drink a little wine. No fire was ever lit in their cells; a rush mat served them for a bed. In short, everything among them breathed the most exact poverty.

The inhabitants of Jericho, learning the austerity of life of these good solitaries, wished to bring them every Saturday and Sunday some refreshments… It was on their part an act of charity much to be praised; but the greater part of these so mortified religious refused this small alleviation as capable of harming their souls. They acted thus because they had learned from their spiritual father, Saint Gerasimus, that abstinence is the mother of perfect temperance, that it makes one fitter for vigils and drives away evil thoughts.

Our Saint carried abstinence still further than his brethren; he passed the whole of Lent without taking any other nourishment than that of the body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist; he possessed also all the other virtues in an eminent degree. Saint Euthymius had so much veneration for him that he sent to him those of his disciples whom he wished to bring to a high perfection. Saint Gerasimus died on 5 March 475. He is named on this day in the Roman martyrology. His laura was a quarter of a league from the Jordan, on the side of Jericho. It still subsisted a hundred years after his death. John Moschus, the historian of Saint Gerasimus, who visited it, heard there the following incident related: The Saint, being one day on the bank of the Jordan, saw a lion come towards him which walked only on three feet; it held the fourth in the air, into which a thorn had sunk. It presented itself to Gerasimus roaring with the pain it suffered. The Saint, touched with compassion, drew out the thorn, bound up the wound it had caused and sent the king of the desert away. But God willed to show, on this occasion, that the just who serve him faithfully can subdue to themselves the fiercest beasts, as they were subject to Adam before his sin; for the lion, as if it had been endowed with reason, never left him again and served him in his monastery more than a domestic animal could have done, without causing the least fright or the least harm to anyone. It remained thus five years in the service of the monastery, at the end of which, the Saint having died, it refused all food and went to expire on his tomb.

It is believed that this story gave occasion to painters to represent Saint Jerome with a lion beside him; he would thus have been confused with Saint Gerasimus on account of the resemblance of the name, which is sometimes found written Gerome, by a bad spelling. — *Lives of the Fathers of the Eastern Deserts* [*Vies des Pères des déserts d'Orient*].

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[1] See a short dissertation on the Saints of the name of Phocas, on 22 September, toward the end of the life of Saint Phocas the Gardener.

[2] Eusebius speaks of Saint Theophilus in the fifth book of his history. He distinguished himself under the reign of Pope Victor, by the energy with which he combated those who, after the example of the Jews, made the Pasch on the 14th of March [*sic*; of the moon], and who for this reason were called Quartodecimans, and whose party was then growing stronger and stronger. He assembled on this subject a council at Caesarea, and, in the name of all the Fathers, wrote a synodal letter in which he said, among other things, that the custom of celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Sunday was of apostolic tradition. Saint Jerome makes great account of this letter. He died toward the end of the second century. Baronius says that it is to this bishop that the letter of Pope Victor was written, and not to Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, who is known to have lived in the time of the emperor Theodosius the Younger.

[3] Lupercus or Luperc, according to the *Lives of the Martyrs of Aquitaine*, a work composed by an ancient author whose elegant style Joseph Scaliger praises, suffered martyrdom at Eauze, under the emperor Decius. The church of Eauze, ancient metropolis of the whole province, honoured him as its patron; and it is agreed to regard him as one of the first bishops of that same church. Nevertheless, some scholars think that he is not to be distinguished from Lupercus, martyr at Saragossa, with eighteen others, and praised by Prudentius, in his book of the *Crowns of the Martyrs*. There existed, in the 11th century, an abbey which bore the name of Saint-Lupercus of Eauze. (*Proper of Tarbes.*)

[4] It will be seen, in the Roman martyrology of 6 March, that Baronius places the place of the martyrdom of Saint Conon in Cyprus. The circumstances of the martyrdom are the same, the place alone differs. Now, here is what led Baronius into error: it is that he had in hand only copies of the menology of the Greeks bearing *K■n■nos tou Kypriou* — Conon of Cyprus — instead of *K■n■nos tou K■pourou* — Conon the Gardener. This latter text is that of the *Menaia*, of the anthology of Maximus of Cythera, etc. The menology, on the contrary, has the faulty text. Henry Canisius, who had given an edition of the menology, remarks the error contained in *tou Kypriou*; so he did not translate these words in his version. It would have sufficed him, as well as Baronius, as the Bollandists say, to consult the *Menaia*.

[5] See 2 February.

[6] The Irish call Saint Kieran the first-born of their Saints: he is the most celebrated of those who appeared in Ireland before Saint Patrick. He came into the world, according to Ussher, in 352. The Bollandists reject this chronology. If, indeed, Saint Kieran was born in 352, which is not proved at all, while there are plausible reasons for believing that he died in 520, that would make a life of nearly two hundred years.

[7] See our *Palmier séraphique*, III, p. 342.

[8] … *Ut proprietatem sui nominis impleret gratia sanctitatis*. Virgilius from *virgo* (Virgil comes from virgin). Boll., 5 Mar.

[9] The community of Rethondes did not prolong its existence beyond three centuries, and, from 893, the abbey was no more than a simple priory of the title of Saint-Pierre, dependent on Saint-Médard of Soissons and whose titular, as heir of the ancient abbots, retained the right of justice over the village of Rethondes which must have formed itself around the monastery. An old Romanesque edifice, which was the church of the priory, is still today like a living remembrance of this religious establishment which, besides, was for Saint Drausinus only the prelude of a more important foundation, that of the abbey of Our Lady of Soissons.

[10] On the present site of the rue des Graviers.

6 March

Martyrologies

Sixth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Nicomedia, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Victor and Victorinus, who, with Claudian and Bassa his wife, after having endured for three years a number of torments and having been kept in prison, ended their lives there. 303. — At Tortona, Saint Marcian, bishop and martyr, who was slain, under Trajan, for Christ, and thus merited the crown of glory.[1] 120. — At Constantinople, Saint Evagrius, who, having been elected bishop by the Catholics in the time of the emperor Valens, was exiled by the same emperor, and migrated from this world into the bosom of God. About 380. — In the island of Cyprus, Saint Conon, martyr,

who, under the emperor Decius, having had his feet pierced with nails, was then forced to run before a chariot; but, having fallen on his knees, gave up his spirit while at prayer.[2] 252. — Moreover, the passion of forty-two blessed martyrs, who, arrested at Amorium and led into Syria, sustained there a glorious combat, and gathered the palm of martyrdom. 845. — At Bologna, Saint Basil, bishop, who was ordained by Pope Saint Sylvester, and governed most holily, by word and by example, the Church entrusted to his care. 4th century. — At Barcelona, in Spain, the blessed Oleguer [Olegarius], first a canon, then bishop of Barcelona, and finally archbishop of Tarragona. 1137. — At Ghent, in Flanders, Saint Colette, virgin, who, first, observed the rule of the Third Order of Saint Francis, then, inspired by the divine Spirit, brought back a very great number of monasteries of the second order to the primitive discipline, and, adorned with divine virtues, shone with countless miracles. The sovereign pontiff Pius VII inscribed her in the catalogue of the Saints. 1447.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Metz, in Lorraine, Saint Godegrand or Chrodegand, bishop, sprung from the noblest blood of the kingdom of Austrasia, author of an excellent rule for canons. 766. — In the same place, Saint Cadroe, first abbot of Saint-Clement of Metz. 978. — At Trier, Saint Cyriacus or Quiriacus, priest and confessor, born in Poitou, who was with Saint Maximin when he received Saint Athanasius in his exile. His body is at Tabenne, in the diocese of Trier. 4th century. — In the diocese of Saint-Paul-de-Léon, in Lower Brittany, Saint Sezni, abbot, patron of the church of Guic-Sezni. 6th century. — At Säckingen, near Basle, Saint Fridolin, abbot of Saint-Hilary of Poitiers, then of Säckingen. — At Chambéry, the feast of the blessed Humbert, count of Savoy. 1188. — At Rodez, the feast of Saint Alvère, virgin.[3] — At Poitiers, the feast of Saint Fridolin, abbot, the same as the one of Säckingen. 540. — In Franche-Comté, Saint Point, monk of Condat.[4] — In the diocese of Arras, the blessed Odo, first abbot of Sainte-Marie of Eaucourt, called by the blessed Lambert, bishop of that city, to help him in the sanctification of his flock. 1140.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Barcelona, in Spain, Saint Oleguer or Olegarius, first a canon regular, afterwards bishop of the same city, and archbishop of Tarragona, illustrious for the reformation of the clergy, for the celebration of councils, for his labours against the schismatics and for virtues of every kind. Saint Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, celebrates him with the highest praises.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict. — The blessed Joan-Mary Bonomi, virgin, who is mentioned on 1 March.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — Saint Cunegund, empress, who, married to Saint Henry I, emperor, kept her virginity with the consent of her husband, and took, after his death, the cowl of our most holy Father Benedict, in the monastery of Kaufungen; then, laden with merits and good works, arrived, by a blessed end, at eternal rest, at Bamberg, on the third day of the month of March.

Martyrology of the Preaching Friars. — At Pisa, the blessed Jordan, confessor of our Order, remarkable for his doctrine, his preaching and the glory of his miracles.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Ghent, in Flanders, Saint Colette, etc.

Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites. — In the Holy Land, Saint Cyril, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites, who, by his doctrine and his holiness, brought a great number of men to the faith, admirably directed his Order for twenty-seven years, and finally, under the emperors Philip and Otto, ended his life by a happy death. 1224.

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Ghent, in Flanders, the blessed Colette, virgin.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

Among the Greeks, the saints Julian, physician, and Eubulus, martyrs; at the same time, Saint Arcadius of Cyprus, who instructed them in the faith and in virtue. Reign of Julian. — At Trent, in Italy, Saint Claudian, confessor, brother of Saint Vigilius, bishop of that city: he helped Saint Vigilius in the apostolate. Both were natives of Rome. 5th century. — At the Mosè,[5] three kilometres from Piacenza, Saint Victor, deacon. 444. — In England, Saint Kyneswide and Saint Kyneburga, her sister, virgins. They were daughters of the famous Penda, pagan king of the Mercians, who waged so terrible a war against Christianity and whose family nevertheless was a nursery of Saints. Kyneswide was the youngest of his children: she was brought up by Saint Kyneburga. The latter had married Alfred, king of Northumbria, who, with the consent of his wife, had become a monk at Melrose: after this separation, Kyneburga had the monastery of Dormundcaster built. This august queen being dead, the brothers of Kyneswide promised her hand to Offa, king of the East Saxons. The poor desolate girl, who had given herself to the King of kings, confided her grief to the Queen of virgins. One day Mary appeared to her and said: “Cease your tears; persevere; nothing is better than to know on earth no corruption and to die in the full integrity of one’s body.” Kyneswide resolved to write to King Offa to beg him to abandon his design. The king, who was a Christian and feared the Lord, approved the holy resolution of his betrothed. She lived to a great age, and went to join the society of the angels, on 6 March. About 714. She was buried in her sister’s monastery, at Caster. — In Scotland and England, Saint Baldhere and Saint Bilfrid, priest and goldsmith, both anchorites. About 757. — In Galatia or Bithynia, Saint Hesychius, wonder-worker. About 790. — In Ireland, Saint Cairpre or Corbre, bishop of Clonmacnoise [Cluain-Mic-Nois]. It is related in his life that a king of Ireland, named Malachy, appeared to him and asked him to pray for his soul, which was horribly tormented in purgatory. This story, true or supposed, proves at the very least the antiquity of prayer for the dead in the Catholic Church. 899. — At Natilica, in Picenum, Saint Sollutus, of the Order of the Crutched Friars [Porte-Croix]. — At Prague, Saint Agnes of Bohemia, virgin, of the Order of Saint Clare. She was betrothed against her will to the emperor Frederick II, who, after a long resistance, let her consecrate her life to the heavenly Spouse alone.[6] 1282.

Saint Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz

712–766. — Popes: Constantine; Paul I. — Kings of France: Dagobert III; Pepin the Short.

He set singers about the altar, and by their voices he made sweet melody. [*Stare fecit cantores contra altare, et in sono eorum dulces fecit modos.*] — Ecclus. xlvii,

Here is the bishop who had, in the 8th century, the greatest share in the establishment of the temporal sovereignty of the Popes, and of the Roman liturgy in France.

Chrodegang, sprung from an illustrious family of the kingdom of Austrasia, afterwards allied to the Carolingians,[1] was born in the country of Hesbaye, in Brabant, about the year 712. His father was called Sigramnus and his mother Landrada. He was brought up in the abbey of Saint-Trond, where he made great progress in letters and piety. When he was of an age to enter the world, his parents sent him to the court of Charles Martel to be formed in the exercises befitting his birth. The mayor of the palace, full of affection and esteem for his virtue and learning, gave him the charge of referendary or chancellor, then that of first minister, in 737. Chrodegang was well made in person, very eloquent, and spoke with great facility the Latin language and the Teutonic. Although he was obliged to live at court, he changed nothing of the simplicity of the clothes he was accustomed to wear. He continued also to afflict his body by fasts, vigils and other austerities. His love of mortification went so far that he granted to nature only what was absolutely necessary to it. His charity for the poor knew no bounds; he provided for the needs of an innumerable multitude of unfortunates, and protected, with a paternal kindness, widows and orphans. He showed, in the high post which he occupied, so much wisdom and equity that, the see of Metz having become vacant, in 742, by the death of Saint Sigebald, he was chosen to replace him. But Pepin, who had just succeeded Charles Martel, his father, would consent to his consecration only on condition that he should continue to fill his functions as

minister. The Saint, who had great capacity, found the means to suffice for everything, without neglecting any of the so numerous and so difficult duties which his double dignity imposed on him. He lost nothing of his humility, of his gentleness, of his recollection, nor of the simplicity which reigned in all his exterior. He always wore a hair-shirt under his clothes. He spent a great part of the night in prayer, and his eyes were accustomed to pour forth a torrent of tears during this holy service. The zeal which he showed in reviving in his clergy that spirit of prayer and fervour which characterized the first centuries of the Church is a very palpable proof of his ardour for the service of God and for the accomplishment of his glory. He made of the Chapter of his cathedral a regular community, and gave his canons and his clerks a very wise rule, in thirty-four articles, taken in great part from that of Saint Benedict. This rule differed little, in fact, from that of religious houses: common dwelling, common table, a like dress, the division of the hours of prayer and of the occupations in the interval. The only difference between the canons and the religious was that the latter had their abbot for head and the former the bishop. Nevertheless, they were regarded as secular ecclesiastics, and, in that quality, they had precedence over the monks. The holy bishop had the cloister of the cathedral built; he added to it two churches: that of Saint-Peter-the-Old [Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux], called by corruption Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, and that of Saint Paul. The bishop had a separate lodging, in which to exercise hospitality without disturbing the community.[2] The rule of Saint Chrodegang was so esteemed that several churches adopted it and that it served afterwards as the model for the general reformation which councils tried to bring about in the clergy. The council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 816, made some additions to it and recommended its observance to all the canons of the empire of Louis the Pious. Leofric, bishop of Exeter, who had lived some time in Austrasia, carried it to England and introduced it in his cathedral. Saint Chrodegang showed no less zeal for the restoration of religious observance in the monasteries of his vast diocese. He founded, about the year 749, near Metz, in a valley all covered with forests, the celebrated abbey of Gorze, which gave to the kingdom of Austrasia so many holy reformers and illustrious prelates, and was loaded, at its origin, with the rich gifts of Pepin and Charlemagne. The holy bishop built it in honour of the Apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and of Saint Stephen, patron of his church, and gave it the rule of Saint Benedict.

Chrodegang was not only a great Saint, but a wise minister and a skilful negotiator, whom his learning and his eloquence gave great authority in the councils of the nation. Pepin liked to employ him in the most delicate affairs. Aistulf, king of the Lombards, having become master of the exarchate of Ravenna, had summoned Rome to recognize him as sovereign, with threats of carrying fire and sword into its territory. Pope Stephen II did all that was possible with the king of the Lombards to move him and engage him to have some regard for the chair of Saint Peter; but, seeing that prayers, presents, the very mediation of the emperor of the East, were useless, he resolved to address himself to the Frankish people. He wrote to Pepin the deplorable state in which Rome found itself, and begged him to send him ambassadors, that he might come to an understanding with them. The Frankish monarch sent him Droctegang, abbot of Gorze, to assure him of his protection. Stephen, ravished with joy, dismissed this ambassador at once with another letter for Pepin; he begged the king secretly to send to Rome new ministers, whose name and dignity would make his person respected, so that in their company he might reach the foot of the Alps and betake himself to France. Two new ambassadors were designated by Pepin and the assembly of the Frankish lords to go to the Pontiff: they were Chrodegang and Duke Autchar. The bishop of Metz above all showed in this delicate mission much prudence and courage, for to all his episcopal virtues he joined a boundless devotion to the chair of Saint Peter. When the two envoys arrived at Rome, they found the Lombards already masters of the fortresses near the city; the Romans were in consternation, and the Pope was preparing to set out for Pavia, to implore there the pity of the king of the Lombards. Stephen therefore took with him the two deputies of Pepin and, accompanied by an escort of prelates and clerics of the Roman church and of the principal personages of the city, he left Rome on 14 October 753. Duke Autchar went ahead, and hastened to Pavia to await the Pope there and prepare his arrival. Stephen conjured Aistulf anew to restore things to the state they were in before his enterprises; but the king of the Lombards obstinately persisted in keeping his conquests, and employed

every imaginable means to prevent the Pope from leaving Italy. Then the deputies of Pepin asked him, in the name of their king, not to oppose the design which the sovereign Pontiff had of going to France. Aistulf, surprised, put off his answer until the next day. In the interval he dispatched people to frighten Stephen, if he persisted in his project; and, when the audience came, at which the Frankish ambassadors renewed their request, the king, counting on the effect of his secret threats, adjured the Pontiff to say whether he really wished to go to France. The latter, encouraged by the presence of Chrodegang and Autchar, answered with a respectful air: “Yes, such is my design, if the intention of your glory is to restore my liberty.” Aistulf, seeing that he would fight in vain against the Pope’s resolution, no longer opposed it, and left him master to continue his journey.

Stephen, accompanied by the prelates of his household and by the two envoys of the king of France, who directed his march, left Pavia on 15 November, and, in spite of the severity of the season, arrived happily in France. Pepin was at Thionville, a royal farm on the Moselle, when he learned that the Pope had already crossed the Alps. He at once sent Charles, his eldest son, who was then in his twelfth year, to accompany the Pontiff as far as the palace of Ponthion, in Champagne, whither he went in person with Queen Bertrada, his other children and the great men of his court. On the news of the Pope’s approach, Pepin himself went a league from the palace to receive him. As soon as he saw him, he dismounted, prostrated himself before him with his wife and children, and the lords who accompanied him; he walked for some time on foot beside his mount, serving him as squire. Stephen, penetrated with joy, raised his voice, and, giving thanks to God, intoned hymns and canticles, which the whole suite repeated. They arrived thus at the palace of Ponthion on 6 January 754, the day of the Epiphany. From Ponthion the Pope withdrew to the monastery of Saint-Denis, where he remained until the end of the winter, awaiting the result of the negotiations.

Among the firmest supporters of the Pope was always the bishop of Metz, who not only used in this affair all his influence at court, but also acted with the Frankish lords, in the assembly of Quierzy-sur-Oise, to induce them to undertake the war of Italy and to have restored to the Holy See the domains which had been unjustly torn from it. But before crossing the Alps, Pepin, on the representation of the sovereign Pontiff, thought he should make a last attempt on the mind of Aistulf. He deputed to him again Saint Chrodegang to conjure him, in the name of the holy Apostles, to exercise no hostility against Rome, to restore to the Holy See the places he had taken from it, and not to subject the Romans to superstitions incompatible with their laws. The bishop of Metz was, besides, the bearer of a letter from the Pope to the king of the Lombards, in which he begged him, by the sacred mysteries and by the dread judgment of God, to listen at last to the voice of religion and justice. But all the zeal and all the skill of Chrodegang were to fail before a prince of blind and sacrilegious ambition, who would not hear of restitution.

Stephen II was not insensible to the zeal and devotion of the holy bishop of Metz. Before leaving France, he decorated him with the Pallium, and conferred on him the title of archbishop, with the power of consecrating bishops in all the Gauls. Paul I, who succeeded Pope Stephen, gave to Saint Chrodegang the bodies of the holy martyrs Gorgonius, Nabor and Nazarius. Perhaps the holy bishop received these sacred relics on a journey he made to Rome in 765, for it is commonly admitted that he must have undertaken this journey several times, to treat of the affairs which then so keenly interested the Holy See and the king of France. Chrodegang deposited the relics of Saint Gorgonius in the abbey of Gorze, and those of Saint Nabor in the monastery of *Hilariacum*, founded in the diocese of Metz by Saint Fridolin in honour of Saint Hilary, and recently restored by Saint Sigebald: hence came to it, afterwards, the name of Saint-Nabor and, by corruption, of Saint-Avold. Saint Chrodegang gave the body of Saint Nazarius to the abbey of Lauresheim or of Lorsch, founded two years before in the diocese of Mainz by several of his near relatives. The holy prelate conducted thither a colony of sixteen monks, whom he drew from his monastery of Gorze. Saint Chrodegang deserved not only the gratitude of the sovereign Pontiffs, by contributing, more than any bishop of his time, to the re-establishment and enlargement of the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See, but he had also the

glory of cooperating effectually in the accomplishment of a wish equally dear to them, the extension of the Roman liturgy. The latitude which each church had, at the origin of Christianity, to draw up its liturgy, was bound to produce differences sometimes very great between the offices of the churches of one same province. The need was early felt of establishing some unity. Provincial synods began to prescribe to the suffragan churches unity of psalmody. Soon the national councils likewise set about extending this uniformity to all the Churches of one same nation. But this state of affairs could not escape the vigilance of the Roman Pontiffs. From the end of the 4th century, they made the most persevering efforts to bring all the churches of the West to a perfect conformity of rite with the Roman Church, mother and mistress of all the churches of the world, but united, it seems, by closer bonds with the churches of the West which had come immediately out of her bosom, and received from her, with the faith, the first elements of their liturgy. We possess letters written on this subject by Saint Siricius, towards the end of the 4th century, by Saint Innocent and Saint Celestine, in the 5th, by Saint Gregory the Great, at the beginning of the 7th, by Saint Gregory II and Saint Zachary, in the first half of the 8th. Already even, before the 8th century, Gregorian chant had been introduced into most countries of the West. When Saint Gregory sent Saint Augustine into Great Britain, he dispersed throughout the West singers trained in the school of Rome. But, in spite of all the efforts of this great Pope and of his successors to spread Roman chant and keep it in its purity; in spite of the frequent sending of skilled singers, formed in the school of the Lateran, ecclesiastical chant was far from uniform. It had fallen in France into a great decadence, above all under the rough administration of Charles Martel. Unfortunate alterations had destroyed its charm. When Pope Stephen II came into France, according to the report of Walafrid Strabo, a writer of the 9th century, he asked King Pepin, as a sign of the faith which united France to the Holy See, to second his efforts to introduce into the kingdom the offices of the Roman Church. The king, continues the chronicler, welcomed the Pontiff's pious design, and the clerics of Stephen's suite gave the Frankish singers lessons on the manner of celebrating the offices. It is agreed to think that it was the church of Metz, under Saint Chrodegang, which, first of the Gauls, received Roman chant and liturgy. In the mission which the holy bishop fulfilled with Stephen II, he was, no doubt, initiated by the Sovereign Pontiff into the project the execution of which the Popes had long pursued. Witness moreover, during his embassy to Rome, of the liturgical magnificence of the Roman Church and of the majesty of the Apostolic See, he could not fail to be overcome by it. He was confirmed also in the design, which he had perhaps already realized, of establishing the regular life in his clergy, after having been witness of the exemplary life of the various apostolic colleges which served the basilicas. To unite more closely the clergy of his Church with the Roman Church, and to give the divine offices a more august form, he hastened, on his return to France, to introduce into his diocese the chant and order of the Roman offices. The zealous prelate used all his influence with Pepin and the Frankish clergy, of whom he was "the light and the glory," as Theodulf, bishop of Orléans, expresses it, to second the work of unity on which the sovereign Pontiffs laboured with so much perseverance. Among the twelve singers sent into France by Stephen II, at the king's request, to propagate there the holy traditions of Gregorian chant, some doubtless came to settle at Metz, whose singing-school began early to enjoy a great celebrity.

The merit of Saint Chrodegang was so universally recognized that he had a share in almost all the important affairs of his time. He attended the assemblies and councils of Verberie (753), of Quierzy-sur-Oise (754), of Verneuil (755), of Compiègne (757), of Attigny (765), which he presided over, and he himself held several councils in his episcopal city. Aided by the pious liberalities of Pepin, he had the choir and sanctuary of his cathedral church rebuilt or restored, and surrounded them with aisles. Paul the Deacon, historian of the bishops of Metz, cites, as remarkable works executed by his orders, the high altar surmounted by a canopy or baldachin, and the balustrades with which he surrounded it. At last the holy Pontiff, laden with merits, went to rejoin in heaven the saints to whom he had rendered so many pious honours. He died on 6 March 766, and was buried in the monastery of Gorze, to which he had bequeathed great possessions by his will, which we still have. Theodulf, bishop of Orléans, composed his epitaph in verse, in which he makes a magnificent

eulogy of his talents and virtues. Afterwards, a part of the relics of Saint Chrodegang was transferred to Metz, to the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Symphorian. They disappeared amid the sacrilegious spoliations of the Revolution.

I. *Notice on the abbey of Gorze.* — Gorze, fifteen kilometres south-west of Metz, was once, as our old chronicles say, only a thick forest where the kings of Austrasia often took the pleasure of the chase, a hilly and stony desert, watered by a multitude of clear streams. The principal one bore the name Gorzia, Gorgia or Gurges (gulf), apparently on account of the depth and abundance of the waters of the spring. It was there that the magnificent Roman aqueduct began, some arches of which still subsist at the village of Jouy, and which conducted the waters of Gorze to Metz. Hence too the name *Gurgitenses* given to the monks, and *Gurgitanum Monasterium* to the monastery. This celebrated abbey was founded, about the year 749, by Saint Chrodegang. It is affirmed that he raised it on the very spot where Saint Clement, coming from Rome to Metz to announce the Gospel, had built an oratory in honour of the Prince of the Apostles.

Saint Chrodegang built his monastery himself in honour of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul; he gave it the rule of Saint Benedict and placed it under the guard and protection of the church of Saint-Stephen of Metz. He made the dedication of the church in 753, a little before his famous journey to Pope Stephen II. From its origin, Gorze drew from its founder a renown attested by the verses of Alcuin.[3]

In 763, Saint Chrodegang led a colony of his religious from Gorze to the monastery of

Lauresheim, which his family had just founded in the diocese of Mainz, and which became one of the most illustrious of Germany. But, about two centuries after its foundation, Gorze had fallen into the most deplorable state, as a result of the civil wars and the ravages of the barbarians which desolated the kingdom. In 933, the bishop of Metz, Adalbero I, whom his zeal for the re-establishment of regular observance has caused to be surnamed the Father of the monks, introduced at Gorze a celebrated reform, of which Saint John of Vandières was one of the principal instruments. The ancient abbey, thus renewed, soon became a nursery of Saints and Reformers. The chronicle has recourse to the liveliest images to render the charms of this holy dwelling: “Gorze was like a sun darting afar the rays of monastic religion,[4] a paradise enamelled with the flowers of holiness.”[5] The riches of Gorze, rapidly increased by emperors and kings, were immense. Its seigneurial territory, not counting several distant domains, contained twenty-eight boroughs or villages; the abbots enjoyed regal rights, struck coin and had a share in the election of the chief alderman of Metz. Numerous and rich priories depended on the abbatial mensa, and above all this temporal splendour piety and learning were long seen to flourish in the schools from which came, in the Middle Ages, several illustrious prelates. This abbey, which resembled a citadel and served as a defence to the town which had formed around its enclosure, suffered much from the wars of religion which desolated France during the 16th century. It was secularized in 1572, on the solicitations of the great Cardinal Charles of Lorraine, who was then abbot of it, and who divided the possessions of the monastery between the primatial church which the dukes of Lorraine had the project of erecting at Nancy, and the Jesuit college of Pont-à-Mousson. The abbatial title was united to the primatial church, and the abbey converted into a Chapter of canons, which performed the office in the parish church, erected since then into a collegiate church. The abbatial church and all the regular places were demolished in 1609. From the year 1717, the traces of the ancient abbey were so effaced that the two Benedictine travellers Martène and Durand, passing through the borough where it had stood, were “surprised not to find Gorze in Gorze any more.” Nothing remains of it today but a pan of wall and a ditch, which the present owner has religiously respected. The collegiate church, a fine edifice of the 13th century, built by the monks of Gorze, still serves today as a parish church; but the old abbatial château has been transformed into a depot for beggars.

II. *On the abbey of Lauresheim or Lorsch.* — This abbey, very celebrated in Carolingian history, was situated on the little river Weschnitz, then called Wisgoz, between Mainz and Heidelberg. The church was consecrated, in 774, before Charlemagne and Queen Hildegard, by Lull of Mainz, Angilram of Metz, and

several other prelates. This abbey became one of the most illustrious of Germany: it was counted among the first four of the empire, and it possessed, as a principality, the country called Bergstrasse (*Strata Montana*), between Heidelberg and the little river Dietbourg. More than four thousand charters were transcribed in its cartulary, which the Palatine academy had printed on account of the precious historical information it furnishes. Tradition credits the monks of Lauresheim with having formed the first library of Germany; and it was in fact among them that, at the Renaissance, the manuscripts of several authors of classical antiquity were found. Tassilo, dethroned by Charlemagne, was relegated to the monastery of Lauresheim, where his tomb was formerly shown. In the 13th century, the Benedictines were replaced by the Premonstratensians, and the abbatial principality was united to the see of Mainz for two hundred years; then it passed to the counts palatine. In consequence of this it happened, in the 16th century, that the electors palatine, having embraced the Reformation, destroyed Lauresheim. The devastation took place in 1555, and a fire, which occurred in 1621, consumed what had escaped the first ruin.

III. *On the celebrated singing-school of Metz.* — The school of ecclesiastical chant founded at Metz by Saint Chrodegang became especially flourishing under the reigns of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, his son, during the episcopate of Angilram and of Drogo. In a first journey which Charlemagne made to Rome, in 774, says John the Deacon, historian of Saint Gregory the Great, he left with Pope Adrian two intelligent clerics of his chapel, to perfect themselves in the knowledge of Roman chant. He destined them for the church of Metz, by means of which he proposed to effect the reform of chant throughout his vast empire.[6] In a second journey which Charlemagne made to Rome, in 787, he asked the Pope for trained singers who could put the Franks back in the line of sound traditions; Adrian hastened to comply with the desire of the religious monarch. He gave him two skilful singers, Theodore and Benedict, who had been brought up in the school of Saint Gregory, and joined to a profound knowledge of chant very extensive acquirements. Charles, on returning to France, placed one of these singers at Metz for Austrasia, the other at Soissons for Neustria, and ordered all the singing-masters of the other cities of France to present their antiphonaries to them to be corrected. The school of Metz, already celebrated, became the most flourishing of the whole empire. Gregorian chant rose there to the highest point of perfection, so that, says the monk of Angoulême, it surpassed the other schools of France as much as it itself yielded to that of Rome.[7] This is still the praise which the Roman historian of Saint Gregory the Great gave it. The school of Metz extended its influence over the whole empire: its antiphonary was the model by which all the others were corrected. In a capitulary of Thionville, of the year 805, Charlemagne ordered that all the singing-masters should be drawn from the school of Metz. Through the channel of this famous school, Roman chant began so to spread in all the provinces that, according to the testimony of the monk of Saint Gall, ecclesiastical chant took, even in Germany, the name of Metz chant. The school of Metz attained its apogee under the skilful direction of Amalarius, archdeacon of the church of Metz, the most skilful liturgist of his time. Amalarius, surnamed Symphosius on account of his taste for music, had studied under Alcuin, whom he even afterwards succeeded in the direction of the palace school. Louis the Pious, who appreciated the merit of the archdeacon of Metz, deputed him to Rome, in 827, with the mission of bringing back a new copy of the antiphonary of Saint Gregory. Amalarius, during his stay in the eternal city, consulted the ministers of the church of Saint Peter, and profited by their instructions to correct his great work *De Officio Divino*, of which he gave on his return a new edition. He took occasion from it also to compose his precious book *De Ordine Antiphonarii*. "This collection," says the author of the *Institutions liturgiques*, "became the regulator of ecclesiastical chant in our Churches.[8] There was no more going back to Rome to seek new antiphonaries, and such was the first origin of the Roman-French liturgy." The reputation of the school of Metz was maintained for several centuries. A letter of Saint Bernard informs us that the first Fathers of Cîteaux, wishing to establish in their congregation the best method of singing the praises of God, had recourse to the church of Metz, and had its antiphonary transcribed.[9] "This superiority which the school of Metz still kept the reputation of, in the 12th century, over the singing-schools of the other cathedrals of France," says the Very Rev. Dom Guéranger, "is

due no doubt to the discipline which Saint Chrodegang had established among the canons. Traditions of this kind were bound to be kept purer in this church, the clergy of which kept the observances of the canonical life with so much regularity."[10]

IV. *Epitaph of Saint Chrodegang, by Theodulf, bishop of Orléans*:

> *Quisquis ab occasu venis hic, vel quisquis ab ortu, Praesulis hic cineres scito jacere pii. Moribus ornatum, virtutum tramite rectum, Egregium meritis haec tenet urna virum. Cui sancti actus, lex meditatio, dogma fidele, Rotgangus nomen, gloria Christus erat. Romuleae de sede sibi data pallia sanctae Extulit, hunc Patrum extulit ille Pater. Instituit sanctae clero bene munus vitae, Ordine in Ecclesia lux decusque fuit. Exemplo et verbis animos ad caelica regna Misit, et in tanta floruit arte satis. Virtutes retinens, vitiorum monstra vitans, Sat que in eo viguit pontificalis apex. Solator viduis fuit, et tutela misellis, Sensit et hunc sibimet orphana turba patrem. Regibus acceptus, populo venerabilis omni, Vita ejus cunctis norma salutis erat. Post vitae casum senio veniente peractum, Terrae dat terram, mittit ad astra animam.*

Whoever you are, whether you come from the East or from the West, know that this urn contains the ashes of a pious and pure man, who joined the lustre of merit to the uprightness which the exercise of the virtues gives. His acts were holy; the law of God was the object of his meditations, and he never wavered in the faith. He brought back from the see of Peter the insignia of the Pallium, and as a Pastor he exalted the head of the Pastors. He gave his clergy the rule of a holy life. Light and glory of the Church, by his example and his words he sent his flock to heaven, for he possessed in a high degree the science of the direction of souls. Full of love for virtue and of horror for vice, he exercised with vigour his charge as bishop. Consoler of widows, benefactor of the unfortunate, he showed himself the father of orphans. Loved by kings, venerated by the peoples, his life could serve as a model to all. And when the years had set the limit of his course, he gave back to earth what was of earth. His soul flew towards the region of the stars. — Mabillon, *Vetera analecta*, p. 377.

Information from M. the abbé Noël, professor at the grand seminary of Metz, now curé of Briey (before 1872).

The Forty-Two Holy Martyrs of Amorium

845. — Pope: Sergius II. — Emperor: Michael III, the Drunkard.

Towards the end of the reign of Theophilus, emperor of Constantinople, who was stripping his empire not only of its fairest ornament but of its best defence, by breaking the holy images, the Arabs or Saracens made numerous incursions on his lands. After having beaten his troops in various encounters, in one of which the emperor thought he would perish, the infidels came to besiege Amorium [Amore], a city of Upper Phrygia. It was valiantly defended by the officers of the garrison, until, through the treachery of an apostate named Baditzes, it was basely delivered to the enemy, who, without allowing any capitulation, put to the sword the soldiers and the inhabitants, except those who were willing to renounce the faith of Jesus Christ. They took prisoners and led into Syria the principal officers, forty-two in number, among whom were Theodore, surnamed Crater, or the Strong, Constantine Callistus, Aetius, Melissenus, Theophilus, who were patricians and held fine posts at court. They were thrown, each laden with a triple chain, into gloomy dungeons, where one could not even recognize one another at full noon; the commonest comforts of life were forbidden them; they were prevented from being visited by any but their gaolers and guards, who treated them with great cruelty; they were granted bread and water only as much as was needed not to die; they had only the earth for a bed and for clothing rags full of vermin. When they were thought sufficiently weakened and almost entirely cast down, they began to solicit them to change their religion; the caliph sent them doctors who passed for the most skilful among the Muslims. Feigning to come of themselves, out of compassion, they brought the prisoners money or clothes, to win them over; for the caliph said that he counted the conquest of a city as nothing in comparison with souls. They went so far as to tell them that, to end their misfortunes, an outward

declaration would be enough, without obliging them to renounce their religion entirely. The holy confessors, sustained by the grace of Him whom they served, showed themselves as invincible to these artful suggestions as they had been to the miseries made them suffer. They were wearied with a thousand proposals: “It does not become you to be so proud,” the Muslims said to them; “listen to us, then you will despise our counsels if they are not to your advantage. Do you not love your parents, your children, your wives, the company of your friends, the customs of your country? You have only one means of recovering all these goods, which is to dissemble a little, to let yourselves be circumcised and to make the prayer with the caliph; he will heap goods upon you, and the war will furnish you some occasion of returning home and resuming your religion.” The Christians answered: “Would you act thus if you were in our place?” — “Yes,” said the Muslims, “for there is nothing dearer than liberty.” And they confirmed it by oath. — “And we,” replied the Christians, “we take no counsel, when it is a question of religion, from those who are not firm in their own.” And they sent them away confused. Some days after, others came who, under the same pretext of giving them alms, began to pity, even with tears, these brave warriors, full of spirit and courage, whose whole misfortune came from not knowing the prophet; addressing them, they said: “Leave this narrow way, in which the Son of Mary commanded you to walk; enter the broad way, for this life and for the other, which the great prophet has shown us. What incredible thing does he teach, when he says that God can give those who serve him all sorts of pleasures in this life, and paradise in the other? Leave your ignorance and do not reject these benefits; for, as he is good, seeing that men were too weak to fulfil the law of Jesus, so hard and so difficult, he sent his prophet Mahomet to relieve them of this weight and to save them by faith alone.” Far from being sensible to these guilty pleasures set before their eyes, the holy Martyrs looked at one another smiling, and answered: “Can you believe true and pleasing to God a religion which gives the flesh all liberty and subjects reason to the passions? What difference is there between beasts and men who live thus? As for us, nothing can separate us from the charity of Jesus Christ.” At last, to deliver a final assault on the glorious athletes of our Lord Jesus Christ, there were sent a kind of Muslim religious, called fakirs; after having given alms to the captives and carried hypocrisy so far as to kiss them, they spoke in this fashion: “See to whom God now gives power: is it to the Romans or to the Muslims? To whom does he give fertile lands and victorious armies? Is it not to us? Yet he is just; if we did not observe his commandments, he would not give us so many goods, and he would not subject you to us if you had not refused to believe in his prophet.” The mind of the generous captives of Jesus Christ was as invincible to these vain reasonings as their heart had been to the brilliance of a false happiness: “Permit us,” they said, “to put a question to you: When two men dispute the possession of an inheritance, if one is content to cry out that it is his, without producing witnesses, and the other, without disputing, brings several witnesses worthy of belief, to whom is the inheritance to be adjudged?” — “To him,” answered the Muslims, “who gives good witnesses.” — Our Saints continued: “Jesus Christ came, born of a Virgin, as you say yourselves, having for him all the ancient prophets who foretold his coming. You say that Mahomet came to bring a third law; ought he not to have had at least one or two prophets as guarantors of his mission? As for the advantage you pretend to draw from your conquests, do you not know those of the Persians, who subjugated almost the whole world, and of the Greeks, who conquered the Persians, and of the ancient Romans, whose empire was so extensive? Did they follow the true religion? Did they not adore several divinities by a senseless idolatry? God sometimes gives victory to those who serve him; sometimes he permits them to be conquered when they offend him, to chastise them by the hands of the wicked.” Thus, every time the infidels returned to the charge, they were obliged to retire in confusion. Seven years passed thus in trials from which the constancy of the forty-two martyrs always came out victorious. They gave thanks to God that he gave them this means of expiating their past sins and prayed for the conversion of the Muslims; at last, their death was resolved. On the fifth day of March in the year 843, the traitor Baditzes, who, as we have related, had delivered the city of Amorium, came in the evening to the door of the prison, called Constantine, secretary of the patrician Aetius and companion of his glorious captivity, and, speaking to him through a hole, begged him that no one should hear them, because he had some secret to reveal to him. Then he said to him: “I have always loved the patrician, your master; having therefore learned

for certain that the caliph has resolved to put him to death tomorrow, if he does not consent to make the prayer with him, I have run to give you this counsel which may save your life. Persuade him to obey, and obey yourself, keeping in your heart the faith of the Christians, and God will pardon you on account of the necessity that is laid upon you." Constantine, wishing to repel this attack with an invincible weapon, made the sign of the cross against the mouth of the apostate, and said to him: "God will make thee perish, tempter! Begone, worker of iniquity!" Then he went back into the prison, and, having drawn aside the patrician his master, he announced to him that the door of the prison and that of heaven were about to be opened for him, without speaking to him of the rest, for fear of exposing him to temptation. Constantine, having learned this good news, invited his companions in captivity and in glory to sing all night the praises of God. The next day, an officer came on behalf of the caliph, with armed men and a terrible array; having had the doors of the prison opened, he ordered the most considerable of the prisoners to come out; they came out to the number of forty-two. The caliph's officer tried yet again to win them over, saying: "You do not wish, then, to make the prayer with the caliph today? for it is for that that he sent me, and I know that there are some among you who desire it; when it is seen how they will be honoured, those who have refused will deplore their ill fortune." The noble warriors answered: "We pray the one true God that not only the caliph, but you and the whole nation of the Arabs, may renounce the error of Mahomet and adore Jesus Christ, announced by the Prophets and by the Apostles, so far are we from abandoning the light for darkness." — "Take heed," said the officer, "to what you say, lest you repent of it; your disobedience will bring on you grave torments." — They answered: "We commend our souls to God, and we hope that, to the last breath, he will give us strength not to renounce his faith." — The officer resumed: "You will be reproached, on the day of judgment, with having left your children orphans and your wives widows; for the caliph could bring them here, and there is still time, if you will acknowledge the prophet Mahomet. The Romans obey a woman who will not be able to resist the orders of our master: as for goods, be not anxious about them; one year of the tribute of Egypt can enrich your descendants to the tenth generation." But our Saints preferred to be enriched for eternity; they burned to depart for their true country, which is heaven, and where they hoped one day to see and possess without fear their wives and their children; they cried out with a loud voice: "Anathema to Mahomet and to all who acknowledge him as a prophet!" They were therefore led to the place of execution, which was outside the city, on the banks of the Euphrates, where the officer who had judged them followed to speak to them again before the execution, and to send away absolved those whom the fear of death might have intimidated. He first had Theodore Crater presented to him, whose past life he knew: he thought that the reproaches he would make him publicly about it would produce what promises and threats had not been able to do; for it must be remarked that Theodore was a eunuch, that he had formerly been ordained priest, and that, having left the ecclesiastical state through a spirit of libertinism, he had taken up the sword and had advanced in the armies and at court to the office of protospatharius, that is to say first esquire, which was one of the finest of the empire. The officer said to him: "Thou who wast a priest among the Christians, who hast borne arms and killed men, in contempt of thy profession, why now wilt thou appear a Christian? Is it not better to implore the help of the prophet Mahomet, since thou hast no more hope in Jesus Christ, whom thou hast renounced?" — "It is that very thing," answered Theodore, "which obliges me to shed my blood for him, that he may pardon me my sins. If your slave, after having fled, came back to fight for you unto death, would you not pardon him?" — "Come then," continued the officer, "since thou wilt die." Immediately the Saint went and placed himself on the sand, and, having made his prayer to God, offered his head to the executioner, who, in cutting it off, procured him a happiness without end. The others followed him courageously and received the crown of martyrdom. The caliph, unable to help admiring their constancy, said, seeing the renegade Baditzes:

"If this man had been a true Christian, he would not have become an apostate"; and, on the instant, he had his head cut off. Thus this coward could not keep the temporal life to which he had sacrificed an eternity of happiness, and hell, which he had long carried with him, kept his soul. The Greeks and the Latins have

agreed to celebrate the memory of our holy Martyrs on 6 March, which is the day of their death.

Their history was written by Evodius, who lived almost at the same time. To these Acts must be joined what the authors of the *Byzantine History* have written on the end of the reign of Theophilus, such as Cedrenus, Zonaras, John Scylitzes, Leo the Grammarian and the continuators of Theophanes. Rohrbacher also dwells on it at great length in his *History of the Church* [*Histoire de l'Église*]; it is from that that we have drawn what we have said of it.

Saint Cyril, General of Mount Carmel

1224. — Pope: Honorius III. — Emperor of the East: Robert of Courtenay.

Excellent doctor, light of holy Church, blessed Cyril, faithful observer of the divine law, pray for us to the Son of God! — Breviary of the Carmelites.

In the year of grace 1126, the city of Constantinople, capital of the Greek empire, saw appear within the circuit of its walls an excellent flower, which has since produced admirable fruits of honour and holiness on Mount Carmel. This was the blessed Cyril, who showed from his tenderest years that he would one day be a very great servant of God and very devout to Our Lady. His parents, who held a considerable rank, took care to have him learn letters divine and human: he became very capable in them in a short time. After his studies, he embraced the ecclesiastical state, and received sacred Orders; he behaved, in the exercise of the divine ministry, with so much purity and holiness that he drew the admiration of everyone. He had a marvellous talent for teaching; he was very subtle in discussion, all inflamed with zeal and fervour in his preaching, and success often answered his generous efforts. Here is an excellent testimony of it. Towards the year 1169, the mother of the sultan of Iconium, in Cilicia, who was a Christian in her heart, seeing herself at a decrepit age, and, as they say, on the edge of the grave, revealed her secret to her son and persuaded him to call the priest Cyril, of whom so much praise was spoken, in order to be instructed by him in the principles of our holy religion. This design succeeded so happily that in a short time the sultan was perfectly instructed in the elements of our holy faith, and sent ambassadors expressly to Pope Alexander III, to learn from the Holy See the order he should observe in receiving holy Baptism. One may see the Pope's answer, reported by Cardinal Baronius, in the same year 1169, as also the miracles of the holy Cross, which our Lord worked as a sequel to this Baptism, of which our Saint had the honour of being the minister and agent. The following year, he was charged with an embassy to the same Pope Alexander, on the part of Manuel, son of Comnenus, emperor of Constantinople, to treat of the means of reuniting the Greek Church with the Latin Church: one sees by this in what esteem this holy Priest was held, in the Greek empire and in the countries of the East.

Meanwhile God, who destined him for solitude, and wished to make of him a Father of a congregation, caused an occasion to arise for him to withdraw from this world and its embarrassments, in order to occupy himself henceforth only with himself and his salvation. He entered into a discussion with the Patriarch of Constantinople, called Theodosius, touching the procession of the Holy Ghost, who, according to this schismatic, would have proceeded only from the Father, whereas the Catholic faith confesses, in its Creed, that he proceeds equally from the Father and the Son, as from one same principle. Theodosius, growing heated in this dispute, passed the bounds of the modesty and gravity which the dignity of his character required, so that he came to insults and threats against the holy priest Cyril. The latter, judging it fitting to yield to the storm, sought in his heart the means of isolating himself from men in order to have to deal only with God. While he was revolving these thoughts in his mind, the Blessed Virgin, whom he had taken from his youth for his protectress, appeared to him at night, with a face full of majesty and shining like the sun, and spoke to him these words: "My son, if thou wilt avoid the persecutions and errors of the Greeks, seek thy refuge on Mount Carmel, and follow the way that will be shown thee there." No more was needed for the blessed Cyril to determine him to sell his goods and give them to the poor: after which he embarked to go to Syria and pass into the Holy Land.

As soon as our Saint entered Jerusalem, he met there Saint Brocard, prior general of Mount Carmel, who, seeing him clad in a long robe in the Greek fashion, saluted him politely, and inquired of him the reason of his coming, and what design he had in his mind: “None other,” Cyril answered him, “than to do the will of God, and to give myself wholly to him and to the service of his most holy Mother.” Thereupon the holy Prior took him to his convent on Mount Carmel, and told him, on the way, of the wonders that God had formerly worked in that holy place by the holy prophets Elijah and Elisha, and how the monastic and religious state seemed to have taken its birth there through them and the other Prophets, their disciples, and that they had always had successors, even in the time of the Blessed Virgin. In fact, the history of this holy Order assures us that she herself, visiting this desert, called its inhabitants her brothers; and that, in recognition of such a favour, they were the first to build a church in her honour on that holy mountain. Cyril, edified and touched by this discourse, felt his heart gradually kindled with the love of this solitude; but he resolved on it altogether when, entering this monastery, he saw those separate cells, and those ancient grottoes of the prophets all filled with other holy religious, who lived not after the manner of men who dwell on the earth, but rather like the angels of paradise. He was confirmed in his resolution by a second apparition of the most holy Virgin, who assured him that this was the place where he was to dwell in order to live out of danger. Wherefore, the very next day, he asked for the holy habit, and received it to the great contentment of all the religious, who promised themselves to see revive, through the virtue of this novice, aged forty-six, the first fervour of their ancient Fathers. They were not deceived: for, as if he had as yet done nothing for God, he began this new life with an admirable exactness in the observance of the rule and with the practices of penance, which he embraced with an ardour beyond all expression. Some years after his religious profession, our Lord, not content that he should labour for himself, willed that he should labour also for others, and that the fine lights which he had given him should not always remain hidden under the bushel, but should spread in the house of God. For this purpose, Saint Basil, bishop of Caesarea, who is believed to have dwelt on the holy mountain of Carmel, appeared to him at night, during his prayers, to order him, on the part of Jesus Christ, to go to Armenia, to preach there the word of God and rekindle there the light of the Gospel, which was almost extinguished. Cyril communicated this vision to his superior, who, having recognized that it was good and came from God, gave him permission to follow it, and assigned him as companion a religious called Eusebius. These new workmen laboured so faithfully in the Lord’s vineyard that the whole nation of the Armenians, and the king himself, embraced the true doctrine and the belief of the Church, and submitted to the obedience of Pope Lucius III, in the year 1181.

Ten years passed in so holy a ministry; and then Saint Cyril, seeing the Church of Armenia sufficiently established and confirmed in the faith, withdrew to his monastery, where God favoured him with several heavenly visions. Once, celebrating holy Mass on the feast of Saint Hilarion, disciple of Saint Antony, an angel appeared to him holding in his hand a rod entwined with lilies, with two silver tablets written in Greek letters, by which our Lord made known to him several great secrets touching the future state of the Church, the ruin of the empire of the Greeks, and that of the faith in the provinces of the East; the event has justified these revelations. The report of so many virtues soon ran through the whole world, and came as far as Celestine III, who was raised to the sovereign pontificate in the year 1191. This Pope, wishing to recognize the merits of the religious Cyril, named him patriarch of Jerusalem; but the Saint could never bring himself to accept this dignity, loving far better to obey in the solitude of Mount Carmel than to command in the Church in the midst of a diocese. He wrote therefore to the Holy Father, excusing himself on his pretended incapacity and on the necessity he was under of working at his own salvation. But the more he thought to hide himself by his humility, the more God discovered him by the force of miracles: he had given a coin to a blind man who was asking alms: this poor man, knowing that it came from Cyril’s hand, applied it out of devotion to his eyes, and, in the same hour, recovered his sight. What is still more admirable is that he received, in addition, enough light in his soul to ask for the religious habit; but his request not being able to be granted on account of the prior’s absence, he conceived so much regret that he fell ill and died at the end of three days.

His funeral was held, and, although he had been a long time stretched in his coffin, and recognized as dead, being on the point of being laid in the earth, he rose up and said in a loud voice: “That the prayers of Cyril had raised him from the dead, as his merits had restored to him the sight of the body as well as of the soul.”

Meanwhile, Saint Brocard, general of the whole Order, having happily completed the pilgrimage of this mortal life, all the religious of the Holy Land, assembled at Mount Carmel for the election of a superior, cast their eyes on Father Cyril, although he was seventy-one years old: and, whatever resistance he could make, he was obliged to bend under the weight of this dignity, and to take the government of the whole Order. One would have said that he was only beginning his novitiate, so much did he redouble his first fervours: he diminished nothing of his prayers, his fasts or his austerities; he was always found the first at all the exercises and all the duties of a religious. He prayed particularly, and with great zeal, for the preservation of his Order, of which our Lord had made known to him the great persecutions to come; he knew even that the Christians, in punishment of their sins, would be shamefully driven from the Holy Land by the infidels, and the religious with them; so that Mount Carmel would become a true desert, depopulated of its holy inhabitants. But God, who does not abandon his elect in their afflictions, consoled his servant Cyril by a vision of his most holy Mother, who appeared to him for the third time, and said to him “that in a short time several great personages of divers provinces would enter the Order of Carmel; that it would multiply by this means, and that afterwards the monasteries and the religious, being favoured with the graces of heaven and strengthened by apostolic authority, would spread through the whole world, to the great advantage of the faithful.” Which has been accomplished since and is still accomplished every day.

During the seventeen years that he governed his Order, as third general of the Latins, he always showed a fervent love for Jesus Christ, an extreme charity towards his brethren, a sovereign prudence and an admirable humility in all his conduct; finally, laden with years and merits, broken with old age and overwhelmed with illnesses, after having devoutly received the Sacraments of the Church in the presence of his religious, and holily disposed all the affairs of his salvation, he peacefully rendered his soul to God, on 6 March 1224, aged 98. There is nevertheless a diversity of opinions, both for the year of his death and for his age, and for the duration of his generalate; but we leave the examination of them to the authors of his Order. His holy body was buried in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, beside those of the blessed Berthold and Brocard, his predecessors, and our Lord has made the glory he possesses in heaven appear by very great miracles which have been worked at his tomb. It is remarked, among others, that a young man who was going from Cyprus to the Holy Land having died on board the ship, the pilots gave his body to the religious of Mount Carmel to bury; but they, while a grave was being prepared, carried it to the tomb of the blessed Cyril, and suddenly, like the dead man who, for fear of the robbers of Syria, was thrown beside the bones of Elisha, he began to come to life again and to say in a loud voice “that Cyril had raised him from the dead and reserved him for a better life.” In fact, he became a religious, and remained twelve years in that same monastery.

This great Saint wrote several excellent works; among others, a treatise entitled *On the Angelic Oracle* [*de l’Oracle angélique*]; a book on the antiquity and progress of his Order, with epistles to different persons. Besides the chronicles and martyrologies of the Order of Carmelites, several writers worthy of credit have spoken of this holy Confessor, such as Trithemius and Aubert Le Mire, and the authors of the *Gallia christiana*; finally some others, whom the Rev. Father Jerome of Saint James, a Discalced Carmelite religious, has not omitted in the collection of the events of his life which he showed us.

Saint Colette or Nicolette, Virgin, Reformer of the Three Orders of Saint Francis

1380–1447. — Popes: Clement VII; Eugene IV. — Kings of France: Charles VI; Charles VII.

Lord God, I want nothing except to know you simply and my sins.

As Monseigneur Saint Bernard says, there is nothing more fitting to heal the conscience of the wounds of sin, and to purify the heart of ordid (evil) thoughts, than often to meditate and think on the Passion of Our Lord… — Life of Saint Colette, by P. de Vaux.

All the Saints are instruments of God's mercy towards the human race. But there are some whose mission is so great and whose influence so profound that they alone deserve the title of providential men. Such were, not to go back further, Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Dominic, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Bonaventure, and among women, Saint Catherine of Siena, Saint Teresa, etc. Among these great personages must be ranked Saint Colette,[1] reformer of the three Orders of Saint Francis, foundress of a great number of monasteries of both sexes, called by God to contribute by her merits and her influence to the extinction of the great Western schism.

Indeed, at the end of the 14th century, in which she was born, the Church found herself in the most lamentable state, divided between two, soon even three obediences, which disputed the faithful at the price of abusive dispensations and disorderly favours. Authority debased, despised; the holiest laws trampled underfoot, corruption of morals, the propagation of baneful doctrines, the religious families unfaithful to their rules, near to complete dissolution; the faithful scandalized and losing all religious sentiment: such were the natural fruits of this long schism.

During this time France, perhaps more guilty than any other nation in the birth of this schism, was invaded by the foreigner, torn by internal factions under a monarch afflicted with madness, bloodied everywhere by foreign war and civil war. She was lost without a supernatural envoy, Joan of Arc.

It is during all these sad events that Saint Colette accomplished her great mission. By her prayers, by her macerations, by the virtues of her disciples, by the radiance of her holiness, by her action on the minds of the great ones of the earth, she had a large share in the healing of the ills of Christian society.

In the city of Corbie, in the diocese of Amiens, there lived at that time an honest man, of irreproachable morals, in a humble condition, a carpenter by trade. His name was Robert Boellet. He had a particular gift for reconciling enemies and bringing back to virtue public sinners among women. He gathered them in a house where they served God and practised charity towards the poor and unfortunate without shelter. He had for wife Marguerite Moyon, a woman of proved virtue and great piety. She confessed and communicated often; she meditated unceasingly on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. After having lived long in marriage without children, by a special gift of divine goodness and against the ordinary laws of nature, they had at last a daughter. Marguerite was sixty years old when she brought into the world, on the day of the octave of the Epiphany 1381,[2] the child who was called Colette or little Nicole, from the name of Saint Nicholas, whom her parents had invoked to obtain posterity. Having reached the age of four, this child manifested so high a knowledge of God that it was impossible to doubt an extraordinary intervention of grace. So she kept away from the games and ordinary vanities of children. Hiding in the most secret retreats, she poured out before God continual prayers and already practised mental prayer. She grew in age and in virtues, encouraged by the examples of her mother, who taught her to meditate on the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Her charity, her mortification, were as ingenious as admirable. She deprived herself of her meals to give them to the poor. She watched long to pray and made her bed harder by putting pieces of wood in it. These virtues gave her a great empire both over men and over the heart of God. On the one hand, she exercised an attraction which she employed to bring to virtue all the persons who approached her, and on the other, she obtained from God miraculous favours, among others, to console her father, a sudden growth which gave her a very tall stature,[3] and to preserve her purity, the disappearance of the bright colours of her complexion.

Her parents being dead, she distributed all her patrimony to the poor. She made several trials of religious life in different communities; but she found nowhere what was necessary to satisfy her passion for sacrifices and her thirst for perfection. She wished however to separate herself from the world, and in an absolute enclosure

to serve God more freely. This was granted her. Some pious persons, with the consent of the abbot of Corbie, had a dwelling built for her against the walls of a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, not far from the church of Saint John the Evangelist. The abbot presided at her entrance into this cell. It was into his hands that she made profession of the Third Order of Saint Francis. In this new life, whether to embrace it or to practise it, she had for director and confessor a man of remarkable virtue, a fervent religious, Father John Pinet, a Franciscan of the convent of Hesdin and custos of Picardy. He formed her to the practice of the rule. In his absence she was guided by John Guyot, curé of Saint-Martin. In her cell God continued to grant her extraordinary favours. He made her see the miserable state of the world, the incalculable number of crimes and the souls hurling themselves into the eternal abysses in a crowd thicker than the flakes of snow in a winter storm. She was so frightened by these flames of hell which devoured them that she seized the bars of her window, and her hand clenched them so hard that for a long time she could not withdraw it. Another time our Saviour showed himself to her all bloody, all disfigured as he was in his Passion, deigning to explain to her familiarly the infinite measure of his sorrows and the manner in which he had borne them. The devil, for his part, assailed her in different ways, as he had done since her childhood. She escaped his snares and was frightened neither by his threats nor by his violences.

The venerable Father Pinet perceived in a vision a virgin marvellously beautiful, who was cultivating a vineyard with great labour and sustained attention. She pulled up with care everything that was harmful or useless and planted vigorous and fertile vines. It was revealed to him that this vineyard was the religious state and this virgin was Sister Colette, who all her life in fact worked to reform the state of her Order, as her excellent works proved afterwards.

As for her, shut up for nearly four years in her narrow dwelling, she practised there an extreme austerity and a severe abstinence. Covered with a hair-shirt, she girded herself besides with an iron chain armed with sharp points. She lay on the ground and had for pillow only a tree-trunk; her vigils and her prayers were continual. Thus she reduced her body to servitude and subjected it to the spirit. She knew supernaturally and announced the death of her director when she was still in her seclusion. From that moment, every year, on the anniversary day of his death, Father Pinet appeared to his spiritual daughter, all resplendent and full of joy. This vision filled her herself with great joy and strengthened her singularly in the love of God. She made progress every day in the rigorous penance which she had embraced. Frequent visions now sustained her in her austerities, now threw her into very painful perplexities. One day she saw herself carried to the foot of the throne of Jesus Christ. On one side, Saint John and Saint Magdalen asked that she might continue her solitary life; but Saint Francis and Saint Clare claimed her for the reform of their Orders. The Lord left the decision in the hands of his mother, and the Blessed Virgin acquiesced in the request of Saint Francis. Nevertheless, fearing to be deceived by the wiles of the ancient serpent, Saint Colette dared not undertake this work nor give credence to these visions. Wherefore she consulted on this subject men distinguished by their learning and piety. All unanimously were of opinion that she ought to consent to do this work commanded by God himself. She still doubted, however, imitating the incredulity of Zachary. She was struck dumb, and even three days later with blindness for three other days; at the end of this time, having promised to undertake the reform, she recovered speech and sight.

The Lord had struck her down; he wished to perfect her assent by a gentler action and at the same time to show her the marvellous effects of the work he imposed on her. In her cell, she saw suddenly grow a tall tree, of graceful form, covered with admirable flowers, sparkling like gold. They spread a very sweet perfume. Around this fair tree, several shoots sprang up. Seeing this and fearing some diabolical illusion, she pulled up and threw outside the great tree and the little ones. A few days after, she saw in the same place a similar tree with other shoots. This time the trees changed place and were transported from one spot to another. She was told that this great tree represented her, and the little ones figured all the souls which, by her care and labours, would be snatched from vice, brought to a better life and directed in the practice of the highest virtues.

Finally this work was to be produced in the various states of society and different countries of the earth.

Reflecting on these marvels and revelations, listening to the advice of wise persons, ecclesiastical and secular, she feared to offend God if she resisted obstinately his call. Wherefore, in fervent prayers with a profound feeling of humility, she offered herself wholly to God to accomplish his good pleasure. At once God sent her all that was necessary for such an enterprise. He gave her first a perfect knowledge of all she had to do to effect the reform. She wrote these things down at once and made herself a memorial of them. Then heaven sent her, to direct her conscience, a man of great virtue, of the Order of Saint Francis of Assisi, an exact observer of the rule, Father Henry de la Balme, a native of Bugey. He was setting out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, when a recluse of Avignon warned him that God imposed on him another journey and an important mission. He came therefore to offer himself to conduct Saint Colette to the sovereign Pontiff and assist her in all her enterprises. He had brought with him to Corbie a generous lady, widow of the lord of Brissay, and daughter of a most honourable family, named de Rochechouart. She desired to cooperate in the work of God. She offered her person, her family and her goods to conduct the servant of God to the sovereign Pontiff. This spontaneous and so benevolent offer inspired in Saint Colette a great gratitude towards Madame de Brissay and fervent thanksgivings to God, who made it more and more known that it was his work and that a happy success was to be expected from him.

However, to observe the canonical rules, the recluse needed a dispensation from her enclosure. Antony de Chalant, legate of the Holy See, recently arrived in Paris, gave commission to the bishop of Amiens, on 23 July 1406, to examine whether the reasons alleged were real, and in that case to promulgate the dispensation. By letters of 1 August, the prelate sent to Corbie his vicar general to execute the orders of the legate. The latter, having discussed and examined with prudence all the circumstances and motives, released her from her vow of perpetual seclusion to allow her to execute the orders of heaven. She left her cell on 3 August.

Then the schism still desolated the Church; in the judgment of the wisest men, private persons owed submission to the Pontiff in whose obedience they found themselves, until a general council had pronounced. There were saints in both parties. France was in the obedience of Benedict XIII; it was therefore to him that Saint Colette had to address herself, as she had already done through Father Henry to obtain dispensation from her enclosure.

The humble servant of God was conducted by the baroness of Brissay to the sovereign Pontiff, who then dwelt at Nice.[4] Prejudiced in her favour by certain extraordinary circumstances and by the information he had received from different persons, he received her with great kindness, her and all her suite, Father Henry, the baroness of Brissay, etc. He even knew, it is said, by a divine inspiration, her high virtue and her design. So, marvellous to tell, at her approach he rose and came to meet her. He received from her hand a little bag in which was the petition she had made to ask for what was necessary to the execution of her project. He took cognizance of it and then let her set forth her views at greater length. She asked especially two things: 1° to be admitted to the profession of the rule which Saint Clare received from Saint Francis and which was confirmed by Innocent IV; 2° that provision be made for the reform and re-establishment of the second Order of Saint Francis.[5]

These requests appeared so reasonable to the sovereign Pontiff that he was disposed to grant them immediately. However, most of his counsellors were of opinion to defer. They were frightened by the youth of the postulant and by the enormous charge she wished to assume. Therefore the answer was put off to another time. A plague broke out suddenly in Nice. It struck the opponents, in such a way that the finger of God was seen in it. The sovereign Pontiff, having called Saint Colette, addressed to her a remarkable discourse on the perfection of the evangelical state which she wished to embrace. He admitted her into the Order of Saint Clare, girding her with the cord and putting the veil on her head; he had her make profession; finally he established her mother and superior of all those whom she should reform or admit into the Order. It was with so much humility, fervour and respect that he performed this function that all expressed their

admiration. He seemed to them like an angel. The cardinals and the minister general of the Franciscans protested that they had never seen this pontiff discharge any ecclesiastical function with so much piety and respect. After having addressed to her further salutary warnings, and told her with what discretion and prudence she ought to act, he assured her of the eagerness with which he would always help her in the reform she was undertaking. Finally he recommended her warmly to her spiritual father, Father Henry de la Balme, and to the baroness of Brissay, and he added in a loud voice: Would that I were worthy to beg the bread necessary for this religious![6]

The humble servant of God returned to her native land and sought, by herself and through friends, in the dioceses of Amiens, Noyon and Paris, a suitable place to build a monastery. The Pope had authorized her to do so and had given her power to admit even nuns of other monasteries and recluses who should present themselves. But the ancient enemy, always ardent against the works of good people, raised up great obstacles for her. Her pious project met with adversaries who caused her much pain and persecuted her in every way. Moreover, her former friends themselves turned against her with violence and the Apostle's word was seen verified in her: *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* She was at last compelled to leave the place of her birth. Her director, whom the Pope had enjoined to direct and support her, seeing this unchaining of all the evil passions, took her with two faithful companions who had assisted her in her seclusion, Marie Sénéchal and Guillemette Chrétienne, into Burgundy, to his brother Alard de la Balme, who received them with much kindness. He was at once rewarded by the happy birth, after several days of fear, of her who was later to be Sister Perrine, inseparable companion of Saint Colette for thirty years.

Father Henry betook himself to the duchess of Geneva, Blanche of Savoy, and obtained from her the free disposal of a part of the château she possessed at La Balme. Saint Colette settled in this asylum with her companions. Soon she admitted Odile de la Balme, niece of Father Henry, and many other novices. She began with them the exercises of the religious life according to the rule of Saint Clare. The holiness of her life, her marvellous fervour, her perfection in all things began to shine forth and to excite admiration. A great respect, a pious affection and a profound veneration were conceived for her.

Meanwhile the duchess of Geneva obtained from Benedict XIII a bull for the erection of a monastery in the town of Rumilly, which belonged to her. But this open town was not suitable in those troubled times. Wherefore she was pleased to solicit from the Holy Father the grant of the monastery of the Poor Clares of Besançon, which was almost abandoned. There were only two nuns left. It was granted to the reformer by a bull dated 27 January 1408, on condition of providing for the maintenance of the two nuns out of the goods of the monastery. However, the venerable abbess did not hasten to take possession of it; she did not go to Besançon until 14 March 1410, accompanied by the duchess of Geneva and her niece, Mahaut of Savoy. An innumerable multitude, headed by the archbishop himself, came to receive her far outside the town. She was venerated as a saint. It was a triumph. Her first care was to strip herself of the revenues belonging to the convent and to provide for the needs of the two nuns. One embraced the reform, the other entered among the Benedictines. She re-established the most exact observance of the rule of Saint Clare, and divine grace soon brought her a great number of daughters of kings, dukes, princes, counts, barons, burghers of every state and condition. They lived in an extreme austerity and a true poverty, had no revenues nor assured goods, neither in particular nor in common. All the year they fasted and never ate meat; summer and winter they walked barefoot; separated by a strict enclosure from society and from all intercourse with men, ecclesiastical as well as secular, they lived in a delicate purity and a fervent devotion, practising absolute obedience according to the rule of the first founder and glorious chief Saint Francis. To favour this exact observance, the minister general of the Franciscans had given them Father Henry for confessor.

Soon the monastery of Besançon, which had become deserted through relaxation, could not hold all the chosen souls which the exact observance attracted there. A first swarm went to found the house of Auxonne in 1412; a second, that of Poligny in 1415. The latter, poor and bare, was always more pleasing to the

passionate lover of poverty. She made a longer stay there than in all the others. Is it for this that Providence willed that her mortal remains should find there their rest and the honours of which they are worthy?[7] When these three houses were well regulated, the development of the reform took a new flight. Saint Colette installed her daughters at Bellegarde or Seurre and at Moulins in 1423, at Aigueperse and Decize in 1424,[8] at Vevey in Savoy in 1425, at Orbe[9] in 1427, at Le Puy in 1432, at Castres, at Lézignan and at Béziers in 1433. Father Henry, for his part, under the inspiration of Saint Colette, laboured for the reform of the monasteries of men. There was at Dole a convent of recent foundation where an attempt at reform seems to have failed. This house was given to Saint Colette and to Father Henry by apostolic authority. The young abbess, in leading her religious to Auxonne, stopped there, and in the midst of multiplied ecstasies, implanted the reform there.[10] A suit brought by some relaxed religious could not destroy the work, and Dole became for men what Besançon was for women, an abundant nursery. At the same time other monasteries were founded also at Chariez, near Vesoul, and at Sellières, not far from Lons-le-Saunier. Later, Saint Colette herself established the reform in the convent of Azille, near Narbonne. Her work could not subsist, even among the Poor Clares, unless it had to direct it religious animated by her spirit, and not partisans of baneful mitigations. Besides, if the second Order exercises a salutary action on the world by its examples and counsels, the first, by the same means, and moreover by preaching and its more frequent relations with the faithful, works far more for the regeneration of Christian society. And such was the mission of Saint Colette. Therefore her religious multiplied rapidly. They were approved and encouraged by the council of Constance. “By the purity of their life,” says Wadding, “the perfect observance of their rule, they acquired so high a reputation that everywhere such men were wanted.” So, before her death, Saint Colette had the happiness of seeing them called by the sovereign Pontiff for the reform of the Mother-House of the whole Order, the convent of Ara Coeli at Rome. Finally, their progress was so rapid that thirty-eight years after Saint Colette, according to their necrologies, they were to number thirty-four thousand, labouring to revive Christian life in the world. What power of action! what fecundity! History has preserved fewer traces of the reform of the monasteries of men, because Saint Colette effected it through intermediaries; nevertheless it is no less certain that she was the living centre of that immense movement of renewal which took place in the 15th century. Even for the second Order, the chronicles have been wrong to speak only of the convents where Saint Colette herself dwelt. Now, through her disciples, she also developed her work immensely, and in her lifetime it crossed the Pyrenees and the Alps, by the cooperation of Saint Bernardine of Siena. The monasteries which she founded herself were hearths which spread afar the sacred fire of charity, and most of them, having passed through the revolutionary storm, still faithfully keep her rule and her observances. They are still ardent enough to furnish, without weakening, burning coals with which other spiritual hearths are lit.

These works put Saint Colette in relation with the greatest personages of the world. It was Duke John of Burgundy who gave her his arsenal for the convent of Poligny; the duke of Bourbon founded the monastery of Moulins. The ex-king of Naples, James of Bourbon, of the royal family of France, after having cooperated in the foundation of several convents and given his daughters to the reform, was himself converted, became a disciple of Saint Colette and embraced the reform. Others imitated them elsewhere. The reward that all these great ones of the earth ambitioned was to see the servant of God sometimes, to have a share in her prayers, to receive her counsels and sometimes her reproaches inspired by Christian charity. It is not astonishing that they had so much confidence in her intercession. Her life was more angelic than human, and heaven confirmed her mission, proved the power of her prayers by prodigies and miracles. In imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ and Saint Francis, she fasted for forty days and forty nights without any food. Her vigils and her prayers were continual; her bodily sufferings, her tribulations, her persecutions incessant. The Lord permitted the devil to attack her in a visible manner by all sorts of frightful or hideous or cruel illusions.

But he also sustained her by extraordinary favours. One day, seated on the ground in the midst of her daughters, she was speaking to them of the extreme poverty which our Lord with his holy Mother and the Apostles was pleased to suffer for us. She exhorted them to imitate him. While she spoke, the twelve

Apostles, like twelve venerable old men clothed in white robes, surrounded her and remained beside her until she ceased speaking. Then they rose into the air and the servant of God with them, until they disappeared from the eyes of the ravished sisters. Often in her prayer she fell into ecstasy, was lifted from the ground, and sometimes so high that she disappeared. A like favour was granted her when she was going to Auxonne and to Dole, even in the presence of the religious. Her ecstasy lasted during almost all the journey. She remained very often rapt for several days. Obedience recalled her to herself. At the word of Father Henry, she came out of the divine colloquy. Another time a marvellous flame escaping from her mouth lit up her oratory.

Through the intermediary of the virgin apostle, Saint John the Evangelist, a gold ring, badge of her incomparable purity, was put on her finger as on the true spouse of the King of kings. Several have seen and touched this ring, and she sometimes gave it to religious to whom she entrusted a dangerous mission, to preserve them from all accident. She received also from heaven a gold cross enclosing a relic of the true cross, which is still preserved in the monastery of Poligny.[11] God took up her defence by prodigies. She was threatened with death at Decize, because the nuns had, by mistake, rung Matins before the hour and the inhabitants had believed it a treacherous signal given to the enemy; but the day was advanced for this town and Saint Colette glorified. In her numerous journeys, her prayers chained the highwaymen or the men of war, as dangerous in that time. They calmed swollen rivers, made streams fordable or firmed the waters under her feet.

A saint was then stirring the world by his preachings and the innumerable prodigies which accompanied them: this was Saint Vincent Ferrer. He had returned to Spain when Saint Colette was shown to him, prostrate before the divine Majesty, asking grace with an extreme fervour for the sins and iniquities of men. The God of all mercy and all consolation answered her thus: My daughter, what would you have me do? Each day I suffer injuries and opprobrium from sinners; they blaspheme ceaselessly and they despise me. They take no account of my commandments. It is on account of this revelation that the great doctor came back from Aragon to Burgundy, always preaching. He went to spend a fortnight at Poligny, with Saint Colette. They consoled and edified each other in heavenly conversations.

Above all they occupied themselves with the evils of the Church and the measures to be taken to make them cease. The council of Constance was then assembled. They wrote to it a common letter to encourage the Fathers in their efforts, assuring them of a happy success. These grave interests were always the great preoccupation of this seraphic soul. It is for this that she mortified herself so cruelly, that she prayed and had others pray. In her relations with the world, with the great ones of the earth, working for their conversion, she did not lose sight of this great cause of the Church. When the council of Basle was assembled, before it degenerated altogether into a schismatic conventicle, she kept up an admirable correspondence with the cardinal who presided over it. He earnestly begged the help of the prayers of her whom he called his mother, and even asked in the name of the council her intervention in delicate affairs.

By her counsels and her prayers she strove to prevent Amadeus of Savoy from allowing a sacrilegious tiara to be imposed on him by the conventicle of Basle. It was in vain. But she was firm in her resistance to the antipope who had been, as a prince, her protector and friend. Her daughters of Vevey and Orbe did not submit to him, although inhabiting a country which recognized him. In order not to prolong this notice too much, many other admirable facts and prodigies worked by her prayers must be passed over in silence. She knew the secret of hearts and possessed the gift of prophecy in a very high degree. Moreover, she raised several dead to life, four grown persons who afterwards lived a long time, and still-born children to the number of more than a hundred. One of them was already buried outside Holy Land when the idea came to present it to her. She recalled also to life, but for a few moments only, a nun of Poligny who had died in a state of sin, and who, after having confessed, put herself back in the coffin.

The life spiritual life, order and regularity were assured in the establishments of Burgundy and of the south. Saint Colette could not forget Picardy, which besides claimed her. Sovereign of that province, the duke of

Burgundy wished also to sanctify it by convents of Poor Clares. He had chosen Hesdin. In 1441, Colette set out with a suitable number of her daughters and came to found a convent in that town. Ghent had been asking for her for twelve years; she led a colony there in 1443 and finally another to Amiens, in 1444. She desired to procure the same good for Corbie. The works were even begun there; but the obstinate resistance of the Benedictine religious caused this enterprise to fail, in spite of the successive intervention of the duke of Burgundy, the king of France and the Pope himself.

Saint Colette's work was finished. By her solicitude and her care she had either built entirely, or brought back to the observance of the primitive rules, strengthened by her wise regulations, seventeen monasteries of sisters. She had, by her influence, had many others reformed. For the service of these houses, she had founded or reformed a great number of monasteries of men. Many nobles or simple Christians, women of every condition, excited by her examples and her wise counsels, had embraced the Third Order of Saint Francis, so that the three Orders had been reformed and renewed by her. The time came when the Lord wished to deliver his faithful servant from the pains and labours of this world, to exalt her, crown her and glorify her. He led her to the place where she was to end her penitent life.

She knew the will of God concerning her. She had received at Hesdin new favours, still more profound knowledge of the mysteries, a livelier sense of the sorrows of our Saviour, above all of his agony in the Garden of Olives. She shared deeply in his anguish. To suffer thus was her life. For her, the most unhappy day would have been the day on which she should have had nothing to suffer; that is one of her sayings. God satisfied her. All her life, her sufferings were continual and unspeakable. They were suspended only when she had business to transact. They took her again afterwards more poignant than ever. It was to perfect her likeness to the Saviour that divine mercy added still something to sorrows already without measure. Thus prepared, she betook herself to Ghent about the feast of Saint Nicholas of 1446.

At the end of February of the following year, she gave her last instructions to her religious, made her last recommendations to her confessor Peter de Vaux, assuring him again that the reform was the work of God and that she had nothing to change in what she had done. At last, on Monday 6 March 1447, at eight o'clock in the morning, she rendered her soul to God. Her body remained flexible and acquired even a greater beauty after her death. More than thirty thousand persons wished to contemplate it. It was necessary to pierce a special door to let out this multitude which could not retrace its steps, pressed as it was by those who arrived. It was laid without pomp in the cemetery of the monastery, as she had ordered.[12]

RELICS AND CULT OF SAINT COLETTE. — HER EULOGY

At the hour of her death, in one of her houses, a multitude of angels was heard producing a heavenly harmony, and one of them said: The venerable religious Sister Colette has gone to the Lord. In another, she appeared all resplendent to a nun who had a singular devotion towards her. In a third, she showed herself also in a nun's habit, but in so great a beauty and with so brilliant a face that the sister could not explain it nor find a point of comparison. As this sister had never seen her, a child who accompanied Saint Colette said: It is Sister Colette, it is Sister Colette. Many other marvels took place, maintained, even increased the veneration that had been vowed to her during her life. Peoples and religious alike invoked her and obtained signal favours. Nevertheless, the inquiries for her canonization could not be begun until twenty-four years after her death. Her tomb, from which a delicious perfume escaped, was covered with an oratory. In 1492 and 1493, the recognition of the relics was made and the tomb adorned. Soon began the instances of princes and ecclesiastical personages to obtain her canonization. There was no opposition. The sovereign Pontiffs testified the desire to be able to pronounce it as soon as possible. But the journeys were long; the proceedings multiplied; a pope died; troubles arose and the acts accomplished became in part insufficient. It was necessary to begin again. Thus the affair dragged on. Saint Pius V wished to finish it by dispensing with formalities, when he died without having been able to carry out his design. At last, in 1604, the Poor Clares

of Ghent were allowed to celebrate the office of Saint Colette, and successively other houses. In 1624, her cell at Corbie, which had become a much frequented oratory, was rebuilt, and a chapel erected beside it by the munificence of the princes of Lorraine and of the royal family of France. From then on, the concourse of pilgrims to this sanctuary became innumerable. They came from all Picardy and the neighbouring provinces. In 1629, the Capuchins made everywhere very regular inquiries, and finally, in 1740, Benedict XIV declared that she enjoyed a very legitimate immemorial cult.

While the preparatory acts of canonization were being carried on, the philosophic and schematic spirit of Joseph II, emperor of Austria, prepared great bitterness for the daughters of Saint Colette. In 1783, he suppressed the convent of Ghent with so many others. The religious, through the intervention of Madame Louise of France, daughter of Louis XV and a Carmelite of Saint-Denis, obtained leave to carry away the relics of their foundress. Received at Poligny with a wholly Christian charity, they brought thither their precious treasure. It happily passed through the Revolution and is still today surrounded with the veneration and piety of all Christians. At last, on 24 May 1807, the sovereign Pontiff was able to put into execution the decree given as early as 1790, and to proceed to the solemn canonization of Saint Colette. The shrine of Poligny was then opened to take out several relics. On 1 May 1867 it was opened again to take out a rib granted to the town of Corbie. This relic is venerated in the ancient church against which Saint Colette's seclusion was made. It is nearly at the place where was the opening through which Saint Colette confessed, received communion and adored the Blessed Sacrament. Below one sees pieces of the old grille which closed this opening, and which is preserved at Bruges, and fragments of a robe of the Saint and of a veil which was half burned by the flame issuing from her mouth.

"The patroness of Corbie and of Ghent is honoured, on 6 March, in the dioceses of Amiens, of Paris, of Besançon, and in all those of Belgium. Her name is inscribed in the Franciscan martyrologies of recent date, in those of Molanus, Canisius, Ferrari, du Saussay, etc.

"The seclusion of Saint Colette, at Corbie, had been destroyed, at the time when the church of Saint-Stephen was sold to a private person. M. the abbé Douillet, anxious to restore to the cult of Saint Colette its ancient splendour, bought back this monument, of which one part serves as a chapel, and the other as a parish orphanage, under the direction of the Franciscan sisters of Calais. 'The zealous dean of Corbie did not confine himself to restoring, in his parish, the cult and the monuments of Saint Colette; for some time he has been soliciting the Holy See to have her office introduced into the Roman breviary.'"

The humility of Saint Colette was as profound as possible. In her eyes, her offences were horrible. She was vile and abject, unworthy to live in the religious state. These are her expressions. It was because she was so completely stripped of herself that God could work such great things through her.

She had a burning zeal, an indefatigable ardour for the divine glory. Knowing from her tenderest childhood the greatness of the sovereign majesty and his immense goodness, she threw herself into his service with an ever livelier impulse. She forgot her fatigues, her weakness, her sufferings, and overcoming everything by her courage, after having seemed in the morning near to succumb, she was in the evening, at the end of a painful journey, stronger and capable of passing yet another night in prayers, tears and sufferings.

It is not astonishing that, animated with such sentiments, she especially deplored and combated the profanation of Sundays and feast days. It was for her a two-edged sword which pierced her heart. So, on every occasion, in giving her advice to preachers, to princes, to authorities of all degrees, to simple private persons, she prayed, she conjured that the feasts be exactly observed. She saw the glory of God and the happiness of men equally interested in the fulfilment of this duty.

Her seraphic love of God embraced naturally the neighbour in its ardent flames. Still a child, she gave admirable proofs of it. During all her life, she was not content to pray for the poor nor to teach them by the example of her voluntary poverty to bear patiently their pains and privations, which is so important, but she

always pleaded with the great and the rich the cause of the little ones and the needy. Her examples were powerful. She became the channel of abundant alms. She stripped her houses to meet pressing needs. So, more than once, God multiplied the provisions miraculously to reward her and enable her to continue her abundant alms.

In reading these few pages on her life, one can see what were her faith, her confidence in God, her divine charity, her obedience, her mortification. Need we praise her delicate and incomparable purity? Does not the miracle she obtained in her youth, which extinguished the bright colours of her face, say enough? This delicacy never belied itself, that is evident. Her presence inspired, commanded purity or at least the desire of that angelic virtue. Those who did not undergo this ascendancy were soon punished and confounded. Two knights visiting her, one was turning over improper thoughts in his mind. Saint Colette uttered a cry of horror which made him come back to himself. She had read in his heart.

We have only indicated previously the innumerable marvels she wrought during her life, the signal favours she obtained from heaven. We cannot extend ourselves further on the miracles obtained by her intercession since her glorious death. She assists those who invoke her in all their spiritual and bodily ills. Nevertheless, some seem to be the special object of her power with God. She obtains posterity for barren spouses; she protects children against the multiplied dangers of the first times of their existence, above all that of not receiving baptism. She delivers from neuralgia. By water blessed with her bones, she heals sick eyes and many other infirmities.

She helps to resist temptations, troubles, illusions caused by the devil, etc., etc. We could cite recent examples which prove the efficacy of her intercession in these different circumstances. Here are the facts which may be reproduced in the paintings and sculptures intended to represent Saint Colette:

Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Clare appear to her to recommend to her the reformation of the seraphic Order.

In order to reward her tender devotion to the sufferings of the Saviour, the Most Holy Virgin places in her arms the body of our Lord, as it was when he was taken down from the cross. As a result of this devotion, every day, about noon, she felt in her person the sorrows of Calvary.

Birds flutter round her head; a lamb lies at her feet, or stands with its two forelegs on her knees. As much as Saint Colette had horror of impure little creatures: slugs, ants, flies, so much did she love those which are the symbol of purity and innocence: lambs, turtle-doves. Once a lark was brought to her, that melodious bird which ceaselessly sings the praises of God, and which, true disciple of the Gospel, is anxious neither for food nor for shelter; she made it her companion and shared with it the poor bread of the convent. From that moment, the larks of the fields came to warble their concerts at the window of her oratory, to peck and eat in her hand. Another person offered her a lamb, which was a great consolation to her, both because it represented to her the spotless Lamb, and because at the moment of the consecration this charming companion of her solitude bent its knees before the Blessed Sacrament; after which it rose again by itself.[13]

Angels surround her bed. If we are to believe the first author of her life, who was her confessor, when the blessed mother Colette was ill, and remained alone during the night, the angels came to visit her, watched over her and, making themselves her infirmarians, rendered her all the services which her sufferings and her dignity as spouse of the Sovereign King required.[14] “Father Ignatius, in his *History of the Mayors of Abbeville* (p. 514), gave the engraving of a picture which was found in his time in the church of Saint-Giles of Abbeville. The following inscription indicated the subject:

> *SAINT COLETTE, VIRGIN, PRAYING THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD TO INTERCEDE FOR SINNERS WITH HER SON.*
>
> *SHE APPEARED TO HER HOLDING HER LITTLE CHILD JESUS, ALL BLOODY, IN A DISH, AND SAID TO HER:*

"M. Crauck, of Amiens, is the author of a fine and large composition which shows us the virgin of Corbie delivering a soul from the flames of purgatory.

"Let us mention, among the statues, the colossal statue which M. the abbé Douillet has had erected on the hill called the Carrière Sainte-Colette [Saint Colette's Quarry]. Tradition relates that she dwelt for some time in these quarries, when, after her return from Nice, she was so ill received by her compatriots.

"Martin de Vos engraved a popular image, now become rare, of Saint Colette, patroness of carpenters."

Prayer composed by Cardinal Bona for the Roman breviary: — Lord Jesus Christ, who didst fill with heavenly gifts the blessed virgin Colette, grant us, we beseech thee, that, imitating her virtues on earth, we may enjoy with her the eternal joys in heaven. Amen.

Another Prayer which an angel brought from heaven to Saint Colette:

(One recites the *Ave Maria* and the *Gloria Patri* before saying the Prayer.) Blessed be the hour of the birth of the God-Man; blessed be the Holy Spirit, of whom Jesus Christ was conceived; blessed be the glorious Virgin Mary, of whom this God-Man was born; may the Lord hear my prayers, through the intercession of this glorious Virgin Mary, and by the remembrance of that most sacred hour at which the God-Man was born; may all my desires be fulfilled for their glory and for my salvation. O good Jesus! O Jesus Redeemer! forsake me not and punish not my sins as they deserve; but hear my most humble prayer, and grant me what I ask of thee, by the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin, and for the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

The Lord Bishop of Amiens has granted forty days' indulgence to those who recite this prayer. We owe this fine Life of Saint Colette to M. the abbé Douillet, curé-dean of Corbie, who has kindly abridged, for the *Petits Bollandistes*, a considerable work which he published on the holy reformer whose cradle his parish was. — The work of M. the abbé Douillet appeared in 1869, at Paris, from Bray and Retaux, in-12 of 500 pages. It is the most exact and most complete Life of Saint Colette. — Only the passages in quotation marks are by M. Corblet, who has rendered a real service to the French language by publishing, in his *Hagiographie du diocèse d'Amiens*, the Life of the Saint written in the naïve, unctuous, inimitable style of the 15th century.

> *Sainte Colette, Tire-moi les jambettes, Rends-moi sage et parfaite. [Saint Colette, stretch my little legs, make me wise and perfect.]*

Extract from the *Life of Saint Colette*, written from the mystical point of view by Peter de Vaux, her last confessor (1418), and reproduced by M. Corblet in the *Hagiographie du diocèse d'Amiens*.

Here is a less terrible vision, which could furnish the subject of another graceful picture: "And when she was at the convent of Besançon, often, after Compline, she had the brothers sing in the chapel of Saint Anne the antiphon *Angeli*,

archangeli. The reason why she said the office of All Saints rather than any other and why she had the said antiphon sung in the chapel of Madame Saint Anne was that she had very humbly commended herself to the said holy Lady in the apparition which she made to her in her own person. In one of her raptures, by the grace of God, there was made manifest to her the care, solicitude and diligence that the glorious lady Saint Anne had for all her affairs. And the said lady was shown to her gloriously and joyfully in a shining and resplendent habit, carrying a very fair and rich golden vessel, but in the form of a basket, with which she begged and sought from the glorious saints, men and women, of paradise their suffrages and prayers to God, that he might be propitious to her little handmaid, and that the holy undertaking which he had given her might come to its effect."

Saint Quiriacus or Cyriacus of Trier (4th century)

(6 March)

Saint Quiriacus filled near Saint Maximin the functions of Mass-server. Among other practices of piety, he was accustomed to visit frequently all the monasteries and oratories. This holy man, wishing to avoid all vainglory, judged it good to choose the night-time for these exercises. Some clerics, jealous of his virtues, were not long in incriminating his conduct; they went so far as to accuse him of a shameful action before Saint Maximin. The holy bishop, who had heard these accusations with pain, suspended his judgment and asked God to enlighten him on an affair so uncertain in his eyes. One day, at the moment when the bishop was preparing to celebrate the holy mysteries, and when Quiriacus was standing humbly behind the door of the church, an angel appeared to the Pontiff and warned him that his servant was innocent. “These things,” says Sigehard, author of the book of the miracles of Saint Maximin, “these things, spread by the powerful voice of fame among all the ancient peoples, and handed down to us, deserve to find a place here; they are true; the paintings of the churches attest it to us, and we have seen, in the old church of Saint Quiriacus, in the crypt raised over his tomb, one of these paintings going back to the highest antiquity and already almost effaced by time.”

Saint Fridolin, Abbot of Saint-Hilary of Poitiers (540)

(6 March)

Ireland, that island which has remained faithful to Catholicism, and to which heretical England makes pay so dear for its fidelity, was the native land of Saint Fridolin, towards the end of the 5th century. Enlightened by a supernatural reason, and in spite of the seductions of fortune and of an illustrious rank, he felt himself drawn, from his childhood, towards the humble poverty of the Gospel. Strong and serious studies had prepared him for the priesthood; he was scarcely clothed with it when he was seen to apply himself ardently to the preaching of the holy word. The praises he deserved there made the young priest tremble; he feared lest vanity should come to deceive him, and, thinking that he could not follow too perfectly the counsel of the Saviour, he sold his goods and distributed them to the poor, to orphans and to churches. Thus, freed from every fetter, he left his country and his family, stopping wherever he could announce the faith. His apostolic journeys brought him as far as the Gauls, a considerable portion of which he evangelized, and finally to Poitiers, where he found a population disposed to welcome and listen to him. His examples and his doctrine were not long in winning him public confidence. The renown of Saint Hilary had attracted him above all to his tomb: his own made it believed that no one was more worthy to govern the monastery, already so celebrated, in which the memory of the holy patron of the Poitevins lived. He was therefore named abbot of it. This took place under the reign of Clovis, after the year 481, and before the year 507.

Saint Peter Damian, bishop of Ostia, pronounced, about the middle of the 11th century, on the occasion of a translation of the relics of Saint Hilary, a discourse in which he tells us, on the administration of Saint Fridolin, particulars of high interest, which he held, he says, from the very tradition preserved at Poitiers. The principal one is connected with the reconstruction of the monastery which had perished with the church of Saint-Hilary, following a siege of that city by the Visigoths. However reduced these places were, sanctified by so many virtues and by the presence of the holy body of which the misfortunes of war had forced the trace to be lost, regularity was perfect there, study and work occupied all the hours that prayer did not claim, and this edifying order was due to the care of the holy abbot, whose vigilance maintained there the love of discipline and fervour. Fridolin showed himself therefore in everything worthy of the great work to which Providence had destined him, and this maternal Providence did not fail him when, in favour of the French monarchy, it allowed Clovis to crush the last army of the Visigoths in the plains of Voulon.[1] When all the country was full of joy at this victory, and one night when Saint Fridolin was praying in silence, Saint Hilary appeared to him, and, after having revealed to him the place where his relics were hidden, imperiously gave him the order to go, accompanied by Adelphius, then bishop of Poitiers, to find without delay the king of the

Franks, and to ask him without hesitation the sums necessary for the reconstruction of the buildings on a plan more vast and more worthy of their object. He wished also that in this new dwelling the holy abbot should have a suitable place prepared where the holy body could be laid as solemnly as possible. Fridolin and Adelphius faithfully fulfilled this mandate. The king received them with kindness, granted their request, and treated them with a generosity worthy of him, giving them lands and money. Thus were restored the church and monastery of Saint-Hilary, at the beginning of the 6th century. It was for Clovis a noble way of inaugurating his victory over the Arian hordes of Alaric. By this important enterprise, Fridolin believed he had accomplished the providential mission which had impelled him into Poitou; for, shortly after, Saint Hilary appearing to him again, warned him to betake himself to an island of Liguria, called at that time Gallinaria, to raise a church there in his honour. No less prompt to obey than the first time, the docile religious handed over the government to one of his relatives, who had come from Scotland to follow the monastic life with him there. The precise time at which Saint Fridolin set out for eastern France and Switzerland, which were to be the principal theatres of his apostolate, is not known. He stopped in various places before settling, preaching the Catholic faith with the zeal of an apostle. During his journeys he built several monasteries and churches, among others, on the Moselle, in Lorraine, the one which was first called Hilariacum, and since Saint-Avold or Saint-Nabor, and a church in the Vosges, which authors think to be that of Neuwiller. As for the church he built at Strasbourg, under the name of the same Saint-Hilary, it is impossible to find any vestige of it. Grandidier thinks that it perhaps existed on the spot where was afterwards built the convent of the Dominicans, called since the Temple-Neuf, and which still today forms part of the first enclosure of the town. On leaving Strasbourg, Fridolin travelled through Alsace, announcing everywhere the word of God and seeking to destroy the remains of paganism. There was seen, before our latest troubles, in the environs of Colmar and at some distance from Wettolsheim, a very ancient church, dedicated to Saint Fridolin. After many researches, we found nothing in history which authorizes us to believe that it owed its origin to the Saint whose name it bore: it was a much frequented pilgrimage for children’s diseases. Meanwhile, Saint Hilary, whose cult Fridolin established wherever he passed, appeared to him and said: “In the middle of the Rhine, thou wilt find a desert island; it is there that thou must go to pass the rest of thy life, to convert the riverside peoples.” Now the Rhine is very long; Fridolin, not knowing where the island in question precisely lay, went up the banks of the river at a venture, to its source in Switzerland; then he came down again as far as the environs of Lake Constance, Schaffhausen and Basle; and he stopped at last on an island situated in the neighbourhood of the present village of Säckingen. He had recognized that it was there he was to pass the rest of his life. It was an altogether desert island; there was seen on it only meagre pastures, where the inhabitants of the neighbouring banks led their flocks to graze. Fridolin began by seeking a favourable site for the building of a church. The riverside people, having remarked the comings and goings of the holy abbot, took him for a vagabond who came to steal their cattle. In vain did he try to persuade them to the contrary; they did not believe him, ill-treated him and drove him out shamefully.

Fridolin, faithful to his mission, was not discouraged; driven several times from the island, he returned as many times: to end it, he addressed himself to the powerful king Clovis, to ask aid and protection of him. The king not only gave him the island, but also handed him a diploma by virtue of which whoever should trouble him in the possession of this domain should be punished with death. As the island was still uncultivated and uninhabitable, Fridolin went to dwell for some time with a rich man named Wacher, who lived not far from there. When he presented himself with his companions, he was very badly received by the latter’s wife; she said to him: “How dare you impose such a burden on us in this time of scarcity? Besides, you see well that our house is not large enough to lodge so many people.” — While she was pouring out these coarse insults, her husband came in, and as he already knew that Fridolin was a holy man, he silenced her and received the foreign missionaries with joy. A short time after, their hostess having become the mother of a daughter, Wacher begged Fridolin to be her godfather. New anger and new transports of the woman. However, by dint

of patience and resignation, Fridolin and his companions ended by winning the confidence and esteem of their hostess, who went so far as to beg Fridolin herself to direct the education and instruction of her daughter. This god-daughter of the holy abbot became later the superior of the convent of women which Fridolin established on the island, and as long as they lived, Wacher and his wife seconded him powerfully, by their fortune, in all his enterprises. Only then did Fridolin's labours begin in earnest. They were of two sorts; first he had the forests cleared and the brambles and bushes pulled up, then, at the same time, he preached the word of God and announced the Gospel to the pagans. But then King Clovis being dead, the enemies of Fridolin (for who has not enemies?) raised their heads, and wished to expel him again from the island. However, to give themselves an appearance of justice, they brought the dispute before the judges of the country. These, being the fellow-countrymen of the claimants, were little favourable to Fridolin. In this extremity, our Saint had recourse to prayer. Now the situation of the island was such that, on one side, it was bathed by the main course of the river, while on the other side there was only a small arm, which, most often, was dry; it filled with water only at the melting of the snows. The eve of the day on which the judges were to come to the island to pronounce judgment, Fridolin had some fir trees cut down and thrown into the main course of the Rhine, at the head of the island; after that he spent the night in prayer, beseeching God to work a miracle. The miracle took place: the next morning the Rhine had changed its course; that is to say that, contrary to what had happened until then, the left side of the island was bathed by the waters of the river, while the right side was dry. At the sight of this miracle, the judges and the people recognized that Fridolin was manifestly protected by God, and they humbly asked his pardon for having wished to defraud him of a property which belonged to him legitimately on so many titles.

Only then could Fridolin hasten the works of building the church and the two convents, one of which was destined to form missionaries, and the other to serve as an asylum for nuns. Fridolin was the soul of both communities; that is to say that both marched with great strides under his direction and guided by his example, in the ways of salvation and of the apostolic ministry. Little by little a great number of pious colonists, desirous of profiting by the spiritual helps abundantly dispensed by the disciples of the holy abbot, came and settled in the country; and thus was born the borough of Säckingen, which still exists today, and whose inhabitants have a particular veneration for Saint Fridolin.

Fridolin passed the last years of his life in this retreat, and awaited the hour of the Lord. He died, according to the Bollandists, Baillet and Longueval, in 538 or 540; but Dom Rivet has refuted these authors and proved that Saint Fridolin was still living under the reign of Sigebert I, and that he did not leave France, to go and announce the true faith in the Rhenish provinces, until about the year 565. God glorified the tomb of our Saint by a great number of miracles: which made his name celebrated in France, in Germany, in Switzerland, in the Low Countries, and even in England, Scotland and Ireland. He is honoured as patron with Saint Hilary, not only at Säckingen and in most of the monasteries he founded, but also at the present day in many churches of Switzerland. He is the tutelary patron of the canton of Glarus, which bears in its arms the image of the Saint, to whom a Benedictine habit is given, although he never belonged to that Order. His body has always been carefully preserved at Säckingen, and the last opening of his tomb took place in the year 1637: his bones were found wrapped in rich stuffs. — *Lives of the Saints of the church of Poitiers*, by the abbé Auber, and *of Alsace*, by Hunckler. — *Lives of the Saints*, by A. Stolz.

Saint Cadroe, First Abbot of Saint-Clement of Metz (978)

(6 March)

Born in Scotland, of a noble family, at the beginning of the 10th century, Cadroe went to take the monastic habit in Ireland. He left that island with Saint Maccalan and Saint Forannan to pass into Belgic Gaul. The first, having been established abbot of the monastery of Waulsort on the Meuse, in the diocese of Namur, gave, in 946, the dignity of provost to Cadroe. The latter, who was then a religious in the monastery of

Saint-Benedict-on-the-Loire [Fleury], betook himself to Waulsort. But the following year, Adalbero III, bishop of Metz, named him abbot of Saint-Clement, an abbey situated in Metz itself and which then bore the name of Saint-Felix. Cadroe made fervour and discipline flourish there again during an administration of thirty-two years. Having gone to pay a visit to the empress Saint Adelaide, he fell ill during his journey, and died at Neristein, in Alsace, on 6 March of the year 978. His body was brought back to his monastery, where his feast was kept on this day: he is also honoured on 26 March.

The Blessed Humbert III of Savoy (1188)

(6 March)

Humbert III, son of Amadeus III, count of Savoy, and of Matilda of Vienne, was born at Avigliana, in Piedmont, in the year 1136. His august parents took particular care of his childhood, and applied themselves to inspiring in him that religious fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. Entrusted afterwards to the blessed Amadeus, bishop of Lausanne, he made under this master, as skilful as virtuous, rapid progress in every kind and above all in the science of the Saints. Called by his birth to the so difficult and so dangerous task of governing peoples, he sacrificed his attraction to solitude to the duties of his vocation. As soon as he had taken the reins of the State in hand, though scarcely entered upon adolescence, he constantly showed himself equal to his position, and knew how to unite, in an admirable manner, the art of reigning with the art of sanctifying himself. Left a widower and without children after the death of his first wife, he went to seek in the abbey of Aulps the consolations his heart had need of. He would willingly have passed the rest of his life in that retreat where he tasted the sweetness of contemplation, had not his vassals come to beg him, with great earnestness, not to abandon them, and to take means to assure the succession in his family. His enlightened piety persuaded him besides that the interests of his people, for which he was responsible, should prevail over his private tastes. Yielding to these powerful considerations, he resumed the cares of sovereignty and contracted successively two marriages.

During his reign, Count Humbert was several times obliged to repel unjust aggressors: which furnished him the occasion of showing that piety, far from weakening courage, only makes it more heroic. Valiant in combat, unshaken in reverses, just and moderate after victory, invincibly attached to the cause which he regarded as that of justice and religion, he resisted the advantageous offers as well as the arms of his enemies, and deserved, by his constancy and the uprightness of his views, that heaven should at last give peace to his States, and grant him a son worthy to succeed him.

The renown of his wisdom, his probity and his other virtues was spread far beyond the bounds of his dominion. He possessed in the highest degree the esteem and confidence of his contemporaries; he received many testimonies of it; but the most brilliant was that of the king of England, when he chose him to end his differences with the count of Saint-Gilles. After so many exploits and glorious labours, after having put everything in order for the good of his subjects, Humbert retired to Hautecombe, to occupy himself solely with the account he was soon to render to the supreme Judge. There was seen this magnanimous prince, this faithful and incorruptible ally, this arbiter of kings, subject himself to the humblest practices and the most austere observances of the religious life.

His assiduity at prayer, his exact fidelity to the rules of the monastery, his humility, his mortification, his charity made the admiration of the most fervent novices. He knew his death by revelation, and at the hour he had indicated, he rendered his beautiful soul to God, after having made profession and received all the helps of religion. Soon miracles came to confirm the opinion of his holiness, and the honours of religious cult were decreed to him.

Time and human vicissitudes, which efface so many things, had weakened the memory of his benefits and the cult due to his immortal virtues. A devastating revolution laid its sacrilegious hands on the mausoleum

which the piety of the princes of Savoy had raised to him in the church of Hautecombe.

Charles-Felix, of glorious memory, hastened to rebuild the tombs of his fathers and to replace in them their venerated ashes. Charles-Albert conceived and executed the happy idea of reviving the too restricted and almost forgotten cult of the blessed Humbert III, by associating it with that of Boniface of Savoy, bishop of Belley and later of Canterbury, whose notice we shall give on the 13th of this month. On 7 September 1838, His Holiness Gregory XVI approved the immemorial cult rendered to these two Blessed. In 1839, their feast was celebrated with extraordinary solemnity in all the States of Savoy, on 28 and 30 June.

We have extracted this notice and the details which follow it from a pastoral letter given, on the occasion of the re-establishment of the cult of Humbert III and Boniface [XI, sic], by Mgr Turinaz, bishop of Tarentaise: this letter was transmitted to us on 24 September 1871 by M. Canon V. Hiédan-Gros, secretary of the bishopric of Moûtiers, who kindly copied it for us with his own hand from the single copy deposited in the diocesan archives. We shall draw from the same source the biography of Boniface [XI, sic]. See 13 March.

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[1] He was “led to the true faith by Saint Barnabas.”

[2] See a note at the 5th [March], p. 167.

[3] “See 9 March.”

[4] “See 23 May.” [See the previous note.]

[5] We find again, beyond the Alps, an appellation which has the same sound and the same meaning as the names of the rivers Meuse, Moselle, etc. The reason for these common appellations on both sides of the Alps will be easily grasped by anyone who knows that the language of the ancient Cisalpine and Transalpine Gauls had a great number of its roots in common with the language of the Teutons: the men are no more, but there remain in the modern languages traces of those which they spoke. *Mose* signified among our ancestors “marsh”, and the Flemings still call *mos-gat* the opening through which the mud and water of the streets drain away, *mos- meyer* the contractor for the scavenging, and *mos-karr* the cart with which it is done. To return to the Mosè of Piacenza, it is well known that the environs of that city were marshy, as the plains watered by the Meuse and the Moselle also were, and in many places still are. — *AA. SS.*

[6] We give in the *Palmier séraphique*, vol. iii, the very detailed life of the blessed Agnes of Bohemia. One may also see, on this same day of 6 March, the biographies of the blessed Peter-John Olivi, Pontius Carbonell and Peter of Assisi, all of the Order of Saint Francis of Assisi.

[7] Ermengarde, first wife of Louis the Pious, was a grand-niece of Saint Chrodegang.

[8] The common life, established in the clergy of Metz by Saint Chrodegang, was observed there until the schism which arose in that church towards the end of the 11th century, under the episcopate of Hériman, and which obliged the canons to disperse and live each by himself. This dispersion gave rise to the foundation of the monastery of the canons regular of Saint-Pierremont, on the lands of the famous countess Matilda, in the diocese of Metz, and later to the erection, in the town, of the collegiate church of Saint-Thiébaut, which adopted the rule of Saint Chrodegang, as modified by the council of Aix-la-Chapelle. The remains of the ancient cloister, with the three canonical churches of Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux, Saint-Paul and Saint-Pierre-le-Majeur, were thrown down in 1755, by order of Marshal de Belle-Isle, to form a parade-ground before the cathedral. It is still the custom, among the people, to call the cathedral church *Grand-Moutier*, that is to say Great Monastery. The seal of the chapter is the image of Saint Paul, patron of the titular and conventual church of the ancient chapter of Chrodegang.

[9] *Epig.* 76.

[10] *Chron. mediani monast.*

[11] *Chron. senon.*, bk. ii, ch. 18; *Vit. S. Joann.*, n. 54; *Vit. S. Guilbert. Gemblac.*

[12] *Vit. S. Greg.*, bk. ii, ch. 9.

[13] *Vit. Carol. Magn.*, ch. 8.

[14] Vol. i, p. 357.

[15] *Praef. in Tract. de Ratione Cantus.*

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 253.

[17] Otherwise Coleto, Colleté, Collette (*Coleia, Coletta, Nicoleta*). Colette, abbreviation of Nicolette, is the feminine of Nicholas.

[18] The bull of canonization gives 1380, because at that time, at Rome, the year was begun at Easter.

[19] “The child, considering the doleful words that were said to her father on account of her smallness, was grieved by them; and once, as she had gone out of devotion on pilgrimage to the church of some saint (according to a tradition it was the church of Albert, famous for its pilgrimage of Our Lady of Brebières), making her prayer before Our Lord, she remembered the words said to her father. Then she began to say humbly and devoutly: ‘Alas, Lord, does it please you that I remain so small!’ And at once, her prayer ended, she

found that she was *creuhe* (grown) and that she was taller on the return than she had been on the going." Colette was then fourteen. This sudden growth gave rise to the saying which little girls of Picardy used formerly to repeat:

[20] "Then she went away in good simplicity, confidence and humility, eyes lowered, heart raised on high to God…" — P. de Vaux.

[21] The first Order is that of the Friars Minor, founded by Saint Francis of Assisi, for religious men; the second is that of the Poor Clares, founded by the same Saint Francis with the cooperation of Saint Clare, for religious women; and the third, or Third Order, is intended to enrol under the banner of penance pious lay people of all states and every condition living in the world.

[22] The Pope said further: "That shoulder is well blessed which shall carry the wallet to beg the bread she will eat." — P. de Vaux.

[23] "In one of her convents, situated in the town of Poligny, the nuns had at the beginning great want of water, for it was necessary to go and fetch it outside, since there was none inside. And no place could be found in the said convent to make a well or fountain, notwithstanding that there were several master workmen to do it. Finally, on the Friday before mid-Lent, on which the Roman Church reads the gospel which mentions the well where Our Lord asked the Samaritan woman for a drink, and after the said handmaid of Our Lord had made her devout prayers before Our Lord, commending her well piteously to him, she had a place dug (*caver*) and struck at a certain spot. And presently the water sprang up so abundantly and came as good and as fair as any in all the country." — P. de Vaux. One still sees today this well, in the convent of Poligny, fed by three springs which never run dry.

[24] It is said that Saint Colette, going from Moulins to Decize, met the Maid of Orléans, who was going to besiege La Charité-sur-Loire. See *Sainte Colette, sa vie et ses œuvres*, etc., by the abbé Douillet.

[25] Vevey and Orbe, which then belonged to the duke of Savoy, as did the Bugey (Ain), form part today of the canton of Vaud, in Switzerland.

[26] The Cordeliers of Dole took the name of Observant Minors.

[27] "For the fervent love she had for the most bitter Passion of Our Lord, among all the relics which our mother holy Church honours, she had in singular honour and reverence the true Cross on which our piteous Saviour was crucified. And very affectionately she desired to have some small portion of it. She was not defrauded of her holy desire; for there was sent her from heaven a little cross of fine gold, in which was enshrined a small portion of the holy Cross, which she kept very devoutly. And several saw it and handled it, and affirmed that the said little cross had never been made nor wrought by human hands." Father Sellier, author of a *Life of Saint Colette* (Amiens, 2 vols. in-12, 1853), gives the following description of this cross: it is of very fine gold and slightly notched at the four ends. The shaft is 0.035 m. in height, the cross-bar 0.008 m. On one side there is a crucifix, whose arms are almost horizontally extended, and whose feet, joined close to one another, are each fastened by a nail. Above the head of Christ is the usual title of the cross. On the other side there are five precious stones, of which four blue at the extremity of each arm, and the fifth red, at the very centre, at the meeting of the arms. Between each of these stones, that is to say in the four interior angles, there is a fine pearl. The stones are raised and set in a gold socket. The pearls are simply attached by a little gold nail. The cross opens beneath the feet of Christ and encloses a piece of the true Cross which is not seen. — Father Sellier's work being out of print, see the life of Saint Colette by M. Douillet.

[28] The monastery in which she saw her death, her cell still existing, the cemetery where she rested so long, have become profane property. Will not the city of Ghent, so Christian, so devoted to Saint Colette, give these blessed places back to religion?

[29] *AA. SS.*, vol. i of March, p. 553.

[30] Peter de Vaux, in the Bollandists, 6 March, and vol. vii of September, p. 116, Palmé ed.

[31] "Another time, very devoutly she prayed to God and the glorious Virgin Mary that she would be intercessor with her dear Child, that it might please him to have pity on his poor people. In which prayer there was presented to her a fair dish all full of small pieces of flesh as of an Innocent. And it was said to her: 'How shall I entreat my Child for those who every day cut him in pieces by the horrible sins and offences they commit against him, smaller than is the flesh cut up in this dish?' Wherefore she bore in her heart long afterwards a great grief."

[32] Arrondissement of Civray, canton of Couhé (Vienne). Modern researches, the abbé Auber, the learned historiographer of the diocese of Poitiers, wrote us on 24 November 1871, have caused Voulon to be adopted instead of Vouillé. A careful examination of the places does not allow a different opinion.

7 March

Martyrologies

Seventh day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At the monastery of Fossanova, Saint Thomas Aquinas, confessor and doctor, of the Order of Preaching Friars, illustrious by the nobility of his race, by the holiness of his life and by his theological science. 1274. — At Tuburbo, in Mauretania, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Perpetua and Felicity; the latter, being with child, says Saint Augustine, and not having, according to the laws, to walk to punishment until

after her delivery, gave free course to her pain and her cries during the labour of childbirth; she testified her joy when she was exposed to the beasts; with them were martyred Revocatus, Saturninus and Secundulus; the latter died in prison, the others were delivered to the beasts, under the reign of Severus. 204. — At Caesarea in Palestine, the martyrdom of Saint Eubulus, companion of Saint Adrian, who was torn by the lions two days after him, and, pierced with a sword, received, the last of all in that city, the crown of martyrdom. 308. — At Nicomedia, Saint Theophilus, bishop, who, sent into exile for the cult of the holy images, ended his days there. 845. — At Pelusium, in Egypt, Saint Paul, bishop, who died in exile for the same cause. — At Brescia, Saint Gaudiosus, bishop and confessor. 445. — In the Thebaid, Saint Paul, surnamed the Simple. 4th century.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Bourges, Saint Satyrus, martyr, who may be the one who was martyred this same day in Africa. — In the abbey of Aniane, in Languedoc, Saint Ardo, religious and confessor. 843. — At Brussels, the blessed Herman of Lochem, Carthusian religious of Schent-Beld [Scheut-Veld]. Unknown to men, he lived for God alone. In the intervals between the offices of the choir, he occupied himself with the transcription of liturgical books. He made so great a number of them that for a long time they sufficed for all the churches of Brussels.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Preaching Friars. — At the monastery of Fossanova, near Terracina, Saint Thomas Aquinas, confessor and doctor of the Church, of the Order of Preaching Friars, most illustrious by the nobility of his race, by the holiness of his life and his theological science; who faithfully kept the cult and all the lustre of virginity; who merited the name of angelic doctor by the extraordinary superiority of his learning; whose writings, remarkable for the solidity and truth of the doctrine, and recommended by our supreme Lord Jesus Christ himself, wonderfully enlighten, like brilliant torches, the Catholic Church and all the schools of the orthodox world.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Africa, Saint Juddène, virgin, whom Carthage saw beheaded in 202. She was stretched four times on the rack, and torn with iron claws, to say nothing of the long miseries of prison. It is probable that her body received burial in the basilica of Saint Perpetua, since Saint Augustine says that the feast of Saint Juddène was celebrated in that church. — Again in Africa, the saints Jucundus, Saturninus, Artaxius and Quintus, martyrs, whom Saint Saturus, one of the companions of Saint Felicity and Saint Perpetua, saw in glory. Year 203. — At Cherson, a city of the Chersonese or Tauric peninsula, which has been destroyed by the Turks, the saints Ephraim, Basil, Eugene, Agathodorus, Elpidius, Aetherius and Capito, bishops of that country and martyrs. Beginning of the 4th century. — In Cyprus, the saints Nestor and Arcadius, bishops of Tremithus, today Nicosia. — At Valeria, an ancient city of Italy, Saint Equitius, abbot, whose life Saint Gregory the Great related in his dialogues. 6th century. — In England, Saint Eosterwine, abbot of Wearmouth [Wire]. He was first cousin of Saint Benedict Biscop on his father’s side, and succeeded him in the government of the monastery of Wearmouth. Year 785. — At Segeberg, in Holstein, the blessed Volker, martyr. At the beginning of the 12th century, the faith planted with great efforts in Holstein by the missionaries whom the Carolingians had sent was completely extinct there. God raised up a man powerful in works and in words, Saint Vicelin, who was not long in restoring churches and even building monasteries: the blood of martyrs made this rebellious land fruitful anew; one of the martyrs of this new persecution was Saint Volker, disciple of Saint Vicelin of Neumünster. Year 1132.

Saint Paul, Surnamed the Simple

4th century.

The simplicity of the human heart is of great value before the simple nature of almighty God. — Saint Gregory the Great, *Dial.* bk. iii, ch. xv.

This Saint was surnamed the Simple because he was free from all malice and on account of the ignorance in which he was of all human knowledge. He was one of the most celebrated disciples of Saint Antony, and perhaps the oldest.

He embraced the monastic life very late, having lived in marriage until the age of sixty or thereabouts, in a village of the Thebaid, where he followed the trade of a ploughman.

The bad conduct of his wife determined him to retire into solitude. After having wandered eight days in the desert, he arrived at the place where Saint Antony dwelt and resolved to be the disciple of so excellent a master.

He knocked at the door of the Saint's cell, and disclosed to him the design he had formed. But Antony, judging that he was too old to imitate at that age his state of life, told him to go rather to some village to earn his living by the work of his hands, or, if he had absolutely resolved to leave the world, to enter among religious whose practices were less austere than those of the anchorites, and by whom he would be better succoured in his old age. And after this answer, he shut himself up in his cell. Paul was not discouraged: he remained in the same place, waiting for the Saint to open his door again and grant to his perseverance what he had at first refused him. He passed thus three days and three nights waiting with humble patience, until on the fourth day Saint Antony having come out, he presented himself again before him, made new entreaties, and protested that he wished to die in that place. The Saint, who perceived that he had no provision, feared that so long a fast, to which he was not accustomed, might put him in danger of death, and that his conscience might be burdened with it. He received him therefore, but with the resolution of obliging him afterwards to retire of himself, disgusting him by the rough trials to which he would put him, for he could not persuade himself that he would bear the labours of the solitary life at so advanced an age. He told him then that he could succeed in sanctifying himself, if he would submit entirely to obedience; which Paul promised him in the sincerity of his heart. The first proof he required of his submission was to remain in prayer outside the cell, and not to stir from it until he came to bring him something to work at; during this time, he shut himself in his cell, watching through the window, by stealth, whether he acquitted himself well of what he had prescribed to him. He left him thus exposed to the heat of the sun by day, and to the cold of the night, without Paul ever changing his position or turning aside from his prayer.

After this long and painful trial, in which the Saint had every reason to admire his docility and patience, he brought palm branches, and told him to work in the manner he would see him do; and when he had finished the work, he told him that he had not succeeded well, and ordered him to undo it, to do it better, which made the work still longer and more painful; to which Paul submitted, without the least mark of uneasiness appearing on his face.

Saint Antony then proposed to him to eat, and ordered him to lay the table, on which he put four loaves of six ounces which were to make the whole meal. It was natural that after so rough a labour and so long a fast, Paul should fall upon it eagerly; and that was just what the Saint was waiting for to judge well of his obedience; but the disciple, who wished to conform in everything to his master, observed him as much as he was observed, in order to regulate himself on him, and showed no less indifference than the Saint for the loaves which were before his eyes.

He waited without difficulty until his master had recited twelve psalms and said twelve prayers, which he also did with him before sitting down to table, and, by way of surplus moderation, he submitted with the same docility when the Saint, instead of allowing him to eat, wished him to be content with having seen the table laid, ordered him to go to bed without having taken any nourishment, woke him at midnight to pray, and finally told him to eat only the next evening, after having recited again the twelve psalms and said the

other prayers.

It was then permitted to Paul to take his refection. But always more attentive to imitate his master, he would eat only one loaf as he saw him do, although the Saint pressed him to eat more, alleging as reason that he wished to be a monk like him; because Saint Antony had told him that he ate only one loaf because he was a monk.

After some time passed in similar trials, during which Saint Antony had increased his austerities, to see whether he would not be discouraged by them, and having had every reason to be satisfied with his submission and his fervour, he said to him at last: “My brother, if you can live every day as you have done these days, I consent that you should remain with me.” To which he answered: “I do not know whether you have anything more difficult to prescribe to me; but I feel no pain in practising what I have seen you do up to now.” Then Saint Antony, no longer doubting that God had sent him to him to imitate his manner of life, received him altogether under his guidance by these consoling words which he said to him: “Behold, my brother, you are become a monk in the name of our Lord.”

Paul, thus declared a religious by his blessed Father, applied himself with all the affection of his heart to conform to his salutary counsels, and the Saint on his side gave him all those that could lead him to the perfection of his state. He recommended to him, among other things, to soften by manual labour the pains of solitude; to raise his mind frequently to God, while his fingers were occupied in material works; to eat only in the evening, and never to be satiated, above all as to drink, were it only with water.

As Saint Antony understood that he must make him walk by the way of obedience, he ceased not to try him on this virtue, and to make him produce acts of it, often commanding him things which seemed to shock reason, so that he might never find fault with what he should command him, and that he might attain that perfect renunciation of one’s own judgment which makes one not reason about the orders of superiors. Thus he ordered him once to draw water from a well during a whole day, and to pour it out on the ground. He told him likewise to undo baskets he had made, and make them again: to unpick his habit, then sew it, and afterwards unpick it again; and on one occasion, as a pot of honey had been brought him, he ordered him to break it, to let the honey run out, and then to gather it up with a shell, recommending him to take care that no dirt got mixed with it; and in all these things Paul’s obedience was always prompt and blind.

He was even so attentive to the least signs of Saint Antony that he took them all with rigour, as if they had been express orders from God. Some of the most renowned solitaries having come to see the Saint, they came to speak of the most elevated matters of the spiritual life, and then entered into a long discourse on the subject of Jesus Christ and the prophets. Paul was present, and asked with simplicity whether the prophets were before Jesus Christ, or Jesus Christ before the prophets. Saint Antony blushed for him at so senseless a question; he made him a sign, with great gentleness, as he was accustomed to use towards the simplest, to withdraw and keep silence.

Paul obeyed this order so scrupulously that he no longer spoke at all, and did not even appear with the other brethren. Saint Antony was told of it, and asked him the reason, and when he had learned it from his mouth, admiring his exactness in obeying an order that he had not intended to extend so far, he said to the other solitaries: “In truth, this man condemns us all; for whereas we do not listen to God who speaks to us from the height of heaven, you see how he observes the least word that comes out of my mouth.”

The Saint also often made use of Paul’s example with the brethren, to show that those who wish to become perfect must not conduct themselves by themselves, nor follow too much their own sentiments, though they appear to them just; but that, before all things, one must accustom oneself to renounce oneself, above all one’s own will, in conformity with the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said that he had not come into the world to do his own will, but to accomplish that of his heavenly Father. It was in fact by the great progress that his blessed disciple made in this renunciation that he arrived at so high a perfection that Saint

Antony no longer regarded him as a pupil, but as a solitary who could live alone, and he built for him for that purpose a cell about a league from his own, saying to him: “Behold, you are become a monk by the help of Jesus Christ; dwell now therefore by yourself, that you may learn to fight against the demons, and remember that these frequent combats that have to be sustained in the desert oblige us to a continual prayer, which is besides a great means of acquiring perfection.” After this separation, the Saint did not fail to come to see him from time to time in his new retreat; and he had the consolation of always finding him occupied in faithfully executing all that he had prescribed to him. Paul had scarcely spent a year in his new cell when God willed to manifest in him the account he makes of simplicity and obedience, and to confirm with éclat the esteem that Saint Antony had of his virtue. He granted him the gift of miracles, and above all so powerful a grace for driving all sorts of demons from the bodies of the possessed, that he worked greater prodigies, and even more in number, than his blessed master; so that he became very celebrated in a short time and people came to him from far away to be healed.

Saint Antony feared that the importunity of so many persons might oblige Paul to flee to the depth of the desert, since he had tasted the ravishing sweetness of contemplation and solitude. He recommended him not to leave him and took on himself to receive those who came to see him; but when there were sick or possessed persons whom he could not heal, he sent them to him, being persuaded that he had received in this a more extensive grace; and in fact Paul never failed to heal them.

His simplicity gave him an extreme confidence in God: there was brought to him one day a young man possessed by one of the most obstinate demons, and so furious that he uttered blasphemies against heaven, and tore all who dared to approach him. The Saint, after having long prayed in vain with fervour, said to God: “In truth, I will not eat today unless you heal him.” And at once, as if God had feared to displease a person who loved him tenderly and who was so dear to him, the possessed man was delivered.

Paul had still received the singular grace of knowing the depth of the hearts of those who entered the church, and the state of their conscience, which he saw as clearly as others see their face. Being at a monastery where several of the brethren were assembled to confer on spiritual things, they betook themselves to the church after the conference to celebrate the holy mysteries. Paul considered those who were entering, and he saw them all with a luminous face, by which shone the joy and the good state of their soul, each having his angel who testified great contentment at their holy disposition. But he saw one whose conscience, defiled by sin, made him appear to his eyes with the body black and covered with a dark cloud, the demon holding him bound, and his angel following him from afar, sad and cast down. Whatever consolation he had from the virtue of the others, the deplorable state of this one touched him so strongly that he began to weep and groan, and remained outside the church without wishing to enter. Those of the solitaries who saw his affliction believed that God had made him know that their conscience was in a bad state, and hastened to ask him, in order to do penance for it. But he would say nothing, and remained prostrate on the ground at the door of the church, ceasing not to weep and groan.

He waited until the holy sacrifice was finished, to see whether he who had assisted at it in those bad dispositions would not come out changed. But God, attentive to his prayers and his tears, had granted this sinner the grace of contrition and penance during the sacrifice, and Paul saw him come out with a holy joy painted on his face, his body as white as it had appeared black to him before; the demon followed him only from afar, and his good angel, who was at his side, testified an extreme contentment at his conversion. At this sight, Paul rose transported out of himself, in admiration of the mercies of the Lord, and cried out with all his strength: “O ineffable goodness of God! O how great is his compassion! O how immense is his love for us!” He ran at the same time to place himself on an eminent spot, and raising his voice with all his strength, he said: “Come, come and see the works of God, how marvellous they are. Come and see how he wills that all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Come, let us adore the Lord; let us prostrate ourselves before him, and say: It is thou alone, O my God, who canst remit sins!” Everyone ran round him to

know what it was. He told them what God had made known to him and begged him in whom he had seen so happy a change to say how it had come about in him. The latter could not deny the truth: he declared that he had been engaged until then in sin, but that having heard read in the church a passage of Isaiah, in which God promises to pardon those who sincerely be converted, he had come back to himself, and had addressed to God this prayer in the feeling of a lively compunction: “My God, who didst come into this world to save sinners, and who hast made us, by thy prophet, the promises I have just heard; make me feel the effect of them, though I am a great sinner and most unworthy of thy grace. I promise and protest to thee with all my heart that from this moment I renounce sin, that I shall not fall into it again, and that I shall serve thee henceforth with a pure conscience. Receive me therefore at present, O my God! since I wish to do penance. Pardon a sinner who conjures thee to remit his crime, and who sincerely renounces sin.”

The public confession of this penitent edified all who were present. They admired no less the mercy of God than the knowledge which he had given his servant of the state of this man, and the grace he had done him; and they rendered to the Lord, aloud, great thanksgivings for it.

God revealed again to his servant the pardon which he had granted to the penitent Thaïs.[1]

— *Lives of the Fathers of the Eastern Deserts* [*Vies des Pères des déserts d’Orient*]; — the Roman martyrology makes mention of Saint Paul the Simple on 7 March.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dominican Religious and Doctor of the Church

1274. — Pope: Gregory X. — King of Naples: Charles I.

Angel of the school… that is to say, virgin and doctor.

God, who takes pleasure in putting flowers beside brooks and who predestines the cradles of the Saints, caused Saint Thomas Aquinas to be born in an admirable corner of earth, sheltered by the last summits of the Apennines, still called in our day, in the sweet language of those places, the happy countryside, the *campagna felice*; a happy countryside indeed, spread like a rich carpet at the foot of the most celebrated monastery in the world: Monte Cassino. The town of Aquino, which this great Saint and great genius has immortalized, is situated in the midst of the happy countryside, in the ancient Terra di Lavoro, at nearly equal distance from Rome and Naples.

On the point of a rock which juts out into the plain and is called Roccasecca, there once stood a castle of the same name: it was there that the powerful family of Aquino dwelt, lords of Loreto,[1] of Belcastro, of Sommacle and other places. This house traced its origin back to the 8th century, to the time of the wars of Charlemagne, when several of its members appeared with brilliance. At the end of the 17th century, its last descendants were helping the grandson of Louis XIV to found a new monarchy in Spain. In the second half of the 12th century, the glory of this house was upheld by Thomas of Sommacle, one of the favourites of Frederick Barbarossa: this Thomas was the grandfather of the Saint whose life we are sketching. From the marriage of Thomas with Frances of Swabia, own sister of the emperor, was born Landulf, father of our Saint. Landulf had married Theodora, of the illustrious family of the Caracciolo: she herself descended from the Norman princes who, two hundred years earlier, had come to carve themselves a kingdom under the beautiful sky of Naples. The princess Theodora was worthy of her origin: in her there lived again the pride of her ancestors, their religion, but also an exaggerated feeling for authority; history accuses the haughty spirit of this noble woman while respecting her heart and her virtues.

Saint Thomas Aquinas came into the world in 1226, the year that saw Saint Francis of Assisi go down to the tomb and Saint Louis mount the throne. What names and what a century! A volume would be needed to give only the list of the great men and monuments of that epoch. But is it not enough to name Innocent III and Thomas Aquinas, Saint Louis and Albert the Great, Roger Bacon and Saint Bonaventure, Giotto and Dante,

the *Summa Theologica* and the *Divine Comedy*, the cathedral of Cologne and the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris, the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* and the cathedral of Amiens: it was in the 13th century that the universities of Oxford and Paris were founded, the Order of Saint Dominic and that of Saint Francis of Assisi, that the Establishments of Saint Louis and the great English Charter were given. But in the centre of this century appears Saint Thomas Aquinas, for Saint Thomas was more than a pious cenobite; he dominated his epoch by the power of the idea, he directed the political movement of his century, not only as theologian, but as philosopher.

This is what the sequel of this history will prove to us.

The last of the children of Landulf and Theodora of Aquino was named at the baptismal font Thomas like his grandfather. If it is true that the Saints receive from God the name which qualifies them,[2] the whole future was enclosed in this word Thomas, which signifies gulf, abyss: for he was an abyss of science and virtue.

The first years of a celebrated life are rarely known: this is not the case with Thomas Aquinas. His oldest historians have preserved for us numerous details of his earliest childhood and even of the circumstances which preceded his birth. Being unable to tell all, we shall confine ourselves to the two following traits:

One day the lightning struck one of the towers of the castle in which the child was, killed his sister beside him and spared him: the eye of heaven watched over his days.

It happened another day that the countess his mother, going to the baths with other ladies, gave the nurse order to accompany her with the child.[3] The latter having seated him in the accustomed place, to wait for the hour of the bath, perceived soon afterwards that he held clasped in his hand a very small leaf of paper,[4] without being able to understand how he had found it in that place. She tried first to open the child's hand; but he defended himself with his tears. He had to be left in possession of this singular treasure, and carried back to his dwelling, without his opening his hand for a single instant. This unaccustomed resistance having nevertheless piqued the countess's curiosity, she opens her child's hand, in spite of his cries and tears. The paper contained nothing else than these words: *Ave, Maria*, the salutation of the glorious Virgin.[5]

Another trait no less charming: when he wept, the surest means of appeasing him was to give him a book which he could turn over.

The celebrated abbey of Monte Cassino stands six miles from Roccasecca. A member of the Aquino family, Landulf Sinibaldo, was abbot of it: it was into his hands that Thomas was put at the age of five. It was remarked from then on that at an age when children ordinarily know only how to babble, Thomas knew how to keep silence and reflect.

His old biographer shows him to us interrupting his childish games to treat gravely the question: What is God? surrounded by little fair heads, attentive and silent, behind which more than one head whitened by learning hid, no less motionless with admiration and astonishment.

These meditations of childhood worthily preluded the researches which were to fill a whole life: no doctor was to answer in a more satisfactory manner this question: What is God. Thomas was ten years old: the development of his intelligence determined the count of Aquino to withdraw him from Monte Cassino to send him to one of those Universities then so flourishing in Europe: he chose that of Naples, which Frederick II had just created.

A political motive alone could dictate this choice, for Naples was the most voluptuous city in the universe, and in a few years its university had reached the last term of depravity.

Between these two periods of his studious life, a moment was left to our Saint, which he spent with his family, in the castle of Loreto. Having left at the age of five, he had not yet been able to taste the delights of a princely opulence, nor even the joys of family. The ineffaceable memory of the kisses with which his mother

covered his brow will one day be the martyrdom of Thomas; but without martyrdom there is no Saint.

Famine then desolated the country: the generous child asked as a favour to be the distributor of his parents' alms: but these alms were far from sufficing for the numerous miseries which came every day to display themselves at the door of the castle. Young Thomas then entered into a struggle with the steward and set about ravaging the pantry as cleverly as possible for the profit of the poor, his friends. The steward, to save his compromised honour, gave notice of it to the count, who lay in wait to surprise the child's pious larcenies.

One day, then, when Thomas was going stealthily through the corridors of the ancient castle of Loreto, carrying in a fold of his mantle the sweet booty of charity, he was suddenly stopped by the unexpected meeting with his much-dreaded lord and father. The latter, barring his way, commanded him to disclose what he was hiding with so much care. Troubled by the look and voice of the count, Thomas let fall the folded lap of his garment: it was found full only of flowers, which, to the great astonishment of both, covered the feet of the child and the old man. At the sight of such a justification, Landulf, moved to tears, embraces his son with transport, and allows him henceforth to follow the inspiration of his charity, so long as there should remain an obol or a morsel of bread in the old manor of the Sommacle.[6]

Later the inhabitants of Loreto will vow a cult of love and gratitude to Thomas, will be honoured to bear his name, will have a church raised to him and will charge the arts with telling in stone and on canvas the actions of their charitable benefactor.

But let us follow the young student to Naples, where charity was to serve him as a shield as well as an occupation.

Placed under the guidance of a wise governor, and formed by the lessons of heaven which spoke to his heart, Thomas kept himself pure in the midst of the bad counsels of his fellow-students, their perverse examples and the seductions of every kind that surrounded him. The means he employed to preserve himself from these dangers cannot be too much recommended to Christian youth. He made first a pact with his eyes, and forbade them to see anything that could soften his heart. His love of prayer; his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the practice of the works of charity on which he employed his superfluity; his application to work, a retired life, such were the other arms with which he fought the influences of corruption. The two professors of the University of Naples to whom Thomas attached himself more particularly were Peter of Ireland and Peter Martin. The first, one of the most learned men of his time, held a school of dialectic and philosophy; the second taught with brilliance rhetoric and belles-lettres.

These masters were not long in discovering the treasures of their disciple's mind, in spite of the reserve in which he wrapped himself; soon they proposed him as a model to the pupils gathered round their chairs. It was remarked from then on that Thomas's reports were at once clearer and more learned than the lessons of the professors themselves.

Exiled in the bosom of a foreign land, and so to speak lost in the midst of Babylon, Thomas had found brothers in the sons of Saint Dominic: the greatest pleasure his governor could do him was to permit him to visit the good religious and go to pray in their church. The wise preceptor saw no danger in these repeated visits: he permitted them, assured that they could only contribute to strengthen his young pupil in good and to consolidate in him the salutary principles which, later, would serve as a counterpoise to the seductions of the world. But he was not long in perceiving that the young man entrusted to his guard was thinking of burying his future in the shade of the cloister.

Thomas was then nineteen years old. For a long time he had been petitioning for the white dress of the Dominicans. As much as these religious had thought it right to put his vocation to the test by delays, so much did they use the holy liberty of the children of God when they believed they recognized in this vocation the

call from on high. In vain did the count of Aquino, informed by the governor of what was brewing, utter threats and speak of the intervention of the emperor, his cousin. Heaven had pronounced.

One day when Thomas was at prayer in the church, one of the religious saw as it were rays of light issue from his eyes and illuminate the whole assembly. The day was fixed for the young lord's taking of the habit: the ceremony took place in the presence of the religious and of all that Naples counted most distinguished. The world failed not to disapprove; but the Saints do not hesitate between the world and the Gospel.

The countess of Aquino (for it is thought that the count had died in the interval) learned with as much spite as grief the realization of a project so contrary to her hopes. Without delay she set out for Naples, hoping to bring her son back.

Now, in spiritual warfare, flight is no shame. As soon therefore as Thomas had learned his mother's departure for Naples, he left that city and went to continue his novitiate at Rome, in the celebrated convent of Santa Sabina. But his flight only irritated a mother's despair; she returns to Rome, and this time without Thomas having been warned of the noise of this second journey. Surprised in his retreat, Thomas makes himself invisible there: he refuses to see his mother. What renunciation and what superhuman violence must this young man of twenty not impose on himself! If the tears of the mother make ours flow, does not the thought of the horrible sufferings of nature in the son make one shudder? One thing alone can explain such inexplicable sacrifices: the power of God's grace. "He that doth not leave his father and mother to follow me," it is said in the Gospel, "is not worthy of me."

Fearing that the countess, very influential at the court of the Pope, might in the long run force the doors of their dwelling, the Dominicans resolved to send Thomas away secretly to Paris; but God, who wished to make use of him to convert his sisters, permitted him to fall into the hands of his two brothers, Landulf and Raynald, who were serving in the imperial armies and who, warned by their mother, had all the roads guarded by which one could leave the States of the Church.

Forced by weariness, Thomas had stopped with his companions not far from Acquapendente, between Siena and Lake Bolsena. Suddenly he saw himself surrounded by a detachment of armed men, with fierce looks and brutal speech. The young novice had to surrender without resistance: he contented himself with asking in whose name he was made prisoner. The leader of the escort gave his name: it was Raynald of Aquino, the very brother of Thomas.

Raynald wished to tear off the religious habit from the novice by main force: before this outrage, the son of Saint Dominic raised his head proudly and resisted the orders of his brother as well as the brutality of the soldiers: "It is an abominable thing," he said to those who were doing him violence, "to wish to take back from God what has once been given to him." It was thus clothed in the livery of poverty and humility that he was led back to the castle of Aquino.

Far from bursting into reproaches, his mother had only tears to shed on the neck of this prodigal of grace. No allusion was made at first to the delicate events which had just passed. But this calm, these smiles, these eager attentions of the first welcome made Thomas uneasy. He tried again to flee; but the drawbridges of the castle did not lower before him. Then his mother began the attack: she employed first tears, prayers, reasoning: Thomas remained unshaken. "My mother," he said to her, "to love God more, shall I love you less?" When anger agitated the proud descendant of the Normans, he kept silence, and, when she wept, he mingled his tears with hers, while trying to make her understand the divine motives that determined his conduct.

These combats lasted some time longer, but always with as little success. In her spite, the countess of Aquino condemns herself to see her son no more and relegates him to one of the towers of the castle, where no one will have the right to see him except his two sisters, who had accepted the mission of harassing him

unceasingly to bring him to change his resolution. Thomas's sisters respected religion doubtless, but above all they were worldly. The holy young man was not frightened by their talk: he spoke to them on the contrary with so much calm, serenity and conviction of the happiness of serving God that their heart and mind were subdued. The elder renounced the world and a brilliant marriage to bury herself in the monastery of Santa Maria of Capua, of which she afterwards became abbess. Admirable Providence of God, which turned the trial of the captive to the sanctification of his family.

But let us not anticipate: the young girls kept the secret of their conversion. Continuing to enter the tower, they conveyed to the young captive the outside help that was so necessary to him: pious books and books of study, encouragements from his friends at Naples and at Rome.

Meanwhile Thomas's two brothers, Landulf and Raynald, had just returned to the castle of Roccasecca. They undertook, as an affair of honour, to ruin his generous resolution: the forgetfulness of the religious principles of which the profession of arms is too often the occasion drove them to employ weapons unworthy not only of Christian men, but of loyal soldiers.

After having exhausted sarcasms, reproaches and ill-treatment, after having torn the habit of Saint Dominic with which Thomas was clothed and forced him to resume the livery of the world, they call to their aid, to deliver the last assault, the demon of impurity. A woman more beautiful than virtuous is introduced into the tower where Thomas is shut up. Unable to take flight, he lifts a look to heaven, seizes a firebrand which, happily, is within his reach, and drives off the unfortunate woman who has made herself the instrument of his brothers' designs. Then, falling on his knees before a cross which he has traced on the wall with the same brand, he sends up to God, who alone can make us continent, his hymn of thanksgiving and renews the vow by which he had already consecrated himself entirely to the Lord. While he prayed, a sweet sleep lulled his senses. During this sleep, which a pious author compares to that of Adam, the first man in the earthly paradise, he was visited by angels: these blessed spirits congratulated him on his victory and girded his loins with the girdle of chastity, saying to him: "We come to thee on the part of God, to confer on thee the gift of perpetual virginity, of which he makes thee from this moment the irrevocable gift." Thomas was not armed knight of purity without a keen feeling of pain which made him utter a very sharp cry. The guards ran up, but he sent them away. He never spoke of this virginal ecstasy, of this mysterious and fruitful sleep, until the approach of death: his confessor, Father Reginald, alone received the confidence of it. Confessing then to the end the mercy of the Lord, he declared that the heavenly girdle had sheltered him all his life from those humiliating temptations, those buffetings of Satan with which the apostle Saint Paul himself was afflicted.

This girdle or cord, which became, after the Saint's death, the property of the Dominicans of Vercelli, gave birth to a pious Confraternity known under the name of the Angelic Militia. The members of this Confraternity wear a cord like the one consecrated by the memory of Saint Thomas, in order to preserve the sacred treasure of chastity or to recover it after having lost it.

Although Saint Thomas had received directly from heaven the gift of continence, it is a marvel to see, say the old hagiographers, what reserve he kept all his life and what care he always took to flee the society of women. A lady having one day asked him the motive of this reserved conduct: "It is," he answered, "that, being the son of a woman, I fear them all." So Father Reginald, his confessor, was able to declare later that Thomas had died as pure as a child of five.

Christian iconography has always placed, in the arms of the angelic doctor, the lilies of purity[7] beside a shining sun which figures the brilliance of genius, brother of the brilliance of chastity. Our fathers were right, for the genius of Saint Thomas Aquinas is a conquest of his chastity. If, as a young student at Naples, he had abandoned himself to murderous and devastating pleasures, instead of a great doctor, there would soon have been we know not what useless being, exhausted in body and mind, forgotten the day after a death without honour. Can one picture Thomas Aquinas… simply married! and instead of the illustrious destiny of the

great religious, instead of those immortal writings which are the honour of the Church, instead of the *Summa*, in a word, a few obscure days of a vulgar felicity in a manor of Italy! We do not say it, then, without reason: the genius of the great Saint Thomas is a conquest of chastity. Alas! how much our time has need of these examples, and how necessary it is to recall to it that the honour of intelligence is brother of another honour: that of morals and of virtue. Folly, Saint Thomas himself was later to say, is a sin, because it is the daughter of lust.[8]

Meanwhile Thomas's captivity had lasted two years and nothing foretold its end. The Dominicans of Naples seized the moment when the emperor of Germany had just made his peace with the Pope to bring to his feet the complaints of religion and liberty outraged. To pay court to the sovereign Pontiff, the emperor showed himself very angry that a religious should have been chained on his lands, and transmitted to the two officers of his army, Landulf and Raynald, the formal order to restore Thomas to the Dominican family. At the castle of Aquino they wished to save appearances. Thomas's two sisters begged the Dominicans of Naples to come by night to the foot of the tower of Roccasecca. At the agreed hour, the prisoner was let down in a basket by the hands of two weak women who let him slide into the arms of his brothers. Returned to Naples, Thomas renewed by religious profession the entire and irrevocable sacrifice of his liberty.

At that time, Brother Albert was teaching theology in the convent that the Dominicans had at Cologne: the lessons of this learned master were to be the last step by which Thomas would climb to the royalty of divine science. He left Italy in the month of October 1244, in company with John the Teutonic, general of the whole Order, and arrived at Cologne at the beginning of the following year. The holy travellers visited the capital of France in passing. It is related that on arriving at the gates of Paris, Saint Thomas stopped on a hill from which the great city was discovered, with its spires of churches and abbeys scattered on both banks of the Seine, and that, seized with admiration, he seemed absorbed in the contemplation of these marvels. His companion said to him: "Brother Thomas, what would you give to be king of this capital?" — "I would rather," answered Thomas, "have the treatise of Saint John Chrysostom on Saint Matthew than all this great city."[9] This answer shows how difficult it was at that time to procure even the most celebrated works, at the same time as it indicates the kind of ambition to which the future king of theology had given his soul.

The public esteem, the honourable distinctions of which Thomas had been the object at Naples had alarmed his humility: so he resolved, once arrived at Cologne, to hide himself from the eyes of men and to wrap himself in an absolute silence.

The students, as skilful ordinarily in distinguishing among themselves a talent which the master's eye does not always perceive, as they are in putting a favoured mediocrity in its place, were all at fault on this occasion. They thought they could not better characterize the silent fellow-student whom Italy had sent them than by calling him the great dumb Ox of the century. It is known only that their professor shook his head, smiling, when by chance he heard come from their mouth the epithet henceforth received: *Bos magnus, Bos mutus*; the great Ox, the dumb Ox.

But if so profound a humility was a thing wholly unknown among the scholars of the Dominican convent, the duties of Christian charity at least were known there. What proves it in a quite indubitable manner is that one of Thomas's fellow-students, attributing, like all the others, his silence during the lessons and the length of his studies to slowness of intelligence, thought he ought to come to his help. He offered, therefore, with as much generosity as confidence, to furnish him every day with private explanations on what had been the subject of the public lesson, given perhaps too rapidly by the learned professor. But the talent of the taciturn Sicilian had here set a trap for itself. He had not foreseen the peril in which his natural goodness incessantly placed him. One day, indeed, seeing his new master weary himself uselessly in developing for him an obscure point proposed by Albert, and sink deeper and deeper, by the very efforts he made, in the dark maze of his reasonings, without hope of return, Thomas thought himself charitably obliged, says the ancient narrator, to come to his aid; or rather, without reasoning, and by the instinctive movement of his heart, he let

himself naturally be led to extricate his imprudent fellow-student from his difficulty.

Scarcely had he approached the difficulty, by clearly putting the question, according to the method from which he never departed, than all obscurity vanished at once. But it was done; the plan conceived by his humility had received a mortal blow. The few words he uttered carried into the mind of his fellow-student so vivid and so sudden a light that he remained as if dazzled: he recovered speech only to ask pardon of Brother Thomas for the lessons he had dared to give him, and to beg him to keep towards him the role that nature had clearly assigned him, by becoming henceforth his master; to which our Saint consented with the same simplicity with which he had at first accepted a quite opposite role. In yielding however to the wishes of a confrere, to the impulses of charity, Thomas took one more step towards that external brilliance which he fled with so much solicitude; if he was not clothed by men with the power of teaching, he seemed to have received it from God himself: he was naturally master and licentiate.[10] It was in vain that humility took its precautions, by requiring from the disciple a secret which it had been far from imposing on the professor. The latter did not think himself bound.

Some time after, indeed, Albert proposed to his pupils the explanation of a very obscure passage taken from a work commonly attributed to Saint Denis the Areopagite, in which it is a question of the names which it is fitting to give to the Supreme Being. The student who had lately become the just appraiser of Thomas, begs him earnestly to put in writing both the state of the question, generally little understood, and the answer which he thought should be given to it. This again was granted him, but always under the seal of secrecy. The question was explained with so much force, depth and clearness that one would have said, according to the remark of an historian, that the very author of the text had made use of Thomas's pen to develop his thought. By design or otherwise, the writing fell into the hands of Brother Albert; and it is then especially that this truly great man was seized with that divine joy which a superior mind alone can feel at the sight of a genius who is to triumph, even eclipsing himself, for the holy cause to which they will both be wholly devoted. He saw uncovered the glorious mystery which he had as yet only glimpsed.

Thus the secret of his humility rapidly escaped the young student, in spite of his efforts and his grief. Brother Albert, wishing to justify in the eyes of all the admiration he felt for his pupil, ordered him to hold himself ready for the next day, on a certain number of thorny questions, to which he was to answer in the presence of a great assembly. Thomas's obedience was equal to his humility: he prepares himself, therefore, without pleading the little time that is given him for it, all the more fit, besides, to employ it well, the more indifferent he is about the result of this trial. The next day, he appears with the assurance of self-denial, with the modesty of true merit, before all the pupils and all the professors of the Dominican school. He sets forth his subject with so much erudition, justness and lucidity that all present, in spite of the greatness of their expectation, remain confounded. The master of the students wishes to make some objections, according to the custom and the order of Brother Albert; Thomas takes up his arguments again, to conform to the known rules of this sort of scientific fencing. But presently he lays down some general principles of solution, so luminous and easy that they seem to make any further instance impossible. The arguer, reduced to silence on the very object of the question, finds fault with Thomas's manner of answering; the words he addressed to him would show the spite of defeat, if they did not serve to hide a quite opposite sentiment, with the intention of testing the modesty of the respondent. — "Brother Thomas," he said to him, "you seem to forget that you are not here a master who decides, but a scholar who must resolve the objections that are put to him." — "I have not seen a better manner of answering the arguments set forth." — "Well then!" continued the professor, "apply your principles to what I have still to object to you!…" And thereupon he sets about raising new difficulties, which seem bound to crush the mind of so young a student. But each of these difficulties is in turn seized and overthrown by Thomas's imperturbable dialectic. The professor insists; the pupil lets himself not be shaken: the thesis has become a veritable struggle. Other opponents enter the lists; but the victory remains always with Thomas: at the shock of an armed word his talent had just revealed itself without

reserve; the whole assembly henceforth shared the admiration of Albert the Great; the latter felt grow that which he had already conceived. In the first flashes of this nascent glory, he had embraced, with a prophetic glance, successes and triumphs which would be those of his Order and of the Church, these two objects of his powerful affections. It was after this thesis, before the respondent and the assembly, that he pronounced those words which their fulfilment was to make so famous: "We call this man a dumb Ox; but in truth, his bellowings will rise so high that they will resound throughout the universe."[11] Thomas was at that time about twenty-two years old. During his stay of some months at Cologne, he found leisure enough to write his first Treatise on the morals of Aristotle.

In the month of June 1245, the general Chapter of the Preachers decided that at the end of the school year, Master Albert should go to Paris to take the degree of doctor, and that Thomas should follow him there to receive that last perfecting which already, at that time, Paris alone seemed able to give to the education of youth. The two pilgrims were received in that house in the rue Saint-Jacques which John of Barastre, chaplain of the king of France and professor at the University, had ceded twenty years earlier to the Dominicans.[12] The final aim of Thomas's studies remained invariably the same. He was to say later that he could not conceive a religious applying himself to other studies than those which have God for their object. He studied therefore as a truly religious man, and this character of religion penetrated all the knowledge, even profane, which he strove to acquire; he bent it all to his ulterior aim, and made it serve as steps to rise to the knowledge of Him who is the Truth by essence.

In spite of the nature of his studies and the aim he always proposed in pursuing them, Thomas experienced, in this purely scientific labour, what every man who gives himself to it with perseverance experiences in his turn, what the holy founder of his Order had experienced before him: namely that science dries up the heart, and that the life of the intelligence is after all only half of the life of the soul. He had recourse therefore to the means employed by Saint Dominic. The Conferences of Cassian never left his work-table; and from time to time he suspended his study, to quench his wearied soul at these refreshing springs of primitive piety. This pious author, by his simple and touching narrations, tore him suddenly from the arid labours of the school, and transported him into the society of the ancient Fathers of the desert: he became, in some sort, the witness of their prodigious austerities, of their fervent prayers, of their meditations prolonged through the whole night, of their ecstasies and raptures: his soul flew away to these holy solitudes, his imagination peopled them anew with their ancient inhabitants; these were the only dreams that a Thomas Aquinas allowed himself. He would have wished to retrace in his life the angelic conversation of the Christian solitaries; he groaned over the present and future necessities of his apostolic vocation; but there was always found in his conduct a reflection of his pious readings.

The modesty of his bearing, the wisdom of his discourse, his unalterable gentleness, the natural beauty of his features, the fund of goodness that breathed in all his person, communicated something heavenly and divine to those who conversed with him.

His mortification reveals to us in part the secret of his chastity as of his fervour: by subjecting the flesh to the spirit, it rendered the latter more capable of divine communications. It is in souls so independent of the appetites, even of the necessities of the body, that the Holy Spirit takes pleasure to dwell. The conduct which Thomas kept at meals was that which has been seen to shine in the greatest Saints of all ages: he had, as it were, lost the taste for food; he ate only by a sort of passive obedience; his soul mingled in this material action only to raise it by heavenly motives; he scarcely ever knew, after leaving the table, either what had been served or what he had eaten.[13] Regretting the hours that must be given to the cares of the body, he ordinarily concentrated himself within himself by prayer or reflection.

Let us recall finally from this school of Paris a trait which characterizes at once two of the virtues of our Saint. One day when he was reading in the refectory, the table-corrector, by mistake, made him a sign to pronounce a word otherwise than he had done: the reader corrected himself at once, as if he had really made

a mistake. On leaving the meal, several of his brethren having told him that he ought not to have repeated the fault of him who had corrected him wrongly, he made them this answer, truly worthy of Thomas: “It matters little to pronounce a word one way or another; but it matters infinitely to a religious to practise obedience and humility.” Never was the evangelical precept better fulfilled: “Become like little children!”

After three years passed in this silent labour of prayer and study, Thomas was sent to teach at Cologne, under Albert the Great, as bachelor (1248). Those who, in our day, still give themselves to serious studies will like to hear the counsels that Saint Thomas gave his pupils on the manner of studying. “You ask me,” he wrote to one of them, “what is the true means of succeeding in your studies, and of arriving surely at the possession of wisdom? The counsel I give you is not to attach yourself at first to difficult questions, but to raise yourself as by degrees; the knowledge you can acquire of the simplest truths will lead you insensibly to the knowledge of more profound truths. Do not hasten to say what you think, or to show what you have learned; speak little, and never answer with precipitation.[14] Flee useless conversations; one loses in them both time and the spirit of devotion. Keep above all with care the purity of conscience, and never do anything that could stain it or render you less agreeable in the eyes of God. Let your prayer be continual.[15] Love to hide yourself, to give to reading or meditation all the time which you would employ in conversing fruitlessly with creatures. You will be admitted into the secret of the spouse if you know how to converse heart to heart with him in retirement. Let solitude not however make you difficult or troublesome; show yourself always gentle and affable, but without becoming too familiar with anyone; for familiarity is ordinarily followed by contempt. Leave to each the care of what concerns him, and do not trouble yourself about what is done or said in the world. It is of infinite importance to you to flee useless going about or visits.[16] In recalling the life and actions of the saints, walk in their footsteps as far as is possible to you, and humble yourself if you cannot attain to their perfection. Keep always the memory of what you learn that is good, from whatever quarter you learn it. Do not be content to receive superficially what you read or what you hear; but strive to penetrate and fathom the whole sense of it. Never remain in doubt on the things which you can know with certainty. Work with a holy avidity to enrich your mind; classify with order in the compartments of your memory all the knowledge you can acquire;[17] yet do not force the talents you have received from God, and do not seek to penetrate what will always be above your intelligence.[18] If you follow exactly the counsels I give you, do not doubt that you will arrive, according to your desires, at the possession of wisdom. Your life will be full of flowers and fruits. You will make the Lord’s vineyard fruitful, all the time that you bear and drag the yoke of this mortal life.”[19] It is at the time of his professorship at Cologne that his admission to the priesthood is placed. To prepare himself for the celebration of the holy mysteries, Thomas passed a great part of the night at the feet of the holy Tabernacles. There he vied in fervour and humility with those pure spirits who are represented to us as watching around the sanctuary.[20] After the holy sacrifice, he prolonged in thanksgiving the happiness he had felt in the reception of the eucharistic bread. Ordinarily, he thought it an honour to fill the office of the choir-boys, and to serve another priest at the altar.

Strange revolutions had taken place in Italy since Thomas had left that first theatre of his militant life. Frederick II aspired to universal monarchy: to attain his end, the emperor of Germany made himself the persecutor of the Church, which opposed an insurmountable barrier to the triumph of brute force: this persecutor of the Popes was to end like all those whom each century has seen arise, but dragging down many ruins in his fall. Most of the Italian lords, among whom must be counted the brothers of Saint Thomas Aquinas, had detached themselves from the cause of the excommunicated. Frederick avenged himself for these defections by ravaging Italy: the town of Aquino among others was razed (1250). On learning the temporal misfortunes of his relatives, Thomas hoped the more for their eternal salvation. Landulf and Raynald indeed understood the severe lesson which Providence had just given them: their faith, awakened by misfortune, rose to the most generous practice of Christian virtues. Saint Thomas’s mother, Countess Theodora, bent under the blows that struck her house, and henceforth imitated a holiness which she had formerly fought. Of Thomas’s two sisters, the elder vowed in the cloister her body to labour, her eyes to tears

and her soul to contemplation. The virtue of the younger shone in the accomplishment of social duties: she was married to the count of San Severino.

Thomas was not long in betaking himself again to the capital of France, the true cradle of his glory (1252). Warned of his departure, the canons of the Chapter of Louvain begged him to honour them with a visit and made him arbiter of differences that had arisen among them: a glorious homage rendered to the extreme youth of our Saint, and which recalls that which the English barons rendered to the spirit of justice of his royal friend Louis IX. Thomas's entry into Paris was not unknown as the first and even the second time.

The University of Paris had not forgotten the triumphs of its pupil; it saw him again singularly grown by the public lessons given, during four years, in the new university of Cologne. It received him with that enthusiasm which ordinarily presages brilliant successes, admitted him without making him undergo the customary trials, among the number of its bachelors. This was to clothe him with the ministry of that secondary teaching which he had just exercised on a less vast theatre; it allowed him to sit at once in a chair of theology. It was not however until the age of thirty-five that the regulations of the university[21] permitted the teaching of the highest as of the most difficult of all sciences; but Thomas was not long in covering with a glorious veil the infringement which had just been made in his favour of the letter, if not the spirit, of the common law. The enclosure of the col- at least six years and to have completed twenty-one. As for theology, it could be taught only when one had studied it eight years and was thirty-five years old. If Thomas taught it at twenty-five, it was by exception, on account of his rare merit. The bachelor read (expounded) for a year the Sentences (Peter Lombard), in the class of a doctor; and, on the attestation of this doctor, he underwent public examinations: then he was admitted to the degree of licentiate, which permitted him to teach as doctor; he thus expounded for a second year the Master of the Sentences. After which he received from the chancellor of the University the degree of doctor, and from then on he had a school with a bachelor who taught under him.

lege of Saint-Jacques could soon no longer suffice for the ever-growing multitude of hearers who pressed round the young Dominican Bachelor; the inferiority of this title had completely disappeared under the superiority of the teaching. Has genius then need of a habit or a name? Let a free field be left it, and presently it exercises its ascendancy and sovereignty!

The ancient doctors themselves, the guides and pastors of peoples, made themselves disciples of a young man of twenty-six. The most difficult questions reached him in quick succession, from all parts of the Catholic world; but the vivacity of his mind, seconded by the ardour of his charity, multiplied solutions with difficulties, answers with questions: his treatises spread simultaneously among all Christian nations. The fecundity of his word, radiating in all directions with so marvellous an abundance, could from then on make him compared to that unique star whose fruitful gaze at once beautifies and fertilizes all nature and whose image has become the radiant symbol of his powerful genius.[22]

There was then seen renewed what antiquity tells us of some rare and almost superhuman minds, who seem, indeed, to borrow something from the exclusive attributes of divinity: Thomas dictated at the same time to three or even four secretaries, on matters quite dissimilar, and often all equally thorny. Doubtless the works which came so rapidly from this poor cell of the Dominican convent, and went in all directions to dissipate darkness and doubt, direct opinion, strengthen orthodox doctrine, have not come down to us in their entirety; but enough remains that, to explain their existence, one is obliged to have recourse to that sort of intellectual phenomenon which gives our young Saint so glorious a resemblance with that formidable genius who was called Origen.[23]

The Dominican Bachelor was far from forgetting that he had been clothed with the character and mission of the priesthood. The numerous churches of Paris so often resounded with his word that the faithful, for their part, could easily imagine that Brother Thomas had only one occupation, one ministry, the apostolate. In the

society of Christians, Thomas was in fact an apostle.

The character and effects of the apostolic eloquence of Thomas Aquinas have scarcely been preserved to us except by tradition and history. Of the countless sermons he delivered in the course of his ministry, we possess only short and fleshless analyses, rather like those rapid notes that Bossuet was accustomed to jot down on descending from the pulpit where his genius had just burst forth with so much amplitude and magnificence. Nevertheless one finds in these abridged notes of the Angelic Doctor the ineffaceable stamp of his wide thought, the inflexible rigour of his method, an admirable use of Scripture, the unalterable purity of religious teaching, and above all that war which he never ceased to wage on vices, on the depravity of the world: everything leads him to this last goal, the panegyric of a saint, like the meditation of a mystery, like a direct discourse of evangelical morality.

The lessons of Thomas were interrupted by disputes which divided, in 1253, the secular doctors and the regular doctors. During Lent of that same year, four students had revolted against the watchmen in the streets of Paris; one of them had been killed, and the others put in prison. Great uproar in the university: it demands back its pupils, who are given back to it the next day; it demands more, it wishes those who had so cruelly treated them to be punished; a second reparation being long in coming, the secular doctors suspend their lessons, and bind themselves by oath to pursue it to the end. The regular doctors, however, continue to open their schools, and do not think they ought to adopt such a measure for themselves. In this they did but imitate the conduct of their predecessors, who had likewise refused to enter into this sort of conspiracy, when, on an occasion quite similar, in 1229, under the minority of the king and the regency of his mother, the doctors abandoned the capital to retire to various towns of the kingdom. Satisfaction once obtained, the university doctors make a statute providing that every master, in whatever faculty it may be, shall be strictly obliged to close his school in cases similar to the one that has just happened. Refusal on the part of the religious to swear, as is required of them, the observance of this new rule, and that in spite of the quite particular cleverness with which the formula of it was drawn up.[24] New decree of the university, which excludes them from its body and deprives them of their chairs. But there was then a power in the world ready to repress all kinds of oppression and tyranny. The religious, unjustly stripped of their rights, appeal at once to the Holy See. Innocent IV, and after him Alexander IV, ordered the re-establishment of the independent chairs of the regular doctors, namely those of the Dominicans. Amid all these movements in which he was enveloped, Thomas lost nothing of that interior peace which is the proper sphere of genius as much as of virtue. His name was often mingled in these ardent quarrels, without his showing any concern for them. In vain was he insulted even in the public exercise of the apostolic ministry; he constantly kept the calm of innocence and dignity. Interrupted in his preaching, on a Palm Sunday, in the church itself of Saint-Jacques, by an emissary of the university, he listens without emotion to the insulting warning that this man had come to bring to the audience on behalf of his masters, and continues, without answering, the instruction begun.

At the epoch we have reached, Bonaventure and Thomas often visited each other in the poor cell which each of them, in his convent, had rendered so famous and so powerful. There, in the uninterrupted labour of prayer and study, were forged the terrible arms which shortly after would serve for the triumph of religion and the confusion of its enemies. The religious of Saint Francis came one day to visit his Dominican brother; and in the naïveté of his affection and humility, he said to him: What is the book, my brother, from which you draw the fine things that the world admires in your works? — Here is my book! answered Brother Thomas, showing his illustrious friend the image of Jesus crucified. — Saint Paul would have owned that answer! Bonaventure had understood all its meaning. It is known how far advanced he was in the reading of this great book, what touching and sublime pages he drew from it, to give them to the admiration, to the edification of the world.

Another day, it was Thomas who went, accompanied by one of his brethren, to visit his friend Bonaventure. But arrived near the latter’s cell, he perceived him bent over his solitary table, and actually engaged in the

work of composition. — Let us leave, he said in a low voice, let us leave a saint to write to the glory of a saint! — Bonaventure was then working at that life of Saint Francis in which the soul of this great patriarch seems to have passed entire. Thomas was not ignorant of the subject that occupied his friend; and he knew well enough his seraphic soul to anticipate the voice of posterity in the place it was to assign to the son beside such a father! After a journey which Thomas was obliged to make in Italy to defend before the Pope and his senate the cause of the mendicant religious attacked by a member of the University of Paris — the famous William of Saint-Amour — he returned to Paris, where the doctor's cap awaited him. Here is the case to admire the profound humility of the saints. Thomas Aquinas believed himself unworthy to bind on the doctoral laurel! and nothing less than an order from heaven was needed to dry his tears and put an end to his repugnances. The night which preceded the day fixed for his public act, Thomas saw in a dream an old man, of venerable aspect, with serene brow, who asked him what was the subject of his sadness. — It is only too just, he answered, since I am forced to take rank among the doctors; of which I am not capable. — And the old man said to him: The very order which you have received, my son, should make you secure; it destroys your own will, and shows you the will of God in that of your superiors. You will take for the text of your thesis these words of the Psalmist: "Thou waterest the hills from thy upper rooms; the earth shall be filled with the fruit of thy works."[25] The next day, a new proof of humility, in the presence of all the faculties assembled in one of the halls of the bishop's palace of Paris: Bonaventure and Thomas, who were to undergo the trial the same day, dispute the last place. Thomas yields at last, as the younger. He develops the magnificent passage of the Prophet, applying it to the divine economy of religion, which he shows as illuminating all souls with the heavenly rays of grace and truth. Posterity has made another application of this same text; it has found no other expression to render the influence that the new Doctor was to exercise on the Christian universe, that torrent of light and life which he was to pour on the highest summits as on the humblest valleys of the world of intelligences. A unanimous acclamation had named him doctor.

This day, 23 October 1257, brought forth Thomas Aquinas on the vast theatre of Christian society, invested with the triple authority of genius, admiration and virtue. Now this man, who had silenced envy, confounded error, made triumph the cause of the mendicant religious Orders and of evangelical devotion, acquired at last in so decisive a manner the high dominion of science and holiness, had scarcely entered the thirty-first year of his existence!

Clothed with the title of doctor, Thomas hastened to resume the triple office of professor, preacher and writer. It was then that he addressed to Father Reginald, the dearest and most constant of his friends, a treatise of theology in two hundred and fifty-six chapters.[26]

Whatever idea one may have formed of our Saint's modesty, it will doubtless be hard to believe that he gave to so considerable a work the title of *Compendium of Theology*. It is nevertheless what he does in his preamble.

In this first year of his doctorate, Thomas composed besides his *Apology of the Religious Orders* and his *Summa against the Gentiles*. This last work, undertaken at the prayer of Saint Raymond of Peñafort, another son of Saint Dominic, was drawn on foundations wide enough to include the simultaneous refutation of Judaism, Manichaeism and Mohammedanism. It was at once translated into Greek, Hebrew and Syriac, and the missionaries whom the Orders of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis ceased not from then on to send to foreign nations, to the centre of Buddhism and to the depths of the East, no longer engaged in these difficult enterprises without carrying with them so precious a weapon.

This so considerable work was immediately followed by a still more considerable labour, on all the Epistles of Saint Paul;[27] it was the portion of Scripture that Thomas loved most after the Gospel. The holy passion of the young Doctor of Paris for the Apostle of the nations deserved a miraculous favour. Evoked by the force of this sentiment, Paul crossed the fatal limits which separate this material world from the sublime abode of souls; he disclosed his immortal features to the eyes of his fervent interpreter.

But this interview with higher spirits was only a first trial for the humility of our Saint, an essay for his mortal sight. After the visit of the Apostle, he was destined to receive that of the Master of the Apostles.

At the time when Saint Thomas Aquinas lived, the question of the eucharistic accidents was agitated in all Christian schools, and divided the doctors of the first of all, the University of Paris. It had to be decided whether these accidents had something real, or were only a simple appearance. The real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist was never called in question; it was recognized, proclaimed as a truth as ancient as Christianity: it was only a question of determining the nature of the accidents which present it to our senses.

Wearied with discussions of which the end could not be foreseen, all the doctors were of opinion to refer on this great question to the sentiment alone of Brother Thomas Aquinas, who had then been teaching in the University of Paris for several years, being yet only thirty-two years of age. All his con- brethren declared that they would hold as truly conformable to the lights of reason and of faith the decision which the young doctor should give, for they had more than once experienced how much more surely than others he seized the true point of the difficulty, how much more clearly he developed it.

The writings in which each had expressed his sentiment having been placed in his hands, Thomas Aquinas collects himself, rises to a high contemplation, prays according to his custom; then he traces, with as much precision as lucidity, what the spirit of God deigns to inspire in his soul.

Nevertheless he would not carry before the doctors and the schools the of his science and of his prayer, before consulting the very One of whom he had had to speak, whose support he had implored. He comes to the altar, and placing before the tabernacle, as before the Master of masters, what he had written on the controverted subject, he raises his hands toward the image of Jesus crucified, and prays in this manner:

“Lord Jesus, who truly dwellest in this admirable Sacrament, thou whose works are incomprehensible marvels, I humbly beseech thee: if what I have written of thyself is conformable to the truth, grant me to teach it and to persuade my brethren of it on thy behalf; if, on the contrary, there is in this writing anything that departs from the Catholic faith, put me in the impossibility of producing it before their eyes.”

Now the doctor had been followed by his usual companion and by several other religious of the Order, who saw Jesus Christ appearing to him and, standing upon the very leaves written by Thomas’s hand, saying to him lovingly: “Thou hast written worthily, my son, on the Sacrament of my body: *Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma*”; and as the Doctor’s prayer was prolonged still further, he was seen to rise about a cubit in the air, as if impelled on one side by the proper ardour of his prayer, and lifted on the other by the attraction of his God.[28]

The solution of Saint Thomas was in favour of the reality of the eucharistic accidents or species. According to him, these accidents, these species or appearances, though intimately bound to the substance of the bread and wine which supports them, have nevertheless a proper existence, and they keep this existence when the substances of bread and wine have been converted into those of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus what we see, what we touch in the Eucharist, the quantity, the colour, the figure, are real things, and our senses are in no wise deceived, as one would be obliged to admit in the contrary opinion.

The opinion of Saint Thomas was universally adopted; it is not of faith, but the Church has clearly marked the preference she gives it, since in the office of the Blessed Sacrament, of which we shall have to speak, she has a part of what the holy Doctor wrote on this subject recited.

The learned were not the only ones to do justice to Thomas’s rare merit. Saint Louis, king of France, had entire confidence in his lights, and asked his advice on the most important affairs of State. He often invited him to dine at his table, an honour which the Saint accepted as rarely as he could, from a principle of humility. When, however, he was obliged to accept it, he appeared at court as modest and as recollected as in his convent. Being one day at the king’s table, there befell him one of those absent-mindednesses peculiar to

great men, which must be related here. He was then engaged in refuting the heresy of the Bulgarians, or new Manichaeans, which, for some years, had been renewed in Italy. As his head was full of his matter, and his mind strongly occupied with the profound meditations he had made, he cried out suddenly: "That is decisive against the Manichaeans!"[29] His prior, who had accompanied him, having told him to think where he was, he set about repairing his fault by asking the king's pardon: but this good prince, far from showing any displeasure, ordered one of his secretaries to write down the reasoning the Saint had just made, lest it should escape his memory.

The general chapters held regularly each year by the Preaching Friars had not merely the aim of perpetuating the holiness of their Order: they proposed at the same time the perfecting of studies. Thomas attended that of 1259, held at Valenciennes; Albert the Great, his master, and Peter of Tarentaise, his disciple, were joined to him for the drawing up of the regulations which were to procure uniformity of teaching in the Dominican houses. These regulations are still in part observed in our day in the schools of the Order of Saint Dominic.

On his return to Paris, Thomas should have suspended the course of his public lessons, according to the university laws, which allowed professors of theology only three consecutive years of teaching in the same school: but the movement of admiration which had led the doctors of Paris to place Thomas in the theological chair before the required age, led them again to prolong a teaching of which the honour redounded entirely to their body. The charms of virtue, his affability and modesty won hearts for him even more than his learning.

One of his own pupils, in his public act for the licentiate, dared to rise against the sentiments he had taught, to maintain propositions which he had formally combated. Thomas, who was present, kept silence nevertheless. His other disciples afterwards complained of it to himself: Thomas renewed to them by word of mouth the lesson of patience and goodness which he had given them by his conduct. But if charity had seemed to demand this first sacrifice, truth could not lose its rights either: and our Saint had long since learned to confound his interests with those of truth.[30] The respondent, according to custom, had to appear again the next day in one of the halls of the bishop's palace, before a more numerous and imposing assembly. Neither the touching example he had received from his master, nor the reflections of the night, brought any change to his thesis. The Doctor then thought he ought to break silence, to justify in the eyes of all the teaching with which he had nourished the minds of his pupils. He cited the authorities, discussed them; he laid down the principles, deduced the consequences; he destroyed one by one all the propositions of the young graduate, showing all that they contained of the false and the dangerous; but all this with such a mixture of gentleness and serenity that his pupil, returning suddenly within the bounds of duty, effectively corrected of his self-love, showed himself quite happy at a defeat which opened his eyes to the light. Ill-treated by a cold argumentation, by a word without bowels, this young soul might have stiffened in its opinion, plunged beyond return into the dark ways of error. Less has sometimes been needed to give birth to heresies! Raised tenderly by a paternal hand, it returned at once to the worship, to the love of truth.

Another young man dared to tell him one day that he did not gain by being known, and that his merit was far from equalling his reputation. What would one of our modern philosophers have answered? Here is the answer of the Catholic Doctor: You are right, my friend; so I would wish the world to be undeceived, by seeing me study without relaxation!

Pope Urban IV, who knew all our Saint's merit, called him to Rome in 1261. Thomas was charged there by his general to teach theology, an office which he discharged with his usual talent. The sovereign Pontiff wished several times to raise him to ecclesiastical dignities; but the Saint refused them all, and preferred the state of simple religious to places that ambition would seek less, if it were capable of reflecting on the dangers that surround them. All that Urban could obtain from him was that he would not go far from his person. This procured him the occasion of announcing the word of God in all the towns where the Pope was accustomed to reside, as at Rome, Viterbo, Orvieto, Fondi and Perugia. Preaching at Rome on a Good

Friday, he spoke in so touching a manner of the love of Jesus Christ for men and of the ingratitude of the latter toward the Redeemer, that he made the tears flow from all his audience: the sighs and groans of the assembly obliged him even to stop several times. The sermon he made on the following Easter Day on the glory of Jesus Christ and on the happiness of those who rise again with him by grace, produced again marvellous effects. William of Tocco adds that, as the Saint was leaving the church of Saint Peter, after his sermon, a woman found herself suddenly cured of a flow of blood, by touching the hem of his garment. But the conversion of two distinguished rabbis among the Jews was a still greater prodigy. The Saint, who had met them by chance at the country house of Cardinal Richard, entered into dispute with them, and proved to them solidly that the Messiah had come; that this Messiah was Jesus Christ, God and man together, and that consequently they must submit to the Gospel. It was agreed on both sides that the conference should be resumed next day. Thomas spent the night at the foot of the altars, and conjured Him who alone can convert hearts to finish the work He had already begun. His prayer was heard. Indeed, the two rabbis came to find him next morning, not to begin the dispute again, but to embrace the Christian religion. Their example was followed by several other Jews.

These difficult conquests Thomas not only accomplished by his living word; after his death, he has not ceased to speak with the same efficacy.[31] Spain saw, in the fifteenth century, another rabbi, whose name is known in the history of science, renounce, on reading the *Summa* of Saint Thomas on the agreement of the old with the new covenant,[32] his national antipathies, strengthened by the studies of his whole life, to embrace the grace of Christianity. Under the inspiration of this genius so devout to the Queen of virgins, Rabbi Paul of Burgos wished to be named, at his baptism, Paul of Santa Maria. He was successively bishop of Cartagena and of Burgos, his native town; he died patriarch of Aquileia.[33]

In the following century, a zealous disciple of Melanchthon, Theobald Thamer, undertakes the reading of the *Summa*, with the design of combating its doctrine, of ruining its results, and of destroying one of the firmest supports of the Catholic Church. Had he heard the word of his confrère Martin Bucer, the Lutheran apostle of Strasbourg: *Tolle Thomam, et dissipabo Ecclesiam*; “Rid me of Thomas, and I will bring the Church down”? But he soon perceives that the work is beyond his strength: he falls crushed under the weight of genius; he rises a fervent Catholic.[34] A still more illustrious man, brought up in the principles of Calvin, but tormented by doubt in the bosom of the Reformation, feels himself pressed to seek Christian truth in the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas;[35] soon this truth shines before his eyes: he abjures Calvinism, he throws himself with transport into the arms of the Catholic Church; the latter receives him with love, and later rewards his talents and services with the most eminent dignities: this man was Cardinal Jacques Davy Duperron!

It was during this first sojourn at Rome that he wrote his *Literal Commentary on the whole book of Job*, and that admirable explanation of the Gospels by the Fathers, which scholars know only under the name of *Golden Chain* (*Catena aurea*).

Some years later, that is to say in 1264, Thomas Aquinas was called anew by Pope Urban IV, who was then at Orvieto. He went there and profited by the first conversations he had with the Holy Father to propose to him the establishment, throughout the whole Catholic Church, of a special solemnity in honour of the divine Eucharist.

Already this feast was celebrated in several churches. That of Liège had been the first of all. A pious nun named Juliana had had a vision on this subject and had communicated it to the archdeacon of Liège, who afterwards became Pope Urban IV, and who approved the project of a feast for the Blessed Sacrament. The office was composed by a religious of the Order to which Juliana belonged, and the feast took place for the first time in the year 1247. From Liège it spread into other countries, and the eagerness of the peoples at these pious ceremonies made it desired that they might be celebrated everywhere, and no one wished it more ardently than Brother Thomas. The pious thoughts which the Saint had long nourished in his heart on this subject were neither less profound nor less ancient in the soul of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. The new prodigies

which were wrought every day on the holy altars had only excited the pious desires of the sovereign Pontiff. It seemed that God Himself had wished to confound the doubts or profanations of impiety, and to second the love and faith of the peoples by various miraculous interventions of His power. Blood had on several occasions flowed from the consecrated hosts, and various Christian peoples had been witnesses of these prodigies.

Pope Urban IV, having decided on the establishment of the feast of the Most Holy Sacrament, wished the office for it to be composed by the two finest geniuses of the century. He therefore summoned to him the angelic Thomas and the seraphic Bonaventure: “Brothers,” he said to them, “I wish to establish in the whole Church the greatest and most touching solemnity; I wish to celebrate the Sacrament of love and mercy.” Then he unfolds his plan to the two monks and orders them to put themselves in a position to execute it. The humility of the two Saints is astonished at the Pontiff’s choice; they resist, but in vain; at a fixed time, they must submit their work to him who, better than any other, is capable of judging it.

Thomas and Bonaventure, on the day determined by the sovereign Pontiff, betake themselves to him, modesty on their brow and distrust of themselves in their heart. “Begin, Brother Thomas,” says Urban IV. The holy Religious first reads the antiphons of the various parts of the office, the lessons, the responsories; all was taken from Holy Scripture and perfectly adapted to the subject of the new solemnity. The Pope keeps silence, while Bonaventure cannot contain a gesture of approval, promptly repressed by respect.

Thomas passes to the morning hymn, *Sacris solemniis*; he comes to that ravishing stanza:

Panis angelicus fit panis hominum; Dat panis caelicus figuris terminum: O res mirabilis! manducat Dominum Pauper, servus et humilis.

The bread of angels becomes the bread of man; this heavenly bread puts an end to the ancient figures. O ineffable marvel! the poor man, wretched and reduced to the condition of slaves, feeds on the body of his Lord.

Tears moisten Brother Bonaventure’s eyelids, and one hears, beneath his frieze habit, the rustling of a parchment whose fragments fall to the floor.

What admirable majesty in the opening of the hymn of Lauds:

Verbum supernum prodiens, Nec Patris linquens dexteram, Ad opus suum exiens, Venit ad vitae vesperam.

The eternal Word, come down to us without leaving the right hand of his Father, to consummate his work, walked of his own accord to the evening of his mortal life.

Then are heard those stanzas so full of sweetness:

O salutaris hostia, Quae caeli pandis ostium, Bella premunt hostilia: Da robur, fer auxilium. Uni trinoque Domino Sit sempiterna gloria, Qui vitam sine termino Nobis donet in patria.

O holy Victim of salvation, who openest to us the gate of heaven, behold: the enemy delivers us to hard battles. Strengthen us against his attacks, lend us thy help.

Eternal glory to God Three and One! may his goodness deign to grant us in the heavenly Fatherland the life that shall have no end.

Brother Bonaventure’s rapture can scarcely contain itself, and new fragments of parchment fall at his feet.

Urban IV, no less profound a theologian than pious a pontiff, seems especially struck by the *Lauda, Sion*, where he finds a complete treatise of the highest and most sublime theology on the mystery of the day.

Thomas finishes with the *Pange, lingua*, of which the fourth and fifth stanzas admirably sum up the sacrament of the Eucharist:

Verbum caro panem verum Verbo carnem efficit, Fitque sanguis Christi merum, Et si sensus deficit, Ad firmandum cor sincerum Sola fides sufficit.

Tantum ergo Sacramentum Veneremur cernui, Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat ritui; Praestet fides supplementum Sensuum defectui.

The Word made flesh changes true bread into his own flesh by his word: by the virtue of this same word, the wine becomes the blood of Christ; and if the senses are powerless to explain such a prodigy, faith suffices to strengthen a truly sincere heart.

Let us adore, with profound respect, a Sacrament so worthy of our homage; let the ancient precept yield to the new, and let faith supply the weakness of our senses.

When the Angelic Doctor had finished reading this work in which his genius had revealed itself in an unexpected light, for the profound theologian had shown himself there a sublime poet, there was a long and deep silence. Urban IV said at last: “Your turn, Brother Bonaventure!” The holy monk throws himself at the Pope’s feet, crying out: “Most Holy Father, while I was listening to Brother Thomas, it seemed to me I heard the Holy Spirit. He alone can have inspired such beautiful thoughts in my brother Thomas. So, Most Holy Father, I should have thought I committed a sacrilege if I had let my feeble work remain. Here, Most Holy Father, is what remains of it”; and the Religious showed the Pope the fragments of parchment that littered the floor. The Pontiff admired and praised the humility of Bonaventure no less than the genius of Thomas.

On 19 June 1264, the feast of Corpus Domini was celebrated with great pomp, and since then the hymns of Saint Thomas Aquinas repeat, across generations and centuries, the same thought, the same sentiment, the same life. There are certain nations, certain churches which have particular chants for every other feast; but here they all unite in a single voice to repeat the voice of the Angel of the school; and these chants of the great theologian, mingled with the inspired chants of the Prophet-King, will rise unceasingly toward the throne of the Lamb, with the clouds of incense, the waves of harmony, the perfume of new flowers, and the flaming impulses of all the souls which, from the obscurities of time, aspire without ceasing to the pure visions of immortality!

It was evidently in the worship of the holy Eucharist that the great Doctor found his lights. Would we know the source of those marvellous clarities which will eternally astonish the philosopher and the theologian, let us listen to the great man, he is about to deliver his secret himself:

Adoro te devote, latens Deitas, — O God! O my God! I adore thee; thou art *Quae sub his figuris vere latitas:* — there, hidden under the figures, but present and living. *Tibi se cor meum totum subjicit,* — My heart has known thee; it abandons itself to thee *Quia te contemplans totum deficit.* — because, in contemplating thee, it faints away with love at thy feet.

Jesu, quem velatum nunc aspicio, — I beseech thee, grant me what I so thirst for: O Jesus, whom I now behold *Oro, fiat illud quod tam sitio,* — beneath veils, grant that I may be happy at the sight *Ut te revelata cernens facie,* — of thy glory! *Visu sim beatus tuae gloriae.*

Meanwhile the authority of the sovereign Pontiff was to enter for the last time into struggle with the humility of Thomas Aquinas. Clement IV, who had succeeded Urban IV on 5 February 1265, appeared to have inherited the sentiments of the late pope for the Angelic Doctor. The bull which conferred on him the see of Naples was already signed; but then the affliction of the Friar Preacher became so profound, his prayer so touching, that Clement IV consented to suppress this authentic act of his power.

It is in the first year of the pontificate of Clement IV that the beginnings of the *Summa of Theology* must be placed. This was to be, as is known, the principal monument of the thirteenth century, the highest formula that Catholic teaching ever had, and, as we shall see, the whole aim of Thomas Aquinas’s existence. Disgusted, as he himself says in the preamble of this great work, by the exuberance, the obscurity, the

disorder of the scholastic Theologies existing up to that day, he conceived the plan of a substantial, luminous and methodical summary,[36] in which Christianity would be taken whole, from the existence of God to the last precept of evangelical morality; a veritable religious encyclopaedia, cleared of all foreign elements, of all useless superfluities, comprising in their logical and natural order all the speculative and practical points of revealed faith; so that each should form a complete whole, and that, in their chain, they should all concur in the composition of a vast body of doctrine, faithful image of that religion whose inflexible lines and admirable proportions a divine hand has traced, image consequently of divinity itself, which, of all its works, wished revelation to bear the most striking and glorious traits of its eternal beauty.

To appreciate the influence and the results of the *Summa of Theology*, one would have to retrace the history of all the Catholic schools since the thirteenth century. The sovereign Pontiffs, the Councils, the religious Orders and the writers of all ages have united to accept the teachings, to exalt the merit of this great work. When the ambassadors of the kingdom of Naples came to ask the canonization of Thomas Aquinas of Pope John XXII, the pontiff, who received them in full consistory, said to them: "He alone has enlightened the Church more than all the other doctors together; and one will profit more in one year with his books than during a whole life with the books of others."[37] And as someone, in the course of the canonization process, remarked that he had worked no miracles, the Pope answered: "He has worked as many miracles as he has written articles."[38] The Greek Church joins in its praises with the Latin Church. Cardinal Bessarion, the glory of Catholic Greece, one of the finest geniuses of the fifteenth century and one of the most ardent promoters of the Renaissance, was accustomed to say that Thomas Aquinas was the most learned of the saints and the most saintly of the learned. Toletus, another prince of the Roman court, mingled in all the religious and political events of the following century, proclaims without hesitation that the books of Thomas are to him in place of all the others.[39] Being unable to report here all the glorious testimonies rendered to the Angelic Doctor, to his *Summa* in particular, let it suffice us to relate a fact which, as it seems to us, magnificently sums up this unanimous concert of all ages and of all the intelligences of Catholicity in his honour. In the Council of Trent, a table was placed in the middle of the hall where the Fathers of the council sat, and on this table were Holy Scripture, the decrees of the Popes and the *Summa* of Saint Thomas. After that let us conclude, with the poet of the thirteenth century, that the Doctor dwells in a sphere to which praises can no longer reach,[40] or else, with a writer of our day, that God alone will be able to praise this great man in the eternal council of his saints.[41] The composition of the *Summa Theologica* occupied the last nine years of Saint Thomas's life, without his renouncing, however, any of the functions, any of the duties that heaven had imposed on him. Bologna had long desired to possess a professor so capable of sustaining its ancient renown. The presence of Thomas in that city revived the love of strong studies.

The glory of the learned professor was not so dazzling, nevertheless, as not sometimes to be misjudged, as we have seen it had more than once been insulted. One day, then, when Brother Thomas was walking with slow steps under the cloister of the convent of Bologna, completely absorbed in his profound meditations, a lay brother told him that, being obliged to go out on some business, the superior had permitted him to take with him the first religious he should meet. The Doctor, alleging neither the pain he was actually suffering in a leg, nor the more serious occupations that filled all his moments, set about at once accompanying this good brother; but the latter walked with such haste that Thomas often remained behind. The great man was promptly recognized in the town; and the escort of citizens took it on itself to recall to this religious his duty and to teach him the name of his companion, he so completely a stranger to the greatest preoccupations of his century, as to the most ordinary attentions of charity. Returned to the convent, he throws himself at the feet of the Angelic Doctor, and asks his pardon for his ignorance and indiscretion. Thomas raises him with his usual gentleness, and says to him smiling: It is not you, my brother, who need excuse, it is I; I ought to have remembered that the state of my leg did not permit me to walk as fast as would have been needed!

Thomas had just published at that time the first part of his *Summa*. Two years of so active a life had sufficed him to elaborate the five hundred and eighty-four articles of which this magnificent work is composed! After the death of Clement IV, that devoted friend, that powerful auxiliary of his generous thoughts, Thomas interrupted the lessons of theology which he had been giving for three years at Bologna, to betake himself once more to the capital of France, as if he had felt the need of making his last farewells to that great and noble city, to the holy and glorious monarch who then reigned over it. As to the real motive that called him to Paris, it was very probably the general chapter of 1269, held in that capital, and doubtless also the call of Louis IX, who, at the moment of engaging in a new crusade, desired to receive the counsels and blessing of a religious as great by his lights as by his holiness.

At the beginning of 1272, the general chapter of the Preachers, held at Florence, received at once from almost all the Universities of Europe requests which formed the most magnificent concert in praise of the Angelic Doctor. As if a strange presentiment of his approaching death had suddenly spread through the world, each learned city made a last effort to obtain the inestimable advantage of possessing and hearing him.

Bologna, whose sojourn had been so favourable to his genius; Paris, where he had laid the first foundations of his glory and which had raised him as a son; Rome, which seemed to be the only theatre worthy of this king of thought; Naples, which, after all, had given the Angelic Doctor to the Order of Saint Dominic, and which alone, among the great cities of Europe, had not yet possessed him, claimed him equally and urged in turn their rights before the Assembly. Naples carried it over her rivals. The new king of Sicily, Charles I of Anjou, made such lively instances with the Dominican superiors that Thomas received the order to betake himself to the city of Naples.

Rome lay on his road: the illustrious traveller came to prostrate himself, and it was for the last time, on the venerable threshold of the holy Apostles; obedience even obliged him to stop some days under the hospitable roof that sheltered the Dominicans at Santa Sabina. But this halt of genius was not fruitless for Catholic science and for the ancient city. It was there that he began the last part of the *Summa* and wrote his *Commentaries* on some books of Boethius. He was even compelled to reappear, were it but for an instant, in his chair of theology; and the crowd was only the more eager to gather up his word. Rome then saw one of those intellectual phenomena which will always seem incomprehensible, and thereby incredible, to certain minds; they manifest nevertheless in the highest degree the power of reflection and meditation with which the soul of Thomas Aquinas was endowed. He was expounding the book of Boethius which treats of the mystery of the Trinity; the torch he held to light himself burned down between his fingers, and burned them for some time, without the feeling of this physical pain being able to distract a soul absorbed in the contemplation of truth. Profane antiquity had seen an energetic will bring about this sort of divorce between soul and body; but the intelligence, never![42]

Before taking the road to Naples again, Thomas had finished his work on Boethius, carefully collected by his inseparable friend Father Reginald, and forming at present the sixty-ninth and seventieth of his opuscula.[43] On leaving the city of Rome, they were received, both of them, in that house of Cardinal Richard where the Angelic Doctor had submitted the two proud rabbis to the sweet yoke of the Gospel. Thomas fell ill at his host's; but this illness was short and slight. Father Reginald, his companion, fell ill in his turn, in the same villa; and this time the malady declared itself with such intensity that it soon inspired the physicians with the most serious anxieties. But holiness possesses resources which science cannot even suspect: our Saint prays for his companion; he lays on him the relics of Saint Agnes, and the sick man suddenly recovers the strength and health necessary to continue with his illustrious friend the journey begun.[44] Thomas had always professed for this lovable and chaste spouse of Jesus Christ a profound veneration, a tender confidence; he constantly carried with him relics stamped with the virtue of martyrdom and the radiance of chastity. The memory of this Christian virgin, whose feeble childhood triumphed over pleasures and torments, had I know not what powerful charm for the austere soul of the Catholic Doctor. Some reasons for it may doubtless be

found in the very history of Thomas's first years; but one cannot refuse to see in it a new proof of those intimate relations, of that natural sympathy, which we have already noticed between genius and chastity.

Thomas's entry into Naples was a veritable triumph. The crowd, moved and respectful, accompanied him to the gates of that Dominican convent where Thomas had embraced the religious profession. What would the Princess Theodora have said, had she seen the triumph of her son in that same house which she had regarded as the tomb of his glory?

The university of Naples came in a body to lay at the feet of Charles I the public homage of its gratitude: it had not forgotten that it was to the credit, to the benevolence of this prince that it owed counting among the number of its professors a master henceforth without a rival. The king, on his side, assigns the Doctor a monthly pension on the royal treasury, rather as a striking testimony of his esteem and veneration than as a reward above which Thomas rose by the whole height of his genius, by the whole abnegation of his holiness.[45] The pilgrim who still today visits the convent of the Dominicans at Naples stops with respect before the entrance of a great hall. The image of a friar preacher, crowned with the halo of the saints, first fixes his gaze; and beneath this image he reads this inscription engraved on the marble: "Before entering, venerate this image, and this chair from which the celebrated Thomas Aquinas once made his oracles heard to an infinite number of disciples, for the glory and felicity of his age; King Charles I procured this advantage for his kingdom, and assigned an ounce of gold as pension for each month." The highest personages themselves approached Thomas Aquinas no longer except with a respect mingled with a sort of religious fear. The cardinal, then legate of the Holy See in the kingdom of Naples, ardently desiring to have a conference with him, wished the archbishop of Capua, an old disciple of the Doctor, to accompany him on his visit. Having come to the convent of Saint Dominic, they had Brother Thomas called into the cloister. He sets about obeying at once; but on the way his mind was so absorbed by the object of his studies that, once come down into the cloister, where the two noble visitors awaited him, he continued gravely his walk and his meditation, no longer remembering those who had asked for him, not even perceiving them when they happened to pass before his eyes. Thomas had not here, as at the table of the king of France, a confrère present to recall him to the outer life. The legate would willingly have taken offence at so strange a reception, had not the archbishop, who knew the master's ordinary raptures, made known to the cardinal this particular trait of his character. Come back to himself, Thomas begged their pardon for his forgetfulness; he laid the cause on the weakness of his mind, which had allowed him only with such pain and slowness to find the solution of a theological difficulty! The cardinal-legate withdrew, not knowing which he ought to admire most, the learning or the humility of the holy Doctor, but avowing that the one as the other far surpassed the greatness of his renown.

In the short space of a year and a half, during which the city of Naples was to have the happiness of possessing him, he composed the five hundred and forty-nine articles that remain to us of the last part of the *Summa*. Soon the Doctor wrote very little on philosophy and on theology properly so called: the meditation of the Scriptures absorbed almost exclusively the activity of his mind and of his heart. A few commentaries on various passages of the holy books still escaped his pen. The earthly and passing elements fade little by little from his thought; his eye perceives other horizons; the angel more frequently spreads his wings to escape the influences of life, and to soar to the abode of immortality.

The ecstasies, the raptures which he had always experienced in prayer, became each day more habitual and more intense. In such moments one would have said that his soul had entirely abandoned his body, so completely did it then return to the inertia of matter. On his return to his earthly prison, he was heard to sigh, in the very words of Saint Paul, after the day of deliverance and vision. Thomas went often repeating at this period: "Who shall deliver me from this mortal body? Oh, how I long to be loosed from bondage and to go to Christ!"

Thomas was then writing his *Commentaries on Scripture*; he was expounding the prophet Isaias, the mysterious evangelist of the ancient covenant. A passage of the inspired book presents him insurmountable difficulties: he strives in vain to discover its sense; the obscurity remains always the same. The interpreter suspends his work, or rather redoubles its activity; he has recourse to prayer. Like all true commentators of the divine text, he asks its understanding of Him who dictated it. After the example of Augustine, his most constant model, he cries out: "O God, source of light, grant that I find grace before thee, that the secrets of thy understanding may at last open to the persevering ardour of my desires."[46] To the power of prayer he joined the efficacy of fasting. According to the promises of the Gospel, heaven was to answer his prayers. One night Father Reginald, who slept next to his cell, heard the Doctor speaking aloud and conversing with someone, without being able, however, to distinguish the words of this strange conversation. A few moments after, Thomas calls him. — "Take a lamp," he says to him, "and the manuscript already begun on Isaias." — And at once he sets about dictating with the same firmness, the same abundance, as if he had drawn from the treasures of his memory or from the pages of a book open before him. Then he sends his secretary away; but the latter throws himself at his feet, and says to him: — "Father, I will not consent to withdraw until you have first revealed to me with whom you have conversed this night." — "It matters little to you to know," answers the holy Doctor; "go, for you have still several hours for rest." — "In the name of your friendship for me," resumes Father Reginald, "in the name of religion, in the name of God, give your child this proof of confidence." — The adorable name which the religious has just invoked allows Thomas to resist no longer: he avows to him that, to initiate him into the understanding of the Scriptures, God had deigned to give him for masters Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and that it was with the Princes of the Apostles he had had the happiness of conversing during this night. — "But, in the name of God," added our Saint, "I command you to reveal nothing of all this before the hour of my death."[47]

Sometimes it was while advancing to the conquest of a theological truth that the profound thinker entered into communication with the inhabitants of another world. Thomas was passing the night in prayer in that church of San Domenico Maggiore, which still keeps so living the memory of his fervour and his ecstasies; Father Romanus, who had succeeded him in his chair at Paris, suddenly shows himself to his eyes, before the news of his death could have reached Naples, and tells him that after having suffered for sixteen days in purgatory, he now enjoys the felicity of the heavens. Here is a man who descends from the very abode of light; Thomas hastens to address several questions to him. By a movement which might be called that of a holy egoism, he asks him first whether he has knowledge that he himself is in a state of grace, and whether his work is pleasing to God. He asks him next whether the knowledge science acquires here below persists or is effaced in a better life; he conjures him finally to teach him the manner of the beatific vision. Father Romanus reassures on the first point the fearful humility of the holy Doctor; his answer is less explicit on the second and third questions: he does not attempt to lift the veils which Saint Paul respected. His words confirm those of the great Apostle, encouraging human science, according to the report of some historians[48], condemning it, according to the testimony of some others[49], and end with a prophecy in which he clearly announces to Thomas the approaching possession of that happiness which he cannot manifest to him.

The death of a person whose salvation was in part his work was announced to him in an equally marvellous manner. His sister, lately dead abbess of Santa Maria of Capua, came to ask him the help of his prayers and sacrifices, to finish satisfying the justice of God. Thomas took care not to refuse such touching solicitations; and in a few days he had the happiness of learning the success of his efforts. This beloved sister, twice brought forth to life by fraternal eloquence and piety, crossed once more the limits of eternity, to console the hope of the pious Doctor and to express her gratitude to him. Thomas desires further to learn from her mouth the lot of his two brothers, who were dead, and the state of his own conscience. This blessed soul had received a mission to satisfy so legitimate a curiosity. Count Landulf was still in purgatory; Raynald was already in heaven; the reverses suffered for the cause of the Church had served not only to bring them back into the way of salvation, but also to make them expiate in part the faults and excesses of their youth.

It will be remembered what violent attacks these two brothers, Raynald in particular, had directed against Thomas's vocation. Since Raynald's death, Thomas had not ceased to ask God for the salvation of his soul: it was a third prayer which he added each day to two others, which also each day, throughout the whole course of his religious life, fell back from his heart toward that divine Heart whose humility formed its most touching character. Thomas regularly asked the Lord for perseverance in the fervour of charity, and the happiness of dying in the state of a simple religious.

The assurances that the Angelic Doctor received in this vision, of the purity of his soul, the orthodoxy of his doctrine, the happy results of his whole life, were transmitted to him again in a vision a thousand times more glorious. The Queen of heaven deigned to unveil her divine features to the eyes of her faithful servant; she made the sound of her divine voice heard in a mortal's ear. This is what our Saint revealed, but only on his deathbed, for the glorification of grace, for the consolation of his last friend.[50] The love, the confidence of Thomas for the august Mary, that mysterious affection which, in his heart, had preceded, as we have seen, the consciousness of himself, received therefore even here below the most magnificent of rewards, and, so to speak, attained by anticipation the goal of its sublime impulses. She who is called the seat of wisdom, the mother of chastity, she whose venerated image then presided over the whole movement of Catholic science and piety, showed herself, then, to this so luminous and so pure genius.

In the mysterious way into which we have entered, as in the ordinary pilgrimage of life, so piously described by the authors of the Middle Ages,[51] the Virgin-Mother marks only a station, the highest doubtless in the sphere of created beings; but the true term of the journey is in God. God had already shown, once at least, that he judged the soul of Thomas worthy of entering into communication with him by means of exterior and sensible vision. It was when, in the church of Saint-Jacques at Paris, he had deigned to approve in so solemn a manner a writing of the pious Doctor on the divine Eucharist. A like favour was to be renewed, for the whole of his works, in the church of Saint Dominic at Naples. Thomas felt the end of his scientific labours drawing near; he was then writing the last articles of the *Summa of Theology*. He redoubled his fervour in his mortifications and his prayers, to obtain of heaven that error might not slip in, in spite of him, into this vast multitude of co-ordinated articles and diverse compositions. While he was praying, in a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas, and pouring out before the Lord the solicitude of his soul, he was seen to rise from the ground several cubits, his eye fixed on the crucifix. The elevation of his body was not the only sign that revealed to those of his brethren who were in the church the miraculous power of that gaze. The venerated image came alive under its action; these words came from its mouth: "Thomas, thou hast written well of me; what shall be thy reward?" The Doctor answered at once: "None other, Lord, than thyself!"[52]

On another occasion — it was the Sunday of the Passion in the year 1273 — Thomas was celebrating the holy mysteries in the church of Saint Dominic; he fell into so profound a rapture that a sort of violence had to be used to recall him to the sense of exterior things. Several officers of the king of Naples and some Dominicans, witnesses of this marvel, begged him in vain to let some rays of grace burst forth before their eyes; they made useless efforts to obtain knowledge of what had passed in his soul during those precious moments when it fled far from men and from the earth. A few days after, Thomas avowed, in the intimate outpourings of friendship, that the very greatness of the things which had been revealed to him had held him in the silence of stupefaction. The tongue of man, he added, after the example of the great Apostle and almost in his expressions, is powerless to render fittingly the marvels of God. Such great things have been revealed to me, he said again, that all I have written, all I have taught in my life seems to me but a pale reflection of the truth, an image unworthy of the supreme beauty.[53] From that day the Angelic Doctor condemns himself to silence; he has resolved to write no more, to teach no more.

Despite this ever-growing repulsion for earthly objects, and these flaming impulses toward a better world, he is seen to leave for a moment his pious solitude, to go and pay a last visit to his sister, the Countess Theodora, in her castle of San Severino, not far from the city of Naples. There he was seized by an ecstasy

longer and more intense than usual; he remained for several hours without giving any sign of life; so that Father Reginald, his companion, could not dispel his sister's alarms by all he told her of marvels in the life of the Angelic Doctor, being forced besides to avow that he did not remember ever to have seen him, for so long a time, rapt out of himself. When this state of ecstatic contemplation had ceased, Thomas could only repeat to his friend the only words which the great Apostle uttered on his return from the third heaven: "I have seen, I have heard things unspeakable." The Doctor added with certainty: My life must soon end, like my teaching.

To dispose himself more immediately for the taking possession of his eternity, Thomas Aquinas had again shut himself up in that tranquil and meditative taciturnity which had been the distinctive character of his early youth, of that epoch of life when man must prepare for the serious practice of existence. But while he thus lived in retreat and prayer, Gregory X drew him from his dear solitude, in order to send him to the council which he had just convoked at Lyons to labour at the extinction of the schism of the Greeks, and to procure help for the Holy Land. As the ambassadors of the emperor Michael Palaeologus were to attend it, as well as several prelates of the Eastern church, a man such as Thomas could render important services to the Church. The sovereign Pontiff therefore enjoined him, by a particular brief, to betake himself to the council, whose opening was fixed for 1 May 1274; he ordered him at the same time to prepare to defend the Catholic faith in the presence of the Greeks. The Saint's health was then in a bad state; but that did not hinder him from leaving Naples, where he was, toward the end of the month of January. He was given again for travelling companion Father Reginald of Piperno, who was charged to take care of him, because he was so little occupied with his body that he would often have forgotten to provide for the most indispensable necessities, had not someone seen to it particularly.

Thomas, having found on his road the castle of Magenza [Maenza], stopped there some time to see Francesca of Aquino, his niece, married to the count of Cécan [Ceccano]. There his illness increased considerably, and he was seized with a general disgust for every sort of food. As he was pressed one day to say what he had a mind to eat, he answered, to rid himself of the importunities of his relatives, that he might perhaps eat of a certain fish very common in France, but very rare in Italy. People took, however, so much trouble that some was found and served to him; but he would not touch it, out of a spirit of mortification. This universal disgust having somewhat diminished, and his strength beginning to return, he continued his road, despite the certainty he had that his last hour was not far off. Meanwhile the fatigues of the journey redoubled his illness, and the fever became so violent that he was obliged to stop at Fossanova [Fosse-Neuve], a celebrated abbey of the Order of Cîteaux, in the diocese of Terracina.[54] The first thing he did on entering it was to go and salute the Blessed Sacrament, according to his custom. His face prostrate on the ground, he poured out his soul in the presence of Him who was soon to call him into his kingdom. Having then passed into the cloister, he pronounced there these words of the Psalmist: "This is my rest for ever and ever."[55] He was put in the abbot's apartment, where he remained ill nearly a month. The religious of Fossanova gave him every possible mark of respect and veneration. They disputed the advantage of serving him, esteeming themselves happy to be useful to a man whom they regarded as an angel clothed with a mortal body. They were as surprised as edified by his patience, his humility, his recollection and his fervour in prayer.

The nearer the Saint saw the hour of his death approach, the more he sighed after the happy moment that was to make him enter into the glory of his God. He was heard to repeat continually these words of Saint Augustine: "I shall not begin to live truly, O my God, until I am entirely filled with thee and thy love. Now I am a burden to myself, because I am not yet full enough of thee."[56] The religious of Fossanova having begged him to explain to them the Canticle of Canticles, as Saint Bernard had done in former times in like circumstance: "Give me," he said to them, "the spirit of Saint Bernard, and I will comply with what you require of me." He yielded nevertheless at last to their repeated entreaties, and dictated to them a short exposition of that mysterious book. This exposition was less the fruit of his learning than of his charity: it

could indeed come only from a soul which, running after the odour of the perfumes of the heavenly spouse, hastened to break the bonds of its slavery to go and enjoy the delights of eternity.[57] Meanwhile our Saint found himself very ill. His weakness became so great that, after commending himself to the prayers of the religious who surrounded him, he begged them to leave him alone, that he might consecrate to God alone the few moments he had still to live. When he saw himself at liberty, he produced, with the sentiments of the liveliest faith, acts of adoration, love, thanksgiving, humility and contrition. He then made a general confession of his whole life to Father Reginald, and that with great abundance of tears. Not that he had committed grave faults; but his love for God represented to him the slightest faults as considerable infidelities: for those to whom he had manifested his interior have always been persuaded that he had never been guilty of any mortal sin. He told Father Reginald, before dying, that he thanked God for having constantly prevented him by his grace, for having always led him as by the hand, and for having preserved his soul from those falls which destroy charity; then, after the example of Saint Augustine, he added that it was by a pure effect of divine mercy that he had been delivered from all the sins into which he had not fallen.[58] The holy doctor, having received absolution with all the sentiments of a perfect penitent, asked for the holy Viaticum. While the abbot and his religious were preparing to bring it to him, he begged those who were about his bed to put him on ashes, in order, he said, to be able to receive Jesus Christ with more respect. It was thus that he wished to await the Saviour, in spite of the extreme weakness to which he was reduced. When he saw the holy host in the hands of the priest, he pronounced the following words with a tenderness of devotion which drew tears from the eyes of all present: “I firmly believe that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is in this august Sacrament. I adore thee, O my God and my Saviour! I receive thee, O thou who art the price of my redemption and the viaticum of my pilgrimage! thou for love of whom I have studied, laboured, preached and taught! I hope that I have advanced nothing contrary to thy divine word, or if this has happened to me through ignorance, I retract publicly, and submit all my writings to the judgment of the holy Roman Church.” The Saint, having then recollected himself to form some acts of religion, received holy communion, and was carried to his bed only when he had made his thanksgiving. As his strength diminished more and more, he wished the sacrament of Extreme Unction to be administered to him while he was still in perfect consciousness. He answered himself distinctly to all the prayers of the Church.

He remained tranquil after that, enjoying a profound peace, which showed itself in the serenity of his face. He was heard to repeat often: “Soon, soon the God of all consolation will crown his mercies, and fulfil all my desires; soon I shall be filled in him, and shall drink of the torrent of his delights. He will inebriate me with the abundance of his house, and make me contemplate the true light in his essence, which is the source of life.” Perceiving that those about him were melting into tears, he told them, to console them, that he saw death arrive with joy, because it was a gain to him; and as Father Reginald expressed to him the regret he felt at not seeing him triumph over the enemies of the Church in the council of Lyons, and occupy a place where he could render important services to the spouse of Jesus Christ, he answered with his usual humility: “I have always asked God, as a rare favour, to die a simple religious, and I thank him now for the goodness he has had to hear me. In calling me to the abode of glory at so little advanced an age, he has done me a grace which he has refused to several of his servants. Do not afflict yourselves, then, over the lot of a man who is penetrated with the liveliest joy.”

He then testified his gratitude to the abbot and religious of Fossanova for all the acts of charity they had exercised toward him. A religious of the community having asked him what must be done to live in perpetual fidelity to grace: “Whoever,” he answered, “shall walk unceasingly in the presence of God, will always be ready to render him an account of his actions, and will never lose his love by consenting to sin.” These were his last words. He prayed still some moments, then fell asleep in the Lord on 7 March 1274, a little after midnight. He was in the fiftieth year of his age.

"As the Doctor was breaking the fetters of this mortal life at Fossanova, Brother Paul of Aquila, himself a doctor and grand inquisitor of the faith, residing at that time in the convent of Naples, thought he saw, in the ecstasy of his imagination, Brother Thomas giving his lesson in the Neapolitan university, in the presence of a prodigious number of scholars. Saint Paul enters the school, in company with some other saints. The professor rises and comes down at once from the chair, to meet the Apostle. The latter signs to him to continue his reading and to go on with the lesson he had begun. But the Doctor conjures the Apostle to tell him, of his grace, whether he has well understood the sense of his epistles. Paul answers him: Yes, as far as a man plunged in the darkness of this life can understand it; but come, I will lead thee to a place where thou shalt have a clearer view of all truth; and drawing him by the skirt of his scapular, he was taking him out of the schools. The brother then began to cry with all his might: Help; they are carrying off Brother Thomas! The other religious, drawn by his cries, asked him the object of his vision, which he related to them. The hour was noted; and later it was learned that it was that at which the holy Doctor had gone to receive his reward."[59]

But the impression produced by this death crossed the greatest distances with the same rapidity. Here is what happened at the other extremity of Europe, in that old city of Cologne, whose schools had been the first theatre of Thomas's successes, as pupil and as professor: "Master Albert of Saxe, an old man of more than eighty, white and venerated head, crowned with all the glories of science and all the honours of religion, to which he had shown himself superior by laying them down; a magnanimous heart toward a pupil above all who was to eclipse the halo of his own successes; Albert the Great, Thomas's master, felt also, by a divine communication, the irreparable loss which the Church and his Order had just suffered. He was at table with the other religious of the convent of Cologne; suddenly he melts into tears. The prior asks him the reason of his grief; Albert answers: It is a sad and great piece of news that I have to tell you; Thomas Aquinas, my son in Jesus Christ, the torch of the whole Church, has just died; God has revealed it to me. The prior took note of the day; and a few weeks after it was learned that it was the very day of the death of the Angelic Doctor."[60] We are greatly mistaken, or history presents few scenes so striking as that of an old man such as Albert the Great, weeping, in such circumstances, the death of a pupil such as Thomas Aquinas. Has the friendship that survives death ever put on more majestic and more touching traits?

The fatal news, before reaching the depths of Germany, had necessarily passed through the city of Lyons, where the deputies of the universal Church were then assembling: it circulated from mouth to mouth with sadness and discouragement. The fathers of the Council approached one another only with the silence of surprise or the tears of grief. Bonaventure was there, doubtless; but the intelligence and heart of this great man seemed struck with an anticipated death at the news of the death of a friend impatiently awaited, and who was accustomed to carry with him the hope of every triumph. Without pretending to attach to this single fact the small success of that assembly in one of its principal objects, which was the reunion of the Greeks with the Latins; making besides allowance for human passions in the resistance they offer to the reign of truth, we can affirm, from all the historical documents, that the absence of Thomas Aquinas was regarded by all the members as the greatest of the misfortunes that could befall Christendom in such conjunctures. A veil of mourning seemed to spread over the first deliberations. Nothing could better than the aspect of the Council inspire this trait of an ancient historian: At the death of Thomas, scarcely arrived at the middle of his career as a doctor, the world felt a shock like that it would experience if the sun were suddenly to be lost in space at full noon!

Let us sum up, by means of iconographic data, the principal traits of the life and the principal virtues of Saint Thomas Aquinas:

Angels pass a girdle round his loins during the mystic sleep of which we have spoken; he puts to flight with a firebrand a woman who comes to tempt him; he has himself let down by a window to escape his family; an ox may be placed beside him: the reason has been seen in his life. The chalice or the monstrance put in his

hand recalls the composition of the office of the Blessed Sacrament. Kneeling before a crucifix, he holds a scroll bearing these words: *Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma; quam mercedem postulas? — Non aliam nisi te, Domine*; one conceives that there are various ways of arranging the cartouche rendering to the eye this great favour of which Saint Thomas was the object. It is above all the sun, as we have already seen, that serves painters to characterize the genius of Saint Thomas: the sun is placed on his breast or on his hand; sometimes it is hung from a collar; perhaps this is a way of designating that one of his works which is called the *Golden Chain*. In an engraving reproduced by Father Cahier,[61] the star with blazing rays is supported by an open book on the Saint's breast. This book is doubtless the *Summa of Theology*. He is sometimes found represented with two wings to recall his title of evangelical doctor; but we do not advise this manner, which does not seem to us special enough. Indeed this emblem suits all the Doctors of the Church, and notably the seraphic doctor, Saint Bonaventure; the same must be said of the dove which some painters have given as emblem to Saint Thomas and to some other Saints of the Order of Saint Dominic: nothing authorizes its use; the star, although it marked the instant of his death, is not sufficiently characteristic either: it belongs more specially to Saint Dominic. He carries the lily, as symbol of his virginity. He is often joined with Saint Bonaventure, his fellow-student at Paris.

In 1860, M. Gandolfi, an Italian artist, issued a statuette of Saint Thomas, standing, calling down God's blessing on the *Summa*, which he has just finished.[62] A mitre at his feet recalls his humility and his refusal of ecclesiastical dignities. Casini has represented him accompanied by two angels; Erasmus Quellin, kneeling before the Virgin, who hands him a paper; Abraham Diepenbeeck standing, holding a palm and a holy ciborium;[63] Sébastien Leclerc, kneeling before an altar; the same, holding a pen from which rays go forth that unite with as many volumes as the Fathers of the Church hold, etc.

Fra Angelico da Fiesole painted Saint Thomas full length, surrounded by the evangelists, the prophets and the pagan philosophers: a fresco executed in the Vatican, in the chapel of Nicholas V. In a painting on enamel on a reliquary belonging to the cathedral of Orvieto, he is seen presenting the office of the Blessed Sacrament to Urban IV. The print room of Paris possesses several figures and portraits of Saint Thomas. See the collection of the Saints in alphabetical order. Finally, the ancient topography of Toulouse, which is in that same print room, reproduces the tomb and the marvellous shrine of Saint Thomas which were in the church of the Dominicans of Toulouse before the Revolution.

Saint Thomas was of tall and well-proportioned stature, but of a very delicate complexion. He was subject to great pains of the stomach, which were still increased by his austerities and by his untiring application to work. As to the qualities of his mind, we have made them known when occasion offered, and we have said nothing that is not still below the idea that has been held in all ages; and what adds infinitely to this idea is that public opinion has formed its judgment on that of the persons who most distinguished themselves by their learning. One of the greatest marks of his fine genius consists in his making great marvels understood in very few words; so that if antiquity paid this honour to a certain Lacedaemonian, of writing in letters of gold all that came from his mouth, all the words and all the sentences that came from this incomparable mind ought to be printed in letters of some substance more precious than gold, and more durable than the firmament, so great is their weight and energy. We shall relate a few of them for our consolation. He said then: "That the poverty of the impatient religious is a useless expense; — that the soul without prayer advances in nothing, and that the religious without prayer is like a naked soldier, who fights without arms; — that the religious ought always to walk accompanied, as Saint Augustine commands in his rule, because the religious alone is a solitary demon; — that he did not know how a man who saw himself in mortal sin could laugh and rejoice; nor how it was possible for a religious to think of anything but God; that idleness was the hook with which the enemy fished; that with it every sort of bait was fit." He was asked one day the means of knowing whether a man was perfect and spiritual; he said: "He who in his conversation speaks of trifles and follies, who is afraid of being despised, and is angry at being so, whatever marvels he may work, I do not

esteem perfect, for all that is a virtue without foundation: and whoever cannot suffer is very near falling." His sister asked him once how she could be saved; he answered her: "By willing it." Another time when she desired to know what was most to be wished for in this life, he told her that "it was to die well." She begged him also to tell her what Paradise was: "Until you have deserved it," he said, "no one could teach you." Being at the point of death, the religious asked him how they could pass their life without fault; he answered them: "If you can give an account of all your actions when you do them." As he was asked in what manner a man could become learned: "By reading," he said, "but one book."

RELICS OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS. — ANALYSIS OF HIS WRITINGS.

The report of his death was no sooner spread than people ran from all sides to attend his funeral. Some religious of Fossanova, and several other sick persons, were miraculously cured by the virtue of his relics.

The universities of Paris, Rome, Naples and other towns, several princes and different Orders asked for his body. After many disputes, Pope Urban V gave it to the Dominicans, permitting them to carry it to Paris or to Toulouse, because Italy already possessed that of Saint Dominic, deposited at Bologna. In 1288, Countess Theodora, the Saint's sister, had obtained one of his hands, which she had preciously enshrined to place it in the chapel of the castle of San Severino. After Theodora's death, this relic was given to the Dominicans of Salerno. The rest of the body of Saint Thomas was secretly transported into France, and it was received at Toulouse with the greatest solemnity. There was a prodigious concourse at this ceremony. There were seen at the head of those present Louis, duke of Anjou, brother of King Charles V, the archbishops of Toulouse and of Narbonne, a great number of bishops, abbots and lords. The body of the holy doctor was formerly kept in the church of the Dominicans of Toulouse; it was enclosed in a shrine of silver-gilt, over which a superb four-sided mausoleum had been raised. Since the Revolution, this church having been suppressed, the body of Saint Thomas was transferred to the church of Saint-Saturninus [Saint-Sernin] at Toulouse, where it still is. An arm was detached from it to send to the great convent of the Dominicans of Paris; it was placed in the chapel of Saint Thomas. The church of the Minerva at Rome has just acquired a precious relic: the humerus of Saint Thomas's right arm. Before 1789 this relic belonged to the Dominican convent of Saint-Jacques at Paris, to which it had been given by Pope Urban V, at the time when the holy Doctor was transferred from Italy to Toulouse. When, in 1792, the club of the Jacobins installed itself in the convent at Paris, the Dominicans entrusted the relic to the duke of Parma, who promised to send it to the general of the Order. In 1805 the duke of Parma's daughter, going to Rome to enter among the Dominican nuns, carried the reliquary there. These religious kept it until recent times. But as the Dominicans of Paris, in 1792, had destined this relic for the general, the Holy Father addressed it to him on 3 March 1874.

The Neapolitans, after the most pressing solicitations, obtained at last a bone of the other arm of our Saint. It was granted to them, in 13?2, by a general chapter. This relic was deposited in the church of the Dominicans of Naples, and remained there until 1603, when it was transferred to the metropolitan church, on the occasion of a public calamity from which the country had been delivered by the intercession of Saint Thomas: it was placed among the relics of the patrons and protectors of the land. The kingdom of Naples honours Saint Thomas as its principal patron, by virtue of the briefs of Pius V and Clement VIII, confirmed by Paul V.

Saint Thomas was solemnly canonized by John XXII, in 1323, and Pius V ordered, in 1567, that his feast should be celebrated in the same manner as that of the four doctors of the Western church, that is to say of Saint Ambrose, Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome and Saint Gregory the Great.

The works of Saint Thomas Aquinas may be divided into four different classes. In the first are the works of philosophy; in the second, those of theology; in the third, the commentaries on Holy Scripture; in the fourth, the opuscula, which may be called miscellaneous works, on account of the diversity of the matters explained in them.

One must take things from a little higher up to make known the philosophical works of Saint Thomas. The elegance of style had given the writings of Plato the greatest vogue among the pagans, and the most learned Fathers of the Church had been brought up in the maxims of the school of this philosopher. His doctrine appeared to favour the Christian religion. Indeed, no author had ever spoken in so sublime a manner of the attributes of the Divinity, of Providence, of the punishments and rewards of a future life. It has been concluded from this that Plato, in the course of his travels in Egypt and in Phoenicia, had learned there several of those primordial truths which tradition had preserved there in spite of the darkness of paganism. It was not the same with the philosophy of Aristotle: besides that it did not present such fine knowledge, it still contained several dangerous principles of which the heretics of the first centuries had made use to sap the foundations of Christianity. It had therefore less currency than that of Plato, and that is why Tertullian called Aristotle the patriarch of heretics, and why a council of Paris proscribed his works about the year 1209. This does not prevent persons who judge without partiality from regarding him as the finest genius of antiquity, and perhaps even as the most profound and penetrating genius that ever appeared. He is the only one of the ancients who knew, fathomed and developed the rules of reasoning, and who gave a complete system of philosophy; and if he fell into errors, as cannot be denied, this comes from his having relied too much on human reason, which is very weak when it is not enlightened by the lights of revelation. The ancient heretics are not the only ones who abused the principles of Aristotle; they had imitators in the twelfth and in the thirteenth century, such as Peter Abelard, the Albigenses, etc. But of all those who then wrote on the principles of the Greek philosopher, there are none who pushed subtlety further than the Saracens of Arabia and of Spain. Saint Thomas attacked the enemies of truth with their own arms; he made the very philosophy of Aristotle serve for the defence of the faith, and it may be said that he succeeded in his undertaking beyond all hope. He distinguished the errors in order to refute them, and presented, in the most striking light, truths which reason had discovered, but which were often enveloped in darkness that not everyone was in a state to pierce. In a word, Aristotle, who was called the terror of Christians, was rendered as it were orthodox by Saint Thomas, and furnished religion with new arms against atheism and idolatry. What our holy doctor wrote on this philosopher forms the matter of the first five volumes of his works. If one sometimes finds in them things of little consequence, it is less his fault than that of the sophistical genius of the Arabs.

2° The commentaries of Saint Thomas on the four books of the Master of the Sentences contain a methodical course of theology, and form volumes vi and vii of his works.

3° Volumes x, xi and xii contain the *Summa Theologica*. This work is admirable, although death did not allow its author to put the last hand to it. Saint Augustine is the one of all the Fathers whom he followed most; which made the learned cardinals Noris and d'Aguirre say that Saint Thomas was his most faithful interpreter. He drew principally from the *Morals* of Saint Gregory on Job the practical rules of duties and virtues. Maximus Planudes translated the *Summa Theologica* into Greek. Three manuscripts of it are known: one which was kept at Venice in the library of Cardinal Bessarion; another which is at Rome in the library of the Vatican; and the third at Paris, in the library of the rue Richelieu. Dom Mechitar published at Venice a translation of it in the Armenian language, at the beginning of the last century. Father Rugli made a translation of it into Chinese.[64] De Marandé, de Hauteville and Father Griffois have given translations of it in French, more or less complete and more or less exact. M. the abbé Drioux has just published a complete translation, with notes full of erudition and interest, 1851– 1853, 8 vols. in 8vo. It was at the solicitation of Saint Raymond of Peñafort that our holy doctor composed the *Summa against the Gentiles*. The aim of this work was to furnish the preachers of Spain with the means of labouring fruitfully at the conversion of the Jews and Saracens. The *Summa against the Gentiles* was translated into Greek and Hebrew, in the lifetime of the illustrious doctor himself.

4° We have also from Saint Thomas commentaries on the greater part of Scripture. His *Explanation of the Four Gospels* appeared under the title of *Catena aurea* (the golden chain). This work is the commentary on

the Gospels by a concatenation of passages drawn from the holy Fathers, so that these immortal doctors seem to continue and explain one another; a miraculous work, says William of Tocco; a work more resplendent than the sun; *sole clarior*, according to the expression of the venerable Cardinal Bellarmine. M. the abbé Castan has translated this fine work into French. Paris, 8 vols. in 8vo, 1854. Saint Thomas had undertaken his work on the holy Gospels at the invitation of Pope Urban IV. The same pontiff charged him to compose the office of the Blessed Sacrament, which the Church still sings today. The canticles *Sacris solemniis*, *Pange lingua*, *Verbum supernum*, *Lauda Sion*, are as elevated by the sentiments they express as by the lyric tone that reigns in them.

5° His *Opuscula* have various matters for their object. One finds in them the refutation of the errors of the schismatic Greeks and of several heresies; the discussion of some points of philosophy and theology; explanations of the Creed, the sacraments, the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation. The holy doctor, in his treatises of piety, reduces the rules of the interior life to the two following: 1° to labour, by the practice of mortification and self-renunciation, to destroy the reign of pride and of the disordered love of creatures; 2° to kindle unceasingly in one's heart the fire of divine love, by the exercise of prayer and meditation, and by a perfect accomplishment of the will of God in all things.[65]

The complete works of Saint Thomas have been published: at Rome (1571), in 18 vols. folio; at Venice (1593); at Antwerp (1614), in 19 vols.; at Paris (1630), in 23 vols.; at Venice (1745–1760) (1765–1788), in 28 vols.; at Venice (1858), in 24 vols.; in our day, at Parma, 24 vols.; and at Paris, at Vivès's, about 30 vols.

As to the *Summa*, after an interruption of about a hundred years, it has again become, as of old, a classic: it is in the hands of all students of theology. The edition without contradiction the most complete, the one containing the best commentaries, is that which the Celestines, successors of M. Louis Guérin, publish at Bar-le-Duc under this title: *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Summa theologica, diligenter emendata, Nicolai, Sylvii, Billuart et C.-J. Drioux notis ornata*, 8 vols. in square 8vo.

The Roman Martyrology makes honourable mention of Saint Thomas. Saint Antoninus, Antony of Pisa, David Roméus, Paul Régius, Surius and Ferdinand du Castel have written on his virtues. Father Touron published a life of Saint Thomas in 1737. We have made use, in composing this new life of Saint Thomas, of the History of the Saint by M. the abbé Bareille; of the *Année dominicaine*, 10 vols. in 8vo; of Godescard; of the *Acta*. But it is the work of M. the abbé Bareille that must be read, if one would see how Saint Thomas was the light, the motive power, the centre of his century.

The oldest life of Saint Thomas Aquinas is that which was given, in the Saint's own lifetime, by Gerard de Frachet, a Dominican religious of the convent of Limoges (1254–1263), and Thomas of Cantimpré; the latter was a fellow-student of Thomas Aquinas at Cologne. After them come Stephen of Salanhac, who died in 1290, and Ptolemy of Lucca, both of the Order of Friars Preachers. The *Annals* of the latter run from the year 1060 to the year 1274. The Bollandists have not reproduced these lives or notices: they begin with the biographical work of William of Tocco, another child of Saint Dominic, who declares that he saw and heard Brother Thomas. William of Tocco composed this life with a view to the canonization of the Saint: it is divided into one hundred and twenty-five chapters. After William of Tocco, the Bollandists give the acts of the canonization process. There follow extracts from Bernard de la Guionie, bishop of Lodève; from a manuscript life found at Utrecht and at Milan, etc., etc.

Saint Ardon, Monk of the Abbey of Aniane in Languedoc

Although the life of Ardon offers nothing remarkable from the point of view of sanctity, we make special mention of him, it being our rule to pass over in silence, as far as possible, none of the Saints who were born or sanctified themselves on our fair soil of France. According to the most common opinion, Ardon was a Frank, and not a Goth. He was born in Languedoc, and exchanged his name of Smaragdus for that of Ardon.

He was one of the first disciples of Saint Benedict of Aniane. His learning and virtue earned him elevation to the priesthood and to the dignity of moderator of the schools of the house. His abbot had so much esteem for him that he ordinarily chose him as the companion of his journeys.

It was apparently on one of these journeys that he became known to Charlemagne. This great emperor showed his regard for him by making him a present, in the very year of his death, of a stone that resounded like bronze. In the same year, that is to say in 814, Saint Benedict, before leaving Languedoc to go and settle at Aix-la-Chapelle, near Louis the Debonair, cast his eyes on Ardon to entrust to him the administration of the monastery of Aniane. The other actions of this great man are not known. The breviary of Aniane states that Ardon died on 9 March 843. The only authentic production that remains to us from Ardon's pen is the *Life of Saint Benedict of Aniane*, which he undertook to write at the solicitation of his brethren. His sanctity is beyond doubt, since for a long time he had been honoured at Aniane as an illustrious servant of God.

But what must above all be admired in this monk of the ninth century is learning united to piety. In those centuries of transformation, all the sciences were in the hands of the monks and, without them, they would have perished for ever.

The school of Aniane, of which Saint Ardon was moderator, deserves a special mention among those which, in that remote age, distributed instruction to youth. Saint Benedict, its founder, had gathered there a considerable library, and established several skilful masters. Among these masters, there were some for chant; others to teach reading; some to teach grammar and the belles-lettres; lastly, theologians to expound Holy Scripture. Several who had attended this school were afterwards raised to the episcopate, and a greater number served to re-establish good studies, according to the method of Aniane, in a great number of monasteries of France, Italy and Germany.[1]

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[2] See Saint Paphnutius and Saint Thaïs, above, page 121 [that is, the life of 3 March in this volume].

[3] Loreto, in the Abruzzi, and not Loreto [Lorette] in the States of the Church.

[4] St. Ambrose, *in Luc.*, ii, n. 51.

[5] William of Tocco, in the Bollandists.

[6] *Chartulam parvulam, divinitus repertam* [a very small paper, divinely found]. (William of Tocco, *loc. cit.*)

[7] William of Tocco, *loc. cit.*

[8] John-Baptist Feuillet, *Life of Saint Thomas*; P. Touron, *Life*, ch. 6; Ant. Maci[usc]?, *Bibl. FF. PP.*

[9] *My beloved to me, and I to him who feedeth among the lilies.* Cant. ii, 16.

[10] *Stultitia est peccatum, quia est filia luxuriae.* 2a 2ae, q. LXVI, a. 3 [the Summa; reference as printed].

[11] *Potius habere vellem Chrysostomum super Matthaeum, quam istam civitatem.*

[12] *Quasi a Deo licentia accepta.* [As if licence had been received from God.]

[13] *Nos vocamus istum Bovem mutum; sed ipse talem dabit in doctrina mugitum, quod in toto mundo sonabit.* (Bolland., *loc. cit.*) — We have borrowed this narration from the excellent history of Saint Thomas by M. the abbé Bareille.

[14] It is from their first house at Paris that the Preaching Friars were named Jacobins throughout France, until the century in which a political sect came to strip them of their name, along with their holy dwelling, and, by the horror of its crimes, to deliver to the execration of the peoples what had been the object of their veneration and love.

[15] This is attested equally by Father Reginald, his last confessor, and by William of Tocco, the oldest historian of his life and his contemporary.

[16] *Tardiloquum te esse jubeo.*

[17] *Orationi vacare non desinas.*

[18] *Discursus super omnia fugias.*

[19] *Quidquid poteris in armariolo mentis reponere satage, sicut cupiens vas implere.*

[20] *Altiora te ne quaesieris.*

[21] *Illorum sequens vestigia, frondes et fructus facies in vineam Domini Sabaoth utiles; quamdiu vitam humeris perferas ac produces. Haec si sectatus fueris, ad id attingere poteris quod affectas.* (*Opusc.* 63.)

[22] Isaias vi, 2.

[23] Regulations made in 1215 by the cardinal-legate Robert de Courçon. (Du Theil, *Life of Robert de Courçon.*) Here is how degrees were taken at the University of Paris: university degrees were granted only to those who were destined for teaching; to be received master of arts, it was necessary to have studied

[24] All the primitive monuments, all the ancient paintings represent Saint Thomas Aquinas invariably with a radiant sun on his breast, as Saint Dominic, his patron, with a star on his forehead. The meaning of both symbols applies in an admirable manner to the influence of these two men on their Order and on society.

[25] This Greek Father dictated, according to the ancients, to seven scribes at once.

[26] Dupin, *Hist. of the 13th century*, p. 63.

[27] *Rigans montes de superioribus suis, de fructu operum tuorum satiabitur terra.* (Ps. ciii, 13.)

[28] Opusc. 2, *Compendium theologiae, ad fratrem Reginaldum, socium suum carissimum.*

[29] *In omnes Epistolas divi Pauli expositio.* (*Oper. div. Thom. Aquin.*, t. 18.)

[30] What we have just mentioned is taken from the Bollandists (t. I, March, p. 675, n. 53). The author cites the manuscript of a contemporary historian named William of Tocco. The latter declares that he holds the fact he reports from a religious who lived in the convent of Saint-Jacques at the same time as Saint Thomas Aquinas.

[31] *Conclusum est contra manichaeos.*

[32] William of Tocco, in the Bollandists, p. 663.

[33] *Defunctus adhuc loquitur.* (Hebr. xi, 4.)

[34] *Summa Theol.*, 1-2, q. 101, 102 and 103.

[35] Mariana, *Hist. Hisp.*, bk. xix.

[36] There is some analogy between the change of this Lutheran doctor and that which was wrought in Thomas's sisters when they tried to convert him, if not to error, at least to the world. The dispositions were equally hostile on both sides, and the defeat was equally glorious to our Saint.

[37] Preface to the works of Cardinal Duperron.

[38] *Consideravimus hujus doctrinae novitios, in iis quae a diversis scripta sunt, plurimum impediri; partim quidem, propter multiplicationem inutilium quaestionum, articulorum et argumentorum; partim etiam, quia ea quae sunt necessaria talibus ad sciendum, non traduntur secundum ordinem disciplinae, sed secundum quod requirebat librorum expositio, vel secundum quod se praebebat occasio disputandi; partim quidem, quia eorumdem frequens repetitio et fastidium et confusionem generabat in animis auditorum. — Haec igitur et alia hujusmodi evitare studentes, tentabimus, cum assistentia divini auxilii, ea quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinent, breviter ac dilucide prosequi, secundum quod materia patietur.* (*Sum. Theol.*, prologue.)

[39] *Plus illuminavit Ecclesiam quam omnes alii doctores; in cujus libris plus proficit homo uno anno, quam in aliorum doctrina toto tempore vitae suae.*

[40] *Tot fecit miracula, quot scripsit articulos. — Doctrina ejus non potuit esse sine miraculo.*

[41] *Pace aliorum dixerim, unus divus Thomas est instar omnium.*

[42] Dante, *Paradiso*, canto 12.

[43] Lacordaire, *Memorial for the re-establishment of the Preaching Friars.* [Title translated; the run-on running head "Lives of the Saints — Vol. III" is omitted.]

[44] So Scaevola putting his hand in the fire and letting it be entirely consumed to punish it for an involuntary error; so that young man named Pausanias, who, in a sacrifice offered before Philip of Macedon, let his hand be burned by the torch he held rather than expose himself to disturbing the ceremony. [The classical story is told of a page of Alexander; as printed.]

[45] *Super Boetium de Hebdomadibus.* (Opusc. 69.) — *Super librum de Trinitate ejusdem.* (Opusc. 70.)

[46] Ptolemy of Lucca, *Hist. Eccl.*, bk. xxiii, ch. 10.

[47] *Caesar Engenius, Neap. Sacr.*, p. 208.

[48] *Vide, Pater, et placeat in conspectu misericordiae tuae, invenire me gratiam ante te, ut aperiantur pulsanti mihi interiora sermonum tuorum.* (*Confess.*, bk. xi, ch. 2.)

[49] *Sed ex parte Dei tibi praecipio ut in vita mea non audeas revelare.* (Ap. Boll., p. 670, n. 32.)

[50] Bernard de la Guionie; William of Tocco; Father Touron.

[51] Ptolemy of Lucca; Jacques Échard; Fleury.

[52] William of Tocco, in the Bollandists, *loc. cit.* This extraordinary favour is told in the same way by several other authors; let it suffice to cite two whose name alone is an authority: Saint Antoninus and Saint Vincent Ferrer.

[53] Saint Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis humanae ad Beatum.…*

[54] *Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma; quam ergo mercedem accipies? — Non aliam nisi te, Domine.* (Ap. Boll., p. 671.) — This incident, become so famous, was affirmed by the witnesses in the canonization process.

[55] *Talia mihi sunt revelata, quod ea quae scripsi et docui, modica mihi videantur.* (Ap. Boll., 7 March.)

[56] It was there that the town called Forum Appii formerly stood.

[57] Ps. cxxxi, 11.

[58] *Confess.*, bk. x, ch. 28.

[59] Saint Thomas's exposition of the Canticle of Canticles begins with the words *Salomon inspiratus.* The one beginning *Sonet vox tua*, etc., is not by him, although it sometimes bears his name; it is the work of Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt. See Échard, t. I, p. 323; Father Touron, p. 714; and Le Long, *Bibl. sacra*, p. 766.

[60] *Tibi debeo et quod non feci.* (St Aug.)

[61] *Process. canon.*, ch. 7.

[62] *Process. canon.*, ch. 7.

[63] *Caractéristiques*, t. I, p. 98.

[64] The artist ought to have remembered that the *Summa*, unfortunately, was never finished.

[65] A very beautiful figure, fol. 109 of the Mazarine collection, no. 4778 (38).

[66] See *Catalogus patrum Societatis Jesu qui in imperio Sinarum Jesu Christi fidem propagarunt.* Paris, 1636.

[67] Opusc. 17 and 18. [The note is printed at the foot of the Ardon page; assigned here by content.]

[1] *Hist. litt. de la France*, t. v, p. 31 ff.; t. iv, pp. 16, 17 and *passim*.

8 March

Martyrologies

Eighth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Granada, in Spain, Saint John of God, founder of the Order of the Brothers of Charity, destined to tend the sick; he is famous for his compassion toward the poor and for the entire contempt he had of himself. 1550. — At Antinoë, a city of Egypt, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Philemon and Apollonius, deacons, who, seized and brought before the judge, had their heels pierced, because they had courageously refused to sacrifice to idols. In this state they were dragged through the city with horrible cruelty; struck at last by the sword, they thus accomplished their martyrdom. 287. — Moreover, in the same place, the martyrdom of Saint Arian, governor, of Saint Theotychus and of three others, whom the judge had drowned in the sea; but their bodies were brought back to the shore by dolphins.[1] — At Nicomedia, Saint Quintilis, bishop and martyr. — At Carthage, Saint Pontius, deacon of Saint Cyprian, who was the companion in exile of this holy bishop until the latter's death; he has left an excellent history of his master's life, and, glorifying God in his sufferings, merited the crown of eternal life. About 262. — Again in Africa, the saints Cyril, bishop, Rogatus, Felix, another Rogatus, Beata, Herenia, Felicity, Urban, Silvanus and Mamilla.[2] — At Toledo, in Spain, the decease of the blessed Julian, bishop and confessor, very famous for his holiness and learning.[3] 690. — In England, Saint Felix, bishop, who converted the East Angles to the faith. 646.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Thérouanne, Saint Humphrey or Hunfrid, bishop of that city, who had been a monk of Prüm, in the diocese of Trier, then abbot of Saint-Bertin, at Saint-Omer. 871. — Near Tulle, in the Limousin, Saint Stephen of Obazine, abbot, of the Order of Cîteaux. 1154. — Again in the Limousin, Saint Saumay or Psalmodius, solitary, disciple of Saint Brendan. About 589. — In Franche-Comté, Saint Anthony of Froidemont, monk of Luxeuil and hermit. He lived before the tenth century. One still shows, near the village that bears his name, the rock that served him as a refuge. Below flows a brook where he used, it is said, to draw water in a wicker basket, and on the slope of the opposite mountain rises a chapel in his honour. Pious pilgrims go there fairly often. One sees there a very ancient statue which is said to be his. The faithful deposit at the foot of this image, as a sign of their passing, little crosses, medals and flowers.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Castronovo, in Sicily, Saint Vitalis, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict and of Vallombrosa. — In Navarre, Saint Veremund, abbot, who, among other miracles he wrought by the grace of God, extinguished by his prayer alone the fire which was devouring the monastery's harvests.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — At the monastery of Clairvaux, Saint Gerard, sixth abbot of that community, and first martyr of the Order of Cîteaux, cruelly killed for zeal for religion and for the preservation of justice; after his death he was glorified by shining miracles.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Africa, with the saints Cyril, Rogatus and others, mentioned above, the saints Dacian and Jucundus, martyrs. — At Nicomedia, with Saint Quintilis, bishop, Saint Capitulinus, his companion, a martyr like him. — Among the Greeks, Saint Cleopatronia, virgin. Daughter of a prefect of Asia named Dacian, she was brought to the faith by Saint Vivencius, priest of Samaria, of whom we gave a notice on 13 January, page 523. Beginning of the fourth century. — At Como, Saint Provinus, bishop of that city. He was a native of the Gauls and became a disciple of Saint Ambrose. The church of his name, which is at Como, possesses his relics. About 420. — In Ireland, Saint Senan, abbot and bishop. As in the legends of all these Irish Saints, marvellous facts abound in those of Saint Senan: thus it is told that, a shepherd in the monastery of Saint Cassidus, he charged his staff with guarding the flock; that at night his fingers became luminous and served him as a torch; he was the disciple of Saint Patrick and the friend of Saint David of Menevia. 544. — At Nicomedia, Saint Theophylactus, confessor, bishop of that city. He defended the cause of the holy images against the emperor Leo the Armenian, who sent him into exile. About 845. — At Prusa, today Brusa, in Bithynia, Saint Paul, bishop and confessor of that city, who endured atrocious persecutions for the worship of the holy images. 845. — At Pavia, Saint Litifred or Liutfrid, bishop of that city. About 874. — At Hyracha [Irache], near Estella, in Spanish Navarre, Saint Veremund or Bermond, abbot of the monastery of that name. The foundation of the town of Estella is connected with a miracle told in his life. Saint Veremund had a tender devotion toward the Blessed Virgin. Now it happened, in the year 1080, that shepherds, guarding their flocks a thousand paces from the monastery, saw a rain of stars fall on a hill which has since been called in Basque Yrricara, that is to say, star mountain. The place visited by the meteors was dug up and there was found a statue of the Blessed Virgin of admirable beauty. To consecrate the memory of this marvel, Sancho Ramirez, king of Navarre, and intimate friend of Saint Veremund, built on this hill a town destined to be placed under the protection of Mary, which he called Estella or Star, and of which he abandoned the possession to the monastery of Hyracha, after the year 1085. — At Ross, in Scotland, Saint Duthac, bishop of that city, who was the friend of King Alexander III. 1250. — At Viterbo, Saint Rose.[4] — At Taranto, in the kingdom of Naples, Saint Cartaud or Catas (Cataldus). He was, it is believed, a native of Ireland, and became famous for his miracles. He is honoured at Sens, where there was a church of his name, and at Bonneville. — At Tarsus, in Cilicia, Saint Castor, who suffered martyrdom with Saint Dorothea. — Among the Copts and Ethiopians, Saint Melas. — In Spain, the venerable John of Avila. 1569.

Saint John of God, Founder of the Hospitaller Religious Called of Charity

1495–1550. — Popes: Alexander VI; Julius III. — King of Spain: Charles V, called in Spain Charles I.

Alms are a flower of the earth whose fruits are gathered in heaven.[1]

On 8 March 1495 there was born at Monte-Mayor-el-Novo, a small town of the diocese of Évora, in Portugal, a child who received at baptism the name of John. He was brought up by his father, named André Ciudad, and by his mother, named Theresa, in Christian sentiments. His parents were not among the richest; so that their greatest treasure consisted in their son, and they promised themselves that he would one day be the staff of their old age; but they saw themselves deprived of him at the moment when they were beginning

to receive some satisfaction from him: for scarcely was he eight years old when there began for him the most adventurous life, which was to plunge him into vice, but draw him out of it; launch him into the world, then detach him from it, making him find disgraces everywhere, and no rest outside God.

One evening, his parents, pious and charitable, received under their hospitable roof a traveller who was going into Spain. The description the latter gave of the churches of Madrid and the other magnificences of the great city struck young John's imagination vividly.

The next day, at daybreak, the traveller set out again after having affectionately thanked his hosts. A guilty thought had taken possession of John's mind, a thought which was the first link of the long chain of sufferings he was to run through. He had told himself that, by following the stranger's tracks from afar, he could make his way to Madrid. Calculating therefore neither the length of the road, nor his absolute lack of money, nor the despair into which he was going to plunge his family, he slipped out of the house and took the direction of Spain; he went on thus several miles almost without stopping. André Ciudad and Theresa had not at first conceived any anxiety, for they supposed that John had gone, according to his daily habit, to visit an uncle who lived at the other end of Monte-Mayor; however, at the end of a few hours, not seeing him return, they became greatly alarmed; André ran to his brother's, and cried from afar: — Where is John? — Your son? said the uncle, I have not seen him today.

Distraught with fear, André returned hurriedly home to take counsel with his wife. Several days passed in fruitless searches. André had to resolve to come back alone and heart-broken. Arriving one evening at the door of the house, he stopped a moment. A sad messenger, he could not make up his mind to announce bad news. When at last he had knocked and said: "It is I!" he was frightened not to hear Theresa's voice, Theresa who ordinarily greeted his return with so much gladness! And yet she was not absent; for the ray of a light shone through the chinks of the door. An old peasant woman came to open. This woman's face expressed such affliction that André could not repress a cry of terror. He advanced hurriedly and perceived his poor Theresa stretched on her bed and a prey to a burning fever. André, his eyes flooded with tears, bent over the bed and pronounced in a heart-rending voice the name of Theresa. She answered with an affectionate smile and held out to him a burning hand which he covered with tears and kisses. When the first moment of emotion was over, the sick woman murmured these words: — So it is you, André? Here you are alone!… — Yes, he said in a dull voice, all my searches have been fruitless. John has left us… He did not love us! he whom we have loved so much… Think no more of this ingrate and recover your health. — André, your wishes are useless; the illness that has struck me, I shall carry to the tomb. — O my Theresa, wert thou to be snatched from me!… Without thee, without my son, what should I do here below? — I will teach you: but be calmer, more courageous, your sobs trouble me. Listen, André, listen well. God has spoken to me; he deigned to send me the guardian angel of our little John. The immortal spirit exhorted me to be patient, to murmur no more. He reassured me as to our son's lot;… John must pass through long trials which will strengthen his virtue. — Theresa, it is a dream… it is the effect of giddiness… — No, André, no: I was not asleep, I was not even suffering when heaven thus unveiled the future to me… Listen again. When I am no more, when I rest in my last abode, distribute to the poor the little that we possess and devote yourself to the service of God in the Order of Saint Francis. — I will follow this counsel… oh! I promise you. — Well then! I die happy; for I am reassured as to the lot of the two beings I loved most. Farewell, André, till we meet… above. And she expired.

John, still following from afar the traveller's tracks, had reached Castile. Fatigue overwhelmed him; fed by public charity, he had often had trouble finding a morsel of black bread, and he had had to sleep on the highways, exposed to all the inclemencies of the air. How often he had regretted the so tender, so manifold cares of good Theresa! How often he had pictured his parents saddened and accusing him of ingratitude! As he went farther away, his thought flew toward the paternal home. He felt how weak a child is when the protection of his family fails him; but a sort of fear, of false shame, held him back. If he still went forward, it

was no longer to satisfy his need of travelling, it was because he dared not retrace his steps. Perhaps also it was necessary that the will of God be accomplished, that will which Theresa had known in her vision. He was at Oropesa when he was obliged to stop. Devoured by hunger, destitute of all resources, he sat down weeping on a fragment of rock. There he let his head fall between his hands and began to make bitter reflections.

A rough voice drew him from this state of numbness… He raised his eyes and perceived a *mayoral*,[2] who was considering him attentively. — What are you doing there? asked this man. John frankly told his adventure without seeking to excuse it. The mayoral reflected an instant, then said: — You did very wrong to abandon your family, think of the grief you have caused them. I, who tenderly love my daughter, my little Mariquita, should never be consoled if she were taken from me. However, since the harm is done, let us apply a remedy to it. When a traveller of my acquaintance goes to Portugal, I will charge him to give your parents news of you. Meanwhile, as you must live honourably, and not as a vagabond, if you will keep one of my flocks, I will treat you well, on the faith of Gonzales. The child accepted eagerly.

For several years John plied this rough trade. Always alone and in the presence of nature, he felt his soul rise, his intelligence expand; often he thought of André, of Theresa: his dearest hope was to see them again one day, to surprise them by his progress. With the help of a monk who sometimes came to beg at the farm, he had learned to read; and, thanks to the library of this good religious's convent, he was able to turn to profit for his instruction the long hours he passed in the fields. To the graces of childhood had succeeded in him the strength of the adolescent; his stature had developed, his face had taken a manly character. Gonzales, satisfied with his excellent conduct and appreciating his lively intelligence, put him at the head of the farm. John's administration was so good that in a short time the mayoral's fortune was considerable.

One day Gonzales invited John to follow him into his garden; there he said to him: — I am content with your care, you have been a faithful servant; I wish to reward you worthily by giving you the hand of my pretty Mariquita; her property will be yours. I am growing old and need nothing now but rest: I shall therefore be happy to see my daughter united to an honest man, and, at the same time, to procure for you a well-being you perhaps would never have obtained by your labours. Instead of welcoming so brilliant an offer with joy, John appeared dismayed. — O my master, he answered, I dare not rejoice at your generosity, for I am unworthy of it. What have I done that you should deign to offer me what you have most precious? I have done my duty, that is all. If a poor young man like me aspired to a rich alliance, might he not be accused of obeying an interested calculation? Besides, a secret voice tells me that I must not, now at least, think of marrying; it seems to me that my liberty does not belong to me, that I have not the right to dispose of it. — You will reflect, resumed Gonzales good-naturedly; tomorrow I shall ask you your answer; it is impossible that you refuse happiness and fortune.

At night John, retired to his room, knelt before an image of the Blessed Virgin, the sole ornament of this modest shelter; his prayer was long and fervent. When he rose, he felt stronger, calmer. — No, he said to himself, I will not abuse Gonzales's generosity; later he might perhaps regret his work. I entered his house poor, I shall leave it poor. I do not know toward what goal God will guide my steps; but my heart tells me that my trials are not to be ended and that I have not sufficiently expiated my wrongs toward my family.

He then took a resolution which was to spare him the embarrassment of an explanation with Gonzales; at daybreak he left the farm unnoticed, and went away in all haste.

After the first hour of walking, reflection lit the fugitive's mind; the horrible phantom of misery rose before his eyes. John felt the necessity of embracing a new profession, or else of putting himself in the service of another mayoral; but what he desired above all was to leave the country so as not to be brought back by gratitude to Gonzales's house.

As he was entering Oropesa, he perceived a company of militia which occupied the main square, where it was executing manoeuvres. John approached, and considered these military exercises. The officer, whose troop was not at full strength, thought at once of acquiring this young villager, who promised to become a vigorous and determined soldier. He called him, and offered him to enlist in the army of His Majesty Charles V: — As true as I am called Don Feruz, he said, there will be profit and glory for you in following our banner; for we are going to the siege of Fuenterrabía, on the frontiers of France.

Some of the militiamen who knew John Ciudad and knew what favour he enjoyed with the mayoral, amused themselves in whispers at the captain's expense; but what was their astonishment when they heard John answer gravely that he accepted Don Feruz's proposals!… At once John was made to put on a jerkin, and a pike was put in his hands. Henceforth he was in the king's service.

The life of the camps was then turbulent and dissipated; most of the recruits of which the armies were composed had pledged their liberty for a little gold; they were generally vagabonds, poor students, unemployed lackeys, or else adventurers like the German *reiters* or the Italian *condottieri*; impudent plunderers, as dangerous to their allies as to their enemies; pitiless in victory, but yielding at the first shock of true warriors. Cast among these soldiers of fortune, John could not withdraw himself from the pernicious influence of their evil principles. Without imitating their infamous actions, without soiling his lips with the same blasphemies, he nevertheless no longer dared to give himself ostensibly to the practices of religion; he hid from being an honest man, as one would hide from being an assassin. Soon even the conduct of his comrades caused him less lively horror; in this whirlwind that swept him along, he no longer dared to question himself on the state of his soul. A few steps more, and perhaps he would have fallen into the abyss! A circumstance at once fatal and fortunate came to tear him from this peril.

The company lacked provisions; John was sent, as the youngest, to seek some at the neighbouring village; he was mounted on a mare lately taken from the French. The animal, recognizing from afar her former abode, wished to return to it; the rider resisted; then the mare reared with such fury that John was thrown by her on a heap of stones. The unfortunate lost consciousness. Pain awakened him at last, but it was to show him a new danger. The French camp was so near that John could hear the footsteps of the sentries. He trembled lest an enemy should perceive him; for, bruised as he was, they would not have taken the trouble to carry him off, and a lance-thrust would have ended his life. How avoid this imminent peril, since he could not take a step?

At that moment faith flooded him with its rays; it reminded him that the best protection descends from heaven, and that, in default of men, God could succour him. Then he addressed a fervent prayer to the Blessed Virgin; scarcely had he finished it, when his strength miraculously returned; he succeeded in reaching the Spanish entrenchments.

A few steps farther, his constancy was again put to the proof. He had been charged to guard a rich booty which was to be shared among the men of the company. Clever thieves seized the major part of this deposit; John was accused of having been in collusion with the bandits. From then on, the butt of the contempt of his chiefs, the hatred of his comrades, and unable, despite his protestations, to clear himself of this infamous imputation, he had to leave the service.

The wandering steps of John Ciudad brought him back to the farm of Oropesa. His arrival was the signal for general joy. Gonzales embraced him tenderly, and renewed his proposals: — Time has not changed me, said that excellent man; I am still ready to give you my daughter with all my goods; reflect maturely, instead of fleeing like a madman. — Why do you tempt me thus with so much generosity? answered John Ciudad sadly. Do you not understand that I am not called here below to enjoy the repose that wealth gives? Whatever my destiny may be, I feel that it is not accomplished. There are in me vague presentiments which agitate me and of which I do not clearly give myself account. O my dear master! if I have come back here, it was to see you again, and not to become your heir. He told the mayoral the circumstances that had followed his

departure, and added: — The king of Spain proposes to make war on the Turks in Hungary. Although I have reason to be discontented with military service, I would nevertheless gladly march in the ranks of the soldiers of Christ; it will seem to me, in fighting the enemies of our holy faith, that I purify myself of my stains. As much as the struggles between Christians are odious, so much is it noble to shed one's blood for the defence of the Church. — Go, my son, cried the mayoral, it is heaven that inspires you! all interests must be silent before such an enterprise. Only, if ever you return to Spain, remember that Gonzales will always receive you with pleasure under his roof. — My chief regret, said John, is that it has not yet been given me to see my parents again. Several times I have begged travellers to carry them my letters, but I have received no answer…, and I must again put off my return to Monte-Mayor! If I escape the dangers of this war, my first care shall be to fly toward the places where I was born, to embrace the beloved beings who doubtless await me impatiently… — Will you find them again? said the mayoral, shaking his head. — Oh! do not inspire me with that cruel doubt… You would break all my strength.

The sun was rising radiant over Monte-Mayor-el-Novo, where silence still reigned. A man clad in a military jerkin, with a long sword hung from a broad baldric, and holding in his hand a knotted staff, entered the little town. This man's face was tanned, thin and covered with scars. Although he appeared extremely tired, he quickened his pace as he drew near the out-of-the-way street where André Ciudad's house stood. Suddenly he made an abrupt movement and uttered a sharp exclamation on perceiving an old man who had stopped to look at him — My uncle Fabricio! he cried. The old man repeated in a tone of astonishment: — I, your uncle! — No doubt, said the soldier; am I so much changed, then, that you do not recognize me? — What! it is you, John?… After so many years! Indeed you are much changed… But what have you come to do here, unhappy man? — Can you ask me?… I come to express my repentance to the tender parents whom I offended. The uncle raised his hands to heaven, and said: — They are there, now… For a long time they have suffered no more.

John mechanically followed the old man's gestures with his eyes; this news was so overwhelming that he did not seem at first to have understood it. — What are you announcing to me? he asked. What! my father, my good mother… — Your father and your mother have left this world.

Abundant tears flooded John's face, and these broken words escaped from his oppressed breast: — They are dead! and it is I who gave them the fatal blow!… They had loaded me with tenderness, and I paid them with ingratitude!… They counted on me for the relief and joy of their old age, and I fled carrying off their happiness! I am no longer worthy to see the light of day!

After this explosion of grief, John recollected himself a little, and begged his uncle to be so good as to accompany him to the cemetery.

Guided by Fabricio, he soon arrived before the plain stone beneath which André's wife rested. An inscription roughly traced, and half effaced by time, recalled the name of Theresa, the date of her death, and invoked for her the prayers of Christians. Around the modest monument the grass had grown thick; some wild flowers bent their cups toward the wooden railing.

At the sight of this mausoleum, John uttered a great cry… His sobs suffocated him. He beat his breast, bruised his face, called down on his head the rigour of heaven, and constantly repeated: "It is I… it is I who killed her!… Pardon; pardon!… O my mother!… An eternal penance!"

Resolved to weep over this misfortune, or rather this crime, for he considered himself a parricide who had killed his mother by grief, he leaves his country, passes into Andalusia, and hires himself to a rich woman of the territory of Seville as a shepherd. His design was doubtless to give himself to the counsels of solitude: in the face of the heaven he has outraged, in the face of his soul, which he has forgotten, neglected, lost, he groans, he weeps day and night, all the time that his duty leaves him free. He seeks how he may repair his ingratitude toward God. He already vaguely glimpses that it will be by the sacrifice of himself for his

neighbour, the most visible form that God puts on to offer himself to our love. He obeys this voice that calls him. He sets out for Africa, where he wishes to bring help to the Christian slaves, to ransom them if he can. In a hospital where he stopped, he assisted the poor and said aloud “that God would take vengeance on those who took more care of their horses than of the poor and the sick,” and made other similar remonstrances.

At Gibraltar, he met a Portuguese gentleman, surrounded by officers of King John III. The deep affliction that could be read in this gentleman’s features fixed Ciudad’s attention. He approached, and, saluting the traveller respectfully, said to him: — Sir knight, you are kept under watch:… are you a prisoner? The gentleman, far from taking offence at this apparent curiosity, answered in a low voice: — Yes, my friend… The king has stripped me of my goods and condemned me to exile. I am being taken to Ceuta, on the coast of Barbary. It is not my fortune I regret. I am already old… It would matter little to me to end my days in Portugal or in Africa… But my family has been involved in my disgrace… My wife, my daughters will perhaps succumb to the attacks of a deadly climate… We are exiled, and yet I was not guilty! — Console yourself then, sir. Happy he who possesses peace of conscience! The ship which was to carry Count da Silva being ready to leave Gibraltar, the Portuguese officers ordered the noble old man to follow them, and John to withdraw.

But the latter said firmly: — Have I not the right to attach myself to the person of this gentleman? If he deigns to accept me as his servant, I will accompany him to Africa. — Alas! my friend, said Count da Silva in his turn, I possess nothing more… I could not pay you wages. — What matter!… At least you will never doubt my zeal. When the vessel set sail and bore away the count with his family, it carried John Ciudad also. Scarcely had the exiles touched African soil when, undermined by misery, exhausted by the excessive heat of the climate, they fell sick one after another. The fatal consequence of this state of things was that the little that had remained to them of their fortune was soon exhausted. But God, good and merciful, had left John health and his two arms. Pressed by extreme need, the gentleman one day took him aside and revealed to him all the horror of his position; he ended by saying to him: — If you could resolve to work at the fortifications of Ceuta and to share your wages with us, we should be saved… have pity on my wife and my four daughters! John consented to this arrangement, unacceptable to any other. He first exhausted all his resources to provide for his master’s needs. Then, not content with watching each night over the sick man, he performed during the whole day the most fatiguing labours; no task repelled him: it was he who was seen first on the quay, ready to hire out his arms to unload the ships. Was it needful to arm himself with a pickaxe and open a road, or to work on the ramparts: he gave the labourers the example of ardour. In short, he appeared untiring. One day when John had found no work, he consoled his master and fed him with part of his clothes, which he sold. In spite of his numerous occupations, he still found means to enter the prisons and make the captives hear consoling words. There, seated on the cold stone beside the sufferers, he shed tears with them; his intelligent charity had taught him the art of tending their wounds. He was at once for them the physician of the soul and the physician of the body. Count da Silva felt the term of his ills approach. John had not left him a single moment since he had recognized the gravity of his state. Profiting by a remnant of strength, a last breath of life, the exile said to his faithful servant: — I wish to thank you, you who have been my true friend,… you who have shown me a devotion proof against everything. Before we part, receive my thanks, my blessings. Your portion on earth is modest, it will be magnificent in heaven. There, no more distinction of rank or fortune… Brothers, elect, a God!… Do not trouble yourself about the lot of my family… Captain Martinez has told me that the king deigns to recall it to Portugal and give back to it part of its goods… If you will follow it there, your future will be assured. — No, worthy sir, answered John. That calm is not made for me. My trials would be too soon ended. Once already I refused fortune, and I congratulate myself on it. If I were rich or even simply sheltered from want, perhaps I should no longer feel the same commiseration for the pains of others. I must live and die poor. — And I, murmured the count, a voice from heaven tells me that you will be one of the most glorious apostles with whom Spain has ever been honoured. Yes, you will be great before God and before men!

Meanwhile, one of his work-fellows having abjured Christianity to become a Mussulman, John's confessor took advantage of it to set before him the danger of living in contact with infidels, and determined him to return to Europe. Yielding to these counsels, our Saint crossed back to Spain. The ship in which he was was surprised by so furious a tempest, in passing the strait of Gibraltar, that nothing more was awaited in it but the hour of death. John, attributing this misfortune to his sins, begged the pilot to throw him into the sea to make the tempest cease; and he had so persuaded him that they were on the point of doing it, when John, having implored the help of the Blessed Virgin, and said a Hail Mary, the tempest suddenly subsided.

Having no longer anything to live on, our Saint, when he was landed in Spain, sold paper images and little books, particularly catechisms: when anyone bought this pious merchandise from him, he gave it only with some exhortation to virtue. One day when he was going to sell images in a village, Jesus Christ appeared to him under the figure of a little boy ill-clad and barefoot; he had compassion on him, loaded him on his shoulders with his bundle, and carried him, sweating under the weight; so that after having gone a little way, he needed to rest and refresh himself at a fountain which was quite near. He begged the little child therefore to get down, but Jesus took this occasion to make himself known, showed him an open pomegranate, in the midst of which was the figure of the Cross, and said to him these words: "John of God, Granada shall be thy cross"; after which he disappeared. The Saint, knowing by this the will of God, went promptly to Granada, rented a little shop under the Elvira gate, and continued to sell his images, until Our Lord made him undertake something else for his glory: which happened some time after. Doctor John of Avila,[3] so celebrated for the holiness of his life and the eminence of his doctrine, was preaching, on Saint Sebastian's day, in a hermitage dedicated in his honour. John, by a particular disposition of divine Providence, found himself at his sermon; he felt himself greatly touched by the word of God, which pierced his heart as happily as the soldiers' arrows had pierced the body of Saint Sebastian: he resolved, on the hour, to suffer all sorts of insults and pains, in imitation of the Saint whose virtues he heard preached. Pressed with extreme regret for his past faults and an ardent desire to endure something to satisfy for them, as soon as the preaching was ended he went out into the street, crying with all his might: "Mercy, Lord, mercy, on this great sinner who has offended thee!" and went thus through the whole town, tearing his hair, striking his face, and rolling in the mud and against the pavement. This made him the object of the derision of the people and of the children, who took him for a madman; indeed, he forgot nothing to give better credit to that opinion. One day he entered the cathedral church, and, throwing himself on the ground, cried still louder than before: "Mercy! mercy!" Some pious persons, moved with compassion at the sight of so extraordinary an object, believing that he had actually lost his mind, had him charitably conducted to the hospital destined for the insane. John, happy to see himself thus despised, continued to play the madman; so that it was thought necessary to employ on him the most violent remedies, such as scourging him every day till he bled. He endured this chastisement with admirable patience, and, amid his extravagances, he said sometimes: "Strike, strike this rebellious flesh; it is just that it bear the penalty of the evil it has done." He received more than five thousand blows, and they would have continued to ill-treat him, if Father Avila, under whose direction he was, warned of the cruelty exercised on him, had not made him understand, on God's part, that it was time to put an end to his voluntary folly and to employ himself in something more useful for himself and his neighbour. On leaving the hospital, he made the pilgrimage to Our Lady of Guadalupe,[4] to render thanks to the Most Holy Virgin for the favours he had received from her Son by her intercession, and for the dangers he had avoided by her help. On the road, the devil appeared to him under the figure of a lord, and offered him a purse full of money, begging him to receive it to provide for his needs, which were extreme; but the Saint answered that the poverty he had vowed to Jesus, his master, forbade him to accept any money, except on condition of distributing it to the priests of the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, to have Masses said there in honour of Mary, Queen of heaven; the devil disappeared, unable to hear the names of Jesus and Mary. As soon as he could descry the church, he prostrated himself on the ground, kissed it several times, and dragged himself on his knees to the door. Then, redoubling the fervour of his devotion, he went to salute the Blessed Sacrament,

and from there to make his prayer in the chapel of the Virgin. As he was reciting the *Salve Regina*, at these words: “Turn then thine eyes of mercy toward us,” the veil that covered the image withdrew to give him means of seeing it; the sacristan, having run up at the noise the curtain had made, and seeing no one but John of God, took him for a thief and raised his foot to drive him out; but his leg was suddenly paralysed, and could be healed only by the prayer of the Blessed: which made known the merit of his holiness. On returning from this pious excursion, which he had prolonged to Oropesa to see again his old benefactors, and to Baeza to present himself to John of Avila, he began to sell in the market of Granada wood that he went to cut in a forest, and devoted the gain he drew from his daily sale to feeding several poor persons. Some months after, in 1540, he rented a house in the fish market, not far from the cathedral, to receive poor sick persons and infirm there, and with an alms of three hundred reals which had been given him by a priest of the royal chapel, he set up forty-six beds each furnished with a mat, sheets, blankets and a bolster. Alone, he supplied the manifold cares required by all these sick, relieving them in their sufferings, preparing their food, arranging their beds; in a word, he knew how to provide with so much intelligence for the pressing needs of the unfortunate he had gathered, that the inhabitants of Granada, greatly edified by his zeal, vied eagerly to help him in his charitable enterprise. The archbishop himself, Don Pedro Guerrero, having been informed of all that was happening, wished to visit the establishment founded by John, and, satisfied with the admirable order with which it was administered, he took this establishment under his protection, gave considerable sums to assure it a stable existence, and, following his example, several rich persons of the city likewise endowed the new hospital. To procure suitable food for the unfortunate sick who filled his house, John, with a basket on his back and a pot on each arm, went through the streets of Granada crying: “My brethren, for the love of God, do good to yourselves.”

This new manner of asking alms had the power of a magic wand; so true is it that with most men self-interest is the motive even of the best actions.

In the course of one of these collections, John was kept to dinner by Don Sebastian Ramirez, bishop of Tuy and president of the royal chancery of Granada. The prelate having asked him what his name was, our Blessed answered ingenuously that the little child who had sent him to Granada had named him John of God, but that as this name could not suit so little virtuous a man as he, he dared not bear it. The bishop, admiring this profound humility, commanded him to bear it in future, and to have himself called John of God, if he would not disown the Master he served. “God forbid, my lord,” answered the Blessed; “since it is his will, I am willing, though I am unworthy to be the servant of so great a Master.” And this prelate having remarked that he wore no other garment than that of the poor man to whom he gave his own, had a tunic of coarse cloth bought for him, with a little mantle which he made him take after having blessed it; and, from then on, our Saint never wore any other.

John’s solicitude was not limited to the sick of his hospital, it extended still to all the unfortunate he met, to all those who solicited his so ardent charity. He stripped himself to clothe them, abandoned to them all his money, and sometimes even, when he had nothing more to distribute, he gave them a note signed by his hand, which he addressed to some pious person, praying him to succour the bearer of this note. Thus, returning one day, toward noon, to his hospital, with the bread necessary for the dinner of his sick, he saw himself surrounded in the street by a troop of workmen out of work, who begged him to have pity on their profound misery. Keenly moved by the complaints of these poor workmen, John of God gave them all the bread he was bringing; and as this help still seemed insufficient to him, he added twelve reals, the only money he had on him. Another time, it was young orphans, covered with disgusting rags, whom he met in a village near Granada, and whose miserable state inspired him with so profound a pity that, leading them at once to a female old-clothes dealer, he had them entirely clothed. And if these unfortunates abused John of God’s good faith, if he was warned that his alms were ill placed, he answered: “That is not my affair; what I give, I always do for the love of God.” He sought out the bashful poor everywhere, and went to bring them

consolations in the places where they hid; or again, each evening, at nightfall, he walked round his hospital, and often found honest persons of various conditions, who awaited him apart to confide to him their solitary poverty. Sometimes it was a citizen of the town engaged in a lawsuit which the judge's avarice made interminable, and who received the money necessary to finish this suit; sometimes it was a young girl of noble family who lacked a dowry to enter religion, and for whom John of God opened the doors of a monastery; sometimes it was a poor widow who had not been able to pay her rent, a peasant, ruined by a bad harvest, who could not discharge his dues, and both withdrew satisfied. There was not even the soldier in debt for want of pay whose expenses he did not pay, or the poor student whom he did not succour at home. Another very difficult work, the conversion of debauched women and girls, further excited his zeal. At first he kept himself in the neighbourhood of an ill-famed quarter, stopped all who were going there, and, throwing himself on their knees, begged them to renounce the design that led them to such a place. If he persuaded the greater number, he was often also hooted, repulsed, even insulted; nevertheless he courageously continued this charitable practice, and later, when he had nothing more to fear from public opinion, he dared to penetrate into the houses where these unhappy sinners plied their infamous trade; he presented himself there crucifix in hand, he spoke to them with such vehemence of the judgments of God that he forced them to blush at their state, to abandon it. Then he fed them to keep them from relapsing into disorder, afterwards placed them in some convent, or even married them sometimes. But this work offered great difficulties, and John of God experienced frequent disappointments. Once, four women having asked him to take them away from the theatre of their disorders in order to be converted more easily, he led them to Toledo, and hired horses to procure them a more convenient conveyance, while he and his companion followed on foot. When they had arrived, three of these women disappeared, one alone persevered in her pious project; and as John of God's companion complained of having made a useless journey, he answered: "We shall have gained much if, by our care, we can save one soul"; then he added: "If four loads of fish were sent us from the port of Motril for the hospital, and three were found spoiled, should we not nevertheless be very satisfied to receive one load of good fish?" Infants too had a share in his solicitudes; for, having learned that a little girl, born only a few days before, remained an orphan, and had no one who would take care of her, he repaired at once to the spot, carried off the child in his robe, and put her out to nurse in the village of Gavia, near Granada. The nurse not having answered John of God's expectation, he sought another more careful, and continued to watch over the education of this poor little orphan, named Geneça Pulida. He did more still, and entrusting to an honest merchant a sum of fifty ducats that he might make them prosper in his business for the benefit of his protégée, he was able to marry her and thus procure her a very advantageous settlement. Finally, his charity was so vast that it included even the dead. While making his ordinary collection, he was crossing a poor and deserted quarter of Granada, and he met the corpse of an unfortunate man lying abandoned on the public way, without shroud and without burial. Heartbroken at such a sight, he ran to a rich personage and begged him to give him the sum necessary to have this dead body buried; having received only a dry answer, he returned to the corpse, loaded it on his shoulders, and came to lay it on the threshold of this pitiless rich man, saying to him: "As you have the means which I have not of rendering the last duties to this dead man, who is your brother as much as mine, I conjure you to do it in the name of God, or else I leave him here." These words, and above all the energetic action that accompanied them, frightened to such a point him to whom John addressed himself that he obtained from him a large alms to have decently buried the poor unfortunate whose mortal remains he had raised. All the hagiographers who have written the life of Saint John of God say that, a new Tobias, he received on this occasion a sensible testimony from God, and they report that, a few days after the preceding event, John having found on the pavement the body of an unfortunate, perceived that he still breathed. He carried him gently to his hospital, laid him in a bed, and as he was religiously kissing the feet of this dying man, after having washed them, he received a divine clarity which made him see on these feet the holy stigmata of the crucifixion all brilliant with light. He recognized then that it was Jesus Christ whose feet he had just washed, and at once the divine Redeemer said to him: "John, the good you do to the poor is done to myself; it is I who receive the alms you give them, who am

clothed with the garments with which you clothe them, and you wash my feet as many times as you perform this charitable care toward a poor man."[5] At these words the sick man disappeared, and John remained with his soul penetrated by a joy so heavenly, a desire so lively to relieve his neighbour, that a fire having broken out in the great hospital of Granada, he was seen to dash repeatedly into the midst of the flames to snatch a great number of sick from death. Enveloped on all sides by the fire, which had transformed the hospital buildings into a blazing furnace, he remained there more than half an hour, so that for a moment it was believed that he had perished a victim of his devotion; and when he reappeared, no other burn was found on him than that of his eyebrows.[6]

Despite the time he employed in accomplishing all these good works, he nevertheless made each day a collection through the streets of Granada, and this collection was for him still more an occasion of showing his patience, his humility. One day when he was passing through the Calle Gomelez, he was pushed by the crowd in front of a lord who was going up the street on foot. John of God hastened to stand aside to give this lord passage; but in his haste, a large basket he carried on his arm caught the gentleman's cloak and took it off his shoulder. The latter roughly apostrophized the wretched stranger he had before him; but his anger grew more lively when John of God said to him, according to his custom of speaking: "Pardon, my brother." Then he gave a slap to the audacious man who treated him so familiarly; and as he received no excuses, and John answered him: "I have well deserved it, you may give me a second," he signed to his lackeys to chastise this insolent and coarse man. The lackeys hastened to rain blows on the one their master had designated, when an honourable man of the neighbourhood ran up and pronounced the name of John of God. At this name, venerated in all Granada, the lord turned about stupefied and dismayed; he wished to throw himself at John's knees, who raised him embracing him, and they parted asking each other's pardon. The next day John of God received an invitation to dinner from this gentleman, who in addition sent him fifty gold crowns.

Another day when he was crossing the court of the old palace of the inquisition, a lackey pushed him roughly into a basin full of water, and he came out without manifesting the least emotion, without giving the slightest sign of discontent. On another occasion, a man having thrown a stone in his face, he excused him, saying that he could well pardon this man a single offence, he who had so many to be pardoned before God. He bore at last with the greatest calm the outrageous words of those who refused to take part in his collection; but John of God's whole person breathed so high, so venerable a virtue that most often he bent under the weight of alms; then he came back very late to his hospital, and although he was overcome with fatigue, he passed part of the night at the bedside of the sick, conversing with each in particular, lavishing consolations on them, showing them, in a a word, the most tender interest. Without credit and without authority, possessing neither goods nor revenues, he was alone in being concerned with the means of giving the necessary relief to the unfortunate who flocked in such great numbers to his hospital that on three occasions it had been necessary to transfer it to more spacious buildings.[7] After one of these transfers he had even gone to Valladolid, where the court of Spain was, to obtain help there, and, very favourably received, he received abundant alms from the infantes of Spain[8] and the lords who accompanied them.

But his charity being unable to bear the sight of the unfortunate without assisting them, he distributed so liberally all that was given him that he had in a short time, at Valladolid, almost as many bashful poor to feed as he had at Granada. And as his companion remonstrated that he ought to reserve this money for his hospital: "My brother," he said to him, "whether one gives here or at Granada, it is always giving for God, for he is in all places and in all the poor."

This sentiment of compassion which he had for others did not extend to himself, and, if he was so gentle toward his neighbour, he was extremely severe in regard to his own body. He did all he could to lay the sick softly and at their ease; as for himself, he had only a mat and a stone for bed and bolster. His whole clothing consisted of a tunic of coarse cloth, and he never used linen or any fine stuff; he always went barefoot and bareheaded, whatever the weather. His ordinary food was only a few vegetables; and even then he never ate

more than one kind at a meal; and, on Fridays, he always passed them on bread and water only. In a word, he treated his body as a slave to whom, according to the word of the Wise Man, after bread, neither discipline nor labour should be spared. That is why he did not spare it this kind of mortification; he did not cease to strike himself until the blood flowed abundantly from his body.

These were his exterior exercises: they did not deprive him of the interior ones, with which he occupied himself whole nights. He employed in prayer all the time he had left after he had assisted the sick, and when sleep pressed him, he said aloud, to wake himself: “Ah! how unworthy it is of him who wishes to serve God to think of sleeping.” His fervour, during his prayers, appeared by the tears that flowed from his eyes and by the extraordinary splendour that shone on his face.

Such happy progress was soon crossed by the common enemy of men’s salvation, for he attacked the servant of God by all sorts of ways, and first by the debauched women whom he had withdrawn from vice. Abusing his goodness, they insulted him unceasingly with words full of outrages, and called him a hypocrite, a bigot, when they had not what they asked for to their liking; but the Saint only laughed at it, and he was so persuaded that justice was being done him, that once he gave two reals to one of these creatures that she might say aloud, in the open street, the insults she said to him in private. And an honest man, taking his part one day, the Blessed begged him not to do so: “I conjure you by charity,” he said to him, “to let them be; they know me better than you, and they know that I am the wickedest man in the world.”

Finally, the devil, seeing that he could do nothing through men, wished to attack him in person. Indeed, one night when the servant of God was at his prayer, he appeared to him in a hideous form that cast fire from its mouth, and ill-treated him so cruelly that the brethren, running up at the noise, found him all in tears, weary and cast down, and crying, his eyes fixed on a crucifix: “Jesus, deliver me from Satan! Jesus, be with me!” A short time after, he came again into his room, under the figure of a young girl; but the Saint recognizing by her answers who she was, invoked the name of Jesus and made the phantom vanish. Another time he took the appearance of a poor man who asked alms; but the Blessed John refused to give it unless he asked it for the love of God; the devil dealt him so rude a blow against the stomach that he made him recoil very far. In a word, he persecuted him so that the Saint was sometimes eight days, sometimes a month, recovering from the blows he had received from him.

But if God, to prove his servant’s virtue, permitted him to be afflicted in this manner, he did not fail besides to console him in several ways, by particular graces and favours, and above all by a miraculous abundance of alms for the maintenance of his poor. John of God met one day Don Pedro Henriquez, marquis of Tarisa, who was playing with other lords; they gave him together, as alms, as much as twenty-five ducats; in the evening, the marquis went to the hospital, in disguise, and, feigning to be a poor gentleman fallen into need, begged him to have pity on him and give him help. The Saint, touched with compassion, said to him: “Hope in Him who despairs of no one, and in whom the most desperate find their consolation and the remedy of their misfortunes: here is what has just been given me”; and he gave him in fact twenty-five ducats. Henriquez received them and went to show them to the other lords; the next day he returned to see the Saint, and gave back the twenty-five ducats; he gave him besides a hundred and fifty gold crowns, and had a hundred and fifty loaves, four sheep and eight hens sent him, and commanded his steward to have this provision given him every day, as long as he should remain at Granada.

He had also the gift of prophecy, whether to discover present secrets or foresee the future: for he declared in particular to several persons enormous sins which they concealed in confessing: which served for their perfect conversion. Being on his deathbed, he saw with the eyes of the spirit a poor weaver who was about to hang himself on a tree of his garden: the Saint asked for his habit, dressed, ran to the help of this wretched man and delivered him. He predicted, before his decease, that several persons, full of zeal for the service of the sick, would establish, after his example, in the world a congregation which would be employed in this ministry: and this has been seen accomplished through the care of Pope Paul V, who erected his Order into a

true congregation, under the rule of Saint Augustine: these religious oblige themselves, besides the three ordinary vows of obedience, chastity and poverty, to a fourth, of hospitality toward the poor sick; which Pope Pius V had already granted for Spain, by a Bull of 1 January 1572. It is yet a particular grace, the care with which divine Providence exalted him when he humbled himself, or when he exposed himself to contempt, or when his enemies wished to overwhelm him. Here is another example: He was accused, before the archbishop of Granada, of keeping in his hospital idlers and persons of evil life, who ate the bread of the poor; the archbishop had him summoned that he might justify himself. The Saint obeyed, and, going to find the prelate, told him in the most natural tone in the world that he knew no one in the hospital who was not of good life; and that he alone was so useless and so vicious that he did not deserve to lodge there. This humility so charmed the archbishop that he said to him these words: “Brother John of God, govern your house as shall seem good to you, I give you the power; and, for myself, I rest entirely on you.” Besides all the graces of which we have spoken, Our Lord was pleased to honour him several times with his sensible presence. As he was praying one day before the crucifix in the church of Our Lady, it seemed to him he saw Jesus Christ, accompanied by the Blessed Virgin and Saint John the Evangelist; the Blessed Virgin, coming to him with a crown of thorns in her hand, set it forcibly on his head, saying to him: “John, it is by thorns and by sufferings that thou must merit the crown my Son reserves for thee in heaven.” And at the same time he felt very acute pains; but his love made him answer: “I shall receive from thy lovely hand these thorns and these sufferings as beautiful flowers and most agreeable roses.” But so many labours, joined to the rough mortifications that John of God imposed on himself, soon exhausted his strength, and an act of that ardent charity which consumed him came still to hasten his already premature end. In the winter of 1550, the Genil, which flows under the walls of Granada, rolled a great quantity of wood in its torrential waters, swollen by the melting of the snows of the Sierra Nevada. John, desiring to use this wood for the service of his hospital, entered the river, and the cold he felt brought on a shivering so violent that he had to be drawn out of the water; but, perceiving that a servant of the hospital had advanced imprudently into the midst of the torrent, he threw himself again into the Genil to try to snatch from death this young man, who disappeared, carried off by the currents. Despairing at not having been able to succeed in his charitable design, John of God fell into a profound dejection, and his indisposition made great progress in a few days, because he went to the houses of all those to whom he was debtor, in order to settle his accounts. Soon he became so gravely ill that, in spite of the devoted care of a virtuous lady named Anne Ossorio, who had wished to receive him in her palace that he might be better assisted in his illness, his state grew so much worse that no more hope was had of preserving him. At once the court and nobility were seen to throng around John of God’s bed; the magistrates of Granada ran to beg him to give his blessing to their city, and the archbishop, Don Pedro Guerrero, came to administer himself to this indigent hawker of books and images, this humble wood-seller, this poor soldier, this obscure man, in short, whom Christian charity had transformed, and of whom it had made an illustrious saint. The archbishop himself wished to give him the last Sacraments: he heard his confession, and, at the end of the Mass which he said in the sick man’s room, he communicated him, and, some time after, gave him Extreme Unction. When he asked him whether he had nothing on his heart, the Saint made him this beautiful answer: “There are only three things which give me uneasiness: the first, that having received many graces from God, I have not recognized them, having rendered him only very small services; the second, that the women whom I have withdrawn from vice and the bashful poor may suffer much after my death; and the third, that those to whom I owe may not be paid what they lent me to feed the poor.” The archbishop, melting into tears, exhorted him to confidence in the mercy of God, and promised to be the protector of his poor and to pay the debts of the hospital. At last the Blessed, feeling the hour of his decease approach, had everyone leave his room, rose, put his knees on the ground; and, embracing a crucifix, gave back his soul to his Creator, pronouncing these very sweet and loving words: “Jesus, Jesus, I commend my soul into thy hands!” It was Saturday 8 March 1550, a short time after midnight. He was beatified by Urban VIII, in 1630, and canonized by Alexander VII, in 1690. Saint John of God is specially honoured at Granada. Booksellers have likewise placed themselves under his protection, because he had been for some time a hawker of books and

religious images.

He is represented with a cord or strap passed round his neck, from which hangs the earthen pot that served him to collect alms. In his left hand a pomegranate, ordinarily surmounted by the cross, recalls that a voice from heaven said to him, in the midst of his indecisions: “Granada shall be thy cross.” It was, in fact, in the city of Granada that he established his first hospital. He is figured crowned with thorns by the hand of the Virgin and of Saint John the Evangelist. He is also seen carrying men on his back. — Letters patent of Louis XIII, issued from the camp before La Rochelle, on 15 February 1631, permitted the Brothers of Charity established in France to have affixed “the arms, pennons and royal staves on the doors and prominent places of the convents and hospitals they should wish.” In consequence of this privilege, the religious of Saint John of God had taken for arms the shield of France with a golden pomegranate surmounted by a cross, amid three fleurs-de-lis with this motto: *Reges caeli et terrae dederunt*: “The kings of heaven and of earth have given it to us.”

THE ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD.

In his profound humility, the holy founder of the Order of Charity had never conceived the thought of establishing a new religious congregation in the Church; he had wished only to form a society of secular persons to serve the various offices of his hospital. Thus, in his lifetime, he had given his disciples no other rule than the example of his virtues to imitate; and the rule that bears his name was made only in 1556, that is to say six years after his death. But Pope Pius V, in approving the Order of Charity, by a bull of 1 January 1571, imposed on the religious of this Order the obligation of following the rule of Saint Augustine. He prescribed to them, besides, the form of the habit they were to wear, authorized them to have one religious promoted to sacred orders, in all the hospitals of the Order, to administer the sacraments; permitted them to make collections, and finally subjected all the establishments of the Brothers of Charity to the jurisdiction of the ordinary.

In Spain the religious of Saint John of God are called Brothers Hospitallers; in France, Brothers of Charity; in Italy, *Fate ben, Fratelli* (do good, Brothers), or simply *Ben Fratelli*. At the end of the eighteenth century the Order numbered in Europe and in America 281 hospitals, 2,915 religious and 10,689 beds; in France, where they had been called by Marie de’ Medici, there were 335 religious, charged with serving 3,181 beds, distributed in 36 different houses. At Paris, the Brothers of Charity filled in part the functions of that complicated and costly administration which in our day has been called the *Assistance publique*.

The church of the Charité, at Paris, possessed the radius of Saint John of God’s arm: this relic and others, the pictures and sculptures that decorated the chapel of the Brothers Hospitallers, were destroyed or dispersed during the revolutionary hurricane at the end of the eighteenth century; but the building still exists, and after having undergone various transformations, it is occupied by the Academy of Medicine, which holds its sessions there. Few persons know today why the hospital of the rue des Saints-Pères (corruption of Saint-Pierre) is still called Hôpital de la Charité; it is that before the Revolution it was entrusted to the Brothers of Saint John of God. After 1789 the Hôpital de la Charité lost its name and became Hôpital de l’Unité, a title it kept until 1802; but, from the month of February 1801, it passed under the direction of the Administration of the civil hospitals and hospices of Paris, which had just been organized. What is peculiar is that the supervising agent and the steward appointed to the Hôpital de la Charité by this new administrative system were former religious of the Order of Saint John of God, who had been secularized by the decrees of the Constituent Assembly, and who came to end their careers in the places witness of their first vows.

Since the Revolution, the memory of the admirable devotion of the brothers of Saint John of God seemed effaced in France, when in the month of March 1819 some pious celibates gathered at Marseilles under the banner of the founder: they replaced, as nurses in the wards of the hospital of that city, the male servants. In 1823, some brothers, come from various communities, went to solicit at Rome the canonical re-establishment

of the institute of the religious of Charity: their requests were granted on 20 August, two or three hours before the death of Pius VII. Today the brothers of Charity possess establishments at Lyons, at Lille, at Marseilles, at Dinan, at Paris. In most of these towns they devote themselves particularly to the care of the insane. At Paris, their establishment in the rue Oudinot is a nursing home.

See the life of Saint John of God, written in Spanish by Father Francis Castro, rector of the hospital of his Order at Granada, translated into Italian by Father Francis Bourdaise, one of the first priests of the congregation of the

Oratory, at Rome, and, since, into our language, by François de Harlay de Chanvallon, archbishop of Rouen. De Loyac, doctor of theology, has also composed one: and Father Hilarion de Coste, of the Order of Minims, in his *Catholic History of the Sixteenth Century*, has not failed to praise this great servant of God, who was, indeed, one of the greatest illustrations of that century. Among modern works, we have particularly consulted, in remaking this life, the *Acta Sanctorum*; a *Historical Study on the Order of Saint John of God*, by M. Leguay; the *Celestial Legend*, by Des Essarts.

Saint Felix, Apostle of East Anglia (646)

8 March.

Felix was a holy priest of Burgundy who converted and baptized Sigebert, king of the East Angles, who had been obliged to pass into France to escape the blows his own family was preparing for him. The prince, having afterwards been recalled to mount the throne of his ancestors, engaged Felix to follow him to England, in order to convert the inhabitants of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge, who were still idolaters. God gave so much success to his mission that he converted almost all of them. He was consecrated bishop by Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, and established his see at Dummoc, today Dunwich, in the county of Suffolk. He died in 646 after having governed his church seventeen years, with all the zeal of a good Pastor. He was buried in his episcopal city; but under King Canute his relics were transported to the abbey of Ramsey.

Dunwich was anciently a great town where fifty-two religious houses were counted; but it has been almost entirely swallowed up by the sea. Steeples can still be discovered under the water about a league from the shore.

Saint Humphrey, Bishop and Confessor (871)

8 March.

Humphrey, a Frenchman by nation, first embraced the religious life at the monastery of Prüm, in the Ardennes. Soon the excellence of his virtues calling him to the episcopal dignity, he succeeded Saint Folquin, bishop of the country of the Morini. He was equal to this sublime office; but, compelled by the invasions of the Normans, who were then desolating almost the whole of France, to abandon Thérouanne, the seat of his bishopric, he formed the resolution of renouncing the episcopate for ever. He consulted the sovereign pontiff Nicholas I, to know whether he might pass the remainder of his life in a monastery; but he obtained this answer, that if it is perilous to abandon the ship when it sails on a calm sea, how much more so is it when it is beaten by winds and waves.

The man of God yielded to this counsel; his courage reviving, he returned without hesitation into the midst of his flock, fully resolved not to abandon them again in these critical circumstances. He gathered those whom fear of the barbarians had dispersed, used the evils they had suffered as motives to bring them to piety, and rebuilt the churches that the fury of the Normans had overthrown. In the ninth year of his episcopate, yielding to the wishes of the clergy and the people, and chiefly to the prayers of the monks, he accepted the

government of the abbey of Saint-Bertin; but, two years after, he resigned it without regret by order of the king. — Charles the Bald sent there, with men-at-arms, an abbot of his own choice.

Humphrey attended the council of Aix-la-Chapelle and the synod of Soissons, in the year 862; and he subscribed the letter which this synod addressed to Pope Nicholas I. He had the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated in his diocese with fitting solemnity, a feast which the Morini did not yet observe. Death visited him on 8 March, at the age of eighty-seven. His body was buried in the cathedral church of Thérouanne, which he had raised from its ruins; two hundred and thirty-six years after his death, his relics were solemnly translated by the Blessed John, bishop of Thérouanne, and deposited near the altar of the Mother of God. The town of Thérouanne having been ruined from top to bottom, the same relics were carried, with those of Saint Maximus, to Ypres, where they are religiously preserved.

Proper of Arras.

Saint Stephen, Founder of the Congregation of Obazine (1154)

8 March.

Stephen was born in the Limousin of virtuous parents. His youth was passed in the exercises of continual piety and charity. Having been raised to the priesthood, he thought himself obliged to a more perfect life, renounced even permitted pleasures, clothed himself in simple garments under which he wore a hair-shirt. Having associated himself with another very virtuous ecclesiastic, he resolved to plunge with him into a deep solitude. The day fixed for their departure having arrived, they gave a little meal to their friends, distributed to the poor the goods they still possessed, and withdrew into the forest of Obazine, a frightful desert, two leagues from Tulle, where they gave themselves up to all the rigours of penance. They were often reduced to eating herbs. They built themselves a poor hut where they prayed together. However, as they believed that they needed the approbation of the bishop of the diocese to receive disciples, Peter, Stephen’s friend, went to Limoges, where Bishop Eustace approved their design, permitted them to build a monastery and to celebrate the holy mysteries on condition that they should observe the rules prescribed by the holy Fathers. Stephen had a gentle and polished mind; but he was none the less rigid in making those who came to range themselves under his discipline observe the religious practices. The austerities practised in that house were extreme. All the time of these fervent religious was consecrated to prayer, reading and manual labour; they ate only in the evening. Stephen did not regard himself as superior to the others; he carried water, wood, did the cooking, and generally all that was lowly and painful. Silence was kept with great exactness. Nothing was left to the senses and to nature, the exterior man was wholly annihilated. To let the eyes wander, to smile, to let a word escape at the time of silence was a crime at Obazine. There was, however, no written rule; for Stephen was the living rule, teaching by all his actions charity, poverty and the most entire obedience. His brethren named him superior of the house, although he wished to unload on Peter the direction of his community. To the first monastery for men, Stephen added a second for women. It was an admirable thing to see persons of distinction renounce the delicacy of the earth and submit with joy to so austere a rule. Their number soon rose to a hundred and fifty. They lived in so great a separation from the world and in such simplicity that they appeared to hold to earth only by the bonds which it was not permitted them to break. Stephen, fearing with reason that the regularity he strove to maintain in his monasteries would deteriorate after his death, because he had written no rule, applied to the monastery of Dalon, of the Order of Cîteaux, to ask for some religious of that house and instruct his own in the usages of the Order of Cîteaux. He himself received the habit of that Order in 1142, and the blessing as abbot, which the bishop of Limoges gave him. Thus passed into the Order of Cîteaux the congregation of Obazine with the monasteries of La Valette, Bélaigue, La Garde-Dieu, La Frenade and Gros-Bot. This last, however, was founded only in 1166, after Stephen’s death. Having learned that Pope Eugenius III, who had been a monk of Clairvaux, was at Cîteaux, Stephen went to see him and was received by him with distinction. Abbot Rainard presented him some time

after to the general chapter, where all the abbots of the Order gave him marks of respect and veneration. Stephen died on the second Sunday of Lent, 8 March of the year 1154, and was at once regarded as a Saint. The church of Aubazine, anciently Obazine, still contains in our day the very remarkable tomb of its founder, Saint Stephen.[1]

See the Bollandists, 8 March, and the Miscellanies *of Baluze, t. III.*

The Venerable John of Avila (1569)[2]

8 March.

The venerable John of Avila, whom one may call the father of so great a number of Saints who appeared in Spain in the sixteenth century, was born in the diocese of Toledo. He was sent to Salamanca, at the age of fourteen, to study law there. From his childhood he was seen to apply himself with the greatest fervour to all exercises of piety. He embraced early the ecclesiastical state, for which he had always felt much inclination. His chief aim was to labour with all his strength to kindle in hearts the sacred fire of divine love. His parents, having recalled him home, were not less surprised than edified at the ardour with which he practised all that perfection has of the most heroic, and as they feared God, they took good care not to resist the impressions of the Holy Spirit who was acting in their son's soul. They permitted him to follow his attraction to mortification. John knew how to profit by this permission. He sought, though without affectation, the simplest and coarsest food. He lay on bundles of vine-branches, wore the hair-shirt, and often took the discipline. To the mortifications of the body he joined those of the mind. He died every day to himself by the practice of an absolute renunciation, a profound humility and an entire obedience. He consecrated to prayer all his free moments, and approached frequently the sacraments, and above all that of the Eucharist, for which he had the most tender devotion. His custom was to receive holy communion only after having long prepared for it by acts of the virtues most proper to purify the heart and inflame it with love for Jesus Christ.

Sent to Alcalá to continue his studies, he distinguished himself in the university of that city as much by his piety as by his progress in the sciences. The celebrated Dominic Soto, a Dominican, under whom he took lessons, conceived for him a tender affection and a high esteem; he declared even more than once that his disciple was destined to be one day a great man; which was confirmed by the event. Pedro

Guerrero, afterwards archbishop of Granada, was one of the principal admirers of John of Avila, and he formed with him a friendship which only increased from day to day.

It was about that time that John lost his father and mother: he thought no more of anything but disposing himself to receive holy orders. On the day he celebrated his first Mass, he clothed twelve poor persons, gave them dinner, and served them with his own hands. Having learned that a young priest had just died after his first Mass: "That is enough," he said, "to have a rigorous account to render at the tribunal of Jesus Christ."

Returned to his native land, he sold his patrimony, and distributed the price of it to the poor, in order to imitate the Apostles to whom Jesus Christ had recommended detachment from all things of this world. He then entered the ministry of preaching; proposing unceasingly to himself the example of Saint Paul, whom he had taken for patron and model, he prepared himself for the sublime functions of the apostolate, not only by the study of the dogmas of religion and the rules of Christian morality, but also by the practice of humility, charity and self-denial. His maxim was that science serves only so far as it is joined to solid piety. A young ecclesiastic having one day consulted him on the means of preaching with fruit, he answered that he knew none better than to love Jesus Christ much. His example was a proof of the wisdom and truth of his answer.

The man of God shared all his time between prayer and the functions of the ministry. The most painful labours, the most pressing dangers had only charms for him when it was a question of labouring for the conversion of sinners; it seemed even that obstacles gave his zeal a new degree of strength and activity. His

discourses, to which divine love communicated an admirable unction, touched the most hardened hearts. He would have made it a crime to seek the applause of men rather than the increase of the glory of God. He never went up into the pulpit without having implored divine help, in order to draw heavenly blessings both on himself and on his hearers. One would have said that the Holy Spirit himself spoke by his mouth, so full were his discourses of those darts of fire which convert and change hearts. He drew from vice those who were plunged in it, and confirmed in good those who had not strayed from the ways of justice. The persons who could not hear him were not for that reason deprived of his instructions; he wrote them letters to indicate the means to take to sanctify themselves.

We have a collection of the letters of the venerable John of Avila, which have been translated into several languages: they can be the work only of a man burning with charity and well versed in the knowledge of the ways of salvation. The facility with which they are written announces a man perfectly instructed in the principles of morality, and endowed with the talent of rendering his ideas with method and clarity. One feels that the heart dictated them. Virtue is painted in them with colours so lovable, vice is represented in them in features so hideous, that one cannot help cherishing the one and detesting the other. In short, one finds in them rules of conduct suited to all circumstances, instructions as wise as they are solid for the various states of life, and powerful motives of consolation for all the trials in which the Christian may find himself. John of Avila recited his office and said Mass with an angelic fervour. He went up to the altar only after having long prepared for the celebration of the august sacrifice; he gave also much time to his thanksgiving. Besides that, he still made four hours of meditation a day: two in the morning, and two in the evening. He went to bed at eleven o'clock and rose at three. Toward the end of his life, infirmities having rendered him incapable of exercising the functions of the ministry, he consecrated almost all his time to prayer. He was always poor in his clothes and in his food, and would never have servants. He ceased not to recommend to others the love of poverty. The practice of this virtue, he said, makes several passions die and renders us like Jesus Christ, who was born, who lived and who died in poverty. He carried detachment from the world to such a point that he has had since very few imitators. A lord, having one day shown him his gardens and his buildings, where all the beauties of nature and of art were found united, was greatly astonished to see that John contemplated all this only with indifference; he asked him the reason. "I avow," answered the holy man, "that there is nothing there that satisfies me, because my heart takes no pleasure in it." Indeed, his heart was so perfectly filled with God and with the love of invisible goods that he had a disgust for all that did not relate directly to so noble an end.

This holy priest preached with the greatest success at Seville, at Cordova, at Granada and throughout Andalusia. By his instructions he brought to the most eminent virtue several persons of both sexes, among others Saint John of God, Saint Francis Borgia, Saint Teresa, Louis of Granada, the countess of Faria and the marchioness of Priego. He had a singular talent for the direction of souls. He inculcated first the necessity of knowing God and of knowing oneself, this double knowledge being the basis and foundation of Christian perfection. But if one wishes to know to what point he was versed in the interior life, one has only to read the treatise he composed on these words of psalm xliv: *Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear*, etc. Here is the occasion of this work: "Doña Sancha Carrillo, daughter of Don Luis Fernández de Córdoba, lord of Guadalcázar, who joined great virtues to rare beauty, was about to go to court and attach herself there to the queen as lady of honour. Already everything was ready for her journey, but she wished, before leaving, to confess to John of Avila. On her return from the church, she was no longer recognized, so great was the change that had taken place in her. All the advantages of the world were no more in her eyes than vanities unworthy of fixing a Christian heart; she renounced them, and took the resolution of remaining in her father's house, where she led until her death the most edifying life. It was for her instruction that our holy priest composed the treatise of which we have spoken above. He indicated the means she must employ to conquer her passions, and above all that of pride; to modify her senses and her will, and to kindle in her heart the sacred fire of divine love. He recommended her to meditate often on the passion of Jesus Christ and on the

excess of love which led that divine Saviour to suffer for us.

One sees, by all the writings of John of Avila, that he had a very tender devotion toward Jesus crucified. The same thing is attested by all the authors who speak of him. It was by meditating the passion of the Saviour that he perfected himself in the practice of all the virtues; it was by this means that he kindled in himself that ardent desire to suffer for Jesus Christ; and that is also why he so strongly exhorts men to give thanks to the Lord when he furnishes them the occasion to suffer something for his holy name. “The good use that is made of trials,” he said, “strengthens the soul and renders it capable of suffering still more.” God permitted his servant to become for a time the victim of envy. Although he had never preached anything but the morality of the Gospel, he was nevertheless accused of an excessive rigorism which made him exclude the rich from the kingdom of heaven. The accusation was devoid of all likelihood: he was nevertheless arrested at Seville and put in the prisons of the inquisition. He suffered the ill-treatment of his persecutors with admirable patience and gentleness; and when his innocence had been recognized, he carried heroism so far as to thank those who had wished to ruin him. He was afflicted with various infirmities at the age of fifty. In the midst of the acute pains he felt, he was heard often to repeat this prayer: “Lord, increase my sufferings, but grant me patience.” At last, after having suffered for seventeen years beyond what can be imagined, he died on 10 May 1569.

The venerable John of Avila was a man powerful in works and in words, a prodigy of penance, the glory of the priesthood. He merited by his doctrine, his zeal and his other virtues to be the edification, the support and the oracle of the Church. He was a universal genius, an enlightened director, a famous preacher, a man revered by all Spain, known to the Christian world, a man in short whose reputation had reached such a point that princes submitted to his decisions, and that the learned asked of him the help of his lights. We shall finish his portrait by saying that Saint Teresa regarded him as her protector, consulted him as her master and followed him as her guide and model.

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[1] Arianus, Theotychlus and their three companions were converted by the spectacle of the patience of the holy deacons Philemon and Apollonius. Arianus was governor of Thebes.

[2] The resuscitated church of Africa makes memorial today of these martyrs.

[3] Saint Julian was born at Toledo and was a disciple of Eugenius III, archbishop of that city. If Rioadeneira is to be believed, Saint Julian had for his motto “that honours should be sought by virtue and not by intrigue, he who flees the good always having partisans enough”. Three of the numerous works that Saint Julian had written have come down to us. The first and most important has for title: *The Prognostics — Prognosticon —* that is, the consideration of future things. In it he teaches the usefulness of prayer for the dead, and this consoling doctrine that in heaven our relatives and friends take an interest in us. He maintains that after the resurrection of bodies the difference of the sexes will subsist, etc. [The note is cut by a page break; the continuation, printed at the foot of the following page, has been rejoined.] His second work, or *Treatise on the sixth age of the world*, is directed against the Jews of his time, who claimed to prove that the Messiah would come only in the sixth millennium of the world. The third work of Saint Julian is the *History of King Wamba’s war against Duke Paul*. These works, and others attributed to him, are found in vol. xcvi of Migne’s *Patrologia Latina*.

[4] See 4 September.

[5] The life of the venerable H. Mofalt, who died curé of the cathedral of Arras in 1859, contains a very pretty saying on this virtue. “He gave alms cheerfully,” says M. Canon Van Drival, his biographer, “following the counsel of the holy books. Look, he said one day to a priest, a friend of his, on seeing an old woman who was on the watch and awaiting him, do you see there? there is an alms in flower.” [The note is printed at the foot of the following page and rejoined.]

[6] This is what a head shepherd is called in Spain.

[7] See the notice of the venerable John of Avila, below, p. 292.

[8] On Our Lady of Guadalupe see the life of Saint Leander on 27 February.

[9] A picture which today adorns the private chapel of the religious of the hospital of Charity at Paris represents this vision of Saint John of God.

[10] The Church considers this fact miraculous, and she records it in the office of Saint John of God, where it is said, in lesson 5: *In schola charitatis eruditus, segnior in eum fuisse ignem qui foris saeviret, quam qui intus accenderat.* (Being instructed in the school of charity, the exterior fire that burned him was found to be less lively with regard to him than the interior fire that inflamed him.)

[11] John of God had first established his hospital in a house in the Fish-Market square; then he moved it, not far from there, to another more spacious place, which again became too narrow, and in 1546 or 1547 he acquired an old convent of nuns, situated at the foot of the Calle Gomelez. But, a few years after John's death, the great number of the poor made indispensable the construction of the magnificent hospital which still exists today, at the entrance of Granada, on the Antequera road.

[12] Prince Philip, who succeeded Charles V, and was king of Spain under the name of Philip II; Princess Mary, who became empress of Germany by marrying Maximilian II, and Princess Joan, who was married to the crown prince of Portugal.

[13] Information transmitted by M. Ferdinand de Lasteyrie, of Brive. — Paris, 14 March 1872.

[14] 10 May 1569: we give here the notice of Saint John of Avila because of the great influence he exerted on the destiny of Saint John of God.

9 March

Martyrologies

Ninth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, Saint Frances, widow, famous for the nobility of her race, the holiness of her life and the gift of miracles which she possessed. 1440. — At Sebaste, in Armenia, the birth into heaven of forty blessed Cappadocian soldiers, who, in the time of the emperor Licinius, under the governor Agricolaus, after having endured the most frightful chains and prisons, after having had their faces bruised with blows of stones, were condemned, in the coldest of winter, to pass the night exposed quite naked to the air on a frozen pond, where their bodies, hardened by the frost, split everywhere, and who at last consummated their martyrdom by the torture of the breaking of the legs. Among them the most considerable were Cyrion and Candidus; Saint Basil and other Fathers have celebrated the glory of all these martyrs in their writings; their feast is solemnized the following day. 320. — At Nyssa, the decease of Saint Gregory, bishop, brother of the blessed Basil the Great, very famous for his holiness and his great learning, who was driven from his city, under the emperor Valens, an Arian prince, for the defence of the Catholic faith. 396. — At Barcelona, in Spain, Saint Pacian, bishop, renowned for the holiness and the power of his word, who, under the emperor Theodosius, ended his days, arrived at the most extreme old age. 390. — In Moravia, the holy bishops Cyril and Methodius, who brought many nations of those countries with their kings to the faith of Jesus Christ. Ninth century. — At Bologna, Saint Catherine, virgin, of the Order of Saint Clare, illustrious for the holiness of her life, whose body is revered with great honour in the same city. 1463.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

In the diocese of Nevers, dedication of Our Lady of La Charité-sur-Loire.[1] — At Clermont, in Auvergne, Saint Alexandrinus, confessor. — At Toul, Saint Waldrick, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Èvre. — At Limeuil, in Périgord, the birth into heaven of Saint Alvère, virgin. — In Brittany, Saint Felix, restorer of the celebrated abbey of Rhuys, born in the bishopric of Quimper, toward the end of the tenth century. 1038.[2] — At Marseilles, commemoration of the resurrection of Saint Lazarus, first bishop of that city, and of the translation of his relics, which, brought from Autun to Marseilles, were enclosed there by the bishop of Marseilles in a silver shrine and solemnly placed in the cathedral church, on 9 March of the year 1131. The same day is celebrated the memory of another translation, of a notable relic of Saint Lazarus, made solemnly by Charles-Fortunatus de Mazenod, on 2 April 1824.[3]

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Nyssa, the decease of Saint Gregory, bishop.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — At Rome, Saint Frances, widow.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Bologna, Saint Catherine, virgin.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At York, in England, the blessed Bosa, bishop. A.D. 686. — In Ireland, Saint Mella, widow and abbess. Eighth century. — In Sicily and in Lucania, Saint Vitalis, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil. He lived first in a hermitage, where he was visited by Saint Luke, solitary, and afterwards founded the monastery of Rapallo. A.D. 994. — In England, Saint Botulph or Botolf, abbot, brother of Saint Adulph, bishop of Maastricht. Having had the happiness of being enlightened by the lights of the faith, at a time when his country was still in great part idolatrous, he passed into Belgium with his brother. He returned afterwards to his native land to share with it the treasures of learning and holiness he had amassed. King Ethelmund gave him the desert of Ikanho to found a monastery there. This monastery was destroyed by the Danes in the ninth century. There are few saints in England who have been honoured with more devotion. 655.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

331–396. — Popes: Saint Sylvester I; Saint Siricius. — Emperors: Constantine; Arcadius.

This illustrious Doctor of the Church was born in Cappadocia, about the year 331, in a family of Saints. Saint Macrina and Saint Basil, his elders, contributed to his education as much as his parents. As soon as age permitted, he studied the humane letters. Theodoret says also expressly that he led for some time the monastic life;[1] but he did not bind himself to it. He even chained himself to the world by the bonds of marriage. He regretted this later, in his *Treatise on Virginity*; he groans at being unable to profit himself by what he says of this virtue, and he deplores the loss of a good which he knew too late. He married, nevertheless, a woman of much merit, who became the companion of his virtue. Living together in a manner conformable to the Gospel, they departed little from the perfection of those of their family who served God in celibacy. After a certain time, which history does not specify, Gregory embraced the ecclesiastical state and filled the office of reader. But, seduced either by ambition or by the charms of profane letters, he ceased to read the sacred books to the faithful, to teach rhetoric to young men. This was a scandal among Christians; one saw in this conduct a sort of desertion of the ecclesiastical career and a great danger for him who launched into it. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, his friend, addressed to him, in a letter on this subject, remonstrances equally full of vehemence and charity. One is led to believe that these reproaches touched our Saint. It is certain, in any case, that he was not long a rhetorician, and that, having re-entered the ecclesiastical state, he was raised to the priesthood. It was some years after, according to certain authors, that he lost his wife, of whom Saint Gregory of Nazianzus made so fine an eulogy; he says “that she was the ornament of the Church; he calls her a sacred person, true spouse of a priest, equal in honour and dignity to her husband, and worthy of great mysteries.” These words have made several believe that, having voluntarily separated from her husband when he entered the priesthood, she had been honoured with the office of deaconess.[2]

Saint Basil, surnamed the Great, brother of our Saint, raised in 370 to the see of Caesarea, metropolis of Cappadocia, thought of employing in the public service of the Church the great talents of Gregory. The see of Nyssa, a town of Cappadocia, thirty leagues from Caesarea, on the side of Galatia, having fallen vacant, six or seven months after, he had it filled by his brother. In making this election known to Eusebius of Samosata, he said to him: “I should have wished my brother Gregory to have to govern a Church proportioned to his merit and capacity; that is to say the whole Church that is under the sun. But as that cannot be done, we must be content that Gregory honour the place where he shall be bishop. True greatness consists not only in being capable of great things, but in being able to make little things appear great.” Our Saint did not share these sentiments on his merits, he believed himself far below the dignity and charge of the episcopate; the bishops of the province had to do him violence to oblige him to receive the imposition of hands. Their choice was

soon justified by the conduct of this holy prelate. He practised poverty on himself to enrich the poor; he consecrated his patrimony to them. Zealous, charitable, prudent, his profound learning did not hinder him from putting himself within the reach of all. We shall speak farther on of the writings he made to regulate the morals and discipline of the Church; he watched over the observance of the canons with still more vigour than his brother. He combated error no less keenly than vice, and no human consideration ever checked his episcopal ardour. As doctor, he served the universal Church with his pen; as bishop, he laboured with all his strength, by example and by preaching, for the good of the Church of Nyssa; it was a title to the hatred of the Arians. These heretics calumniated him to Demosthenes, vicar of Pontus, a great enemy of the Catholics, like his master the emperor Valens. Demosthenes sent soldiers to arrest the holy bishop. The latter at first let himself be taken without resistance; but when he saw that they would grant him no relief, in spite of the bad state of his health and the rigour of the season, he escaped from the soldiers' hands. In vain Basil, in a respectful letter, tried to soften Demosthenes, setting before him, on behalf of all the bishops of Cappadocia, the innocence of his brother.

The council that was charged to judge him at Nyssa was composed solely of Arians. What caused our Saint the most grief was less the persecution he suffered than the progress of heresy, and the sad lot of his flock, governed by an intruder without faith, without morals and without capacity. He wrote of it to Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, who answered him to put his confidence in God and to hope that error would not long triumph over truth. This prediction was realized in 378, at the death of the emperor Valens. Gratian, his successor, recalled the exiled bishops and gave them back their churches. Saint Gregory of Nyssa's exile was not lost to the Church; it was even the finest moment of his life, for the churches of the places where it was known he was to pass called him to pacify and regulate them. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus says that this continual change of place made him like the sun, which, without ever stopping in any place, carries everywhere heat, light and fecundity. Our Saint then mounted again on his see; but, scarcely had he tasted the joy of seeing his people again, when he was called to Caesarea by the death of his brother Saint Basil, whom he had always regarded as his guide, his oracle. The thoughts of religion alone could give him strength enough to bear the loss of a person so dear, at the moment when the peace restored to the Church was going to allow them to correspond and see each other more freely (379). The same year he had to betake himself to Antioch, where the patriarch Saint Meletius held a council. Saint Gregory of Nyssa received there the commission to visit Arabia and Palestine, to reform the churches there. But he made these journeys only the year after, that is to say in 380. On leaving the council he returned to Nyssa, then set out to visit his sister Saint Macrina, whom he had not seen for eight years. He needed to console himself with her for the death of Saint Basil, but he found a new subject of grief; when he was near the monastery of which Saint Macrina was superior, he learned that she was ill. The monks who lived in the same place, under the direction of Saint Peter, her brother, came to meet him, according to their custom; the virgins awaited him in the church. After the prayer, they bowed their heads to receive his blessing and withdrew modestly, without a single one remaining. He saw by this, for they were veiled, that his sister was not there. He went to see her in her room, where he found her lying on the ground, on a plank; she was turned toward the East to be able to pray. The conversation soon fell on Saint Basil: "My mind," said Saint Gregory, "was quite troubled by it, my face cast down, and I could not restrain my tears. But she, far from letting herself be cast down like me, took advantage of it to say things so marvellous on divine Providence and on the future life that I was quite transported out of myself." These thoughts served our Saint afterwards to compose a *Treatise on the Soul and the Resurrection*. In these sweet outpourings of sister and brother, in which each related what had happened, Gregory spoke to her of the disgraces he had undergone under the emperor Valens, his exile, his privations. "What! my brother," said Saint Macrina to him, "do you take that for disgraces? it would be ungrateful not to regard them as great favours from heaven." The bishop of Nyssa, delighted with this heavenly conversation, would have wished it to last longer; but they heard the singing of the psalms, for the prayer of the lamps, that is to say Vespers; his sister sent him to church and prayed on her own side; the next morning, he found her

exhausted by fever, and saw plainly that she would not pass the day: but she, overcoming the violence of her illness and the difficulty of breathing, strove to dispel by her conversation the sadness that appeared on her brother's face. Toward evening, feeling herself dying, she ceased to speak to him and began to pray, but in so low a voice that she could hardly be heard. Yet she joined her hands, and made the sign of the cross on her eyes, on her mouth and on her heart. When light had been brought, it was recognized, by the movements of her lips and eyes, that she was acquitting herself, as far as she could, of the evening prayer, the end of which she marked by making the sign of the cross on her face; and, heaving a deep sigh, she ended her life with her prayer. Saint Gregory, whom she had asked to close her eyes and mouth, found her eyelids gently lowered, as if she had been asleep, her mouth and hands on her breast, in short her whole body so well composed that there was no need to touch it to lay it out. Saint Gregory begged two of the principal nuns, an illustrious widow named Vestiana, and a deaconess named Lampadia, who, under the deceased, led the community, to help him to render funeral honours to his sister. He asked them whether they had not in reserve some precious garments to adorn the body of his sister, according to custom. Lampadia answered, weeping: "You see all she had. There is her mantle, her veil and her shoes quite worn out." Saint Gregory was therefore reduced to adorning her with one of his own mantles; for the garments of men and women consisted of large draperies, many of which could be used indifferently. Vestiana, in adorning the head of the deceased, said to Saint Gregory: "Here is what her necklace was." In saying this, she unfastened it behind, and showed him a cross and a ring, both of iron, which the Saint always wore on her heart. "You may keep the cross," said Saint Gregory, "I shall content myself with the ring, for I see a cross engraved on it too." — "You have not chosen ill," answered Vestiana, "the ring is hollow at that place and contains wood of the true cross." Vestiana made him remark, below Macrina's neck, a black mark as big as the prick of a needle, and said to him: "It is a monument of God's piety and protection toward her. Having one day a sort of cancer at that place, she would never suffer the surgeons to lay a hand on it; her modesty made her regard this remedy as something worse than the evil. As her mother wished to oblige her to suffer the operation, the Saint passed a night in the church in prayer and tears. The next day, her mother returned to the charge; Macrina then begged her only to make the sign of the cross on her breast. The mother did so, and the cancer was found entirely healed; there remained only the little black mark that you see."

They passed the night singing psalms, as on the feasts of martyrs; and, day having come, as a very great multitude of people had run together, Saint Gregory arranged them in two choirs, the women with the virgins, the men with the monks. The bishop of the place, named Araxius, was there also with all his clergy. Saint Gregory and he took the bier on which the body lay by the front, two of the first of the clergy took it behind, and they bore it thus slowly, stopped by the crowd of people who walked in front and pressed all round. Two rows of deacons and other ministers walked before the body, carrying wax torches, and psalms were sung with one voice from one end of the procession to the other. Although there were only seven or eight stadia to the place of burial, that is about a thousand paces, they were almost the whole day in doing it. It was the church of the forty martyrs, where the father and mother of Saint Macrina were buried. Having arrived there, the accustomed prayers were made; and, before opening the sepulchre, Saint Gregory took care to cover with a white cloth the bodies of his father and mother, so as not to fail in respect by exposing them to view disfigured by death. Then he and Araxius took the body of Saint Macrina from the bier, and laid it, as she had always desired, beside Saint Emmelia, her mother, making a common prayer for both. All being finished, Saint Gregory prostrated himself on the tomb, and kissed its dust. It is thus that he himself describes the funeral of Saint Macrina, his sister, in the letter to the monk Olympius which contains the life of this Saint.

Saint Gregory, after having rendered his sister the last duties, returned to Nyssa, toward the end of the year 379. He remained there until the fine season permitted him to visit Arabia and Palestine. The emperor gave him for this journey the use of the public conveyances: a carriage was placed at his disposal, and served him, and those who accompanied him, as church and monastery. They sang psalms in it on the road and observed

the fasts. He visited then Arabia, then Bethlehem, Calvary, the Mount of Olives and the Holy Sepulchre, to satisfy his devotion; but he found so much disorder and corruption among the inhabitants of that country that he considered this pilgrimage dangerous, especially for women and religious, whose virtue was there much exposed. He explained himself on it afterward in a discourse in the form of a letter; not that he absolutely condemns pilgrimages, since he made one himself; but he points out their perils. The affairs of the Church were in no better state than the morals of the inhabitants, in spite of the zeal of Saint Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem. Saint Gregory was no more fortunate in reforming that Church; he was obliged to return, having done nothing else than increase his merits by noble intentions and courageous efforts. He found himself the following year (381) at the celebrated council of Constantinople, which, composed only of Eastern bishops, became ecumenical, because the whole Church adopted its decrees. It is one of the four councils that Pope Saint Gregory respected like the four gospels; he made there the acquaintance of Saint Jerome, and showed him, and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, a book he had written against the heretic Eunomius. He pronounced there the funeral oration of Saint Meletius of Antioch, president of the assembly; moreover, he was one of the prelates who were established in the East as the centre of Catholic communion; so that, if anyone refused to communicate with him, he would not have been considered as belonging to the true Church. He attended again the following year (382) another council of Constantinople, where he delivered a fine discourse on the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Three years later (385) he was obliged to return to the imperial city and make a long sojourn there: he pronounced there two funeral orations: one of the young princess Pulcheria, daughter of the emperor Theodosius; the other of the empress, first wife of Theodosius and mother of Pulcheria. This last is “excellent and accomplished,” says Father Giry; “it contains the virtues proper to queens and princesses; it may be read by ladies, who will find in it a model of Christian perfection quite suited to persons of their condition.” Returned to Nyssa, our Saint saw his repose often troubled there by Helladius, bishop of Caesarea, successor of Saint Basil, his brother, a restless man of very mediocre merit, who applied himself only to persecuting, to wearying without reason the relatives and friends of his holy predecessor. Saint Gregory, in spite of his patience and humility, was obliged to entrust to Saint Flavian, patriarch of Antioch, the care of defending him from these unjust attacks. In the year 394, Saint Gregory attended yet another council of Constantinople, for the dedication of the church of Rufinus; he was placed among the metropolitans, a great distinction granted to his person and merit, for his episcopal see was of little consideration. He ended his glorious career between the year 394 and the year 404: the exact year is not known.

NOTICE ON THE WRITINGS OF SAINT GREGORY OF NYSSA.

1° The *Hexaemeron*, or book on the work of the six days. It is a supplement to the homilies of Saint Basil on the same subject. The latter had omitted all the questions that were above the reach of the people. Saint Gregory undertook to explain them, at the prayer of several persons recommendable for their learning and virtue, and he did so with an exactness worthy of a brother of the great Basil. He shows in this work that he had a perfect knowledge of ancient philosophy.

2° The *Treatise on the Formation of Man* may be regarded as a continuation of the preceding work, although it was composed first, that is, about the year 379. It is very curious and full of erudition; one finds in it very fine things on the excellence and dignity of man, on his likeness to God, on the spirituality of his soul, on the resurrection of bodies, etc.

3° The book of the *Life of Moses, or of the perfect life*, is addressed to a certain Caesarius, who had begged the Saint to teach him in what the perfect life consists, that he might strive to attain it. Saint Gregory traced for him an accomplished model of all the virtues in the person of Moses.

4° The two *Treatises on the Titles of the Psalms*, and the *Homily on the Sixth Psalm*. Saint Gregory gives in these two treatises a general idea of the psalms, of which he shows the marvellous usefulness for the sanctification of the faithful. He says that in his time Christians of every age, every sex, every condition had

these divine canticles unceasingly in their mouths. 5° The eight *Homilies on the first three chapters of Ecclesiastes*. They contain admirable instructions on virtues and vices, and on the effects that follow from them. 6° The fifteen *Homilies on the Canticle of Canticles*, which were all preached, are addressed to a virtuous lady of Constantinople named Olympias, who, having become a widow after about twenty months of marriage, distributed her goods to the poor and to the churches. The holy doctor says there that the book of the Canticle of Canticles ought to be read only by those who have a pure heart disengaged from love of creatures.

7° The five *Homilies on the Lord's Prayer*, which were also preached, contain very useful instructions on the necessity and efficacy of prayer. 8° The eight *Homilies on the eight beatitudes* are of the same style as the preceding. One finds in them solid instructions on humility, gentleness, poverty of spirit, etc. 9° The *Treatises on the Subjection of the Son*, and on the *Pythoness*, and the *Discourse on the ordination of Saint Gregory*. It is not certain that the first work is by our holy doctor. The error of the Origenists on the cessation of the pains of the damned seems to be taught in it. Those who attribute this treatise to Saint Gregory say that the error found in it was added afterwards by some Origenist. The treatise on the Pythoness is in the form of a letter, and addressed to a bishop named Theodosius. Saint Gregory there discusses the question of the evocation of Samuel's soul, and thinks that it was the devil who, under the figure of Samuel, spoke to Saul. The discourse on ordination, which should rather be called the discourse on the dedication, was pronounced in 394, on the occasion of the dedication of a magnificent church that Rufinus, praetorian prefect, had built at the borough of the Oak, near Chalcedon.

10° The *Antirrheticus*, or treatise against Apollinaris. There was only a fragment of it in the editions of the works of Saint Gregory; but Lawrence Zacagni, librarian of the Vatican, gave it entire in 1698, from a manuscript of more than seven hundred years. Leontius of Byzantium, Euthymius and Saint John Damascene cite several passages of it under the name of Saint Gregory, and the sixth general council attributes it to him. One cannot therefore doubt that this Father is its author. It was composed about the year 377. The holy doctor proves there, against Apollinaris, that the divinity is impassible, that Jesus Christ has a soul, that he unites in his person the divine nature and the human nature, etc.

11° The *Discourse on the Love of Poverty*, which is a pathetic exhortation to almsgiving. The *Book against Fate*, in which it is proved that everything happens by the order of Providence. It was composed about the year 381, and is written in the form of a dialogue. The *Treatise on Common Notions*, which is a philosophical exposition of the terms the ancients had used to explain the mystery of the Trinity.

12° The *Canonical Epistle to Letoius*, bishop of Melitene, metropolis of Armenia. It forms part of the penitential canons published by Beveridge. Saint Gregory prescribes there penances for the most enormous sins. Dom Ceillier has shown, vol. VIII, pp. 265 and 266, the little solidity of the reasons which have determined some Protestants to strike this epistle from the catalogue of the works of Saint Gregory of Nyssa.

13° *Discourse against those who put off their baptism.* Sinners are exhorted in it to penance, and catechumens to receive baptism, by very strong reasons drawn chiefly from the uncertainty of the hour of death, and from the various accidents which may at every instant precipitate us into the tomb.

14° The *Discourses against fornication and usury, on penance and almsgiving*, offer a very fine exposition of Christian morality on these various points. The *Discourse against usury* deserves particular attention, by the strong and interesting manner in which things are treated in it.

15° *Discourse on Pentecost. Testimony against the Jews.* The first work was had only in Latin; but Zacagni published it in Greek from three manuscripts of the library of the Vatican. Saint Gregory proposes to himself, in the second work, to prove the mystery of the Trinity against the Jews by the very words of Scripture. It also was had only in Latin before Zacagni published the Greek text. This scholar, not having found in the manuscripts the last three chapters of the old Latin editions, concluded rightly that they were supposititious,

and in place of these three chapters he gave four others which form a sequel and render the work complete.

16° The twelve *Books against Eunomius.* Saint Gregory there avenges the memory of Saint Basil, his brother, attacked by Eunomius, and proves, against this heresiarch, the divinity and consubstantiality of the Word. He says there that independently of Holy Scripture, which he employs with marvellous sagacity, tradition alone would suffice to confound heretics. 17° The *Treatise to Ablabius*, and the *Treatise on Faith.* It is a defence of various points of Catholic doctrine against the Arians.

18° The *Great Catechesis*, divided into forty chapters, is cited by Theodoret, Leontius of Byzantium, Euthymius, Saint Germanus of Constantinople: the last twenty lines were added afterwards. In this work, Saint Gregory of Nyssa teaches catechists how they ought to prove, by reasoning, the mystery of the faith.

19° The *Book of Virginity* is divided into twenty-four chapters, not counting the prologue. The holy doctor shows in it the excellence of virginity, and the advantages it has over the state of marriage.

20° The ten *Syllogisms against the Manichaeans*, and the *Book of the Soul and of the Resurrection.* It is proved, in the first work, that evil is not an incorruptible and uncreated nature, any more than the devil, who is its father and author. The second is a dialogue or narrative of a conversation that Saint Gregory had with his sister on the eve of her death, on that of Saint Basil. It was composed about the year 380.

21° The *Letter to Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, against the Apollinarists.* It is cited in the fifth general council and in the *Panoply* of Euthymius. 22° Three *Treatises on Christian perfection.* Saint Gregory examines in the first what the name and profession of Christian oblige to; he traces, in the second, rules for arriving at perfection; in the third, entitled *The Aim of the Christian*, he develops and sets in all their light the holiest maxims of the Gospel.

23° The *Discourse against those who will not be reproved*, and the *Treatise on infants who die prematurely.* Several interesting questions are treated in the second work. 24° The *Discourse on the Nativity of Jesus Christ*, and the two *Panegyrics of Saint Stephen.* Dom Ceillier proves, vol. VIII, p. 845, that the discourse cannot be contested to Saint Gregory. It speaks not only of the birth of Jesus Christ, but also of the murder of the innocents. Only the first panegyric was found in the ancient editions; we are indebted to Zacagni for the publication of the second.

25° *Discourses on the baptism, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ.* The first, which is entitled in some editions *On the day of lights*, was pronounced at the feast of the Epiphany, a day on which catechumens were baptized in the churches of Cappadocia. Of the five discourses on the resurrection, only the first, third and fourth appear to be by Saint Gregory.

26° *Discourse on the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* One finds in it the refutation of the errors of the Arians and the Eunomians.

27° The *Panegyrics of Saint Basil and of the Forty Martyrs*, the *Funeral Orations of Pulcheria and of Flacilla*; the *Lives of Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus, of Saint Theodore, of Saint Meletius, of Saint Ephrem and of Saint Macrina.*

28° The *Discourse on Death* was much ill-treated by heretics. Saint Gregory's aim was to furnish motives of consolation to Christians who afflicted themselves excessively over the death of their relatives.

29° Several letters. In that which is entitled *On the Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, the saint rises against several abuses committed by some Christians under pretext of visiting the holy places; but he does not condemn pilgrimages in themselves, as several Protestants have pretended. Besides the letters of which we have just spoken, Zacagni has given fourteen others, from a manuscript of the Vatican. John Baptist Caracciolo, professor of philosophy at the college of Pisa, also had seven printed, which had never been published, at Florence, 1731, folio. He had drawn them from a manuscript in the library of the grand duke of Tuscany.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa may be compared to the most famous orators of antiquity, for purity, ease, sweetness, force, fecundity and magnificence of style; but he surpasses himself in some sort in his polemical works. He shows in them a singular penetration of mind, and a marvellous sagacity in unmasking and confounding the sophisms of error. Of all the Fathers he is the one who has best refuted Eunomius. Saint Gregory has only been reproached with having given too much to allegory, and with having sometimes explained, in a figurative sense, texts of Scripture which it would have been more natural to take literally. The best edition of the works of Saint Gregory of Nyssa is that which Fronto Ducaeus gave in Greek and Latin at Paris, in 1615, 2 vols. folio; but there must be joined to it the third volume, also folio, which the same Fronto Ducaeus gave in 1618 by way of appendix. This edition with the supplement is preferred to that which appeared at Paris in 1638, 1 vol. folio. A very correct Greek-Latin edition will be found in the *Patrology* of M. Migne. The ancients have bestowed great eulogies on our Saint: they call him worthy brother of Saint Basil, on account of his faith, his good life, his virtue and his wisdom (Vincent of Lérins, *Commonit.*, ch. xiii); they have called him the law and the rule of all virtues (Nazianzen, *Orat.* 6, p. 138); they have said that these two brothers were an accomplished model of the moderation to be kept in prosperity and of the strength with which adversity must be borne (the same, *epist.* 37, p. 799). In the second council of Nicaea, he is given the title of Father of Fathers (*Concil.*, t. vii, p. 477). We have had to remake the history of this life, incomplete in Father Giry's collection.

Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius, Brothers and Apostles of the Slavs

Ninth century.

They shall be patient, that they may announce. (*Bene patienter erunt ut annuntient.*) — To teach others and sanctify them, one must be patient. St Greg., *Mor.* xx.

Constantine, who was later to go and bury his glory in a monastery at Rome and to substitute for his first name that of Cyril, was born at Thessalonica, of a senatorial family. His parents having sent him to Constantinople to study letters, he made such rapid progress in this study that he was given the surname of Philosopher: but he was still more distinguished by his virtue than by the variety and extent of his knowledge. The important services he rendered the Church, when he had been raised to the priesthood, made the highest idea be conceived of him. Here is an occasion on which he gave the least equivocal proof of the purity of his zeal. Photius decried Saint Ignatius, who had been placed on the patriarchal see of Constantinople in 846, and taught that there were two souls in each man. Cyril did not fear to reproach him with so scandalous an error; and as the other answered that he had not had the intention of offending anyone, and had only wished to test the patriarch's capacity and dialectic: "What," replied the Saint, "you have hurled your darts into the crowd, and you pretend that no one has been wounded! In vain do you avail yourself of the lights your wisdom gives you; they are obscured by the vapours that rise from that fund of avarice and jealousy that is in your heart. Your passion against Ignatius blinds you and plunges you in thick darkness."[1]

It was about this time that the Khazars resolved to embrace the Christian religion. These Khazars were a tribe of Turks, the most numerous and powerful people among the Huns who inhabited European Scythia.[2] They had settled in a country neighbouring Germany, and which extends along the Danube.[3] Having formed the project of submitting to the Gospel, they sent a solemn embassy to the emperor of Constantinople, Michael III, and to the pious empress Theodora, his mother, to ask for priests who would be willing to charge themselves with the care of instructing them. Theodora sent for Saint Ignatius to confer with him. The patriarch, after having examined everything, concluded by proposing to put Cyril at the head of this important mission, which was definitively decided (848). As the Khazars spoke the Turkish language, like the Huns and the Tartars, our Saint went to study it at Cherson, in the Tauric Chersonese (Crimea), where he had the happiness of discovering the relics of Saint Clement I, pope.[4] He learned it in a short time, because zeal for the salvation of souls animated him to devour all the difficulties which ordinarily accompany such a

labour. He was no sooner in a state to make himself understood than he began to preach the Gospel. All eyes opened to the light which struck them. The Khan or prince received baptism, and his example was soon followed by the whole nation. Cyril founded churches, which he provided with excellent ministers, and returned to Constantinople. The prince and the people wished to make him rich presents; but it was not possible to determine him to accept anything. Such disinterestedness made a happy impression on the minds of these new Christians: he had contented himself with asking the release of all the foreign slaves, which was granted him.

Cyril was next charged to go on a mission to Bulgaria. There was associated with him in this good work his brother Methodius, who was a monk of eminent holiness; but things must be taken from a little higher up. The Bulgarians, a Scythian people, had a common origin with the Slavs. It appears that they first settled in the neighbourhood of the Volga, and that they were driven from it with the Avars by the Turks. They seized the ancient Moesia and Dacia, that is to say Wallachia, Moldavia and a part of Hungary.[5] The Greeks whom they made prisoners under the reign of the emperor Basil, surnamed the Macedonian, threw among them some seeds of Christianity; but they were converted only a long time after. Here is how the thing happened: Bogoris, king of the Bulgarians, had a sister who had become a Christian at Constantinople, whither she had been taken captive. It was the empress Theodora who procured her the happiness of knowing the truth. The princess, having afterwards returned to her brother, continued to follow with fervour the maxims of the religion in which she had been instructed; she even tried to inspire Bogoris with the sentiments with which she was penetrated. Unfortunately human motives prevented this prince from yielding to his sister's solicitations. At last, however, the moment of mercies came. The king of the Bulgarians having asked of the emperor of Constantinople a skilful painter, the latter sent him the holy monk Methodius, who excelled in this art. (There were found then several monks who succeeded perfectly in devotional pictures.) Scarcely had Methodius reached his destination when Bogoris asked him for some pieces capable of contributing to the decoration of the palace he had just had built; he recommended him, among other things, to imagine a subject whose representation might freeze the spectators with terror. The Saint resolved to turn the king's dispositions to profit: he undertook to paint the Last Judgment. One saw Jesus Christ surrounded by angels, to right and left, seated on a throne resplendent with glory, and clothed with the formidable array of an angry judge. All men, without any distinction of rank, were assembled before his tribunal, where they awaited, trembling, the sentence which was to decide their eternal lot. There was besides, in the different parts of the picture, a force, an energy, a vivacity and a warmth of expression which added still to the terrible character of the subject. The work finished, it was shown to the king, who was singularly moved by it; but his emotion grew much greater when the painter came to explain each of the parts whose whole composed his picture. He could not hold out, and, corresponding from then on to the grace which spoke to him by a sensible object, he asked to be instructed in the mysteries of the Christian religion. Methodius laboured without delay to clear up his doubts, and to give him all the lights he could need. The prince had no sooner known the doctrine of the Gospel than he received the sacrament of regeneration, and took the name of Michael.[6]

But, although he had been baptized by night, the great men of his court, having had knowledge of it, stirred up all the people against him and came to besiege him in his castle. He did not fail to sally out against them, bearing the cross in his bosom and accompanied only by forty-eight men who had remained faithful to him. These, though so few in number, so astonished the rebels that they could not sustain the shock, and their defeat appeared a miracle. The king put to death fifty-two of the most seditious great men, and pardoned the multitude. Then he exhorted them all to become Christians and persuaded a great number; then he asked the emperor for uncultivated lands on his frontier to extend his people, too cramped in their country, and the emperor granted him a district which they named Zagora.

This conversion of the Bulgarians happened in the year 865, and the following year their king, Michael, sent ambassadors to King Louis of Germany, with whom he had peace and alliance, asking him for a bishop and

priests. Those who came on his behalf said that when he went out of his castle against the rebels, there were seen marching before him seven clerics, each of whom carried a lighted candle, that the rebels thought they saw a great burning house fall on them, and that the horses of those who accompanied Michael walked on their hind feet and struck the rebels with their forefeet; that they were so frightened that, without thinking of flight or defence, they remained stretched on the ground.

King Louis had asked for them of his brother Charles the Bald sacred vessels, priestly vestments, and books for the clerics he was to send there, and King Charles drew for this purpose a great sum from the bishops of his kingdom. Louis sent the following year into Bulgaria Bishop Ermanric, with priests and deacons; but, when they arrived, they found that the bishops sent by the Pope had already preached and baptized throughout the country; that is why they took leave of the king of the Bulgarians and returned home. Indeed, this king had sent at the same time to Rome his own son with several lords, bearing offerings to Saint Peter, among others the arms which King Michael had when he vanquished the rebels. They were charged to consult the Pope on a host of religious questions and to ask him for bishops and priests. They arrived at Rome in the month of August 866, and the emperor Louis, having learned it, asked the Pope for the arms and other presents which the king of the Bulgarians had made to Saint Peter, which, doubtless, was not very liberal. The Pope sent him a part. Pope Nicholas had an extreme joy at the arrival of the Bulgarians, not only for their conversion in itself, but also because they had come from afar to seek the instructions of the Holy See. He named, to go and instruct them, Paul, bishop of Populonia (Piombino), in Tuscany, and Formosus, bishop of Porto, prelates of great virtue, and charged them with his answer to their consultations, as well as with several copies of Holy Scripture and other books he judged necessary.

As these legates were bishops, they gave the sacrament of confirmation to the Bulgarians baptized by the Greek priests; they also prescribed to them to fast every Saturday, which was loudly disapproved by Photius, schismatic patriarch of Constantinople. Some of the new converts, having been baptized in urgent cases by the hand of laymen, and even of infidels, applied to the Pope to know what they ought to hold on this subject. Nicholas answered that their baptism was valid, and that it must not be repeated. He resolved also other difficulties that had been proposed to him.[7] The letter of Pope Nicholas I to the Bulgarians is one of the fine monuments of the civilizing influence of Catholicism. After the conversion of the Bulgarians, which had been the principal fruit of the zeal of Cyril and Methodius, these two apostolic men set out to go and preach the Gospel in Moravia.[8] They had been drawn to that country by the pious king Rastislav, who received baptism from their hands, as well as the greater part of his subjects. The Moravians had the less trouble in leaving their superstitions in that they thought rather favourably of Christianity, especially since the conversion of the Bavarians by Saint Rupert, bishop of Worms, and founder of the archiepiscopal see of Salzburg.

Our two saints had an advantage over the Latin missionaries: that they knew the language of the country. Cyril invented a particular Slavonic alphabet, translated the Bible and other writings, from Greek and Latin into the Slavic tongue, for the use of the Moravians. This alphabet has been preserved to our day in Bulgaria, in Serbia, in Bosnia, in Moldavia and in Wallachia[9] (867). About the year 867, the two missionaries undertook the journey to Rome, where Cyril became a monk and died shortly after his arrival.[10] Methodius was elected by Pope Adrian II bishop of Moravia and Pannonia. When he had returned to his immense diocese, some German bishops saw with displeasure the extent of their jurisdiction restricted by the creation of this new bishopric. One of them, the bishop of Passau, in the name of his clergy, accused Methodius at Rome of teaching errors and of having introduced into divine worship the use of the Slavic language, instead of the Latin. Pope John VIII made our Saint these two reproaches in his letter of 879, and invited him to come and justify himself; in the meantime he forbade him to celebrate Mass in the Slavic language, ordering him to use the Latin or Greek language, in use throughout the world for the divine office; but he might preach in Slavic. Saint Methodius, following the Pope's order, returned to Rome the following year, 880. The Pope,

having had from him the explanations he desired on his faith and conduct, sent him back with a letter to Count Svatopluk, prince of the Slavs settled in Moravia and successor of Rastislav. In it he praises this prince with a paternal tenderness for his filial devotion to Saint Peter and his successor, a devotion which had made him choose him, in concert with his nobility and with all his people, for their patron and defender, in preference to all the princes of the earth. He adds: "We have asked your venerable archbishop Methodius, in the presence of our brother bishops, whether he believed the Creed and sang it at Mass as the Roman Church holds it and as it was received in the six universal councils. He declared that he held it and sang it according to the tradition of the Roman Church. Thus, having found him orthodox in his doctrine and capable of serving the Church, we send him back to you to govern that which has been entrusted to him, and command you to receive him with the fitting honour; for we have confirmed to him the privilege of archbishop, so that, according to the canons, it is for him to regulate all ecclesiastical affairs.

"Finally, we approve the Slavonic letters, invented by the philosopher Constantine (otherwise Cyril), and we command that the actions and praises of Jesus Christ be published in the same language, since Holy Scripture warns us to praise the Lord, not in three tongues only, but in all tongues, saying: Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him together, all ye peoples; and Saint Paul says again that every tongue must confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father. It is not contrary to the faith to employ the same Slavonic language to celebrate Mass, to read the Gospel and the other writings of the Old and New Testament, well translated, nor to sing there the other offices of the hours. He who made the three principal languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, made all the others also for his glory. We wish nevertheless that, to mark greater respect for the Gospel, it be read first in Latin, then in Slavonic, for the benefit of the people who do not understand Latin, as is practised in some churches; and if you and your officers prefer to hear Mass in Latin, we wish it said to you in Latin." This letter is of the month of June 880.[11]

There are authors who think that, if Pope John VIII had held firmer to the use of Latin in the sacred liturgy, he would have made the schism and perversion of the Slavonic nations less easy.

Saint Methodius therefore returned to continue his labours, but not without opposition; this is seen by a letter that Pope John wrote him the following year, to console and encourage him. Previously already the holy apostle of the Moravians had suffered great tribulations. The prince or king Svatopluk, the very one to whom John VIII was later to address a letter full of praises, and who began to reign in the year 870, after the expulsion of Rastislav, shut up in a monastery by Louis of Germany and deprived of sight, showed himself at first a tyrant and impious. Saint Methodius, who struck him with anathema, was driven from the country; but the prince soon repented, sent to beg the Saint to return and promised to repair his first faults. He kept his word, and Methodius saw himself amply compensated for his first tribulations. So it was with the following ones; they merited him the grace of converting another nation.

One day the young duke of the Bohemians (his name was Bo■ivoj) came to find King Svatopluk, on whom he depended. The king received him with honour; but at the meal, he made him sit on the ground, according to the custom of the pagans, for there were still such, and did not admit him to his table with the Christian lords. Saint Methodius, sensible of the insult done to the young duke, took occasion of it to instruct him in the vanity of idols and the truth of Christianity. Bo■ivoj, after having listened well and reflected, asked for baptism, with thirty of his counts. Saint Methodius, after instructing them and making them observe the solemn fasts, baptized them and gave them a priest to strengthen them in the faith. The young duke had married a woman of the Slavic nation; her name was Ludmilla, she had much piety and zeal for idols. The example of her husband and the instructions of the priest he had brought opened her eyes; she was converted with all her heart and became a saint; we shall even see her end her life by martyrdom and leave a grandson who is also counted among the Saints.[12] A part of the Bohemian nation followed the example of its prince, the other part remained idolatrous. The latter even expelled Duke Bo■ivoj because he was a Christian and gave itself another; but at last the Christian part of the nation got the upper hand; Bo■ivoj, who had taken

refuge with Svatopluk, was recalled and reigned peacefully. It is not known at what epoch Saint Methodius went to receive in heaven the reward of his labours. According to certain authors, he did not die before 910.

The Roman Martyrology names these two saints on 9 March. Their relics are preserved at Rome, in the church of Saint Clement: the church of Saint Peter, at Brünn, in Moravia, possesses a bone of the arm of Saint Cyril. Stredowski, in his *Sacra Moraviae historia*, calls Saint Methodius and Saint Cyril apostles of Moravia, of Upper Bohemia, of Silesia, of Khazaria, of Croatia, of Circassia, of Bulgaria, of Bosnia, of Russia, of Dalmatia, of Pannonia, of Dacia, of Carinthia, of Carniola, and of the greater part of the Slavonic peoples.

Saints Cyril and Methodius are painted facing each other and together supporting a church: this manner recalls that they are the founders of the Slavic and Bohemo-Moravian Church. An old missal of Prague adds to the edifice the letters of the Slavonic alphabet. — They are painted also holding together the picture of the Last Judgment painted by Saint Methodius for Bogoris.

Taken from the two lives of these Saints, published by Henschenius under 9 March. See Kohl, In Hist. codicis sacri Slavonici, *and* Introduct. in hist. et rem litter. Slavorum, *Altona, 1729; Stredowski,* Sacra Moraviae historia; *Calcynzki,* Specimen Ecclesiae Ruthenicae, *an. 1783; Rohrbacher,* History of the Church; *Godescard, etc.*

Saint Frances of Rome, Widow, Foundress of the Oblates

1384–1440. — Popes: Clement VII; Eugenius IV. — Emperors: Wenceslas; Frederick III.

To have been born in opulence, said Saint Frances, does not oblige a woman of the world the less to follow the maxims of the Gospel.

We shall see, in the life of this illustrious widow, the portrait of that valiant woman of whom the Wise Man speaks, and of whom he makes such great eulogies. She was born in the year of grace 1384. Her father was named Paul Bussa, and her mother Jacqueline Roffredeschi, both of the first families of Rome. She showed, from the cradle, such an aversion for all that is contrary to purity that she could not bear that any man, not even her father, should use the caresses and liberties that nature authorizes toward a child. At the age of twelve, she would gladly have shut herself up in a cloister to serve for the rest of her days the one Spouse of virgins; she even made every effort for it: but her parents, without consulting her inclinations, obliged her to marry, in 1396, in spite of all her repugnances, Lawrence Ponziani, a young Roman lord, whose fortune equalled his birth: there were few marriages so happy, because there are few so holy; esteem, respect and love were mutual, peace and union unalterable; these spouses lived together forty years without the slightest misunderstanding, without a shadow of coldness.

However, scarcely had Frances changed her condition when she fell dangerously ill; which showed the displeasure she had had in engaging in marriage. Nevertheless, her illness did not last long; for Saint Alexis, appearing to her by night, restored her in an instant to perfect health. Her house was a veritable school of virtue: she regarded her domestics, not as her men-servants and maid-servants, but as her brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, without however this gentleness making her relax anything of zeal and justice when the offence of God was concerned; for she could not bear that anything be done against the interests of his glory. Her first care was to study her husband’s natural disposition, and to avoid scrupulously all that might have displeased him. She considered him as her master, and as one who held near her the place of God on earth; she was so submissive, so obedient to him that, even when she was occupied in prayer or some practice of piety, she left everything to satisfy him and attend to the obligations of her state: which ought to be the principal object of the devotion of a woman engaged in marriage. So God made it appear, by a marvel, how agreeable this obedience was to him. Our Saint, reciting one day the office of Our Lady, was so pressed to interrupt it, to satisfy some duty of her household, that she left the same verse four times; but the business

done, returning to her devotion, she found the verse written in letters of gold, although before it was written only in common characters. Some time after, the apostle Saint Paul, appearing to her in an ecstasy, told her that her good angel had himself traced these new characters, to make her know the merit of obedience. The sacrament of marriage having been established by God to people heaven by the birth of children on earth, this faithful spouse begged Our Lord to give her some. She had, among others, a son who, by a happy presage, had John the Evangelist for patron, unlike his elder called John Baptist. He lived only nine years; but in this short time he showed that he was born rather for heaven than for earth: for he was endowed with the gift of prophecy, and foretold to his father that he would receive a dangerous blow in a part of the body which he indicated to him, and, to a mendicant religious, that he would soon change habit: these predictions were verified. Lawrence Ponziani was wounded in a war that broke out, in the year 1406, between the Romans and the Neapolitans, and the religious was made a bishop. This holy child was struck by the plague, when it afflicted the city of Rome, at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Foreseeing his death, he warned his good mother of it and begged her to give him a confessor, because he saw Saint Anthony and Saint Onuphrius, to whom he bore a particular devotion, advance toward him to lead him to heaven: which happened the same day; and he was buried in the church of Saint Cecilia, beyond the Tiber. A year after, the Saint, praying in her oratory, perceived her little John all shining with light and assisted by another still more resplendent than he; he disclosed to her the state of his glory in heaven: he was in the second choir of the first hierarchy, and the angel who accompanied him appeared more beautiful because he was in a higher degree of glory than he. He added that he came to seek his sister Agnes, aged only five years, to be placed with him among the angels. Finally, in going away, he left her, as guardian, that archangel who afterwards always remained with her; and she avowed to her confessor that when she cast her eyes on this heavenly spirit, the same thing happened to her as to a person who looks fixedly at the sun and cannot bear the brightness of its light.

Heaven poured on her those sweetnesses of another world which are the foretaste of divine joys; but it reserved her a cross, and a terrible cross. Rome having been taken by the king of Naples, Ladislas, Frances saw her house pillaged, her goods confiscated, her husband banished: she bore these reverses with admirable constancy. The tempest agitated her without; but calm was in her soul and serenity on her face. The storm passed; her husband was recalled from exile, his goods were restored to him; peace returned into her family. The virtuous lady profited by these misfortunes to persuade her husband to live together in perfect continence. This husband, sanctified by the heavenly virtues of his tenderly loved wife, granted her all she wished. From then on she ate only once a day, nourished herself only on bread and water, and, at most, on some insipid vegetables which she took only once a day. She forbade herself for ever and until death the use of fine linen, and wore no more, beneath her serge garments, than a harsh hair-shirt and a girdle made of horse-hair; she wore, besides, another circlet of iron which pierced her skin. Not content with this instrument of penance, which she never took off, day or night, she added to it, on various occasions, a discipline made of little iron chains with sharp points: obedience alone, which she preferred to all her own feelings, sometimes made her diminish these rigours, when her confessor thought himself obliged to bring moderation to them. She joined to this austerity the practice of works of mercy, assisting the poor, whom she regarded as the images of her crucified Saviour. To do it with more advantage and liberty, she joined her sister-in-law Vannozza, a very virtuous soul: they went together, from door to door through the streets of Rome, to beg alms for the needy. God so approved this conduct that he often worked miracles in their favour, multiplying the bread and wine they gave for his love.

She confessed ordinarily every Wednesday and Saturday, and communicated at least once a week; she frequented much the church of Saint Peter, at the Vatican; that of Saint Paul, outside the city; that of Our Lady of Ara Coeli; that of Santa Maria Nova and that of Santa Maria beyond the Tiber, always in the company of her sister-in-law. It is told that one day they went to the church of Saint Cecilia to make their devotions there: a priest, who did not approve that married women should communicate so often, gave them

both unconsecrated hosts; but Frances perceived it at once, not feeling the presence of her Spouse, as she was accustomed to do when she received holy communion; she complained of it to Father Anthony of Monte Sabello, her confessor, who came to find the priest: the latter confessed the truth of the matter to him, and did penance for his fault.

The devil, who saw the virtue of our Saint only with regret, resolved to combat her. Employing every effort to ruin her, he presented himself to her in a thousand frightful postures, with ridiculous and immodest gestures. He attacked her often during her prayers, rolled her face against the ground, dragged her by the hair, beat and scourged her cruelly. One night, as she was taking a little rest, after a hard combat, he carried the body of a dead man into her room, and held her on this corpse for a long space of time: this made such an impression on her that, since this accident, it seemed to her that this object was always near her, without her being able to be rid of the odour it exhaled: what do I say? the mere sight of men was a torment to her, feeling at their approach a universal shuddering in all her limbs. It would be impossible to relate here all the persecutions the devil made her, and the victories she gained over him. She triumphed over his malice, not only when he employed it against her, but also when he employed it against others: sometimes she converted women abandoned to vice, sometimes she drove them from Rome, or from the other asylums to which they retired, to prevent their perverting innocence.

She obtained, by her prayers, that her confessor should be delivered from an evil spirit that drove him to anger. She foresaw the temptations of several souls and preserved them from falling into them by her good counsels. Once the devil hurled Vannozza from the top of a stair to the bottom, and broke almost her whole body; but Frances, by her prayers, restored her at once to perfect health. Thus the devil remained vanquished on all sides.

Since she had associated herself with the pious Vannozza, her sister-in-law, she did nothing except in concert with her. One day God wished to show, by a marvel, how agreeable their holy union was to him: as they had retired apart to one side of the garden, in the shade of a tree, to deliberate together on the means of leaving the world, pears extremely beautiful and of good taste fell at their feet, although it was in spring. These two holy women carried these fruits to their husbands, that they might strengthen them, by this prodigy, in the will to serve God, and give them an entire liberty to do so.

In the year 1423, our Saint undertook to erect a congregation of girls and widows who should give themselves perfectly to piety and devotion, under the rule of Saint Benedict. She was strengthened in this pious design by several heavenly visions in which there appeared to her the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Saint Benedict and Saint Magdalen, who prescribed to her rules for her religious. It seemed to her one day that Saint Peter, after having veiled and solemnly blessed her, offered her to Our Lady, to be received under her protection and special safeguard; it was then that, having come to herself, she drew up in writing the rules which have been observed, since, in her monastery, such as they had been dictated to her in these admirable visions; and, having communicated them to her spiritual father, she had them approved by Pope Eugenius IV.

The blessed Frances was then about forty-three years old; she had already passed twenty-eight of them in marriage. In the twelve which she passed in it afterwards, God made her holiness shine by several marvels and miraculous healings; but her humility made her disguise them by the application of remedies to the wounded part, though these remedies were quite contrary to the evil. We say nothing of the particular assistance that the angels rendered her. We have already seen that besides her guardian angel, God gave her a second, who accompanied her visibly: if it happened that the devil borrowed the figure of an angel of light to deceive her, this faithful guardian failed not to discover to her the artifice of her enemy, and her soul was at once filled with so agreeable an odour that she was admirably consoled by it. If, when she was in company, there escaped her an action or word less necessary, or if she let herself be carried away by superfluous thoughts touching her household, or other subjects, this heavenly spirit, continual witness of her whole life,

withdrew from her eyes, and, by his absence, obliged her to return into herself, and recognize herself. Hence it comes that this Saint is depicted having at her side an angel who serves her as guide and governor.

Death, which spares no one, having taken her husband from her, in the year 1436, she settled in a short time all her affairs, and, abandoning her goods to the children she still had in the world, betook herself to the monastery she had founded; there, prostrating herself on the ground, a cord about her neck and her eyes bathed in tears, she besought most humbly the daughters of whom she was the mother in Jesus Christ to receive her into the monastery as a little servant; which they did with all imaginable joy. Soon after, they elected her their superior, notwithstanding all her repugnances. These religious are called Oblates, because in consecrating themselves to God they use the word oblation and not that of profession: instead of saying as the others, I make profession, they say, I offer myself;[1] they make no vows; they promise simply to obey the mother president. They have pensions, inherit from their parents, and may go out with the permission of their superior. There are in the convent which they have at Rome several ladies of the first quality.

Behold then Saint Frances absolutely mother of the pious congregation she had herself established. She brought it afterwards to such a perfection that it may be said she left in it the most perfect idea of the religious life. They were at first not conveniently lodged: that is why they made acquisition of another house, cleaner and better situated, at the foot of the Capitol, to which they betook themselves solemnly after all having communicated; this house was called the Tower of the Mirror, on account of a tower which is on the same spot, and which has been adorned, on its surface, with some reliefs resembling mirrors.

God continued, and even increased, the favours that he did our Saint, and worked by her many miracles, which may be seen in the bull of her canonization. She delivered of falling sickness a child of five years, by putting her hand on his head. By the same means, she healed another of a rupture; she restored health to several other sick by the mere imposition of her hands. A woman named Angela, who was crippled in one arm by the violence of gout, having met the Saint on the road, implored her help, and received from her, at that very hour, perfect health. She gave one day a very abundant dinner to fifteen religious with a few morsels of bread which could scarcely have sufficed for three, and yet there remained still a full basket. Another time, some religious having followed her to cut wood outside the town, as they suffered from thirst, God made as many bunches of grapes grow in a vine as there were girls with her, although it was in the month of January. We pass over in silence the rest of her miracles, to say a word of her virtues, particularly of her humility, by which she raised herself to true greatness.

Never did she suffer, either in the cloister or in her husband’s house, that she should be served, although she was the mistress and superior; but, practising literally the word of Our Lord, she preferred to serve others and be treated as a servant: she took even a singular pleasure in being esteemed the least of all, and, if she had been believed, she would not have been given more honourable titles than that of “sinner, vessel of impurity, and most vile and most miserable woman.” This humility appeared still more in her actions than in her words: for she was seen returning from her vineyard, which was outside the suburbs, with a bundle of vine-branches on her head, and driving before her a laden ass, which she employed for the service of the poor; she showed by this that nothing is difficult to charity; and that, when this virtue makes us act, human respect is trampled underfoot, even that which appears most reasonable. In sufferings, her patience was invincible: when her husband was sent into exile, when her goods were confiscated and her whole house ruined (during the troubles that followed the invasion of Rome by Ladislas, king of Naples, and during the great schism that rent the Church, under the pontificate of John XXIII, in the year 1413), never did she say anything other than these fine words of Job: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be his holy name!” She had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the altar; in its presence she rose to God with so much fervour that she remained sometimes long motionless and quite rapt in spirit. As for the Passion of Our Lord, she meditated it with so great a tenderness that she shed abundant tears over it, and even really felt acute pains in the places of her body where Jesus Christ had suffered in his own, as the bull of

her canonization expressly says. Finally, God willed to end so holy a life by a happy death.

John Baptist, her eldest son, having fallen into a very dangerous illness, Frances thought herself obliged to lavish her care on him, since she did not refuse it to strangers. Her confessor commanded her to pass the night there, because it was too far to return to her monastery, beyond the Tiber; but she was herself seized that night with a burning fever, which increased so much that, not being in a state to leave that place, she was obliged to dispose herself for death by the reception of the sacraments. God having made known to her that the seventh day of her illness would be the last of her life, she gave notice of it four days before, saying: "God be blessed! on Thursday at the latest I shall pass from this life to a better." The event verified this prediction; indeed, on the following Wednesday, 9 March 1440, she gave up her spirit to him who had created it, with admirable tranquillity, and without any sign of pain. She was aged fifty-six years: she had passed twelve in her father's house, forty in her marriage and four in religion.

Her body was carried to the church of Santa Maria Nova, where it remained three days exposed to the view of all the people, who ran thither in crowds to admire the marvels of God. There exhaled from this precious treasure so agreeable an odour that one would have said that the whole church was filled with jasmines, carnations and roses. Several miracles were wrought at her sepulchre by the touch of things that had belonged to her; above all in favour of persons afflicted with the plague. A perfumer, named Jerome, being at the point of death, was drawn from it by having touched our Saint's habit; and a woman, named Magdalen of Clarelle, was preserved from it by the mere invocation of her name. A crowd of sick were cured by the merit of her prayers. A Turk, named Beli, was so hardened that nothing had ever been able to be gained on his mind; all that could be drawn from him was that he would say these words: "Frances, servant of God, remember me." He was converted. All these marvels often made the sovereign Pontiffs be pressed to proceed to the canonization of this illustrious Roman. Eugenius IV, Nicholas V and Clement VIII laboured at it; Paul V finished this holy affair on 29 May 1608. Innocent X commanded that her feast be celebrated, with double office: which is done on the 9th of this month. The body of Saint Frances remained in the earth more than two hundred years. It was exhumed in 1638, and enclosed in a fine shrine of gilt copper.

The feast of Saint Frances is kept as a holiday at Rome, as that of Saint Roch was at Paris before the revolution, that is to say that without being of precept it is the occasion of a great solemnity.

The Saint is sometimes represented driving an ass before her. — At other times, a little angel is placed near her, ordinarily clothed after the manner of a deacon and radiating light. — It is known that her guardian angel appeared to her almost every day, and according to the greater or lesser brilliance that he shed, the Saint had learned to understand whether God was content with her, or whether she had something to reproach herself with. The clarity the angel shed around him was sometimes such that the Saint could read at night without other light. — She is also represented receiving the Child Jesus from the hands of Our Lady, who gave him to her one day when she had just visited the church of Saint Stephen, that she might carry him to the neighbouring church. — She is seen again carrying on her arm a basket of vegetables, to show that she fulfilled with joy the lowly offices of the community.

VISIONS OF SAINT FRANCES OF ROME.

Saint Frances left ninety-three visions which she herself dictated to her confessor. The treatise on hell, in particular, is very remarkable. In the thirteenth vision, she sees the Blessed Virgin, whose head is adorned with three crowns: that of her virginity, that of her humility and that of her glory. In the fourteenth vision, she tells of heaven: this is divided into starry heaven, crystalline heaven and empyrean heaven. The heaven of the stars is very luminous; the crystalline is still more so, but these lights are nothing in comparison with those which light the empyrean heaven: it is the wounds of Jesus that illumine this third heaven.

In the seventeenth vision, God shows her his divinity: she saw as it were a great circle which had no other support than itself, and cast a brightness so vivid that the Saint could not look at it in the face: she read in the

middle the following words: “Principle without principle and end without end.” — She saw next how the creation of the angels took place: they were all created at once, and the power of God let them fall like flakes of snow which the clouds pour on the mountains in winter season. Those who have lost the glory of heaven for ever form the third part of the immense multitude of these spirits.

On 13 February 1432 — it is the twenty-first vision — the choir of virgins, led by Saint Magdalen and Saint Agnes, made her hear the following canticle: “If anyone desires to enter into the heart of Jesus, he must strip himself of all things, interior as well as exterior; — despise himself and judge himself worthy of eternal contempt; — act in all simplicity, affect nothing that is not conformable to his sentiments, not seek to appear better than one is in the eyes of God; — never return upon one’s sacrifices; — renounce oneself and know one’s misery to the point of no longer daring to raise one’s eyes to look at one’s God; — hate oneself to the point of asking vengeance of the Lord; — render to the Most High the gifts one has received from him: memory, understanding, will; — regard praises as a torment and a chastisement; — if it happens that aversion is shown toward you, regard this pain as a bath of rose-water in which one must plunge with true humility; — injuries must resound in the ears of the soul that tends to perfection like agreeable sounds; — one must receive injuries, ill-treatment as caresses: that is not enough, one must give thanks to God for them, one must thank those from whom one receives them; — the perfect man must make himself so small that he is no more to be perceived than a grain of millet thrown to the bottom of a deep river.” It was then told her that only one soul had been found in the world adorned with all the virtues in a supreme degree: that of Mary.

In the forty-third vision, she held Jesus on her knees: he had the form of a little lamb. She saw next an altar magnificently adorned on which was a lamb bearing the stigmata of the five wounds. At the foot of the altar were a great number of rich candlesticks arranged in a fine order. In the first row — it was the farthest — there were seven which signified the principal virtues; in the second row, there were twelve which signified the twelve articles of the Creed; in the third, there were seven which signified the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; in the fourth, there were seven others which represented the seven sacraments of the Church. This vision, which took place on a feast of All Saints, lasted thirteen hours. She saw further the principal orders of saints advancing under their standards. The patriarchs were led by Saint John Baptist; — the apostles by Saint Peter and Saint Paul; — the evangelists by Saint John and Saint Mark; — the martyrs by Saint Lawrence and Saint Stephen; — the doctors by Saint Gregory and Saint Jerome; the religious by Saint Benedict, Saint Bernard, Saint Dominic and Saint Francis; — the hermits by Saint Paul and Saint Anthony; — the virgins by Saint Mary Magdalen and Saint Agnes; — the widows by Saint Anne and Saint Sabina; — and the married women by Saint Cecilia.

The treatise on hell, we have said, is the most remarkable of the writings that Saint Frances dictated. Here is an idea of it:

One day when the servant of God was very ill, she shut herself in her cell to give herself to the exercise of contemplation. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. At once she was rapt in ecstasy, and the archangel Raphael, whom she did not then see, came to take her to conduct her to the vision of hell. Arrived at the gate of this frightful kingdom, she read these words written in letters of fire: “This place is the place of hell; hell without hope, hell without interval in the torments, hell without rest.” The gate opened and Frances looked: she saw an abyss so deep, so appalling, from which escaped cries so frightful and odours so insupportable, that since then she could not speak of it without her blood freezing in her veins. Hell appeared to her divided into three regions, one upper, another lower, the other intermediate. The torments were heavier in the lower region than in the other two. In the upper region are placed the Jews who, except for their obstinacy, lived exempt from great crimes; those of the Christians who neglected confession during life and were deprived of it at death. In the deepest part of hell are the Sodomites and all those who gave themselves to sins against nature; the demons transfix them with flaming spits. Then come the usurers, who are stretched on tables of bronze reddened in the fire; the demons pour into their mouths buckets of liquefied metal; — the

blasphemers have their tongues pulled out by the ministers of heavenly vengeance with hooks; — from traitors and hypocrites they unceasingly tear the heart, which unceasingly they put back in place; — murderers and women who destroy their fruit in the womb are carried endlessly from a vat where there is boiling blood to another vat where there is ice; — apostates are sawn in two; — the incestuous are plunged in vats full of stinking filth; sorcerers, wizards, and those who believe in their ridiculous art receive flaming discs which the demons hurl in their faces. Then come the punishments of the seven capital sins; finally the torture of thieves, of unnatural children, of religious who violate their vows, of calumniators, of foolish virgins, of vicious widows, of women idolaters of their beauty. We regret that we cannot give all these details, but those whom the subject would interest may read the Bollandists.

At the fall of the bad angels, one third remained in the air, another third remained on the earth, and the last third fell as far as hell. This difference arises from the difference of the common fault.

Lucifer is the monarch of hell, but a chained monarch and more unhappy than all the others; he has under him three princes to whom all the infernal spirits divided into three bodies are subject by the will of God. The first of these three princes is Asmodeus; he was in heaven a cherub. He presides over dishonest sins. The second is Mammon; he was a throne. He is the demon of money. The third is Beelzebub; he belonged to the choir of dominations; he is established now over the crimes which idolatry begets. These three chiefs, as well as Lucifer, never leave their prison, only, when God permits it, they depute to earth legions of subordinate demons. The subordinate demons of hell are classed in the abyss according to hierarchical order: cherubim, seraphim, etc. These same hierarchies are found among the demons who inhabit the earth and the air, but they have no chief and live in a sort of equality. It is they who do harm to men, and by that means diminish their confidence in Providence, and make them murmur against the will of God. The demons who live on the earth concert together and help each other mutually to ruin souls. The only means of escaping this infernal plot would be to rise promptly from the first fall, and that is precisely what is not done. Nothing paralyses the efforts of the demons better, or causes them greater torments, than to pronounce the holy name of Jesus. When souls live in the habit of mortal sin, the demons install themselves in their heart; but when they receive absolution, they lodge out as quickly as possible and place themselves beside them to tempt them anew; but their attacks are less lively, and the more one confesses, the more they lose of their strength.

Limbo is contiguous to hell, but does not communicate with it: an angel guards the gate of it, no pain is suffered there other than the privation of light. It is there that is found the abode of children dead without baptism. In the first of the three regions of which limbo also is composed are found children born or conceived of Christian parents; the intermediate part is inhabited by the children of Jews and pagans; in the lower part are shut up children born or conceived by a crime contrary to the solemn vow of chastity or spiritual affinity. There reigns a deeper night than in the other two parts. Purgatory is distributed like hell; the servant of God saw written at the gate these words: “Here is purgatory, place of hope.” In the lower part burn the souls who have not satisfied for mortal sins: seven years of suffering there correspond to the temporal penalty deserved for a single mortal sin. It is each soul’s guardian angel who gathers the suffrages offered for it on earth. When a soul — let this be well noted — has made pious bequests before its decease, God accepts them at once, and rewards them even though they should not receive their execution through the fault of those charged with them. But for souls who put off their good works after their death, through attachment to riches, God rewards these works only at the expiration of the time fixed for their accomplishment. The Masses, indulgences and good works offered for certain souls by their relatives and friends are not applied to them in full; they receive indeed the better part, but the rest is distributed among all the souls of purgatory. Offerings made in favour of souls who enjoy heavenly beatitude profit first those who make them on earth, and afterwards the souls remaining in purgatory. The helps granted by the living to souls unhappily reprobate profit entirely their authors, God not permitting them to be applied to the souls of purgatory. The most burning part of the lower purgatory is reserved for religious and priests, even if they had committed lesser

sins than seculars. Frances saw in this dungeon a priest very pious, but who had sacrificed too much to his weakness for the table and good wine. The intermediate purgatory is destined for the expiation of venial sins, and the upper purgatory for the purification of imperfections.

The life of Saint Frances was written by the Roman John Mattiotti, who had been twelve years her confessor. There is another, under the name of Mary Magdalen dell'Anguillara, superior of the Oblates, which Bollandus has given with the preceding, with the admirable visions that she herself wrote by order of her confessor. André Valladier, abbot of Saint-Arnould at Metz, who was at Rome at her canonization, composed her eulogy in Latin and in French, under the title of *Mirror of Matronal Wisdom*: it is from them that we have gathered this summary, as well as from the Bull of her canonization, which we have chiefly used, as being a purer source of truth.

Saint Catherine of Bologna, Poor Clare

1463. — Pope: Pius II. — King of France: Louis XI.

Rosa rutila caritatis, lilium candens virginitatis, balsamum fragrans paupertatis, de Francisci prodiens hortulo: Tu ergo nobis miseris, quondam peregrina in terris, succurre nunc suffragio in caelesti collegio.

Vermilion rose of charity, shining lily of virginity, fragrant balsam of poverty, who didst come forth from the little garden of Saint Francis of Assisi, O thou who wast once a traveller like us on earth, from the midst of the assembly of the Saints where thou hast taken rank, bend mercifully toward us, poor pilgrims. — Antiphon of the office of Saint Catherine.

This illustrious saint was born at Bologna, on the day of the Nativity of the most holy Virgin, in the year 1413. Her father was named John. He was a gentleman of Ferrara, of the illustrious family of the Vigri, and adorned with all the qualities which can recommend a personage whom his position puts in view. He had become, at Bologna, doctor *utriusque juris* (in civil law and in canon law), and he gave public lessons. He married in that city the virtuous Benvenuta, of the ancient family of the Accommobini. The merit and worthy character of the professor[1] drew on him the attention of his prince, Nicholas d'Este, marquis of Ferrara, who sent him as ambassador to the republic of Venice, where he remained thenceforward.

When Catherine was born, he was at Padua; the night before, the holy Virgin appeared to him, and foretold to him that the daughter he was about to have would be one day a great light for the whole world.

The child did not cry at her birth, and remained three days without taking any nourishment. Before knowing how to walk, she showed a great affection for the poor; and when she was a little older, she gave them all that she found under her hand. At eleven years, at the request of the marquis d'Este, and by order of her father, she went, with her mother, to dwell at Ferrara, where she was brought up at court with Margaret, daughter of the marquis, and she always kept with her the greatest intimacy. Though still very young, she had already the prudence of mature age, and attached all hearts by her virtues together with her natural gifts. She continued very assiduously the study of the Latin tongue which she had begun at Bologna, and was soon able to understand all the authors. She even composed, in a very pure and very elegant Latin, various writings which are still possessed today. But when she had given her heart entirely to God, she would no longer read any pagan author, and found no more pleasure except in studying Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. After about three years passed at the court of the princess Margaret, Catherine felt an inclination more and more irresistible to consecrate herself exclusively to the Lord; she was not long in finding a favourable occasion to free herself from the bonds which still held her attached to the world. Margaret married the count of Rimini; Catherine, who had conceived a great disgust for the luxury and amusements of the court, would not follow her; the princess then saw herself obliged to send her back to her mother. Catherine, who was to be the sole heiress of her parents' great riches, was sought in marriage by several great lords; but her mother, who had become a widow and occupied herself now only with God, left her daughter absolutely free to

follow her vocation. There was then at Ferrara a pious girl of a great family, Lucy Mascaroni, who lived with her aunt and with some young ladies whom she instructed to serve God, and who never went out except to assist at the offices in the church of the Friars Minor, situated quite near. Catherine was admitted into their association, where she made herself loved and admired by her affability, her gentleness, her obedience. One day when she was praying in the church, God revealed to her that he had pardoned her all her sins and remitted all the penalties she had deserved. She was then sixteen years old. About the same time she had another vision: she found herself, on the day of the last judgment, at the right of the throne of God, whom she invoked with confidence. These heavenly favours made her lose nothing of her humility, and she considered herself on the contrary as the most unworthy of creatures. The pious association of which she formed part was composed of fifty girls under the direction of Lucy, who maintained the house at the expense of her aunt. The latter, who was a widow and very rich, had instituted her niece her sole heiress, on condition of having her house converted into a convent of Augustinians. When this aunt died, Lucy would immediately have fulfilled the prescribed condition, had not some of the pious girls felt more inclination for the order of the Franciscans, under whose direction they had lived until then. One of the members, named Alise, brought over to her side most of the others, and brought a suit against Lucy, accusing her of disregarding the last will of her aunt, and of wishing to found a convent of Franciscan nuns. The affair was carried before a lay tribunal and turned in favour of Alise: Lucy was deprived of her inheritance. But she appealed to the bishop, who judged the case quite differently. Alise and those of her party were excluded from the community, and the others sent home until the convent should be built. All these contests and this last reverse afflicted Catherine deeply, who desired only solitude and calm. Therefore, as soon as there was in the monastery a suitable dwelling, she betook herself to it with five of her first companions. The number of the holy girls increased rapidly; but they did not all follow the same rule. Lucy and some others still inclined to that of Saint Augustine; Catherine and the rest had adopted that of Saint Clare. At length Catherine brought everyone to her sentiment, and, with the bishop's permission, they all put themselves under the direction of the Friars Minor; the provincial solemnly gave them the habit of the Clares in 1432. Catherine was then twenty years old.

The rule was observed so rigorously in the new monastery that several sisters fell ill, and some died. So the vicar general of the Order, Saint John Capistran, saw himself obliged to moderate their zeal and soften the observances. He reduced the daily fast to Fridays only, and authorized the use of sandals, and, when they should have need of them, that of stockings. But Catherine never profited by these permissions. Moreover, she was not yet satisfied, because the convent was not enclosed.

She shunned with the greatest care the loss of time; so she was always seen occupied with something useful. "How blind men are," she often said, "to make so little account of time! They will one day have to render account of the useless employment they make of it; this time, however short it be, can merit eternity for us; but, once passed, no one can find it again!" She made for herself a breviary written entirely with her own hand, and painted herself a great number of pictures with which she adorned it. It was long preserved with great respect in the convent of Bologna.

She put above everything holy obedience, which is the foundation stone of the religious life. Although she was one of the oldest sisters, she practised it with as much exactness as if she had entered the Order only a short time, and she submitted even to the wills of the youngest sisters. She did nothing without the superior's permission; or, if she saw herself forced to it by the momentary absence of the latter, she warned her afterwards as soon as she saw her. The abbess reprimanded and punished her often without her having committed the least fault. She accepted everything with humility, without ever allowing herself the least excuse. When she was mistress of novices, she never ceased to exhort her daughters to submission and docility: "Take, my daughters," she often said to them, "take the chalice of holy obedience, which ought not to be so bitter to you, since the Son of God died on the cross to give us the example of this virtue." She could

not bear that confessors and superiors should be blamed, even when they were in the wrong; she said that it was quite enough for them, the responsibility with which they were charged before God. She had a great respect for the religious of all Orders; so she taught that, when some defect was noticed in them, one ought not to be scandalized at it, but only to have compassion on it and say: “Such a one has this infirmity, and I have others.” And she added this word of the Apostle: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of God.”

As for holy chastity, Catherine cherished it so much, and preserved it with so much care, that she disapproved of too great a familiarity with confessors. She said that confession ought always to be full of simplicity, humility and a pious fear, as if it were made to Jesus Christ himself; and that, once absolution is received, one must leave the confessor, were he a saint. God willed to render a striking testimony to this admirable purity and to this life of austerities when, after the death of the holy girl, he permitted her body to remain so long in a perfect state of preservation.

The devil, seeing the great perfection to which Catherine had attained, delivered cruel assaults to her. In the beginnings, she always came out of them triumphant. But one day, seeing herself the object of one of these rude attacks, she answered the devil boldly: “Know that thou canst send me no temptation that I do not recognize at once.” God, wishing to correct this too great confidence, and to show her that the enemy was much more skilful than she, permitted him to trouble her for a long time in a manner well calculated to discourage her. The evil spirit made use, to combat her, of the very virtue she cherished most, obedience. He appeared to her, now under the figure of Our Lord, and now under that of his most holy Mother, reproaching her with not being detached enough from her own will. Then he suggested to her a thousand thoughts against submission, which she took for effects of her own character; she believed herself continually disposed to criticize and to bear with impatience all the orders of the superior. The affliction she felt from it made her shed so many tears that her sight was weakened by it; and her intelligence, overwhelmed by this incessant idea, grew obscured and exhausted. She could no longer pray nor read her hours without feeling keen pains; she was obliged no longer to watch as long as before. But she was so accustomed to prayer that in the middle of her sleep she rose, stretched out her arms and began to pray. She would infallibly have succumbed to these persecutions of the enemy, had she not known that despair was the gravest of all faults. By an evident grace of God, she always preserved, in the midst of these terrible struggles, the firm will to do nothing which could displease God. So the Lord afterwards made her know that all that was only a deception of the spirit of evil. God had permitted it thus to give the holy girl a deeper knowledge of herself, and a greater prudence against the devil’s artifices.

But the enemy, seeing himself frustrated in his expectation, wished to disquiet her in another manner. He then filled her mind with impious thoughts which besieged her during her confessions, her prayers and her penances. At other times it was thoughts of vanity that obsessed her, especially when she was in choir occupied in singing the praises of God. But, for her heart set on fire with heavenly love, there was no more painful trial than the temptations of unbelief regarding the Blessed Sacrament. So the Lord, who unknown to her stood beside his servant during her struggles, ended by assuring her a complete triumph, and taught her that he who feels no devotion in receiving the Blessed Sacrament does not nevertheless lose the fruit of communion, provided he has a pure conscience and does not consent to the temptations of unbelief; she understood that a soul is more meritorious in the midst of such a trial, when it bears it with patience, than if it approached the holy table with the sentiments of the tenderest piety.

Catherine having thus acquired by her own experience a great knowledge of spiritual struggles, wrote a work in which she related her long temptations and the numerous graces with which God had loaded her; she set forth in it, for the instruction of her neighbour, the dangers of this relentless war which the devil wages against us, and the means of coming out of it victorious. Having perceived that knowledge of this work had been obtained, she burnt it out of humility; but, by God’s order, she wrote another which she entitled: *The*

Seven Spiritual Weapons. As long as she lived, this book was known to no one; but it was published immediately after her death. Everyone can draw much fruit from reading it. Although she speaks in it of herself as of another person, it is easy to see that the noble heroine is at the same time the author. Besides, according to her own testimony, all this was put in writing only to guard souls against too great confidence in oneself, and against the artifices of the devil. We must, she says, distrust ourselves, even when we are the object of great heavenly favours. We ought never to imagine that we know or understand anything whatever, except by the light and strength that we receive from God. On the other hand, we must not, in temptations, let ourselves go too much to sadness, as if all these thoughts came from ourselves; let us be assured that they are only the effect of the devil's jealousy, for he cannot bear that we should taste interior peace in serving God with a humble and submissive heart. We must, she says again, resist the inspirations of the enemy with courage and patience, and thereby we shall merit the crown of a sort of spiritual martyrdom.

In the counsels she gave by word of mouth, she often repeated that one must make known in time one's temptations to those who have care of our soul, seeing that it is impossible to heal a hidden wound. She maintained that the more brilliant revelations and other favours of heaven appear to us, the more we ought to inform the physicians of our souls of them, in order not to be duped by the appearance of good, as she had been herself. To imitate her Saviour, who says to us in the Gospel: "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart," Catherine aimed with all her strength to perfect in herself that fair virtue of humility. In her relations with her sisters, she showed herself affable and obliging, submitted to the least among them, and took pleasure in the most lowly services of the cloister. When surprise was shown at it, she answered: "Yes, I am the servant of the spouses of Jesus Christ; my glory and my rest consist in working for all, that I may not eat the bread of sinners to my condemnation." She always wore the most worn-out clothes, without taking care to adjust them well, except when she approached the holy Table. Her veil was made of other old veils of which she sewed the pieces together. To hide her holiness, she feigned a profound ignorance of all things, and sought to appear endowed with very little intelligence. Yet she often deplored not having shown enough esteem and charity toward the people who had afflicted or despised her. She accused herself of not deserving the name of servant of the Lord, because she did not cherish enough that cross of sorrow and humiliation which the Saviour had embraced with so ardent a love.

Although the other religious did not see with pleasure the bad state of her clothes and her veil, they had ended by admiring her patience and humility; they said among themselves: "How great this soul must be before God! and yet no one conceives a high idea of her." Her uprightness even won her the confidence of the abbess, who did not fear to consult her and follow her advice in all important affairs. Catherine gave it always with firmness together with modesty. She charged herself for a long time alone with the care of making bread for the whole monastery, and when the old convent of Ferrara was repaired, they carefully preserved, no longer with its first destination, but as a venerable memorial, the oven where she had thus laboured. She exercised also for several years, with the same devotion, the office of portress. When she had herself become superior, she would not be called either mother or abbess. She taught the sisters, by her example and by her counsels, to be humble, not only interiorly, but also outwardly. She recommended to them to speak little, without raising the voice, and to wait till their advice was asked; to consider themselves each as the last person in the world, to obey promptly and to renounce their own will. She counselled them to confess often even the lightest faults, and above all to love and fear God with the simplicity of childhood.

She had always for her sisters the greatest indulgence and the most devoted affection. She lavished consolations on them, rendered them all the services that were in her power. At the rebuilding of the convents of Ferrara and Bologna, which occasioned for the sisters an increase of work, Catherine was always, even while she was abbess, the first and the last at the task; she wished, she said, to leave the religious thereby more time and calm to work at their perfection. She often knew the secret thoughts of hearts. A novice being one day greatly tormented by the devil, Catherine had her come and said to her: "Struggle with courage, I am

ready to satisfy in purgatory for your sins, which I take upon myself; I will do penance for you, and I leave you a share of my merits, if I have any, on condition that you continue to serve in the Order." The sister, strengthened by these words, persevered in her vocation, and became later abbess herself, which she always attributed to the tender solicitude of Saint Catherine. Illuminata Bembi, daughter of a Venetian senator, who afterwards received the habit, had still much attachment to the vanities of the world, and Catherine feared that she would not persist in her design of embracing the religious life. But one day the holy Virgin appeared to her and promised her that the young girl would remain in the Order. Illuminata did indeed make her profession. Some years later, in a conversation they were having together, Catherine said suddenly to the religious: "Faint heart that you are! Can you not struggle better? And would you let the enemy get the upper hand?" Sister Illuminata, quite dismayed, looked at Catherine and felt at that instant a great strength against the torments to which she was a prey, but which she had not made known to Catherine; her uneasy heart was all enlightened, her uncertainties gave place to a great confidence. Then she told Catherine of her anguish, and the latter related to her the vision she had had concerning her. Illuminata felt a redoubling of courage, and their intimacy only increased. This holy religious was three times abbess after Catherine's death, and died in the odour of sanctity. She was a person of great prudence and rare intelligence. She knew Latin very well. She wrote a life of Saint Catherine; besides the information supplied to her, she related what she saw with her own eyes. Devoured with zeal for the salvation of souls, Catherine was overwhelmed with sadness in thinking of the outrage which mortal sin does to God, and of the deplorable state into which sinners cast themselves; so she never ceased praying for their conversion.

A malefactor had been condemned to be burned alive. He called the devil to his aid, and would not hear confession spoken of. At this news Catherine set herself to pray before the Blessed Sacrament; she remained there a day and a night, shedding burning tears; as soon as Matins were ended, she betook herself again to prayer, then, full of confidence, she said to the Lord: "My God, I will not rise from here until you have granted me the salvation of this soul, which you have redeemed with your precious blood; refuse me not this grace, despite the unworthiness of my prayers." Then she heard a voice say to her: "I can refuse you this soul no longer; thanks to your prayers, it shall be blessed." At the same time, someone ran to the monastery and asked the prayers of the sisters for this criminal who had just declared that he wished to make avowal of his crimes to the confessor of the convent. That is what he did, indeed, testifying the most sincere sorrow and regret. He ceased not, in the midst of the flames, to invoke the name of Jesus, as Catherine had prescribed to him in a letter in which she consoled the repentant criminal.

Saint Catherine obtained thus, by the fervour and persistence of her prayers, the conversion of several other persons, among others of a religious who, after having led an impious life under the monastic habit, had apostatized. Catherine, by dint of interceding with God, drew on this man so powerful a grace that he returned of himself to the convent with the sentiments of the profoundest penance.

The souls in purgatory also had a large share of her solicitude; she offered to God for them the merit of her good works, and exhorted her sisters to do the same. She read each night the hours of the dead, and she felt during this reading a supernatural strength of soul, from which she hoped that the suffering souls experienced some relief. She sought, by the salvation of souls, to increase the glory of God; she desired ardently that he should be known, loved and served by all, and said that we ought to love God solely for his glory, and not for our own advantage. She was often heard complaining that the love of God was so rare and so weak among men. Most, she said, seek only their advantage and not the glory of God; even those who ought to be animated with the most ardent charity fear the judgments of men more than those of God; far from imitating our Saviour who, to save souls, willed to suffer all humiliations, they think only of meriting the esteem and consideration of the world. God, she affirmed also, is still in our days just as good to men as he ever was; it is our love for him that has diminished. If he found at present on earth souls burning with as much charity as formerly Saint Magdalen, or with as much zeal for his glory as the illustrious Saint Francis, he would lavish

on them today as then all the treasures of his goodness.

Saint Catherine said that prayer triumphs over all temptations, gives the will to do penance, kindles the love of God in our hearts and drives out of them the love of the world; she added that perseverance in prayer had been all her consolation, all her pleasure and all her happiness, and had delivered her from mortal sin. Nevertheless she did not approve the religious who manifest in prayer exterior signs of piety, and, because of the taste they find in it, at once let their spirit be carried away in it. When, by obedience, she was obliged to work with the others, and at the same time was occupied with God by prayer, she felt a union more sweet and more intimate with God than when, by her particular inclination, she was alone in the church outside the ordinary time. And she addressed frequently to her sisters the following exhortation: “Hold yourselves only in silence; remain at rest in the cell of your heart; represent before your eyes the sufferings and humiliations of your Spouse, for he lets himself be found everywhere that holy silence is observed.”

She could not weary of being in church, because there she found the only object of her love hidden under the species of bread. She surpassed the other sisters by far in her zeal to assist at the canonical hours; and often she was in choir so absorbed in the contemplation of the holy mysteries that she saw nothing of what was passing around her. When the hours of the dead were said, her heart thrilled with joy, for she found them full of a heavenly unction capable of touching the coldest hearts. She read also every day with the greatest devotion the hours of the holy Virgin. She held for certain that when one had once well understood the whole value of the canonical hours, one no longer shrank from any difficulty or any pain to assist at them. After dinner she questioned the sisters on what had been read during the meal, in order to keep their piety always awake.

The sufferings of the Saviour were so deeply imprinted in her heart that she spoke of them only in the most ardent expressions. The Saviour and his holy Mother appeared to her several times, testifying the tenderest affection to their beloved daughter. In one of these visions, the holy Virgin placed the Child Jesus in Catherine’s arms. Her sisters perceived this divine favour by the features of her face, which preserved for some time an unaccustomed brightness, and by a delicious odour which spread around her person. She was further favoured with several other miraculous visits. The three persons of the holy Trinity came to communicate to her a deep knowledge of that august mystery. One day, being weary of work, she dozed off in prayer: Saint Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, appeared to her, clothed in pontifical ornaments, and told her that prayer ought to be regulated, and that one should give oneself some relaxation, so that, having regained strength, one might return to it with more fervour. Then he gave her his hand to kiss and disappeared. One of the ways in which she proved her love for Jesus was the care with which she decorated his statues; she also had represented in painting various circumstances of the life of Our Lord, to adorn the monastery. There was shown for a long time in the convent of Bologna an image of the Child Jesus which she loved to adorn with her own hands.

The Lord further rewarded this great love by granting her the spirit of prophecy. She predicted the revolt of the inhabitants of Bologna against Annibale Bentivoglio. She announced also beforehand the fall of the Eastern empire and the taking of Constantinople. On 24 July 1446, she saw ascend to heaven the soul of the blessed John Fossignano, bishop of Ferrara.

Catherine’s mother had had by a second marriage a son and a daughter. This son did not lead an edifying life, so Catherine prayed fervently for her erring brother. In 1450, she was miraculously present at Rome in spirit for the canonization of Saint Bernardine of Siena. Then she invoked the glorious triumpher of this solemnity, and obtained from him the conversion of her brother. As for her sister, after having become a Poor Clare and having attained in a few years a very high degree of perfection, she had died in the convent of Ferrara. Catherine saw her soul in glory.

Catherine's virtues having made her noticed early in the cloister, she was first named mistress of novices. Although she regarded herself as unworthy of those functions on which the prosperity of a monastery depends in great part, she was not long in making the young religious placed under her direction advance greatly. She preached by example even more than by her instructions; moreover, she loved to be warned of her least faults, and prayed in a quite special manner for the sisters who rendered her this service. She taught them that the foundation of all virtues is a firm will to please God and to seek his glory in all things. Her pupils put in writing several of her recommendations, which are still possessed today.

The city of Ferrara, finding great advantages in a free communication with the pious girls of the convent, long opposed its enclosure; but Catherine ceased not to pray God and Saint Clare that the Pope should grant the necessary bull. She ended by obtaining it; indeed, the abbess who had directed the convent for twenty years having come to die, Catherine gave the following counsel to the foundress Lucy Mascaroni: "Since they had all become Poor Clares, and at the same time were not sufficiently acquainted with the obligations of the rule, it was fitting to ask some religious from a convent where the strict rule was in force, and to choose among them an abbess who would establish the cloistered life." This counsel pleased Lucy greatly, but the Fathers of the Order had already their eyes on Catherine to name her abbess, and Lucy, who knew her holiness, showed herself also very disposed to it. When the holy girl had knowledge of these intentions, she could not hide her astonishment and displeasure, and they could not resolve to torment that holy soul whose humility dreaded such a burden.

They therefore had some religious of the convent of Mantua come to Ferrara, and, with the Pope's authorization, chose among them an abbess who should have the enclosure observed. But her joy was not of long duration. The convent of Ferrara and those of the neighbouring towns having become too small to contain all the religious who came to ask the habit of Saint Clare, two new monasteries were founded, one at Cremona, the other at Bologna, and Catherine was elected abbess of the latter.

She testified to God in her prayers how much she desired not to be invested with this dignity, and to end her pilgrimage here below in the place where she had embraced the religious life; but the Saviour revealed to her that, according to the will of his heavenly Father, she must accept at Bologna the functions of superior, and that it was at Bologna also that she would end her days. At the same time she saw in heaven two resplendent seats, one of which was a little larger and richer than the other; and as she contemplated them with admiration, asking herself who could occupy them, a heavenly voice answered her that the finer of the two was for Catherine of Bologna.

It was in 1456 that this installation took place. Four Bolognese gentlemen and three distinguished Fathers of the same city had come to bring to the abbess of Ferrara the Pope's bulls and the request of the great council of Bologna. The abbess, who was then Sister Leonarda, of the illustrious family of Ordelaffi, told them that she wished to see them return to Bologna perfectly provided, and that she gave for abbess to their monastery a second Clare, a true daughter of Saint Francis, a holy religious who had deserved to hold the Child Jesus in her arms. As for the sisters whom she sent under her direction, they were worthy of having so holy a mother and they were almost all from Bologna. Catherine wished once more that another should be chosen, but the vicar general and the provincial ordered her to obey. On the eve of her departure for Ferrara [*sic*; Bologna is meant], she kissed the feet of all the religious, bathing them with her tears, and begged pardon for all her faults; she promised never to forget the monastery where she had served God so long, and to leave her after her death a lasting memorial. God kept the promise of his betrothed, by sending a heavenly perfume which was perceptible each year in the monastery about the time of her feast. Catherine set out with fifteen religious and a novice; she was accompanied also by her aged mother Benvenuta, who, a widow of her second husband, had entered the Third Order. With the Pope's permission, she was received in the convent of Bologna, and died there holily, blind and very old, some months after the death of her illustrious daughter.

At Catherine's arrival at Bologna, the city was divided into several parties, which drove one another out in turn, according as one or the other had the upper hand; they agreed nevertheless in an edifying manner to receive within their walls these poor religious, and to give them all sorts of testimonies of honour, as if they had foreseen that they brought with them calm and concord for their country. Two cardinals went to meet them: Bessarion, legate of the Pope, and Philip Calandrini, bishop of Bologna. They were escorted by a great number of persons of distinction and accompanied by a considerable crowd as far as the hospital of Saint Anthony of Padua, which was assigned them for a dwelling until the new cloister should be finished, which took place four months after. During the octave of the Nativity of the most holy Virgin, the new superior had the happiness to receive into the Order the first six sisters by whom the monastery was increased. They all distinguished themselves by their holiness, and all became abbesses also. Catherine soon counted sixty religious in her convent, and at the end of some months it had become insufficient to receive those who continued to present themselves. Then, by means of the alms that flowed in, the municipal council bought some neighbouring houses to enlarge it.

Catherine drew the affection of all the sisters by her tender solicitude. She consoled them in their afflictions, even anticipating their confidences, without respect of persons. So neither complaints nor murmurs were ever heard; and the religious listened with a devoted submission to her affectionate recommendations, which had almost always for their object humility, mutual charity and detachment from the world. She regarded it as a great folly to notice and condemn each other's faults, for it happens very often that a person who seems to us blameworthy is nevertheless in a state of grace, and far more agreeable to God than others who have in appearance great virtues.

She often recalled to her sisters the thought of death, citing these words of the Apostle: "While we have time, let us do good, for we know neither the day nor the hour when the severe Judge will call us." However, she did not wish them to treat their body with immoderate rigour, nor that any should practise without permission some particular penance; she considered that as deceptions of the enemy who, when he despairs of being able to discourage in the exercise of virtue a religious full of zeal, suggests to her inconsiderate penances, which expose her to fall ill and to render herself incapable of fulfilling her ordinary duties. But, at the same time, she inculcated on them this maxim, that one must suffer disgusts and bitternesses, with a view to the eternal reward, and say with Saint Francis: "The happiness I await hereafter is so great that I consider as nothing all misfortunes and all sufferings." She considered good will as the most precious gift that we can receive from God, since no one can be saved without it, nor lost with it.

Her compassion and solicitude for the sick were boundless. However repulsive their ailments might be, she was never seen to show the least disgust at them. Moreover, she cured almost all of them herself, for she had remedies suited to each. Sometimes even her cures were miraculous, as took place on the following occasion:

Excessive penances or unavoidable privations, to which the religious found themselves exposed in the new convent, had so compromised the health of some of them that the physicians had declared they would never recover, or at least that they would remain incapable of fulfilling their daily obligations. Catherine, full of hope in God, went to pray in church; on her return, she gave to some of them what the physicians had prescribed them, and in a few days those were on their feet. She restored others by good words, exhorting them to resign themselves to the will of God; and, as for those who were most dangerously stricken, she sent them in good health to the church, to thank God for their cure.

In 1458, Pope Pius II ordered by a bull that the office of abbess among the Poor Clares should be only for three years. The blessed Mark Fantuzzi,[2] then provincial, had been the promoter of this bull, and when he came to announce its publication to the convent of Bologna, he foresaw well that this measure would give as much pleasure to Saint Catherine as it would be disagreeable to certain other superiors. Indeed, Catherine thanked God warmly for delivering her thus from this burden, and testified also her gratitude to the provincial, bearer of so happy a piece of news.

When her three years were completed, another abbess was elected; but the latter having become blind that very year was obliged to renounce her functions. The sisters had resolved to choose Catherine no more, for fear that her extreme goodness might bring some injury to the severity of the rule. They had, each in particular, made this determination known to the provincial. So the latter's astonishment was at its height when he found, on the day of the election, that all the votes, save one, were for Catherine. He said, with a rather displeased air, that all the sisters were very inconsistent, to do thus the contrary of what they had announced. While all ashamed they kept silence, she who had not voted for Catherine rose full of assurance, and joined her voice to that of the others, adding that God made known clearly enough that he wished for the convent no other superior than Catherine, so long as she should be of this world. Then the provincial, to the general satisfaction, restored Catherine to her functions. She alone was saddened, but she could not resist this unanimity, in which the will of heaven manifested itself in so sensible a manner.

Scarcely had she resumed the direction of the monastery when a great number of pious girls came to ask the habit. There was not room to receive them all; the holy abbess had recourse, as always, to prayer, and in a short time rich postulants obtained from their parents considerable alms which permitted new enlargements. Later the monastery increased still notably, thanks to the generosity of Gregory XIII; there was then formed of it a vast square, surrounded by high walls, and of about a third of a mile in circuit. Besides the fine church where the divine office was celebrated, there is still seen there the parish church of Saint Christopher, and that of Our Lady of the Angels. The number of the religious was ordinarily three hundred, and rose sometimes to three hundred and fifty; it was therefore one of the most considerable convents of all Italy, as well as one of those where the spirit of perfection and poverty reigned in the highest degree.

Catherine had resumed her functions as superior but a short time before she fell dangerously ill. She then had a vision, in which Our Lord appeared to her seated on the throne of his majesty, and surrounded by a crowd of Angels and Saints, who sang these words of Isaias: "And his glory shall be seen in thee." The Saviour took Catherine by the hand, led her near his throne and said to her: "My daughter, listen to this song, and understand well the sense of these words: *And his glory shall be seen in thee.*" Then he explained to her the signification of this word, and assured her at the same time that she would not die of her present illness.

Indeed, Catherine recovered little by little, and continued one year more her life of active charity and ardent devotion. More than ever she sought solitude, and gave herself wholly to prayer and meditation. As happens to all the saints, she thought she had still made only the first step toward perfection, when she had already almost reached its last limit. On the Holy Thursday which had followed her recovery, she had washed the feet of all the religious, according to the custom she had taken up before falling ill. But the following year, on the first Friday of Lent, she assembled them all in chapter and announced to them that her death was near. She gave them her last instructions, and insisted, in finishing, on the charity they owed one another. The sisters were pierced with grief; however, they could not imagine that her presentiment should be justified, for neither that day nor the two following days did they discover in her any precursory sign of death. But on Sunday evening, returning to her cell, she exclaimed suddenly, sighing: "My good Jesus, you might have granted me the grace not to die before having resigned my functions, and having seen a new superior in my place; then, according to my desire, I could have died a subject; but, if it so please you, may your will be done!" Sister Illuminata Bembi, who heard these words, asked her if she did not feel well: "How should I not feel well, since my course is finished?" — "God forbid," cried the sister; "if you were to die, what would become of us?" — "Be united," resumed the holy abbess, "practise penance; God will assist you better than if I remained among you. Only observe the rule as one ought, and after death, I shall be of greater help to you. God be praised for granting me after my exile the so desired rest!" Then, almost instantaneously, all the maladies she had had to suffer during twenty-eight years seized her at once: cruel pains in the head and in the chest were complicated by a terrible flux of blood, then by a burning fever. She remained in this state all the week, bearing her pains with an unalterable patience. On the Wednesday of the following week, she had the

vice-superior come, the blessed Joan Lambertini, and recommended the monastery to her. Doubtless she foresaw what was to happen after her death, for Joan Lambertini directed the convent two years without the religious being willing to choose a new abbess. Catherine, after having confessed several times, turned to the sisters and said to them: “My children, I am going to leave you; but after my death, I shall be more useful to you than during my life, provided you live in mutual concord and charity. This virtue is the inheritance that Jesus Christ left, not only to his Apostles, but also to all Christians, and I bequeath it to you as my testament.” She ordered them next to take great care of the novices, to obey with respect her who should represent her, and to serve with the tenderest charity their blind superior. “Honour, fear and love God,” she said in ending, “preserve your good reputation and that of your convent, and you will find that I shall never abandon you.”

The religious melted into tears; then Catherine represented to them that they ought rather to congratulate her that she was passing from the prison of this life to the abode of eternal joy. After a last confession, she asked pardon humbly of the sisters for all the faults she might have committed against them in word and deed. She then received the most holy Sacrament, and her face appeared animated with a heavenly joy; she turned for the last time her gaze toward her beloved sisters, closed her eyes, and, sighing gently, breathed forth her blessed soul into the hands of the Spouse of virgins. It was eight o’clock in the morning, 9 March 1463. Catherine had lived fifty years on earth, and had given thirty-nine of them to God in the convents of Ferrara and Bologna.

HER CULT AND RELICS. — HER WRITINGS.

It would be difficult to express what was the desolation of the sisters at the death of their holy superior.

Yet the face of the departed became all radiant with a heavenly light, and her body exhaled a sweet odour which strengthened hearts and softened their sadness. When it was placed before the tabernacle, the features of the face grew still more beautiful with a greater expression of joy. At this sight the religious, in the enthusiasm of their admiration, embraced her face, pressed her hands and feet, and could not be satisfied with contemplating the precious remains of their mother.

The funeral took place with great solemnity: the body was put in the earth and kept between two boards, in order not to be damaged. The sisters often went to visit her tomb, to pray and weep there. A very sweet perfume escaped from it, and it was sometimes seen crowned with a brilliant light. Several religious were cured there of various maladies or delivered from temptations, sadnesses, troubles of conscience; thus the holy abbess appeared from then on to keep the promise she had made to be of great help to them after her death. At the sight of so many prodigies attesting the favour of heaven, the religious keenly regretted that the body of their holy mother should be buried so humbly in the common cemetery. They obtained from the confessor permission to put it in a coffin. On the nineteenth day after her death, it was exhumed, she was still perfectly preserved; they were to put her in the coffin and then place her again in the earth; but, by a supernatural impulse, the sisters who carried her led her into the church, before the tabernacle. The lid was opened, and her face appeared as if flooded with joy. A great number of persons came to visit her and were witnesses of this radiant and living expression of her countenance. It is even related that she spoke to call a young girl, Leonora Poggi, who, in her great desire to see her, had run to the monastery without the knowledge of her parents. As this girl was pushing through the crowd to reach the grating, Catherine opened her eyes, and making a sign with her hand, said in a very distinct voice: “Leonora Poggi, come then.” When Leonora was near the grating, Catherine added: “Hold yourself ready, for I wish you to be a religious in this convent, where you will become the best loved of my daughters, and the guardian of my body.” Leonora was then only eleven years old. Eight years later, she refused a rich match which her family proposed to her, became a Poor Clare, and was in fact charged with taking care of the body of Saint Catherine. She lived holily in the monastery for fifty-five years. The body having been exposed seven days to public veneration, the cardinal archbishop of Bologna had it put in a double coffin and enclosed in a tomb in the form of an

altar, which had been built expressly. The religious often went to visit her there, and several were cured of various maladies by the simple touch of her precious remains. A child near death recovered health, and a dead person was raised to life by means of some relics of the holy abbess. Other miraculous cures were also experienced by invoking her intercession, by coming to visit her tomb, or by making use of some object that had touched her mortal remains.

About a year later, it was perceived that the parts of the body which were not covered by her garments were blackening because of the dampness of the tomb, which had been built too hastily. The body was then carried into a room near the Church, which the Saint had formerly occupied; and it was transported to the choir whenever they wished to expose it to the eyes of visitors. But, as it had to be carried in arms going down and up a staircase, a rolling seat was afterwards made, in which she was seated; this seat was placed in the choir, and was made to approach the grating at will.

The queen of Navarre, Isabella, wife of Ferdinand of Aragon, having heard much of her miracles, and read with great pleasure her book of the Seven Spiritual Weapons, which Cardinal Capranito sent her, put her husband and her kingdom under her protection. This devotion had its reward, for in 1463, when her throne ran the greatest danger, the king of Naples, at the moment when it was least to be expected, won a decisive victory which delivered him from his enemies. Isabella wished to prove her gratitude in a manner worthy of her rank. She betook herself to Bologna two years after, in 1465, and after entering the convent of the Poor Clares, she took off her crown and put it on the head of Saint Catherine, saying with effusion: “I know, blessed virgin, that it is by your intercession that the throne of Naples has been restored to my husband, to me and to my children; I come to discharge my debt to her to whom I am most indebted after God: we possess only a passing kingdom, whereas yours is eternal; this crown therefore suits you better than me: I pray you to be pleased to receive it for ever and to take me under your protection.” Then Isabella put on the finger of the holy abbess her ring, adorned with a very precious diamond; and, after making a generous alms to the convent, she returned to Naples, where she died piously some months after.

At the end of a certain time, with the authorization of two cardinals, the legate of the Pope and the archbishop of Bologna, the body of Saint Catherine was transported, still seated on the same seat, to a room which was converted into a chapel. This seat, which she had used during her life, ended at last, after more than a hundred years, by being deteriorated; it was replaced by another artistically carved and adorned with rich gilding. The head of the Saint bears a crown of gold; her hands and feet are covered with precious stones; the right hand holds a crucifix, the left rests on a book, in the binding of which pearls are set. The whole body is wrapped in magnificent garments and a mantle of precious stuff. These various adornments are the gifts of several remarkable persons, among whom must be cited Charles Borromeo, who often invoked her as his quite special protectress. This body is assuredly one of the most remarkable and best preserved relics that Italy possesses.

Monsieur the secretary of the archbishopric of Bologna, Don Francesco Fantoni, wrote us, on 27 November 1858, on the relics of Saint Catherine, a letter in Italian, of which here is the French translation [rendered here into English]:

“Sir, [*the printed text has a stray* ”et” *here*] Here is some information about our Saint Catherine. I could not betake myself in person to the sanctuary to observe each thing minutely; but I charged with this care a lady on whose good sense, great intelligence and instruction I can count: it is Miss Levis; I have the honour to transmit to you the letter she addressed to me. I have myself very often seen what this letter reports; it is known to everyone, because every year, for eight consecutive days, from the 9th to the 16th of March, the populations run in crowds, from the town and the country, to see the Saint and kiss her venerated foot. Nevertheless, I wished that the person who should have to make the account of it could say she had had full liberty to see, touch, observe by herself. Indeed, according to the order I had given to the guardian of the sanctuary, he introduced my envoy there, and made her see everything. I think I have thus satisfied the desire

expressed in your letter."

The so interesting letter of Miss Maria Levis is in French; we transcribe it in its entirety: "Monsieur l'abbé, I have accomplished, with all possible care, the commission you had given me, to go and see Saint Catherine of Bologna, and to give you all the information that I believe most interesting about the body of this Saint. Here is what I was able to remark by myself, and the notices which the Father Confessor and Madam the abbess had the goodness to give me.

"Father Giry will have seen the Saint through an iron grating with an oval opening, made in a chapel of the church, and which gives on the closet where the precious body of Saint Catherine is kept. I, I have not only seen her near, but I have touched her, and I can assure you that there is not now seen in her that appearance of life which Father Giry had remarked, because of the almost black complexion of her skin, which has dried on the bones, and of the sensible change of forms which has come about in her face. She is nevertheless preserved from all corruption and has her members complete: which is the more admirable as she was never embalmed, and as she has always been left in the state in which she was at her death. She appears seated, but the religious assured me that she supports herself by herself, and that she rests only on one of her feet. On her face, scarcely the trace of the eyes is seen; the nose is still intact; the mouth lets some rather white teeth be perceived. She has a whitish spot near the chin, and, according to tradition, it is the mark of a kiss which she received from Our Lord, the Child Jesus. It was during a Christmas night that the Mother of God put her Son, wrapped in swaddling clothes, into the hands of this Blessed. Her hands, her feet too, keep a fine shape, and the arms have still a flexibility which permits them to be raised. The religious charged with dressing the Saint are touched by the sweet odour which the garments taken off her give out. The scapular which she wore at her death is perfect, in spite of four centuries' duration. There is still seen, near her, a phial which contains a liquor always liquid, very odorous (according to the assertion of the religious); it is the sweat she gave off after her death. Several works of the Saint are also to be remarked: there remain to us some paintings from her hand, very beautiful manuscripts, in which she imitated the printed character of the fifteenth century. Her violin remains to us still."

As Saint Catherine painted admirably, at least in miniature, the academy of painting at Bologna has taken her for patroness.

The blessed Catherine composed several spiritual treatises for the instruction of devout and religious souls. She wrote in Latin and in Italian. In her book of the *Seven Spiritual Weapons*, she teaches us to combat the enemies of our soul. In that of her *Revelations*, she shows that one must always be on one's guard and on the defensive in the combat we have with the devil. She avows that she was deceived in it, and that, trusting too much in the great graces she had received from God, she had imagined herself above the artifices of the devil, who had nevertheless deceived her, appearing to her under the figure of Jesus nailed on the cross, and under that of the holy Virgin. From this she draws the consequence that it is God alone who can make us discover the malice of the devil: for, as for her, her too great credulity put her in states in which she knew not whether she was loved by God or abandoned by him. After her death, this book was found sealed, because she did not wish it to appear in her lifetime. She had made another on the temptations which the devil had stirred up in her, and the helps she had received from God to overcome them. But, having perceived that knowledge of this work had been obtained, she threw it into the fire to avoid vainglory. Finally, there is found a hymn of hers, on the origin of the intellectual creature, and on the five joyful mysteries of the Rosary.

Here is a short analysis of the *Treatise on the Spiritual Weapons*:

"Every person," she says, "who wishes to take upon herself the cross of the Saviour, who died first on the field of battle to give us life, must first seize the weapons necessary for this kind of combat. The first is diligence, or application to doing well: therefore no lukewarmness; it is accursed; no negligence, and great

care to avoid too much as well as too little: in a word, to have discretion. The second weapon is distrust of oneself and confidence in God; for without God we can do nothing.[3] The third is the remembrance of the Passion and of the instructive pilgrimage of Jesus Christ on earth. The fourth weapon is the remembrance of death: therefore let us do good while there is time.[4] The fifth is the remembrance of the goods of paradise: it is impossible, said Saint Augustine, to enjoy present goods and future goods. Let us repeat with Saint Francis of Assisi: 'Lord, the just await me, until you give me the reward.'[5] The sixth weapon is the authority of the holy Scriptures: it is with this weapon that Jesus Christ conquered the devil in the desert, it is this weapon that the blessed virgin Cecilia always carried hidden in her breast."

We have still, from Saint Catherine of Bologna, two mystic ladders: the first, which is the ladder of the virtues, has ten degrees; the second, which is the ladder of humility, has twelve. The ten degrees of the first ladder are: 1° *cloister*, or separation of body and spirit from all the things of the world; 2° *audition*,[6] or promptness to hear the word of God, according to this saying of the prophet: "I will hear what the Lord my God will deign to say to my heart";[7] 3° *restraint*, which is the guardian of the virtues of the religious; 4° silence; 5° *graciousness*, that is to say kindness, honesty, courtesy toward all sorts of persons; 6° vigilance; 7° purity of mind, which consists particularly in always thinking well of others; 8° obedience: to obey is the surest way of not being deceived; 9° humility, which is so odious to the devil and so conformable to the examples of Jesus Christ; 10° love of God and of neighbour, which is the end of the life of every Christian and the perfection of the religious life.

The twelve degrees of the ladder of humility consist: 1° in having a kindly exterior and cordial manners; 2° in speaking, in few words, with discretion and low; 3° in being neither easy nor quick to laugh; 4° in keeping silence until one is questioned; 5° in observing the rule exactly; 6° in believing oneself the most miserable of the persons of the world; 7° in confessing that one is useless and unfit for the least thing; 8° in frequenting often the sacrament of penance; 9° in embracing obedience promptly, without murmur either interior or exterior; 10° in submitting perfectly to those who are above us; 11° in never doing one's own will; 12° in fearing God with a filial fear.

One day, one of her companions said to her: "If I could do as you do, I should be very happy." Catherine answered her: "My dear sister, if you pretend to have what others have, you must also put a little of your own into it." — "And in what does what I must put of my own consist?" The Saint answered: "In acquiring the following things: the first is to despise the things of earth, even to forgetting your parents and your friends; the second is to endure without murmur the suffering of all your pains; the third is the extirpation of interior vices and of the exterior airs of the world; the fourth is the mortification of body and mind, fidelity in listening to the dictates of our conscience; the fifth is compassion toward the neighbour.

"And when your soul shall have acquired these five things, it will still be necessary to give all your care to acquiring the five following: 1° the continual occupation of body and mind, for idleness begets many sins; 2° serenity of soul and face; 3° confidence in God; 4° humility of heart; 5° fear of God. And when your soul shall have passed these degrees, it will have to mount five others still, after which it will be admitted even in this world to participation in the beatitude which the true servants of the good God enjoy even here below. Now these are the five degrees: The first is the knowledge of the way of perfection, which consists in knowing particularly Jesus Christ, the Eternal Truth, and imitating him; the second is liquefaction, that is, that one must so love God that, by the effect of this love, one feels as it were to melt; the third is union with God, whether by works or by virtues; the fourth is joy in God, with God and for God; the fifth and last degree is perpetual praise, that is to say a continual desire to praise and glorify God from whom all goods proceed." On the efficacy of prayer, she was often heard repeating these beautiful words: "When you see a religious person who does not give herself to prayer, do not make great foundation on her and have not great confidence in her works, because, though she wears outwardly the habit of a person consecrated to God, lacking the spirit of prayer, she will not be able to persist long in this kind of life. Who does not practise

prayer assiduously and does not relish it, has not in himself those bonds which hold one tied, attached and as it were clasped to God; so it will be no astonishing thing that the world and the devil, finding her thus alone, should bring her to bind herself with them."

Her life was written in Italian about fifty years after her death, by Denis Paleotti, of the Order of Saint Francis, and translated into Latin by John Anthony Flaminio; it is thence that Baronius drew it to insert it in the seventeenth volume of the *Ecclesiastical Annals*. The bishop of Pamiers makes mention of her also in the supplement to the Annals of Baronius, and Bollandus gives her life, composed by various authors. — The one we give here is extracted from the *Seraphic Palm-tree*.

Saint Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona, Father of the Church

(390).

Saint Pacian, Spanish by birth, bishop of Barcelona, was born and died in the fourth century of the Church:[1] according to Saint Jerome, he rendered himself equally recommendable by the purity and holiness of his life, and by his eloquence, that is to say by the purity and exactness of his discourse and the beauty of his mind. He had been engaged in marriage before his episcopate, and had a son named Flavius Dexter, who was of so great consideration in the empire that he was honoured with the dignity of praetorian prefect, and who was the particular friend of Saint Jerome. He employed his great talents no less in combating heresies than vices. We have proofs of it, above all with regard to the Novatians, against whose errors he wrote some letters to a man who was engaged in their sect. Three of them have been preserved to us, which not only justify the advantageous judgment which Saint Jerome made of him, but which show also how attached he was to the truth of the doctrine received successively in the whole Church from the Apostles, by the channel of a pure and constant tradition. It is there that he teaches all the faithful to distinguish themselves from all sects, by taking, as a law, the name of Christian and the surname of Catholic, while the heretics bear the name of their chiefs or of their authors. It is not only in writings against the Novatians that our Saint rendered himself the defender of penance: he laboured no less among Catholics to establish its necessity and advantages. In one of his exhortations on this subject that has remained to us, he acknowledges that it is sometimes more fitting not to speak at all of certain vices than to reprove them by exposing them to the light, because one sometimes learns the evil sooner than one prevents it, and there are ways of putting out fire that serve only to rekindle it. He complained of having made a vexatious experience of this against his intention, in publishing his little book of the *Stag*. He had composed this work against a sort of profane game called the little Stag, which was much in use in Gallia Narbonensis and Aquitaine, and which had been introduced into Catalonia. But, instead of the good effect which he had promised himself from it, he had remarked that his writing had served only to excite the more the curiosity of persons inclined to evil, and that more sure remedies were needed, but of a more secret virtue, to act against disorders which are public, and sustained by the multitude. This little treatise of the *Stag* is among the number of the works of Saint Pacian that we have lost: and there remain to us, besides those of which we have spoken, only a discourse on Baptism, addressed to the catechumens. What such precious remains are worth ought to make us judge of the greatness of the loss that we have made. Besides the elegance of style, which was very rare in his century, and still more in the following ones, there is found in them a very great justness in his thoughts, much solidity in his reasonings, turn, vivacity and agreeableness in his manner of writing: qualities which, being joined to purity of doctrine and morals in Saint Pacian, have caused him to be regarded as one of the greatest ornaments of the Church. He died in a great and happy old age, under the reign of Theodosius the Elder, about the year 390.

Saint Alvère, Virgin and Martyr

Alvère made herself the servant of Christ from her early age. She cultivated piety and charity with perseverance and with progress, and thus rendered herself worthy of martyrdom. Struck with an axe, by the

hand of villains, she rendered her soul to God on the 9th of March. She gave her name to the village of Sainte-Alvère, situated in the diocese of Périgueux; the head of the virgin martyr is preserved there, marked with a wide scar. In that part of the diocese of Rodez which formerly constituted the diocese of Vabres, this virgin martyr is honoured with a special cult. Her relics are preserved in the church of Vabres, a place near which flows a little brook named the brook of Sainte-Alvère.

It is on the 6th of March that her feast is kept in the diocese of Rodez.

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[1] The monastery of Our Lady of La Charité-sur-Loire had been founded in 1056; at the same time that the conventual buildings were being raised, work was going on with the greatest activity at the construction of the church, which was to be worthy of the eldest daughter of Cluny, for such is the title taken by the priory of the Charité. Five naves led to the transept. There now remains of the ancient church only the region of the choir, with its chapels radiating round the sanctuary, its ambulatory and the apsidal chapels. It was this vast and magnificent church that was to receive its consecration from a Pope, as its founder Saint Gerard had announced before dying. Indeed, Pope Paschal II, who was travelling through France in the interest of the Church, consecrated it on 10 March of the year 1103. Numerous prodigies accompanied this dedication: the consecrating Pontiff was the very first delivered from a malignant fever from which he had long suffered. At the moment when he stretched his hands over the altar and poured the holy Chrism on it, his face became radiant like that of an Angel; a heavenly messenger appeared in the air and assured him that Our Lord and his Mother were at his side. — They had neglected to prepare the crumb of bread that is used to remove the oil with which the consecrator's hands are impregnated. Suddenly a poorly clad man presented a piece of bread, to the great astonishment of all. It is to be remarked that it was the bread of charity that was used in the consecration of the church of the Charité, for he who offered it was a poor man, according to the minutes drawn up under the dictation of the monk sacristan Robert, who attended the ceremony. See Mgr Crosnier, *Hagiologie nivernaise*. [The note is printed across the page break at the foot of the next page; rejoined.]

[2] First a hermit in the island of Ushant, he left his hermitage to go and settle near the relics of Saint Paul, first bishop of Léon, which had been, during the Norman invasion, transferred to the abbey of Fleury, in the diocese of Orléans. He embarked with this design with some companions on a little vessel which was overturned by the waves on this passage. God protected them so particularly that none perished. The very book which Saint Felix used to sing the praises of God was not spoiled by the sea water. At that time most of the monasteries of Brittany were in ruins. Geoffrey I, count of Rennes, charged our Saint to rebuild them. It was the labour of his life. After having long governed with prudence the community of Rhuys, he went to receive the reward of his labours in the year 1038, and was buried in the left wing of his church, where his tomb is still found. His holiness has been attested by a great number of miracles. He is honoured in no diocese.

[3] This feast is celebrated with much solemnity at Marseilles, on the Friday after the fourth Sunday of Lent. Here is how the Proper of that diocese expresses itself in this regard: "This is now the acceptable time, behold the day of salvation. Today the holy Church of Marseilles solemnly opens the treasure of graces which she has received from the liberality of the sovereign Pontiffs. Now here is what happened: At the moment of the greatest furies of the schism, and while the whole Christian world found itself divided, Marseilles, animated by a pure and sincere zeal, recognized with the kingdom of France Pope Clement VII, who established the apostolic see at Avignon. This Pope, grateful for the great benefits with which he and his cardinals had been loaded by the clergy and people of Marseilles, wishing besides to reward the unshaken fidelity we had kept to Joan, queen of Sicily and sovereign mistress of our city, drew for us abundant riches from the treasury of indulgences. The sovereign Pontiff willed that every year, all those who, truly contrite and confessed, should visit our cathedral church on the Friday that follows the fourth Sunday of Lent, and who should come to the help of the fabric of this church or make any other pious alms, should have a share in all the pardons and indulgences granted, by the authority of the sovereign pontiffs, to those who, each year, on the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, visit the basilica of Saint Peter at Rome. Now, that no one may conceive a doubt in this regard, let it be known that Pope Martin V confirmed, later, all the decrees touching faith and good morals, issued by the sovereign Pontiffs during the continuance of the schism. Let us therefore receive with piety, humility and devotion the benefits of heavenly munificence, that we may bear worthy fruits of penance, and that Christ, who is about to rise from the dead on the holy day of Easter, may find us pure of all stain. We celebrate the same day the translation of a notable relic of Saint Lazarus, which was brought to us after having been long and piously venerated in the island of Malta. Charles-Fortunatus de Mazenod, who, first, occupied the episcopal see of Marseilles since its re-establishment, after having scrupulously verified the documents that establish the authenticity of this relic, transported it and deposited it solemnly in the cathedral church, in the presence of the canons, of all the clergy, and in the midst of a great concourse of people, on the Friday before Passion Sunday, and the second day of April of the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four. On the occasion of this same solemnity, the relics of Saint Victor, martyr; of Saint Cannatus, bishop of Marseilles; of Saint Adrian, martyr; of Saint Cassian, abbot, and many others which the cathedral church formerly had the honour of possessing and which the endowment of some of the faithful had withdrawn from the searches of the impious, during the fury of the revolutionary tempest, were likewise examined, recognized and again transferred with the relics of Saint Lazarus, from the church of Saint-Martin to the cathedral church."

[4] Bk. iv, ch. 28.

[5] Cave pretends that Saint Gregory of Nyssa continued to cohabit with his wife, even when he was bishop. This fact, for which he furnishes no proof, would have been contrary to the laws of the Church then in force: 1° Deacons, priests, bishops who had not been married before their ordination were to remain celibate; 2° those who were married were to separate from their wives, by reciprocal consent, to enter the priesthood. According to Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, the necessity of celibacy had become so popular a

conviction that the sacraments would not have been accepted from the hands of a married priest. Synesius at first refused the bishopric of Ptolemais, because he could not accept it without renouncing all intercourse with his wife. See Eusebius, Saint Jerome, Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Epiphanius, etc. It is only from the seventh century, when the East began no longer to let itself be guided entirely by Rome, that it gradually lost the ideal of the priesthood, and that the clergy, in freeing itself from chastity, lost consideration, learning and zeal. [Printed across a page break and rejoined.]

[6] All this is reported by Anastasius the Librarian. The error of the two souls was condemned in the seventh general council, can. 11, t. VIII, *Conc.*, p. 1132.

[7] In the tenth century the Turks were divided into seven, and sometimes ten tribes, each of which had an independent prince named Chagan. (See M. Joseph Assemani, *Orig. Eccl. Slav.*, t. II and III, p. 161.) They drove out the Arabs and the other nations of Huns from the banks of the Etil, called afterwards Volga, as far as the Danube, under the reign of the emperors Maurice and Tiberius, who made alliance with them, and sent them two magnificent embassies, the description of which is found in Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*Excerpta Hist. de Legationibus*) and in Theophylact Simocatta. It is from these ancient Turks that some authors derive those among the Oyguz Tartars who inhabit Asia, as well as the Tartars of Crimea. Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*De regendo Imperio, ad Roman. filium*) and the other authors of the Byzantine history also give the name of Turks to the Hungarians and to the nations that are to the north of Europe and Asia. [This note is interleaved in the print with the body text — "the holy monk … Methodius" — and has been disentangled.]

[8] In the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, this country had Bulgaria to the east, the land of the Patzinaks to the north, Moravia to the west, and the country of the Chrobati to the south.

[9] Cf. *Acta Sanctorum* on 9 March.

[10] It was under the reign of the emperor Anastasius that the Bulgarians left the settlement they had by the Volga. The new State they founded subsisted until 1013, when John, the last of their kings, was assassinated. Basil II added Bulgaria to the Eastern empire. This name of Bulgars or Vulgars came to them from their dwelling on the banks of the Volga.

[11] He was baptized by Greek priests. Baronius and Henschenius put his baptism in 845; Father Pagi puts it in 861, and Jos. Assemani in 865. It is not true that Bogoris was baptized at Constantinople, as some authors have pretended; the revolt of the Bulgarians is an evident proof of it.

[12] *Responsa ad consult. Bulgar.*, t. VII, *Conc.*, p. 1542.

[13] Moravians are mentioned for the first time in a letter of Pope Eugenius II, written in 825. (See Hansizius, in *German. sacra*, t. I, p. 71.) The Moravians, like the Carinthians, were of Slavic blood. The latter were governed by dukes, and the former by kings, of whom the first was Samo, born in the neighbourhood of Brussels. The Moravians thus rewarded him for the services he had rendered them in defending them courageously against the Avars or the Huns of Pannonia. Although Moravia had been conquered by Charlemagne, with Bavaria and Pannonia (at least Eginhard says so expressly), it was nevertheless governed, in 850, by dukes who disputed the sovereignty. Their names were Mojmír and Pribina or Prinnina. The first having been assassinated, Rastislav, his nephew, was made king of Moravia in 856 by Louis, king of Germany. Henschenius calls this prince Svatopluk, but it is an error, as M. Jos. Assemani has proved from the *Annals of Fulda*. Svatopluk was the nephew of Rastislav; he succeeded him and at first persecuted the Christians.

[14] Kohl, Kulcinius, Hofman and Jos. Assemani think that the name of Slavs or Slavonians comes from *slava*, which signified glory in the language of those peoples. The Slavs, Scythians in origin, had issued from the neighbourhood of the Palus Maeotis, and had fallen on the north of Germany, whence they drove out the Vandals, the Venedi, etc. They settled in Pomerania and in the neighbouring countries. Another swarm of Slavs seized Illyria, and subdued the Goths and Gepids about the reign of the emperor Justinian, as we learn from Constantine Porphyrogenitus and from Procopius, etc. (See Jos. Assemani, t. III, p. 309; Budrius, in the history of Ragusa, and John Lucius, in his book *De regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*.) The Slavs afterwards acquired new settlements in Poland and in Bohemia. The affinity of the languages spoken in these two countries is the proof of it. Here is what is read in the first chapter of the *Chronicon Slavorum*: "The Danes and the Swedes inhabit the northern coast of the Baltic Sea; but the southern coast of the same sea is inhabited by the Slavs. Under this denomination are understood the Russians, who are to the east, the Poles, who have the Prussians to the north, and to the south the Bohemians, the Moravians and the Carinthians." M. Jos. Assemani has demonstrated, in his *Origines Slavorum*, t. II and III, that the Slavs originally inhabited a part of Scythia and Sarmatia, and that they issued from it to spread over Germany, Poland, Bohemia, Pannonia, Dalmatia and Illyria. The kingdom of Bohemia was founded, about the year 650, by Zechus and Chechus [■ech and Lech?], who were Slavs, and even brothers according to some authors. The Patzinaks, who were also originally from Scythia, fell on the frontiers of the Roman empire, seized the ancient Dacia, and gave the Greeks much occupation; but in the end they were vanquished and subdued by John Comnenus. The Greeks gave them the name of "Clahes". They are today the Wallachians. See John Lucius, *loc. cit.*, bk. vi, ch. 5. [The note is interleaved with the text of the Pope's letter on the following page; disentangled and rejoined.]

[15] One reads in some authors that Saint Cyril was bishop of Moravia; but this agrees neither with the Polish Breviary nor with other ancient monuments. It is said there, indeed, that Saint Cyril died a monk, and that Saint Methodius was consecrated archbishop only after his brother's death. It is also said in the second life of our two Saints, published by Henschenius, that they were summoned to Rome by Pope Nicholas, who was no longer living when they arrived; that Cyril became a monk in that city, and died there before having been consecrated bishop. Saint Methodius has the title of archbishop of the Moravians in a letter of Pope John VIII, dated the year 879. In a letter of the same Pope to Svatopluk, duke of Moravia, Saint Cyril is simply styled philosopher. "We approve," he says, *ep.* [247], "the Slavonic letters, invented by the philosopher Constantine (Cyril), and order that the praises of God be sung in the Slavonic language." This passage leaves no doubt about the true inventor of the Slavonic alphabet. The ancient lives of Saint Cyril are

conformable to it. The same thing is found in an author who wrote in 878. His work was published by Freher, in his collection of *rerum Bohemicarum*. — One might say also that from humility Saint Cyril resigned the episcopate, and that is even what one of his biographers affirms. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*.

[16] *Epist.* 247. Cf. Hanzius, t. I, *German. Sacr.*, p. 163; Jos. Assemani, *Orig. Eccl. Slav.*, t. III, p. 173. It appears from the letters of John VIII and from the two lives of the Saint that the affair here in question had not been examined by Popes Nicholas and Adrian, as Cardinal Bona and some authors have pretended. The Slavonic missal was revised in 1631, by order of Urban VIII. The brief of approbation of this Pope is seen at the head of the same missal, printed at Rome in 1715, at the expense of the Congregation of Propaganda. This Congregation also had the Slavonic Breviary printed at Rome, in 1688, by order of Pope Innocent XI. At the head is found the brief by which Innocent X approves this Breviary, and orders its recitation by the Slavs. The reader will perhaps not be displeased that we treat at some length what concerns the use of the Slavonic language in the ecclesiastical office. The liturgy is celebrated in Slavonic in the churches of Dalmatia and Illyria which follow the Latin rite, and in those of the Russians, Muscovites and Bulgarians which follow the Greek rite. The usage of the Slavs of performing the office in their language was approved by the synod of Zamo■■ in 1720, and confirmed by Innocent XIII and by Benedict XIV, *Inter plures*, constit. 98, an. 1714; *Bullar.* t. I, p. 376, constit. 68, *Etsi dubitare non possumus*, an. 1742, ibid. p. 217, constit. *Ex pastoralis munere*, 1754. It had been previously approved by John VIII, Urban VIII and Innocent X. In the churches of Moravia, Dalmatia and Illyria, where Mass is said in Latin, the Gospel is no sooner read in that tongue than it is read again to the people in Slavonic. See Jos. Assemani, t. IV, *Commen. in Calend. univ.* part 2, ch. 4, p. 416. A synod held at Split, and a legate of the Pope, ordered, about the year 1070, that the Slavonic language should not be used in the divine office. This decree was confirmed by Alexander II; but one must either agree that it concerned only the churches situated toward Poland and Moravia, or say that it was never executed. There are even in the diocese of Spalato ten chapters and several parishes that celebrate the liturgy in Slavonic. We learn this from Orbinus, cited by the learned Carman, archbishop of Zara, in his dissertation *De lingua slavica litterali in divinis celebrandis*, n. 32. The same thing is attested by Robert Sala, in his *Observations on the liturgical books of Cardinal Bona*, bk. I, ch. 9, § 4, p. 151. This last author adds that there are in the diocese of Spalato only eight parishes where the Latin language is used.

Pope Gregory VII, bk. vii, ep. 2 *ad Uratislaum Bohemiae ducem*, forbade saying Mass in Slavonic; but this prohibition concerned only those of Bohemia. The reason of it is besides very easy to discern. The permission John VIII granted to Saint Methodius to employ the Slavonic language in the Church had never extended to Poland and Bohemia; it is therefore not astonishing that those who wished to introduce it into the churches of these two kingdoms should have been opposed.

Cardinal Bona is mistaken in confounding (*Liturg.*, bk. I, ch. 9, § 4) the Slavonic language with the Illyrian. This latter is a particular dialect which has been introduced among the Slavs of Illyria. The Slavonic used in the liturgy is the ancient one, that from which the modern dialects have come, and which is called the Slavonic of the schools or of the learned. *Idioma quod nunc slavum litterale appellant*, says Benedict XIV, after Urban VIII, Innocent X, etc. When Carman revised the Breviary and missal of the Slavs, printed at Rome in 1745, he followed the rules of the ancient Slavonic language, of which there is a dictionary for the use of the clergy. It is called *Azbukvidarium* or *Abecedarium*. There is also a grammar of the same language, composed by Smotrytsky, a Russian monk of Saint Basil. It was printed at Vilna in 1619, and at Moscow in 1721. If one wishes to know how great is the difference between the ancient Slavonic and all the modern dialects derived from it, one may consult Father Le Long, *Bibl. sacr.*, t. I, art. 6, sect. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, and Reland at the end of the third part of his *Dissertationes Miscellaneae*. The Slavonic language is in use in Bohemia, Moravia, Poland, Muscovy, Russia, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bulgaria, etc. But the dialects of all these countries differ so much among themselves that a Pole, for example, does not understand a Dalmatian. This observation is from Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, bishop of Warmia, in Poland (*Dial. de Sacro vernaculo legendo*). The same author thinks that there is no language so widespread as the Slavonic. The Arabic must nevertheless be excepted, which is in use among the Christians of Arabia, Syria and Egypt, and among the Mohammedans who inhabit Asia, Africa, and a considerable part of Europe.

Herbinius, *De Religiosis Kioviensibus Cryptis*, pretends that Slavonic is a mother tongue, which has given birth to the idioms spoken in Russia, Muscovy, Poland, Vandalia, Bohemia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Wallachia and Bulgaria. It is thought to hold the middle between Hebrew and the other languages, both of the East and the West, and to suit all climates. Some add that it appears to have all that is necessary to become a universal language. Authors have been found who have attributed to Saint Jerome the invention of the Slavonic alphabet and the translation of the Bible into that language; but their opinion is certainly false. Saint Jerome tells us himself that he translated the Bible into his own language. Now the language of Saint Jerome was Latin. See Banduri, *Animad. in Constantin. Porphyrog. de administr. imper.*, p. 117.

The Slavonic letters have no affinity with the Gothic; they were invented by Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius, who formed them from the Greek alphabet. The Slavs have two other alphabets for ordinary use: one, which is of a fine character, is current chiefly in Dalmatia, Carniola and Istria; the other, which has almost no resemblance to the first, appears to have been borrowed from the Croats and the Serbs. (See Kohl, *Introduct. ad Hist. Slavor.*, and Jos. Assemani, bk. iv.) Of all the dialects of the Slavonic language there is none that has been so cultivated as Polish. The Lithuanians have not a common origin with the Slavs. This is proved by the diversity of their language, which is a dialect of Sarmatian. For more details, see the history of the Bohemian language and literature by Dobrovský. Prague, 1792.

N.B. The particle *ski*, with which Polish names end, corresponds to our article *de*: thus one must not say *le comte de Jablonski*, but *le comte Jablonski*, or *le comte de Jablon*.

[17] See on 16 September for Saint Ludmilla, and on 28 September for Saint Wenceslas. The Greeks and Muscovites honour him on 11 May; they keep the feast of Saint Cyril on 14 February.

[18] *Profiteor. Offero.* [The two Latin words, “I profess”; “I offer.”]

[19] Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. II of March, new ed., and Grimes, *Esprit des Saints*, vol. V, 3rd edition.

[20] See 27 March.

[21] John xv, 5.

[22] Gal. vi, 10.

[23] *Me expectant justi, donec retribuas mihi.* Ps. cxli, 8.

[24] In Italian *audienza*. Some authors have translated it *audience*: we believe that this is improper.

[25] *Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus meus.*

[26] Cf. *Esprit des Saints*, by M. the abbé Grimes, vol. V.

10 March

Martyrologies

Tenth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Sebaste, in Armenia, the Forty Blessed Martyrs. 320. — At Apamea, in Phrygia, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Caius and Alexander, who, as Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis, relates in his book against the Cataphrygian heretics, won the palm of a glorious martyrdom in the persecution of Marcus Antoninus and Lucius Verus. About 168. — In Persia, the martyrdom of forty holy martyrs. About 375. — At Corinth, the holy martyrs Codratus, Dionysius, Cyprian, Anectus, Paul and Crescens, who, in the persecution of Decius and Valerian, and under the governor Jason, perished by the edge of the sword. 258. — In Africa, Saint Victorinus, martyr: on the day of his feast, Saint Augustine gave a sermon to the people. — At Jerusalem, Saint Macarius,[1] bishop and confessor, at whose exhortation the holy places were purified by Constantine and Helena, and decorated with holy basilicas. About 334. — At Paris, the decease of Saint Droctoveus, abbot, disciple of Saint Germanus, bishop. 580. — At the monastery of Bobbio, Saint Attalus, abbot, illustrious for his miracles. 627.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Lagny-sur-Marne, in the diocese of Paris, Saint Emilian or Imelin, abbot, disciple and successor of Saint Fursey. About 675. — At Poitiers, Saint Disciola, virgin, religious of Sainte-Croix.[2] Sixth century. — At Nesle-la-Reposte, near Villenauxe, in Brie, Saint Blanchard, confessor, whose body is honoured in this place with relics of Saint Bout [*sic*]. There is in the diocese of Auch, near Mirande, a parish which from his name is called Saint-Blanquart. 659. — At Montenois, in the diocese of Nevers, consecration of an altar which encloses the relics of Saint Savinian and Saint Potentian, apostles of the Senonais. — In Belgium, at Vissenaeken, near Tirlemont, the feast of Saint Himelin, priest, a native of Scotland, near relative and contemporary of Saint Rumbold. He was found after his death with his face illumined with a heavenly brightness. Eighth century.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — At Palermo, in Sicily, the blessed Peter of Jeremias, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, who, encouraged in the ministry of the word of God by Saint Vincent Ferrer, gave himself wholly to the salvation of souls. *Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites.* — The forty blessed Martyrs, whose torment and triumph are recalled to memory on the eve of this day.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Armenia, Saint Peter, bishop of Sebaste, who buried the remains of the forty blessed Martyrs. About 320. — At Venice, Saint Meliton and his companion, martyrs, whose bodies are preserved in the church of Saint Lazarus.[3] — At Nicaea, in Bithynia, the saints Gorgonius, palatine officer, and Firmus or Firminus, martyrs,

mentioned in the martyrology of Saint Jerome and in several others. — At Antioch, the saints Agape and Mariana or Marina, virgins and martyrs. — At Nicomedia, the saints Palatinus, Firmianus and Rusticus, martyrs. — In Scotland, Saint Kessog, bishop, who was the son of a petty king of Ireland. Sixth century. — In Egypt, Saint Anastasia, a patrician lady, who refused to marry the emperor Justinian in order to consecrate herself to God.[4] A.D. 567. — In Tuscany, the blessed Andrew, abbot, of the congregation of Vallombrosa, disciple of Saint Ariald. A.D. 1097. — At Vallombrosa again, the blessed John, who gave himself at first to the art of magic and necromancy: the remonstrances of his abbot made such an impression on his mind that he expiated by a rigorous penance the errors of a part of his life. It is said that his particular devotion to Saint Domitilla, niece of the emperor Domitian, merited him to see often this inhabitant of the heavens. 1380. — At Holleschau, in the archdiocese of Olmütz, the blessed John Sarkander, secular priest, born at Skotschau, in Upper Silesia, on 20 December 1576, then parish priest of Holleschau, where he died on 10 March 1620, martyred in the most cruel manner by the heretics, either in hatred of the faith of Jesus Christ, or because he refused to violate the secret of confession.

Saint Attalus, Abbot of Bobbio

627. — Pope: Honorius I. — King of France: Dagobert I.

Saint Attalus, second abbot of Bobbio, in Lombardy, was born in Burgundy, of parents very illustrious by their piety and by their nobility. His father, remarking that Attalus had great dispositions for letters, put him under the direction of Arigius, bishop of Gap, that he might learn at the same time virtue and the sciences. But Attalus, seeing that he profited little in the episcopal palace, and aspiring to a higher perfection, resolved secretly to embrace the monastic life and withdrew to the monastery of Lérins. He lived there some time with a marvellous purity; but, seeing that the religious of this house were relaxing from the rigours of their rule, he thought that he ought to seek another place of refuge to retire to. He left Lérins therefore and went to find Saint Columban, who had founded not long before the monastery of Luxeuil, to be received among the number of his religious. This holy personage, remarking in Attalus an inclination wholly carried toward virtue, was delighted to have him, and took very great care of his spiritual advancement. He took him also with him into Lombardy when he was exiled from France by Theodoric. Our Saint made such great progress under the discipline of so good a master that, after the death of Saint Columban, he was judged worthy to govern the celebrated monastery of Bobbio, which the same Saint had founded during his exile with the help of Agilulf, king of the Lombards. But Attalus did not meet with little difficulty when he wished to maintain the religious in the strict observance of their rule; some of them murmured loudly against him, complaining of the severity of his conduct and the heaviness of the yoke he imposed on them. In vain he did his best to bring them back to duty, and employed gentleness with all the marks of a truly paternal love; in vain he showed them that the holy Fathers had all walked by the way of mortification and by contempt of the things of this present life, he could never gain anything on them. Several shook off entirely the yoke of obedience, and, under pretext of leading a solitary life, went out of the monastery to be at liberty, charging this holy abbot with an infinity of calumnies and impostures; but divine justice did not leave these rebels long unpunished.

Indeed, soon after, the principal author of this disorder, and he who spoke of this excellent superior with the most impudence, was seized with so violent a fever that he soon recognized that it was a stroke from the hand of God punishing him for his sin; wherefore he asked, with loud cries, that he might be permitted to speak to the holy Abbot and ask his pardon: but the means of it was taken from him by a sudden death. Some of his companions, touched with repentance at the sight of so terrible a chastisement, went and threw themselves at the feet of him whom they had offended, and entreated him to pardon them their temerity. Attalus granted them their pardon with great generosity, receiving them as sheep saved from the jaws of the wolf; he re-established each of them in his rank. As for the others who, through shame or obstinacy, would not return

to the monastery, where they would have obtained the remission of their crime, they ended their life miserably and with visible marks of divine justice: one was killed by a sword-stroke, and two others were drowned.

After these so exemplary punishments, God authorized the conduct of his servant by several miraculous actions, which made him more and more considerable. The mill of the monastery was in great danger of being carried away by an overflow of the river Bobbio, which gave its name to this abbey; he sent there Sinoald, deacon, and, putting his crozier in his hand, charged him to make the sign of the cross, and to command the waters to take another course. Sinoald went, and found more obedience in this element than the holy man had found in the minds of his bad religious. He stopped the waves and returned at once to relate this prodigy to the holy Abbot, who forbade him to speak of it during his life. A religious, who was ploughing the earth half a league from the monastery, having cut off the thumb of his left hand, had recourse to the holy Abbot to be cured. The Saint sent him back to look for his thumb which he had left on the spot; and, rubbing it with spittle, he joined it so perfectly that one would have said it had never been cut. He also restored health to a child given up by the physicians. The historian Jonas, who relates these facts, was an eyewitness of them.

Although our Saint did all he could to hide his holiness, his humility, however, could not prevent his being considered the wonder of his century. He had a great gentleness toward his inferiors, an extreme moderation and courtesy toward his equals, an admirable wisdom in rewarding merits, a sovereign condescension in instructing the ignorant and in raising up and sustaining the weak, a particular prudence and talent for settling disputes, an inflexible courage in opposing the proud and combating the enemies of truth, a consummate intelligence for all sorts of affairs, and a universal charity for all who depended on him or who dealt with him. His patience never wearied in adversities, and his heart was never puffed up nor lifted in prosperities; in a word, he was an excellent model, in whom all the Christian and moral virtues appeared with brilliance.

Like Saint Columban, his predecessor, Attalus vigorously combated the Arianism which still infected Italy, above all the Milanese. So Ariowald [Arioald], king of the Lombards, who professed this heresy, hated our Saint and his monks greatly. One day when one of them passed without saluting him — for at that time they often followed to the letter the precept of Saint John: “Salute not even him who is excommunicated” — the king ordered one of his people to wait for him on the road by which he must pass during the night, and to kill him. This order was executed. But God raised the dead man to life, and the murderer, seized by the devil, suffered horrible pains; Attalus alone could deliver him. Another religious, whom the holy Abbot had charged to destroy the remains of paganism at Tortona, was seized by the inhabitants, who threw him into the water and heaped enormous stones upon him. By an effect of the divine power, the Martyr came out of the water safe and sound, while most of the persecutors died a violent death.

Fifty days before his death, Attalus had notice, by revelation, to hold himself ready for a great journey; and not understanding whether, in fact, God destined him for some foreign land, or whether death was to end his pilgrimage in this world, he put everything in order in his monastery, and made all the preparations necessary to undertake a long journey, and set out on the way if it were the will of God. But feeling himself seized with fever toward the end of the appointed term, he understood that this journey regarded eternity. At length, knowing, by the redoubling of the attacks, that his last hour was near, he had himself placed at the door of his cell, where there was a cross which he always touched in entering and going out, before making on himself the sign of salvation; he saluted it lovingly and with all the affections of his soul, then, shedding torrents of tears, he prayed humbly the divine Goodness to pardon him all his past faults, and not to exclude him from his paradise. Then he dismissed the bystanders, and asked that he might be left alone some time; nevertheless, Saint Blimund, that illustrious abbot of Saint-Valery, whose life we have given on the third day of January, remained secretly near him, to help him in case of need. Saint Attalus, believing himself alone, gave his heart entire liberty to express its sentiments. He implored with tears the divine mercy, and conjured

it to look on him with an eye of pity. In the midst of his sighs, raising his eyes to heaven, he saw it open, and gazed on it the space of several hours; after which, having called his religious, he begged them to carry him back to his cell. The next day, he had them all assemble, made them a pressing exhortation to perseverance, said several things to console them; and at last, having given them his last blessing, he rendered his soul to him who had created it, on 10 March 627. He was buried in the monastery of Bobbio, beside his illustrious master Columban. Later, the body of Saint Bertulf was placed in the same tomb, and the three Saints thenceforth shared the same honours. Jonas, a Scot, who was his disciple after having been that of Saint Columban, wrote his life, as it is found in the third volume of the venerable Bede, whence Surius collected it. The learned continuators of Bollandus carry it back to the second volume of this month, after having collated it with four ancient manuscripts.

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[1] He assisted at the great council of Nicaea against Arius, whom he always resisted most vigorously from the very beginnings of his heresy. The letter of Arius cited by Saint Epiphanius and Nicephorus bears witness to it. The historian Socrates has preserved for us a letter which the emperor Constantine wrote him. There was another Macarius, bishop of the same see, in the time of the emperor Justinian: he was driven from his see because he defended the heresy of the Origenists, then restored after he had retracted. (Baronius.)

[2] See 13 May.

[3] It is believed at Venice that these relics are those of two of the forty blessed Martyrs of Sebaste brought from Anatolia by merchants.

[4] See her life on 18 March.

11 March

Martyrologies

Eleventh day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Carthage, the holy martyrs Heraclius and Zosimus. — At Alexandria, the martyrdom of the saints Candidus, Piperion and twenty others. — At Laodicea, in Syria, the holy martyrs Trophimus and Thalus, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, after many and cruel torments, won the crown of glory. 301. — At Antioch, the memory of several holy martyrs who, when some had been laid on burning gridirons, by order of the emperor Maximian, not to make them die there, but to prolong their tortures by fire, and others had been tried by other very cruel torments, all attained the palm of martyrdom. Fourth century. — In the same place, the saints Gorgonius and Firmus. — At Cordova, Saint Eulogius, priest, who, during the persecution of the Saracens, merited to be added to the martyrs of that city, having, in writing of their combats for the faith, vividly desired to imitate them. 859. — At Sardis, Saint Euthymius, bishop, who, sent into exile for the cult of the holy images by Michael, iconoclast emperor, consummated at last his martyrdom under the emperor Theophilus. About 827. — At Jerusalem, Saint Sophronius,[1] bishop. About 638. — At Milan, Saint Benedict,[2] bishop. About 725. — In the diocese of Amiens, Saint Firmin, abbot.[3] — At Carthage, Saint Constantine, confessor. — At Bauco, in the Roman Campagna, Saint Peter, confessor, illustrious by the brilliance of his miracles.[4]

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Tours, Saint Gorgonius, martyr, whose body, found at Rome on the Appian Way, near Saint Cecilia, was transported to the great monastery of Tours, in the year 847, and worked on the way several great miracles. — In the forest of Compiègne, Saint Vigilius, bishop of Auxerre, massacred for justice by the emissaries of Waratto, mayor of the palace and successor of Ebroin. 689.[5] — At Cambrai, Saint Vindician, bishop and confessor. About 712. — At Agen, the feast of Saint Alberta, virgin.[6] — At Tarbes, the feast of Saint Cerasius, first bishop of Eauze, whose entry into heaven is marked on 24 April. — At Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, in Savoy, the blessed Ayrald, from prior of the Charterhouse of Les Portes, in

Bugey, become bishop of that city, who, preserving admirably monastic manners in the midst of pastoral solicitude, merited the glory of both states; he received the eternal reward from the hands of the Lord, in the year 1146, and was illustrious by his miracles during his life as well as in his tomb. The cult rendered from time immemorial to the holy bishop of Maurienne was approved on 23 December 1862.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Jerusalem, Saint Sophronius, bishop, of the Order of Saint Basil.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — At León, in Spain, Saint Vincent, abbot and martyr, who was condemned to death by the Arians, for the confession of the faith, and who ended his life, struck with a sword-stroke while he was praying for his

persecutors. — At Limoges, at the monastery of Obazine, Saint Stephen, first abbot of that place and founder of several houses of cenobites, who, having put himself, and all that he possessed, at the disposal of the superiors of the Order of Cîteaux, shone with great brilliance by his virtues and miracles. *Martyrology of the Most Holy Trinity for the redemption of captives.* — The memory of the holy Martyrs and of the other Saints whose bodies and glorious relics are preserved in the churches of our Order.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Frances, widow, who went to heaven on 9 March, at Rome. — At Aquila, among the Vestini (Abruzzo Ulteriore), the blessed Antonia of Florence, first abbess of the monastery of Aquila, famous for the holiness of her life and for great miracles. When the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the blessed Virgin Mary is prevented, on the Friday after Passion Sunday, by a feast of a higher dignity or rite, then on that same Friday is read first: The Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the blessed Virgin Mary.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — The feast of the purity of the blessed Virgin Mary. *Martyrology of the Capuchins.* — Saint Catherine of Bologna.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

Among the Greeks, Saint George Theophorus, wonder-worker. — At León, in Spain, Saint Vincent, abbot of the monastery of Saint Claudius; Saint Ramiro, prior of the same monastery, and twelve religious, put to death by the Arian Suevi in hatred of the Catholic faith. The relics of Saint Vincent of León are at Oviedo. About the year 555. — In Scotland, Saint Constantine, king, who, abandoning the throne to his son, went to find Saint Columba, became a monk, became abbot, and preached the Christian faith to the Scots and the Picts. A.D. 576. — In Ireland, the blessed Aengus the Culdee, bishop and abbot. About 824. — In Spain again, the blessed Auria, virgin, of the monastery of Saint Aemilian, which was subject to the rule of Saint Benedict, and sheltered religious women during the invasions of the Moors. She had the happiness of seeing Saint Agatha, Saint Eulalia and Saint Cecilia, whose sufferings she loved to read again. Some think that the town of Soria (Sancta-Auria) owes its name to this blessed virgin. A.D. 1100.

Saint Vindician, Bishop of Cambrai and Arras

620–712. — Popes: Boniface V; Constantine. — Kings of France: Clotaire II; Dagobert III.

Be ye ready, for you know not at what hour the Son of man will come. Matt. xxiv.

Vindician came into the world in a village called Bullecourt, in the territory of Bapaume in Artois, about the year 620. The magnificent foundations which he afterwards made with the revenue of his patrimony show well enough that he was sprung from rich parents and the most considerable of the country. His childhood passed in a perfect innocence. The fear and love of God growing in him with age, his principal occupation in his youth was to go often to Arras, by a retired road which has since been called by his name, to pass hours and entire days there in praying in the churches and hearing the word of God. He made for himself at the

same time near the town a little oratory; after acquitting himself of his exterior duties of devotion, he retired there quite alone to exercise himself in fasts, vigils and the contemplation of divine things. He won in this manner great victories over himself, restraining his passions, subduing his flesh and adding to this continual study of mortification works of charity toward the poor: all things which made him in a short time a model of perfection, and a man excellent in all sorts of virtues.

He was helped in these beginnings by the great Saint Eligius, bishop of Noyon, who had caused to be built, on a mountain rather near the place where our Saint made his retreat, and which is called today Mont-Saint-Éloi, a little dwelling where ten solitaries lived in great silence and separated from one another. As this holy bishop visited this place of piety often, to breathe there more freely the air of eternity after the great occupations of his charge, Saint Vindician, who was there at the same time, profited admirably by his conversation, and drew abundantly from that source the science of salvation and the holy skills of Christian perfection. He had also frequent communications with Aubert, bishop of Arras and his pastor, and with other holy personages of his neighbourhood. And as he learned from one gentleness and patience, from another unwearying zeal to succor the neighbour; from this one, modesty, temperance and chastity; from that one, general contempt of all the things of earth, there was formed in his soul a blessed concert of all that was rarest and holiest in these great men, who were regarded as the wonders of their century. His prudence and merit shone forth particularly in an assembly held at Arras, for the conclusion of the testament of Saint Rictrude, before she withdrew into her abbey of Marchiennes. The great Saint Amand, bishop of Maastricht, having begged him to be present, he laboured at this affair with so much judgment and good sense that it was seen well that if he was retired into a solitude, it was not for lack of lights to handle the most important affairs, but through the desire to serve God more perfectly. From then on Saint Aubert cast his eyes on him to make him his successor, and named him his vicar general at Arras. This makes it believed that our Saint contributed much, by his counsels and by his great wealth, to the foundation of the celebrated abbey of Saint-Vaast, which Saint Aubert had already begun; he must also have assisted, with his bishop, at the translation of the body of Saint Vedast into the new church of this abbey, and at that of the body of Saint Fursey, when Saint Eligius transferred the relics of this latter Saint from the first place of his burial to that of the collegiate church of Péronne.

Vindician, having been elected bishop of Arras and of Cambrai, after the death of Saint Aubert, in the year 675 [*sic*, as printed], fulfilled perfectly all the duties of a true pastor. He travelled through all the parishes of his diocese with an unwearying charity; and, although he did not lack vigour and severity toward those who persisted in vice, he had a gentleness and goodness so admirable toward others that he generally remedied all their bodily and spiritual ills, consoling the afflicted, strengthening those who were losing courage, giving great alms to the poor, and above all winning an infinity of sinners to God.

But the deeds which signalized his episcopate will make us know him better than mere eulogies.

The first, following the order of time, is the solemn translation which he made of the body of Saint Maxellendis, martyred at Caudry, a few days before the death of Saint Aubert, by a lord whom she had refused to marry, and whose bloody remains had been laid in the church of

Pommereuil. It is there that a pious widow, who was accustomed to address her prayer to God near the tomb of the young martyr, heard these words: “Go and find the Pontiff of Cambrai, Vindician, and tell him to come here with priests and clerics to raise the body of the virgin Maxellendis, carry it to the place where she was killed, and bury it there. The Almighty, to glorify his name, is to work many prodigies in this place, where, for love of Jesus Christ, she was put to death by impious men.” Saint Vindician listened to the account of the venerable widow with a religious attention, addressed to her all the questions that prudence suggested to him; then, recognizing, beyond doubt, that this was a manifestation of the will of heaven, he ordered all the preparations for this ceremony. On the appointed day, he published a fast to draw down the blessings of heaven, and betook himself afterwards, with a part of his clergy and a great number of the faithful, to the

place where the body of the Saint reposed.

One of the most striking circumstances which signalized this translation, that above all which filled with consolation the heart of Saint Vindician, was the conversion and miraculous healing of Harduin, murderer of the Saint. Having been led, at his own request, to meet the procession which the bishop followed, he had thrown himself on his knees near the bier on which lay the body of the martyred virgin. Saint Vindician, motionless in the midst of his clergy, followed this touching scene with his eyes, when suddenly he sees Harduin rise full of joy and run toward him telling him of his healing and of the mercies which the Lord had just used toward him. At the sight of this great culprit prostrate at his feet, and shedding tears in abundance, the holy bishop is at the height of happiness. He cannot contain the sentiments which fill his soul, and, addressing the crowd, moved by such a spectacle: “My brethren,” he says, “you have all seen the work which the Lord has just wrought in your presence. Let us give him thanks and thank him that he deigns to glorify thus the virgin Maxellendis. No doubt that what we do here is his will. Let us finish then this holy ceremony with respect and devotion.” Having thus spoken, Saint Vindician gave his blessing to the multitude, which continued its march praising God as far as the village of Caudry. After he had celebrated the holy mysteries and placed in a suitable place the relics of Saint Maxellendis, the worthy bishop thought of perpetuating, by a pious foundation, the memory of the triumph she had won. For this he established at Caudry a community, charged with watching over the sacred deposit and with serving God in the practice of the virtues.

The year when Saint Vindician rendered this striking homage to a young martyred virgin, a house of prayer was rising at Honnecourt for some persons who asked to live there in perfect chastity and love of God. It was founded by a lord of the country called Amalfrid, and his wife Childeberta, in favour of their daughter Auriana. Saint Vindician consecrated the church of this monastery with the venerable Lambert, bishop of Maastricht, who soon after shed his blood for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Between the already flourishing abbeys of Elnon and Marchiennes, two other monasteries were rising, which promised still fruits of salvation to this privileged region. John, lord of the place, and Eulalia, his sister, had formed the desire to consecrate themselves to the Lord, and to retire into the community which they would gather, the one of pious men, the other of virgins and widows, all disposed to live no more except for God. The works accomplished, Saint Vindician came to bless and consecrate these two churches, placed under the title of the holy apostles Peter and Paul. Almost on leaving this place, Saint Vindician was invited by Saint Amand to assist at the consecration of the church of his monastery of Elnon. This time, he found himself in the company of Saint Reolus, metropolitan of the province of Reims, of Saint Mummolin, bishop of Tournai and Noyon, of Saint Bertin, abbot of Sithiu, and of several other holy personages, disciples of Saint Amand. All together they offered their prayers to God for the exaltation of religion, the propagation of the Gospel and the sanctification of souls. All also heard the testament which Saint Amand then read in their presence, and which he begged them to confirm by adding their name to it. The holy bishop of Arras did so in these terms: “In the name of Christ, I, Vindician, sinner, have subscribed.” This took place on 17 April of the year 679.

Saint Vindician was returning to Cambrai, when another bishop arrived in the diocese of Arras, his eyes put out, his lips mutilated, his body all bruised, and keeping scarcely a few drops of blood which he was soon to shed. It was Saint Leodegar, one of the bishops persecuted by Ebroin, and he whose memory has left a deeper impression in the memory of peoples. Put to death in the forest of Sarcing, in Artois, by the orders of the implacable mayor of the palace, he had consummated his long martyrdom by a glorious death, which God at once crowned with prodigies. Indeed, all the bishops and faithful Christians of France, whom the report of the attempt committed on Saint Leodegar had at first profoundly afflicted, felt themselves filled with consolation when they learned the miracles that were wrought at the tomb of the martyred Pontiff. Some time after, several bishops, assembled in an important city of the kingdom, were conversing among themselves of the affairs of the Church and above all of the sacrilegious murder of Saint Leodegar. Among them was Saint Vindician. They decided with one voice that respectful representations should be addressed

to King Theodoric, on the attempt committed against the person of the holy bishop of Autun. All also agreed to confer this dangerous honour on the bishop of Cambrai and Arras, whom his character and virtue seemed to render more capable of fulfilling with success so difficult a mission. Without being frightened at the consequences that such a step might have for him, Saint Vindician submitted to the decision of his colleagues. He put his fate into the hands of God and boldly approached the monarch in the midst of the principal lords of his court. After some words full of wisdom, which conciliated for him the goodwill of the spectators, he began to represent to the king with respect "that it is a duty for the bishop to reprove him who has failed, lest he die in his sin, and the bishop be punished with him." Then, after this preamble in which the interest of the culprit was above all invoked and put forward, Saint Vindician, addressing Theodoric directly, added: "that he should listen with submission to some words of reproach on the murder of Saint Leodegar, committed with his knowledge; that this crime was so great that bishops gathered in council scarcely knew what remedy to ordain for such a wound; that the king must reconcile himself with God in all humility, acknowledge his fault, and, with the just Job who, he too, was powerful in his country, pronounce these words: 'I have not hidden my sin, but I have confessed it in the presence of all the people'; that he should likewise imitate King David in the conduct he held after his sin, avow his fault publicly as he did, and like him prostrate himself before the Lord to weep for it. Then," he added in finishing, "the king will merit to hear, like David, this promise: 'Because thou hast repented of thy iniquity, it is forgiven thee; thou shalt not die.'" Theodoric listened to the bishop with respect, declared that he recognized his fault, and that he would strive to repair it: "so that," continues the biographer of the Saint, "the spectators asked one another whether Vindician had been firmer in his reproaches than the king had been prompt in his submission." The assembly of the bishops had happily accomplished one of the most important objects it had proposed. Another question, very grave in the eyes of these men of faith, presented itself now: it was a matter of knowing to whom the body of the holy martyr should be given. Three Pontiffs had put forward just claims, and it seemed difficult to decide to which it was more fitting to yield. Ansoald of Poitiers represented that Saint Leodegar, besides being his relative, had governed that diocese as archdeacon, and directed, for six years, the monastery of Saint-Maixent, situated not far from his episcopal city. For his part, Hermenarius of Autun, the successor of Saint Leodegar, asked that he should be given back to his people who had been his pastor and father. The assembly was already moved and edified by the discourse of this pious prelate, when Saint Vindician, taking the word, claimed the bloody and mutilated remains of this martyr, whom Providence had brought into the midst of his flock to give him his crown. "Venerable Pontiffs," he said to them, "the thing cannot be done as you say. To me must remain the privilege of possessing this blessed body: like honour is due to the place where he deigned to take his rest. If you weigh all with justice, neither of you two will claim the body of the holy martyr; for if your churches had him, the one as archdeacon, the other as bishop, ours has him as martyr. It is among us that he happily fought under the standards of Christ, it is in the midst of us that he conquered. But to what purpose these deliberations? Has he not himself manifested his will? If he had wished to repose with you, he would never have illustrated our diocese with so many miracles. Put an end then to all these debates, and seek for the holy martyr no other asylum than that which he has chosen. This place we can embellish with magnificent buildings and put there new ministers."

Thus spoke Saint Vindician: the assembled fathers decided that the will of the Lord must be consulted by lot; and their faith, as naïve as it was sincere, ended thus this pious debate. The holy body fell to Ansoald, bishop of Poitiers. Saint Vindician received from it a part of the head, which he deposited in his abbey of Saint-Vaast at Arras. According to an ancient tradition, it is believed that this house possessed, among other precious relics, the stone on which the bloody eyes of the Pontiff had been gathered.

King Theodoric, for his part, took pleasure in giving striking marks of his repentance; and the multiplied good works which signalized the last years of his reign confirmed the truth of the impression made on his soul by the word of Saint Vindician. "And because," adds the historian of the Saint, "the blood of Saint Leodegar, unjustly shed in the country of the Atrebates, had been an occasion of great troubles for that part of

the territory of the Franks, where Saint Vedast had brought the faith, bishop Vindician obtained from the monarch that the monastery of Arras (since called Saint-Vaast) should feel above all the effects of his generous repentance."

This monastery, begun by Saint Aubert on the site of the oratory where Saint Vedast ordinarily retired to give himself to prayer and contemplation, had become for Saint Vindician the object of a special solicitude. It entered into his views to accomplish in everything the will of his venerable predecessor, and to establish in the episcopal city of Arras a community of fervent men, for the sanctification of souls. With this design, he spared no sacrifices, no expense; so that he has been considered at all times as the first and most signal benefactor of this abbey. If certain authors are to be believed, Saint Vindician would have made at that time a journey to Rome, and obtained from the sovereign Pontiff bulls which confirmed the donations and privileges granted to the monastery of Saint-Vaast. Until then he had kept its direction: the still precarious state of the community, the small number of the members composing it, the continual need of his counsels and his help, demanded this immediate oversight of the founder bishop. But when Saint Vindician saw the development that this house was taking, he thought of placing there an abbot, on whom he might rely for this care, and who might help him in the administration of the church of the Atrebates. King Theodoric was not a stranger to this determination: the ever increasing interest which he bore to this abbey, where he wished to be buried with his wife, made him seek all means of securing its prosperity. After having conferred of it with the prince, Saint Vindician called to govern it the blessed Hatta, religious of Blandinberg, near Ghent, and one of the disciples of Saint Amand. This wise choice, made in good season, produced all the fruits that were expected. Saint Vindician, confiding in a man filled with the spirit of God, withdrew to go to other places where his presence was also to procure great good.

These events bring us to 683, the date at which the arrival of the blessed Hatta at the monastery of Saint-Vaast is fixed. The following year, Saint Vindician called this holy abbot to the consecration of the new church, built at the monastery of Hamage by the care of Gertrude, who had just succeeded Saint Eusebia. The Pontiff made at the same time, in the midst of a concourse of the faithful, the translation of the body of this abbess and of Saint Gertrude, her grandmother.

From this moment, the biographer of the holy bishop no longer indicates particular facts, and sets before our eyes his conduct in the midst of his flock. "Saint Vindician," he says, "had done so much and such great things in the house of God that he surpassed or at least equalled the other Pontiffs. All his life, he refused no help, and shrank from no fatigue, to fill the churches and monasteries of his diocese with spiritual and temporal goods, and to win souls to Jesus Christ. And because, according to the sentence of the Holy Spirit, it is not the word but the life that persuades, he brought an extreme care to the fulfilment of his duties as pastor, and offered unceasingly to his flock, by his words and his works, admirable examples of virtue and piety. He distributed abundantly to the poor and the unfortunate the riches which his patrimony procured him, and, conformably to the oracle of the Gospel, he laid up in heaven a treasure which is never to perish." To his last years, Saint Vindician occupied himself, with the most active solicitude, with the salvation of souls. When he wished to rest from his fatigues and give back to his limbs, weighed down by age, the strength and vigour they needed, he retired to the monastery of Saint-Vaast, to Mont-Saint-Éloi, or into some other retreat. There he lived as a father in the midst of his children, praying God for his flock and completing his sanctification by all sorts of good works. Important affairs, or perhaps simply the desire to visit these distant parts of his diocese of Cambrai, having led him to Brussels, he was seized there with fever and lost his strength in a few days. Feeling that his end approached, he called the disciples who had accompanied him, gave them his last admonitions, and asked of them that after his death his body should be transported to the monastery of Mont-Saint-Éloi, which he chose for the place of his burial. These words pronounced, he recollected himself and gave back his soul to his Creator, in the midst of the prayers and tears of his spiritual children. Saint Vindician had then attained his eightieth year.

His body, brought back from Brussels with respect, was deposited by bishops and other prelates in the monument which had been prepared for him at Mont-Saint-Éloi. It remained in that place until the day when it was raised from the earth, on account of the numerous cures that were wrought there. The report of it spread far, and a crowd of pilgrims came to commend themselves to his protection. Kings and princes sent their offerings thither. Halitgar, bishop of Cambrai and Arras, asked before dying (831) that his body be buried there, and Hincmar of Laon sent thither about the same time his niece, who recovered there the use of sight, which she had completely lost. Days of mourning and desolation arrested these impulses of the devotion of the peoples. The Normans, after having committed frightful ravages throughout the country, came to attack the abbey of Mont-Saint-Éloi, and destroyed it from top to bottom, after having massacred the religious who had not been able to escape their blind rage. For sixty years, this place presented only a heap of ruins. Providence having permitted that the tomb of Saint Vindician should then be discovered (940), bishop Fulbert, accompanied by several prelates, raised his precious remains with solemnity. Some words which were found engraved near the body did not permit doubt of his identity. After having enclosed it in a fine shrine, Fulbert entrusted the deposit of it to eight clerics or canons, whom he placed in a church built by his care on the site of the ancient monastery. This place was again defiled by the murder of several canons, who opposed acts of rapine and brigandage, at the time when Richard, duke of Normandy, traversed Artois to go and attack the emperor Henry II, then occupied in besieging Valenciennes (1006). When bishop Gerard I made, on 18 October 1030, the dedication of the new church of Notre-Dame at Cambrai, which he had repaired and considerably enlarged, he ordered to be brought, for this ceremony, the relics of the ancient pontiffs who had governed this diocese, and among others those of Saint Vindician. It is found also that on several occasions these venerable remains were carried in procession in Artois, Flanders and Hainaut, according to the custom of the Middle Ages. During the wars which took place in France between the well-known factions of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians (1419), Michael Dalenne, then abbot of Mont-Saint-Éloi, sent to Douai the shrine which enclosed the relics of the holy bishop: they remained there thirty years, after which they were transferred to the church of Notre-Dame at Arras. It was on 7 July 1453 that they were replaced in the abbey. It was on this occasion that Hugh, apostolic legate, granted an indulgence of a hundred days to those who, on the anniversary day of this translation, or on any other feast of Saint Vindician, should come to adore God in this place. Two years later, Cardinal Nicholas of Santa Croce, then at Arras, to re-establish peace between Charles VII, king of France, and Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, granted new privileges in favour of those who, after confessing their sins and giving an alms to the poor, should come, within the octave of this same translation, to implore the help of God through the merits of his servant. All these spiritual favours were only an addition to those which Pope Innocent IV had already granted, from the year 1252, for all the faithful who celebrated piously the feast of Saint Vindician. During the wars of Philip II of Spain against Henry IV, king of France, these precious relics were again enclosed in the refuge which the religious of Mont-Saint-Éloi had at Chaune, to withdraw them from the pillage to which the provinces of the North were exposed (1598). They remained there until 1601, when they were carried back to Mont-Saint-Éloi.

The relics of Saint Vindician were saved, at the time of the Revolution, by the venerable M. Antoine Le Gentil, religious of Saint-Éloi, successively professor of theology, archivist, prior of Rebreuve and prior of Gouy-en-Ternois. The abbot of Saint-Éloi, then reigning, Augustine Laignel, deceived himself as to the scope the Revolution was to have; he did not take enough precautions to withdraw himself, as well as the sacred deposits entrusted to him, from the excesses to which impiety was about to proceed. He himself, however, was to be one of the victims of this Revolution, and to pay with his head for his unshakable fidelity to his God. M. A. Le Gentil had better grasped the true point of view, better appreciated the situation. So, profiting by the absolute and well-deserved confidence that his superior had in him, and with the aim of saving, in spite of him in some sort and unknown to him, what there was most precious in their treasures, he

took advantage of a visit he was making to the abbey, where the confidence of M. Laignel often called him, to carry off the relics of Saint Vindician, with the leaden plates and other authentics, deposit them in a chest and hide them in the earth, in the middle of a garden of his priory of Gouy, at a spot known to himself and to several persons on whose faith he could count. It was there that rested, during the storm that burst on France, the holy relics, once so venerated and surrounded with so much honour and splendour! Scarcely did M. Le Gentil see the tempest calmed when he returned from exile, and his first request was not relating to the other precious objects which he had likewise saved, but indeed: “Is the body of Saint Vindician still there?” And, on the affirmative answer that was made him: “God be praised!” he cried, and with a piety full of the liveliest expansion, he went to venerate and take back his holy deposit. High positions, in keeping moreover with his well-known merit, were offered him by Monsignor de La Tour d’Auvergne, then bishop of Arras; he refused them modestly and with a constancy which nothing could shake. He wished to die in his priory of Gouy, where only he consented to exercise the functions of parish priest. It was not without pain that he resigned himself to relinquishing, in favour of the cathedral of Arras, the relics of Saint Vindician. He understood nevertheless that a simple priest could not have in his possession one of those treasures which have always been the property of a church and not of a person, however elevated in dignity he might be. The abbey of Saint-Éloi was no more, the cathedral of Arras succeeded to its rights and privileges, at least in such matters; it was therefore to the bishop of Arras that the delivery of this treasure ought regularly to be made. He made in fact this delivery, by an act, in the form of a letter, still today preserved in the shrine of Saint Vindician. Two considerable bones (kneecaps) were left at Gouy; they had been taken out of the provisional shrine on 26 July 1806, and the permit for the exposition of these relics is of 28 July of the same year.

It was on 12 July 1860, three days before the great feast celebrated at Arras in honour of the blessed Benedict-Joseph Labre, that, by commission of Monsignor Parisis, the relics of Saint Vindician were deposited in the new and beautiful shrine in which they now rest. This shrine is adorned with two paintings in which are seen, on the one side, Saint Vindician reproaching King Theodoric, in the face of all his court, with the murder of Saint Leodegar, and on the other, Saint Vindician offering to Pope Sergius the monastery of Saint-Vaast, of which he may be considered the principal founder.

Saint Vindician was formerly the patron of the arquebusiers and crossbowmen of Arras. His life was written first by Baldericus, in his *Chronicle of the Bishops of Arras and Cambrai*; in the seventeenth century, by François d’Oresmieux, abbot of the monastery of Mont-Saint-Éloi. The abridgment which we give of it here is in part borrowed from the *Lives of the Saints of Cambrai and Arras*, by the abbé Destombes, and in part from the *Sacred Treasure of the Cathedral of Arras*, by the abbé E. Van Drival. M. Leglay, in his edition of the *Chronicle of the Bishops of Arras and Cambrai*, has proved that its author must not be confounded with a bishop of Noyon of the same name. (Note of M. Corblot.)

Saint Eulogius, Priest of Cordova, and Saint Leocritia (Lucretia), Martyrs

859. — Pope: Nicholas I.

In principle, one must obey one’s parents, one’s masters, the constituted authorities; but when they command things contrary to the law of God, the maxim of the apostle Saint Peter must be applied: We ought to obey God rather than men.

In a gallery where are exhibited the glories of the Church that have had the purest lustre, that of a holy life, we cannot omit the portrait of the man who was the principal ornament of Catholic Spain in the ninth century. Eulogius belonged to one of the first families of Cordova, a city then the capital of the kingdom of the Moors. The Barbarians, having ruined the empire of the Goths, had not nevertheless entirely abolished Christianity. They had suffered, until the birth of our Saint, the public exercise of our religion with churches and monasteries, contenting themselves with levying a tribute on each Christian at the beginning of the moons or lunar months. Eulogius entered, from his youth, the community of the priests of Saint Zoilus,

where he learned the sciences with piety; he made himself very skilful there, above all in the knowledge of Holy Scripture; and, having exhausted the masters who had been given him, he went to place himself under the discipline of a pious and learned abbot, named Speraindeo, who governed the monastery of Cute-Clar, to the north-west of Cordova. He had for companion and emulator in this excellent school an ecclesiastic of his own age, named Alvar, who contracted from then on a very close friendship with him, and who wrote his life after his death. He appeared, on leaving Speraindeo's, as a man already consummate in wisdom and exercised in all sorts of virtues: his humility above all, his gentleness, his charity won him the affection, esteem and respect of all who knew him. He taught letters in Cordova for some time; then he received the Order of the diaconate, and was at length raised to the priesthood. He became then a great model of continence, piety and mortification for the Church that he served; he macerated his body by fasts and vigils; he prayed continually or meditated on Holy Scripture, and all his recreation was to visit the monasteries or the hospitals. He drew up rules for those who served God in the communities and convents, living himself as a true religious in the clergy, and showing himself a perfect ecclesiastic when he found himself among the monks. Not content with visiting the monasteries of his country, he wished to see also those of distant provinces in order to compare their constitutions with the rules he had drawn up, and to take what he should find best in them: after having visited the monastery of Saint Zachary, in Navarre, and others at Pamplona, at Saragossa, at Toledo and elsewhere, gathering, like the bee, what the flower of doctrine and good examples offered him that was purest, he returned to Cordova to compose of it the heavenly honey of perfection. Meanwhile the Moors, by we know not what sudden fury, began to persecute the Christians in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Abderrahman, which was in 850 of Jesus Christ. A bishop of Andalusia, metropolitan of the province, named Reccared, instead of defending at the price of his blood the flock of Jesus Christ, opened the door of the sheepfold wide to the fury of the wolves. It was he who had the priests of Cordova arrested with the bishop of the place; they were all shut up in prisons: Saint Eulogius, who was of the number, employed this precious time in praying, in reading Holy Scripture to the others and in encouraging them to remain faithful to God; he composed an exhortation to martyrdom for two virgins named Flora and Mary: "You are threatened," he said to them, "with being sold publicly and dishonoured; but know that no harm can be done to the purity of your soul, whatever infamy you are made to suffer; cowardly Christians, to shake you, represent to you that the churches are silent, deserted and without sacrifices on account of your obstinacy; that, if you will yield for a time, you will recover the free exercise of your religion. But know that, for you, the sacrifice most agreeable to God is contrition of heart, and that you can no longer draw back nor renounce the truth that you have confessed." Strengthened by such instructions, our two holy victims let themselves be immolated in honour of Jesus Christ; Saint Eulogius and the other prisoners, having learned it, gave thanks to God at once. They celebrated Mass in their honour, commending themselves to their prayers. Six days after, they were delivered from prison, according to the promise of the holy Flora and Mary, for they had said to some of their friends that, as soon as they should be before Jesus Christ, they would pray him for the liberty of their brethren. Saint Eulogius composed at once the history of this glorious martyrdom, to excite the other confessors to run this noble course, until they should merit to receive the same crown. He used his liberty only to instruct and confirm his brethren, whether by word of mouth or by pen; his zeal increasing with the persecution under Mohammed or Muhammad, son of Abderrahman II, he prevented an infinity of weak Christians, or still attached to the earth, from disowning Jesus Christ, and he sent many elect ones to martyrdom. There were of all conditions: ecclesiastics, religious and married persons. He took great care to collect himself the Acts of these holy martyrs, and he composed of them three books of history, which we have under the title of *Memorial*. He made next an *Apologetic* against those who envied them the quality of martyrs, under the pretext: 1° that they did not work miracles, as the ancient martyrs; 2° that they had gone to meet death instead of awaiting it; 3° that they had lost their lives all at once, without passing through various torments; 4° that they had not been killed by idolaters, but by people who acknowledge the true God, as do all the Mohammedans. Eulogius, in defending these saints, justified himself, because he had excited some to suffer and approved the courage of the others. After the

death of the archbishop of Toledo, the clergy and people of that city cast their eyes on our Saint, whom they already regarded as the finest ornament of the Church in Spain, as much for his doctrine, his capacity, his virtue, as for the glory of the confession which he had already made of the faith of Jesus Christ. But it pleased Our Lord to crown him before he was consecrated. There was at Cordova a Christian virgin, named Leocritia, whom many call Lucretia; converted very young from heathenism, or rather from the infidelity of Mohammed, to the faith of Jesus Christ, by means of one of her relatives, she saw herself extremely ill-treated by her father and mother, who wished to force her to apostatize; she took refuge with Saint Eulogius, who took her under his protection and gave her to be kept to his sister Anulo, who made profession of virginity in her father's house, until, having instructed her perfectly in her duties and strengthened her in her holy resolutions, he had her placed in safety with a friend. Leocritia's parents, suspecting what might have happened to their daughter, obtained from the magistrate the power to inquire into her alleged abduction and to seize all those who should be suspected by them. Many persons were taken, on whom a rude question and various other torments were inflicted, while Saint Eulogius, watching continually over Leocritia, had her secretly passed from one house to another to preserve her faith and to have more leisure to prepare for the martyrdom which he could not avoid by keeping her. He passed the nights in prayer for her in the church of Saint Zoilus; she, for her part, fasted, watched, and slept on ashes, covered with a hair-shirt. They were taken at last both of them, thrown into a dismal prison and presented afterwards to the judge. The latter asked Eulogius why he kept this girl in his house. The Saint answered that priests could not refuse instruction to those who asked it; he showed him that, according to the very principles of those who persecuted the Christians, he had been right to make her prefer God to her parents. He offered the judge to show him the true road to heaven as to her; to make him see the impostures of the false prophet Mohammed, and to prove to him that Jesus Christ is the only way of eternal salvation: which was all that he had taught Leocritia. The judge furiously ordered him to be scourged. But the Saint having told him that he would sooner have done by condemning him to death at once, and that, far from ever changing, he would gladly give several lives, if he could, for the defence of the truths he maintained, he had him led to the palace, before the king's council. One of the counsellors took the Saint aside, and told him that regard would be had to his merit; that it was only a question of renouncing Christ with the mouth, before the tribunal, for a moment, and that afterwards he would have full liberty to remain a Christian as before. Eulogius had horror of such a proposal: "Ah! if thou couldst know," he answered, "the rewards which await those who preserve our faith, thou wouldst renounce thy temporal dignity." He dared even boldly to propose to the council the truths of the Gospel; but, so as not to hear him, they condemned him at once to lose his head. As he was being led to the torment, one of the king's eunuchs gave him a blow; our Saint, instead of complaining, presented the other cheek, and the infidel had the insolence to strike it, forgetting the respect he owed at least to the place where he was. When our Saint, happy to represent in his person a part of the Passion of his Saviour, had arrived at the place of execution, he prayed on his knees, stretched his hands toward heaven, made the sign of the cross on his whole body, to render it victorious by this invincible weapon and to unite his death to the merits of Jesus Christ dying on the cross; finally he held out his head to the executioner with an admirable firmness, and thus consummated his glorious martyrdom, on Saturday 11 March of the year 859. Saint Leocritia was beheaded the following Wednesday, and buried in the church of the martyr Saint Genesius. The faithful bought back from the executioner the head of Saint Eulogius, and buried it honourably with his body, in the church of the martyr Saint Zoilus. It was raised from the earth on the first day of June of the following year; and because the eleventh of March was ordinarily occupied by Lent, the feast was put off to the day of this first translation, and it is celebrated at Cordova with an Octave. This holy body was afterwards transported to Oviedo, with that of Saint Lucretia, on 19 January 883, and a third translation of it was made in the year 1300, to Camarasanta.

Saint Eulogius is represented standing, his skull cleft by a sword, his heart pierced by a sword; he holds a book and a palm; on the ground a Turk overthrown. All these details are explained by the life and martyrdom

of the Saint. — The scourge may also serve as his attribute, since he was cruelly flogged before his beheading. — He is sometimes united with Saint Lucretia, because their bodies were transported at the same time to Oviedo, in 883, on the 9th of January [*sic*; 19 January above].

He is invoked at Cordova, at Elne and at Oviedo. The carpenters of Spain have taken him for their patron; we could not say why.

WRITINGS OF SAINT EULOGIUS.

Saint Eulogius has left us, in a work entitled *Memorial of the Saints*, in three books, the acts of the martyrs of Cordova. One of the first who suffered in the persecution of the Muslims was a monk named Isaac; he had been a clerk and had left his office to enter the monastery of Tábanos, seven miles from Cordova (3 June 851). — The priest named Perfectus had been brought up in the monastery of Saint Asciclus. He was known to the Muslims because he knew Arabic perfectly. One day when he was passing through the streets of Cordova, he was asked what he thought of Jesus Christ and of Mohammed: the answer he made won him to be denounced to the cadi and condemned to death (18 April 850). It was in that year that the great persecution of Cordova began. — The following year suffered: the monk Isaac, a young layman named Sanctus, Flora and Mary (24 November 851). — The year after, the city of Cordova was watered with the blood of Aurelius and Sabigotho, his wife; of Felix and Liliosa, his wife: these four martyrs had sold their goods to distribute them to the poor; their assiduity at church and with the captive Christians marked them out to the hatred of hell (27 July 852). The third book of the *Memorial of the Saints* relates the combats of the young monk Fandila, who, sensible to the railleries of which the Christians were the object, went to preach the Gospel to the Muslim cadi and reproached him with the impurities of his sect; of another monk named Anastasius; of the priest Abundius, of Felix, of Digna, of Benildis, of Columba, etc. The cadi, who had been struck with wonder at the beauty of Columba as much as at her constancy, forbade exposing her body like those of the other martyrs. Clothed in her linen garments, and placed in a basket, it had the waves for tomb. See on 13 March the abridgment of the acts of Saint Rodrigo and Saint Solomon, which were also written by Saint Eulogius.

There will be found in volume cxv of Migne's *Patrologia Latina* the *Memorial of the Martyrs* of Saint Eulogius, as well as his other writings: his *Apologetic of the Martyrs*, or legitimacy of the cult rendered to them; his *Exhortation to Flora and Mary*, and his various letters. The writings of Alvar, friend of Saint Eulogius, who passed for the greatest doctor of his time, are found in volume cxxi of the *Patrologia Latina*: they consist of a *Life of Saint Eulogius*, which we have just abridged, of a *Confession* or autobiography, of various letters.

Saint Cerasius, Bishop of Eauze

(First century).

According to a constant tradition among the inhabitants of the territory of Auch and the other peoples of Novempopulania, Cerasius was one of the first preachers of the Gospel in these regions. He formed part of one of the groups of missionaries sent into Gaul by Saint Peter, the prince of the Apostles. Invested with the fullness of the priesthood, Cerasius fixed his see at Eauze, which was then the metropolis of the countries comprised between the Garonne and the Pyrenees.[1] This holy bishop has received from the grateful posterity of the spiritual sons whom he begot to Christ the glorious title of Baptist of the province evangelized by him. After a long and laborious life he withdrew into the forests that neighbour the borough of Simorre, in the diocese of Auch, to attend more freely to the contemplation of divine things. His principal bones and in particular his head, enclosed in a silver thigh-case [*cuisse d'argent*], are piously preserved in the ancient abbatial church of Simorre. Such is the substance of the legend which the Proper of Auch devotes to Saint Cerasius; we might stop there: let us add nevertheless with the Proper of Tarbes that in an ancient list of the

bishops of Eauze, drawn up more than five hundred years ago, it is Cerasius whom one finds named first with the title of bishop of Eauze, ancient metropolis of all Novempopulania. It is not, however, peremptorily proved that he should be counted among the bishops of that city. A very ancient martyrology, that which bears the name of Saint Jerome, makes mention, on 6 June, of a Saint Cerasius [*Cérat*], bishop of Grenoble, and there are some who suspect that he is the same as our Saint Cerasius.

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[2] Saint Sophronius figures in the Greek martyrologies on the same day, with the following mention: “Our holy Father Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, native of Damascus, remarkable for a very extensive erudition, for his knowledge of the divine Scriptures and for his piety. He succeeded bishop Modestus, in the time of Pope Honorius. He was still on his see under the pontificate of John IV. He held a synod at Jerusalem against the Monothelites and drew up the synodal letter sent on that occasion to Pope John.” — Baronius.

[3] Saint Benedict figures in the tables of the Church of Milan. Paul the Deacon (*de gestis Longob.*) speaks of him in these terms: “The venerable bishop Benedict, a man of eminent holiness, whose glorious and holy renown filled all Italy.” This holy Bishop opened a refuge to repentant women of his episcopal city: which shows that the Church has at all times been animated by the same spirit of charity. He also pronounced the funeral oration of Saint Caedwalla or Ceadwall, king of the Anglo-Saxons, who had abjured idolatry and had been baptized at Rome by Pope Sergius. 20 April 687.

[4] There was never an abbot of the name of Saint Firmin in the Amiénois; it is a confusion with Saint Firmin (Firmanus, Firmianus) who was abbot at Saint-Savin, in the March of Ancona, and who died on 11 March 1020.

[5] Saint Peter of Bauco was a Spanish soldier who became a hermit in Italy to save his soul. Epoch unknown.

[6] Or 684, according to the *France pontificale*. “It is certain,” says M. Fisquet, who affirms without proving, “that he died on 11 March 681 [*sic*].” Now this is not certain at all, since Waratto was mayor of the palace only for some months in the years 688–689. Saint Vigilius signalized his episcopate by the foundation of a hospital for the poor and of a church dedicated to Notre-Dame-la-d’Hors. The Huguenots burned the shrine of Saint Vigilius in 1567. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*.

[7] See, on 20 October, the Acts of the Martyrs of Agen.

[1] Gers, Landes, Basses-Pyrénées, part of the Hautes-Pyrénées (Béarn and Oloron), part of the Gironde (Bazas).

12 March

Martyrologies

Twelfth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, Saint Gregory, pope and excellent doctor of the Church, who, on account of his fine deeds and for having converted the English to the faith of Christ, was called the Great and the Apostle of England. 604. — At Rome again, Saint Mamilian, martyr. 295. — At Nicomedia, the martyrdom of the blessed martyr Peter, officer of the chamber of the emperor Diocletian, who, having complained aloud of the unheard-of torments inflicted on the martyrs, was brought out in public by order of the prince, hung up in the air, and in this state long torn with strokes of the scourge, then sprinkled with vinegar and salted with salt, and finally roasted over a slow fire on a gridiron; he was thus truly the heir of the faith as of the name of Peter. 303. — In the same place, Saint Gorgonius, priest, and seven others, who were stifled one after another, one a day, so that their companions should be struck with terror. About 303. — At Constantinople, Saint Theophanes, who, from being very rich, having become a monk and poor, was detained in prison for two years by the impious Leo the Armenian, for the cult of the holy images, then deported to Samothrace, where, overwhelmed with misery, he gave up his soul to God and was glorified by great miracles.[1] About 818. — At Capua, Saint Bernard, bishop and confessor.[2] 1109.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

In the isle of Batz, on the coasts of Brittany, Saint Paul, first bishop of Léon, whose relics, which were at Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, have experienced the fury of the Calvinists. 573. — At Guerber, in Lower Brittany, Saint Tanguy, abbot of Saint-Mathieu of Finistère. About 600. — At Roermond, the venerable Denis Ryckel, Carthusian, commonly called Denis the Carthusian, famous for his writings. 1471.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil and of Saint Benedict. — At Rome, Saint Gregory, etc.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — At Rome, Saint Gregory, pope and excellent doctor of the Church, who, on account of his fine deeds, and for having converted the English to the faith of Christ, is surnamed the Great and the Apostle of England. While still a young man, he built six monasteries in Sicily, under the rule of our Father Saint Benedict, and a seventh at Rome, under the name of Saint Andrew, in which he embraced the monastic profession and shone in the abbatial dignity.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

Among the Greeks, Phinehas, high priest of Israel: he was the son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron: the high priesthood continued in his family until the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem.[3] Year of the world 2596. — At Tebessa, in Numidia, Saint Maximilian, martyr under Diocletian. Having refused to serve in the Roman armies, because the profession of soldier was almost inseparable from idolatry, he was condemned to lose his head. As he walked to the torment, he said to his father: “I pray you to give to him who shall cut off my head the garment you had made me to go to the army.” He was only twenty-one years old. 296. — At Nicomedia, with Saint Peter, officer of the palace of Diocletian, mentioned above, the saints Migdonius, priest, another Migdonius, Eutychius, Maximus, Donata, virgin, Rugin [*sic*], Marius, Smaragdus, Hilary, Evengulus, Quirinus, Mareas, Nestor, Eugenius, Dorotheus, Gorgonius and Matulus, martyrs, several of whom were also of the emperor’s household. 302. — At Rome, Saint Peter, deacon and disciple of Saint Gregory the Great: it is at his prayer that the holy Pope composed his *Dialogues*, in which he is one of the speakers: his body was transported to Saluzzo where it was long surrounded with the veneration of the inhabitants. 605. — In Ireland, Saint Murus or Muran, abbot of Fahan, of the noble family of the O’Neills. About 650. — In England, Saint Elphege, surnamed the Bald, bishop of Winchester, relative of Saint Dunstan, whom he persuaded to embrace the religious life. 951. — At San Gimignano, in Tuscany, Saint Fina or Josephine, virgin and mirror of Christian sufferings. As she was endowed with great beauty, the Lord wished to spare her temptations: he afflicted her with an illness so painful that she could scarcely move in her bed: her flesh rotted away. During this long martyrdom, she never lost courage and called her sufferings favours of heaven. Besides these miseries, Fina was in great poverty, and had no other resource than the alms of charitable souls: but God never left her in want. After her death, her body, which before had exhaled an insupportable stench, spread a sweet odour with which her whole poor cottage was perfumed. At the moment when she was being carried to burial, she cured a poor cripple reputed incurable: a child was cured at her tomb. It is hard to suffer a whole life, but it is sweet to die in union with Jesus. 1253. — In Tuscany again, the blessed Justina, recluse. 1319.

Saint Paul, Bishop of Léon

492–573. — Popes: Saint Gelasius; John III. — Kings of France: Clovis I; Chilperic I.

As the stars are the ornament of the firmament, so the virtues are the ornament and light of the soul: virtue is heaven in our heart. — Saint John Climacus. Saint Paul, whose name has remained to his episcopal city (Saint-Pol-de-Léon), formerly called Oxismor, had for father Parphius, of an ancient and illustrious house of Great Britain. He was himself born in that island, about the year 492. He was put quite young under the direction of an abbot named Illtud, who was a disciple of Saint Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, and had the reputation of a personage of great erudition and consummate virtue. He made such progress there in letters and piety that, in the space of ten years that he remained under the guidance of this excellent master, he became a great servant of God: for although he did not yet wear the monastic habit, so as not to disobey his father, he observed nevertheless all the rules of the monastery, with as much fidelity as the religious. At the age of fifteen, he felt himself strongly inspired by God to withdraw into some solitude; and to do so, after

consulting this wise counsellor, he went to a desert place which belonged to his father: he was followed by twelve others of his school companions. There he built a little chapel and thirteen cells, at some distance from one another, and began to lead a life so austere and so holy that all the neighbouring country ran to that place to consult him and commend themselves to his prayers. He was plainly clothed and lived only on a little dry bread with pure water, except on Sundays, when he ate vegetables and fish in the company of his brethren, but never flesh.

At the age of twenty-two, he was ordained priest with his twelve companions, by the bishop of Winchester, to whose diocese he belonged; some time after, one of the most powerful kings of the island, Mark, informed of his holiness and of that of his twelve priests, called them to his court to be catechized and instructed in the mysteries of our holy faith. Saint Paul went, leaving, though with regret, his dear solitude; this prince received him with so much joy and profited so well by his instructions that he had himself baptized soon, and almost all his kingdom with him. He would gladly have kept this new apostle there to make him first bishop of this nascent Church; but God, who called him elsewhere, had him told by an angel to go out of this country to go to another, where he would still bear greater fruit. He embarked at the age of thirty, about the year 522, and crossed the British Ocean; he landed on the island of Ushant, in Lower

Brittany, where he at once built a new monastery with thirteen cells made of turf and covered with hurdles.[1] After having remained there six months, on the advice of the angel, he put to sea again, and, without losing sight of land, coasted the shore of Léon as far as the Havre de Kernic, whence he drew on to the isle of Batz: there he restored sight to three blind men and the use of speech to two dumb; and having entered the palace of the count of that same island, called Withur, who received him as a messenger from heaven, he gave health there to a paralytic. As he was conversing with him, there was brought the head of a large fish that had just been caught; in it was found a little bell, which the Saint had formerly asked in vain of King Mark: it is this same little bell that is still seen in the treasury of the cathedral of Léon.[2] The count seeing, by this miracle, the holiness of Paul, begged him to employ his credit with God to deliver the island from a horrible dragon of prodigious size, which caused a thousand ravages there and devoured even men. The Saint passed the night in prayer with the priests, and, after having celebrated Mass, he went, clothed in the sacred vestments, to the dragon's cave, and commanded it to come out; then, putting his stole round its neck, he dragged it to the extremity of the island, toward the North; there he ordered it, on God's behalf, to throw itself into the sea; which it did: since then this place is called the Abyss of the Serpent, and at all times the sea makes there a strange noise.[3]

The count, with all his subjects, thanked Saint Paul for this grace, and offered him his own palace and all its dependencies to make a monastery of it. The Saint lodged there with his twelve priests; and several young men, renouncing the world and its vanities, became religious under the guidance of so good a master. As fresh water was wanting in this place, he miraculously made a fountain spring up, merely by planting his staff in the earth. Meanwhile the city of Oxismor, on the coast of Léon, where the count had retired, having lost its bishop, all the people asked the abbot Paul to succeed him. But the count, foreseeing the resistance the Saint would make to this choice, was of opinion to send him to Paris to Childebert, king of France, so that he himself, without knowing what he did, should present to His Majesty the letters by which he was asked for as bishop. The thing succeeded as the count had planned: for the king, subscribing to the request of the people of Léon, granted them the abbot Paul, put the pastoral staff in his hands, had him consecrated in the cathedral of Paris by three bishops,[4] and notably increased the revenues of his bishopric, which has since taken the title of Saint-Pol-de-Léon, as we have said.

It is not easy to express the joy with which this new prelate was received in his diocese. He had no sooner taken possession of it than he set about reforming it, repairing the ruined churches, building new ones and founding monasteries. Nevertheless, feeling himself always drawn toward solitude, and being no longer able to bear the weight of his charge, he resolved to rid himself of it; and, in fact, he put in his place Saint Joevin,

his nephew, whom he had consecrated by Saint Samson, archbishop of Dol. Joevin having died at the end of a year, Saint Paul had Tiernomaglus, canon of Léon, elected, who also lived a short time: Paul was therefore obliged to resume his bishopric. At last, seeing that his strength was diminishing, on account of his extreme old age, he resigned for the second time his charge, and had elected in his place Ketomeren, one of his twelve first priests and disciples, who was canon of his cathedral, a pious and learned man. After having consecrated this new bishop, a ceremony in which he healed a blind man by touching him with his hand, our holy old man withdrew to his ancient monastery in the isle of Batz, where he gave himself entirely to prayer, vigils and penance, until the age of more than eighty years; then it pleased Our Lord to reward all the labours he had sustained for the advancement of the Church and for the glory of his name.

This happy news was announced to him by an angel, who, appearing to him at night on his return from Matins, warned him that he would enter on the following Sunday into the glory of his Lord; so he peacefully gave up his soul on the twelfth day of March, in the year of grace 573, according to the most probable opinion. His body, as he had expressly ordered, was carried to his cathedral of Oxismor, where several miracles were wrought at his tomb. When the Danes ravaged Brittany, it was transported to the monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire, in order to be preserved there from their fury; but, later, it did not escape that of the Calvinists, who, having made themselves masters of this celebrated monastery, burned his holy relics and cast his ashes to the wind.

However, the church of Léon has the happiness of still possessing today (1872) the head of Saint Paul, an entire bone of his right arm, and, further, an intact finger, enclosed in a silver box, with this inscription: *Finger of M. S. Paul, bishop and patron of Léon.* The authenticity of these relics was recognized on 6 July 1809, by Monsignor Dombidau de Crouseilhes, bishop of Quimper. In the cathedral of Saint Paul, at the foot of the steps of the high altar, his tomb is shown, covered with a large black marble, which bore an inscription, effaced during the French Revolution. The brush and the graver have in turn exercised themselves on the various circumstances of the life we have just related: the fish from whose mouth a little bell issues; the dragon he drags with his stole and is about to hurl into the sea; the coarse bread and pot of water which made all his nourishment for a long time, etc.

There is still given as attribute to Saint Paul of Léon: a calf, because he made the sea recede which often invaded the monastery of his sister, and because he made a fountain spring up in an arid place. — He is sometimes united to the group of the six other primitive bishops of Armorica, Saint Samson of Dol, Saint Tudwal of Tréguier, Saint Corentin of Quimper, Saint Paternus of Vannes, Saint Brieuc and Saint Malo.

For this life, we have completed Father Giry with Dom Lobineau, published by M. Tresvaux.

Saint Gregory the Great, Pope and Doctor of the Church

540–604. — Emperors of the East: Justinian I; Phocas.

He excelled principally in three things: in praying, in reading and in meditating. — James of Voragine, serm. II, *de S. Gregor.*

To judge the merit of a pastor, one must consider by what way he has attained the supreme dignity, in what manner he has lived in it, how he has taught in it, and whether he has entered deeply into the knowledge of his infirmities. — S. Greg. the Great, *Pastoral.*

The Saint whose history we undertake to write deserves the glorious title of Great, for all the reasons that can raise a man above his fellows: for he was Great in nobility and in all the qualities that come from birth and from ancestors; Great in the privileges of grace with which heaven loaded him; Great in the marvels that God wrought by his means, and Great by the dignities of cardinal, of legate, of pope, to which divine Providence and his merits raised him.

He was born at Rome about the year 540. Gordian, his father, was a senator and enjoyed a considerable fortune. But he renounced the world after the birth of this son, and consecrated himself to God; when he died, he was counted among the seven cardinal-deacons who had care, each in his quarter, of the poor and the hospitals. Sylvia, his mother, following the same impulse of grace, also sanctified the last part of her life, by serving God in a little oratory, near the portico of Saint Paul. Gregory was grandson of Felix III, a very holy pope, and nephew of the blessed virgin Tarsilla, who merited to hear, at the hour of her death, the heavenly music, and to see Jesus Christ, who came to receive her blessed soul.

He had received from his illustrious parents the happiest dispositions for science and virtue. He learned with such facility letters divine and human that he was the admiration of the city of Rome. His actions were always accompanied by modesty, and his movements very regular in the years of his youth. During his father's life, he took part in the government of the State: the emperor Justin II raised him to the first magistracy of Rome; he had to wear its insignia, which consisted of a robe of silk, enriched with a magnificent embroidery and all covered with precious stones. But it is probable that his heart was, like that of Esther, detached from this luxury, from this pomp inseparable from his rank. It is probable that he already esteemed only the things of heaven, since he found so much pleasure in the conversation of men of God, of holy religious, in prayer and meditation. But God demanded more of him: he enlightens him, he presses him; Gregory yields, he breaks, after his father's death, the last bonds that attach him to the world.

He founds six monasteries in Sicily, and another at Rome, in his own palace, under the name of Saint Andrew (it bears today the name of its holy founder, and belongs to the Camaldolese; it is from there, says M. de Montalembert, that, after thirteen centuries, there came forth another Gregory, pope and monk, Gregory XVI), introduces there the rule of Saint Benedict and takes the habit himself in 575, under the abbot Valentine, at the age of thirty-five, after having distributed to the poor what remains to him of his patrimony. Thus, says his historian,[1] and after him M. the count de Montalembert, Rome, which had seen this opulent patrician traverse its streets in garments of silk, sparkling with precious stones, saw him with far more admiration, covered with a coarse garment, serving the beggars — a beggar himself — in his palace become a monastery and hospital.

He had kept only a single remnant of his former splendour: it was a silver bowl, in which his mother sent him every day poor vegetables for his nourishment. This luxury did not last long. A poor merchant who had, he told our Saint, suffered shipwreck and lost all, begged him to succour him. Gregory gave order to count him six pieces of money; but the poor man replying that it was very little, Gregory had as much more given him. Yet the same beggar presented himself again two days later to the Saint, and prayed him to have pity on his extreme misery. The man of God, softened by the pressing needs of the poor man, commanded his steward to give him six pieces more; but the latter not having counted them, the Saint, whose heart was all full of charity and incapable of refusing anything, gave the beggar the last wreck of his silverware, the bowl of which we have spoken. After this action he worked so great a number of miracles that he suspected some inhabitant of heaven under the shipwrecked man. Indeed, long afterwards, he had a vision of which we shall speak further on.

Our Saint gave himself with so much ardour to the reading of the holy books; his vigils, his mortifications were such, that his health succumbed to them, and that his very life was compromised. He was obliged to take food more frequently and more substantial, which afflicted him greatly. He was above all inconsolable at not being able even to fast on Holy Saturday, on that day when even little children fast, says Paul the Deacon. Having communicated his grief to the pious monk Eleutherius, they united their prayers to obtain from God deliverance from so great a misfortune, and they were heard beyond their petitions.

Saint Gregory had so ardent a zeal for the salvation of souls that it extended over the whole world. He passed one day through a market where he saw young children of a ravishing beauty who were being exposed for sale. Learning that they were English, and that the inhabitants of that country had not yet received the faith of

Jesus Christ, he had so great a compassion for them that he wept, adding these words: "What! must Satan possess the souls of these corporeal angels!" He went at once to find Pope Benedict I, and begged him urgently to give him his apostolic blessing to go and preach the Gospel to those islanders. The Pope granted his request, and the Saint, with some other servants of God, set out at once on the way for this mission; but when his departure was learned in the city, the people murmured so loudly at it that the Pope, going to the church of Saint Peter, found himself surrounded by a multitude of people who cried: "Holy Father, you have extremely offended Saint Peter; you have lost Rome by permitting Gregory to leave it." So that Benedict was obliged to recall him and make him return to his monastery. The Saint felt extreme regret at it, and kept always in his soul a great zeal for the conversion of the English. Some time after, he was constrained to appear in public, and to leave his retreat; first Pope Benedict I, in 577, created him cardinal-deacon or regionary. Those who were clothed with this dignity, to the number of seven, presided over the seven principal regions of Rome. "He yielded only very unwillingly to the authority of the Pontiff. When a ship," he said, "is not well moored in port, the tempest carries it off even from the safest shore: here I am plunged again into the Ocean of the world, under an ecclesiastical pretext. I learn, in losing it, to appreciate the peace of the monastery, which I did not know how to defend enough when I possessed it." It was much worse when Pope Pelagius II sent him as apocrisiary, or nuncio, to the emperor Tiberius,[2] to treat of some affairs of great importance, the negotiation of which demanded a man as holy and as prudent. Seeing himself obliged to leave his monastery, he took with him some of his religious, to continue, in their company, the holy exercises which he was accustomed to practise in the cloister. He was received by the emperor with all imaginable respect, and obtained the help of his arms for the defence of Italy oppressed by the Lombards: which was the principal motive of his legation. It was in this journey that he contracted a close friendship with Saint Leander, archbishop of Seville.[3]

He refuted the errors of Eutychius, patriarch of Constantinople, and received his retractation. During these six years, he edified the court of Constantinople by his simplicity and modesty. God delivered him in this city from a dangerous illness and from a shipwreck during his return. He brought back a general against the Lombards, Smaragdus, and precious relics for Italy, above all for his monastery, among others the arm of Saint Andrew and the head of Saint Luke, apostles. He was therefore received as an angel from heaven, bringing back peace and happiness to his country. A little time after (584), the religious of Saint Andrew elected him abbot. He tasted still for some time in this house the delights of solitude.

"Tenderly cherished by his brethren, he associated himself paternally with their trials, their interior crosses, provided for their temporal and spiritual necessities, and admired above all the holy death of several among them. He has related the details of it in his *Dialogues*, and seems to breathe in advance the perfume of heaven. But the affectionate goodness which always inspired him did not hinder him from maintaining with a scrupulous severity the demands of the rule. He had thrown on the dunghill the body of a monk who was also a skilful physician, and in whose possession three pieces of gold were found, in contempt of the article of the rule which forbade all individual property. The three pieces of gold were thrown upon the corpse, in the presence of all the religious, who had to repeat aloud the text of the verse: *Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem*: Thy money perish with thee.[4] Once this justice was accomplished, mercy regained the upper hand in the heart of the abbot, who had Mass celebrated for thirty days in succession, to deliver this poor soul from purgatory." Saint Gregory tells us[5] that after the Mass of the thirtieth day, the deceased appeared to one of his brethren, and told him that he had just been delivered from the pains which he had endured since his death.[6]

Gregory's solicitude soon had to pass beyond the enclosure of his monastery. Rome was desolated by terrible inundations, followed by a greater scourge, the plague, which spread mourning and solitude in almost all the houses, and deprived the Church of its head. Pope Pelagius died in 590. The clergy, the senate and the people demanded with one voice that the deacon Gregory should succeed him. He was the only one to oppose his

election, but in vain. He wrote in vain to the emperor Maurice to oppose it; Germanus, prefect of Rome and brother of our Saint, stopped the courier, kept the letters, and wrote others in the name of the clergy, the senate and the people, entreating the prince to confirm so just and so canonical a choice. Meanwhile, the plague increased and made so great a havoc in the city that it seemed God had poured out all his wrath on the Romans. Saint Gregory exhorted them to do penance and to recognize that this chastisement came from heaven on account of their sins. He had a general procession made, for three days, in which appeared for the first time all the abbots of the monasteries of Rome with their monks, and all the abbesses with their religious. The image of the holy Virgin, painted by Saint Luke, was carried in this solemnity, and it is related that, wherever this august figure passed, the corrupted air drew aside and gave place to it, and that Saint Gregory perceived on the summit of the mausoleum of the emperor Hadrian an angel who was returning his sword to its scabbard. (The image of this angel, standing on this superb monument, has caused it to be given the name of Castel Sant'Angelo, and perpetuates still today the vision of Saint Gregory.) Our Saint knew by it that the wrath of the living God was appeased, and that mercy was about to take the place of justice. Indeed, the plague ceased.

Seeing no other means of escaping the sovereign pontificate, Gregory fled in disguise. But the sacred Spouse of the Church, who had named him in heaven, had him discovered by means of a column of light, which appeared above him and accompanied him wherever he went. He was taken from a cave where he had hidden himself, brought to Rome in spite of all his resistance, and at length crowned in the church of Saint Peter, on 3 September of the year of Our Lord 590.

When the news of his exaltation was spread through all Christendom, a great number of letters were written to him to congratulate him. He answered them with tears and groans: "I have lost," he wrote to Theoctista, sister of the Emperor, "all the charms of repose. I appear to ascend outwardly, I have fallen inwardly…

Though I fear nothing for myself, I fear much for those with whom I am charged… The emperor (Maurice), in approving my election, has not given me the merit and the virtues necessary." To the patrician Narses: "I am so overwhelmed with grief that I can scarcely speak." He adds that he is always sad, because he sees from what tranquil region he has fallen, and into what an abyss of embarrassments. To André, of the rank of the illustrious: "On learning my promotion to the episcopate, weep if you love me, for there are here so many temporal occupations that I find myself by this dignity almost separated from the love of God." Long after, one day when, more overwhelmed than ever by the weight of secular affairs, he had retired to a secret place to give himself up there in a long silence to his sadness, he was joined there by the deacon Peter, his pupil, his childhood friend and the companion of his dear studies. "Has some new sorrow then befallen you," said the young man to him, "that you are thus sadder than usual?" — "My sorrow," answered the Pontiff, "is that of all my days, always old by use and always new by its daily growth. My poor soul recalls what it was formerly in our monastery, when it soared above all that passes, all that changes; when it thought only of heaven; when it cleared by contemplation the cloister of this body that encloses it; when it loved death in advance as the entrance of life. And now it must, on account of my pastoral charge, bear the thousand affairs of the men of the world and defile itself in this dust. And when, after having thus spread itself abroad, it wishes to find again its interior retreat, it returns there diminished. I meditate on all that I have lost. Behold me beaten by the ocean and quite broken by the tempest. When I think of my life of other days, it seems to me I look back toward the shore. And what is saddest, it is that thus tossed by the storm I can scarcely catch a glimpse of the port that I have left."[7]

These complaints came not only from his humility; this vast mind saw the whole extent of the evil that God called him to heal. The Church was in the most deplorable state, suffering in Africa from Donatism, in Spain from the Arian heresy, in England from idolatry, in Gaul from simony and the crimes of Fredegund and the errors of Brunhilda; in Italy from the Lombards, an Arian people and rival of the Byzantine power; in the East, from the arrogance of the patriarchs of Constantinople, from the ill will of the emperors who, no longer

able to defend or govern Italy, were jealous to see the Popes fill that role. He knew how to steer his bark, thus tossed, with a most rare energy and skill. Romanus, the exarch of Ravenna, that is to say governor of Italy, in the name of the emperor of Constantinople, breaks in bad faith a treaty he had made with the Lombards. At once the latter, commanded by their dukes Arnulf and Arigis, invade the centre and south of Italy. The exarch protects neither Rome nor Naples, and yet he forbids the Pope to treat with the Lombards, who besiege Rome and spread all around that desolation, that sterility which could never be repaired since. Then Gregory multiplies himself: captain, king, pontiff, father of the Romans, he reproves the exarch for his bad faith, which draws on him the wrath of the Greek emperor, assembles the troops, pays their wages, furnishes the barbarians the contributions they demand, feeds and consoles his people. At last, after nine years of efforts, he succeeds in concluding, between the Lombards and the Greeks, a peace which soon breaks. He then treats in his own name, and obtains from the king of the Lombards a truce for Rome and its territory. He does more. Theodelinda, wife of Agilulf, who owed him the crown, was a Christian and a faithful friend of the holy Pope: they unite their efforts and bring back from Arianism to the Catholic faith the whole nation of the Lombards. Saint Gregory afterwards delivered the Roman territory from all the petty tyrants sprung from the bosom of anarchy; and such is the origin of the temporal power of the Popes: “Sole guardians of Rome, they have become its masters.”[8] But a far more insupportable yoke than that of the barbarians weighed on Italy: it was the Greek domination, the empire of the East. Gregory laboured skilfully and courageously to lighten it, to soften it; he denounced in a letter to the empress the frauds, the rapines of the imperial functionaries: in Sardinia, they sold for money, to the pagans, the right to sacrifice to idols, and continued to levy this tax on those who had themselves baptized; in Corsica, they overwhelmed the poor with such taxes that they reduced them to selling their children to pay, and to seeking refuge among the Lombards. Italy was thus bled under pretext of defending her. So Gregory dared to say to the empress: “It might be suggested to the emperor that it would be better to suppress some expenses in Italy, in order to suppress the tears of the oppressed in Sicily.” He was no less firm when it came to giving a lesson of humility to John the Faster, patriarch of Constantinople, who took in his acts the title of oecumenical or universal, a word hitherto reserved for general councils or representing the whole Church. To name oneself thus was to attribute to oneself alone the episcopate, and to regard the other bishops only as one’s inferiors, one’s vicars. John doubtless did not give this name so extended a signification, but he was wrong to take a title so new and so pompous, he, the bishop of a see not founded by the Apostles, and which had no other merit than to be in the capital of the empire, that is, very exposed to becoming too dependent on the imperial court, to fall into domesticity, according to the term of M. de Montalembert. The humility of Saint Gregory furnished him invincible arms to combat this pretension. He charged his nuncio at Constantinople to make remonstrances to the patriarch; he wrote to him, he wrote to the emperor: “Understand,” he says to John, “what presumption it is to wish to be called by a name that no true saint has ever dared to attribute to himself. Do you not know that the council of Chalcedon offered this honour to the bishops of Rome, calling them universal? But not one wished to receive it, lest he should seem to attribute the episcopate to himself alone and take it from all his brethren.” In a letter to his nuncio Sabinian, he discovers the artifice of John, who had the emperor write to the Pope for him. “He hopes,” he says, “to authorize his vain pretension, if I listen to the emperor, or to irritate him against me, if I do not listen. But I walk the straight road, fearing in this affair God alone. Fear nothing either; despise for the truth all that appears great in this world, and, trusting in the grace of God and the help of Saint Peter, act with sovereign authority. Since they cannot defend Italy from the swords of the barbarians, since the Church has been obliged to sacrifice its goods to defend the State, it is too great a shame they ask of us, to sacrifice our faith also.”

This language will be admired if one recalls that Gregory was a subject of the emperor of Constantinople, and that no one would then have dared to speak with so noble an independence. Writing to the emperor himself: “What!” he cries, “Saint Peter, who received the keys of heaven, the power to bind and to loose, the charge and primacy of the whole Church, was not called universal apostle, and behold my pious brother John

would wish to be named universal bishop? I must needs cry out: O times! O manners! all Europe is at the discretion of the Barbarians. The cities are overthrown, the castles in ruins, the provinces depopulated; the earth has no more arms to cultivate it; idolaters rage against the faithful even to death, and priests who ought to prostrate themselves on the pavement in tears and ashes seek to make themselves titles of vanity."[9] He reminds the emperor that the see of Constantinople has been occupied by Nestorius and Macedonius, heretics and heresiarchs. "If then," he says, "he who occupies this see were universal bishop, the whole church would fall with him. As for me, I am the servant of all the bishops, so long as they live as bishops; but if anyone raises his head against God and against the law of our Fathers, I hope he will not make mine bend, even with the sword." He opposed to this dangerous vanity of the bishop of Constantinople something stronger still than his reprimands: it was his own humility. "He had stamped the seal of this very humility, by taking, first among the Popes, in the heading of his official acts, that beautiful name of servant of the servants of God, which has become the distinctive title of his successors."[10] He reproved Rusticiana because in the letters she wrote him she called herself his servant, and begged her to change her style, because he wished to be the lord of no one, but the servant of all. It is related in the *Spiritual Meadow* that John, abbot of Persia, a holy man and of very great merit, having come to Rome to visit the tombs of the glorious apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, met one day Saint Gregory in the street, and came to throw himself at his feet: but the holy Pope forestalled him, prostrated himself at the abbot's feet, and would not consent to rise without the abbot rising also. To return to John, patriarch of Constantinople, it is believed that he yielded to the admonitions of the holy Pope, for it is certain that he continued to recognize the authority of the Holy See, and to refer to the Pope the final judgment of ecclesiastical causes. In one of these cases, Gregory discovered and demonstrated to John's envoys that the council of Chalcedon and that of Ephesus were found falsified in the church of Constantinople; he therefore recommended to them to seek older copies of these councils, and told them in passing that truth is preserved far better among the Latins than among the Greeks, for the Latins, who have not so much wit, use fewer impostures; a solid criticism of history and manners. In another case, he sent back absolved, after having judged him in a council, John, priest of Chalcedon, against whom an unjust sentence had been pronounced in the name of the patriarch of Constantinople: previously a monk falsely accused of Manichaeism, and beaten with rods by order of the same patriarch, having appealed to the Pope, the latter had judged him anew, quashed the sentence of the patriarch, and made the latter a severe reprimand, exhorting him to dismiss a favourite who abused his confidence, and to ask pardon of God; if you refuse, he said to him, to keep the canons of the Church, I know not who you are.

We cannot weary of considering this great Saint, who, at every instant and on every point of the globe, watches, scrutinizes all things, and if he perceives that the liberty of souls, the honour of God, the interests of religion, of civilization suffer, comes at once to their help. The emperor and his thousand functionaries were incessantly encroaching on things which our Saint was obliged to defend. In 592, the emperor Maurice forbade, by an edict, soldiers to embrace the monastic life. Saint Gregory received this edict like all the patriarchs to notify it to the laity of his district. He wrote to the emperor to represent to him that he was attacking the laws of God and the rights of conscience; he reminds him skilfully of the origin of that power of which he abuses, and invites him to think of the last judgment, where Christ will say to him: "I made thee, from secretary, count of the guards; from count, caesar; from caesar, emperor; that is not enough, I made thee father of an emperor. I subjected my priests to thy power, and thou withdrawest thy soldiers from my service. Tell, lord," he continues, "tell your servant what you will be able to answer Him who, on the day of judgment, will speak thus to you."[11] The subject remained always faithful in this great Pope. He gave his remonstrance the name of supplication, and accompanied it with all the obsequious terms then in use: moreover, he dispatched the law, against which he protested, to the various provinces. "By this," he said to Maurice, "I have fulfilled my double duty; obeyed the emperor by publishing his edict, and fulfilled my ministry by representing that this edict did not accord with the interests of the glory of God." If this protest displeased the emperor at first, it enlightened him nevertheless; he moderated the rigour of his law by

permitting the reception of soldiers to monastic profession, after a novitiate of three years. Saint Gregory announced it and testified his joy, in a letter to the bishops of the empire.

Maurice was besides one of the Greek emperors who had most respect for the canons; our holy Pope praises his piety and his zeal for the Church. But he was cruelly punished for his avarice. Twelve thousand Greek prisoners, whom he refused to ransom from the Avars, were massacred. He repented of this crime without correcting himself of the vice which was its principle. In 602, he reduced his army to living by pillage, in the enemy country, during the winter. The troops revolted and set upon the throne an officer named Phocas, who had the emperor butchered with his six sons, then his brother, the empress and her three daughters. This monster, as M. de Montalembert calls him, sent, after this massacre, his image and that of his wife to Rome, where the senate and the people, according to their shameful habit, received them with acclamation. Our Saint is reproached with having associated himself with these acclamations, and with having written to Phocas a letter of congratulation, in which he blames the conduct of Maurice. It is avowed that this is the only stain found on this glorious life; it is recognized besides that the intentions of Saint Gregory were pure, that the terms he uses were in some sort the official style of that time at each change of reign. It is admitted that what he blames in Maurice was blameworthy; that, by this blame, he counselled Phocas not to fall into the same faults; that he had to, in the interest of Italy, not irritate the new emperor; that after the usual felicitations, he exhorted him to cause justice, peace and liberty to reign among his subjects. With these reservations, we are of opinion that one ought not to hold today, and that Saint Gregory would certainly not hold, if he were living, the same conduct.

While he pursued the integrity of the faith, the liberty of the Church, on the side of the Lower Empire, our Saint did not forget the barbarian peoples who had just invaded almost all the west and south of Europe. He made himself their friend, their educator, their master, to civilize them and bring them into the bosom of the Church. We can only sketch these noble undertakings. Virgilius, bishop of Arles, having written to him and had written to him by the king of Austrasia, Childebert, to ask him for the pallium, the Pope grants his request (595), names him his vicar in these regions, without prejudice to the right of the metropolitans, and begs him to come to an understanding with the king and all the bishops to extirpate two vices which were gnawing the Gallo-Frankish priesthood: simony and the election of laymen to the episcopate.[12] He wrote on the first subject several letters to the bishops and the king. He says to the young Childebert, to make him understand his role as Catholic king, surrounded by Arians, pagans, and commanding subjects still half barbarian: “As much as the royal dignity is above other men, so much does your kingdom surpass the other royalties of the nations. It is little to be king when others are, but it is much to be Catholic, when others have no share in the same honour. As a great lamp shines with all the brilliance of its light in the darkness of a deep night, so the splendour of your faith radiates in the midst of the voluntary obscurity of foreign peoples. In order, then, to surpass other men, by works as by faith, let your Excellence not cease to show itself clement toward its subjects. If there are things that offend you, do not punish them without discussion. You will begin to please the King of kings the more when, restraining your authority, you shall think yourself to have less right than power.” Does not this language appear of a light, a mildness, a wisdom more than human, if one thinks that we are in the age of Fredegund and Brunhilda, a dark and bloody age, in which our kings were rather monsters than men? The Popes knew how to see in that chaos, and draw from it the most Christian kingdom.

The relations of this father of the Christian family were no less cordial with the Spanish nation. Spain, evangelized from the first centuries, had become Arian with the Visigoths, who had invaded it in the beginning of the fifth century; but the Catholic faith ended by triumphing and sat even on the throne with Reccared, in 587. Saint Leander, bishop of Seville, was the principal author of this conversion of the Visigoths. Being the intimate friend of our Saint, he wrote to him, he and several bishops, and later the king also, to announce to the Pope this happy news; then they ask him for his works, above all the *Pastoral* and

the *Expositions on Job*; they consult him on embarrassing cases, they ask him advice as one would of the director of one's conscience. "I beseech you, by the grace of God, which abounds in you," wrote to him Licinian, bishop of Cartagena, "not to reject my prayer, but to be willing to teach me what I confess I do not know: for what you teach, we are under the necessity of doing." Then, after having set forth to him the cases of which he desires to receive the solution, he adds: "Deign to send us both the work on Job, and your other books of which you speak in your *Pastoral*, for we are yours, and we love to read what comes from you." King Reccared sent Saint Gregory a chalice of gold, adorned with precious stones, begging him, in his letter, to be pleased to offer it to the prince of the Apostles. "We pray also your Highness," adds this prince, "to honour us with his holy letters, when he shall have occasion."

"You are not ignorant, I think, with what sincerity I love you: those whom distance separates, the grace of Christ unites as if they saw each other. Even those who do not contemplate you near at hand know by renown how good you are." The holy Pope, in his answer, thanks the king tenderly for his sentiments and congratulates him on having converted the nation of the Goths: he accuses himself, by an excess of humility, of being lazy and useless, and trembles to appear at the last judgment with empty hands, while the king will appear there followed by a multitude of new faithful whom he has just drawn to grace. He exhorts him to preserve, in the midst of so fine a success, humility of heart and purity of body, for it is written: "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled"; when, to puff up our spirit, he says, the evil spirit recalls to us the good we have done, let us recall our faults. As to purity of body, the Apostle has said: "The temple of God is holy, and it is your body that is this temple; a Christian must abstain from fornication and possess his body as a sacred vessel, in holiness and honour, and not in lust. It is needful also that with regard to your subjects," he continues, "your government be tempered by a great moderation, lest power blind the mind, for a kingdom is well governed when the glory of governing does not dominate the soul. One must also guard against anger and not do too quickly all that is permitted: for anger, even when it punishes the faults of the guilty, ought not to precede reason, its mistress, but follow it as a servant, and present itself before it only when it receives the order. For when anger has once taken possession of the soul, everything cruel that one does is regarded as permitted. So it is written: let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to anger. I doubt not that, by the grace of God, you observe all this; but, finding occasion to present some counsels to you, I associate myself stealthily with your good actions, so that henceforth you may no longer be alone in doing them." Such was the influence of this holy Pope; we are certainly the enemy of no control which moderates in its excesses, without hindering in its legitimate exercise, the power of kings: but would they not gain, they and their subjects, in receiving still today finally heavenly lessons which have not for their aim to repress acts, but to purify them at their source, in the heart?

This paternal solicitude of our Saint extended still to Africa, where he wrote forty letters, re-establishing disturbed jurisdiction, rendering justice, giving the last blow to the heresy of the Donatists, and having captives ransomed on the market of Barca, for that was the principal use the Roman Church made of the revenue of the rich patrimonies which it possessed in Africa, in Gaul and in Italy. The Church has been, as soon as it could, a proprietor, because there is no better means of having regularly here below the independence necessary to a religion which must not be subject to earthly powers. Two things render the properties of the Church the most sacred of all: their origin, which was ordinarily a donation, and their use, which is to succour the poor and to aid the propagation of the faith. Always by his instructions as solid as paternal, but also by his charity, by his invariable equity, he brought back to Catholic unity almost all the schismatics of Istria. Here are some examples of his admirable conduct. Having learned that two bishops of Istria, Peter and Providentius, desired to come and find him, to ask him for explanations, if they were promised that no pain would be done them, he wrote them, in the month of August 595, a letter full of charity: he urges them to come to him with all confidence, they and all those who would, promises to satisfy them fully, and, whether God gives them the grace to unite with him, or they have the misfortune to continue in their dissension, he will send them home without any harm being done them. The inhabitants of Como,

urged by Constantius, bishop of Milan and friend of Saint Gregory, to unite with the Church, answered that the manner in which they were treated did not attract them, that several Catholics unjustly retained their goods, among others the Roman Church, which had usurped from them a certain land. The holy Pope, having been informed of these complaints by Constantius, answered him: If this land belongs to them, we wish it to be restored to them, even though they should not unite with the Church. The bishop Natalis, to whom Saint Gregory reproached, among other things, his too sumptuous feasts, tried to justify himself by passages of Scripture such as this: “Let not him who eats not judge him who eats.” Gregory answered: “This passage is not at all suitable, for it is not true that I do not eat, and Saint Paul speaks thus only for those who judge others with whom they are not charged. You suffer with pain that I have reproved you for your great repasts; and I, who am above you by my place, though not by my morals, am ready to receive correction from everyone, and I count as friends only those whose discourses make me efface the stains of my soul before the coming of the terrible Judge.”

But one of the things in which the zeal of Saint Gregory appeared with most brilliance was the conversion of the English. He chose a religious named Augustine, prior of the monastery of Saint Andrew at Rome, whom he sent to England accompanied by several others. It is believed that they were forty; but the devil foresaw the loss he was about to suffer: he put into their minds difficulties which appeared to them invincible; they stopped therefore on the way and sent Saint Augustine to the sovereign Pontiff to represent to him the motives they had for not going further. The Saint, far from condescending to their weakness and listening to the reasons which pusillanimity had suggested to them, wrote them, in the year 596, the following letter:

“Gregory, bishop, servant of the servants of God, and servant of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

“As it would have been more expedient not to undertake the good than to abandon it after having undertaken it, it is necessary, my very dear brethren, that you strive to accomplish, with the grace of God, the good work which you have begun. Be not frightened by the length of the way nor by the snares of the wicked; pursue generously and with fervour the design you have undertaken by the order of God, because assuredly the greatest labours will be rewarded with a greater glory in heaven. Obey in all things with humility your superior Augustine, who is returning to you, and whom I have designated to be your abbot, being persuaded that all that you shall do by his counsel will be profitable to your soul. May almighty God preserve you and assist you with his grace, and give it to me to enjoy in heaven the fruit of your labours, and to share in the reward you shall receive from it: for, although I cannot go with you, I have nevertheless the will to labour as well as you.” The religious having received this letter, took courage again, resolved to go forward, and landed at last happily in England, thanks to the prayers and merits of him who sent them. They were very well received there, and made Jesus Christ known to Ethelbert, king of Canterbury, and to a great part of his subjects: God so blessed their zeal that they asked new workmen of Gregory, in order to make a more abundant harvest. The Saint received very great joy from it and sent them still other religious to preach the Gospel there. Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus and Rufinianus were of this number, and carried with them all that was necessary for the decoration of the churches: sacred vessels, rich ornaments, precious relics with books proper to divine service. He named Augustine archbishop of the island, and sent him the Pallium; he ordained twelve suffragan bishops of Canterbury; he would not have the temples of the Gentiles pulled down, but only purified with holy water, and consecrated to the true living God. He recommended to Saint Augustine to introduce little by little the Christian religion in that country, and not to tear up all at once and with violence some customs, even if they were not altogether praiseworthy, provided they were not found absolutely incompatible with religion; to dissemble and pass over them, until this new plant should be stronger and capable of embracing entirely all the rigour of ecclesiastical discipline. He warned him also not to attach himself too much to the customs of the Church, but to take from other Churches what he should judge to be most profitable, according to the disposition and need of the country; “because one must not,” he says, “love things on account of places, but love places for the good things that are in them.” We pass in

silence several other instructions he gave to this zealous disciple and to his companions, to whom God granted the grace of miracles to complete the winning of this nation to the Christian religion. These incomparable cares of the holy Pontiff have won him the title of Apostle of England. For although this island had earlier received the knowledge of Jesus Christ, since the heresy of Pelagius had slipped into it as early as the time of the great Saint Augustine; nevertheless, as these peoples, who were Britons, had since been subjugated by the English, who gave a new name to the island, they had also changed religion and fallen back into their ancient idolatry: so they had need of a new apostle. Saint Gregory is called the Apostle of England, as we call in our country Saint Remigius the Apostle of France, although he is not the first who preached the Gospel.

Saint Augustine rendered an exact account to Saint Gregory of the affairs of his mission, and they wrote to one another; here is what the holy Pope sends him in one of his letters: “I know that almighty God has wrought, by your means, great miracles in the midst of this nation which he has chosen; therefore it is necessary that you should enjoy modestly this heavenly and redoubtable gift, and that you possess it only with fear and trembling; you ought to rejoice that the soul of the English is attracted by these exterior miracles to interior grace; but you ought to fear lest these prodigies give you thoughts of presumption, and make you fall into vainglory.” And in the *Morals* he says: “The English, who knew before only a barbarous tongue, have begun to praise God in the Hebrew tongue; and the Ocean, which was formerly swollen and furious, is now subject and vassal to the servants of God. The proud peoples, whom the princes of the earth could not tame by arms, have been subjugated by the simple word of priests: and the infidel nation, which did not dread armed squadrons, since it has been faithful, trembles at a word from poor and humbled men.”

Now that we have tried to paint the vigilance and sovereign action of Gregory over the principal regions of the world, let us leave Father Giry to tell us his virtues and what he did, so to speak, in the very heart of the Church. It is not easy to express on paper the marvels wrought by this most worthy Pontiff; whether we consider the order he established in the Church for the reformation of morals and for the edification of the faithful; or whether we regard what concerns the assistance of the poor, the consolation of the afflicted, the re-establishment of ecclesiastical discipline, and the lustre and ornament of the Christian religion.

He first put a very fine order in his palace, knowing that the prince’s house ought to be a model and example of virtue for the subjects. He received no seculars there, but only ecclesiastics of recognized piety, goodness, doctrine and prudence. He admitted there also some religious, in order to live himself always as a religious as far as it should be possible for him. He had no regard, in the collation of benefices, either to the riches or the poverty of persons, but only to holiness of life, to excellence of doctrine and to the other qualities required for acquitting oneself well of one’s duties. So, during his pontificate, the arts and sciences, whether human or divine, were in so great repute in Rome that several patricians left the sword to give themselves to study. He assembled a council, where a quantity of abuses were cut off, and several salutary and advantageous things usefully established for the service of God and the edification of the faithful. He had a particular care of the divine office and of the ecclesiastical ceremonies to be observed in it, and regulated the antiphons, the prayers, the epistles and the gospels which are said during the course of the year at Mass, as may be seen in his *Antiphonary* and in his *Sacramentary*.

It was, according to some, this great Pope who instituted the great litanies, or (what is more certain) who ordered that the general procession, which was already made singing the litanies, should be conducted to Saint Peter’s, as we learn from himself, at the beginning of the second book of the *Register*, cited by Cardinal Baronius in his *Remarks on the Martyrology*, on 23 April, where he speaks of the institution of this ceremony. He increased also the principal stations of Rome, and reformed the ecclesiastical chant, which is still called today, on that account, the Gregorian chant. For this purpose, he caused two houses to be built: one near Saint John Lateran, and the other near Saint Peter’s, to instruct there the children destined for the choir; his zeal for the service of God was so ardent that, even in the greatest pains of the gout, with which he

was extremely troubled, he had himself transported to the house where his pupils were, and taught them, lying on a little bed, holding a little rod in his hand to reprove those who failed: a humility worthy of the vicar of Jesus Christ, who has so strongly recommended to us the practice of this virtue. The deacon John, who first wrote this history, reports that, in his time, the bed on which the Saint had himself carried and the switch he used to correct these young children were still shown with devotion. God approved by miracles the great zeal of this holy Pope for the worship of Religion. One day, wishing to consecrate to the use of Catholics the church of Saint Agnes, profaned by the Arians, to do it with more solemnity, he carried in procession the relics of Saint Sebastian and of this Saint, and placed them himself under the altar; while he was singing the Mass there, an unclean animal came out, it is said, of the church growling and making a great noise: which made it believed that the devil, who had established his dwelling there, was obliged to flee in the presence of the holy relics. Several lamps of this church lit themselves, without anyone putting a hand to them. A very brilliant cloud lit the whole altar, and a very agreeable odour spread in the church; although this church was open, no one dared to enter it, so much respect and reverence had this miraculous meteor imprinted in the hearts of the faithful.

There took place also another prodigy for the confirmation of the truth of the Eucharist. Our Saint was celebrating one day the holy sacrifice of the Redemption; the woman who had offered the bread to be consecrated approached to communicate; but as he was pronouncing these words: “May the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul for life everlasting,” he perceived that this woman was smiling; he deprived her of communion, carried the Blessed Sacrament back to the altar and finished the Mass; after which he commanded the woman to declare, in the presence of all the people, why she had committed the irreverence of laughing, when about to receive the body of Jesus Christ; she answered, after several instances, that it was because he had said that this bread, which she had kneaded with her hands, was the body of Jesus Christ. The Saint, hearing this, knelt at the foot of the altar, and began prayers with the people, entreating the Father of lights to enlighten the soul of this poor unbelieving woman. And at once the species were changed into flesh; Gregory showed it to all the assistance and to this unbelieving woman, who was converted by this miracle; and the Saint having made a second prayer, the host resumed its first figure. These marvels served not a little to confirm Christians in the faith of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist.

At the same time, ambassadors being at Rome begged him to let them have some relics, in order to honour their churches; the holy Pontiff took a white linen, had it touch the bodies of the Saints, and, having put it in a box, according to a custom of that time, he sealed it with much reverence and gave it to the ambassadors to carry to their country. When they were on the way to return, curious to know what they carried, they found the linen alone, without any relic. Greatly astonished, they returned to Rome and complained to the Pope that he had deceived them, giving them a rag instead of the bones of the Saints. The holy Father took the linen and placed it on the altar, and, having knelt down, prayed the divine Goodness to show what was contained in this linen, in order to instruct the faithful with what reverence and faith they ought to receive all that is given for relics by the Holy See; then he rose, and, in the presence of the ambassadors, pierced the linen with a knife, and at once blood came out of it in abundance; the ambassadors, confused, took back this sacred linen, with the box, and went to their country with all possible satisfaction. This custom of sending linen which had rested on sacred relics, or touched holy bodies, was then much practised at Rome, as we see in the answer that our Saint made to the empress Constantina. She had asked him for the head of Saint Paul, to put it in a magnificent church which she was building at Constantinople, under the name of this Apostle of the Gentiles; Saint Gregory answered that the sovereign Pontiffs were not accustomed to give the relics of holy bodies, nor even to touch them, except with much respect; but that, instead of relics, they sent a band, or a linen, by which the hand of God wrought marvels. He sent her, as a rare present, filings of the chains of Saint Paul, as may be seen in his epistle, which well deserves to be read, to learn with what veneration holy relics ought to be touched.

His vigilance regarded not only the exterior service and ornament of the Church; it extended no less to the living temples of God, who are the faithful, having care at once of the spiritual and temporal of his sheep. His charity toward the poor was according to the heart of Jesus Christ: so it was rewarded by considerable favours. As it was his custom to make some beggars eat at his table, one day he wished, out of humility, to give himself to a poor pilgrim water to wash with: but while he took the ewer and basin, the poor man vanished, and, the following night, Our Lord appeared to him and said to him: "You receive me ordinarily in my members, but you received me yesterday in my person."[13] Another time, he had commanded an almoner to bring twelve poor to dinner; when he sat down at table, he found thirteen: he wished to know why the number he had prescribed had been exceeded; the almoner answered that he had brought only twelve, and that there were no more: in fact this man saw only twelve. The Saint saw well that there was some mystery in it, and, casting his eyes on the thirteenth, he considered him attentively, and remarked that he had changed figure several times during the meal, having appeared young at the beginning, and appearing at the end like a venerable old man. After dinner, he drew him aside and conjured him to tell him his name and who he was. He answered him: "Why do you wish to know my name, which is wonderful? I am, not to conceal it from you, that unfortunate merchant to whom you caused to be given twelve crowns as alms and your mother's silver bowl. Believe assuredly that it is for this good work that God willed that you should be successor of Saint Peter, and that what he had determined from all eternity should be accomplished in you. As you are a faithful imitator of Peter, and have so much care of the poor, he has had a particular care of you." — "How do you know that?" said Saint Gregory to him. — "Because I am," answered the poor man, "the very angel whom God had sent to prove you." At these words, Saint Gregory found himself extremely surprised; but the angel said to him: "Fear not, Gregory, the God of heaven has sent me to you to assist you and guard you to the end, and to grant you, by his ministry, all that you shall ask of him." Then the holy Prelate prostrated himself with his face against the ground, saying with fear and reverence: "If God has made me pastor of his Church for so little a thing, I may well hope more from his liberal hand, if I serve him with great affection and if I share with the poor all that is his." This vision increased marvellously the zeal he had to succour the needy; there was no church, nor monastery, nor hospital, nor house of devotion that did not feel his liberality. He had written in a book the names of the poor who were in Rome, in the suburbs and in the neighbouring places, and he gave them alms according to their quality and necessity. He sent every day some dish from his table to the sick and to the shamefaced poor. Having learned that a poor man had been found dead in a village remote from the city, he was so afflicted that, fearing that the man had died of hunger or some other inconvenience, through his fault, he remained, by way of penance, some days without saying Mass.

His charity spread through all Italy and even to the most distant provinces of the domain of the Church: for the receivers who were established there on his behalf had charge to distribute to the poor what he prescribed them; and he put in it so fine an order that those who will take the trouble to read his epistles on this subject will be delighted: he says in them very fine and very touching things on almsgiving. He maintained, in the city of Rome, three thousand religious women. He said of these holy girls that great obligations were owed to their tears and their prayers, and that it was they who, by their credit with God, had turned aside the arms of the Lombards.

He sent to Jerusalem an abbot called Probus, with a notable sum of money, to have a hospital built there, which he always maintained, during his life, with all that was necessary. He had care also to furnish, every year, provisions and clothing to the religious of Mount Sinai, of whom one, named Palladius, was superior.

His zeal for the glory of the Church made him keep his eye on the bishops and other prelates, informing himself exactly of their conduct, and reproving them generously when they failed in their duty. He wrote to a bishop who neglected the poor: "Know that it is not enough, to render faithful account to God, to be retired, studious and given to prayer, if your works are not profitable to your diocesans, if you have not your hand open to supply the necessities of the poor; a prelate ought to regard the poverty of others as his own: it is

wrongly that you bear the name of bishop, if you do otherwise."

He ordained that ecclesiastics alone should have the administration of the churches and of their revenue, and that the same person should not be able to hold several charges; so that, according to the doctrine of the Apostle, each member of the ecclesiastical body should have its own office, and each might serve God in the same spirit.

He forbade giving the direction of monasteries to ecclesiastics, saying that this was the way to ruin them. He did not wish that they, nor the religious, should intercede easily with the judges for malefactors; but, if they did so, that it should be with great prudence, so that their reputation should lose nothing of its lustre, and that it might not be imagined that the Church favoured crimes and delayed the execution of justice. He reproved severely simoniacal bishops and the laymen who rose to bishoprics without having passed through the other degrees of the Church. He was an enemy of presents; he had those sent to him returned and had money carried back to those who had made them to him. He reproved Januarius, bishop of Cagliari, for having excommunicated a man for some injury he had received from him; he said that the bishop ought not to excommunicate anyone for his private interest, nor employ in avenging himself an authority which he has only for the general good of the Church. Desiderius, archbishop of Vienne, had asked him for the Pallium: the holy Pope wrote him not to explain to the public the poets nor the other profane authors, because that did not at all befit his age nor his dignity.

He did not permit bishops to reside outside their dioceses, except when necessity demanded it, and then only for some time. He did not approve either that they should embarrass themselves in the affairs of the world which did not regard the functions of their charge. He watched with extreme care that the religious women should keep their vow in all its purity: wherefore he blamed Vitalian, bishop of Manfredonia, strongly, for having permitted a nun to leave the habit and return to the world; and he reprimanded Romanus, exarch of Italy, for having consented to the marriage of some nuns, threatening him with the wrath of God, if he did not do penance for it. He warned also Venantius, who had left the religious habit, that, if Ananias and Sapphira died at the feet of Saint Peter for having kept back and concealed a part of the money they had received from their inheritance consecrated to God, he might, with much more reason, apprehend the rigour of his justice, for having robbed him, not of pence, but of himself and of what he had promised him, when he had consecrated himself entirely to his service. He could not bear that ecclesiastics should do anything against the holiness of their character. He wrote to Andrew, bishop of Tarentum, who was accused of having fallen into a grave fault against Christian morals, that, if he felt himself guilty, he ought to resign his bishopric, because, although men could not convict him of this sin, he could not hide it from God nor avoid the rigours of his justice.

Saint Gregory preached himself to his people, and, when illnesses or some lawful impediment took away this consolation, he composed sermons and homilies, and had them pronounced in public by someone else. In short, he was so careful, so vigilant and so indefatigable in acquitting himself of the charge of good pastor that it seems almost impossible that one man alone could have done so many and such different things at once: procure peace by his mediation, think of war, regulate ecclesiastics and seculars, treat with God in prayer, and with men in conversation, apply himself to the government of the spiritual and temporal of the Church, preach so often, dictate such admirable letters to so many persons of various conditions; in a word, compose the fine works that remain to us of him. So the Church, during his life, extended its branches in divers places, and, to use the terms of the Prophet: "The vine of the great God of hosts covered almost the whole earth";[14] several holy personages flourished and shone with miracles during his pontificate, as we may learn from what he says of them himself in his *Dialogues*. His firmness in defending the purity of morals often put his life in danger. He excommunicated a Roman knight who, having fallen into adultery, had repudiated his lawful wife. This wretch, wishing to avenge himself on him, had recourse to magicians; for the execution of this design, they promised him that one day when the Saint went to the city, they would make an

evil spirit enter the body of his horse, so that the latter, having thrown him to the ground, should trample on his belly and take away his life. This detestable design was executed in the manner in which it had been planned: a demon seized the horse and made it make such strange bounds that it could not be stopped by those who were near the Holy Father; but Gregory, discovering by a divine inspiration the source of the evil, made the sign of the cross and drove the demon out of the body of his horse. The magicians, in punishment of their malice, lost bodily sight; but this accident opened to them the eyes of the soul, and, making them know the enormity of their crime, they renounced all commerce with the devil, and asked baptism. The holy Pontiff gave it to them, without however restoring their sight, for fear lest they should return to their maleficent practices and to the reading of books of enchantments and magic; preferring to have them maintained at the expense of the Church than to give them a subject of ruining themselves. As we have already said, Gregory joined to a great courage for the defence of the interests of God so profound a humility and so marvellous a gentleness that it is a prodigy to see so well united together, in the same person, two things so different: the firmness and constancy of a sovereign Pontiff in sustaining and preserving the rights of the Holy See, with the humility of a simple private person who considered himself as the last of men. It was a marvel worthy of the eyes of God, to see him now giving laws, and commanding priests, magistrates and even princes to keep them, and that with such authority that he deprived them of their dignities if they did not obey; and now humbling himself and abasing himself as if he were the least of all and the most unworthy of honour. For, as he says himself, superiors must not let themselves be blinded by their power, but consider that they have a human nature common with their inferiors; and, instead of rejoicing to see themselves the superiors of men, they ought to take pleasure in being able to be useful to them by the functions of their charge.

The humility of Saint Gregory made him call the priests his brothers, the other ecclesiastics his very dear children, and the laymen his lords; and, though he was the sovereign Pontiff, the pastor and universal patriarch of the whole Church, he would not suffer nevertheless, as we have said, that this title be given him, but took only the quality of Servant of the servants of God, which he used in his apostolic letters, and, since, all the other popes have followed this fine example of modesty. In a letter which he wrote to Gregoria, lady of honour of the empress, he speaks to her in these terms: “As to what you threaten me with, that you will be always importunate to me until I write you that God has revealed to me that he has pardoned you your sins, you ask of me a thing difficult and useless; difficult, because I am not worthy to have revelations; useless, because you ought not to be assured of the pardon of your sins till the last breath of your life, when you will no longer be able to weep for them; as long as that hour delays to come, be always in fear and apprehension for your faults: wash them every day with your tears.” Writing to Stephen, bishop, he says: “You show by your letters that you have much esteem for me, and more than I merit; the Wise Man warns us not to praise a man during his life; nevertheless, although I am not worthy to hear the things you say of me, I beseech you to make me worthy of them by your prayers, so that, having said good of me which is not, it may be in me hereafter, because you have said it to me.” From this humility sprang the contempt he made of himself. He speaks in these terms to the emperor Maurice, in a letter which he wrote him at the height of his persecution: “I am a great sinner; but if I offend my God continually, I hope that on the day of his redoubtable judgment, he will pardon me my sins, for which I am afflicted in this life; and I believe, O emperor, that you appease the divine justice by persecuting me as you do, since I am but a cowardly and lazy servant.” From the same humility proceeded a great detachment from all the things of earth, for, though he possessed many goods, his heart was not at all attached to them. A hermit, who had remained long in the deserts, in perpetual prayer and in penance, had begged Our Lord to let him know the reward he might hope for having abandoned all the comforts of this life, in order to serve him in so strict a poverty; he heard a voice during his sleep: this voice told him that he might hope the same prize that was due to the poverty of Pope Gregory. The solitary was extremely afflicted at this answer, fearing that his poverty was not agreeable to God, since he promised no other reward than that which he gave to a man raised to the first dignity of the world, and who possessed

immense treasures; he complained of it for several days, which he passed in sighs and groans, until God taught him, by a second oracle, that it was not the possession of goods which made the rich man, but covetousness alone, and that thus he ought not to prefer his poverty to the riches of Gregory, since he loved his cat more than Gregory had affection for all the goods and treasures he possessed; for Gregory, instead of loving them, despised them and made liberal share of them to the poor.

His patience did not appear with less brilliance than his humility; it was a thing worthy of admiration to see how he bore the public calamities which happened in his time, the bloody war the Lombards waged against the Romans, the persecutions and ill-treatment of his enemies, and the painful illnesses with which he was attacked. Here is what he says of them in his epistles: “It is almost two years that I have been on a bed, tormented by such great pains of gout that I can scarcely rise on feast days to celebrate Mass; I am no sooner risen than the violence of the pain makes me return to bed, and presses me in such a way that it makes me sigh. Though this pain be more or less supportable, it is never so small that it leaves me entirely, nor so sharp that it makes me quite die; thus, dying every day, I cannot cease to live. I do not wonder that, being so great a sinner, God holds me so long in prison.” He says in another epistle: “I pray you not to cease making prayer for me, who am a poor sinner; because the pain I suffer in my body, and the bitterness with which my heart is filled in seeing the desolation and ravage caused by the barbarians, afflict me extremely; it is not that in the midst of so many evils I seek a temporal consolation, I ask only the eternal; but as I cannot obtain it by myself from my sovereign Lord, I wait for it only by means of your prayers.”

We learn, in his other epistles, that he was so undermined by illnesses that he had his body as attenuated and as dry as if he had been already in the tomb; nothing was capable of consoling him but the desire and hope of dying soon. He conjured all his friends to pray for him, to obtain for him patience and constancy in his sufferings, “lest my faults,” he said, “which might be healed by sorrows, be renewed by my complaints.” At last, when he was purified by so many trials, it pleased God, who gives recompense to just souls, to satisfy his desires and deliver his fair soul, to give him the crown of glory which he had so well merited by his heroic virtues. He had governed the Apostolic See thirteen years, six months and some days. He died in the year 604, the second year of the empire of Phocas, on 12 March, the day on which the Church celebrates his feast, and was buried in the church of Saint Peter. The Doctors of the Church, who have succeeded him, have given him magnificent eulogies: they call him “a man of very great erudition, the prince of theologians, the light of philosophers, the splendour of orators, the mirror of holiness, the organ of the Holy Spirit.” Saint Ildephonsus, archbishop of Toledo, speaks of him in these terms: “He was so endowed with the merits of all the ancients that we find nothing like him in antiquity: he surpassed Anthony in holiness, Cyprian in eloquence, Augustine in science, etc.” Saint Isidore writes that not one of the Doctors of his time, nor of the ancients, could enter into comparison with him. And the eighth council of Toledo says that, in moral things, Saint Gregory must be preferred almost to all the Doctors of the Church.

The persecutions against this holy Pope did not end at his death: God willed to render his holiness more brilliant and more celebrated by the miracles which would be wrought on this account. Indeed, one day the people, in a time of famine, addressed themselves to Pope Sabinian, to remind him of the care and charity that Saint Gregory, his predecessor, had shown in like calamities, hoping to move him thereby to succour them; this Pope, feeling himself stung by this tacit reproach, gave order to flatterers to publish that Gregory had been a vain and prodigal man, and that, by his bad administration, the Church was so exhausted in finances that it could not suffice for this extreme necessity. This unjust complaint went so far that they began to gather all the books of the Saint to burn them; some of them were even burned, according to the deacon John, or they were at least on the point of burning them, according to Cardinal Baronius. Those we have were preserved by the industry of Peter, deacon, who had been very familiar with the holy Pontiff; it is he whom Saint Gregory introduces, discoursing, in his *Dialogues*. This holy deacon, seeing the unjust design of Sabinian, declared that he had often perceived the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, on the head of Saint

Gregory, when he was writing, and that it was committing a horrible crime against heaven and a sacrilege against the spirit of God, to wish to burn books which had been composed under his inspiration; and, to convince them that he spoke the truth, he added that he was ready to maintain and confirm his deposition by a solemn oath in the presence of everyone; that, if he died after having sworn, they ought to believe that he had told them true, and preserve with veneration the books of this great Pope; but that, if he did not die, they should hold him for a liar, and he would be the first to burn the books. His proposal was accepted: Peter affirmed, by oath, what he had advanced, and died as he had said, in finishing swearing. Everyone was extremely frightened by this prodigy, and afterwards they had all possible veneration for him whom God had justified by so evident a miracle. That is why painters represent a white dove near the ear of our holy Pope, to signify to us that the Holy Spirit is the author of what he writes. Several other miracles were wrought by the merits of this great servant of God, particularly against persons who profaned his monastery by their disorderly life, who spent uselessly or managed ill its revenue, who took from the poor what he had left them, or who committed some other actions against the respect and veneration owed to his memory.

Besides the dove, of which we have just spoken, a great number of other attributes are given to Saint Gregory in the arts. Few lives offer scenes so grand: such is that of the procession he made to obtain from heaven the cessation of the plague at Rome; in the air, above the mole of Hadrian which will from then on take the name of Castel Sant'Angelo, appears an angel, who returns the sword to its scabbard, and divers spirits sing in the air. There may be brought into this scene the *image of Our Lady* which the holy Pope had carried in this procession and which is still honoured today at Santa Maria Maggiore. — The song of the angels was this: *Rejoice, Queen of heaven, Regina caeli laetare, alleluia.* The Pope completed the antiphon by adding the words which end it today: *Ora pro nobis Deum*; pray God for us: the artist may therefore write these characteristic words of the Saint, either on a cartouche, or on a banderole. Saint Gregory the Great has also received as attribute a church on his hand, either to recall that he was the support of the Church, or to designate him as founder of monasteries.

The Mass said to be of Saint Gregory is famous: we describe the scene recalled by these words, after an old woodcut anterior to the fifteenth century. Saint Gregory, vested in the chasuble, is kneeling on the footpace of the altar, between a deacon and a subdeacon, who carry a torch. The chalice is in the middle of the altar on an extended corporal; the book is open on the Gospel side and toward the opposite angle is seen the papal tiara. The accessories recall the various circumstances and instruments of the Passion, which is represented there in infinite details. But what is the signification of this whole ensemble in which Saint Gregory figures?

We have related that Saint Gregory, having recognized that a woman did not believe in the real presence, obtained a miracle to convince her and to revive the faith of the people: the consecrated host showed itself on the corporal in the form of flesh, visible to all the assistants. Is this fact the first idea of the engraving in question? The thing appears to us probable.[15]

Ancient prayer-books add to this picture, which they often reproduce, seven prayers in honour of the Passion, entitled: *Prayers of Saint Gregory*. The indulgences mentioned after them have doubtless made the fortune of these prayers and the prayers have given vogue to the image. This picture may also recall the considerable part which Saint Gregory took in the redaction of the Roman missal and of the liturgy of the Eucharist.

Whatever be the true signification of the picture called the Mass of Saint Gregory, it has so become his attribute that the *monts-de-piété* of Italy had taken it for a sign, doubtless on account of the memory of the great alms of the holy Pope, and that the Franciscans had adopted it as seal of their province of the Philippine islands, whose title was province of Saint Gregory.

There are still placed near him papers or books of musical notation to show that he fixed the bases of the liturgy and regulated the ecclesiastical chant. Everyone knows that the system of tonalities and modulations which dominate in the music of the Church is called Gregorian chant.

Saint Gregory is the patron of Granada, of Petershausen and of Catholic England. He is also the patron of singers and of choir-school pupils. The council of Clif or Cloveshoe, held in 747 under archbishop Cuthbert, ordered all the monasteries of England to keep the day on which the Church honours Saint Gregory. The feast became obligatory for the whole kingdom, by virtue of an ordinance made in 1222 by the council of Oxford, and this ordinance was observed until the so-called reformation. Here are some notes on the state of his cult and relics in the dioceses of Autun, of Sens and elsewhere.

RELICS AND WRITINGS OF SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT.

In the year 826, a part of the body of our holy Pontiff was brought into France, with relics of Saint Sebastian, to the celebrated monastery of Saint-Médard of Soissons, which he called, during his life, the Father of monasteries. His precious ashes still reposed there in the eighteenth century, in a shrine above the high altar.

The abbey of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, at Sens, possessed his head, which was given to archbishop Ansegisus, by the favour of the most Christian king Charles the Bald. Urban VIII, in the year 1628, asked a bone of it for Rome, in order that this celebrated city, which had been the theatre of the fine actions of this great Pope, should not be quite deprived of his precious remains. Thus Saint Gregory, who, during his life, had spoken with so much honour of France, to the point of raising its kings above other kings as much as these are raised above their subjects, has at last come himself to honour it with his presence by his holy relics.

I. Present state of the cult of Saint Gregory the Great at Sens.

Since the re-establishment of the Roman [rite] at Sens, in 1852, Saint Gregory has been put back in his ancient place of 12 March, where he had always been at Sens until 1702, when he was put on 3 September. The present legend is no more than that of the Roman.

The ancient one mentioned the gift of the head of Saint Gregory to Sens in 876, preserved until 1793 at Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, and the possession of a bone in the Treasury of the Metropolitan church.

II. Relics of Saint Gregory the Great at Sens.

According to the new description of the Treasury of the metropolitan and primatial Church, octavo, printed by Jenlain, at Sens, about 1844, anonymous, but nevertheless official, and which I believe to be by M. the abbé Carlier, canon-treasurer: the Treasury of Sens possesses: 1° page 8: A vertebra of Saint Gregory the Great; 2° page 14: Glazed reliquary; four fragments of the head of Saint Gregory the Great, given by Pope John VIII in 876.

“Various fragments of the head of Saint Gregory have been given at different times and to different churches; among others to the Roman Church, where the memory of the gift made by John VIII had been preserved *in Vaticana*, and which had a fragment of the said head asked, through the apostolic nuncio, on the part of Urban VIII, of Octave de Bellegarde, then archbishop of Sens. 1628.” In 1569, Saint-Germain of Auxerre possessed a bone.

> *The library of the school of medicine of Montpellier possesses a manuscript of the Lectiones or Homilies of Saint Gregory, and another of his Pastoral, both coming from the rich library of Saint-Germain of Auxerre in 1800 or 1801.*

Missal of 1715, 3 September, proper Mass of Saint Gregory.

Introit, Paris. — Collect, Sens. — Epistle, Rome. — Gradual, Paris. — Alleluia, M. Fenel, dean of the chapter. — Gospel, Rome. — Offertory, M. Dancourt. — Secret, Paris. — Communion, Paris. — Postcommunion, Saint Gregory.

III. Principal relics of the city of Sens.

Analysis of the notice indicated above, made after the solemn visit of the relics of the Treasury, by order of M. Mellon Jolly, the present archbishop, sixty-two relics authenticated. Page 6. True Cross (Charlemagne).

Page 8. Saints Savinian, Potentian, Altinus, Eodald, Lupus, Ebbo, Wulfran, Amatus, Honobert, Honulf, Bond, Paternus of Sens, Vincent, Lawrence, Sebastian, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, John Baptist, Saint Columba, Damian; Saints Magdalen, Mary of Bethany, Martha. Page 9. Saints Sanctian, Beata, Gervase, Protase, Simeon the Just, Blaise, Augustine, martyrs. Page 10. Saint Thomas of Canterbury (vestment).

Page 11. Saint Paula, Roman lady.

Page 13. The forty martyrs of Sebaste.

Page 14. Saints Ursicinus, Ambrose, Agricius, Leo of Sens.

Page 15. Saint Victorinus of Sens.

Page 18. Autograph letter of Saint Vincent de Paul, armchair and comb of Saint Lupus, etc., etc. (The comb of Saint Lupus served, on 28 October 1862, at the consecration of Monsignor Bravard, bishop of Coutances.) The inventories of the Treasury and relics of Sens, since 1200, official and unofficial, might amount to the number of twenty. It were to be desired that copies of them should be made, which would be gathered in one fine folio volume, gilt-edged, that would be preserved in the Treasury.

Parishes of Sens.

Saint-Pierre-le-Rond (relics)?

Saint-Maurice. Celebrated relics of the saints Fort, Guinefort, Aveline (pilgrimage). 3. Saint-Pregts [Saint-Prix?] ?

Saint-Savinien within the walls.

Saint-Savinien outside the walls, now Bon-Pasteur. Relics of Saint Theodechilde, daughter of Clovis, foundress of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, in 509; vault or crypt of Saint Savinian, altar still stained with his blood, four celebrated inscriptions in uncial letters. Saint-Didier. Relic and pilgrimage of Saint Mathias of Troyes. Note. The notice analysed, page 2, does not speak of the body of Saint Romanus, celebrated nourisher of Saint Benedict, of which the monks of Monte Cassino asked relics of Sens some years ago, and which is in the Treasury.

In 1164, Pope Alexander III, who spent eighteen months at Sens, made a solemn visit of the relics of the metropolitan church, and, in memory of the kindly hospitality he had received, ordered that they should all be exposed and venerated, each year, at Quasimodo [Low Sunday], and granted indulgences in perpetuity.

This pious and glorious exposition took place every year until 1793: it is mentioned in the historical calendars of all the parish books. It had been imitated by the other parishes, and the *Banc d'œuvre* [vestry bench] was called for that reason the Bureau of Relics.

Auxerre is extremely rich in relics. The catacombs of the church of Saint-Germain contain sixty holy bodies. MM. Thomas, dean of Chablis, and Labosse, parish priest of Carisey, have also private collections of very precious relics.

IV. Present remains of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif. 1° A garden of seventeen arpents, with the walls with which it was enclosed in 1112, by abbot Arnulf. This abbot, an admirable figure of the Middle Ages, made the catalogue of the library of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif; he cut the parchment himself for the monks who were copyists. This garden contains the well called of Saint Petronilla, built of dressed stone inside; it is attributed to Odoranus, monk, artist, sculptor, historian, painter, musician, who died at Sens in 1040. This well never dries up.

2° Audience-chamber of the ancient bailiwick of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif.

3° Building of the ancient farm-yard.

4° Ancient garden of the abbot, separated by a wall, belongs to a private person. 5° The church of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif was bought, then demolished, by Loménie de Brienne, archbishop become first bishop of the Yonne.

The ancient church of Saint-Savinien outside the walls, contiguous to Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, bought and preserved by pious faithful, then given by them to the archbishops on condition of preservation and maintenance, has been ceded to the religious of the Good Shepherd of Angers, who bought Saint-Pierre-le-Vif and founded there a house of education and refuge.

6° Place Saint-Pierre-le-Vif; public square, opposite the Good Shepherd. 7° The image called of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif.

8° Some sandstone boundary stones, with two carved keys, which formerly served for the properties of the religious, and are now private boundary stones.

9° Some books and precious manuscripts in the libraries of Sens and Auxerre. *Pedes sanctorum suorum servabit, et impii in tenebris conticescent.* [He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness.][16]

V. Diocese of Autun.

The holy Pope had, with Queen Brunhilda and several bishops of France, relations that it is fitting to mention. Brunhilda was guardian of her grandsons, Theodoric, king of Burgundy, who held his court at Chalon, and Theodebert, king of Austrasia. If she soiled herself with strange crimes, she did much good also.

The letters of Saint Gregory attest the important services this princess rendered to the Church. He wrote to her frequently either to recommend to her the Apostles of England, or to exhort her to convoke synods, to repress simony, to extirpate schism and idolatry. Whatever may be the judgment to be borne on Brunhilda — too much calumniated in our opinion, the Pope granted her all the privileges she had claimed for her establishments of Autun. In concert with Saint Syagrius, bishop of Autun, she had raised in that city a hospital in honour of Saint Andochius, and two monasteries, one of women, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and Saint John Baptist, in the city, and the other of men in the suburbs, in honour of Saint Martin. The privilege of the abbey of Saint-Martin was addressed to the abbot Luppo, and that of the monastery of Saint Mary and Saint John the Great to the abbess Thessalia: they are dated from the month of November 602.

The seminary of Autun possesses a manuscript copy of the *Dialogues* of Saint Gregory the Great, so ancient that it is one of the proofs which critics like to cite when they attribute this work to the holy Pope.

The feast of Saint Gregory had a special importance in the church of Saint-Pierre-le-Moutier, and the ancient missal of the church of Saint-Symphorien indicates the particular cult of Saint Gregory at Saint-Martin of Autun.

Saint Gregory is the patron of Charnay-lès-Chalon.

Here is the list of the works of Saint Gregory:

1° The book of the *Duty of Pastors*, or the *Pastoral*. He develops in it marvellously the dangers and obligations of a person charged with the direction of souls; a direction which he calls, after Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, the art of arts and the science of sciences. This work had so much reputation from its birth that the emperor Maurice sent to Rome to fetch a copy of it, and that Anastasius, patriarch of Antioch, translated it into Greek. It has received since the greatest eulogies from councils and popes, who have strongly recommended its reading to pastors of souls, that they might consider themselves in it as in a mirror.[17] The holy bishops of England always made it the rule of their conduct; and King Alfred gave a translation of it in

the Saxon tongue.

2° The *Sacramentary*, that is, the missal and ritual of the Roman Church, which our Saint reformed. Mention is made in the letters of the popes Saint Innocent I, Saint Celestine I and Saint Leo, of an ordinary of the Mass as it was said at Rome. This ordinary does not differ, in substance, from that which is used today; the changes which have been made to certain prayers are purely accidental and do not touch the substance. Pope Gelasius revised the liturgy in 490; and his true sacramentary was published at Rome, by Tommasi, in 1680. Mention is made in it of the adoration of the cross on Good Friday, of the solemn blessing of the holy oils, of the ceremonies of baptism, of the invocation of the saints and the veneration of their relics, of holy water, of votive Masses for travellers, the sick and the dead; of those which were said on the feasts of the saints, etc. The sacramentary of Saint Gregory differs from that of Pope Gelasius only in some collects or prayers. It is by this work of our Saint, as well as by his *Antiphonary* and his *Responsorial*, that the conformity is seen between the ecclesiastical office of today and that of the first times. The same ceremonies and the same blessings are found in the apostolic constitutions and in the most ancient liturgies. It is from these sources that Grabe, Riches, etc., have drawn wherewith to form their new liturgies, which approach rather nearly that which is followed at present in the Roman Church. Dom Ménard published in 1642 the sacramentary of Saint Gregory, with learned and curious notes.

3° The *Morals on Job*, which were composed at Constantinople about the year 582. We have made this work known in the life of the Saint, as well as the *Pastoral* and the *Homilies on the prophet Ezekiel and on the Gospels*. The *Pastoral* is divided into four parts, of which the first treats of the dispositions required in a man called to the episcopate; the second, of the duties of a pastor; the third, of the instruction he owes his flock; the fourth, of the necessity he is under of watching over his own heart.

4° Four books of *Dialogues* between the Saint and one of his disciples, named Peter. Saint Gregory relates in them, on the testimony of persons worthy of faith, several miracles which happened in his time. His style in them is less elevated than in his other writings.[18]

5° A great number of *Letters*, divided into fourteen books, not to speak of an appendix to the same letters. They form a very interesting collection.

6° An excellent *Exposition of the Canticle of Canticles*. It is surely by the holy doctor.[19] It does not appear certain that Saint Gregory is the author of the commentary on the seven penitential psalms.

7° There are, under the name of Saint Gregory, divers compilations extracted from his works by Claudius, abbot of Classe, his disciple, by Paterius, notary, and by a monk of Tournai, who lived in the twelfth century.

The Christian churches have always made a singular esteem of the writings of Saint Gregory. There is found in them wherewith to confound several heretics and a very fine exposition of the truths and maxims of the Gospel. Allegories too far-fetched are sometimes met with in them; but that was the taste of the age. The Saint troubled himself little about the graces of discourse; that is why his style is not always pure and correct.

Dom Denis de Sainte-Marthe gave at Paris, in 1705, a good edition of the works of Saint Gregory, in 4 vols. folio. It was followed in that of Verona, and in that which appeared at Augsburg in 1758. The latter was augmented with a very useful anonymous work, entitled: *De Formula praelatorum*.

All these works are found in the *Patrology* of M. Migne, in 5 vols. quarto. The deacon John composed the life of Saint Gregory the Great in the ninth century, by order of Pope John VIII: it is from this primitive source that all the biographers have drawn.

The Venerable Denis the Carthusian

1471.

Blessed are the poor in spirit — that is, according to Denis the Carthusian: blessed are they who are humble.

Denis of Leeuwen [*de Leuwis*], surnamed the Carthusian, was born at Rickel, a village of Looz, in the ancient principality of Liège. From his childhood he was equally inclined to piety and study, and he made himself very profound in the knowledge of theology and Holy Scripture. He passed doctor or master in the university of Cologne at the age of twenty-one; and, from that time until two years before his death, he occupied himself constantly with the composition of various works, the number of which is so great that it deserves to be considered a prodigy, above all because he had written all his works with his own hand, and was often distracted from it by other employments. He became a Carthusian at Roermond in the year 1423: and as he had almost nothing to reform in his manners, he attained in a short time a high degree of virtue. He excelled particularly in humility, in abstinence and in devotion. He was in a continual recollection which kept him far from sensible things and served to maintain his senses in a general mortification, in order to be more in a state to taste heavenly truths. This contributed much to those frequent ecstasies or ravishments of spirit to which he was so subject, and which won him the title of ecstatic doctor. Whatever he did, his prayer was continual; whether he wrote, or meditated, or was in contemplation.

His brethren would not suffer, however, that he should be always shut up in his cell; they made him procurator of the house.[1] While he held this charge, he converted a Jew of distinction, who, in gratitude to his catechist, had himself called Denis of Denis,[2] a name which his descendants have since kept at Roermond. He made still other important conversions while he lived in the world. His reputation induced Cardinal of Cusa,[3] legate of the Holy See in Germany, to send for him to be near him for the service of the Church. Denis, not being able to excuse himself, made use of this occasion to labour for the reform of different convents of men and girls. He also often made salutary remonstrances to the bishops and ecclesiastics. He even made himself the pacifier of public troubles, and calmed a distressing war between the duke of Guelders, Arnold, and his son Adolph, who had revolted against him.

The humble Carthusian shut himself up, as soon as possible, in his ancient retreat of Roermond; and although his fasts, his vigils, his obstinacy in work had drawn on him divers infirmities, he relaxed nothing of his ascetic exercises nor of his studies. He made his patience admired in the diversity of the ills which afflicted his body. These ills, besides those which came upon him from day to day, and passed, were a paralysis, a rupture, with the stone and nephritic colic, and incurable ulcers in the legs. These trials served marvellously to purify and perfect his virtue: they showed also what the weakest and most disgraced of men can do when God sustains him. They made him foresee from afar the death for which he had prepared all his life. He died on the twelfth day of March of the year 1471, aged sixty-nine years: he had passed forty-eight of them among the Carthusians.

The martyrologies of the Low Countries, of France and of Germany speak of Denis the Carthusian as of a man of blessed memory and great holiness. His memory was honoured with a religious cult at the Grande Chartreuse, in the diocese of Grenoble, where some of his relics were exposed with those of the other Saints. Henry Cuyckius, second bishop of Roermond, proposed to have the canonization laboured at, and had an altar in his honour provisionally destined in the church of the Carthusians; but in order to cover this liberty from censure, he dedicated it also under the name of Saint Denis the Areopagite. His bones were found the following year (1608), and were placed very decently behind the altar, until permission should be had from the Holy See to expose them to public veneration.[4] It is an honour of which he has always been judged very worthy, but which the Church has not yet confirmed.

WRITINGS OF THE VENERABLE DENIS THE CARTHUSIAN.

1° *Commentaries on all Holy Scripture*, printed at Cologne in 1533; at Venice and Lyon in 1567 and 1579.

2° A work entitled *Monopanton*, that is, all the epistles of Saint Paul arranged by order of matter, printed at Venice in 1528, at Lyon in 1547, and at Paris in 1551 and 1631.

3° A *Commentary on the books attributed to Saint Denis the Areopagite*, printed at Cologne in 1536.

4° A *Summa of the orthodox faith*, printed at Antwerp in 1569.

5° A *Commentary on the Master of the Sentences*, printed at Cologne in 1535, and at Venice in 1584.

6° Eight *Books of the Catholic Faith against the Gentiles*, printed at Cologne in 1554.

7° A *Treatise on the four last ends of man*, printed at Delft in 1487, at Cologne in 1568 and in 1591. This treatise contains such extraordinary things that Possevin, in his *Apparatus sacer*, suspects that they were inserted there by a stranger hand. It is advanced in it that the souls in purgatory are not assured of their salvation.

8° *Speculum omnis status humanae vitae*, printed at Nuremberg in 1595, quarto.

9° Gerard Hamontanus, Carthusian of Cologne, published, in 1559, a folio volume containing thirty-one opuscules, several of which were unpublished.

10° There were published also at Louvain, in 1574, seven other opuscules in one quarto volume.

11° *Speculum conversionis peccatorum magistri Dionysii de Leuwis alias Rikel ordinis Cartusiensis. — Impressum Alosti in Flandria, anno 1473*, quarto of 27 leaves. This volume, very rare, is precious because it is the first known printing, with date, made in Belgium. It was printed by Theodoric Martens of Aalst. It is found in the preceding collection.

12° Four books *against the Alcoran*, printed at Cologne in 1553. This treatise is not common. 13° Divers works of which the catalogue, drawn up by himself, is very considerable. Several have not yet seen the light or are no longer found.

It is to Father Theodoric Loër that we owe the publication of the most important works of Denis the Carthusian; he laboured at it while he was sub-prior at Cologne, and neglected nothing to procure the manuscripts and funds necessary for this enterprise, which cost him incredible pains. He put ample prefaces at the head of the different volumes of the author which he published. Father Joseph Engelgrave, prior of the Charterhouse of Brussels, had planned, in 1718, to give a complete edition of all the works of Denis the Carthusian, but it was not executed because the French Carthusians desired to have it printed in France. Pope Eugenius IV said of Denis that the Church was happy to have such a son, and Cardinal Bellarmine calls him a man of great holiness and great learning. According to the testimony of Dupin, he writes easily, but his style is simple and has nothing polished or elevated. He had read and studied much, and did not lack erudition in common things. His judgment was good, and he applied passages of Holy Scripture happily: he is sober and wise in spirituality, and full of salutary maxims and instructions. In short, there is hardly any mystical author whose works are read with more profit and pleasure.

The life of Denis the Carthusian was written by Theodoric Loër, or Loerius, surnamed *a Stratis*, because he was a native of Hoogstraten. Theodoric became a Carthusian at Cologne, on 10 January 1520, and died at Würzburg on 26 August 1554, generally esteemed by Catholics on account of his activity and the holiness of his manners. This life, which is fairly exact, was printed at Cologne in 1530 and in 1532, and is found in the collection of the Bollandists, vol. II of March, pp. 247–258. See Trithemius and Bellarmine, *de Scriptoribus eccles.*; Possevin, *Appar. Sac.*; Petreius, *Bibliotheca Carthusiensis*, p. 49; Dupin, *Bibl. Eccles.*, fifteenth century; 1st part, p. 350; and Baillet, under 1 March. Father Fisen, in his *Flores Ecclesiae Leodiensis*, pp. 154–165, gives a very extended notice on the virtues of the venerable Carthusian. The list of his writings and his portrait are found in the *Biblioth. Belgica*, vol. I, p. 241. (Godescard, Brussels ed.)

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[5] We have from Saint Theophanes a *Chronography*, or abridgment of history, from the year 231 [*sic*; 284], where George the Syncellus ended, to the year 813. The style is not polished enough; which comes doubtless from the infirmities and the prison of the Saint not permitting him to retouch it. Theophanes was an intimate friend of George, syncellus or secretary of the patriarch Saint

Tarasius. (The syncellus was that one of the clerics who dwelt in the bishop's chamber to render him the most secret services and to be witness of his conduct.) George, as recommendable for his virtue as for his erudition, died about the year 810. He left a *Chronography*, or abridgment of universal history, from the creation of the world to the year 231. There are found in it precious fragments drawn from Manetho, Julius Africanus, Eusebius and other ancient authors.

[6] Saint Bernard was bishop of Calvi (Calenum), a town today ruined, two kilometres from Carinola, in the land of Labour [Terra di Lavoro].

[7] On this famous avenger of the injuries done to God, see the following passages of Scripture: Exod. vi, 25; Num. xxv, 7; 3 Kings [1 Kings] ii, 27–35; Num. xxxi, 6; Jos. xxii; Jos. xxiv, 33; Judges xx, 28; Ps. cv, 31; Ecclus. xlv, 28; Boll., II March.

[8] This place is now called Land-Paol [Landpaol], from the name of our Saint.

[9] This little bell is of a singular figure, says M. de Fréminville, having the quadrangular form. The sides are not equal: there are two large and two small. To its upper part is fitted a handle to suspend it or to hold it in the hand. Its dimensions are not considerable: it is only nine inches high. It was not cast in a mould, like the bells made today, but was beaten with the hammer. The metal that composes it is red copper mixed with a great deal of silver. Miraculous virtues are attributed to this bell. (*Antiquities of Brittany*, Finistère, first part.)

[10] Here, on this subject, is a note of M. Tresvaux: "Dom Lobineau regards this fact as an allegory having for object the destruction of paganism; but M. de Fréminville judges, in the work already cited, that it was a crocodile, and it may be thought that it was an enormous serpent, as are still seen in some countries. This part of Brittany being then little inhabited, must have contained several. If, in the course of time, Guiana is entirely civilized and peopled, its inhabitants will perhaps have some difficulty in believing that their country produced monstrous serpents. Yet nothing is truer, on the testimony of travellers."

[11] This cathedral, dedicated to Saint Vincent, was very near that of Notre-Dame.

[12] Paul the Deacon, c..

[13] *Les Moines d'Occident* [Montalembert], vol. II, p. 94.

[14] See the life of Saint Leander, vol. II, p. 46, where we speak at greater length of this friendship of the two Saints.

[15] Acts viii, 20.

[16] *Dial.*, bk. IV, ch. 55.

[17] It appears, from the life of Saint Theodosius the Cenobiarch, from the funeral oration of the emperor Valentinian composed by Saint Ambrose, and from several other monuments of ecclesiastical antiquity, that in the first centuries of Christianity solemn prayers and sacrifices were offered for the dead on the third, seventh, thirtieth and sometimes the fortieth day after their death. The name *Gregorian* has been given to the Masses that are said for thirty days in succession for the soul of some deceased person, in memory of the fact that Saint Gregory had a like number said for the repose of the monk Justus. (See Gavantus and the other rubricists.)

[18] *Les Moines d'Occident, loc. cit.*

[19] Ozanam, cited by M. de Montalembert.

[20] Translation of M. de Montalembert. *Moines d'Occident*, vol. II, p. 114.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Translation of M. le comte de Montalembert.

[23] See the life of Saint Virgilius, above, page 158. Saint Gregory had formed a little library for Saint Augustine, apostle of England, and the latter put it in his monastery of Canterbury. There still remains of it a book of the Gospels, which is in the Bodleian library at Oxford: there is also a copy in the library of Corpus Christi at Cambridge. The other books which Saint Gregory had given to Saint Augustine were psalters, the *Pastoral*, the *Passionarium sanctorum*, etc. See the catalogue of the Saxon MSS. by H. Wanley, at the end of the *Thesaurus* of Dr. Hickes, p. 172. There were also kept formerly, in the monastery of Canterbury, precious ornaments, vases, relics and a pallium which Saint Gregory had given to Saint Augustine. There is still seen in the Harleian library, in London, the manuscript inventory of all these effects, which had been made by Thomas Elmham, under the reign of Henry V. It was published by the learned lady Elstob, at the end of a panegyric of Saint Gregory in the Saxon language.

[24] *Membra prius quasi me suscepisti, sed heri me.* — A stained-glass window of Canterbury of the twelfth century reproduces this legend.

[25] Ps. lxxix, 13.

[26] Cf. Father Cahier, *Caractéristiques des Saints*.

[27] M. Urbain Prunier, parish priest of Soucy, near Sens, member of the Hagiographical Commission of Sens.

[28] See the third council of Tours, can. 3, and the preface which Bulteau put at the head of his French translation of the *Pastoral* of Saint Gregory, printed in 1630.

[29] See the preface of D. Denys de Sainte-Marthe.

[30] See Ceillier, vol. XVII, p. 350.

[1] He was also the first prior of the Charterhouse of Bois-le-Duc. See *Hist. Episc. Sylvaducensis*, p. 572.

[2] *Dionysius-Dionysii*; and in Flemish *Denys-Denyssens*.

[3] Nicholas of Cusa, born of poor parents in 1461 [*sic*; about 1401], at Cusa, a village situated on the Moselle, in the diocese of Trier, attained, by his probity and learning, the dignity of cardinal in 1448. He was first archdeacon of Liège, then legate of the Holy See, reformer of ecclesiastical discipline in Germany, and bishop of Brixen. Eager for knowledge of every kind, he had made himself skilful in Hebrew and Greek, in philosophy and theology, and even in the exact sciences. His works were printed at Basel in 1565, 3 vols. folio. His life was composed in Latin, by Father Hartzheim, Trier, 1730, octavo. In vol. IX, pp. 1–116 of the *Archief voor kerkelijke geschiedenis, inzonderheid van Nederland*, by Kist and Royaards, there is found a very extended notice on Nicholas of Cusa, by E. B. Swalue, who unfortunately has let himself be too much influenced by the prejudices of Protestantism.

[4] See Havensius, *de erect. nov. episcopat. in Belgio*, p. 304.

13 March

Martyrologies

Thirteenth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Nicomedia, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Macedonius, Patricia his wife, and Modesta their daughter. 303. — At Nicaea, the holy martyrs Theusetas, Horres her son, Theodora, Nymphodora, Mark and Arabia, who were all given to the flames for Jesus Christ. — At Hermopolis, in Egypt, Saint Sabinus, martyr, who, after having suffered much, was at last cast into the river, where he consummated his martyrdom.[1] 287. — In Persia, Saint Christina, virgin and martyr. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Rodrigo, priest, and Solomon. 857. — At Constantinople, Saint Nicephorus, bishop, intrepid defender of the traditions of his fathers, who firmly opposed Leo the Armenian, iconoclast emperor, for the cult of the holy images; condemned by him to exile, he prolonged his martyrdom there for fourteen years, after which he departed from this world to God. 828. — At Camerino, Saint Ansovinus, bishop and confessor.[2] 840. — In the Thebaid, the obsequies of Saint Euphrasia, virgin. 412.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

In the abbey of Saint-Antoine, in Dauphiné, the feast of Saint Maximus and of several other holy martyrs, whose bodies were brought there to receive the veneration due to their victories. — At Toulouse, Saint Stephen, of the Order of Saint Francis, martyr. — At Poitiers, Saint Pient, bishop of Poitiers, mentioned by Saint Gregory of Tours. 564. — At the royal abbey of Hautecombe, in Savoy, Saint Viviant [*sic*], second abbot of that Cistercian house and successor of Saint Amadeus of Hauterive. He had been a disciple of Saint Bernard. — At Chambéry, Blessed Boniface of Savoy, archbishop of Canterbury. 1270. — At Troyes, Saint Mélain,[3] fifth bishop of that city. About 390. — At Remiremont, Saint Macteflède or Mafflée, first abbess of that monastery, seventh century. — At Nevers, Saint Vincent of Magny, priest and confessor. Seventh century. — At Novalesa, at the foot of Mont Cenis, Saint Heldrad, abbot of that place, born in Provence. 875. — At Saint-Pierre-les-Églises, near Chauvigny-sur-Vienne, in Poitou, an annual procession established following a vow which this parish made to be delivered from the black sickness. It is perhaps the last trace remaining of that horrible scourge which desolated France about 1437. On that day no one works at Saint-Pierre-les-Églises. The Revolution itself could not interrupt the accomplishment of this pious duty. — At Cluny (formerly), translation, about the year 1100, of the relics of Saint Consortia, daughter of Saint Eucherius, who was afterwards bishop of Lyon. When Saint Eucherius separated from his wife to serve God in solitude, Consortia followed, it is said, her mother, Saint Galla, into her retreat. 463.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil the Great. — At Constantinople, Saint Nicephorus, bishop of the Order of Saint Basil, etc.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Camerino, Saint Ansovinus, confessor, who, having from a canon regular become bishop of the same city, so well administered his Church that he was dear to God and agreeable to men.

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — At León, in Spain, Saint Ramirus and twelve religious martyrs, who, massacred by the Arians while they were chanting the creed, received with joyful heart the crown prepared for them.

Martyrology of Cîteaux. — Near Susa, at the foot of the Alps, Saint Heldrad, abbot of Novalesa, of the Order of Saint Benedict, remarkable for his rare merits and the excellent holiness of his life, whose sacred bones are honoured by the striking testimony of many miracles.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — At Todi, Blessed Roger, confessor, disciple of our Father Saint Francis the Seraphic, who, all shining with the brightness of his excellent charity and the perfection of his life, flew away to the heavenly abode on 5 January [*sic*; as printed], and whom the miracles and prodigies wrought during his life and after his death have made illustrious.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — At Palermo, in Sicily, Blessed Matthew of Agrigento, bishop of the same city and confessor, of the Order of Minors, companion of Saint Bernardine of Siena, and most glorious imitator of his virtues, and above all of his piety toward the Mother of God and the Most Holy Name of Jesus, who, after having holily discharged and then laid down the episcopal charge, rested in the Lord on 7 January [*sic*; as printed], celebrated for the renown of his miracles and for the antiquity of his cult, which has been approved by apostolic authority. 7 February 1451.

Martyrology of the Carmelites, Calced and Discalced. — In the Thebaid, the decease of Saint Euphrasia, virgin, of the Order of Carmelites, who, full of merits, passed from earth to heaven.

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Todi, Blessed Roger, confessor.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In the East, the venerable Pemene, virgin. — At Nicomedia, in Bithynia, Saint Urpasian, martyr, who suffered a glorious death at the beginning of the persecution of Maximian. He was torn with ox-sinews, then hanged and burned at the same time. He was of the number of the senators. 295. — At Cagliari, in Sardinia, Saint Edictius, martyr, whose body was found, in 1616, under the altar of the church of Saint Ephysius.[4] — In Ireland, Saint Mochoemoc, also named Pulcherius, abbot of Liathmore. Seventh century. And Saint Gerald, bishop and abbot. About 700. — In Scotland, Saint Kennoch, virgin. About 1007. Although she was the sole heiress of a rich house, Kennoch became a nun. Her name became celebrated by the miracles which God granted to her prayers. Several churches of Scotland were formerly under her patronage. There is still one near Glasgow which bears her name. The Scots formerly had much veneration for her relics. — At Perugia, in Italy, Blessed Eric or Henry, who died in that city and who was, as is believed, son of a king of Denmark. 1415. — In Portugal, feast of Saint Sancha.

Saint Euphrasia or Eupraxia, Virgin in the Thebaid

412. — Pope: Saint Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.

O virginales nuptiae, / Per quas caro fit spiritus! / O dulce vinculum, quo jungitur / Deo mens, menti Deus.

O nuptials of virginity, by which the flesh becomes spirit! O sweet bonds, by which God is united to the soul and the soul to God. — Santeuil, *Hymns.*

Euphrasia, whose life we give here, had for father a senator of Constantinople called Antigonus, and for mother a noble woman named Euphrasia. Antigonus was allied to the emperor Theodosius the Younger, and one of the most employed in public affairs and the most capable of managing them; Euphrasia, his wife,

yielded to him neither in nobility nor in virtue. They were both very attached to religion and the service of God, and worthily discharged all the offices that were entrusted to their prudence. Some time after their marriage, they received from the hand of God a daughter, who was named Euphrasia like her mother. They were content with this child: Antigonus, who was strongly persuaded of the vanity of this life, proposed to his wife to pass the rest of their days in perpetual continence, since it had pleased God to give them a daughter, heiress of their house.

Euphrasia, blessing God in her heart for having caused this good desire to arise in the soul of her husband, assured him that she asked nothing better, knowing well, according to the words of Saint Paul: "That the time is short, and that they who are married should live as though they were not, because the shadow and figure of this world pass away in a moment."[1] She begged him then to distribute a part of his goods to the poor, that they might carry them for them into heaven, where it would profit them a hundredfold. Antigonus did it willingly, and from that time both, no longer united but by the bond of charity alone, applied their minds only to serving Jesus Christ perfectly; but Antigonus did not live long in this holy exercise: he died at the end of the year, and left the capital of the empire full of regrets by his death, as well as of the good odour of his virtues. His widow, in her affliction, had recourse to the emperor, threw herself at his feet, and begged him to treat little Euphrasia as his daughter, since she had the honour of belonging to him. Theodosius promised it to her, and, in proof of his good will, he had her betrothed to one of the principal senators, when she was yet only five years old.

The contract was drawn up and the rings given, but the wedding was put off until she should be of age. While the young widow thought only of settling the lot of her child, she saw herself sought in marriage by another senator; he employed all the means that came to his thought, even to interposing the authority of the empress, that she might persuade Euphrasia. His industry, however, availed very little, because the virtuous widow would in no way listen to him: wherefore, fearing to be always importuned by him, she withdrew with her daughter and her household into Egypt, where she had great estates. She did not stay long in the same place, but went from city to city, in order to leave everywhere marks of her charity by the great alms she gave to the poor. She visited the lower Thebaid, and it was for her an ineffable consolation to see the holy hermits who dwelt there. At last she fixed her abode quite near a monastery of a hundred and thirty nuns, whose life was so austere that some ate only once a day, towards sunset, a little bread and vegetables; others ate only every second day, and others every third day, not to say more of their other mortifications and penances.

The mother of Euphrasia, touched by these examples of virtue, wished to give a great sum of money to this holy house, in order to have a share in the prayers that were made there; but the abbess refused this alms, saying that her nuns had no need of it, since they had renounced the goods of the world to enjoy eternal goods, and she accepted only wax, oil and incense for the service of the church. The holy widow often visited this monastery with her daughter, who was then only seven years old, and the abbess took pleasure in entertaining this innocent virgin on the sweetnesses which those experienced who were consecrated to God, and how delightful a thing it is to give oneself entirely to him, despising the vain grandeurs of earth. Little Euphrasia was vividly touched by these discourses; when evening had come, as her mother wished to retire to her lodging and take her with her, she told her she did not wish to leave the monastery. The abbess answered her that no one could remain there without being consecrated to Jesus Christ by a perpetual vow. Then the holy child, approaching a crucifix which was there present, embraced it with much tenderness, and, kissing it lovingly, cried out: "Let that not hinder it; I offer myself to Jesus Christ by a perpetual vow to be a nun of this convent." She pronounced these words with great fervour; in vain did the superior try to frighten her with the austerities of the house, she could never shake her courage, nor oblige her to return with her mother. The latter, far from opposing the resolution of her daughter, prayed God to grant her constancy. She left her then in the hands of the abbess, and returned with eyes bathed in tears. She continued to lead the holy life she had begun, going through all the places where she knew there were poor and unfortunate, to assist

them in their needs. Meanwhile the abbess had a revelation that this excellent woman was not to live long: she warned her of it, that she might dispose herself for death. The holy widow was in no wise astonished at this news, since she asked God every day to be pleased to withdraw her from the world; after having therefore thanked him for it, she sent for her daughter, exhorted her to perseverance, and, having left her all her riches to employ in works of piety, she gave up her soul to God at the end of three days, and was buried in that same monastery. The emperor, informed of this death and of what had passed, wrote to the young Euphrasia, at the solicitation of the senator to whom she had been betrothed; he bade her, since she was of an age to marry, come to Constantinople, to celebrate the solemnity of her wedding. Euphrasia answered that she made him himself judge, whether it was reasonable that she should leave her spouse Jesus Christ, who was an immortal God, to marry a man destined to be the food of worms; for herself, she was resolved to die a thousand times rather than leave the religious state she had embraced; she asked also that her goods be distributed to the poor, her slaves set at liberty and her farmers discharged of what they might owe since the death of her father, so that, being entirely delivered from the cares of earth, she might think of nothing but serving Jesus Christ, to whom she had entirely consecrated herself. The emperor received this letter, and had it read in presence of all the court; and, approving the proceeding of Euphrasia, he faithfully accomplished all that she asked of him.

This young nun, seeing herself thus out of the embarrassments of the world, undertook to labour at her perfection with a courage worthy of a spouse of Jesus Christ. As soon as she had reached her twelfth year, she began to practise the fasts of the monastery and to eat only once a day; and, some time after, she remained as much as two and three days without taking nourishment. She swept the convent, made the beds of the other sisters, drew water for the kitchen, exercised herself in the vilest offices of the house, and acquitted herself of all these things with incredible joy. The spirit of darkness, foreseeing the fruits her fervour would bear, at first made cruel war upon her by strong interior temptations; but she overcame them, redoubling her fasts and austerities and declaring her troubles to her superior, an efficacious means of triumphing over all the artifices of the demon. The abbess, to try her, sometimes commanded her to carry great stones from one place to another, then to carry them back to their first place, and our Saint did this as punctually as if she had seen the utility of it. She made her also make the bread of the convent; our Saint obeyed with pleasure, without troubling herself about her nobility and her birth. The demon, outraged with spite at seeing with what facility Euphrasia received the commands of her superior and accomplished all that regarded the observance, did not leave her at rest: he delivered new assaults to her, tormenting her with evil representations which he excited in her imagination, and with importunate dreams and dangerous phantoms; but the holy girl, knowing that this proceeded from the evil spirit, was not disturbed by it; on the contrary, wishing to mortify more and more her exterior senses by fasts longer than the ordinary, she asked permission to fast a week without eating anything, an austerity which no nun had yet been able to practise, except the abbess, who was very zealous and fervent. This holy superior, seeing the courage of Euphrasia, permitted her to do in that whatever she pleased; so that she remained seven days without eating. There was in the monastery a nun of low birth named Germana, daughter of a slave; instead of admiring the favours and graces which Euphrasia received from the goodness of God, and labouring to imitate her virtues, she conceived such a jealousy of her having fasted the whole week without taking anything that, interpreting this miraculous action in a bad part, she told her, in a tone of reproach, that it was but ambition and hypocrisy to become abbess after the death of the other; but that she hoped God would never suffer it. Euphrasia, instead of being angry at these bitter words, profited by them as by an occasion of virtue; and, throwing herself at the feet of Germana, she asked her pardon, confessing that she was a sinner, and did her best to soften the bitterness of her heart by words full of charity; but it was in vain. The abbess, having learned what had passed, severely reproved this nun who had thus outraged the Saint, and, for her penance, commanded her to remain separated from the community. Euphrasia, far from rejoicing at this justice done her, ceased not to entreat the abbess to pardon Germana, and employed for that the credit of the elder nuns, until she at last

obtained what she asked.

The demon, vanquished on the side of the soul, resolved to attack the body, to take the life of our Saint or to render her incapable of fulfilling her duties. He seized her one day as she was drawing water at the well and threw her into it; she would have drowned there, had not her good angel held her above the water until the nuns, who had heard her voice, ran up and drew her out. Then she said to the demon, smiling: “I pray our Lord Jesus Christ, O Satan, that thou mayest not triumph over me.” Another time, in cutting wood, she gave herself so great a blow of the billhook on the foot that the pain made her faint. The nuns came promptly to her help to carry her into the monastery; but, having come to herself, she finished her work in spite of her wound, and loaded herself with the pieces of wood she had cut, lest her enemy should boast of having made her let go. Another time, he cast her down from the height of a third storey; but she rose up sound and without a wound. As she was cooking vegetables for the convent, the evil spirit overturned upon her the cauldron of boiling water: the sisters thought she was all scalded, but she protested that she had felt only cold water.

The heavenly Spouse permitted the demon thus to try the person of his beloved, to render her more illustrious, and to give us to know that the demon can do nothing against those who are aided and strengthened by his all-powerful hand. He made the holiness of Euphrasia appear also by several miracles. It is related, among others, that she healed a child of eight years, who was deaf, dumb and paralytic, by making the sign of the cross over him, and saying these words: “May he who created thee heal thee.” There was in the monastery a possessed woman; the abbess entrusted the care of her to Euphrasia, that she might bring her food and drink: which no other dared to do, for fear of being beaten by the demon. But Sister Germana, of whom we have spoken, still jealous, said with contempt to her companions: “Is there then no one here who can manage this possessed woman but Sister Euphrasia? If the charge is willingly given me, I shall fulfil it as well as she.” She took her dinner and carried it to her; but the possessed woman, quite furious, seized Germana, and, throwing her roughly on the ground, tore her clothes and bit her so hard that she took out a piece; she continued to ill-treat her until Euphrasia ran up to her aid and tore from her hands this poor nun more dead than alive, and commanded the demon to stop: thus this jealous sister became wise at her own expense, and the holiness of Euphrasia was recognised by all the other nuns. The abbess, having remarked by this the power Euphrasia had over demons, commanded her to pray for this poor possessed woman. The saint obeyed, and, trusting in the divine mercy, which does not despise the prayers of the humble, she said these words to the possessed woman: “May my Lord Jesus Christ, who created thee, heal thee.” And immediately the impure spirit was forced to go out, uttering frightful howls, and foaming in a horrible manner at the mouth of this woman.

Some time after, God made known, in a vision, to the abbess that he would soon call Euphrasia, and to what degree of glory she was to be raised. A few days later, our Saint was seized with a fever which led her to death in twenty-four hours, in the thirtieth year of her age, about the year 412, according to those who make her born under Theodosius the Great, and 460 according to others, who make her born under Theodosius the Younger. She was buried in the sepulchre of her mother. Sister Julia, who had served her as guide and mistress in the exercises of religion, begged her, as she was in agony, not to forget her, but to ask God that he would withdraw her from this world with her; the abbess also entreated her to grant her the same grace. Euphrasia being dead, Julia passed three days in tears and prayers by her tomb, and on the fourth she went to find the abbess and told her, with great joy, that Jesus Christ was calling her to himself by the merits of Euphrasia: she then embraced all her sisters, and the next day she died, and was buried beside her dear disciple. At the end of thirty days, the abbess assembled the chapter, and told them that she would die in a short time, Euphrasia having obtained this favour for her from God, and ordered them to elect another superior in her place. The nuns, although extremely afflicted at losing her, proceeded to the election of another abbess, who was Theogenia; and the next morning this saint was found dead in the oratory, or to

speak better, asleep in the Lord. She was placed in the tomb of Euphrasia with the others; but since then no one more has been placed there. God has wrought great miracles in favour of those who visited this sepulchre with devotion and reverence.

The memory of Saint Euphrasia is in such great veneration among the Greeks that, when the vows of a nun are received, the priest asks God for her that he make her partake of the graces and blessings with which he filled Saint Thecla, Saint Euphrasia and Saint Olympias.

Saint Euphrasia is represented embracing a crucifix, to recall that circumstance of her life in which, considering a crucifix, she thought she saw in its open arms an invitation to embrace it, and ran to surround it with her child's arms, to promise it never to have any other love. — She is also figured trampling under foot the demon who strives to cast her into a well.

The Roman Martyrology and that of Usuard make mention of this holy Virgin on 13 March, and the Greeks on 25 July. Surius gives her life in his second volume, and Saint John Damascene speaks of her in the third discourse which he wrote on the Images.

Saint Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople

828. — Pope: Gregory IV. — Emperor of the East: Michael the Stammerer.

Theodore, father of Nicephorus, was secretary to the emperor Constantine Copronymus; but his inviolable attachment to the doctrine of the Church touching the holy images overthrew his fortune and made him lose the position he held at the court of Constantinople. The prince, furious at finding in one of his servants an invincible opposition to the impiety of the Iconoclasts, avenged himself on him in the most cruel manner: he deprived him of his office and banished him after having condemned him to suffer horrible torments. Young Nicephorus, who was brought up under his father's eyes, was continually animated to the practice of virtue by the domestic examples which he had unceasing occasion to remark. Death having early taken his father from him, Eudoxia, his mother, continued to cultivate with care his happy dispositions: she formed him to piety, while different masters took care to adorn his mind by the study of letters. Nicephorus had no sooner appeared in the world than he made himself universally esteemed there by his virtue as well as by the extent and variety of his knowledge. His merit penetrated even to the court. Constantine VI and Irene his mother, who then governed the empire and who were zealous for sound doctrine, honoured him with their confidence and gave him the office which his father had held under Constantine

Copronymus. He responded perfectly to the idea that had been conceived of him, discharging his employment with extraordinary capacity; but he was not content to serve the State by his talents, he laboured also with all his strength for the defence of the faith and the extinction of the heresy of the Iconoclasts. He made himself admired by the Fathers of the seventh general council, at which he assisted in the quality of commissioner of the emperor.

This zeal for orthodoxy, joined to great virtues and an uncommon learning, caused him to be judged worthy to succeed Saint Tarasius, patriarch of Constantinople, who died in 806. The Church could but gain much by this choice, as the event proved. Nicephorus gave, on the day of his consecration, the most authentic testimony of the purity of his faith and of his horror of the impiety of the time: he held in his hand, during the whole ceremony, a writing which he had composed for the defence of the holy images, and afterwards deposited it behind the altar, as a pledge of the firmness with which he was determined to maintain unto death the tradition of the Church.[1] Hardly was he seated on the patriarchal chair when he undertook the reformation of the manners of his diocese. He succeeded in it by adding the force of example to that of exhortations. He was indefatigable when it was a question of fulfilling the functions of his ministry. Gentleness and patience were the principal arms he employed against vice, and he did not use them uselessly; but the glory that came to him from the change wrought in the manners of his diocesans does not yet

approach that with which he was covered by the invincible firmness with which he suffered the persecutions that the enemies of the faith raised against him.

Leo the Armenian, governor of Anatolia, having been proclaimed emperor in 813, the Church found itself plunged into new troubles. This prince, entirely given over to the Iconoclasts, busied himself only with the means of spreading their errors. Cunning, artifice, violence, nothing cost him anything, provided he came to the end of his designs. He felt what weight the approbation of Nicephorus would have among the orthodox; so he put everything in use to obtain it; but the holy patriarch was no more touched by his caresses than by his threats. “Prince,” he said to the emperor, “your efforts are useless; we cannot change the ancient traditions; we respect the holy images as we do the Cross and the book of the Gospels.” It was a reasoning without reply. In effect, the first Iconoclasts, agreeing that the Cross and the book of the Gospels might be honoured, ought consequently to avow that the holy images might also be honoured, since there was question on both sides only of a relative cult. But it is not rare to see heretics fall into contradiction with themselves. The generous answer of Nicephorus was followed by a short but eloquent apology for the Catholic faith: he proved in it that the orthodox did no injury to the supreme honour due to the Divinity, since the cult they render to angels, saints and prophets is referred to God. It is the same, added the patriarch, with the respect we have for the inanimate things which serve in the divine service, such as temples, sacred vessels and images.

The emperor, naturally imperious, was indignant at the resistance he met. He used a stratagem which he thought must be more efficacious than the means he had employed. He ordered some soldiers secretly to drag with contempt an image of Jesus Christ which was on the great cross set up at one of the gates of the city; his order having been executed, he forbade another image to be put back, under pretext of preventing a like profanation. The patriarch saw well that a violent storm threatened the Church; but he was not discouraged. Full of confidence in God, he redoubled the fervour of his priests, exhorted the Catholics to remain firm, assembled about him several holy persons, and prepared for every event.

Leo, informed of what was passing, brought together in his palace some iconoclast bishops, and had Nicephorus told to betake himself thither as soon as possible with those of his brethren who held to his party. The patriarch obeyed, and came to the palace with several other Catholic bishops. When they were in the presence of the emperor, they conjured him not to meddle with the government of the Church and to leave it to those whom Jesus Christ had established its pastors. “If the matter in question,” said Emilian of Cyzicus, “is an ecclesiastical matter, let it be treated in the church, according to custom, and not in the palace.” Euthymius of Sardis, having taken the word, added: “For more than eight hundred years since Jesus Christ came into the world, he has been painted and adored in his image. Who would be bold enough to abolish a practice founded on so ancient a tradition?” Saint Theodore the Studite spoke after the bishops, and said to the emperor: “Lord, trouble not the order of the Church. God has placed in it apostles, prophets, pastors and doctors;[2] but he has not spoken of emperors. The government of the State is entrusted to you, as that of the Church is to the pastors.” Leo, transported with fury, drove out the Catholic bishops and forbade them to appear again in his presence. He was especially angry with Nicephorus; he thought then only of the means of ruining him, and he was not long in finding them. The iconoclast bishops, having assembled in the imperial palace, held there a pretended council, to which Nicephorus was cited. The patriarch did not appear, because the citation was not canonical; he answered only those who were charged to make it to him: “Who gave you this authority? Is it the Pope, or one of the other patriarchs? You have no jurisdiction in my diocese.” He then read them the canon which declares excommunicated those who dare to exercise any act of jurisdiction in the diocese of another bishop, then ordered them to withdraw. This answer should have intimidated the partisans of error; but heresy respects the laws of the Church only so far as it can make them serve its designs. The iconoclast bishops therefore continued their assembly, and pronounced a sentence of deposition against Nicephorus. The emperor, to satisfy his hatred by putting the crown on injustice, sent him into exile. Happy

still to have escaped the snares that had been secretly laid for his life!

Michael the Stammerer, who succeeded the emperor Leo, in 820, favoured the Iconoclasts like him and persecuted the Catholics, so that Nicephorus was left in the place of his exile. He died on 2 June 828, in the monastery of Saint Theodore, which he had caused to be built. He was about seventy years old and had passed nearly fourteen in exile. His body was brought back to Constantinople in 846, by order of the empress Theodora. The ceremony of this translation took place on 13 March, the day on which the Saint's name is found in the Roman Martyrology.

WRITINGS OF SAINT NICEPHORUS.

Saint Nicephorus left several writings, which are:

1° An *Abridgment of History*, which begins at the death of the emperor Maurice and ends at the reign of Irene and Constantine her son, which comprises a space of about two hundred years. Photius, cod. 66, praises this history. Father Petau had it printed in Greek and Latin, at Paris, in 1616, octavo. It was reprinted in the same city in 1648, in the body of the Byzantine history, and at Venice in 1729, with the historians who have written since Theophanes.

2° A *Chronology* from the creation of the world to the time when the Saint lived. Some additions were made to it in later centuries. The learned Father Goar, Dominican, published it at Paris, in 1652, with notes, with George Syncellus; it was also reprinted at Venice in 1729, in the body of the Byzantine history. We cite here only the best editions.

3° The *Stichometry*, that is, the enumeration of the sacred books with the number of verses these books contain. It is ordinarily joined to the chronology of Nicephorus, whether in the Latin or in the Greek editions. This work cannot be contested to our Saint.[3]

4° The *Antirrhetics*, or writings against the Iconoclasts. Some of them have been inserted in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, in the *Auctarium* of Father Combefis, in the *Lectiones antiquae* of Canisius, part 2, Basel edition. The others are found in manuscript in the libraries of Paris, Rome and England. The real presence is established in the clearest and most precise manner in one of his writings.[4] Almost the same terms are found in the book *De Cherubim a Moyse factis*.[5]

5° The *Dispute with the emperor Leo the Armenian*, on the matter of images.[6]

6° The *Letter to Pope Leo III*. We have spoken of it in the life of Saint Nicephorus.

7° Seventeen *canons* inserted in the collection of the councils, vol. VII, p. 1297, etc. Cotelier has published some others with a letter to Hilarion and Eustratius.[7]

8° Saint Nicephorus composed also a work to prove that Eusebius of Caesarea was an Arian, and that Epiphanides favoured the error of the Manichaeans.

Volume C of the *Patrology* of Migne contains the works of Saint Nicephorus. Dom Pitra has published, in his *Spicilegia*, some new writings which are not found in Migne. Godescard, from whom we borrow this biographical and critical notice, took it himself from the *Life of Saint Nicephorus* by Ignatius, a contemporary author, who was first deacon of Constantinople, then bishop of Nicaea, and from the account of his banishment given by Theophanes. See Fleury, bk. XIV, nos. xlvi, xlvii, and Dom Ceillier, vol. XII.

Saint Heldrad, Abbot of Novalesa, in Piedmont

Ninth century.

I was a stranger, and you took me in… Verily I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. Matt. xxv, 35–40.

Toward the end of the eighth century, the town of Lambesc (Bouches-du-Rhône), then the chief place of an important valley,[1] was governed by a *leude*, faithful to his prince and to God. He who understood his duties so well had from heaven, as reward, a perfect wife, who made him father of a son endowed with the best nature.

This son, named Heldrad,[2] never ceased to be the edification of his contemporaries, first as a secular and later as a monk; so carefully had his parents developed in him, from his tender years, the best sentiments, above all from the religious point of view.

It is not known to what celebrated school Heldrad was sent to pursue his studies, and the names of the professors who initiated him in letters are equally unknown today; but it is known that he had scarcely made his entrance into the world when he had the misfortune to lose his father and mother. He wept for them bitterly, and it was only with great regret that he took up their inheritance.

Henceforth it fell to Heldrad to administer considerable domains, and also to ensure the welfare of numerous populations, for the monarch had maintained him, at Lambesc, in all his father's honours. Let us say quickly that riches, no more than social distinctions, were ever able to prevent him from recognising the nothingness and vanity of the things most sought after here below: he used everything as though not using it. Soon he was seen, from self-denial and humility, to cut off all luxury from his clothes and his furniture, as well as from his hunting or war equipage. If he kept horses, he ceased to have them richly harnessed.[3] Such reforms had further the advantage of increasing Heldrad's resources for the good works in which he took most delight.

To bring succour and consolation to the poor and afflicted, as also with the aim of instructing the inhabitants in their religious duties, he willingly traversed the countries dependent on Lambesc, and even the neighbouring lands.

However, the locality which most fixed Heldrad's solicitude was not far from his native town.

In a quarter fairly near, which one reaches by heading toward the east, there existed several crossings of the ancient roads of communication of the Salyes. The Marseillais had profited by them to establish there a market, and, if need be, a sort of custom-house or toll; at any rate, in the time of Heldrad there was found almost constantly at this place a throng of travellers little inclined to good, for the most part, and above all an abundance of merchants who had not yet renounced the practices of paganism, in the hope of more easily deceiving the buyers as to the origin and quality of the imported goods.[4]

To come to the aid of so many souls worthy of pity, and to do so in a continued manner, Heldrad had built, at the entrance of the said market, a vast and beautiful church which he dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles.[5] This church he enriched with all the objects necessary for the exercise of worship, and he took care above all to provide it with ministers of the altars, whose maintenance he suitably secured.

Finally, as a complement of his work of moralisation toward the strangers crowded at the gates of Lambesc, Heldrad established, without delay, beside the church of Saint Peter, a great *Xenodochium* or charitable establishment, which he endowed largely, so that the guests, whether rich or poor, in health or sick, should be well treated there without paying anything. He wished even, by means of shades and gardens planted with fruit trees, to have the chance of prolonging, for convalescents and travellers, the cares of charity and still more the lessons of piety.[6] There was no lack, as one sees, for Heldrad, a few steps from his palace, of poor in body or in spirit to care for. And the mission he had given himself in this regard would have sufficed for a soul less ardent than his; whereas for him the desire to aid his neighbour, while accomplishing his personal salvation, remained still incomplete.

Heldrad aimed at an immense action of charity, at something supernatural of this kind, and in his thought he associated it with the most entire immolation of his person, not finding, it seems, his body yet sufficiently subject to passive obedience.

To follow more freely his projects for the future, he then takes the determination to strip himself of the fortune that may remain to him, and to quit for ever Lambesc and its valley.

The interest he bears in the pious foundations he has just made, the attachment of the populations, family memories, and the beauty of the fields that belong to him, are not capable of inspiring in him regrets which he cannot overcome.

He therefore disposes of all his goods, and distributes the value of them to the poor of Lambesc, after having retained, for the *Chorepiscopus* of the region, considerable sums which he destines for the maintenance of all the religious and charitable houses established, as well as for the foundation of a good number of others, whether in the valley or outside.

Heldrad now no longer fears for himself the sentence pronounced against the rich by the sovereign Judge; behold him become a voluntary poor man. Very soon, for his garments already of the humblest, he substitutes the simple costume of the inhabitants of the country. He encloses, in a wallet of coarse linen, food for two or three days at most, and, loading the whole upon the shoulder where in his time the military baldric shone, he sets out like the most unfortunate traveller.

He went almost at random, from one celebrated sanctuary to another, kneeling and praying; but before all, seeking a *sanctimoniale* or religious establishment of perfect regularity, in which he could consecrate himself to God as a monk, and have to accomplish acts of charity much greater than those which Providence had until then entrusted to him.

Having found nothing, according to his views, in all western France, even after having crossed the Pyrenees and passed into the Spanish March, comprised at that time in the Carolingian empire, he was obliged to take again the road to Lambesc.

Heldrad sees again, without too much emotion, his dear establishments of Saint Peter, and after a few days' rest, he resumes his journeys of investigation for a place of retreat such as his soul demands.

This time, traversing Provence from west to east, he directs himself toward the Italy of the Franks and explores it with attention. There again, even at Rome, no more than in Provence, his country, which abounded in model monasteries, did Heldrad find for himself the port of salvation such as he desired, and he was about to carry his search into eastern France, after having crossed the Cottian Alps, when he heard from the mouth of some pilgrims[7] the praise of Novalesa.

This praise, which consisted in representing this ancient abbey as a hearth of charity and Christian perfection such as few existed, was deserved, inasmuch as the monks of Novalesa, no longer limiting themselves to exercising hospitality, day and night, at their monastery at the foot of the Alps on the Piedmont side, had taken charge[8] of the painful service of the Almonry, established at the summit of the pass of Mont Cenis, and acquitted themselves of it with great care. During the long season of snows, the monks of Novalesa went on one and the other slope of Mont Cenis to seek out the travellers, and after having received them at the hospice on the mountain, they provided largely for their needs before letting them resume their course.

The warm season that followed, so short in the Alps, scarcely sufficed for the monks of Novalesa to gather, at the top of Mont Cenis, the wood and other provisions necessary to assist the unfortunate travellers.[9] They were nearing the end of this painful provisioning for the winter of the year 814, when Heldrad, who had precisely the pass of Mont Cenis on his itinerary, reached, at the very entrance of the said pass, the monastery of Novalesa. He found in the vestibule of the house of strangers the abbot Amblulf, a Provençal by origin, who that day was filling the functions of master of guests; but who would never have recognised the lord of Lambesc, his compatriot, under the livery of poverty, without an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Heldrad therefore ran the chance of receiving the ordinary kiss of peace, and then of being led to the altar to pray before passing to the refectory; his material needs would above all have been provided for, as was practised

for the common run of travellers. Instead of that, thanks to the light coming from heaven, Amblulf sees already all the profit Novalesa may draw from the arrival of Heldrad. He runs to him, embraces him affectionately, and the adoration over, he urges him to stay, promising to come to visit him often, in the interest of his soul.

Heldrad, in his relations with the abbot of Novalesa, was obliged to agree that he was not a man of nothing, laden with miseries, for whom only pity was to be had. Amblulf even brought him to confess that he had made the sacrifice of his goods in order to give himself more entirely to God. And later he heard him declare that all he saw at Novalesa proved to him that he had at last found the shelter from the tempests of the world which he sought, and all the conditions to serve God and neighbour as he had long desired.

However that may be, the abbot Amblulf thought he should test the determination of Heldrad before admitting him as a novice, and he was seen during this time in layman's habit cultivating the vineyards of the abbey, situated quite at the bottom of the valley of Novalesa. When Amblulf found himself well edified as to the desires of Heldrad, and perfectly certain that the lord of Lambesc really believed himself arrived at the term of his journeys of search, he at last gave him the religious habit.

Heldrad, taking part in the regular life as a professed, had no less ardour for manual works than at his arrival at Novalesa; but it is related that, in the intervals of these, in order to come to know well his new duties, he was in search of all the teachings that come to us from the founders of the monastic life.

If he puts in the first rank of his readings and meditations Saint Benedict and the rule left by him,[10] he willingly dwells on Saint Columban and his cenobitic prescriptions, as well as on the writings of Saint Basil. Heldrad was not only remarkable for his zeal for the religious studies, one admired his eagerness to succour the unfortunate and above all his perfect obedience, his angelic gentleness; so much so that Amblulf was not long in having him ordained priest, and in letting him pronounce absolute vows as a choir monk.

The sacrifice of himself, which he had so desired, is about to begin: behold him a soldier of Christ, in a monastery which has for patrons two apostles who died on the cross, Peter and Andrew. He can reckon, with less fear than ever, his hopes of salvation, for he is definitively admitted into a seminary of Saints.

He is sent, in his turn, to Mont Cenis to care for the travellers, or lend them assistance in the midst of the snows, and this particular employment of his aptitudes and his strength never seemed to him commanded often enough.[11] At other times, Amblulf entrusts to him a certain number of young religious to instruct and to familiarise with the exercises of piety and charity.

Heldrad, surrounded by his pupils, constituted a sort of little monastery apart. In effect, as a means of regulating the teaching, and also as an easier mode of maintaining order, in the midst of five hundred religious, the cells formed, in that time, divers groups around the numerous chapels scattered through the enclosure of Novalesa.[12]

While caring for the studies of others, Heldrad did not neglect to add to his own knowledge, for no one, more than he, loved to unite science with charity. It was moreover easy to instruct oneself at Novalesa, where there existed a library furnished with great treasures, whether religious or purely literary, a library which went on enriching itself each day by means of the copies made by the monks of the abbey and the exchanges which could thus be carried out abroad.

It is perhaps at this present epoch of the life of Heldrad that his correspondence with the deacon Florus of the church of Lyon should be placed. The letters exchanged between them, long preserved by the monks of Novalesa, are now lost: but, from the other correspondences of Florus which have come down to us, it may be supposed that these letters treated thoroughly of the affairs of the Church, as well as of the State, in a style which, on one side as on the other, was not without charm, for the deacon of Lyon knew how to choose his interlocutors.

The monks were not to be strangers to the great interests of the world, since sovereigns could not draw elsewhere so surely as in the convents the learned and capable men they needed for their council or to fulfil the difficult functions of *missi dominici*. Heldrad, no more than other learned religious of his time, was forgotten in the depths of his cloister; if we trust charter no. 55 of the cartulary of Saint-Vincent of Mâcon, he was at Cluny in the year 825 in the suite of Louis the Pious to help in the settlement of important affairs.

However, it was much against his will that Heldrad could be thus taken from the sweetness of his solitude, from that contemplation which he cherished at Novalesa itself, in that grotto which is still shown us, and before which all the marvels of creation unfold in miniature, above all in summer, when one can see and hear the numerous cascades of the streams that have resumed their course in the valley.

Heldrad willingly raised himself toward God in admiring his works, and he hoped to be able to do so still with some freedom, when he was called by degrees to a most active and absorbing life.

The abbot Amblulf was dead, and it had been thought right to elect in his place, about the year 837, Hugh, brother of Louis the Pious: it was an act of complaisance toward the monarch, who liked to know Novalesa in good hands, seeing that this monastery, on account of its importance, was held, besides prayers for the salvation of the State, to the most real military service. Unhappily Hugh, who had other abbeys to oversee, was often absent from Novalesa, and the most important services would have suffered had not Heldrad had the goodness to provide for them unceasingly. The occasion for Heldrad to make himself known as administrator of the whole monastery was such, during all the time that Hugh enjoyed the quality of abbot of Novalesa, that at his death, which took place in 844, he was called by unanimous vote to succeed him. Heldrad, who had never thought of the honours of the prelacy, protested against the choice of which he had just been the object. Observing that there were in the monastery more worthy religious, he prayed, he supplicated that a burden too heavy for an old man be turned away from him.

The monks of Novalesa, on the contrary, persisted in their decision; they succeeded at last in overcoming the resistance of Heldrad, by showing him the danger of thwarting the views of the Most High on the monastery and on himself. Heldrad, from his entrance into office, impressed on everything a redoubling of life. The *Laus perennis*, or incessant chant of the praises of God, went hand in hand with charitable works at every moment. More than ever, the poor travellers were affectionately cared for, in that hospice of Mont Cenis, where everything was then accomplished under the fair invocation of Jesus Christ Saviour and of his divine mother, Mary ever Virgin. To find again the unfortunates lost in the midst of the snows, the monks went themselves to search even to the bottom of the precipices, realising already all that has since been said of the devotedness of the religious of Saint Bernard.[13] To inspire his collaborators with a charity toward travellers carried even to martyrdom, he was accustomed to say to them, with that amenity which perfection gives: “I assure you that we have nothing to expect in another life, save the just proportion of what we shall have done for our neighbour, with a view to please God. *Juxta mensuram, mercedem crede futuram.*”

At Heldrad’s request, Lothair, who had succeeded Louis the Pious as emperor, confirmed more particularly, in favour of the hospice of Mont Cenis, all the donations of his predecessors, and united in the most formal manner to Novalesa the opulent abbey of Saint Peter, founded near the city of Saluzzo by Aistulf, king of the Lombards.[14]

Always to please Heldrad and to come to the aid of the hospice of Mont Cenis, one of those marquises of Susa, whose descendants have continued in the house of Savoy, gave, at the entrance of the valley of Novalesa, at the village of Venaus, arable lands and the wooded mountains which are above. Besides the offerings of princes, those of simple private persons were each day more considerable.

If the new abbot was eager to increase the revenues of Mont Cenis, he was no less jealous to preserve the resources of which the hospice could already dispose; wherefore he had certain serfs of the villages of Exilles and Oulx condemned to continue the services owed by them by agreement.[15] Under the government of

Heldrad, nothing remained, so to speak, incomplete, even from the material point of view. For example, we shall say, there lacked a tower in the middle of the fortified enclosure which then contained all the regular buildings of Novalesa: he had one built, among the highest and the most spacious, of which the upper storeys could serve for signals, while the lower storeys would shelter the most precious objects of the abbey, not forgetting its rich collection of books.[16]

When there were no more improvements possible to be made, either at Novalesa or at the hospice of Mont Cenis, Heldrad employed the sums remaining free in his hands in succouring the travellers at other points of the Cottian Alps. Then the pass of the Lautaret, in Dauphiné, fixed his attention, and he sent religious thither to build, at its approaches, a hospice, in a place called today the Monêtier de Briançon. The walls were already well raised when the religious charged with this work arrived at Novalesa, declaring the undertaking rendered impossible by the presence of serpents which desolated all the country. On learning this, Heldrad commanded the messengers of so troublesome a piece of news to set themselves to prayer to implore the mercy of the Most High, and after having done so himself, he betook himself with them toward the new hospice. Arrived on the spot, he made sure of his discipline and set about driving the serpents before him, in such wise that they were very soon all gathered together and confined in a cleft of rocks not far off, so as to be able to do no more harm.

God made use of the hand of Heldrad, this time and many others, to modify physical effects in the natural order.

Succoured in this manner, the delegate of the Almighty several times arrested the progress of contagious maladies, among men and animals, which were invading the valley of Novalesa and the neighbouring countries. To the prayers of Heldrad was attributed, not without some foundation, the cure of a mute, a lame man and a leper, whose infirmities were well known in the country.

Passing through the city of Asti on business of his abbey, he restored health to a sick woman, abandoned by the persons charged to care for her. Finally, there was owed to Heldrad, after God, the return to life of several dead persons. These benefits, great doubtless, were nothing in comparison with those which Heldrad rendered by the aptitude he drew from the Holy Spirit of reading to the depths of consciences and of bringing back with ease to the accomplishment of their duties all the persons with whom he was put in relation.

Whatever the usefulness of the presence of Heldrad on earth, the ninety-fourth year of his age having arrived, God did not think fit to delay longer the moment of entering into account with his servant. This moment, so formidable even for Saints, was revealed four days in advance to Heldrad, who neglected nothing to turn this precious favour to profit.

He gathered around him all the religious who were under his obedience, and after having himself announced to them that he was about to separate from them, which made them melt into tears, he consoled them as much as he could, and begged them to pardon him for not having edified them more than he had done. Heldrad, awaiting his end, conversed with his religious on the sweetnesses of life in Jesus Christ, and renewed the most touching instructions for the time when he should be no more, counselling the union, concord and peace which result from the strict observance of the rule of the great Saint Benedict. At the moment when he felt his strength fail, he asked for the last sacraments and received them with the most ardent faith. Soon after, while he still prayed, adoring the holy Eucharist which he had just received, he raised his arms to heaven and his soul separated from his body without agony. This death, so worthy of envy, took place when Louis, son of Lothair, was emperor and king of Italy, in 875, on the 3rd of the ides of March, that is the 13th of the said month.

If one wishes to reconcile as chronologically as possible all the facts of the life of Heldrad, it must be admitted that he had left the world at thirty-three years, and passed at Novalesa sixty-one years, the last thirty of them as abbot.

What mortal can ever say how agreeable to God and useful to his neighbour was the whole duration of so long an existence!

RELICS AND CULT OF SAINT HELDRAD

At the moment of the funeral, the body of Heldrad was solemnly deposited in a stone tomb, before the entrance of the chapel of Saint Nicholas, on one of the steepest points of the enclosure of Novalesa. A few years later, at the request of the faithful, the body of Heldrad was raised from the ground upon the very altar of the chapel of Saint Nicholas, and this chapel was no longer known but under the name of Blessed Heldrad. In the tenth century, the raising of the body, performed with pomp, took the place of the canonisation, the forms of which were regulated only by Pope Alexander III. There had been a reburial of the body of Heldrad on the eve of the invasion of the country by the Saracens, in 906, and after the long depopulation of the abbey, the body of Heldrad might be said or believed lost, when a young blind man pointed out its existence in a cavern, whence the monks drew it forth in the year 1021. According to the chronicle of Novalesa, in 1040 there was a translation of the body of Heldrad from a modest shrine into a rich silver shrine, which has always been considered one of the fine specimens of the goldsmith's art of the eleventh century. This new shrine, so precious above all on account of its contents, was borne from Novalesa to the extremity of northern Italy, in 1042, for the greater edification of the faithful, on the occasion of a great assembly of princes and bishops which had been held at Ferrara to advise on the means of pacifying the country. Likewise with the aim of impressing the populations favourably, the shrine, containing the entire body of Blessed Heldrad, was carried, in 1114, across Savoy, Burgundy and other provinces as far as Beauvais, where a council or synod was then about to assemble. A great exposition of the relics of Blessed Heldrad took place in 1368. On this occasion, Ruffino, prior at once of Novalesa and of the monastery of Saint-Just of Susa, retained, outside the silver shrine, the head, a portion of an arm and some other bones. The head was placed in a silver bust, and the bones of the arm in an arm likewise of silver. These two relics thus became the property of the monastery of Saint-Just of Susa. The other bones, which had not been replaced in the silver shrine in 1368, were distributed to divers churches, at Turin and elsewhere, or else became the property of the princes of the house of Savoy, who for a long time knew how to love and respect holy things. It is from the house of the princes of Savoy that M. Aubert, curé of the parish of Lambesc, received, in 1743, the important fragment of bone which adorns the altar of Blessed Heldrad in his native town. The delivery of this relic took place diplomatically through the intermediary of the embassy of Ferrara [*sic*] at Turin. As to the remainder of the body of Blessed Heldrad, since 1368 it has continued to rest in its ancient and beautiful silver shrine at the monastery of Novalesa itself, and pious pilgrims could still see it, in 1855, in the abbey church, on the right as one enters. Let us hope that this treasure, at once religious and artistic, escaping the profanations of the Italian government at the moment when it dispersed the Benedictine monks of Novalesa, has remained under the guard of the inhabitants of the valley, who hold the memory of Blessed Heldrad in great veneration. The abbey of Novalesa and its dependencies were secularised, some years ago, and sold for a derisory sum by the sacrilegious government of Victor Emmanuel II, king of Sardinia, become, so-called, king of Italy.

The accounts of Heldrad's first hagiographer not having reached us entire, the part of the supernatural that we know is found incomplete, as, moreover, all the rest of his life; but what we know of this kind suffices to lead us to believe in a great holiness. However, if we could desire to grow our conviction, it would be well to render account to ourselves of the power of Blessed Heldrad in heaven, by pausing to consider the number and extent of the graces obtained through his intermediary since the epoch of his death. The record of the miracles of the tenth and in part the eleventh century fills a certain number of the lessons of the most ancient office of Heldrad. We have to remark there several cures of blind and other infirm persons conducted by their families to the tomb of the Blessed, and we must read there, not less willingly, the touching history of that woman who, running to pay homage to the relics of Heldrad when they were carried along the valley of the Po, in 1042, had found death in the river and was recalled to life by the force of the prayers of her children.

The miracles of the end of the eleventh century, and of the four or five following centuries, are reported in the works of Dom Rocher and Dom Carretto, as extracted more particularly from the *Sanctorale* of Novalesa, where they had been registered after the life of Blessed Heldrad. Among these miracles, one cannot admire enough that which had for object some knights of Piedmont or Provence who, in 1099, after the capture of Jerusalem, having to struggle against a frightful tempest, implored their compatriot, and obtained to finish the crossing happily to return to their country. It is not less touching to see the faith of that unfortunate cripple, cured at Aiguebelle, in 1114, on the occasion of the passage of the relics of Blessed Heldrad across Savoy. Dom Rocher and Dom Carretto make known also other very edifying miracles, verified after the time when the *Sanctorale* had been written, and even give the enumeration of the favours obtained by the persons of their epoch, that is from 1610 to 1693. For the period nearer to us, the confidence placed in Heldrad not diminishing, there would still be many miracles to point out; but, as to them, we must await a canonical examination. Of this number is perhaps the return to health of a paralytic woman which took place in 1743, at the happy moment when it was given to the parish of the town of Lambesc to possess a particle of the body of Heldrad. The populations, loaded with benefits in a superhuman manner by Heldrad during his mortal life, were easily led to believe that their protector would pass from this world to heaven to continue to protect them. As for the ecclesiastical authority, after having studied with prudence the judgment to be borne on this matter, it soon permitted Heldrad to be honoured as Blessed. Before the year 906, the little chapel of the enclosure of Novalesa, originally under the name of Saint Nicholas, was dedicated to Heldrad. This same chapel, after having been destroyed by the Saracens, was re-established, in 1240, by the prior James Scalis, who had it adorned with paintings reproducing the principal circumstances of the life of Heldrad. These curious paintings, which still exist, are accompanied by numerous inscriptions in ancient characters destined to explain them. An altar was reserved to Blessed Heldrad, from 1029, in the church of the Benedictines of the town of Susa. There has been, since 1020, in the abbatial church of Saint Peter of Novalesa an altar on which the shrine of the relics of Heldrad has never ceased to rest. This altar, situated on the south side, had been decorated, in 1508, at the expense of the prior Andrew Provana, with very beautiful paintings which unhappily no longer exist. Very anciently, the villages of the valley of Novalesa have had, in each of their churches, an altar dedicated to Blessed Heldrad. Dom Rocher and Dom Carretto, in their works relating to Heldrad, affirm that he had in their time several altars in Dauphiné. One no less precious perhaps than all those already indicated is that which has existed from the most remote epoch in the parish church of the town of Lambesc. This altar has preserved its primitive place at the sumptuous reconstruction of the church, in 1741, at the expense, for the most part, of the Estates of Provence. And tradition, supported by titles, holds that this altar stands on the site of the palace of the parents of Blessed Heldrad at Lambesc. Holy souls find some consolation in thinking that there, even, may have been the private apartment inhabited by Heldrad during his life. One must see also a fine testimony of the constant remembrance of Heldrad's compatriots in the chapel of Saint Peter, in the territory of Lambesc; a Romanesque chapel, reworked in part in September 1580. A good picture of the school of Van Loo adorns the altar of Blessed Heldrad at Lambesc; but this picture, though edifying, must please less as to the subject than that of the altar of the village of Venaus in the valley of Novalesa.

The Italian painter has represented happily Heldrad having before him a great number of unfortunates in the most urgent needs, and, in the first rank, a mother who brings her dead child in her arms. The picture of Venaus served, in its time, as model for an image engraved in etching and for a very beautiful bronze medal, which, very widely spread at first, are both very rare now. The Benedictines of Novalesa had the attention to have the image reproduced by lithography, Turin, 1845. They proposed to render the same service to the faithful as regards the medal, at the moment when the Italian Revolution forced them to abandon their monastery.

In memory of the virtues of Heldrad, his name has not ceased to be given at baptism, in

Piedmont and in Provence, from the epoch when he was declared Blessed until today. The feast of Heldrad has always been celebrated in the valley of Novalesa, and at Lambesc, on 13 March, that is the day of his death, which would have been that of his entry into heaven. Father Ferraris, in his *Catalogo dei Santi d'Italia*: Milan, 1613, indicates the feast of Heldrad as fixed very anciently, by the Benedictines, on 13 March. Father Buccelin, author of the *Menologium Benedictinum*, Turin, 1655 [*sic*; the Menologium was published at Feldkirch in 1655], and the Bollandists assign to 13 March the feast of Blessed Heldrad. John Molanus, in his additions to the martyrology of Usuard, puts this feast on the same day. Until recent times, the populations of the valley of Novalesa were accustomed to flock to the abbey, not only on 13 March, but also on Easter Monday [lit. "the day of the second feast of Easter"], which corresponds to some translation or reception of the relics of Heldrad. It must not be left unknown, likewise, that it has always been close to the heart of the inhabitants of this valley to be able to carry the shrine of Blessed Heldrad each year around their territory on the occasion of the Rogations. A proper office of Heldrad was composed about the year 1040; an office which was entire in volume III of the *Sanctorale* of Novalesa and in an ancient missal of the abbey. Dom Rocher and Dom Carretto, who had both promised to publish this office, did not keep their engagement. It is almost accidentally that Dom Rocher, in his book entitled *Gloires de l'abbaye de la Novalèse*, pages 108, 112, 120, 121 and 122, gives some parts of responsories, hymns and prayers which are of a nature to make one regret the rest of this primitive work. Dom Rocher has further, almost without wishing it, the merit of giving, after the *Sanctorale*, lessons which are not found in the collection of the acts of Blessed Heldrad transmitted to the Bollandists by Turinetto. This proper, very ancient office, in use at Novalesa, is pointed out by Buccelin, page 194, of his *Menologium Benedictinum*, and by Ferraris, in his *Catalogo dei Santi d'Italia*. Rome approved a proper office of Blessed Heldrad, in 1702, and fixed his feast on 13 March as of precept for the valley of Novalesa, which was maintained until 1792. After the return of the Benedictines to Novalesa, the cult of Blessed Heldrad, having resumed with fervour, a decree of Pius VII, of 2 October 1821, authorised, for 13 March, the feast to which, the same year, the rank of second class was assigned. By concession of Leo XII, of 12 April 1825, the proper office of Blessed Heldrad was regulated. Finally, under Pius IX, a decision of the Congregation of Rites, of 9 December 1852, at the request of the bishop of Susa, raised the feast from the rank of second class to the rank of first class for the valley of Novalesa. The office and the decree were printed at Susa by Gutti in 1853.

A life of Heldrad was written immediately after his death by a monk of Novalesa, who had seen or heard what he reported. — This first work, now lost, was before the eyes of the anonymous writer who inserted the Acts of Heldrad very fully in the chronicle of Novalesa. — Duchesne, Le Cointe, Muratori and others giving this chronicle declare it much mutilated and ascertain that it was written before 1099. — When the chronicle had scarcely been written as regards Saint Heldrad, a summary was made of this part to serve for his office from the year 1048. — The partial reunion of the lessons of this office formed the life of Heldrad which Father Turinetto copied, in 1654, in the royal archives of the court of Savoy, at Turin, and which was published in 1735 by the Bollandists, vol. II of March, p. 333 ff. — It is still the same life that is found in the *Monumenta historiae patriae*, Turin, 1848. — After the life of 1048, but above all by the aid of the chronicle not yet mutilated, a monk of Novalesa wrote very anciently a fairly extended life of Heldrad, in volume IV of the *Sanctorale* of Novalesa, a collection of lives of the Saints, for the particular use of the abbey. — The *Sanctorale* of Novalesa, now not to be found, served Dom Rocher for the life of Heldrad given by him in French, p. 90 ff. of his book *La Gloire de l'abbaye de la Novalèse*, Chambéry, 1670. — Profiting by the *Sanctorale* of Novalesa better than Dom Rocher, Dom Carretto published, in Italian, a very edifying and very remarkable life of Heldrad: *Vita e miracoli di S. Eldrado*, Turin, 1693. — The fine pages that Gioffredo devotes to Saint Heldrad in his *History of the Maritime Alps* are to be cited only for the record, for Gioffredo, whose work, written in Italian, remained long in manuscript before finding place in volume VIII of the *Monumenta historiae patriae*, Turin, 1848, had no other aim than that of seeking to withdraw from Provence the cradle of Heldrad, and of thus making this blessed man accomplish his entire life in the Sardinian States.

— The true critical information on the life of Heldrad is furnished by Canon Galizia, in volume III, p. 196 ff., of his precious work: *Vita dei santi degli stati della regia casa di Savoia*, which, published in 1764, had been written before the year 1787 [*sic*]. — Galizia localises the birth of Heldrad at Lambesc and fixes his death at 875. — For everything concerning Blessed Heldrad, Mabillon, *Annales Benedictini*, vol. II, annotations for the year 874 more particularly, is to be consulted. — A little manual, now not to be found, and which, well before 1789, had been printed for the use of the priors of Saint-Pierre of Lambesc, presented in a few words the life of Heldrad. — An interesting notice on Saint Heldrad was recorded by Achard in the *Dictionary of the Illustrious Men of Provence*, vol. III, pp. 257 and 258, Marseille, 1788. — There is also good information on Saint Heldrad in the *Statistique des Bouches-du-Rhône* of 1820, vol. III, p. 293. — M. Reinaud, of the Institute, a native of Lambesc, placed a note on Saint Heldrad in his book on the *Invasion of the Saracens*, pp. 163 and 164, Paris, 1834. — A very abridged life of Saint Heldrad forms part of a collection of prayers published at Aix, 1837, by M. d'Isoard, a native of Lambesc. — This same collection, with the aim of popularising the life of Heldrad, was reprinted at Turin, in 1851, by the care of the Benedictines of Novalesa. — The biography which we give here was written by the Marquis Jessé-Charleval, and communicated to us by M. the abbé Ant. Ricard, honorary canon, director of the *Semaine religieuse* of Marseille.

The Venerable Pemene, Virgin; Saint Pientius, Bishop of Poitiers; Saints Rodrigo and Solomon, Martyrs at Cordova; Blessed Boniface of Savoy

THE VENERABLE PEMENE, VIRGIN

God has chosen for himself elect souls in all ranks, and the Son of God spouses in all conditions; he drew David from the keeping of flocks to set him at the head of his people; he sanctified the virgin Pemene by leaving her there during her whole life. She was the daughter of a shepherd, in a country of the East. As soon as she was able to follow him, she was led to the keeping of the flock entrusted to her father's care. She preserved her innocence by a continual vigilance over herself, keeping always in the presence of God, who is everywhere, and whose Providence the country so well reveals; she rendered him an incessant homage; her delights were all in prayer. She often led her flock to a place where was a chapel consecrated to Our Lady, but which had fallen into ruins. There remained there a very beautiful image of the Virgin, holding the little Jesus in her arms, and every day the young shepherdess came before it to say a part of her prayers. To see the image of her good Mother in heaven thus abandoned, deprived of every ornament, pierced the heart of this good girl, who said to herself: Since I am poor, and can do nothing to adorn the statue of the Queen of heaven, of the Mother of my Saviour, I will come to her feet and make her a crown of prayers. She made this promise to Mary in all simplicity, and fulfilled it with scrupulous fidelity. So she lived in great innocence and perfect holiness of life, keeping her purity inviolably for the spotless Lamb.

The Lord, wishing to reward the fidelity of his humble servant, the virgin so devout to his Mother, sent her, in a short illness, the announcement of her passage to a better abode. The poor girl, feeling herself seized with a high fever and seeing herself laid on her wretched pallet, set about preparing her soul and hastened to dispose herself for death. It is so easy to detach oneself from life when it is full of miseries and when the heart is pure! It happened, while she lay in her cottage, that two religious were passing through a great wood near the village where Pemene dwelt. Wearied by the journey, they stopped a few moments to rest; one of them fell asleep; the other set himself to make a spiritual reading. The latter soon saw coming along the road that led to the village a troop of virgins, magnificently clothed in garments brocaded with gold, who saluted him with a bow, which he took care to return. Soon after, there came another, more magnificently adorned, and clothed in dazzling whiteness. Then a little later a third appeared, clothed in ornaments yet more splendid, in which the whiteness of snow was mingled with the purple of queens. At the head of this last troop was a virgin of a beauty which eclipsed all the others: her garments were covered with white and crimson roses, and her head with a wreath of freshly gathered flowers. The good religious, quite amazed,

saluting her deeply, dared to ask her who they were: “The Queen of Virgins,” she answered him, “accompanied by the virgins of heaven. The first whom you saw are of those who wavered between the two states of marriage and of virginity, but who nevertheless died virgins. The second are of those who resolutely vowed continence; and these have joined to the lilies of virginity the roses of martyrdom. We are all going to the next village to gather the soul of a young girl and place her in heaven.” The good religious, having awakened his companion, told him what he had just seen, and they resolved to assist at the death of the sick virgin.

Arrived at the village, they inquired for her dwelling, and the shepherd’s cabin was pointed out to them. They entered, found the young sick girl lying on straw in all poverty, saluted her and sought to console her. “My Fathers,” she said to them, “pray God that he make you see the virgins of paradise who are around me.” They prayed to ask this favour, and obtained it; they heard a hymn sung of marvellous melody, and they saw the Virgin Mary gird the head of Pemene with a garland of flowers at the moment when she gave up her soul. Without giving this life as absolutely authentic, we have thought we should reproduce it at least as a fine allegory. M. l’abbé Chapia, *Une vie de Sainte par jour*.

SAINT PIENTIUS, BISHOP OF POITIERS (564)

Pientius or Pient, born in a mean condition, and whose father appears to have been attached to the church of Poitiers as a servant,[1] raised himself, by his merit and piety, to the first dignity of the diocese. The epoch at which he began to govern it is not well known, but it could only have been after the year 541, since at that date Daniel, his predecessor, was at the fourth council of Orléans. A great event marked his episcopate, and he had the happiness of taking a great part in it. We mean the establishment of the monastery of the Holy Cross, which Saint Radegund was founding at Poitiers. Such houses of prayer bring too much glory to God and joy to priests for Saint Pient not to give to it all his devotedness. Happily seconded by Eustrapius, governor of Poitou for King Clothaire, he entered into the intentions of that prince, hastening the completion of the holy dwelling, over which the pious queen moreover watched, and which was favoured by the royal largesses of her husband. These cares of the prelate inspired Radegund with a gratitude which she testified to him all her life, and Saint Gregory of Tours, who wrote the history of that time, of which he was nearly a contemporary, reports several traits which prove how much she always wished to remain, with her sisters, in a filial dependence toward him.[2] She loved to entrust to him abundant alms for his poor and his churches. It is she also who furnished him the loaves of pure wheaten flour which she made for the service of the altar. All that remains to us of the life of Saint Pient attests his zeal for the regularity of the episcopal life and the accomplishment of his duties. Ceaselessly applied to the good of his flock, he visited it with solicitude, however vast the territory of the diocese of Poitiers then was, extending from the Ocean to the limits of Touraine, Berry and Limousin. Once, while sailing toward the waters of the Isle of Maillezais, he was shipwrecked with the mariners who guided his course; several of these perished. The Saint escaped death on this occasion only to go and succumb at Melle, a little town of Lower Poitou, which received his visit perhaps in this same pastoral journey. It is believed that it was about the year 564. What is certain is that it must have been after 561, the date of the death of Clothaire I, since he died after that prince; and before 567, since Caribert, who succeeded the latter on the throne of France and reigned only six years, placed Pascentius II after Saint Pient on the see of Poitiers.

The feast of Saint Pient has been made from time immemorial on 13 March, which is the day of his death. His name was placed between Saint Anthemius and Saint Fortunatus in the litanies of Poitiers, and the most ancient liturgy of that diocese consecrates his memory. But his cult has nowhere preserved so much celebrity as at Maillé, chief place of a parish near Maillezais. It is there that the Saint had been cast by the tempest at the shipwreck of which we have spoken. The tradition of the country relates that Pient had promised to God in this peril to build a sacred monument at the very spot where he should land, if his Providence deigned to save him. This vow was fulfilled, and it is this same chapel, of which the last traces have disappeared, but

which, having long borne his name, was for more than ten centuries, on 13 March of each year, the rendezvous of innumerable pilgrims. The little monument having been ruined, the devotion was transferred to the parish church of Maillé, and it is there that it still exists entire in the confidence of the peoples who come to seek there the cure of ailments of the ears and deafness.

Notes communicated to M. Canon Auber, historiographer of Poitiers, by M. the abbé Bourbon, professor at the grand seminary of Luçon, and transmitted to the latter by the curé of Maillé.

SAINT RODRIGO AND SAINT SOLOMON, MARTYRS AT CORDOVA (857)

A Spanish author begins thus the acts of the martyrs of Cordova under Abderrahman II and his son Mohammed: “At that time, by a just judgment of God, Spain was oppressed by the Moors…”

The reading of the acts of the martyrs of that epoch gives, indeed, a rather poor idea of the Christians, descendants of the Visigoths and the Iberians. Division reigned in families, and there were few that did not count apostates among their members. The Muslims themselves were scandalised at the little energy with which the Spaniards took up the defence of their religion, and did not spare them mockery on the subject.

The acts of Saint Rodrigo and Saint Solomon, of which we insert here the abridgment, seem to us to paint perfectly the social state of Spain in the ninth century. Rodrigo had two brothers, of whom one abjured the religion of his fathers to become a Muslim, and the other was a very bad Christian; which often occasioned disputes with the third. One night when they were pushing them to excess, Rodrigo tried to appease them. They both threw themselves on him, and, without meaning to, wounded him mortally. While he tried in vain to lie down on his bed, not having the strength, the Muslim had him put on a stretcher and carried through the neighbouring streets, saying: “Behold my brother whom God has enlightened; although he is a priest, he has embraced our religion, and, finding himself, as you see, at the extremity, he would not die without declaring his change to you.” After some days, Rodrigo recovered his health; but he had no memory of what had passed, because he then had neither feeling nor consciousness, so much was his body overwhelmed by the ill-treatment he had received. He was told what his apostate brother had done, and, after the example of the Lord, who thought he should withdraw from the snares of Herod, he retired from his country house to another place. Obliged to come to Cordova on some business, he was met by this Muslim brother, who led him to the cadi, accusing him of having abandoned the sect of Mohammed. Rodrigo denied that he had ever embraced it, and declared that he was not only a Christian, but a priest. The cadi, after having tried in vain to shake him, sent him to prison. Rodrigo there made friends with Solomon, imprisoned for the same cause. The cadi, informed of the good works which they did together and of their intimacy, had them separated, with prohibition to let them be seen by anyone; then he had them brought up to three times before him. Seeing that his discourses made no impression on their minds, he condemned them to death. They both prepared for this punishment by the sign of the cross. Rodrigo was executed first. Saint Eulogius, having learned that they had consummated their martyrdom, celebrated Mass, then came to the bank of the river where their bodies had been exposed. He remarked there that the infidels took pebbles stained with the blood of these martyrs and threw them into the river, for fear that the Christians should keep them as relics. They are honoured in the Church on 13 March, day of their martyrdom, in 857.

We owe these Acts to Saint Eulogius, whose life we gave on 11 March.

BLESSED BONIFACE OF SAVOY, BISHOP OF BELLEY AND OF VALENCE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (1270)

This prelate, one of the principal ornaments of the royal house of Savoy, was son of Count Thomas I; he was the most accomplished prince of his time. His beauty had won him the surname of the *Absalom of Savoy*. He had for his appanage the lands of Rossillon, of Virieu-le-Grand, in Bugey, and other fiefs in Savoy.

To withdraw from the seductions of the world, he entered the Order of Saint Bruno, and made profession at the Grande Chartreuse. His time, in this pious solitude, was entirely divided between prayer, the study of theology and that of canon law, in which he became very skilful. His only ambition was to live unknown and to make his talents forgotten. But heaven had other views on him. Violence was done to his modesty by naming him to the priory of Nantua, and entrusting to him successively the administration of the dioceses of Belley and Valence. Although still very young, he showed so much maturity, prudence and capacity for affairs that, the church of Canterbury having become vacant by the death of Saint Edmund, its archbishop, Boniface was judged worthy to ascend that see, the most eminent of England. He was solemnly consecrated at Lyon by Pope Innocent IV, who was in that city to hold a general council.

The wars and calamities of those unhappy times had carried disorder to its height in all classes of society, and it was certainly not an easy thing, above all for a foreign prelate, to attack abuses accredited by usage and by the most imposing examples. But the ascendancy of the virtues of Boniface, his patience, his firmness, his prudence triumphed over all oppositions and all prejudices. Little by little the disorders were repressed, the abuses corrected, the vices branded, and piety restored to honour.

A vigilant pastor, zealous apostle, wise dispenser of the heavenly mysteries, Boniface was always the man of God devoted to all kinds of good works. His charity embraced without distinction all misfortunes and all needs. Faithful to his God and to his king, he defended in turn, and with equal courage, the interests of the Church and those of the Sovereign, proving by his examples that the ministers of Jesus Christ have for principle, like their divine head, to render to God what is God's, and to Caesar what is Caesar's. Grave dissensions having broken out in the States of Savoy, during the minority of the successor of Amadeus IV, the holy Archbishop hastened thither, and re-established good harmony by his intervention. The sovereign Pontiff, to whom he went to render account of all he had done in his diocese, approved everything, and gave him signal marks of his esteem and confidence. King Henry III, obliged to leave England, left him the regency of the kingdom, and, on another occasion, wished him to accompany him into France, to help him with his talents in difficult negotiations. In 1269 he returned to Savoy, at the prayer of his brother Philip, to see his family. That was the term of his holy career. Attacked by a grave illness, and worn out by a laborious episcopate of twenty-five years, he died at Sainte-Hélène-du-Lac, on 14 July 1270. His body, buried in the abbey of Hautecombe, and deposited in a very beautiful tomb, was found incorrupt nearly three centuries after his death. This extraordinary fact, joined to several miracles obtained by the intercession of the holy Prelate and to the memory of his virtues, made him the object of the veneration of the faithful. People came from every side to venerate his tomb, and it was daily visited by a great number of the faithful; but the French having taken possession of Savoy at the end of 1792, driven by revolutionary impiety, destroyed this monument and chased the religious of Hautecombe from their monastery. The king of Sardinia, having in 1814 recovered Savoy, restored this abbey to its ancient destination, and had the tomb of Blessed Boniface rebuilt in 1826, whose cult was approved by Gregory XVI, on 7 September 1838. Taken from the *Histoire généalogique de la royale maison de Savoie*, by Guichenon, vol. I, and the *Proper of the Kingdom of Sardinia*. Cf. Mgr Depéry, *Hagiologie de Belley*, and a pastoral letter of Mgr Turinaz (1839) [*sic*]; this last document was communicated to us by the bishopric of Tarentaise.

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[3] The Menaea report that Saint Sabinus was denounced by a beggar whom he nourished with his alms.

[4] There exists, between Siena and Florence, a little town called Monte Sansovino, from the name of our Saint. His legend relates many marvellous things: one day, among others, when the sun troubled him in the celebration of holy Mass, he hung his mantle in the air, to shelter himself from the importunate rays of the orb of day.

[5] Mélain was the fifth bishop of Troyes. The history of his life, of his virtues and of his fine actions has perished through the injury of time; nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that he was an excellent pastor of the flock of Jesus Christ, and that he flew away to God, full of merits, on leaving this life, about the year 390 of our era. We find his name inscribed in the dialogue [*sic*; "diptychs" is perhaps meant] of the Saints of the country of Troyes, at all epochs, no less than in the memory of men. His memory was honoured at the monastery of Celle and at the priory of Gaon. His relics are today at Saint-André-lès-Troyes: the most considerable is the very head of the holy Pontiff. The church of Nevers honours on this day a holy priest whose life was hidden in the Lord. The village of Magny, on

the high road from Paris to Lyon, where he exercised the functions of the holy ministry, was witness of his modest virtues, and tradition has perpetuated down to our days the memory of his holiness: a street which comes to end at the church still bears the name of the Saint. It is there, it is said, that Vincent, to relax from his fatigues, walked while praying. It was about the middle of the seventh century that the Lord called him hence to crown his merits. He was buried in the crypt of the church of Saint-Nazaire, at Magny. The holiness of Vincent was manifested by striking miracles. In 858, Charles the Bald, pressed by Louis the German, his brother, and abandoned by his troops, went to take refuge in the Nivernais. Knowing the power which the holy priest Vincent enjoyed with God, he betook himself to Magny to implore his help: his prayer had its effect, and the same year the prince acquitted the vow he had made to endow the church of Magny magnificently. Saint Vincent had an altar in that church until the revolution of 1793. The fate of his relics is unknown. In 1715 the cathedral of Nevers possessed one of his arms. As for the rest of the body, they no longer knew at Magny, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, what had become of it. (After Mgr Crosnier.) See his notice at 23 January.

[6] The tomb inscription bore these words: “Saint Edictius, martyr, who lived twenty-nine years.” See at 17 June.

[7] 1 Cor. vii, 29.

[8] There is found in the *Annals* of Baronius, under the year 811, and in the seventh volume of the *Councils* of Father Labbe, the confession of faith which Saint Nicephorus sent to Pope Leo III immediately after his installation. The Saint set forth in it clearly the principal mysteries of the faith, as well as the doctrine of the Church touching the invocation of the Saints and the cult that is owed to their images and relics.

[9] Eph. iv, 11.

[10] See Dom Ceillier, vols. XII and XIII.

[11] See Leo Allatius, bk. III *de Consens. eccles. occid. et orient.*, c. ii, p. 1223.

[12] See Canisius, vol. I, part 2, p. 13, and the *Bibliothèque des Pères*, vol. IX.

[13] See Father Combefis, *Orig. Constantin.*, Paris, 1661, quarto.

[14] *Monum. graec.*, vol. III, p. 451.

[15] From the most remote epoch until 1789, there has never ceased to be recognised as comprised in the valley of Lambesc all the smiling countries of the left bank of the Durance, from Saint-Estève-de-Janson as far as Mallemort inclusively.

[16] If names had been hereditary, from the Carolingian epoch, one might have sought to find the father of Heldrad among the great personages who signed a charter of the cartulary of Saint-Denis in the year 775.

[17] Hunting was then an exercise in some manner obligatory for a lord, as a ceaseless preparation for military service, to which he might be called at any hour.

[18] A votive altar, dedicated to Mercury, has been found in the quarter of Lambesc which has kept, since Heldrad, the name of San-Peyré [Saint Peter], and the oldest and most numerous fragments of pottery are ceaselessly brought to the surface of the soil, while the neighbouring rocks preserve the traces of the frequent passage of the chariots of the most primitive times.

[19] Saint Peter, in his first Epistle, chap. iv, 9, recommends to the faithful, in a quite particular manner, to have a perseverant charity toward one another: for charity, he says, covers a multitude of sins.

[20] The great church, as well as the so complete hospitable house, which Lambesc owed to the charity of Heldrad, crumbled through age or perished during the invasions of the Saracens in the tenth century; but their site has remained down to this day masked by a very small Romanesque chapel, built with materials that had served for more ancient edifices. This chapel, dedicated to Saint Peter, has been, from a very remote epoch, maintained by lay priors chosen among the inhabitants of Lambesc; some retouching works executed by them in ogival style are marked: *Sep. 1580*.

[21] At the epoch of Heldrad, and for a long time after, the roads of Europe were encumbered not only with merchants, but also with pilgrims. — And these pilgrims, who almost always went to immense distances, had not all for the motive of their journeys the impulses of divine love, for the greatest number wandered thus in order to obey secular justice, which, quite as much as ecclesiastical justice, proposed to make them better, or at least to subject them to a sort of expiation, at the same time that it removed them temporarily from the countries which had had to suffer from their presence.

[22] The first house of succour, at the top of the pass of Mont Cenis, had been founded by the archbishops of Lyon, who in that had obeyed the most ancient Christian prescriptions relative to the establishment of hospices and their maintenance; or rather, the said archbishops had thus followed the fine example of a celebrated Father of the Church. Indeed, one reads in the life of Saint John Chrysostom by Palladius that he had a *Xenodochium* built on the mountain of Nitria, near the principal church, and took care to fix there physicians and even makers of *placenta*, *placentarii*.

[23] Pope Adrian I, in letter lxxii of the *Codex Carolinus*, recommends to Charlemagne the hospices “which are situated on the passes of the Alps for the reception of pilgrims” [*qui per colles Alpium siti sunt pro susceptione peregrinorum*]. And Charlemagne, in a Capitulary no. 14 of the collection of Muratori, prescribes to the bishops and abbots to re-establish everywhere these ancient hospices and not to let them lack anything.

[24] “We wish,” says Saint Benedict, in chapter 53 of his rule, “that all guests who come to us be received as Jesus Christ himself, who will say to us one day: I was a stranger and you received me.”

[25] The keen air of Mont Cenis did not permit staying too long at a time at the hospice at the top of the pass, and the Abbot had to see to the periodic return of the monks to Novalesa, to recover their health in a milder climate. This time, moreover, was not lost for the guests of Mont Cenis, for there was always work to do for them at Novalesa, were it only in making, with the herbs gathered in the

Alps, preparations useful to travellers.

[26] Heldrad's cell was near the chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas, patron of merchants, the Saint who had just given his name to a great Pope [Nicholas I]! A rather curious comparison might be made between the dedications of the chapels of the enclosure of Novalesa and the dedications of the chapels which were distributed, along the whole course of Mont Cenis, to serve as refuge for travellers during the *tourmente*, or storm, in the midst of the snows. These chapels still exist on both sides, and if need be the ruins of those that may have recently disappeared would be found for this study. Thus, on Mont Cenis, one sees on the southern slope, at one of the most difficult points to cross, a chapel of Saint Nicholas, while at Novalesa one shows you, in the centre of the enclosure, on the highest point, a chapel larger than all the others, dedicated to the Saviour of the world and to his divine Mother the Virgin ever Virgin, like the great church of the hospice of Mont Cenis.

[27] Saint Francis de Sales, in his treatise on the love of God, speaking of the devotedness of the monks of Saint Bernard, gives the following appreciation: "Hospitality, in case of necessity, is counselled to the faithful as a good action; to receive the stranger is the first degree of it; but to place oneself at the entrance of the road to invite him to enter, as Abraham did, is more worthy, more elevated. And still more than that: to go and establish oneself in dangerous places to receive strangers, to help, relieve and serve them… is more than can be asked of the human heart."

[28] The charter of Lothair, inserted entire in the *Monumenta historiae patriae*, Turin, 1848, is among the most formal as to the intention of the sovereign. It is specially recommended in it to come to the aid of the travellers received by the hospitable house of Mont Cenis. The same charter has the advantage of making well known the dedication under which the said hospice stood.

[29] The order of things of this epoch involved the use of forced services. In vain did the inhabitants of the villages of Exilles and Oulx, who had tried, in 820, to resist Amblulf, renew their pretensions in the time of Heldrad; a new *placitum* brought them back to obedience. This *placitum* is to be seen in the royal archives of the court of Savoy, at Turin.

[30] There were at Novalesa notable relics of the true Cross and others, which were owed to the munificence of the emperors. As to objects of gold and silver, several wagons might have been loaded with them; but it is the books above all that abounded at Novalesa; the number of them exceeded 6,000. None of these objects was in the tower of the monastery when it was destroyed from top to bottom by the Saracens in 910. These treasures had been transported to Turin from 906 as a measure of precaution, and perished in that city.

[1] Besly (after the *Chronicle of Peter of Maillezais*, c. 6), *Evesq. de Poit.*, p. 9.

[2] Gregory of Tours, *De gloria Confessorum*, c. 106.

14 March

Martyrologies

Fourteenth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, the birth into heaven of forty-seven blessed martyrs, who were baptised by the apostle Peter, at the time when he was detained with Saint Paul, his colleague, in the Mamertine prison, where they were shut up nine months; after a most courageous confession of the faith, they all perished by the sword of Nero. 69. — At Rome again, Saint Leo, bishop and martyr.[1] — In Africa, the holy martyrs Peter and Aphrodisius, who received the crown of martyrdom in the persecution of the Vandals. — At Carrhae, in Mesopotamia, Saint Eutychius or Eustathius, patrician, and his companions, who were slain by Eulid, king of the Arabs, for the confession of the faith. 741. — In the province of Valeria (Further Abruzzo), two holy Religious whom the Lombards put to death by hanging them on a tree, where their enemies heard them chanting psalms even after their death. Sixth century. — In the same persecution, a deacon of the church of the Marsi who had his head cut off for the confession of the faith. — At Halberstadt, in Germany, the sweet sleep of Saint Matilda, queen, mother of the emperor Otto I, celebrated for her humility and patience. 968.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Chartres, Saint Lubin (Leobinus), bishop, who by his prayers delivered the city of Paris from a horrible fire, in the time of Childebert. 557. — At Fréjus, in Provence, Saint Euperge [*sic*], confessor. — At Perpignan, the feast of Saint Florentina, virgin, sister of Saint Leander, Saint Fulgentius and Saint Isidore, seventh century. — At Arras, Blessed John of Barastre, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Éloi. 1275.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — In Moravia, the holy bishops Cyril and Methodius, of the Order of Saint Basil, who brought to the faith of Jesus Christ several of these nations with their kings. Ninth century. — At Palermo, Saint Infant [*sic*], monk, of the Order of Saint Basil, honoured on 21 February, with Saint Convuldus and other companions.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict. — Saint John of God, mentioned on 8 March.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — In the diocese of Cracow, Blessed Vincent Kad■ubek of Rosis, bishop of that city, who, despising the pomps of the world, entered the Cistercian monastery of Andreov [J■drzejów], shone there by the observance of the rule, by fasts, by humility and the contemplation of heavenly things, and, full of days, made a precious death before the Lord.[2]

Martyrology of Saint Dominic. — The octave of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — In the March of Ancona (Picenum), near Sivole, diocese of Ancona, Blessed Peter of Treia, formerly Monticulo, confessor, of the Order of Minors, illustrious by his renown for holiness and by his preaching, as well as by his great devotion toward the Blessed Virgin and the archangel Saint Michael, and by the glory of his miracles.[3] End of the thirteenth century.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — At Lyon, in France, the translation of the body of Saint Bonaventure, cardinal, bishop of Albano, Seraphic doctor, whose head was found, without any alteration of the living state, a hundred and sixty years after his death, in the time of Pope Eugenius IV. — The same feast among the Capuchins.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Pydna, in Macedonia, Saint Alexander, martyr, who perished in the persecution of Maximian: the Christians saw his soul borne to heaven by four angels clothed in white robes. — At Antwerp, the translation of the relics of the saints Romanus, Albert and Domitius, martyrs, sent from Rome to that city in 1659. — At Verona, Saint Innocent, one of the thirty-six bishops of that city who are honoured as Saints. Fourth or fifth century. — At Lampsacus, on the Hellespont, Saint Euschemon, confessor, bishop of that city. Cast into prison for the zeal with which he defended the cult of the holy images, he converted his jailers. Eighth century. — At Padua, Blessed Arnold, abbot of Santa Giustina. A victim of the divisions which tore his country, he was cast into prison by the tyrant Ezzelino, who seized the goods of his abbey, and died there at the end of eight years of hard captivity. 1254. — In Scotland, Saint Boniface, bishop of Ross.[4] Seventh century.

Saint Lubin, Bishop of Chartres

557. — Pope: Saint Pelagius I. — King of France: Childebert I.

Brethren, this is the prayer that I make to the priests who are among you… Feed the flock of God which is entrusted to you… not by constraint, but willingly, according to God: not for filthy lucre, but of free will. 1 Pet. v.

We see in this illustrious Prelate the truth of those words of the Royal Prophet: “That God draws, when it pleases him, the poor from the dust and the mire, to place them on thrones and establish them princes of his people.” He came into the world in a village near Poitiers, in the time of Clovis I (last half of the fifth century), without any distinction on the side of birth or fortune. Early he obeyed God and his parents in the most edifying manner. His youth was employed in ploughing the earth or in pasturing the oxen that served for agriculture. Yet he had, even then, a great desire to learn; having met a good religious, whom some call Novigil, who probably was of the abbey of Nouaillé, he begged him earnestly to write for him all the letters

of the alphabet round his girdle, so that, going and coming through the fields with his beasts, he might easily imprint them in his memory and make himself capable of something more. This device succeeded so well with him that in a short time his mind opened, and he put himself in a state to enter the schools to study the sciences; desiring to give himself to this study with more freedom, and seeing himself of an age to choose a condition, he entered a monastery of the country (Ligugé according to some, Nouaillé according to others), where he was charged with the office of cellarer, and the care of marking the hours. He took much from the time of his sleep to give to study; but as his lamp disturbed the sleep of his brethren, he put a veil before his window to stop the light. After having thus passed eight years in this monastery, he desired to visit Saint Avitus, who lived as a hermit in the Perche. Having betaken himself to that country, he first met there the deacon Saint Calais, who had not yet separated from Saint Avitus to retire into the Maine; this great master of the spiritual life gave our Saint, among other counsels, not to attach himself to the service of any church or chapel, because that would be to throw himself back into the world, and expose himself to observing his rule as a religious ill, and not to dwell in a small monastery, because ordinarily obedience is ill observed there, and each one wishes to be master there. As to Saint Avitus, he counselled Lubin to pass still some time in the cloister before living in the deserts. He took therefore the road to Lérins; but a monk of that abbey, whom he met, told him that the air there was unhealthy, which had obliged him, he said, to leave it. They went together to Javols, where Blessed Hilary, bishop of Mende, received them and put them in his community. They soon left this house, owing to the inconstancy of the monk of Lérins, who found himself well nowhere, and entered the monastery of Île-Barbe, near Lyon, attracted moreover by the reputation of the abbot Saint Lupus, who was afterwards bishop of that city. After some time, the monk of Lérins wished again to take Lubin away to continue his vagabondage with him, but our Saint let this fickle spirit go alone, separated at last definitively from him, and remained five years more at Île-Barbe.

Meanwhile a war had broken out between the Franks and the Burgundians. The latter were vanquished: the sons of Clovis made themselves masters of Burgundy in 525. The abbey of Île-Barbe was invaded by the soldiers, eager for pillage: they found there only Lubin with an old man, who had not been able to take flight with the other monks. The old man, who was asked where the treasures of the community were, answered that Lubin knew it better than he; the soldiers addressed themselves to Lubin, first by gentle means, then, finding him incorruptible, they had recourse to the violence of torments; among other tortures, they bound his head with cords, tied his feet, and plunged him thus several times into a gulf, says the historian: they left him for dead without having been able to obtain anything. God restored his health to him, and, having joined some solitaries whom he met, Lubin led them with him into the Perche to dwell together under the discipline of Saint Avitus; Saint Lubin there filled the office of cellarer. At the death of Saint Avitus, our three hermits (430 [*sic*]) withdrew into the desert of Charbonnières, at the extremities of the forest of Montmirail, which separates the Beauce from the Maine. They made three cells there and passed together nearly five years serving God far from the world. But the holiness of Lubin became known by miracles: his prayer stopped a hurricane which was destroying the harvests, and a fire which was devouring the forests. The bishop of Chartres, named Etherius, learning this, ordained him deacon and established him abbot of the monastery of Brou, in the Perche; he raised him afterwards to the priesthood to give him more authority over the religious: which was no less given him by his virtues and his miracles. By the sign of the cross, he delivered two energumens, so tormented and rendered furious by the demons that they broke their chains. His religious begged him to cure himself of a cancer which he had in the nostrils: he contented himself with applying blessed wax to it, awaiting with patience the will of God; at the end of twelve years he obtained, without any other remedy, a complete cure of this malady, generally considered incurable.

One of the brethren saw him in the night conversing familiarly with a personage all resplendent with light: he asked the Father who was this inhabitant of heavenly glory, and learned that it was Saint Avitus. Saint Aubin, bishop of Angers, going to visit Saint Caesarius, bishop of Arles, begged Saint Lubin to accompany him (536); the holy abbot consented. When he saw himself in Provence, he was keenly tempted to retire to Lérins

to escape his charge of superior: but Saint Caesarius strongly reproved him for it, showing him that he ought not thus to abandon a house which God had entrusted to his care by the ministry of his bishop. Lubin, by this remonstrance, became uneasy about the fate of his flock: he came to rejoin it as soon as possible, and had the consolation of finding it in the best state. Meanwhile, in 541, Etherius passed from this life to a better, and immediately everyone cast his eyes on our holy religious, to raise him to the episcopal dignity. Thus he was elected bishop of Chartres by the almost unanimous suffrages of all the clergy, with the consent of King Childebert. The Saint did all he could not to be charged with so heavy a burden, judging himself incapable of bearing it. Never did prelate have more care of his church. It is he, it is said, who, to represent the disciples of Jesus Christ, raised the number of canons to seventy-two. He prescribed to them most holy rules, to advance in virtue and to celebrate the divine offices; he provided them also with revenues sufficient for their maintenance. He reformed, by his care, several abuses which had crept in among the people, and brought them to the exact observance of the commandments of God and the Church. He was not, in this, little assisted by Saint Avitus, whose disciple he had been; this Saint, though already in glory, visited him often to warn him of the faults of his clergy and to prescribe the method he should follow to govern them holily.

What rendered him more commendable is that he found no sick in his diocese whom he did not cure by the credit he had with God. By his prayer alone he restored to health a dropsical man of whom the physicians despaired; and a blind man, who had lost his sight eight years before, recovered it as soon as he had made his prayer for him. A girl, possessed by the evil spirit, was delivered by touching with faith the hem of his garment. Two young boys, also possessed by the demon, were likewise delivered by taking of a food which the Saint had blessed; he cured further several feverish persons and other sorts of sick; and, by the sign of the cross which he made in the presence of King Childebert, he extinguished a great fire which had broken out in Paris; the Breviary of Chartres says that he raised to life a girl of Châteaudun, and restored her in full health to her father, called Baudelin. A priest of Chartres, Caletricus, a young man of eminent holiness, fell dangerously ill; they awaited only the hour of his last breath. Saint Lubin wished to visit him: seeing him in peril, he administered to him himself the sacrament of Extreme Unction: but he soon recognised that this sacrament had produced in him its double effect, which is to give health of body as well as that of soul; then, by a prophetic spirit, he predicted to this good priest that not only would he rise from this sickness, but that he would also succeed him on the episcopal see. The event verified this prophecy, for he was in fact elected in his place, and governed his people so well that he merited the title of Saint after twelve years of prelacy. Saint Lubin assisted at the fifth council of Orléans, one of the most celebrated of France (549), and at the second of Paris (551). He already had, at this last epoch, a malady which purified his virtue by long sufferings until the end of his life. He was called by God to receive the crown of immortality in the year 557; his body was buried in the church of Saint-Martin-du-Val, in the faubourg of Chartres, where it was religiously preserved until the day when the new iconoclasts of the sixteenth century, the Calvinists, burned his sacred bones and cast his ashes to the wind; there remained, however, his venerable head, which was kept very devoutly in the great church of Notre-Dame of Chartres, in a reliquary enriched with precious stones; but the French Revolution stripped the church of Chartres of this holy relic: it is found today in the church of Saint-Nicolas, at Blois. Since then bones have been taken from a cemetery where they had been thrown at that epoch; there are certainly some of Saint Lubin among them, but they have not been recognised.

The memory of Saint Lubin is particularly honoured in the Blésois, where several parishes have adopted him for patron. One of the most ancient churches of the city of Blois was dedicated to him; this edifice has disappeared for many centuries, but the street where it stood has kept the name of Saint-Lubin. He is also patron of Rouvray, in Normandy.

Saint Lubin is represented 1° healing a possessed person;[1] 2° raising the daughter of a man who had received him in his house on one of his journeys. He has been painted, in this circumstance, near the bed of the dead girl, although, to tell the truth, the Saint did this miracle without knowing it. He had only perceived a deep

grief in the family and set himself to pray that God would console it. Hardly had he finished his prayer when the dead girl rose full of life and health.[2]

The Roman Martyrology and that of Bede, with the Breviary of Chartres, make mention of Saint Lubin on 15 September, the day of his translation; but, because that day will be occupied by other Saints, we have put him on this day, which is that of his death. Father Guy drew this life from the lessons of the Matins of his office, from the martyrology of the Saints of France and from the Remarks of the continuators of Bollandus. We have completed it with the Acts of Saint Lubin (*Act. Sanct.*, March) and the *Saints de Blois*, by M. Dupré.

Saint Matilda, Empress

963. — Pope: John XIII. — Emperor of Germany: Otto I, the Great.

Love is stronger than death, says Holy Scripture. In effect, death cannot dissolve the bonds which Christianly unite men to one another, nor dispense us from doing good by prayer, alms and assistance at the holy sacrifice, to those who were our father, our mother, our brothers or our children.

Although the most pious and most illustrious Princess whose merit we are about to unfold acknowledges as ancestors and descendants several famous heroes and several great saints, as may be seen in history and in the Chronological Tables drawn up to the glory of her family, we shall content ourselves nevertheless with saying here, in a few words, that she draws her origin from one of the noblest races of Germany; that she was wife of a great king, Henry I, mother of Otto I, called the Great, emperor of the West, and the noble stock of several other great monarchs who governed their States with much glory and success.

The father of this blessed Princess was Count Thierry, or Dietrich of Saxony, descendant of the famous Widukind, chief of the Saxons, who long waged war against Charlemagne; she had for mother the countess Reinhild, of the blood of the princes of Denmark and Friesland. Thierry had had no less regard for her rare virtues than for her illustrious birth when he chose her for wife. There was born of so fair an alliance a fruit which appeared very agreeable to everyone: I mean little Matilda or Mahaut, who was the greatest glory of her family.

She was still a child when the mother of Count Thierry, who was a widow, and who, having left the world, had become abbess of the celebrated monastery of Erfurt, asked for her to bring her up in piety and have her learn what children of her birth ordinarily ought to know. She profited in every way under the guidance of so wise a mistress: she appeared to have happy inclinations for virtue from her most tender youth, and much capacity was even remarked in her for the sciences and for all sorts of works suitable to persons of her sex. Otto, duke of Saxony, who was a lord very commendable by his birth and by his employments in the armies of Conrad, had a son, among several others, named Henry, for whom he sought a wife worthy of his merit: he was a young prince endowed with great perfections of body and mind. Divine Providence, which conducts everything with wisdom, made known to Otto the match that was most suitable to his son.

In effect, the reputation of the young Matilda, who had become marriageable and who possessed very rare qualities, flew so loudly everywhere that Duke Otto resolved to give her as wife to his son Henry, and sent him himself to see her whom he destined for him. When he had arrived at the monastery of Erfurt, the abbess of the monastery, having regard to the birth and other qualities of the young lord who came to ask for Matilda, did not refuse to hear his proposals; the families agreed and the marriage was concluded.

Henry, at the head of the troops which he then commanded, led his wife into Saxony, and the wedding was celebrated in the town of Waldhausen [Walhausen], with all the pomp that could be desired and the applause of the peoples, who conceived a particular joy at seeing so fair an alliance. Otto regarded Matilda as his own daughter; he favoured her as much as he could, admiring the great virtues that shone in her person; but at last God, who counts and ends our days when it pleases him, withdrew this wise father from this world, and

Henry, his son, became sole master of the duchy. This new dignity, which was then very considerable, did not puff up Henry's heart; he acted with so much humanity toward his subjects that everyone, recognising moreover in his person qualities altogether royal, wished him nothing less than the crown of the empire. Heaven seemed to wish to answer the desires of the peoples: Conrad, emperor of Germany, came to die, and Henry was raised to the throne, which he occupied most worthily (919). Matilda, his wife, though raised to the imperial dignity, diminished nothing of that profound humility which she had acquired before, and she made herself more illustrious by the lustre of the Christian virtues she practised than by the royal pomp which she was obliged to sustain in the state in which she found herself; she knew how to despise glory in the most honourable condition to which a person of her sex could be raised. She showed so much kindness to her subjects, without diminishing anything of the lustre of her majesty, that she became equally the object of the love and of the respect of all her peoples.

Her most ordinary exercise was prayer. Not content with passing several hours in it by day, she exercised herself in it still during a good part of the night. She found means to withdraw adroitly from the nuptial bed of the king, her husband, to go and enjoy the sweet embraces of the heavenly Spouse in the sweetnesses of contemplation; she gave alms to the poor every day, and never did any afflicted person present himself before her but he received some remedy for his pain; she obtained the deliverance of prisoners, either by satisfying their debts, or by soliciting their pardon from the king, her husband, if it was for criminal affairs.

The excellent virtues of this illustrious Princess drew great blessings upon the royal family; God would not deprive so fair an alliance of the consolation of having children who might become the heirs and successors of the kingdom. Five are ordinarily named: Otto the Great, who was emperor of Germany; Henry, who was duke of Bavaria; Saint Bruno, archbishop of Cologne; and two daughters, of whom one married Louis d'Outremer, king of France, and the other Hugh Capet [*sic*; Hugh the Great, father of Hugh Capet], head of the third race of our kings.

Never was seen a more accomplished marriage than that contracted by these two illustrious persons; they had but one will, and all the desires of the one were the desires of the other. Sacred love was the principal bond which united them; they were animated by the same spirit, which was that of God; they tended to the same end, which was to conquer heaven and vanquish their passions, rather than to subdue cities and provinces. God, nevertheless, made them subjugate an infinity of different nations, to give them occasion to make the Gospel reign there. They concerted together laws full of justice, to establish them in their States; they confirmed and had inviolably observed the ancient ones which appeared to them good, and universally upheld all those that tended to the good and happiness of their peoples.

They gave great proofs of their piety and of their liberalities, by having built a number of hospitals and monasteries, which might be occupied by religious who would praise God in perpetuity, and would offer continually vows to heaven for their royal persons; but while King Henry was thus occupied with his holy wife in extending the reign of God on earth, it pleased the divine Goodness to call him into another kingdom, which was that of heaven. Being on the bed of death, he had several holy conferences with his wife, on the subject of that great passage; he thanked the Princess for all the good counsels she had given him, and for having so many times moderated his great zeal in the sentences which he projected to pronounce against the rebels and the impious; he praised this august Queen before the whole court, and gave great testimonies of the esteem he had of her person and her virtue, the more as he knew that he alone knew well all the merit of it. At last, the malady having increased, the holy Princess learned, at the feet of Jesus Christ expiring, the sad news of the death of the king: she prostrated herself at once on the ground, and, annihilating herself thus before God, she adored the decrees of his Providence and gave testimonies of her perfect conformity to all the orders of heaven. After having granted to the just sentiments of nature what grace does not forbid on such occasions, she rose from the humbled posture in which she had put herself, and went, with her three children, to throw herself at the feet of the late king; she addressed to them a most edifying exhortation, making them

reflect on the vanity of the grandeurs of earth, and representing to them that, if they had some right to ascend the throne of their father, they should also remember that they would one day descend into his tomb. Then, forgetting her own grief to think only of the spiritual interests of the dear deceased, she set herself again to prayer to commend to God the soul of her husband. She asked whether there was still a priest who was fasting, in order to say holy Mass. An ecclesiastic, named Adeldac, having presented himself, she felt so much consolation that she took off her golden bracelets and gave them to him, saying: “Take this and say a Mass for the repose of the soul of the emperor.” As long as she lived, she had numerous commemorative Masses celebrated each year for the same intention. She knew how to profit by the perfect liberty in which she saw herself; she gave herself to all the exercises of piety which Saint Paul requires of a true widow: prayer, fasting, alms, mortification of the senses, retreat and the reading of holy books were the ordinary practices in which she occupied herself without relaxation; the day not seeming to her long enough to content her piety, she rose again in the middle of the night to attend to prayer and exercise herself with more freedom in acts of penance; she never went to church without carrying presents there, obeying in that to the letter the Holy Spirit, who says that one must never appear empty-handed before God.

It was her custom to recite the whole psalter before the first crow of the cock. She was so attentive to the necessities of the poor that, as soon as she heard their voice, she presented herself to answer it: she distributed to them herself now money, now clothing; to some wherewith to pay their debts, to others food to nourish their family, and to all wherewith to meet their needs. She was very sober in her meals, peaceful and tranquil in conversation, quick only to do good to everyone and to acquit herself of all that was her duty; she undertook nothing but by counsel and after having consulted God himself in prayer. But, though she was irreproachable in her conduct, she did not fail nevertheless to have enemies who gave rise to occasions of great patience for her, and God permitted that it should be suggested to King Otto, her son, that she hid great treasures, and that she made herself mistress of the revenues of the crown. That was enough to bring this monarch to have the queen his mother render account of the royal moneys she had handled; he even deprived her of her own revenues. He inquired into the gifts she had made; he sent spies on all sides to discover the conduct she held; he posted guards in the places where she had her alms secretly carried; but what seemed to her most sensible was to see that her son Henry, duke of Bavaria, whom she had always loved in preference to the others, joined on this occasion with his brother to persecute her and oblige her to leave the court.

It was in this rude persecution that God willed to make the virtue of this incomparable Princess shine more loudly. In effect, she bore the injustice of her children with an invincible patience. She could not suffer that anyone should speak ill of their conduct; she proclaimed that she deserved it for several faults she had committed: “Is it not moreover a subject of great consolation for me,” said this Princess, “to see that my children, who were in disunion, are now united on the subject of the persecution they inflict on me? Would to God,” she continued, “that they could, without sinning, never cease to persecute me, provided they always kept the peace which is now between them.” And she did not fail, nevertheless, to profit very advantageously for herself by the persecution which her children inflicted on her; she withdrew very willingly from the court, she abandoned to them even the goods which the late king, her husband, had left her, and took refuge in the town of Enger, in the county of Ravensberg, in Westphalia. The more she saw herself deprived of the favour of men, the more she received of help and blessings from heaven.

This illustrious Princess thus enjoyed a very profound peace in her retreat, when God, to avenge the cause of her innocence, and in punishment of the injustice and ingratitude of her own children, permitted that troubles and wars should arise which drew a thousand misfortunes upon their States. Henry was also struck with a very dangerous illness, and everyone easily conceived that the removal of the pious Princess drew the anger of God upon the kingdom, and that in losing her the State would be deprived of a good inestimable happiness. In effect, the evils increased to such a point that the great men and ministers of State found themselves constrained to solicit Queen Edith, wife of Otto, to ask for the return of the queen-mother. Edith

in effect represented to Otto the fault he had made in removing the queen his mother; this prince opened his eyes, recognised his wrongs, and on the spot named lords of the first rank to go and mark to this illustrious Princess the grief in which he was plunged for the conduct he had held toward her, and the ardent desire he had to see her again at court. He even wrote her a letter full of submission and respect, in which he humbly asked her pardon for his fault. The Princess, who was incapable of resentment, and who was not ignorant of the usefulness of her return to her children, was willing to leave the sweetness of her retreat and the delights of contemplation with which God favoured her in solitude, to answer the eager designs of the king her son; as soon as she appeared, this monarch confessed to her that he recognised no other cause of all the misfortunes which had befallen his State than her absence from the court. It is known that women generally have more difficulty in forgiving sincerely and entirely than men; and yet the following fact proves how sincere and entire was the reconciliation of Saint Matilda. Her eldest son, Otto, emperor of Germany, came to visit her, and passed eight days with her.

At the moment of separating, mother and son went once more together to assist at a Mass. At the end of the office, the empress accompanied her son to the door of the church, and there they separated, shedding tears; their farewells were so touching that the bystanders wept also. Then, while her son mounted his horse, Matilda returned to the church, sought the place where he had knelt, and kissed weeping the trace of his steps. Count Witigon, having perceived it, returned to the emperor, and told him what the empress had done. The prince at once dismounted, re-entered the church, and found his mother still kneeling in the same place, praying and weeping. Profoundly moved, he threw himself at her feet, saying:

“O my venerable mother, how shall I be able to testify to you my gratitude for these tears?…”

Henry, duke of Bavaria, her second son, having taken part in the fault of his brother, joined with him also to obtain the pardon of his mother, and made her the same excuses as his brother Otto: from that time there was a perfect understanding between this worthy mother and her children. She was even begged to take care of the kingdom: nothing was done without her counsel; she had entire liberty to give alms, and she laboured in concert with the king to have built churches, hospitals and other like houses consecrated to the glory of God. It was at this time that she had built a celebrated monastery, in which she assembled three thousand ecclesiastics, to publish continually the praises of God, and to which she left funds sufficient to make them subsist. Our illustrious princess then enjoyed a great peace: but it was soon changed into sadness, when she learned the death of her dear son Henry, duke of Bavaria. This news was very sensible to her, and, recognising thereby more than ever the vanity of all things and the fragility of all human supports, she made account of nothing but virtue alone; she gave up diversions, even the most innocent, and she observed to grant nothing more to her senses of what could satisfy them: she substituted, by a happy exchange, the simple recital of the psalms for the most melodious concerts of the churches; silence and prayer for the most agreeable amusements, and the exercises of penance for the pleasures one tastes at the court of the great.

She withdrew from ordinary conversations to converse with the poor, who recognised her as their mother; she gave them to eat, twice a day, delicious dishes: when she was on a journey, she ordered a religious, who accompanied her everywhere, to observe all the poor who should appear, and to let none pass who had not a part in her benefactions. She had great fires lit in the public squares, in the time of the rough seasons, for those who had need. The day of her most abundant charities was Saturday: from the break of day she was occupied in preparing what she was to distribute; she even made baths for the relief of the sick, the poor and the pilgrims. She did not judge it an action unworthy of her person to apply her royal hands to the ulcers and wounds of the sick and to dress their ills. She made herself so familiar with the poor that she often introduced them into her chamber to have them explain their needs and to understand at leisure the point of their necessities.

Not being able to go herself to visit the hospitals, she sent thither persons of her household, who had orders to distribute alms in her name.

Divine Providence, to reward Otto for the justice he had rendered to his mother, willed that, a short time after having put her back in possession of all her rights, he should be called to Rome by the sovereign Pontiff, to be crowned emperor. During this time of the king's journey into Italy, the queen his mother redoubled her alms and her prayers: she had the holy sacrifice offered every day for the happy return of her son, and, with the consent of her grandson Otto, she had built, in the town of Nordhausen, one of the most considerable monasteries of women that have been in the world, with foundations for the maintenance of three thousand virgins who offered day and night their tears, their penances and their prayers to God, to thank him for the blessings he poured upon the empire, and to draw down new graces on the royal family.

The emperor Otto, full of glory and happiness, left Rome after having been crowned, and came to the town of Cologne to see his venerable mother there, who received him with a consolation that cannot be expressed: he confirmed all that she had done in his absence, declared publicly that he held from her the empire which heaven had just placed in his power, and gave her a thousand blessings. All the court then went to the town of Nordhausen to admire there the masterpiece of the queen, in the construction of the monastery she had built for the three thousand virgins. Having had them come into his presence, the emperor declared to them his intentions, which were conformable to those of the queen his mother; he exhorted them to fulfil the duties of their vocation, assuring them that he would protect them in all things.

The return of the emperor Otto gave occasion to Saint Matilda, who foresaw her end, to ask this monarch for authorisation to take refuge in the convent of women which she had founded, to prepare herself better for death. The emperor could not resist the prayers she made him on this subject; she left the court therefore, to go and shut herself up in this solitude. It was a thing worthy of admiration to see with what fervour she assisted at all the regular acts of the community; she even entered into the detail of the needs, both spiritual and temporal, of all the sisters; she informed herself, not from curiosity, but in a spirit of zeal, of the situation in which they found themselves, in order to console some of their pains, to profit by the virtue of others to advance herself in perfection, and to animate them all to fulfil the duties of their state.

Scarcely was this pious princess enjoying the happiness she had found in the house where she was, when divine Providence raised up pressing affairs, which obliged her to leave this place of peace and holiness, to repair to the town of Quedlinburg. After she had settled the affairs which had made her come, divine Providence, which wished to end her course and crown so many good works she had done during her life, permitted a slow fever, with which she had already been troubled for several months, to increase notably: doubting not her departure for eternity, she distributed the rest of her goods to the bishops and other ecclesiastics who were then present, that they might make largesses and alms of them to those whom they should judge to be in need. She would not defer making her confession; she made it into the hands of the archbishop of Mainz, who was one of her grandsons; then she wished to give some testimony of her goodwill to this prelate, for whom she had much esteem: but a religious who was near her having represented to her that everything belonging to her had been distributed, according to her orders, and that nothing more remained in her apartment but the sheets she had reserved to bury her, she ordered that they should be made a gift of to the archbishop, saying that he would have need of them before her, for the journey for which she was preparing. It was a prediction which had its effect, because this prelate, returning to his diocese, died on the way before the decease of the princess.

Some time after, knowing that her hour was drawing near to depart from this world, she sent for some prelates to regulate what was to be done at her obsequies; she gave lessons of piety and wisdom to all who were in her apartment, and especially to her granddaughter Matilda, daughter of the emperor Otto, who was abbess of a monastery: she made her make serious reflections on the advantages of the course she had taken and on the vanity of the grandeurs of earth; she put into her hands a memorandum in which were written the names of all her illustrious ancestors deceased, that she might remember to pray God for the repose of their souls, and that she might also understand that the high qualities and great titles of honour with which these

illustrious heroes had been favoured had not been able to exempt them from death.

At last, having ended her pious exhortations and received all the sacraments of the Church, she begged that several psalms might be recited in her presence, and that the holy Gospel also be read to her until she should have given the last breath. She had beforehand the precaution to have the rough hair-shirt which she ordinarily used spread on her floor; she begged that she be taken from her bed to be laid upon this instrument of penance, and, taking ashes, she put them on her head, saying to the assembly that every person who made it his glory to be a Christian ought not to expire otherwise than on the hair-shirt and in ashes. Hardly had this worthy princess finished this heroic action of piety when, making upon herself the sign of the cross, she rendered her blessed soul to him from whom she had received it: which happened on 14 March 968. Funeral rites suitable to her dignity were made for her: she was buried in the church of Saint Servatius, at Quedlinburg,[1] in the duchy of Saxony, near the sepulchre of King Henry her husband. Thus died this most pious princess, more illustrious still by the lustre of her virtues than by the quality of empress and mother of the emperor. Thus ended her life she who was the mother of the poor, the protectress of the peoples, the advocate of prisoners and captives, the joy of the empire, the foundress of so many churches, hospitals and monasteries; in a word, the most accomplished, the most Christian and the most virtuous princess of her century. Artists have in turn recalled the generosity of our princess distributing alms; her assiduity before the altars of the Lord; her zeal for the adornment of churches, her love for the little ones and for children, to whom she often distributed the bread of religious instruction. Hence a purse in her hands;[2] an altar before which she is devoutly kneeling;[3] a little sacred edifice placed on her hand, children surrounding her like a crown, are so many attributes by which she may be recognised.

We have composed this life on that which was made by order of the emperor Saint Henry, her grandson [*sic*; great-grandson in fact], which is reported with fine notes in Bollandus. Dom Mabillon has also given extracts from it, drawn from the chronicle of a contemporary author, and published in the tenth century [*sic*] by a Benedictine.

Saint Florentina, Virgin, in Spain (630); Blessed John of Barastre, Fifteenth Abbot of Saint-Éloi (1275)

SAINT FLORENTINA, VIRGIN, IN SPAIN (630)

Florentina or Florence was born at Cartagena, in Spain, of an illustrious family. She had for father Severian, governor of the province, and for mother the noble lady Turtur, who also gave birth to the bishops Leander, Fulgentius and Isidore, so celebrated for their doctrine and holiness, as well as to Theodora, wife of the Visigoth king Leuvigild.

Formed early in the teachings of the faith, distinguished by the purity of her morals, and endowed with great penetration of mind, this pious virgin studied with profit the Holy Scriptures under the direction of her brother Leander: he himself attests the progress of his young sister in a method which he dedicates to her to help her read the Old Testament, and in particular the Canticle of Canticles. So she soon became capable of directing the first education of her young brother Isidore. In concert with Leander, she put all her care into nourishing him with the milk of holy doctrine, and into making him know all the dogmas of the faith.

She thought she should employ herself with the more ardour in forming him to holiness because God had seemed to manifest his views on this child. Isidore was still in the cradle when she saw a swarm of bees enter his mouth, come out of it, and then fly away toward heaven. Frightened, the young girl set herself to prayer to ask heaven the explanation of this omen: she then learned that the child would become a great doctor of the Church, and that by his care Spain would be delivered from the Arian heresy.

Several great lords aspired to the hand of Florentina. But she disdained, with the conjugal bond, the seductions of the world. The manners of the age inspired her moreover with the deepest disgust: she became a nun, offering to Jesus Christ the flower of her virginity, and taking him for master and spouse.

In her monastery, continually applied to reading and prayer, she adorned her soul, as with so many flowers, with all the virtues of the Christian and the religious: charity, humility, poverty. So a great number of virgins, attracted by the perfume of her holiness, came to place themselves under her guidance. Several monasteries even submitted to her direction and supervision.

Saint Leander had the highest opinion of her holiness and the efficacy of her prayers; in addressing to her two little treatises which he had composed for the spiritual advancement of his sister and that of her companions, he said to her with abandon: “To conclude, beloved sister, I conjure thee to remember me before God, and to give place in thy prayers to our young brother Isidore. I am certain that God will lend his ear, in our favour, to the prayer of thee, a virgin.” These two treatises, which are the two parts of one work, have for title, the one *On the contempt of the world*, the other *On the institution of Virgins*.

Saint Isidore had no less idea of the eminent holiness and learning of his sister. Full of gratitude for the good care she had lavished on his childhood, and the first lessons she had given him, wishing to render her something for what he had received, he dedicated to her two books, the one which treats *Of the Nativity, the Passion, the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Last Judgment*, and which he declares to have composed at the request of Florentina herself; the other is that of the *Vocation of the Gentiles*. He promises her at the same time to send her explanatory commentaries which will help her to understand the difficult passages of the divine Scriptures.

Arrived at the perfect flowering of virtue and learning, Florentina has no longer any desire on earth. What the Lord had revealed to her concerning Saint Isidore she saw accomplished in this illustrious doctor, whose glorious services all Spain repeated and whose zeal — united with learning — had banished Arianism from his country. Hermenegild, her cousin [*sic*; nephew], had exchanged his royal crown for the aureole of martyrs, and Recared, brother of Hermenegild, had been converted to the Catholic faith. Consumed with love for God, she did no more than languish in this world. At last, full of days, she fell asleep in the Lord, at Écija, as is believed,[1] in the monastery of Santa María del Valle. Her body was transported from this monastery to Seville, and placed in the tomb of her holy brothers, where it rested until the entry of the Saracens into Spain, at which epoch it was hidden in the woods of Guadalupe with the relics of Saint Fulgentius. Under the reign of Alfonso XI, this double treasure was found again at Berzocana, a village of the diocese of Plasencia. Under Philip II, two parts were made of the holy relics of the brother and sister: one was left in a magnificent marble mausoleum which was erected at the same place; the other, transported to Murcia, and honourably placed near the high altar, where these sacred bones are, on the part of the faithful, the object of the greatest veneration. Some particles were also given to the palace of the Escorial, at Madrid.

Proprium of Spain and of Perpignan, new translation.

BLESSED JOHN OF BARASTRE, FIFTEENTH ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT-ÉLOI (1275)

John of Barastre was one of the holiest prelates who have administered the abbey of Mont Saint-Éloi, near Arras. King Saint Louis had the deepest veneration for him, and often gave him testimonies of it. He gave him even, in 1261, a thorn from the crown of Our Lord, and Raissius inserted the title of this donation in the *Sacred Treasure of Belgic Gaul*. The countess of Flanders, Jeanne, shared these same sentiments, and both made abundant largesses to the community of Mont Saint-Éloi, which they cherished in a special manner. The pious abbot was moreover equally venerated by all that was most elevated in the country, and he was worthy among all of this high esteem.

In effect, penetrated with the liveliest faith, he was constantly applied to the things of God. Every day he meditated on the sorrowful mysteries of the Passion of the Saviour, and it often happened to him, while he celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass, to shed tears in abundance at the thought of the love of Jesus Christ for men and the little return he receives from the greater part of them. His emotion was still more lively at the moment of communion, when he nourished himself with the body of the Saviour. He had also a tender devotion toward the Blessed Virgin, toward Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, whose protection he claimed with fervour. His charity for the poor was no less remarkable. Seeing in them the suffering members of Jesus Christ, it was with joy and respect that he distributed to them the goods which he could dispose of in their favour. He gave them food, clothing, remedies: he gave them also the spiritual alms and addressed to them the instructions and consolations of faith. “Friend and protector of men of letters,” says one of his biographers, “he put all his care into making the sciences flourish among the religious. He had several of them study at the University of Paris. One of them, Stephen of Fermont, was received doctor there and taught theology.” John of Barastre took care also of the temporal interests of his abbey. He had it rebuilt in great part; he obtained the confirmation of all its privileges; he obtained even, in 1260, exemption from all toll, passage-dues and wine-dues, for the things the abbey might have need of. One sees that, from every point of view, he was a good administrator, an enlightened guide, a model, a father. The sovereign pontiff Gregory X, who knew the eminent virtue and wisdom of the abbot of Mont Saint-Éloi, invited him to betake himself to the general council convoked at Lyon in the year 1274. The venerable John, who was already very aged, testified at once the profound emotion which this mark of confidence on the part of the august head of Christendom had caused him, then begged the Pope to excuse him on account of the infirmities of old age, which did not permit him to undertake so long a journey. He sent to replace him two procurators of his choice, who were received with distinction.

Blessed John of Barastre died, in the sentiments and exercise of the most constant piety and the greatest charity, on 14 March 1275. He had governed the abbey for twenty-seven years. Under this wise administration, the renown of the house of Mont Saint-Éloi and of its abbot had spread even into foreign countries. Relations of association and bonds of fraternity were established between the abbey and a great number of convents. Let us cite among others the abbey of Anchin, that of Jumièges, the Preaching Friars and the Friars Minor. Nothing was neglected by the holy Abbot to assure the spiritual good of his house, and to attain, with the greatest possible efficacy, the supreme end to which he had consecrated every instant of his worthy life. M. Canon Van Drival and M. the abbé Destombes, *Saints d’Arras*.

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[2] Addition made by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, 2 September 1871. The relics of this holy Martyr were formerly honoured in the Agro Verano, near Saint Lawrence.

[3] See in the additions of 16 March.

[4] Friend of the venerable Conrad of Offida and his emulator in virtue, he dwelt for some time on Mount Alverna, where Saint Francis had received the stigmata. The two friends associated to give missions in the neighbourhood.

[5] An ardent zeal for the salvation of souls engaged this Saint to leave Italy to go and preach the Gospel in the north of Great Britain. Having landed near the mouth of the Tees, he built there a church under the invocation of Saint Peter; he built a second at Tellein, three miles from Alect, and a third at Restemet. This church was served by canons regular of Saint Augustine when the monasteries were destroyed in Scotland (Godescard). His preaching produced marvellous effects in the provinces of Angus, Buchan, Elgin, Moray and Ross. Become bishop of Ross, he founded several churches in that province, and made the spirit of piety and religion flourish everywhere. He died about the year 630. It is read in the Breviary of Aberdeen that he founded a hundred and fifty churches or oratories, and that after his death God granted a great number of miracles to his intercession. See the Breviary of Aberdeen, the Calendar of King, under this day; Lesley, *Hist. Scot.*, bk. IV; and Hector Boece, *Hist.*, bk. VI.

[6] Folio 131 of the fourteenth volume of the collection of the Cabinet des Estampes of Paris.

[7] *Acta Sanctorum*, March, vol. II.

[8] The abbey of Quedlinburg, where the body of this illustrious princess rests, is now comprised in the duchy of Saxony [*sic*; Prussian Saxony]; it was, in the sixteenth century, in the first rank of the other abbeys of Germany, and the abbess took precedence over the princesses of the empire. The community of Quedlinburg embraced the Confession of Augsburg in 1539. This sad apostasy is due to the influence of the countess Anne of Stolberg.

[9] Callot, *invenit et fecit*, fol. 163 of the fifth volume of the collection of engravings of Paris.

[10] Sébastien Leclerc. See his work at 11 March.

[1] One reads in the *History of the glorious virgin Saint Florentina*, published at Madrid in 1581, by Rodrigo Yepes, a Hieronymite religious who dwelt in this same convent of Santa María del Valle, made illustrious by Saint Florentina: "The virgin Saint Florentina lived in the monastery of Santa María del Valle; such is the tradition: this tradition is confirmed by numerous vestiges of antiquity: a very old tower which is called the tower of Saint Florentina; in the cloister, remains of the cells inhabited by the nuns; a hospital and a confraternity established at Écija, whose origin is lost in the night of time; hospital and confraternity which are called of Saint Florentina. On certain days of the year, the members of this confraternity carry in procession the statue of the Saint — dressed as a nun — to the monastery of Santa María. When in 1570 Philip II suppressed all the little hospitals whose revenue was insufficient, to unite them to the great ones, he let that of Écija subsist, so as not to deprive the inhabitants of this city of their procession in honour of Saint Florentina to the church of Santa María del Valle, to which the hospital is annexed. The generations which lived in the seventeenth century at Écija had received from those who preceded them their cult of love and veneration for Saint Florentina. The fathers had told their children that the road which leads to the monastery was called the street of the Virgins: that in the time of the Saracens, from the church of Santa Cruz to the monastery, the road had been watered with the blood of the nuns immolated by the infidels. In the same street is found a little bridge which also bears the name of bridge of the Virgins," etc. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, under 20 June.

15 March

Martyrologies

Fifteenth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Caesarea in Cappadocia, the passion of Saint Longinus, soldier, who is said to be he who pierced the side of Our Lord with his lance. First century. — The same day, the birth into heaven of Saint Aristobulus, disciple of the apostles, who, having finished the course of his preachings, consummated his martyrdom. First century. — At Thessalonica, Saint Matrona, servant of a Jewish woman, who, secretly honouring Jesus Christ, and going every day to church to make her prayer there by stealth, was at last surprised by her mistress, and, having been ill-treated in many ways, perished under blows of a stick, and, in the confession of Christ, rendered to God a spotless spirit.[1] — The same day, Saint Menignus, fuller, who suffered under the emperor Decius.[2] 251. — In Egypt, Saint Nicander, martyr, who, searching carefully for the relics of the martyrs, merited to be himself made a martyr under the emperor Diocletian. 302. — At Cordova, Saint Leocritia (Lucretia), virgin and martyr.[3] 850. — At Rome, the birth into heaven of Saint Zachary, pope, who governed the Church with extreme vigilance, and died in peace, laden with merits. 752. — At Rieti, Saint Probus, bishop, at whose death Saints Juvenal and Eleutherius, martyrs, appeared. 570. — At Rome, Saint Speciosus, monk, whose brother saw his soul borne to heaven. Sixth century.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Dijon, Saint Tranquillus, abbot of Saint-Bénigne, who was buried in honour beside the apostle of Burgundy. The life of Saint Tranquillus, like that of Saint Eustadius, his predecessor, resembled the limpid brook that flows without noise, happy to fertilise the valley it waters and the shrubs that flower on its banks: let us do good with humility. 540. — At Auxerre, the venerable Fulcaud, bishop, buried at Saint-Eusèbe. 743. — At Langres, the feast of Saint Leonilla and Saint Junilla, martyrs.[4] — At Limoges, the feast of Saint Sacerdos, vulgarly Saint Serdon, bishop of Limoges, cited in the Roman Martyrology on 4 May.[5] About 530. — At Cahors, on the Friday after the fourth Sunday of Lent, the feast of the Holy Shroud of the head of Our Lord. — At Trier, the translation of Saint Theodulf, abbot. — At Chartres, feast of Our Lady of the Pillar, established in memory of the victory won, in the year 1568, over the Protestants who were besieging Chartres and were repulsed at the moment when, masters of the ramparts, they were about to penetrate into the town.[6]

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — Saint Zachary, pope… — The same feast among the Canons Regular.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Margaret of Cortona, mentioned on 22 February.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At Toledo, in the Cistercian monastery of Mount Sion, Saint Raymond, abbot of Fitero, founder of the celebrated military order of Calatrava, liberator of his country and indefatigable defender of Christendom, who departed to the Lord on 1 February, illustrious by many miracles wrought after his death. — The same feast in the Order of the Trinitarians. 1163.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — Solemn commemoration of the Saints whose bodies or relics are kept in the churches of the three Orders of our father Saint Francis.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — At Todi, Blessed Roger, confessor, disciple of our father Saint Francis, who, shining with an admirable charity and the perfection of his life, departed for the heavenly kingdom on 5 January.

Martyrology of the Carmelites, Calced and Discalced. — At Bologna, Blessed Ludovic Morbioli, Carmelite confessor, whose birthday [into heaven] is 9 November.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Antwerp, the saints Constantius and Felician, Roman martyrs, whose bodies were given to the Carmelites of that city, and transported in the year 1657. — At Barcelona, Saint Matrona, virgin and martyr. First centuries of Christianity. — At Capua, another virgin of the same name, of Portuguese origin and royal blood. About the eleventh century. These two Saints must not be confounded with Saint Matrona of Thessalonica, feasted on the same day. — At Trent, Saint Magorian, son of Saint Maxentia, brother of Saint Vigilius, bishop, and of Saint Claudian. Fifth century. — At Ravenna, Blessed Valerius, archbishop of that city. Year 812. — In Castile, Saint Sisebut, abbot of Cardeña.[7] Year 1082. — At Arsenga [Erzincan?], in Armenia, the blessed Monald of Ancona, Francis of Fermo, and Anthony of Milan, of the Order of Friars Minor, who were put to death in that country while preaching the Gospel to the Saracens. Their remains were gathered by Armenians and wrought several miracles.[8] Year 1286.

Saint Longinus, Martyr

First century. — Pope: Saint Peter.

Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute and calumniate you. Matt. v, 44.

Many authors think that Saint Longinus is that centurion who cried out at the moment of the death of Our Lord: “This was truly the Son of God.” According to others, he is that soldier who opened with a lance his sacred side, and made the blood and water flow from it. Some even maintain that he was both; but is it credible, have some pious souls asked, that after having confessed his divinity he would have dared to carry the lance into his adorable breast? We think with Saint Augustine,[1] that when the centurion recognised Jesus Christ as Son of God, he did not give to this expression the extent of the sense it contains; he meant to be understood that he took him for a divine man, and that he remarked in him something extraordinary, supernatural. This first glimmer of grace will not have hindered him from accomplishing his task to the end and piercing the Saviour’s side. The pious belief of the Middle Ages seems to confirm our way of seeing: according to the terms of the legend, the blood of Jesus Christ spurted on the face of the centurion at the moment he pierced his side, and healed his diseased eyes; a naive way of saying that faith opened the eyes of his soul at the foot of the cross. Besides, the act which Longinus accomplished in piercing the side of the Saviour, far from being contrary to his nascent faith, was an act of humanity, since in making blood and water come forth from the heart of the Saviour, he spared his adorable body the breaking of the legs which

was inflicted on the condemned who had still a breath of life. In the paintings and sculptures of the Middle Ages, Longinus is on his knees and in a position so respectful that faith seems already born in his heart. On account of this so honourable ministry and of his quality of Roman knight, Saint Longinus was in great honour among the men-at-arms of former times.

Be that as it may, according to Metaphrastes and his office in the Greek liturgy, Saint Longinus, having received the order to guard the tomb of the Saviour after his burial, was witness of the great miracles which took place at the moment of his resurrection, and thereby more and more confirmed in his belief. He came to relate to the Princes of the priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees what he had seen and heard: which put them in great trouble. Fearing that the name of the Saviour should become more illustrious than ever, they strove to corrupt Longinus by rich presents and fine promises; they wished to make him say that, his soldiers being asleep, the Disciples of Jesus Christ had stolen his body.[2] The holy soldier, who was already quite changed and filled with divine light, absolutely refused to be the minister of this imposture; on the contrary, he published the truth aloud, and was a most faithful witness of the resurrection of Our Lord.

The Jews, seeing his constancy, resolved to avenge themselves on him; the pious Longinus, having discovered their design, left the army, and, abandoning Judaea, went from Jerusalem to Cappadocia, accompanied by two soldiers. There he began to preach what he had seen, and drew, by his virtuous actions and his words, several unbelievers to the knowledge of the living God; so that the faith there increased notably, to the great reproach of the Jews who had crucified him. These impious men made every effort to have this admirable preacher condemned to death, accusing him as a traitor; they pressed Pilate, governor of Judaea, so hard that he sent some of his archers to Cappadocia, to take him and put him to death. The soldiers went there full of fury and impiety; but God permitted that they should address themselves to Longinus himself, without knowing him, and discover to him the subject of their journey.

This news rejoiced him extremely; he even received them and treated them splendidly in his house, assuring them that he would soon put in their hands him whom they sought, without their taking the trouble to inquire further. After having lavished on them for three days the most cordial hospitality, as he burned with the desire to shed his blood for him whose blood he had made flow by a thrust of the lance, he made himself known to them, and said: “I am Longinus whom you seek: I am ready to endure death, and if you give it to me, you will pay me with usury the good treatment I have shown you, for you could not reward me better.” These soldiers could not believe it, so new and surprising did this resolution appear to them; and, when they were assured that it was indeed Longinus, they felt an extreme repugnance to put him to death. But the desire he testified to suffer for Jesus Christ, and the fear they themselves had of being ill-treated by Pilate if they returned without having executed his orders, at last made them resolve upon it. He commanded then a servant to bring him a white garment to solemnise the feast of the heavenly nuptials to which he saw himself invited, then he exhorted the two soldiers his companions to perseverance; and, after having embraced them, and having marked the place where he wished to be buried, he had his head cut off, like them.

The executioners carried his venerable head to Pilate, who had it placed on the gate of the city, to give satisfaction to the Jews; afterwards it was thrown on the refuse heap: but God had it drawn out in a miraculous manner. A woman of Cappadocia, poor and blind, having only to console her widowhood a son who led her by the hand, undertook the journey to Jerusalem, to pray Our Lord there to heal her and deliver her from the calamities with which she was overwhelmed; but hardly had she arrived when her son died and left her without a guide and in a desolation that cannot be expressed. The weariness with which she was overwhelmed at last made her drowsy and made her sleep. During her sleep, Saint Longinus appeared to her and consoled her, showing her that the pains which Jesus Christ had suffered for our sins were incomparably greater than hers. Then he commanded her to go and seek his head, which was covered with dung, assuring her that by touching it she would recover her sight; he promised her also that he would let her see her son, whose loss she wept bitterly. The woman, encouraged by this vision, had herself led to the place that was

indicated to her, and, drawing this precious treasure from the foul place where it was, she received the grace that had been promised her. The following night, Saint Longinus appeared to her again, and, showing her her son clothed in a marvellous brightness, said to her: “Weep no more as unfortunate those who are crowned with glory and who bless God eternally. Take my head and bury it with the body of your son, in one same coffin, and cease not to praise God in his Saints.” After this vision, the pious woman took this venerable head, with the body of her son, and buried them honourably in a village called Sardial, which was the birthplace of the holy Martyr.

As for the iron of the lance, with which it is said Saint Longinus pierced the side of Our Lord, it was religiously kept before the French Revolution, in the Sainte-Chapelle, at Paris, where King Saint Louis placed it with the other instruments of the Passion, which his piety had given him the means to recover from divers places of Christendom.[3]

Saint Longinus is represented in arms, helmet on head, sword at side, at the foot of the cross. Several ancient painters make him carry his left hand to his eyes, while with the right he directs his pike toward the body of the Crucified, in allusion to his bodily and spiritual healing together.[4] He is said to have had his eyes put out before his beheading. In the posture of a man condemned to death which is given him, he has therefore sometimes his eyes torn out.[5] He passes also for having overcome a dragon: it is doubtless in allusion to the preaching of the Gospel which he made in Cappadocia.

He carries sometimes a crystal vase in which are found two or three globules which are explained as will be seen. The city of Mantua gloried in possessing, with the body of Saint Longinus, some drops of the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, gathered by the Saint who had pierced his side. — The reliquary of the holy blood figures on several ancient coins of the city of Mantua: the discovery of this treasure, at the beginning of the ninth century, gave occasion to the erection of an episcopal see in that city. Saint Longinus appears with this attribute of the reliquary and the drops of blood in a picture in the Louvre, painted by Giulio Romano for Mantua.[6] The memory of Saint Longinus is marked on this day in the Roman Martyrology, as appears from the translation we have given of it: there is seen approved in it the ancient tradition that it is he who pierced with a thrust of the lance the side of the dead Saviour, whence flowed blood and water, as it is written in Saint John. Saint Hesychius, priest of Jerusalem, composed his history, and the continuators of Bollandus report the Acts of it drawn from an ancient manuscript of the library of the Vatican.

Saint Zachary, Pope

752. — Emperor of the East: Constantine IV, Copronymus. — King of France: Pepin the Short.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Following the example of Saint Zachary, we ought to fulfil the office of peacemakers every time the occasion offers itself, were it only between two persons.

Zachary, a native of Syria, canon regular, then Benedictine monk, created priest-cardinal by Gregory II, was son of Polychronius. Endowed with the rarest qualities of mind and heart, brought up with great care in piety and the sciences, he passed into Italy in the eighth century, and was admitted into the Roman clergy at a time when the city of Rome was very subject to alarms from the Lombards. Liutprand, who had long reigned over those barbarians in Italy, having once already advanced with his army to besiege Rome, had been turned aside from it by Pope Gregory II; he had even reconciled himself so well that, as a pledge of his good understanding, he had offered a silver cross and a golden crown at the tomb of Saint Peter. But, ten years after, this prince, ill satisfied with the protection which Pope Gregory III gave to Trasamund, duke of Spoleto, came and laid siege to Rome, and withdrew only after his troops had pillaged the church of Saint Peter, which the Goths had formerly respected. Things were in this state when Gregory, after having asked help from Charles Martel, in France, against Liutprand, who had since ravaged again the lands of the Church,

left the See vacant by his death. There was not much to deliberate on the choice of the successor to be given him. A man was needed who had the prudence and moderation necessary to re-establish the affairs of the Church and of the State in Italy. This was what was found in the priest Zachary, whose virtue and capacity were known. The innocence of his life and the integrity of his morals were accompanied by a natural kindness and a gentleness that charmed everyone. He had never been surprised in the least outburst: always full of charity for everybody, he had been seen disposed to render good for evil on every occasion, and, when he had become pope, far from avenging himself on those who had persecuted him, he wished to conquer them only by benefits.

He was consecrated on 19 November, in the year 741, nine days after the death of his predecessor and nine days before his burial. The disorder in which he found public affairs at his accession made him judge that he ought to begin by remedying it, in order afterwards to regulate those of the Church with more facility. Resolved to expose himself to everything for the salvation of his people, he first sent a nuncio with letters full of civility to King Liutprand, who was so touched by them that, having conceived much esteem and respect for this new Pontiff, he appeared softened and entirely disposed to acquiesce in all that should be proposed to him on his part. Zachary knew how to profit by these happy dispositions. He went himself, accompanied by the principal members of his clergy, to find the king at Terni, in Umbria. This prince, having had notice of it, sent the first lords and officers of his court to meet him, and received him with all imaginable honours. He made with him a treaty of peace as advantageous as could be wished: he released all his prisoners and restored to the Holy See the cities he had taken in the duchy of Rome and on the lands of the Church. The next day, which was a Sunday, the king wished to assist, with his court and his officers, at the consecration of a bishop which the Pope was to perform in the church of Saint Valentine of Terni. The holiness of the ceremony and much more still that of the prayers which he made there touched the Lombards so keenly that most could not hear them without shedding tears; and the piety he showed in all this action excited in the hearts of several sentiments of devotion toward God and respect for the Church. The Pope, on leaving this ceremony, invited the king to dinner; the king there received his blessing, and testified that he had never been at a better meal. He then had him honourably escorted back by the duke of Chiusi, his nephew, and other lords of note: the treaty having afterwards been faithfully executed, Zachary ordered public prayers at Rome, to give thanks to God for the success of the whole affair.

The peoples of Italy, seeing the great credit which he had acquired over the mind of Liutprand, sought with eagerness his mediation and his favour with this prince. Zachary strove to employ it always in a manner that might make the success turn to the glory of God and the advantage of the Church. With this view he undertook to extinguish the war which was kindled between the inhabitants of Ravenna and this king, and to reconcile them with him. Seeing the violent oppression in which Liutprand held them, he feared not to expose himself to the fatigues of a long journey and to go and find him at Pavia, to carry by his presence what he had not been able to obtain from him by his nuncio and his letters.

Having therefore left the government of Rome to the patrician Stephen, he ran, like the good shepherd, to redeem those of his sheep who were about to perish. It was in the height of summer. It was observed that from Rome to Ravenna a cloud sheltered him from the heat of the sun by day, and that from Ravenna to Pavia this cloud seemed preceded by armed battalions. The exarch (so was named the prefect who governed Ravenna in the name of the emperor of Constantinople) came to meet the holy Pontiff as far as seventeen leagues from the city, whither he conducted him. All the people of Ravenna, men, women, children, went to meet him and received him amid tears and thanksgivings, crying: “Blessed be our pastor who has left his sheep and has come to deliver us, who were about to perish!”

From Ravenna, the Pope sent two deputies to Liutprand, to announce his approaching arrival. But the king, determined to grant nothing, refused even to give them audience. “Must it be,” cried the Lombard, “that the importunities of a priest, of an old man, always come to trouble my triumphs?” This obstinacy, of which he

was informed in the night, did not discourage the holy Pontiff; despising the peril and trusting in Christ, he boldly went out of Ravenna, entered the lands of the Lombards and arrived on the banks of the Po, on 28 June. The king sent his great men to receive him and conduct him to Pavia. But as it was the eve of Saint Peter, the Pope went to the church of that Saint, which was outside the city, and there celebrated the prayer of None, with holy Mass. The next day, the very day of the feast, he celebrated solemn Mass there, at the king's request. There, having greeted each other, they ate together and returned into the city. On the day after the feast, invited by the king to come to the palace, where he was received with the greatest honours, the holy man begged him to send his troops no more into the province of Ravenna, but on the contrary to restore to him the cities he had taken, particularly Cesena. The king resisted long; but at last he agreed to restore to Ravenna all the territory it had previously, and two-thirds of the territory of Cesena, keeping, for his security, the other third and the city until 1 July of the following year, in order that his ambassadors might have time to return from Constantinople. At the Pope's departure, the king accompanied him to the Po, and left with him several lords, with orders to follow him to Ravenna and to cause the Lombard garrisons to leave the places he restored.

In all these conjunctures, we see the peoples of Italy, with their magistrates, whether imperial or other, have recourse to the Roman Pontiff as to their only salvation, and this Pontiff not deceiving their confidence. Alone and without arms, he disarms by word and persuasion princes and kings. Surely, if there is a way of becoming legitimate sovereign of a country, it is this way. At least so judge good sense and the gratitude of peoples saved.

Having returned to Rome in the month of July, he celebrated there anew the great feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, although he had already solemnised it on 28 and 29 June at Pavia, in presence of the king and his court. He mingled with it public prayers for the deliverance of the people of Ravenna, on the news he received of the infidelity with which Liutprand seemed to fail in his word. A few days after, the death of this prince was learned, whose successor Hildebrand, who was his nephew, was driven out seven months after by the Lombards themselves, because he was as ill disposed as his uncle toward the repose of Italy. They raised to the throne in his place Ratchis, duke of Friuli, to whom Zachary at once sent a nuncio to congratulate him and to try to bring him into ways of pacification. The new king deferred entirely to these remonstrances, and made a peace of twenty years with all Italy. It served the holy Pope to re-establish the ancient face of the Church, to remedy the disorders which had crept in with war and public calamities, to reform the morals of clergy and people, and to make discipline flourish again. He rebuilt or adorned divers churches and other pious edifices in Rome, and he made other establishments useful to religion, which were fruits of the peace he had procured for the peoples. His solicitude and his cares extended at the same time into the most distant provinces of Christendom. In the West, he powerfully seconded the zeal of Saint Boniface, apostle of Germany, and sent him the decision of several points on which he had consulted him, with divers regulations on the conduct he should hold in his apostolate.

Among other things, he confirmed the erection of three bishoprics established by Saint Boniface; he afterwards confirmed the erection of the archbishopric of Mainz, to which the same Saint Boniface gave as suffragans the bishops of Langres [*sic*], Cologne, Worms, Speyer and Strasbourg. Boniface consulted Zachary with the most entire submission; sometimes, in Germany, priests little instructed administered baptism in incorrect terms, and he cited examples. Zachary answered that a baptism must be regarded as valid in which the priest had even pronounced words devoid of sense and clearness: the intention of doing what the Church does suffices. Saint Boniface, in his intimate correspondence with the Pope, complained that a priest named Virgil laboured to put division between him and Odilo, duke of Bavaria, and that, besides, he taught several errors, of which the principal were that there was another world, other men under the earth; another sun, another moon.[1] Zachary answered that he must be deposed if he persisted in teaching such errors. But it would be wrong to conclude from this answer, as modern writers have done, that the holy

Pontiff condemned the opinion of those who admitted antipodes; he had in view certain heretics who maintained the existence of a race of men who did not descend from Adam, and who had not been redeemed by Jesus Christ. Moreover he pronounced no judgment on this occasion, since he ordered Virgil to come to Rome, that his doctrine might be examined. There is every appearance that Virgil justified himself, since he was elected shortly after bishop of Salzburg.[2]

The holy Pope had a tender charity for the unfortunate. Having learned that Venetian merchants had bought slaves at Rome to resell them to the Moors of Africa, he first reproached them with a traffic so injurious to humanity and religion, and then paid the sum that was asked to restore liberty to all these slaves. He adorned the city of Rome with several magnificent churches, made a great number of foundations in favour of the poor and pilgrims, and assigned a very considerable annual revenue for the maintenance of the lamps of the church of Saint Peter. In the East, he laboured, by his gentleness, to manage, in favour of the Church, the difficult mind of the emperor Constantine Copronymus, who had made himself the enemy of the holy images. This prince, though obstinate in his impiety, showed much consideration for Zachary, and willingly granted him what he had asked in particular for the Roman Church. The Pope held divers synods at Rome, from the beginning of his pontificate: working unceasingly at the affairs of the Church with an indefatigable application, now with the bishops his neighbours, now with the clergy of Rome, in order to do nothing except with knowledge of the cause and much maturity. In that which he assembled of several bishops, in the year 743, he cut off from the body of the Church two inventors of new heresies, named Adalbert and Clement, whom Saint Boniface had already condemned; and in the year 748, he did the same with regard to a third, called Samson, of Ireland. Although he watched equally over all the churches of the earth, he seemed to do so still more particularly over those which Saint Boniface and the other evangelical labourers had newly founded in Germany: and it is seen that there are no affairs of which more is spoken in most of the letters which remain to us from him. Amid so many occupations, he did not fail to find leisure to translate into Greek the *Dialogues* of Saint Gregory the Great.

It is customary to count, among the most glorious circumstances of the pontificate of Saint Zachary, the striking conversion of two princes, a conversion of which he was the instrument and minister. The first was Carloman, mayor of the palace of Austrasia, son of Charles Martel and elder brother of Pepin, who was, a short time after, elected king of France. This prince, who bore the quality of duke of the Franks and who shared with his brother all the royal power, after having maintained the State by his valour, and the discipline of the Church by his zeal, renounced the world all at once, came to Rome to receive the tonsure from the hands of the holy Pope, retired afterwards to Mount Soracte, where he built a monastery in honour of Saint Sylvester, and passed from there to Monte Cassino, where he embraced the institute and rule of Saint Benedict. The other prince was Ratchis, king of the Lombards, who, after having broken the peace and laid siege to Perugia, was not only turned from his design by Pope Zachary, but so sincerely converted to God that, on his advice, he came down from the throne and voluntarily reduced himself to the state of a private life to serve God. The impression which the remonstrances of the Saint made on his mind afterwards completed the work of so rare a conversion and of so great an example. Ratchis wished to leave all to follow Jesus Christ; but his wife, Tassia, and his daughter, Ratrude, touched like him with contempt of the world, could not leave him. They came therefore together to Rome, where Zachary gave the tonsure to Ratchis with the monastic habit, which his wife and daughter also took from his hand, and he sent all three to the monastery of Monte Cassino.

It was at this same time that Pepin, mayor of the palace, who was master of France under the shadow and name of Childeric III, sent to Rome Burchard, bishop of Würzburg, in Franconia, and his chaplain Fulrad, abbot of Saint-Denis, to consult the holy Pope on the design the Franks had of putting the crown on his head. Zachary, thinking to procure a powerful protection for the Holy See against the Lombards, with whom the Romans could not be in safety, was not content with approving the choice of the Franks; but he also secretly

exhorted Pepin not to refuse a crown which Providence so visibly destined for him. The answer which he made to the consultation of the Frankish lords on this subject, though in general terms, served greatly to determine them. For, without speaking either of deposing Childeric or of electing Pepin, he sent them word that "it was better that he who had all the power should be king." No more was needed for Pepin, who knew well how to make this answer of the holy Pope count. Everyone took it for an approbation, or at least for a consent; the election of Pepin was regarded as the work of heaven; he had himself consecrated the following year at Soissons, by Saint Boniface, archbishop of Mainz.[3] This royal unction took place only on the first day of May; and our holy Pope had died on the preceding 3rd of March [*sic*], after ten years, three months and fourteen days of pontificate. The day of his burial, which took place on 15 March, in the church of Saint Peter, is that on which the Church honours his memory.

He is represented clothing with the religious habit Ratchis, king of the Lombards. The Bollandists have given his portrait in their supplementary volume of May, and Ciaconius in his *Lives of the Roman Pontiffs*. The engraving adopted by the former is preferred to that given by the latter. See the letters of Saint Zachary, vol. VI of the *Councils*, and the *Pontificals*. See also Fleury, vol. IX, bk. XLII.

Among these secret things on which Saint Lul was charged by Saint Boniface to consult Pope Zachary by word of mouth, and on which the Pope gave, likewise by word of mouth, his answer, it is conjectured with sufficient foundation that there was question of ratifying and closing a political revolution which had been preparing for long years among the Franks, namely: a change of dynasty. In the beginning, the crown of the Franks was rather elective than hereditary. Childeric, father of Clovis, having rendered himself odious by his debaucheries, the Franks drove him from the throne and the kingdom, and unanimously chose for king the Roman Aegidius, who reigned alone eight years. Then, having learned that Childeric had become wiser, they begged him to return from Thuringia, where he had fled, and re-established him in the royalty; so that he and Aegidius reigned together (Greg. Tur., bk. II, c. 12). This fact, attested by Saint Gregory of Tours, shows us that, in the beginning, the Franks could choose kings not only of another family, but even of another nation. Since Clovis, who had had the precaution to destroy all his other relatives, they were chosen from among his descendants. These having promptly degenerated and become altogether null, might not the Franks do a second time what they had done a first, give themselves a king of another family, or even of another nation? above all a king who already was one in fact, and to whom nothing was lacking but the name? It is to be believed that Saint Boniface consulted Pope Saint Zachary confidentially on this important question before it was officially proposed to him.

"In the year 751. Burchard, bishop of Würzburg, and the priest Fulrad, chaplain, were sent to Rome to Pope Zachary, to consult the Pontiff on the kings who then existed in France, and who had only the name of kings, without any royal power. By them, the Pontiff sent word that it was better that he should be king who had the sovereign power; and having given his authorisation, he ordered that Pepin be established king. The year after, following the sanction of the Roman Pontiff, Pepin was called king of the Franks, consecrated for that purpose by the hand of the holy Martyr, the archbishop Boniface, and, according to the custom of the Franks, raised on the throne in the city of Soissons. As to Hilderic, who bore the vain title of king, he had his hair cut off and was relegated to a monastery." Such are the terms in which Eginhard, fellow-student, then secretary of Pepin's son Charlemagne, related the thing in his annals of the Franks (Eginh., *Annal.*, ad an. 749 and 750). A contemporary author, the continuator of Fredegarius, reports it in these terms: "Then, by the counsel and with the consent of all the Franks, and with the authorisation of the Apostolic See, the illustrious Pepin, by the election of all France, the consecration of the bishops and the submission of the princes, was raised to royalty, with the queen Bertrada, according to the ancient customs" (Fredeg., *Contin.*, year 752). The other annals and chronicles report the same thing as these two writers, and often in the same terms. The annals of Xanten, a town on the Rhine, below Cologne, say more briefly: "Pepin, elected king according to the custom of the Franks, is consecrated by Saint Boniface, bishop of Mainz" (Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae*, vol. II,

p. 221).

Now, what is to be thought of the conduct of the Franks and of the decision of Pope Zachary? We shall cite the opinion of three competent men. Here is how Bossuet sums up this fact: “In a word, the Pontiff is consulted, as in an imposing and doubtful question, whether it is permitted to give the title of king to him who already has the royal power. He answers that it is permitted. This answer, issued from the greatest authority in the world, is regarded as a just and legitimate decision. By virtue of this authority, the nation itself takes the kingdom from Childeric and transfers it to Pepin. For it was not to the Pontiff that application was made that he should take away or give the kingdom, but that he should declare that the kingdom ought to be taken away or given by those whom he judged to have the right” (*Defensio*, bk. II, c. 34). Fénelon explains himself in the same sense. He recognises formally that temporal power comes from the nation; he supposes that the nation has the right to elect and depose its kings; for he observes that, in the Middle Ages, the bishops had become the first lords, the heads of the body of each nation to elect and depose sovereigns (*Œuvres complètes de Fénelon*, Versailles, vol. XXII, p. 584). He recognises that, in order to act in security of conscience, Christian nations consulted in this case the head of the Church, and that the Pope was bound to resolve these cases of conscience, for the reason that he is the supreme doctor and pastor. “Pope Zachary,” he says, “answered only to the consultation of the Franks, as the principal doctor and pastor, who is bound to resolve particular cases of conscience, to put souls in safety” (*Ibid.*, vol. II [*sic*], p. 382). — “Thus the Church neither deposed nor instituted lay princes; she answered only the nations which consulted her on what touches conscience, in the matter of contract and oath. This is not a juridical and civil power; but only directive and ordinative, such as Gerson approves” (*Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 334). Here is what Chateaubriand says, following Bossuet and Fénelon: “To treat the accession of Pepin to the crown as usurpation is one of those old historical lies which become truths by dint of being repeated. There is no usurpation where the monarchy is elective, as has been already remarked; it is heredity which, in that case, is an usurpation. Pepin was elected by the advice and consent of all the Franks: these are the words of the first continuator of Fredegarius. Pope Zachary, consulted by Pepin, was right to answer: It seems to me good and useful that he should be king who, without having the name, has the power, rather than he who, bearing the name of king, keeps not the authority.” (*Études historiques*, vol. III, p. 243.)

Saint Aristobulus, One of the Seventy-Two Disciples of Jesus Christ, Apostle of Great Britain; Blessed Louis Morbioli

SAINT ARISTOBULUS, ONE OF THE SEVENTY-TWO DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, APOSTLE OF GREAT BRITAIN (FIRST CENTURY)

Saint Aristobulus was brother of Saint Barnabas. He attached himself to Saint Paul and was first charged with a part of the faithful of Rome.[1] He was ordained by Saint Peter, head of the Church, bishop of all Great Britain, and accompanied that apostle on his voyage to the British Isles.[2] The English add that he was a Roman citizen, like Saint Paul, and that he died a martyr at Glastonbury.

BLESSED LOUIS MORBIOLI (END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY)

He was born at Bologna. Forgetting the Christian principles in which his family had brought him up, he gave himself to all the pleasures and all the vices of the world. Laden with debts, he saw himself obliged to leave his country and betook himself to Venice, where the canons of San Salvatore received him out of charity. A grave illness with which he was struck and the fear of the judgments of God were the means which heaven used to stop him in the way of evil. Louis, sincerely converted, returned to Bologna, charged his brother, to whom he abandoned his share of the goods, with the care of satisfying his creditors, and entered the Third Order of Carmel. He showed himself to his fellow-citizens clothed in a simple sheepskin and barefoot, and asked their pardon for the scandals he had given them. Feeling keenly the need of repairing in a striking

manner his disorders, he travelled through Italy, holding in his hand a staff at the end of which a crucifix was fixed, and preaching penance everywhere with a success which made it believed that God had raised him up to reform the manners of his contemporaries. Without fixed abode, he slept on the ground. Afterwards a pious man took him in, but the Saint would not inhabit any other retreat than the space under a staircase: this retreat was later changed into an oratory. He lived thus until the age of fifty-two. His body, first buried in the cemetery of the cathedral, was at the end of ten months buried in the church itself, on account of the miracles which soon made his tomb illustrious. Gregory XVI approved the cult which had been rendered to him since the day of his death, on 24 October 1842, at the same time as that of the Blessed Romeo, Louis Rabata and Jacobin, all of the order of Carmel.

Breviary of the Carmelites.

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[3] There are some relics of Saint Matrona of Thessalonica at Mazères, canton of Salies, in the diocese of Toulouse. There is also in that parish a little chapel dedicated in her honour. It is a jewel of the twelfth century. A statuette of the Saint, which is venerated there and which is not very ancient, passes for miraculous. — Note of the Rev. Father Caries, Toulouse, 8 May 1872.

[4] He was a native of Parium, in the Hellespont.

[5] See the life of Saint Eulogius, above, p. 352.

[6] We speak of Saint Leonilla and Saint Junilla in the Acts of the Three Twins, on 17 January, in those of Saint Benignus, on 1 November, and in those of Saint Symphorian, on 22 August.

[7] See at 4 May.

[8] There will be found at 11 April, in the life of Saint Fulbert, the history of Our Lady of Chartres and of her two celebrated statues: Our Lady of the Pillar and Our Lady Under the Earth.

[9] The convent of Cardeña had been ruined by the Moorish king Zaphan, in 834, and the two hundred religious it contained put to the sword, in hatred of the Christian religion: it was inhabited anew in 900, thanks to the munificence of the Catholic king Alfonso III the Great.

[10] See our *Palmier séraphique*, vol. III.

[11] *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, bk. III, c. 20.

[12] See the Gospel of Saint Matthew.

[13] See, at 3 May, the *History of the Relics of the Passion*.

[14] Miniature of a Greek calendar in the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. I of the month of May, and the plate of the month of October, the 16th of the said month. — The same by Callot. — Cavaliere Bernini made his statue. — Raphael has also painted him covered in his armour.

[15] Miniature of the *Menologium Graecorum*, fig. 121 of vol. I, edition of Cardinal Albani. The same miniature recalls the discovery of his head at Jerusalem by a blind lady of Cappadocia who, warned in a dream of the place where this venerable remnant had been relegated, recovered her sight at the moment when she found it again under a heap of stones.

[16] Father Cahier. — This picture, we say, is found at the Louvre, in Paris: it is very much out of place there, let us admit. François Chauveau engraved it. See plate 81 of a volume of engravings, under no. 4773 (65), at the [imperial?] library.

[17] *Quod alius mundus et alii homines sub terra sint, seu alius sol et luna*, etc. — *Conc.*, vol. VI, p. 1521, and *Bibl. Patr.* among the epistles of S. Bonif. The opinion of those in question was that there were under the earth men who had not Adam for father, and who had not been redeemed by Jesus Christ. Now, it could be condemned as erroneous, since it contradicts Scripture. See Cardinal Baronius under the year 754, no. 12.

[18] Several ancient philosophers thought that the figure of the earth was not spherical, and rejected the existence of the antipodes. This philosophical error, which had no influence on the faith, was adopted by some Fathers, as by Saint Augustine, bk. XVI *de Civ. Dei*, c. 9; by Bede, bk. IV *de Princ. Philos.* [*sic*], and by Cosmas the Egyptian, surnamed Indicopleustes. It must not however be imagined that it was general among Christian philosophers until the sixteenth century, as Father de Montfaucon has pretended, in the preface he put at the head of Cosmas the Egyptian. Philoponus, who lived at the end of the sixth century, demonstrated in his book *de mundi creat.*, bk. III, c. 13, that Saint Basil, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Saint Athanasius and the greater part of the Fathers of the Church believed that the earth was round. Mention is even made of the antipodes in Saint Hilary, *in Ps. ii*, 32; in Origen, bk. II *de Princip.*, c. 3; in Saint Clement, pope, etc. (Godescard.)

[19] Certain historians have blamed the conduct of Saint Zachary in the affair of the election of Pepin. Here is how Rohrbacher relates the event and answers the objection: About the year 750, Saint Boniface sent to Pope Zachary a holy priest with a letter in which he said to him: “I earnestly pray your Holiness and your fatherly piety to receive kindly the bearer of this letter, named Lul, who is a priest of my clergy. He has secret affairs to communicate on my part to your Piety alone, as well by word of mouth as in writing.”

[1] Rom. xvi, 11, and the *Annals* of Baronius, year 58.

[2] Martyrology of England; *Annals of the British Church*, year 80, no. 1; *History of the Seventy-Two Disciples*, by the abbé Maistre.

16 March

Martyrologies

Sixteenth day of March.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Rome, the martyrdom of Saint Cyriacus, deacon, who, after having long languished in prison, was sprinkled with molten pitch, stretched on the rack, drawn violently with sinews, bruised with blows of a stick, and had at last his head cut off with Largus, Smaragdus and twenty others, by the express order of Maximian. Their feast, however, is kept on 8 August, the day on which their bodies were raised by Pope Saint Marcellus, and honourably buried. Fourth century. — At Aquileia, the birth into heaven of Saint Hilary, bishop, and of Saint Tatian, deacon, who, under the emperor Numerian and the president Beronius, after the torture of the rack and other torments, ended their martyrdom with Felix, Largus and Denis. 285. — In Lycaonia, Saint Papas, martyr, who, having been harshly scourged, torn with iron claws, forced to walk in shoes studded with nails, the points turned inward, was at last bound to a tree, and in dying made fertile this tree previously sterile. Fourth century. — At Anazarbus, in Cilicia, Saint Julian, martyr, who, after having been tormented very long under the president Marcian, was at last shut in a sack with serpents and cast into the sea.[1] — At Ravenna, Saint Agapitus, bishop and confessor.[2] 341. — At Cologne, Saint Heribert, bishop, celebrated for his holiness. 1021. — In Auvergne, the obsequies of Saint Patrick [*sic*; Patrice/Patricius], bishop. — In Syria, Saint Abraham, hermit, whose acts Saint Ephrem, deacon, wrote. 370. — At Vicenza, Saint John Cacciafronte of Sordi, bishop of that city. 1181.

THE MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND ENLARGED

At Lescar, in Béarn, Saint Julian, first known bishop of that see. 400. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Isicius [Hesychius] I, bishop of that city.[3] 480. — This same day, the head of Saint Colochil [*sic*], who is believed to have been a king of England and whose shrine was in the great church of Sens. — At

Marchiennes, in Flanders, Saint Eusebia, vulgarly Ysoie or Eusoye, virgin, abbess of Hamage,[4] whose name a village of the Beauvaisis, near Breteuil, bears. About 660. — This same day, Saint Dentelin, of whom there is a church in the land of Cleves and a chapel at Sainte-Aldegonde of Emmerich. His body is honoured at Saint-Vincent of Soignies, in Hainaut.[5] Seventh century. — At Pithiviers, in the diocese of Orléans, Saint Gregory, bishop of Nicopolis, in Armenia, who left his bishopric and came to France to live in solitude; which he did with so much holiness near the said town that he merited to shine during his life and after his death by several miracles. Eleventh century. His feast is on 26 March [*sic*] at Orléans. — This same day, Saint Hugh, abbot of Bonnevaux, in Dauphiné. He died about the year 1189, after having shown himself the worthy imitator of Saint Bernard, whom he had taken as model and whose life he wrote. Twelfth century. — At Tarbes, the feast of Saint Orens, whose entry into heaven is marked in the Roman Martyrology on 1 May. — At Algiers [Tangier?], the feast of Saint Marcellus, martyr. Marcellus was a centurion in the legion of Trajan. One day when his companions in arms quartered at Tangier were sacrificing to Hercules, he cast to the ground the insignia of his rank and declared he wished to renounce military honours rather than burn incense to false divinities. Arrested for this, he was not long in being beheaded. — At Malines, the feast of Blessed Pirrone, recluse of the Third Order of Saint Francis.[6] 1472.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Constantinople, Saint Theophanes, who, from very rich becoming a poor monk of the Order of Saint Basil, was detained in prison for two years by the impious Leo the Armenian, for the cult of the holy images, then deported to Samothrace, and there gave up his spirit overwhelmed with miseries, and shone by many miracles; his birthday is 12 March. 818.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Among those of the Lateran, Saint Fusca, virgin and martyr, who, having suffered much during the reign of Diocletian, under the president Quintian, with Maura her nurse, was at last pierced with a sword, and consummated her martyrdom at Ravenna, on 13 February.

Martyrology of Saint Benedict. — Near Subiaco, Blessed Laurence of Fanello, hermit, surnamed Loricatus, honoured also on 16 August.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Blessed Torello or Victorello, that is, Little Victor, hermit and confessor of our Order. 1282.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — Saint John of God, confessor, who flew to heaven on 8 March.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — At Siena, Blessed Peter Pettinaio, confessor, of the Third Order of our father Saint Francis, who, remarkable for his love of poverty, his charity toward the poor and his humility, at the same time illustrious by the gift of prophecy and the glory of miracles, fell asleep in the Lord on 4 December 1289. Pius II proclaimed his holiness, and Pope Pius VII permitted his feast to be celebrated with Mass and office. 1802. — Likewise in the Seraphic Order of Conventual Minors, among the nuns of Saint Clare and the Tertiaries of both sexes.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Caesarea in Palestine, Saint Romanus, deacon. — Among the Greeks, Saint Euphrasia, martyr. — In England, Saint Columba, virgin and martyr. She is believed to have been one of the companions of Saint Ursula. — At Cyzicus, in Asia, Saint Stratonice and Saint Seleucus, martyrs.[7] 297. — At Samosata, the seven blessed martyrs Hipparchus, James, Romanus, Lollian, Philotheus, Paragrus and Habibus, who were crucified and strangled on the cross. Persecution of Maximian.[8] 297. — At Terracina, in Italy, Saints Valentine, bishop of that city, and Damian, his deacon, martyrs. About 312. — In Asia, Saint Aninas [*sic*; Aunas?], wonder-worker and anchorite, who lived on the banks of the Euphrates, having with him two docile lions. — In the Hellespont, with Saint Abraham, hermit, mentioned above, Saint Mary, his niece, who is feasted at the same time as he and owed her conversion to him. 375–376. — In Ireland, Saint Finian, who was abbot of the monastery of Swords, built by Saint Columba, illustrious by the heroic patience with which he bore the sufferings of a cruel illness, whence came to him the name of Lobhar or Leper. About 610. — In Scotland, Saint Boniface, surnamed Quiritinus, legate of the Pope among the Picts. Eighth century. — At Vicenza, in Italy, Blessed John, bishop and martyr. 1181. He was assassinated by one of the feudatories of the bishopric who unjustly held a land of the church and whom the Shepherd of the flock had cut off from the number of the sheep. — At Marlagne and Bois-Villiers, in the province of Namur, in Belgium, Blessed Heribert, hermit, distinct from his namesake the archbishop of Cologne, feasted on the same day. About the thirteenth century. — At Andreov [J■drzejów], in Poland, Saint Vincent Kad■ubek, bishop of Cracow and afterwards Cistercian religious, whose birth into heaven is 8 March. A declared enemy of corrupt manners, he made religion flourish again and restored piety to honour. His zeal led him to propagate the faith among the peoples of the North. He was not less commendable for his compassion for the poor. Full of respect for the temples of God, he endowed them with his patrimony. His devotion toward the Holy Eucharist led him to found a lamp which was to be continually lit before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament in the cathedral of Cracow. He had edified his diocese for ten years when he stripped himself of the marks of the episcopal dignity and set out barefoot for the monastery of Andreov, where he died holily on 8 March 1223. Clement XIII approved his cult in 1764. — At Siena, Blessed Peter, comb-maker, whose death is marked on 4 December. — At Milan, Blessed Beatrice Casati, wife of Count Franchino Rusca, died in 1490. She is honoured at Milan on this day. — At Saint-Damien, near Assisi, Blessed Benedetta or Benoîte, abbess of that monastery of Poor Clares. She succeeded Saint Clare in 1253, and walked in the footsteps of the illustrious foundress, in whose school she had been formed. — At Amsterdam, in Holland, feast of the miracles of the Most Holy Sacrament, established in commemoration of a crowd of prodigies which divine mercy has

wrought there by the virtue of Jesus in the Sacrament. In 1355, a host, carried to a sick man and cast into the fire, appeared all luminous in the midst of the flames and without any alteration. In 1452, a fire which consumed half the city of Amsterdam and destroyed the chapel raised by the piety of the inhabitants to the miraculous host, respected the vessel which contained it and even the linen veil with which the ciborium was covered. The sanctuary, where the miraculous host formerly reposed, was a place of reconciliation for sinners, of consolation for the afflicted, of deliverance for captives, of help for the abandoned, of health for the sick.

Saint Abraham, Solitary and Priest, and Saint Mary, Penitent, his Niece

370 and 375. — Pope: Saint Damasus. — Emperor of the East: Valens.

It is a duty for every Christian to labour for the conversion of sinners, because all participate in the priesthood of Jesus Christ with the mission to propagate the Gospel. 1 Pet. ii, 9.

Abraham was born, in the year 300, at Chidana, in Mesopotamia, near the city of Edessa. Scarcely was he of an age to marry when his parents, who were very rich, and who regarded him as the principal heir of their goods, presented to him a girl of noble birth and well dowered. He had hardly any design of marrying her; but, not daring to oppose their will, he let them conclude the affair. The wedding was therefore celebrated, which passed in feasts and banquets lasting seven days according to the usage of the time. But on the seventh day, when he was to consummate the marriage, he felt his soul penetrated by a lively ray of grace, and was so keenly touched by it that he left his wife, went out of his house and went to hide in a cell which he found empty, three-quarters of a league from the town. There, giving his heart free play to the interior unction with which the Holy Spirit, who had served him as guide in his retreat, had filled him, he gave thanks to the Lord with a holy joy, and thought only of glorifying him. The surprise of his parents and of all his neighbours cannot be expressed. They sought him on every side, and at last, at the end of seventeen days, they discovered him at prayer, and were in an astonishment from which they could hardly recover. “Why do you wonder to see me here?” the Saint then said to them; “admire rather the favour that God has done me in drawing me out of the mire of sin, and pray him to grant me the grace of bearing to the end the so sweet yoke of his service, which he has been pleased to impose on me without regard to my unworthiness, and that I may faithfully accomplish all that he asks of me.” They pressed him no further, and consented to his following his vocation; but he begged them at the same time not to come and interrupt him in his exercises under pretext of paying him visits, and when they had withdrawn, he had the door of his cell stopped up and left only a very small window, by which he received on certain days what was brought him for his nourishment. He undertook thus the work of his perfection with an admirable ardour, and, aided by the grace of the Lord, he made every day new progress by the entire renunciation of all the satisfactions of the senses, by vigils, prayer, tears of holy compunction, as also by the practice of humility and charity. So, although he remained shut up in his cell, the lustre of his holiness was not long in appearing abroad. The report of it increased insensibly, and those who heard it spoken of hastened to come to see him to assure themselves of the good they had heard said of him, and to find near him wherewith to instruct and edify themselves at once. It appeared well that it was God who brought them to him; for having placed him in that spot as a light which he wished to use to enlighten others, he granted him the gift of counsel and of wisdom in abundance, so that one could not weary of hearing him speak of heavenly things.

It was ten years since he had renounced the world when he learned that his parents were dead and that he had inherited their goods, which were considerable. His heart was too well detached from the affection for perishable riches to think of taking them back. He begged therefore a friend, whose probity he knew, to make the distribution of them to the poor and orphans, and rested entirely on him for this office of piety, in order not to be interrupted by this care in the exercise of prayer, after which he troubled himself no more about it.

This sacrifice was for him like a new engagement which he took to detach himself ever more from the things of earth, and to animate himself by a new zeal to enrich himself with the treasure of virtues. He had nothing but a mantle, a tunic of goat's hair, a dish to eat from, and a mat of rushes to lie on, and even so he often lay on the bare ground; and by so great a stripping his soul took a greater flight to raise itself to God by the degrees of virtues. But it may be said that he flew rather than climbed by degrees, so extraordinary was the progress he made in perfection.

One must read what Saint Ephrem says of it, that faithful and true witness of his eminent piety, who was united to him by the bonds of a holy friendship: "He never relaxed in anything," he says, "since he embraced the solitary life. He passed not a single day without shedding tears. He was never seen to smile. He regarded each day as that of his death." "But here," continues Saint Ephrem, "is what is still more worthy of admiration: it is that in so austere a life he always kept a fresh countenance, an agreeable air, a healthy and vigorous body, although he was of a delicate temperament, as if he had done no penance, so much did the unction of grace strengthen him and sustain him in all his actions, and so much joy did it communicate to his soul. Finally, what one must still admire in him is that he never changed, during fifty years, the robe of goat's hair with which he was clothed, and that it even served others after his death."

We have said that the odour of his virtues drew crowds from all sides to his cell. Saint Ephrem teaches us further how he received them, instructed them, consoled them and animated them to labour at their salvation. "His humility," he says, "was of the profoundest, and he had an equal charity for everyone. There was with him no acceptance of persons. He did not prefer the rich to the poor, nor the great to the little; but he had for all the same zeal and the same Christian tenderness, and revered them all equally in Jesus Christ. He reproved no one with bitterness, and did not know what it was to use harsh words; but all his discourses were seasoned with the salt of charity and gentleness. So one never wearied of hearing him; and in considering the holiness that shone on his face, one felt urged by a greater desire to see him often."

The incomparable Abraham, this man of penance, prayer and charity, was thus exercising himself in these virtues, shut up in his narrow cell, when Providence willed to make his zeal, his love and his patience shine by a mission to which it called him, and which required nothing less than a virtue as ardent, as firm, as unshakeable as his. There was in the diocese of Edessa a large village all of whose inhabitants were idolaters, and so strongly attached to their superstitions that they had never been willing to listen either to the priests and deacons whom the bishop had sent them, or to several solitaries who had wished to undertake their conversion. On the contrary, as they added cruelty to their blindness, the charity of these missionaries had issued only in exciting their fury, and in being driven out without having been able to gain anything on their hearts.

It was for the bishop of the city a great subject of affliction to have made so frequent attempts hitherto in vain to bring them to the faith of Jesus Christ. One day when he had assembled his clergy, the conversation fell on the virtue of Saint Abraham, whom they began to praise as he deserved. Then God inspired the good thought in the bishop to send him to these pagans as one of the greatest servants of God that he knew, and as the most fit to soften the hardness of their hearts by his charity and his patience. All the ecclesiastics applauded this choice, so that he rose on the spot and betook himself with them to the cell of the servant of God. After having saluted him, he spoke to him of these idolaters, and declared to him the intention he had to ordain him priest and send him to their village to labour for their conversion.

Abraham was very far from fleeing pain, he who put his delights in penance; but his humility so hid his virtues from his eyes that he could see in himself only miseries and weaknesses. So the proposal of the bishop frightened him and made him quite sad. "I conjure you, my holy Father," he said to him, "to consider that I am only a vile man, most incapable of undertaking an affair of this importance; wherefore I beg you rather to let me weep for my sins." "God will make you fit for it by his grace," the bishop said to him, "so make no difficulty of submitting." — "I beseech you," replied Abraham, "to have pity on my weakness and

to suffer me to continue weeping for my sins." — "What!" the bishop then said to him, "you have left all, you have abandoned the world and all that you could claim in it, you are crucified to the world, and you would not yet have acquired the virtue of obedience?" — "Alas! my Father," Abraham answered him, shedding many tears, "what am I but a dead dog? and what is the life I lead that has made you judge that I was fit for so great an undertaking?" — "Here," the bishop said to him, "you occupy yourself only with your own salvation, and there you will be able, with the help of the Lord, to convert many souls and save them. Consider well then within yourself how you can obtain a greater reward, whether it will be here, or there; whether it will be in saving yourself alone, or in saving many others with you?" Then this holy man answered, continuing to weep: "May the will of God be accomplished; I am ready to obey you and to go where you shall order."

The bishop led him therefore to the city, ordained him priest, and had him conducted to the village of the pagans. This was about the year 330. Abraham, as he went, held his heart raised to God and said to him: "O God full of goodness and clemency, cast your eyes on my weakness and insufficiency for so great a ministry, and send me your help from on high, that your holy name may be glorified." And when he had entered the village, seeing everywhere only marks of idolatry, and a people given entirely over to its abominations, he raised his eyes to heaven, uttering deep sighs accompanied by tears, and said to God: "You alone are sinless, you alone are merciful, you alone clement, you alone goodness itself; reject not the work of your hands."

As there still remained something of the distribution of his goods, he sent to the faithful friend whom he had charged with it to have it brought to him, and used this money to build a very beautiful and very ornate church. Whether God by a secret force hindered the idolaters from opposing it, or whether they did not dare, because he was supported by the authority of the magistrates, and perhaps also by some rescript of the emperor Constantine which the bishop had obtained, this church was brought in a short time to its perfection, and the pagans came every day to see it out of curiosity. When it was finished, he made there to God long prayers for the people whose care his Providence had entrusted to him.

Until then he had passed amid the idols without saying anything, content to groan and pray; but at last, animated with a holy zeal, and authorised by the spirit of God as much as by the laws that Constantine the Great had already caused to be published (for this took place under his reign between the year 330 and the year 334), he overthrew all the altars and broke all the idols of the place. No more was needed to excite the fury of the inhabitants: they threw themselves upon him, scourged him and drove him out of the village; but he came back in the night, re-entered the church, and, more touched by their hardness than by all they had made him suffer, he continued to solicit for them with many tears the mercy of God.

The next day, the pagans were strangely surprised to find him again in the church at prayer. They could hardly recover from their astonishment. He took occasion from it to exhort them to renounce at last their superstitions; but instead of listening to him, they threw themselves on him like madmen, beat him cruelly, dragged him by the feet with a rope out of the village, overwhelmed him with blows of stones, and withdrew believing him dead. He was indeed almost lifeless; but he recovered his senses in the middle of the night, and addressing God from the bottom of his heart, he said to him, groaning and weeping much: "Why, Lord, do you disdain my lowliness? why do you turn your eyes from me? why do you reject the desires of my heart? why do you despise the work of your hands? I beseech you, O God of infinite goodness, to cast looks of mercy on this poor people. Grant them the grace to know you, and to believe that there is no other God than you."

After this prayer, God restored his strength to return to the church and sing his praises there; and the pagans having come back there at break of day, were more astonished than ever to find him there. Their rage was rekindled, and having seized him, they treated him as cruelly as the day before. In sum, their persecution lasted three years, and during that time there is no ill-treatment they did not make him endure. But whether they beat him, heaped a thousand outrages on him, dragged him, overwhelmed him with blows of stones,

made him suffer hunger and thirst, and all the ills they could imagine to oblige him to withdraw, he appeared like a diamond, never shaken or cast down, without even showing any movement of anger or indignation against them; on the contrary, the more they persecuted him, the more his charity toward them, like a brazier that cannot be put out, took increase. Sometimes he exhorted them with zeal; sometimes he warned them gently; sometimes he gave them great testimonies of tenderness and affability: he treated the old men as his fathers, the less aged as his brothers, and the youngest as his children, although on their side they ceased not to despise him, to say insults to him and to do him a thousand outrages.

At last the day of mercy came. God heard the prayers, the tears and the sufferings of his servant, and compensated him, by the entire conversion of this people, for the pains he had endured until then. Here is how Saint Ephrem relates this marvellous change: “All the inhabitants of the village being assembled one day, they began to speak of the Saint, and said to one another in a sentiment of admiration: You see that in spite of all the ills we have made him suffer, far from abandoning us, he has persisted in remaining here, without ever having said to anyone any angry word, or having any aversion against us, far from it: he has suffered our persecutions with unalterable patience, and has even testified joy at them. Assuredly he could not have borne these things if the true God were not with him, and if what he tells us of the kingdom of heaven and of eternal torments were not true. And how could he alone have overthrown and broken all our gods, without their having avenged themselves on him by terrible chastisements, had they had the power? It must be then that this is the servant of the one true God, and that all that he has told us comes from him and is true; so we ought to believe in the God he preaches to us.

“This sentiment was received by all; and on the spot they went to find the Saint at the church, crying with all their might: ‘Glory be rendered to the God of heaven who has sent us his servant to deliver us from error and to save us.’ What was the joy of this holy man when he saw them come and heard them cry thus? As flowers that have been nourished with the dew of the morning have livelier colours, such too appeared the face of the man of God.

“Seeing them so well disposed, he baptised them all in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, from the least to the greatest, to the number of a thousand persons. From that time he read to them assiduously every day the holy Scripture, and instructed them in the principles of the faith, of Christian justice and of charity.”

He passed yet a whole year with them after they had received holy baptism, instructing them day and night to strengthen them in piety; after which, presuming that they were well established in the faith, and that they loved God in the sincerity of their heart, and seeing moreover the extraordinary affection and veneration they had for him, he began to fear that it might be for him an occasion of relaxing in his manner of life and of engaging too much in the solicitudes of the world under pretext of giving them his care. Which shows how pure his zeal was, and how sincere was his humility, which thus led him to distrust himself: a great example for persons applied to the exterior ministry of the salvation of souls, which teaches them to seek in it only the glory of God, and to conduct themselves with a holy distrust of themselves.

These considerations determined this holy man therefore to yield to others the field of the Lord which he had so happily cleared and cultivated with so much labour, in order to re-enter his solitude, when he judged that he had sufficiently fulfilled his mission. He rose in the middle of the night: after having long prayed, he went out secretly from the village, gave it his blessing by making three signs of the cross, and withdrew to another place where he hid himself as best he could.

One may judge of the grief of the faithful when, day having come, they no longer found him in the church. They spread at once everywhere like wandering sheep, to discover where he might have hidden, calling their holy pastor by their grief and their tears, and making all places resound with their lamentations; but not having been able to find him, they had recourse to the bishop, and told him what had happened. The bishop

was no less afflicted than they, and he sent people without delay everywhere to seek him as one would seek a precious stone. At last, those he had sent having returned without having been able to discover him, he went himself to the village with his clergy, where after a discourse he made to the assembled people to try to console them, seeing how established they were in faith and charity, he chose among them those he judged the most fit for ecclesiastical functions, ordained some priests, others deacons, and others readers.

Saint Abraham learned with great joy what the bishop had done, and rendered to God great thanks for it; after which, no longer fearing that obstacles would be put to his retreat, he withdrew into his cell. He had a second built touching his own, which, being like an outer cell, made his more fit for recollection and thereby favoured more his love for the life of prayer and contemplation which he wished to lead. But the people of the village whom he had converted had no sooner learned of it than they came to testify to him the joy they had at seeing him again, always regarding him as their guide in the way of salvation, and having recourse to him with a filial confidence, like children to their father, to receive his instructions and be edified.

The demon, who from the beginning declared himself the enemy of virtue, more irritated than ever against Abraham who had won over him so many victories by his invincible patience, and had taken from him so many souls, came to attack him several times visibly, either to oblige him to relax his penance, or at least to trouble his retreat by causing him fright. He appeared to him sometimes by spreading in the middle of the night a false brilliance, as if it were a heavenly light, and making him hear the voice of several persons, who gave him great praises and congratulated him on his victories; sometimes by feigning to wish to overthrow his cell to crush him under its ruins; sometimes by making appear a great troop of people who exhorted one another with great cries to bind him and cast him into a deep pit, and sometimes by making appear to his eyes divers other phantoms, whether when he prayed or when he took his little meal. But the Saint, who had put all his confidence in Jesus Christ, was not troubled by his illusions; he despised his enemy, far from fearing his power and malice; he fought him by the passages of Holy Scripture and by invoking the help of the Lord.

“But I wish,” continues the same Saint Ephrem, “to speak to you yet of a trait of his life among the most worthy of admiration, which happened to him in his old age, and which, putting the greatness of his charity in a new light, may serve spiritual persons as a very useful example and very fit at the same time to inspire in them sentiments of holy compunction.” It is the history of his niece, of the innocence in which he had kept her, of the fall she made, of her return to God, of her penance and her blessed end.

He had had a brother in the world who left at his death an orphan daughter named Mary, whom his friends brought to him, aged only seven years. He took charge of her therefore with the sole intention of bringing her up in piety, by which he might render her worthy of heavenly goods, and desiring for her only this unique possession, he had distributed to the poor the riches which her father had left her, and had her put in a cell near his own, whence he instructed her by a little window he had pierced. He had her learn the psalter and the other books of Holy Scripture; he made her watch to praise God with him and made her chant psalms; he made her practise mortification, and formed her so happily to piety that she made marvellous progress, loving her state and making it the delight of her heart like her holy uncle, and adorning her soul after his example with all the virtues.

Abraham, on his side, ceased not to pray the Lord with tears that he would deign to preserve her in her innocence and prevent her heart from engaging in the affection of earthly things. She also often conjured him to ask God to preserve her from the snares of the demon and his evil suggestions. So she advanced with a holy joy in the service and love of her God, and faithfully kept the rule her uncle had prescribed to her. This holy man was filled with joy at seeing her persevere so constantly in her manner of life, and at the progress she made in perfect charity. Saint Ephrem also joined his instructions to those of her uncle, and for twenty years she preserved herself like a chaste dove and a spotless lamb.

But the demon could no longer bear to see himself vanquished by so fair a virtue, without at last letting his rage burst out against her. He set his nets therefore to surprise her, or at least to be able to distract her blessed uncle, by the affliction he would cause him, from the so close union he had always with God. As he employed against our first parents the cunning of the serpent to draw them from the garden of delights and make them pass into a land that produced for them only brambles and thorns, so he found an instrument of perdition to make serve his pernicious design against this pious virgin. This instrument was a false monk, who sometimes came to see Saint Abraham under pretext of instructing himself with him in the duties of his state, but who unhappily cast evil looks on his niece, and let himself be dazzled by her beauty, which was very great, so that he came no more except to see her, covering always his guilty intentions with the pretext of speaking to the man of God.

He had to struggle for a whole year against her virtue; but at last he went about it with so much artifice that at the end of this time Mary listened to him. The demon, who had fascinated her eyes by softening her heart to hinder her from seeing the precipice in which she was going to be lost, then showed her all its horrors and its depth, in order to finish overwhelming her by despair. The mind of Mary, which had raised itself to God with such facility, was suddenly covered with thick darkness; her fair soul, which had tasted God with so much peace and sweetness, found itself as if metamorphosed into a demon by the horrible ugliness it contracted and by the frightful trouble with which she felt herself cruelly agitated. Then giving herself up entirely to her remorse, and to the fright her sin caused her, she tore her hair-shirt and bruised her face with blows: her despair even went as far as wishing to kill herself. “It is done,” she said, uttering great cries, “I must regard myself as dead; I have lost all the time I had spent until now in the practice of virtue; I have lost my labours; I have lost the fruit of my tears, my vigils, the holy canticles in which I passed a part of the night; I have covered my soul with infamy, I have given it death, I have made it the laughing-stock of the demons. What an affliction for my holy uncle! Of what use to me were his counsels and those of Ephrem, when they told me so often to keep myself pure, and that I had an immortal Spouse, who is as jealous of modesty as he is holy? How shall I dare still to present myself at that window, whence he gave me his instructions? Would there not come out of it a flame to devour me? It is much better then, since I am dead to God and no hope of salvation remains to me, that I go to a country where I am known to no one.”

Such were the sentiments to which, according to Saint Ephrem, this girl fallen from her virtue gave herself up, and she executed them only too well; for instead of avowing her fault to her uncle, who would have helped her to rise from it and do penance, she thought no more but of fleeing him, and she went away to a city where she abandoned herself entirely to sin. God made known at the same time in a vision to Saint Abraham the fall of his niece. It seemed to him he saw a monstrous dragon which had come with horrible hissings to his cell and had swallowed a dove there, after which it had returned to its den. He thought at first that it was the presage of some persecution against the Church, and prayed much to receive new lights thereon. He had no other, save that two days after he again saw in a dream this dragon, and that having crushed its head with his feet, he had forced it to vomit up the dove, and had drawn it out of it alive.

He woke thereupon, and called his niece, asking her why he had not heard her for two days chanting the praises of God; but having no answer, it was easy for him to make the application of the vision he had had, and he doubted no more of the misfortune that had befallen her. “Ah!” he cried, groaning and shedding tears in abundance, “how unhappy I am! A cruel wolf has carried off my sheep; my daughter has been made captive.” Then raising his cries to heaven: “Jesus, Saviour of the world,” he said, “give me back Mary, my sheep, and bring her back to your sheepfold, that in my old age I may not go down into the tomb with my grief. Despise not, my God, the prayer I address to you; make me soon experience the effect of your mercy, by drawing from the jaws of this dragon my daughter who still lives.”

The two days of interval that passed from the first to the second vision represented, says Saint Ephrem, the two years that this unfortunate girl persevered in disorder. Her holy uncle passed them in continual tears and

prayers which he made for her conversion. It was only at the end of this time that he learned the place where she had retired and the life she led there. He did not rely altogether on the first news given him of it; but he begged one of his friends to betake himself to the place to assure himself better of the truth. He did so, and on his return he certified to him all that had already been told him. The Saint begged him further to bring him a horseman's dress and to bring him a horse; and having put on his head one of those great hats which also cover the face, that he might not be recognised, he set out in this equipage, and betook himself to the inn where he had been told his niece was lodged. He cast his eyes on every side to see whether he could not perceive her; but as she did not appear, he said to the innkeeper, feigning to smile: "My master, they say you have here a very pretty girl; could I not see her?"

The innkeeper, astonished at this request on the part of a man who appeared broken with old age, reproached him with it as a speech unworthy of his age. He confessed to him nevertheless that he had at his house a girl whose beauty was ravishing, and had her called. She presented herself then in a costume which sufficed to reveal her conduct, and the heart of the holy man was pierced with grief. He affected nevertheless to be gay and ordered a meal. As for Mary, says Saint Ephrem, finding herself near the Saint, she perceived that sweet odour of purity which abstinence gives, which recalled to her the happy time when she practised it so perfectly. "Ah!" she cried, groaning and weeping, as if her heart had been pierced with a dart: "Ah! wretch that I am!" The innkeeper was astonished at it, and asked her the subject of her tears, since until then she had never given a sign of sadness. But she answered him without explaining further: "O would to God that I had died three years ago!"

This was no riddle to her holy uncle, who, continuing for some moments to dissimulate, told her that it was out of place to speak of her sins when one was in joy. At last, finding himself alone with her in the room, he raised the hat which covered almost all his face, and said to her, weeping: "My daughter Mary, do you not know me? Am I not Abraham who have held the place of a father to you? Am I then unknown to you? Was it not I who brought you up? What has happened to you then, O my dear daughter? Where is, my dear child, that angelic habit which you wore before? Where is that fair purity? Where are those tears, those vigils, that compunction of heart? What has become of that time when you lay on the ground, and made so many genuflexions to adore God? O my daughter! how have you fallen from the height of heaven into this deep abyss? Why did you not discover the temptation to me when the demon raised it up against you? Would not my dear Ephrem and I have prayed for you that you might be delivered from it by him who can draw us from death itself? Was it needful to abandon yourself still more to the demon after your first fault by an unhappy despair? Judge of the excess of grief that I felt at it. But, my dear daughter, God alone is sinless."

The Saint spoke to her thus holding her by the hand, which lasted until midnight, and she, seized with fright and confusion, was without speech like a stone, and dared not raise her eyes to look at him. Whereupon the Saint said to her, continuing to shed tears: "Why, my daughter Mary, do you not answer me? Have I not come here overwhelmed with grief to bring you back into the way of salvation? I take your sin upon myself, O my daughter! I will answer for it for you at the judgment of God; I take it on myself to do penance for it." These words, said with that gentleness which charity inspired in him, and accompanied by those tears which the state of his niece made him shed, began to restore her a little from her surprise and dejection; for the blow had struck her down, and she said to him: "If I dare not look at you in the shame with which I am overwhelmed, how, feeling myself covered with crimes, shall I dare to invoke the holy name of the Lord?" "I have told you, my dear child, that I take your iniquity upon me before God," the Saint replied. "Only follow my counsel and let us return together to our first dwelling; our dear Ephrem grieves and groans to obtain from God the pardon of your sins. I conjure you therefore, have pity on my old age and refuse not to follow me." — "Yes," she said to him, "if I am still in time to do penance and if the Lord will have mercy on me, I will follow you as you command me. I submit myself entirely to your holiness and I kiss the holy traces of your steps, in gratitude for what your fatherly charity has made you do to draw me from the snare in which

the demon had engaged me." Saying this she prostrated herself, and resting her head on the feet of the Saint, she passed the rest of the night in this posture, shedding quantities of tears and saying to the Lord: "What can I do, O my God! to acknowledge your graces and the effects I experience of your very great mercy?"

At last day began to appear and the blessed old man said to her: "Rise, my daughter, and let us set out to return to our cells." — "I have still here," she said to him, "some money and some clothes; what will you have me do with them?" — "Abandon all that," the Saint answered her, "for you hold it only from the demon." Then he made her mount his horse, and like the good Shepherd who brings back the sheep he had lost, the holy old man made the journey with his niece, his heart filled with joy. He shut her up in the inner cell where he himself formerly lodged and put himself in the outer cell. Mary resumed her hair-shirt with her first exercises of penance. She let her soul be penetrated with the liveliest compunction; she persevered in tears and in humiliation of heart; she punished her body by vigils and the roughest labours of penance; she exercised herself in it even with a holy joy, afflicting herself without ceasing and groaning before God with a lively sentiment of a compunction accompanied by a tender confidence in his mercy; and to include everything in few words, her conversion had all the qualities of a sincere penance and of a contrition truly medicinal to heal the wounds of sin. God made known to her, after three years of continual tears and groans, by the gift of miracles which he granted her, that her penance had been agreeable to him and that her crimes were pardoned; for she restored health to several persons by her prayers. As for Blessed Abraham, he passed ten years more glorifying God for the conversion of his niece, and persevered, without ever belying himself, in the austere life he had led since he engaged in the monastic state. At last he died aged seventy years, and went out of this world, says Saint Ephrem, like a roe that escapes the snares laid for it, with a face so full of joy and beauty that it appeared well the angels had come to receive his soul. All the inhabitants of Edessa ran to his cell to be present at his burial. Each hastened to touch his holy body out of devotion and to carry away something of his garment as a blessing; and it is affirmed that all the sick who touched him found themselves healed on the spot.

As for Mary, the same Saint Ephrem says that she survived her holy uncle five years; that she continued to pass that time in tears and exercises of penance; but it was with so much fervour and contrition that several persons who, in passing, heard her weep and sigh could not help weeping and sighing with her. She fell asleep thus with the death of the just, and there appeared on her face a splendour which made all who were present glorify God; she was forty-four or forty-five years old when she died about the year 373–76 [*sic*]. The Greeks keep the feast of Saint Abraham and his niece on 29 October: it is marked in the martyrologies on 16 March.

In the images that have been made of the solitary of Chidana, he is commonly seen having near his little house a cell in which his niece is shut up. A popular engraving, in Germany, represents the good old man leaning on his staff leading by the bridle the mount which brings his niece back into solitude: she holds her face hidden in her hands: a luxuriant head of hair covers her body almost entirely: it is a picture full of poetry before which one cannot help being moved.

Saint Ephrem, deacon of Edessa, who lived at the same time, made on Abraham and Saint Mary, his niece, an express work, from which all authors have since drawn what they have written of them. The continuators of Bollandus put back the epoch of these two Saints about two hundred years, and wish that the writer of their history be not the great Saint Ephrem, but another of the same name, much more recent. We find their conjectures too weak to take this work from this holy deacon, and to change anything in the ancient chronology of Saint Abraham; and we see no appearance that this Abraham, of whom John Moschus speaks in his *Spiritual Meadow*, as contemporary with the abbot Theodosius, and whom he calls Governor of Saint-Mary-the-New, is the Saint whose life we write. — We have replaced in part the account of Father Giry by that given by Father Ange Marin in his *Fathers of the Deserts of the East*.

Saint Julian, First Known Bishop of Lescar or Béarn

About the year 400. — Pope: Saint Anastasius. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.

Non destitit laborare ut denarium diurnum a Domino mereretur accipere. He laboured unceasingly to merit receiving from the hands of the Lord the penny of each day.

Breviary of Lescar (1541), Legend of Saint Leontius of Trier.

Here is what an ancient tradition reports, gathered by the old Breviary of Lescar, printed in 1541:

… "In the city of Trier, capital of Belgic Gaul, which was founded by Trebeta, brother of Ninus, king of Assyria — if the old histories are to be believed — and which was evangelised by Valerius, disciple of Blessed Peter, there was a bishop, of the name of Leontius, a man distinguished by the nobility of his race and the gravity of his morals, applied to holy works and desirous of cultivating the vineyard of the Lord, by the extirpation of idolatry, even in the most distant lands. He had a disciple admirably virtuous, Julian, a most diligent imitator of so good a Master. 'Now Saint Leontius, who knew that a part of the Gauls was given over to the worship of demons and who, in his great grief, found it unjust and indecent that the Prince of Darkness should reign over the creatures of God, learned that the land of Béarn,[1] far from having received the Gospel of Christ "which had been sown there in a thousand ways," still groaned in the mire of superstition and unbelief. One day then, when Blessed Julian was beside him, he spoke to him in these terms: "Blessed Brother, we must observe the precepts of the Lord, and, for the eternal reward, labour much in the vineyard of Christ. Wherefore, O excellent and most merciful man, hear my counsels and gird your loins; make haste and run to bring to the true religion this people who serve the demons."' Blessed Julian himself burned with the desire to snatch from the jaws of the dragon the souls that Christ has redeemed with his blood. Docile to the counsels of his master, he took with him two priests, Austrilian and Alpinian, and set out with as much joy as promptness.

"But soon it happened that one of his companions, Austrilian, passed from life to death. Whereupon, Blessed Julian, turning back, ran in all haste to tell his misfortune to the servant of God. The latter said to him: 'Depart again as soon as possible, and, taking in hand my staff, you will touch with it the corpse of your dead brother.' Julian set out again, and, arrived at the place where the priest Austrilian had been buried, he touched with the staff, according to the word of the man of God, the body of the dead man, who returned to life. Then, redoubling his ardour, Blessed Julian continued his road. At last he arrived at Beneharnum; he confessed there the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, taught there loudly the law of God, and, by his gentleness no less than by his miracles, he brought to the faith of Christ the Béarnese nation, so greatly blind until then.

"Miracles, in effect, came to confirm the preaching of Blessed Julian. He healed a lame man, of the name of Citernanus, and his two sons; he gave sight to three brothers, blind from birth, Amilian, Nicetas and Ambrosian; cleansed two lepers, Valentine and Urban; restored hearing to four deaf men and saved seven men whose boat the waters of the Gave[2] were carrying away.

"God willed to give a virgin martyr to this nascent church. A noble girl, named Valeriana, had been promised in marriage to a Gentile; but as the latter, resisting the counsels of Julian, would not abjure his false gods, Valeriana refused to marry him; which seeing, the young man put his betrothed to death, and she obtained thus two crowns, the one white for her virginity, the other purple for her martyrdom. 'It was in this manner that Blessed Julian led the people of Béarn to the truth and that he founded a new Church, whose episcopal see was fixed in the town which now bears the name of Lescar.[3] Meanwhile, the holy bishop of Trier, Leontius, had undertaken, in spite of his extreme old age, the pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint James. On his road lay the city of his disciple. He stopped there, and, when he saw the triumphs won by Julian over the darkness of error, he rendered to God immense thanks, then continued his pious journey, traversing the city of Iluro and the valley of Aspe.

"On his return, Leontius passed again through Beneharnum, where he felt his octogenarian limbs weaken. Soon the agony declared itself; he received the sacraments of the Lord; a white cloud was seen to envelop his bed, and he rendered his soul to God, uttering holy words. Blessed Julian made for him magnificent funeral rites, which God illustrated by miracles, among others the resurrection of three dead and the cure of ten blind. At the moment when the clergy intoned the office of the dead, an angel's voice was heard, saying with transport: 'Rejoice in the Lord,' as if to declare that to pray for the Saint was to do him injury."

ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY IN NOVEMPOPULANIA

At what epoch were the first seeds of the Gospel brought to the nine peoples who inhabited the First Aquitaine,[4] comprised between the Garonne and the Pyrenees, that is, to the Tarbelli (Dax and Bayonne); the Ausci (Armagnac); the Bigerriones; the Cocosates (Bazas); the Elusates (Eauze); the Tarusates (Tartas and the Chalosse); the Convenae (Comminges and Couserans); the Beneharni (Oloron, Lescar, Orthez, Aspe, Ossau, Barétous, Soule); the Garites, whose name is recalled by Garis, a village of Lower Navarre?[5]

"It is believed," says M. the abbé Menjoulet, in his *Chronicle of the diocese and country of Oloron*, "that the metropolitan church of Elusa (today Eauze) had for founder Saint Paternus, disciple of Saint Saturninus or Sernin, of Toulouse." And the learned historian inclines to the opinion which fixes in the year 232 the epoch of this mission, in the year 254 the mission of Saint Vincent of Dax. Further on M. Menjoulet adds: "It does not appear that the religious zeal of that epoch (beginning of the fourth century, reign of Constantine) produced, in our country, anything but isolated conversions. Christian families were doubtless found there, perhaps missionary priests were seen there, who went from village to village to carry the good news to the elect of God and sustain the neophytes in the practice of evangelical virtues, but there was no church properly so called, there was as yet no diocese, whether at Beneharnum or at Iluro (Lescar and Oloron), and history must traverse the whole fourth century to arrive at the first bishop of Béarn." Then follows the legend of Saint Julian, of which we have borrowed the translation from the same work.

Without wishing to undertake here to discuss the question of the immediate apostolicity of the evangelical preaching in the Gauls, which we shall treat amply in one of the last volumes of this work, we shall say simply that we find, in M. Menjoulet's own book, the condemnation of a system according to which the church would have been constituted only in the third century in Novempopulania in general and at the end of the fourth in Béarn in particular. In effect, when in 408 [*sic*; Wallia in fact arrived in 415], that is, six years after Saint Julian of Lescar, Wallia, at the head of his Western Goths or Visigoths, "depopulated all that belongs to Aquitaine and to the nine peoples, the country where he was camping was Catholic," and Sidonius Apollinaris informs us that "Bordeaux, Bazas, Comminges, Auch and many other cities were touching their spiritual ruin through the death of their pastors, reaped without new bishops being established… In the dioceses and in the parishes everything was neglected." Sidonius Apollinaris, in this passage, distinguishes the rural parishes from the urban parishes. According to Saint Gregory of Tours, it was above all the cities of the two Aquitaines and of Novempopulania that saw themselves depopulated by this horrible tempest. Let us go further: the acts of the council of Agde, held in 506, and at which Novempopulania was represented by eleven bishops, that of Béarn (Lescar), Saint Galactorius, and that of Oloron, Saint Gratus, among others, teach us that from the first years of the sixth century, that is, a hundred years after Saint Julian, there were in the countries of the South convents of men and of women, that the clergy possessed properties, that the dioceses were divided into parishes, etc. — What conclude from all this, except that at the epoch of the arrival of the Visigoths, at the beginning of the fifth century, the Church was everywhere hierarchically constituted, and divided into urban parishes and rural parishes.

Now this could not have been done in a few years, as it would be necessary to admit according to the system of M. Menjoulet; above all it could not have been done during the course of the fifth century, which was entirely a prey to the devastations of the Visigoths, relentless persecutors of the Catholic Church. But that did

not prevent idolatry from still reigning in certain countries, in certain remote valleys of the Pyrenees, at Oloron, for example, and it is thus that is explained the mission of Saint Julian of Trier in Béarn, at the end of the fourth century, of Saint Amandus in the seventh, among the Basques, of Saint Leo of Carentan in the ninth, etc.

The situation of Catholics with regard to pagans was, for long centuries, what it is today, for example, in England and in Germany, with regard to dissidents. From the time of the Apostles, the Church was constituted in the midst of pagans, and in spite of pagans, in the same manner as it exists today, with its bishops, its priests, its schools, its churches, in the midst of heretics and in spite of heretics.

Saint Gregory of Armenia, Bishop of Nicopolis and Solitary in France

Beginning of the eleventh century.

The solitary escapes the triple temptation of the eyes, the ears and the tongue. For us who live in the world, let us keep watch over our senses.

Saint Ephrem, de vita spirit.

Gregory was a native of Armenia: but it is nevertheless France that was the principal theatre of his finest actions. His history, which was composed by an anonymous writer, but a contemporary, does not tell us the name of his parents, and reports only that their piety engaged them to give their children every sort of good instruction. When he was of age, he was entrusted to excellent masters who taught him the sacred letters and the principal mysteries of the Christian religion, which was indeed professed in the country, but which was then so corrupted by the errors of the Manichaeans that it was enough, in the judgment of Baronius, to know that someone was an Armenian to give ground to believe him a heretic.[1] Gregory, aided by the help of his parents, and sustained by the good doctrine of the chosen masters who had been given him, remained always in innocence, and knew how to preserve the purity of his faith in the midst of heresy. Those who instructed him were soon surprised at the great progress he made in very little time; for he became so penetrating and so enlightened in the science of the Old and New Testaments, as much for dogma as for morals, that he surpassed all the masters; and one must not be astonished at it, since he drew from prayer and orison such lights as only the Holy Spirit, the Master of masters, can give. He always took great care to prefer the duties of piety and virtue to those of learning and other human exercises. From his most tender years he had a great horror of impurity and of lying. The principal virtues that were seen shining in his conduct were humility, modesty, gentleness, sobriety, chastity, and especially a great compassion for the poor and an ardent desire to oblige his neighbour. The parents of our Saint were no sooner taken from this world than, seeing himself at liberty, and esteeming only the goods of heaven, he renounced both the goods he already possessed and the inheritance of which he might lawfully have enjoyed by the decease of his father and mother; he made a just and liberal distribution of them to the poor whom he knew to be in need; and, after thus renouncing every kind of possession, he executed what he had long projected in his heart: this was to abandon, like so many other servants of God, his own native country to go and live unknown in some remote desert, where he might have only God as witness of his actions. His design succeeded fairly happily; for, having set out under the protection of divine Providence, he arrived at a monastery near the city of Nicopolis, an ancient episcopal see of the First Armenia, formerly a suffragan of Sebaste. It was there that Gregory, uniting himself to the fervour of those he found there, imitated them, and even surpassed them in the practice of all virtues, and particularly of fasting, vigils, austerities, orison, psalmody and the like; but his attraction to prayer and continual adoration was so pressing that, to satisfy it according to his innocent intentions, he had found means, with the consent of those who had the care of guarding the church and who shut its doors, to re-enter it secretly in the evening, and to pass all the nights in acts of adoration and very frequent prostrations before the Most Holy Sacrament. The historian of his life remarks that he prostrated himself and rose a hundred different times each night, and that, in this humbled posture, where his whole body clung to the earth, there

were only the two little fingers of his hands that supported his head.

So great a fervour soon made known, even to those who observed him most closely, that Gregory was favoured by heaven with a very particular grace: the bishop of Nicopolis was informed of his manner of life; he recognised his merit and capacity, and drew him to his side; he communicated to him his greatest secrets; he trained him for ecclesiastical functions, and, finally, he conferred on him the priesthood, in the thought that he might attain some more elevated dignity. Gregory, answering the desire of the prelate who introduced him into the harvest of the field of his church, began, with a new zeal, to purge the threshing-floor of the Lord, to make war on the Manichaean heretics, to reunite the parties most opposed by the division of lawsuits, to combat the vices which most reigned in the country, to defend widows and orphans against the malice and violence of those who wished to oppress them, and to have rendered to God the worship that was due to him, by destroying all the superstitions that reigned in the diocese.

No more was needed, when the pious bishop of Nicopolis had died, to engage all the people and the very ecclesiastics to bear Gregory to the episcopal throne; he could not defend himself from accepting this dignity, although he judged himself unworthy of it; but not wishing to resist the order of God, which he saw manifested by the common acclamations, he took up the burden, and exercised all its functions with an exactness that answered the hopes that had been conceived of him: he provided for all the spiritual and bodily needs of the flock entrusted to him: he was accustomed to have recourse first to God to obtain the pressing helps of which his diocesans had need; he often restored health to sick persons who had not been able to obtain it by natural means; everything, in short, contributed to make it believed that heaven, as well as men, approved the choice that had been made of this worthy personage to govern that Church. Nevertheless, a rather singular thing, although this humble Prelate could not doubt that his election was canonical and even agreeable to God, by all the blessings he received from heaven in the conduct of his flock, that did not prevent him from meditating very seriously a retreat, by favour of which he might renounce the great applause he received, and the episcopal dignity he possessed. He remembered the sweetnesses and innocent pleasures which the holy anchorites enjoyed in the deserts; he compared the cares and the necessary and continual attentions of bishops with the tranquillity of the life of solitaries in the forests; and, judging that the state of the latter was far safer for the salvation of his soul, he did not hesitate to take the course of leaving the state of grandeur to which he had been raised against his will, to go and hide in some unknown place, whither he hoped the divine Goodness would lead him.

He departed then in secret from the place where he was, and passed into the West with two Greek religious whom he had associated with himself; and, after traversing a part of Italy and of France, he stopped near the town of Pithiviers, or Piviers, in the Beauce, in the diocese of Orléans, which has given its name to the country of Piverais. He learned, by revelation, that there was, at three quarters of a league from there, a little church dedicated under the name of Saint Martin of Vertou, and called Saint-Martin-le-Seul, that is, the Solitary; judging therefore that this place was perfectly conformable to what he had so long desired, he resolved to establish there a dwelling in order to make himself a recluse there for all the rest of his life. To execute his resolution with more safety, and to have no one afterwards who could bring any obstacle to his sojourn, he asked of the lady of the place, who was called Avoye or Louise, mother of Odolric, bishop of Orléans, permission to settle in that spot,[2] which he obtained the more easily as this lady knew what was the signal merit and the qualities of this pious Solitary. He built himself therefore a little hut of the height and length of his body, in which he shut himself up to give himself no more to anything but the contemplation of celestial and eternal truths, as he had conceived the design from his first years. The holy recluse, seeing himself entirely master of his actions, began to treat his body in a manner little known until then in the West; for, without speaking of the other bodily austerities, he observed a very severe fast; he deprived himself of all food on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and if he took anything on Tuesdays and Thursdays, it was only toward the end of the day, after sunset; he observed nevertheless an exception every Sunday and

the great feasts of the year, during which time he did not fast, imitating in this the ancient Solitaries who ceased fasting on those days; but the meals of this recluse were so frugal that one could say he took them only in order not to die. In effect, he never used meat, nor even foods dressed with butter; he ate only lentils soaked in common water, which he was content to expose to the heat of the sun; his custom, to measure the quantity, was to take as much as his left hand could hold. The bread he used was made of barley; he ate only three ounces of it a day; he also sometimes used raw roots that were found in his desert, and which the poor inhabitants round about brought him. This manner of life could not be hidden by the servant of God; also divine Providence seemed to have led him to this place to appear there as a torch destined to enlighten many persons, as much by the austerity of his life as by the gentleness of his counsels and the depth of the instructions he gave to those who, having known him, came to his little cabin to receive there the bread of life which he did not refuse to distribute.

The noise of his reputation spread so far that not only the peoples round about, but even those who were the most distant, came to admire and hear the oracles of this new preacher, who led moreover so angelic a life on earth. Each, in emulation, came to bring him small presents suited to his state of life. In order not to sadden his benefactors, and not to deprive them of the merit of their alms, he received what was offered him; but it was to distribute it afterwards, and share it with the poor of the country. He failed not, in the relations he was willing to have with the people, to instruct them on all their duties, to speak to them of the last ends and to raise their minds to console them in all their misfortunes. When this holy Prelate had finished his preachings, they asked his blessing, which he gave with great faith and deep humility: he also distributed to the people *eulogiae*: these were blessed breads which were given in that time, to maintain devotion and charity with one another.

The prudent recluse, seeing that not only the common people but the very ecclesiastics and priests came to see and hear him, thought, for the glory of God, that he ought to profit by their visits; he gave them great welcomes, respected them, honoured them, and even had small meals prepared for them near his cell, so that, in nourishing their bodies with the natural foods that had been given him, he might also make them partakers of that supernatural abundance of celestial lights with which heaven favoured him in his orisons. A memorable thing happened on this occasion: a lord, who had come to see the saint, having been invited, like many others, to take some refreshment in the desert, and having refused it out of contempt, was no sooner returned to his house, with his escort, than he felt himself possessed by the evil spirit, finding himself agitated by such violent convulsions that he wished to throw himself into the river, in spite of the reasons and obstacles opposed to him. The charitable solitary, having been informed of it, prayed God for his healing: he compelled the demon to leave his body; and the sick man, having very humbly asked pardon for his fault, recovered perfect health.

The holy Bishop remained the space of seven years in the little cavern which his piety had made him choose, exercising himself, as we have said, in all sorts of acts of virtue which brought him to a very high degree of perfection, and joining the exercises of the solitary life to those of the greatest missionaries and the most ardent preachers. At last, God willing to reward him and to call him to a happier life, made known to him the day on which he would leave this world. The Saint prepared himself for it; he asked and received the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the form of Viaticum; and, provided with so powerful a help, he peacefully rendered his spirit to his God. The year is not known precisely; but it was toward the beginning of the eleventh century, on 16 March. It would be difficult to express the tears and cries of all the people round about, and even of the most distant cantons, who believed they had lost everything in seeing themselves deprived of the help and counsels of so holy a personage, whom they regarded as a powerful protector for them with God. The regrets of the people increased when they saw the new miracles which heaven wrought in favour of several sick persons, who invoked the holy recluse to obtain their healing. As much care as the holy Bishop had taken to hide himself during his life, so much did heaven make his merit and holiness shine

forth after his death. His body was therefore taken out of the tomb, we mean out of the little cell in which he had shut himself; it was carried with solemnity into the church of Saint-Martin amid the applause and praises of an infinite concourse of people; it was buried in the middle of the church, before the high altar; but the lady of Pithiviers, of whom we have spoken, recognising more and more the treasure that was found on her lands, had sufficient authority to obtain that it should be carried, afterwards, into the town itself, and it was honourably deposited in the church of Saint Solomon, where new marvels were again worked: among others, a poor man of the country, who had lost his sight, having prostrated himself before the tomb of the holy Solitary, whom he had known, having implored his help, and trusting in his power with God, received perfect healing. It was again in this manner that a woman, whose right hand had become twisted in a fit of paralysis by which she was attacked, was favoured with perfect health, praying with a lively faith at the tomb of our holy Bishop.

We read in the Proper of the church of Orléans, where the feast of Saint Gregory is marked semi-double, on 26 March, that the body of this Saint rests still today in the church of Saint Solomon, at Pithiviers.

The reputation of the singular holiness of our admirable Anchorite having reached even the country where he had been born, his kinsfolk, believing to find him still living, came to receive near him, like many others, the lights of salvation; but they had the affliction to learn, on arriving, that he had died. Their journey, nevertheless, which had been conducted by the order of divine Providence, was not useless, since it is from them that the circumstances of his life in the years which preceded his journey to the West were learned.

He is represented on horseback with a child behind him on the crupper who guides him across Asia and Europe to Pithiviers, where his host directed him to Saint-Martin of Vertou.

The Acts which we have just reported are the more authentic as the author who has left them to us assures us that he saw a great part of them with his own eyes, that he learned another part from several persons of his time who had conversed familiarly with the Saint himself, and that the truth was had from the very mouth of his kinsfolk, who came from Armenia to France, as we have said. We have drawn what we have just said from the originals that we found in Bollandus, profiting also by the learned remarks which some modern authors have left on this subject.

Saint Eusebia or Ysoie, Abbess of Hamage (660)

Saint Eusebia was the eldest daughter of Saint Adalbald of Douai and of Saint Rictrudis: she received an excellent education in her father’s house, and was early entrusted to her venerable grandmother Saint Gertrude, who had founded the monastery of Hamage, on the Scarpe. It was there that this child blessed of heaven formed herself in the practice of Christian and religious virtues, which always shone in her with so lively a brightness. It was probably when her father was assassinated in Gascony, and when Saint Rictrudis, her mother, with her two youngest daughters Glossinda and Adalsinda,[1] withdrew into the monastery of Marchiennes, that Saint Eusebia came to dwell near her grandmother.

At the death of Saint Gertrude, which happened some years later, the young Eusebia was charged with the government of the community of Hamage. So had the holy Abbess regulated it before breathing her last sigh; but all the precautions that had been taken could not reassure Saint Rictrudis, who hastened to recall her beloved daughter to her side. She feared that the demon, so skilful in seducing and casting into illusion persons of mature age, might deceive more easily still her dear Eusebia, and stifle in her heart the precious seeds of virtue which she saw germinating there.

After some delays, motivated doubtless by the tender attachment she bore to that house where her childhood had been spent, and where rested the venerable remains of her grandmother, Eusebia, on the express order of her mother, betook herself with the whole community of Hamage to the monastery of Marchiennes. She was received there, with her companions, with every token of the most sincere joy. Lighted candles and smoking

censers surrounded the bodies of the Saints which they had brought with them, among which was that of Saint Gertrude. From that moment the two communities melted into one, and all the religious, united in heart and mind, followed, in the joy and peace of the Holy Spirit, the same rules and the same exercises.

Meanwhile the thought of the monastery of Hamage and the last recommendations of Saint Gertrude presented themselves unceasingly to the mind of the young Eusebia. It seemed to her always that it was in that place that she ought to live with her companions, and continue, as she had promised, the holy work that had been begun there. Soon she was no longer able to master the feeling that dominated her, and, profiting by the calm and darkness of the night, she betook herself in all haste to those abandoned buildings to render to God her homage there, and to protest to him the sincere desire she had to accomplish his will. Saint Rictrudis was informed of it, reproached her daughter, and even inflicted on her a punishment which seemed to her deserved, for what she regarded as obstinacy. But soon believing she recognised in Eusebia's persistence, and in the docile obedience she gave her in everything else, a hidden design of heaven, she resolved to consult men of God, who might indicate to her what she had to do. All were of opinion that Eusebia should be left the liberty to return with her companions to the monastery of Hamage, with the body of Saint Gertrude, to continue there the holy and edifying life which they had led before.

Eusebia, having therefore received her mother's blessing, returned full of joy to her former dwelling, where she promptly had order and religious observance re-established, as under the government of her grandmother, whom she strove to imitate in all things. The gentleness of her command, the affability of her manners, the perfect regularity of her conduct, won her the respect and affection of all her companions. Nothing seemed painful to them in the accomplishment of the duties of the religious life, because she always took for herself the most difficult offices, and because the sight of her examples alone was capable of inspiring courage and devotion in the most lukewarm. Thus piety was in honour in that house, and, in a short time, the number of holy maidens who came to consecrate themselves there to the service of God was seen to multiply considerably.

Such was the admirable life led by the virgin Eusebia when God gave her a presentiment of her approaching end, though she was as yet only in her fortieth year. She did not hide it from her pious companions who, at this news, were all filled with the deepest grief. As for her, submissive to the holy will of heaven, she awaited, with calm and confidence, that supreme hour which was to crown her happiness by reuniting her to her divine Spouse. Feeling soon the first attacks of the sickness that was to take her from this world, she set about calling to her funeral couch the holy maidens who had placed themselves under her guidance. She addressed to them all the most touching and pious words, recommended to them particularly obedience, which is the sinew of the religious life, charity, which makes its sweetness and charm, and the spirit of abnegation and sacrifice which gives it its merit before God. Then, as her death might let arise in minds certain anxieties on the future of a house which owed almost everything to her liberalities and those of her family, she urged her sisters to put all their confidence in God, who never abandons those who hope in him. As the sick woman finished these words, a great light spread in the place where she was, and almost in the same instant her soul flew away into the heavens. "Thus did the glorious Eusebia make her way to the nuptials of the Spouse, daughter of admiration, like the beautiful rainbow, which, rich in the colours of the divine livery and touching earth only with the tip of its feet, enters with open heart into the attire of glory. Wise and prudent virgin, noble lamp of the cloisters, full of the oil of grace, slowly consumed by the liveliest flame of a perfect holocaust: sweet exhalation that perfumes the heavens."

The pious Virgin was buried in the church of the holy apostles. Some years later, at the invitation of the new abbess, also called Gertrude, Saint Vindicianus, bishop of Cambrai and of Arras, accompanied by Hatta, first abbot of Saint-Waast, came to make the dedication of a new church into which the body of the Saint was transported, who began, above all at that epoch (691), to receive the homage of the faithful. One sees in very ancient acts that the body of Saint Eusebia was placed later in the monastery of Marchiennes, without it

being well known for what reasons. Since then also the custom had been established of transporting it to the priory of Hamage, on the eve of the dedication of that church. The religious, who had accompanied the shrine of the Saint, celebrated there with pomp the offices of the night; then, the next day, the rest of the community, accompanied by the abbot, came to complete the pious solemnity. After the mass, which was sung with pomp, all took the road again to the monastery of Marchiennes, repeating the praises of God.

There were several translations of the relics of Saint Eusebia. The last that the authors have mentioned is that made on 17 May 1138 by Amandus, abbot of Marchiennes. Previously one sees that the abbot Adalard stripped the shrine of the Saint of all the riches that covered it, to come to the help of the inhabitants of a neighbouring village whom a fire had reduced to the extremest need.

The shrine which contained the relics of this Saint was sent in 1793 to the mint of Paris. The body, which was entire, was saved from profanation by the care of an estimable man named M. Desrotours, and deposited later at the archbishopric of Paris; it was preserved there until the moment of the pillage of that palace, on 29 July 1830 [*sic*: the sack of the archbishop's palace took place in February 1831]. The relics of Saint Eusebia were at that moment profaned and dissipated without it having been possible since to recover them. There remains only a fragment which had previously been placed in a reliquary of the church of Notre-Dame of Paris. About half a league from Marchiennes, one discovers in the country, on a much frequented road, a chapel dedicated to Saint Eusebia. Placed on a little hill and surrounded by a belt of tall poplars, which dominate all the country round about, it seems to invite the inhabitants and the labourers scattered in the fields to invoke in heaven her who once edified these places by the example of her virtues and the benefits of her charity. Saint Eusebia, who is known in different places and particularly in the territory of Beauvais under the name of Saint Ysoie or Eusoye, has often worked miraculous healings in favour of the persons who have invoked her. Her acts bear witness to these benefits, which have contributed to make her cult celebrated in the places where she lived. She is named on this day in the Martyrologies of France, of the Low Countries and in that of the Benedictines. The diocese of Beauvais has, we say, a particular veneration for her. The cult of Saint Eusoye, in this diocese, goes back to a very remote antiquity. Here is what its origin was: as the community of Marchiennes possessed an estate not far from Breteuil, a chapel was built there in honour of the blessed Abbess; from then the people of Beauvais took her in great affection. Several times, in calamitous times, they addressed themselves to her, and received powerful help from her. They went to invoke her often, and above all on 18 November, the anniversary day of her first translation. Enriched by their pious liberalities, become the rendezvous of a crowd of pilgrims, the chapel of Saint Eusoye was not long in seeing itself surrounded by dwellings, and became a parish church. The village which has formed there has taken and retained the name of the Saint: it has chosen her as patroness and celebrates every year her feast on this day.

In a manuscript which is found today in the Library of Douai, Saint Ysoie is represented with Saints Glossinda and Adalsinda carrying a palm and a lamp, the lamp indicating the vigilance necessary to virgins and the palm announcing the final success. Men more learned than we have said: doubtless the palm given to Saints who are not martyrs is a particularity belonging to certain countries, Flanders, for example, in the case that occupies us; so be it. It was a fine idea to unite in one same picture the holy personages furnished by one same family: nothing more edifying, nothing more convincing, nothing more triumphant. The family from which Saint Ysoie sprang was a veritable nursery of the elect. Thus it is not rare to meet Saint Adalbald, the Martyr, united with Saint Rictrudis, his wife, and their four children: Saint Eusebia, Saint Adalsinda, Saint Glossinda and Saint Mauront.[2]

Saint Heribert, Archbishop of Cologne (1021)

Heribert was born at Worms, an imperial city of Germany, in the Palatinate of the Rhine. His father was one of the principal gentlemen of the country, and his mother was a granddaughter of Reginbald, count of

Swabia. He was brought up first near his parents in human letters and in piety, and then went to complete his formation in the study of the holy Scriptures and of theology at Gorze, a celebrated monastery of Lorraine, in the diocese of Metz, which then passed for an excellent school of virtue and learning. He took so well to the religious life there that he was resolved to make profession in it, and never to leave that holy house, had his father not employed all his authority to make him return. When he had returned to Worms, Bishop Hildebald,[1] charmed with his mind, his wisdom and his piety, made him provost of his Church, and destined him to be his successor: but his death prevented the execution of this design. Some years after, the emperor Otto III, who had not yet received the imperial crown, having been informed of Heribert's merit, summoned him to court, and made him his chancellor. This prince, who had love and taste for virtuous persons, judging him equally fit for the service of the Church and of the State, did not leave him in repose until he had had him promoted to sacred orders with his cousin Bruno, who was afterwards pope under the name of Gregory V, and who crowned him emperor in the year 996. Meanwhile the archbishopric of Cologne fell vacant: and, after disputes of several months, which formed a kind of schism in that Church, everyone agreed to choose the chancellor Heribert. A deputation was sent at once to the emperor, who was in Italy. He summoned to Benevento, where he was, Heribert, who was finishing the pacification of the peoples around Ravenna. When he learned the designs that were held on him, his humility, joined to the apprehension of seeing himself charged with a ministry as redoubtable as that of the pastors of the Church, made him have recourse to a thousand means to turn this burden from his shoulders. But in vain did he declare himself a sinner, ignorant, incapable before the emperor and the deputies of the church of Cologne; no one would believe him. He was obliged to yield, as soon as sensible indications of the will of God were given him. Having been provided according to the customary forms and ceremonies, he spent still two months, from his investiture, near the prince. He went then to Rome to receive the Pallium from the hands of Pope Sylvester II, and he set out at once to betake himself to the metropolitan church of Cologne, of which he took possession on the eve of Christmas, in the year 999, which was the day of his consecration. He answered promptly the grace of his ordination by the care he took of his flock: and, not content with reviewing it, with recognising its needs, with dressing its wounds, with feeding it with the bread of life which he distributed to it himself by the ministry of preaching, to which he was very assiduous, he presented to it besides in his own person the model it had to follow, by giving examples of all sorts of virtues to his clergy and his people, and by making himself the nourisher of the poor, the physician of the sick, the support of the weak, and the common father of all his diocesans. He remained always within the bounds of a profound humility, to guard his heart from swelling and elevation, and not to let himself be dazzled by the false brilliance of the grandeur that surrounded him. He joined to it a continual mortification, to hold always his body and passions under the yoke of the spirit; and never did he leave off the rough hair-shirt which he hid under an ordinary habit befitting his dignity. He had churches repaired and built new ones; but a great famine which afflicted Germany and France made him suspend what appeared less necessary in these works, to go to meet the public misery which pressed his charity still more keenly. He was not only the liberator of his country on this occasion, as the patriarch Joseph had been of Egypt; he made himself also the servant of the poor and of strangers, for whom he procured by himself all possible assistance for the needs of soul and body, even to washing their feet, and preparing their food with his own hands. He built, in a place indicated by the Blessed Virgin, a great monastery, on the other side of the Rhine, opposite Cologne, and he endowed it with a rich fund, which the emperor Otto III had left him a short time before his death, as well as with his personal goods. This is the one which was called Deutz, in the town of the same name, and which was long afterwards in repute for great regularity, by the excellence of the discipline that our holy Prelate established there. He consecrated at Cologne, near the Porta Alta [High Gate], a chapel to Saint Stephen. He rebuilt the basilica of the twelve Apostles and added a college to it. To avert plague and famine, he instituted a solemn procession around the walls of the city, which took place until the end of the eighteenth century, on the Friday in the octave of Easter. In a time of extreme drought, after a procession to the church of Saint Severin, the usage of which has been piously preserved down to our days, the blessed Prelate inclined his head in his hands resting on the

altar to implore the Almighty, weeping abundantly, and, as formerly Saint Scholastica, he drew suddenly from heaven a torrential rain.

As this excellent Pastor had nothing so much at heart as the preservation and increase of the flock which his Master had entrusted to him, he could not tire of reviewing it by continual pastoral visits, carrying everywhere with him not only the light of the word of God to enlighten minds, the fire of charity to animate each to love one another, but also the helps of bodily life, to remedy the necessity and misery of individuals. It was during the course of these laborious visits that he was stopped in the little town of Deutz by a sickness which it pleased God to use to end and crown his labours. He died on 16 March of the year 1021. His body was buried at Deutz in the monastery he had founded. Arnold, archbishop of Cologne, made the elevation of it in 1147, on 30 August, and he rests still in that place in a beautiful sepulchre.

He is represented with a church on his hand; this attribute recalls specially the foundation of the abbey and monastery of Deutz; we say specially, because he had a great number of sacred edifices restored in his diocese.

The foundation of this same abbey of Deutz has given occasion to represent Saint Heribert in another fashion, that is, kneeling in prayer before an image of Our Lady, because, wishing to raise his foundation in a place famous for the crimes that had been committed there, he besought the Blessed Virgin to purify it.

Saint Heribert, as we have just seen, obtained from heaven the end of a prolonged drought which threatened to bring on a great dearth. During the public prayers ordered by him to appease the anger of God and at which he assisted, a dove was seen fluttering round his head, as if to point him out to the veneration of the peoples. His commiseration for the poor was great. Thus people ran from France and Germany to have a share in the largesses of his charity. He is invoked for rain.

He is honoured at Deutz, and even in Lombardy, because he accompanied the emperor Otto III there. See the Proper of Cologne, Baillet, and the celebrated Rupert, abbot of Deutz, who composed the life of the Saint in the monastery which he had founded.

Saint John of Sordi, Bishop of Vicenza (1181)

John of Sordi was born in 1125. His father was named Evangelist and his mother Bertha de' Persici. They were allied to the first families of the country, possessed great riches and were remarkable for their piety and love of God. John lost his father early and saw his mother remarry a man who gave him his name of Cacciafronte. Entered into the monastery of Saint Lawrence of Cremona after having been, at the age of fifteen, a canon of that city, he was soon the model of the whole house. Like all the Saints, he sought mortification and passed long hours in prayer. Raised to the priesthood after having pronounced his vows in 1159, he became first prior of the monastery of Saint Victor of Cremona, then abbot of the monastery of Saint Lawrence. He distinguished himself in the conduct of his religious by an altogether paternal gentleness, a consummate prudence and a boundless charity. Obedience under him was not difficult, for he accomplished first what he recommended to his religious. If the spiritual needs of his children were his continual preoccupation, he did not forget on that account their material needs; he saw to it that nothing should be wanting to them, and though the monastery was not rich, he administered its revenues with so much skill that each day he had abundant alms distributed to the poor.

God visits with tribulations those who are dear to him. Trials did not fail John of Sordi. He lost first his mother, who, to his great consolation, died in the odour of sanctity. He had soon after to groan over the evils of the Church which was, in 1159, torn by the schism of Octavian, cardinal of Saint Cecilia. He took care that the people of Cremona should not let themselves be seduced by the innovator, and, to appease the anger of God, he obtained that expiatory processions should be made throughout the city. Frederick Barbarossa, protector of Octavian, irritated at the conduct of John of Sordi, exiled him from Cremona. The Saint

submitted: he withdrew into solitude while waiting for the storm to pass, and there he gave himself more than ever to prayer and mortification. Honours came to find him in his retreat. At the request of the clergy and people, he was named to the episcopal see of Mantua. He resisted long, then was at last constrained to bow before the formal order of the Pope. He occupied himself with the government of his diocese with the activity and zeal of a good Pastor. He began by preaching by example, then he provided that his priests should lead a life worthy of the holiness of their state; he gave wise regulations to repress abuses and to make public vices disappear. His life was that of a religious. A friend of poverty, he traced its image in his clothing, in his food and in his furniture. All the money that came into his hands went in works of mercy. Meanwhile reverses had broken the pride of Barbarossa and softened his character. In 1177 he was reconciled with the legitimate pope Alexander III, to the great joy of the Church, to the great joy above all of the bishop of Mantua. He wrote to the sovereign Pontiff to testify all his gladness and to congratulate him on this happy event; he asked him at the same time for the restoration of the bishop Graziadeo, who had abandoned his see to follow the Antipope and repented of it. The Pope yielded to the prayers of the Saint and gave Mantua back to the penitent bishop; as for John of Sordi he gave him the bishopric of Vicenza, become vacant by the death of the titular. He was at Vicenza what he had been at Mantua. Vices had in him an inflexible adversary, but full of a sweet charity; the clergy was the object of his unceasing solicitude; the afflicted, the poor, the unfortunate found in him a father and a consoler. His people, edified by his holy and austere life, did not cease praising him and venerated him as an angel. The death of the holy Bishop was the result of a vengeance. In the twelfth century, bishops, to increase their revenues in order to be able to meet the miseries of the time or to secure protectors against the exactions of a multitude of petty tyrants, farmed out a part of the goods of their churches. The lands of the castle of Malo, belonging to the church of Vicenza, had been leased to a certain Pietro, who had ended in time by paying no more rent, by regarding himself as a true proprietor and by acting accordingly. The Bishop claimed the rights of his church; he put into it gentleness and long-suffering, then, seeing that he advanced nothing, he excommunicated the usurper. This punishment, far from bringing the guilty man back to himself, exasperated him; he formed the project of assassinating the Bishop, and carried it out on 16 March 1181. At the news of this crime, the whole city of Vicenza was in mourning and in tears. The enraged inhabitants wish to take prompt vengeance on the murderer: they run to his house, which they give to the flames. Pietro managed to escape, and it was never known what became of him. The body of the Bishop was buried in his cathedral and placed afterwards in a marble mausoleum. Saint John of Sordi had long been honoured as a Saint when, in 1821, Leo XII approved his cult.

Divers collections of lives of Saints.

Blessed Laurence, of the Order of Saint Benedict (1243)

Apulia, a province of the kingdom of Naples, was the native land of Blessed Laurence, who came into the world in the twelfth century. He embraced first the military state; but having had the misfortune to kill a man by accident, he felt so much pain at it that he quitted the career of arms and undertook a pilgrimage to Saint James of Compostela. Returned to Italy after this long journey, Laurence withdrew to a place near the monastery of Subiaco and practised the eremitical life there. The desire of a greater perfection led him to ask of the religious of the abbey of Subiaco permission to settle on a mountain rather near their house and not far from the grotto where the great Saint Benedict once lived. Having obtained it, he chose a cave there to dwell in, and there he lived most holily for long years. Having received several disciples, he formed them to the practice of the rule of Saint Benedict.

Among the virtues which shone in this servant of God, his abstinence was especially remarked. It was so rigorous that he ate only once a day, and had for food only bread, water and a few herbs. His mortification seems almost incredible, so much industry did he put into afflicting his body and reducing it to servitude. He

wore on the bare flesh an iron cuirass; he had hoops of the same metal on his arms, thighs and legs. Besides, he wore on his head two iron rods placed crosswise. Animated by the desire to imprint in himself the image of Jesus suffering, he was in the habit of burning his forehead each year on Good Friday. Cardinal Hugolin, who afterwards attained the papacy under the name of Gregory IX, having come to visit Blessed Laurence, engaged him to moderate the rigour of his penance. Docile to the voice of a superior and a child of obedience, the servant of God relaxed his austerities a little; but his ardour for mortification made him find other means of practising it. He applied himself with extreme care to preserve chastity. His silence was nearly perpetual; three days each week, and during the whole of Lent, he did not permit himself to say a single word. His charity toward his neighbour was very lively, and the poor inspired in him a tender affection. The Blessed Virgin had in Laurence the most devoted son, and he gave her a manifest proof of this devotion, by building in her honour a church between two fountains which one sees still and which are said to have sprung from the earth in a miraculous manner.

After having led for a long time the most edifying life, the servant of God went to receive from the Lord the crown of justice, on 16 August 1243. His body, buried in the place he had inhabited, remained there for several centuries. It was, in 1724, transferred to the grotto of Saint Benedict and exposed to public veneration. Inquiries had been undertaken, under the pontificate of Innocent IV, concerning the holiness of the venerable Laurence; they made known that he had worked several miracles during his life. After his death, Pius VI, desiring to increase his cult, permitted the mass and office to be celebrated in his honour.

See the lessons in the Monastic Breviary. Printed at Rome in 1831 (Godescard).

Blessed Torello, Hermit of the Order of Vallombrosa (1282)

One of the greatest benefits that we can receive from the goodness of God is that of a Christian education. Doubtless all those who have had this inestimable advantage do not profit by it; there are even some who render themselves altogether unworthy of it; but it is at least in their soul a precious seed which, being developed by grace, can produce fruits of salvation; and while the language of religion is often unintelligible to those who never knew it in their youth, its friendly voice easily makes itself heard by those who had listened to it before their wanderings. The life of Blessed Torello[1] offers us a new proof of this truth. He was born at Poppi, in Tuscany, on 16 March 1202, and had the happiness to have for father a man full of the fear of God, who put great solicitude into inspiring it in him from his tenderest infancy, and who was seconded by a very virtuous wife. Torello answered perfectly the good care of his parents, and became as he grew a model of piety; he shunned games and all the other profane amusements, and lived in an innocence of morals which was the joy of the authors of his days. Unfortunately for him, he lost his excellent father at a time when he still had great need of his support to sustain himself in the practice of good. However, this death did not at first shake him. He took the resolution to attach himself more closely to God; and to obtain more abundant blessings, he scattered numerous alms into the bosom of the poor of the country. But in giving himself to these good works, he did not distrust enough his fragility and weakness; he forgot that the Lord makes it a duty for us all to practise Christian vigilance. The acquaintance he formed with two young men of Poppi, whose morals were depraved, became for him the cause of the most deplorable fall; he abandoned the respectable societies he frequented, his good habits, his exercises of piety; and, after having been the object of the edification of his countrymen, he became their scandal, so dissolute was his life. A young person of the neighbourhood, more agreeable than virtuous, fixed his attention and captivated his heart so much that she made him bend to all her wills. Thus this unhappy young man forgot all the wise counsels of his father, and this tree which had shown such fair flowers produced no more fruit. He despised even all the advice that the most respectable persons could give him. But God, who had particular designs of mercy on this unfaithful soul, enlightened him and made him know his misery. One day when Torello was playing at bowls, in the presence of his mistress, with his treacherous friends, a cock perched in the place where he was, flew

suddenly on his shoulder and began to crow three times; it seemed to him that this cock said to him: “It is time to come out of the mortal sleep of vices.” Whether this event was altogether natural, or whether the Lord willed to use such a means to recall this sinner to himself, as he had used it for Saint Peter, it is certain that Torello felt from it an impression so lively and so deep that, leaving the game that very instant, he runs to the abbey of Saint Fidelis, of the Order of Vallombrosa, which was not far off, goes to cast himself at the feet of the superior, and, with tears in his eyes, begs him to help him to re-enter into grace with God. The abbot, who was a holy man, receives him with kindness, and after having heard his confession, admits him in due time to the holy table. Entirely disgusted with a world which had been so fatal to him, the new penitent entreats the abbot to be so good as to clothe him in the habit of the secular lay brothers [*frères convers séculiers*], regarding himself as unworthy to live in the monastery. The venerable abbot, seeing that Torello, who wished to practise the eremitical life, was led by the spirit of God, condescends to his desire, and before he leaves the abbey, wishes to give him a sack of wheaten loaves; but he refuses them and accepts only three little ones of barley. He departs then and leaves with joy the country of Poppi, without any of his relatives and friends perceiving it. Torello passed eight days seeking a solitude in which he might settle. Having found a grotto which suited him, he returned to Poppi, distributed all his goods to the poor, and in spite of all the entreaties of his family, who told him that he must not become his own homicide, he hastened to betake himself to his hermitage. There he began a penitent and mortified life of which worldlings cannot understand the usefulness, because they have never well meditated those terrible words of Jesus Christ: “Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish.” He ate only once a day, about three o’clock in the afternoon, drank only water and in small quantity, slept on vine-shoots and rose each night to recite Matins. He afflicted his body in a thousand ways, in order to repair his past disorders and to triumph over his passions. The Father abbot of Saint Fidelis, who had reconciled him with God and who was his director in the ways of salvation, visited him often in order to procure him the spiritual helps of which he had need. Informed and surprised at Torello’s austere penance, he expressed to him one day the fear that it lacked discretion; but the fervent penitent gave him such good reasons to justify his manner of acting that the abbot, who recognised that the Holy Spirit enlightened him, said to him: “My son, may God strengthen you in your good resolution and in his service until death.” Then he gave him his blessing. The wish of the pious abbot was completely realised. Torello remained faithful to his vocation, however painful it was for nature. Overwhelmed with maladies and infirmities, he rejoiced in suffering, in order to satisfy divine justice. The remembrance of the Passion of the Saviour, with which he occupied himself frequently, made him shed abundant tears. A life so holy rendered him venerable to those who knew him and who had recourse with confidence to his lights; it merited for him heavenly favours. He stopped by his prayers a wolf which, having carried off a child, was ready to devour it; he suddenly healed the wounds which the bites of the wolf had made on this child, and gave it back sound to its mother. It is said even that since that time no wolf has attacked anyone in the country he inhabited. Warned of the hour of his death, he made it known to the abbot of Saint Fidelis, confessed and received holy communion. He announced also his death to a disciple whom he had with him in his hermitage; he gave him the wisest counsels; then, embracing him tenderly, he said to him: “I feel that God calls me; I commend you to our Creator.” Then, having knelt down to pray, he raised his hands toward heaven and rendered his spirit tranquilly, on 16 March 1282, at the age of eighty years. He was buried in the church of the abbey of Saint Fidelis of Poppi, where his relics have always been preserved with much respect.

He is represented with a wolf at his side. Here is why: he made a wolf, in the name of God, let go its hold, which was carrying off a child left by its mother on the bank of the Arno, while she was washing her linen there. Moreover, the holy man forbade this animal ever to attack anyone of Poppi: whence the devotion of the inhabitants of Poppi, who invoke Blessed Torello against wolves. He is likewise honoured at Forlì from time immemorial.

His life, written several centuries ago, has been reproduced by various authors and is found in the second volume of March of the collection of the Bollandists. Dom Soldani, fellow-countryman of the Blessed, and a

religious of Vallombrosa, published a new imitation of it, under the title of *Apologetic Treatise*, to prove that the servant of God belonged to the Order of Vallombrosa, and not to that of Saint Francis. 1 vol. in-4°, Lucca, 1731. (Godescard, Lille edition.)

Blessed Peter of Siena, Artisan (1289)

Peter Pettinaio, born at Siena, was at first engaged in marriage, and lived with his wife in so virtuous a manner that he deserves to be proposed as a model to the Christians who have embraced that state. He earned his living by making combs, a trade which he had learned in his native town and which he exercised until old age. From a sentiment of humility, he renounced worldly clothes and clothed himself in the livery of penance, embracing the secular Third Order of Saint Francis. Shortly after, having lost his wife, by whom he had had no children, he sold all he possessed, gave it to the poor, and devoted himself entirely to the practice of perfection. He frequented much the celebrated hospital of Siena, called Santa Maria della Scala, and passed a great part of the day and even of the night in orison, whether in the church of Saint Dominic or in that of Our Lady, which is the principal one of his town. The lights he received in his communications with God made him know how perfectly Saint Francis had imitated Jesus Christ. Through affection for the holy patriarch whose son he had become, he wished to live among his disciples and entered among the Friars Minor of Siena as a guest. He remained there the rest of his days, enjoying all the consolations that God reserves to pure souls and defending himself successfully against the attacks of the demon.

The meditation of heavenly things had so kindled in the heart of this holy man the fire of charity that this fire manifested itself outwardly and he appeared all surrounded with light. This prodigy put him in great repute of holiness; but the high idea that was held of him diminished in nothing his humility. Regarding with reason this virtue as the foundation of all the others, he practised it with particular care; he also held silence in great esteem, and preserved the purity of his soul and body by his almost continual abstinence, by his vigils, his long prayers and his frequent pilgrimages. It is said that one day when he was bitterly deploring the faults of his youth, he heard the voice of an angel who announced to him that his sins were remitted.

God manifested the eminent virtue of his servant, by working several miracles by his means and by loading him with extraordinary graces; and this poor artisan became so celebrated that his fellow-citizens consulted him in the most important public affairs. Blessed Ambrose of Siena, of the Order of Saint Dominic, made it his glory to follow his counsels, as he honoured himself on being in intimacy with him. Peter, enriched with merits for heaven, fell sick in 1289, and, after having received the sacraments of the Church, rendered his holy soul to his Creator on 4 December of the same year. He was buried in the church of Saint Francis, where the government of Siena had a magnificent tomb raised to him, and, in concert with the inhabitants, decided that his memory should be celebrated each year. This decree is still observed in that city. Pope Pius II published the holiness of the servant of God in a sermon which he preached at Siena; and Pius VII, in 1802, permitted his feast to be celebrated.

A comb is put in his images to recall his profession.

Drawn from the lessons of his office. See the Franciscan martyrology of Father Arthur du Monstier. This writer cites a fairly large number of authors who have spoken of Blessed Peter.

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[1] See the Acts of Saint Julian in the works of Saint John Chrysostom (French translation of Bar-le-Duc, 11 vols. octavo, hom. xxvii to the people of Antioch).

[2] One of the eleven *colombin* bishops of that city. On the expression *colombin*, see Saint Severus, at 1 February.

[3] Saint Isicius I (Hesychius), bishop of Vienne, in Dauphiné, was a senator of that city when he was chosen to succeed Saint Mamertus, in the year 477. He had been engaged in marriage and had two sons: Saint Avitus, who succeeded him on the see of Vienne, and Saint Apollinaris, who became bishop of Valence. It is believed that Blessed Audentia, his wife, was dead when he was raised to the episcopate. He died in 480; he was surnamed the Great, on account of his virtues, and also to distinguish him from one of his successors of the same name. The feast of the latter is celebrated on 12 November.

[4] Hamaye, Hamaige.

[5] Saint Dentelin was son of Saint Vincent of Soignies and of Saint Waudru, who flourished in Hainaut in the seventh century. It is reported that he died at the age of seven years and that heaven attested his holiness by prodigies wrought at his tomb. His feast was formerly celebrated, in Hainaut, only in the church of the Canonesses of Sainte-Waudru of Mons. He was very celebrated among the Canons of Rees, who kept his feast on 14 July. Saint Dentelin became, afterwards, patron of the town of Rees, which still honours him today on 14 July likewise. He was also commemorated formerly on 16 March, at Emmerich, on the Rhine, in the parish of Sainte-Aldegonde. Saint Dentelin was buried at Soignies, beside his father, Saint Vincent. Nothing more is known of him. It is not known when and how the town of Rees procured his relics. Son of a Saint and of a Saint; nephew of another Saint, Aldegund of Maubeuge; brother of Saint Landric, of Saint Aldetrude and of Saint Madelberta, it was doubtless considered, in placing Dentelin among the Saints, that God had wished to except no one of a family so extraordinarily remarkable. For other children, not martyrs, honoured with a public cult, see Saint Reineldis at 15 July, Saint Ludre at 4 November.

[6] See, in our *Palmier séraphique*, vol. III, the interesting life of Saint Petronilla or Pirrone, and that of Blessed Countess Beatrice Rusca.

[7] *Acts of the Martyrs*, III, 135.

[8] See their acts in Assemani, *Acta*, III, 213.

[9] *Patria Bearnica.*

[10] *Gave* is the generic name of all watercourses or torrents in the Pyrenees; *gare* or *gaba* signifies, in Basque, dark and deep: it is indeed under such images that one pictures a torrent. This word has passed into the popular speech of certain provinces, where they still say *se gaver d'eau* to signify to gorge oneself.

[11] Lescar succeeded to the town of Beneharnum, which gave its name to the province of Béarn. This province corresponded, before 1793, to the present arrondissements of Pau, Orthez and Oloron. — The town of the Béarnese (*urbs Beneharnensium*) subsisted until the year 845, at which epoch the Normans destroyed it. The dukes of Gascony raised it from its ruins about the year 1000, and it is only from that epoch that it was called Lescar, that is, surrounded by streams. Its bishopric, lastly, was composed of only forty parishes, whereas that of Oloron counted two hundred and more: but the spiritual circumscription of Lescar must have been more considerable in the time of Saint Julian, and comprised apparently all Béarn. Oloron was only a dismemberment of this primitive diocese; and as from the civil point of view Oloron was more important than Beneharnum, the spiritual circumscription of the first of these two towns was more extensive, seeing that dioceses generally had the delimitation of the civil circumscription.

[12] The word Aquitaine, say some, comes from the Basque *Aki-tannia*, land of rocks; it comes from the Latin *aqua*, say others, and signifies land of waters. One might say, to reconcile everybody, that the two etymologies do not exclude each other, seeing that the waters come from the mountains or rocks. In any case, if we had a preference to express, it would be in favour of the Basque origin, seeing 1° that the Romans did not rename the countries they conquered; and 2° that the Basque language, contemporary with Hebrew, Phoenician and Bactrian, is a language much more ancient than Latin, and that the word *aqua* itself is perhaps only a borrowing from the primitive word *aki*, rock or source of waters.

[13] There is rather little agreement on the classification of these nine peoples: we have given the most probable enumeration.

[14] Saint Jerome, *Epist. ad* …; … — 3. *Ep.* vi, l. vii, *Patr. lat.*, t. lviii. [Only fragments of this note survive; the note numbered 2 is lost.]

[15] This Odolric was bishop of Orléans from 1022 to 1035; he was elected some time after the death of Saint Gregory.

[16] They are also named Glotesinda and Adalsenda.

[17] *Lives of the Saints of Cambrai and Arras*, by M. the abbé Destombes. [Printed at the foot of the following page.]

[18] See these various names in the general table.

[19] The Bollandists believe that this name Torello is a diminutive of Victorello. They remark that such diminutives were formerly in use in Italy. In effect, they said Gerlo instead of Rogerlo, Rita for Margarita, etc.

17 March

Martyrologies

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

In Ireland, the birth into heaven of Saint Patrick, bishop and confessor, who first preached Jesus Christ in that island, and shone as much by his great miracles as by his lofty virtues. 464 [*sic*]. — At Jerusalem, Saint Joseph of Arimathea, noble Decurion, disciple of the Lord, who took his body down from the cross and buried it in his sepulchre which was new. 1st c. — At Rome, Saint Alexander and Saint Theodore, martyrs. — At Alexandria, the memory of several holy Martyrs, who, having been seized by the worshippers of Serapis, and having constantly refused to adore that idol, were cruelly massacred in the time of the emperor Theodosius, who at once gave a rescript to have the temple of Serapis pulled down. 390. — At

Constantinople, Saint Paul, martyr, who, for having defended the worship of the holy images, was burned under Constantine Copronymus. 970 [*sic*; read the eighth century]. — At Chalon-sur-Saône, Saint Agricola, bishop. 580. — At Nivelles, in Brabant, Saint Gertrude, virgin, of illustrious birth, who, having despised the world, and having applied herself throughout the whole course of her life to practise all the duties of holiness, merited to have Christ in heaven for her spouse. 659.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED

In Dauphiné, the translation of the body of Saint Anthony, to the town which bears his name.[1] — At Beauvais, the translation of the body of Saint Angadrisma.[2] — At Alexandria, Saint Ambrose the deacon, who was an illustrious confessor of the faith, for which he suffered great torments toward the frontiers of Gaul and Germany, under Julius Maximinus. About 251 [*sic*]. — At Cologne, memory of Saint Vivencia, whose relics are honoured in a sepulchre raised above ground, in the famous church of Saint Ursula. — At Bayeux, another Saint Patrick, different from the Apostle of Ireland:[3] the church which bears the title of Saint Patrick was dedicated under his title in 469. — At Rennes, the venerable Pierre Jouvaud, restorer of the regular life in several convents of the Order of Saint Dominic. A man of interior life, much given to orison, very devout to the Blessed Virgin, he excelled in forming the young religious to piety and to the science of divine things. 1637.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — In Ireland, Saint Patrick, bishop and confessor, who first preached Jesus Christ in that country and instituted a rule of life for the clergy of the whole island, and shone by great miracles as by great virtues.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — To the eulogy of Saint Gertrude, add: whose feast is celebrated on 22 March.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — In Ireland, Saint Patrick…

Martyrology of the Servites. — At Jerusalem, Saint Joseph of Arimathea…

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Rome, with Saint Alexander and Saint Theodore or Theodulus, mentioned above, the Saints Nicander, Artemius, Theodore, Sisinnius, Pollio and Crescentian, martyrs. 1st c. — At Donard, near Dunlavin, Saint Sylvester and Saint Salonius, companions of Saint Palladius, first Apostle of Ireland: their bodies long rested at Donard, in the island of Boethin, which took its name from Saint Boethin, who lived at the beginning of the seventh century. — In England, Saint Withburga,[4] virgin, who founded a monastery at Dereham at the indication of the Blessed Virgin. 653. — Among the Greeks, Saint Theoctistus,[5] confessor, who was persecuted under Constantine Copronymus. 8th c. — At Padua, Blessed Julian Une, whose body was found again in 1147. — At Perugia, Blessed Thomasello, Friar Preacher, disciple of Saint Thomas, dead at twenty-eight years. Year 1270. — At Ross, in Scotland, Saint Kyrstin or Kyrin, bishop; he is also called Boniface. 660 [*sic*]. — At Halberstadt, Saint Raymo, bishop. 853. — At Mantua, Blessed Paula Malatesta, wife of John Francis of Gonzaga, and a Clarisse after the death of her husband.[6] 1449.

Saint Joseph of Arimathea

First century.

Jesus Christ, who, on coming into the world, willed that a Joseph should take him in his arms, to render him the first duties of life, also willed that a Joseph should receive him into his hands after his death, to render him the last duties of burial. Joseph, son of David, sprung from Bethlehem, received his newborn body from the hands of Mary, to lay it in the manger, and Joseph, born at Arimathea, received from the same hands his

holy body, after his death, to put it in the tomb. As the Church consecrates this day to the memory of the latter, it is just that we should relate the praises which the Gospel, the holy Fathers and the ecclesiastical historians give him.

Joseph was a native of Arimathea, from which he took his surname. It was, writes Saint Jerome, a sort of small town situated on Mount Ephraim, and named, in the holy Scriptures, Ramathaim-Zophim, where the prophet Samuel was also born. It was otherwise called Rama, which means elevated, because of its situation; and, according to the remark of the same holy Doctor, this signification suits our Joseph very well, because he was extremely elevated, as much by his eminent virtues as by his great riches. It is doubtless this which gave him occasion to leave the village of Arimathea to come and dwell at Jerusalem, capital of the whole kingdom, where he bought houses, gardens and other possessions, for which he is called rich by Saint Matthew; and by Saint Mark, noble decurion, that is, counsellor or senator, because he who was called at Rome a senator was named, in the other confederated cities, decurion or counsellor. This office gave him entry into the most celebrated assemblies of the city: it is in this quality that he found himself at that famous, but detestable council, which was held at the house of the high priest Caiaphas, where the means of putting to death the Son of God were sought. But, as he was just and a good man, according to the express terms of Saint Luke, and as, according to Saint John, he was a hidden disciple of Jesus, he recognised the iniquity of their project and of their resolution, and would never consent to it. At last, when the sentence of death given by Pilate against the Saviour had been executed, he stripped himself of that spirit of fear which had obliged him to keep himself hidden, and showed publicly that he was a disciple of the Crucified, at the very time when all the others, after having boasted so much that they would never abandon him, had shamefully left him. Seeing then this dear Master dead on the cross in the midst of the mourning and regrets of all creatures, and no longer able to conceal the sentiments of his heart, he went boldly to Pilate, represented to him the innocence and holiness of him whom he had put to death, and told him that, after having recognised it, his body ought not to be treated like those of the other executed persons, but that on the contrary an honourable burial should be given him; as for himself, he offered to render him this good office, if they would be pleased to permit it. Saint Anselm adds that the Blessed Virgin revealed to him that, when Joseph of Arimathea asked the body of Jesus of Pilate, this disciple, to obtain this favour from him, made him know that the mother of Jesus had been stricken with grief since the death of her Son, that the only thing which could moderate her grief was to give her at least the satisfaction of burying him, and that Pilate, after having assured himself by the centurion that Jesus had given up the ghost, ordered that his body be given to Joseph. This order of the governor wonderfully consoled this dear disciple. He promptly bought a winding-sheet, betook himself to Calvary, and took down from the cross that sacred body: sad spectacle, at which were present Saint John the Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Cleophas and above all the divine Mary, who, according to the report of Metaphrastes, stretched out her arms to receive this holy deposit. It was then that she lovingly embraced this adorable body which she had conceived and borne in her chaste womb: she kissed it tenderly, she washed with her tears its sacred wounds, and at last, speech succeeding to sobs, she cried out in these terms, says Cardinal Baronius in his *Annals*: “O my Saviour, O my God! this mystery which was resolved before the foundation of the ages, behold it at last accomplished.” Then, addressing Joseph of Arimathea: “It is for you,” she said to him, “now to place this divine body in the tomb, and to render it the last duties.”

As for the Holy Shroud, in which Joseph of Arimathea buried the body of the Saviour, Father François Vinton, Minim, speaks of it in this way, in a treatise which he made expressly on this subject: It is, he says, of a fine and strong cloth, three cubits wide, twelve long and of a single piece; the figure and shadows of the body of Our Lord are represented, as much on the ground as on the fold. Joseph and Nicodemus anointed this adorable body with a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, and then laid it in the monument which this first disciple had had cut quite recently for himself, in the rock, in a place in his garden. This is what the four Evangelists teach us, and what we have of certain concerning this disciple of Jesus. In a Gospel attributed to Nicodemus, it is noted, if we believe Gregory of Tours and Baronius, that the Princes of the priests were so

strongly irritated against Joseph of Arimathea, on account of the burial that he had given to Jesus Christ, that they seized this disciple, shut him up and kept him themselves while the soldiers watched over the sepulchre; that on the night in which the Saviour rose again, Joseph was miraculously delivered from prison by an angel, and that the Jews, reproaching the soldiers with their cowardice, in having thus let the body of Jesus be taken from the tomb, the latter replied to them: “Deliver Joseph to us, and we will deliver Christ to you; but as you cannot give us back the benefactor of God, neither can we, for our part, put the Son of God into your hands.”

Although tradition teaches us nothing of Joseph of Arimathea’s retreat after the burial of Jesus, one may nevertheless persuade oneself that he kept himself, until the end of his life, in the company of the most holy Virgin and the other disciples, and that thus he found himself with them on the day of the Ascension, on the Mount of Olives, to see ascend into heaven that same body to which he had rendered the pious duties of burial; that ten days after, he received the Holy Spirit with the twelve Apostles; that he brought the price of all his goods to their feet to embrace himself an altogether apostolic life, and that at last he died at Jerusalem, whence his body was transported into France, under Charlemagne, to the abbey of Moyenmoutier, in the diocese of Toul, by Fortunatus, patriarch of Grado, who was fleeing the persecution of the idolaters, and who was afterwards abbot of the same monastery, founded by Saint Hydulphus, archbishop of Trier. There are authors who believe that the Jews never ceased to persecute this generous disciple, and that, to banish him from their lands, they exposed him without sails and without oars, with Saint Martha, Saint Magdalene, Saint Lazarus their brother, and Saint Maximinus; but that the vessel, by an effect of divine Providence, having arrived happily at the port of Marseilles, in Provence, Joseph of Arimathea traversed all France and passed to Great Britain, preached Jesus Christ there and died there in peace; and it is apparently for this reason that the English recognise him as their first Apostle.

The arts have summed up thus the history of the holy burier of Jesus: 1° According to a legend dear to the English of the Middle Ages, Saint Joseph of Arimathea is said to have inherited the cup used by Jesus Christ on the day of the supper: this is why he is painted with a cup in his hand; — 2° he is also represented holding one of the extremities of the Holy Shroud, while Nicodemus holds the other; — 3° he naturally forms part of the group of those who bury the Saviour: Nicodemus, Saint John and the Blessed Virgin,[1] when this scene is portrayed by painting, sculpture or engraving; — 4° at other times he is represented planting a staff in the ground, for the English legend further claims that at Glastonbury he drove his staff into the earth and it became a shrub giving, about Christmas, red and white flowers; — 5° lastly he is put in the vessel which brought Saint Lazarus and Saint Magdalene to the coasts of Provence.

RELICS OF SAINT JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

M. the abbé Déblaye wrote to us from Imling, on 25 November 1862: “I am happy to be able to answer your questions of 22 November 1862. 1° Was the body of Saint Joseph of Arimathea brought to Moyenmoutier: and then afterwards stolen by monks? Is there still any trace of it?

“Dom Humbert Belhomme, in his *Historia Mediani monasterii*, Strasbourg, 1724, in-4°, will answer us.

“Fortunatus, patriarch of Grado, and not of Jerusalem,[2] having had to take refuge in France, obtained from Charlemagne the abbey of Moyenmoutier. The history of the successors of Saint Hydulphus, which Dom Belhomme publishes in his book, after a manuscript of Paderborn, believing it anonymous, although it is by Valcandus, monk of Moyenmoutier, at the beginning of the eleventh century, speaks thus of the relics brought there by Fortunatus: ‘*Ipsius vero collatione, ex cunctis pene instrumentis humanae conversationi atque passioni Domini aptatis amplexibilia pignora locus hic meruit percipere, pariterque pretiosorum Martyrum Stephani, Lazari quadriduani sepulti, Georgii, atque Pancratii, cum plurimis: quod nunc longum videtur prosequi.*’[3]

"The relics above mentioned were not entire relics, but partial; also there remains nothing of them. You see besides that our most ancient chronicler does not speak of Joseph of Arimathea.

"Here is Dom Belhomme's note on the above text:

"'*E. Richerius in chronico Senoniensi et Johannes a Bayona in historia Medionensi tradunt Fortunatum attulisse ad medianum monasterium corpus sancti Josephi Arimathaei, sed postmodum eo videlicet tempore, quo Canonici idem monasterium possederunt, a quibusdam monachis peregrinis noctu furatum et exportatum fuisse. At rem suspectam reddit silentium anonymi hujus auctoris (Valcandi), qui Richerium ducentis et Joannem a Bayono trecentis annis praecedit.*'

"Dom Belhomme seems to me to be right, in not believing the tales of Richer and of John of Bayon. It is quite certain that for many centuries no trace of this relic has remained at Moyenmoutier.

"2° You ask next what has become of the abbey? The ancient abbey was demolished about a hundred years ago, and rebuilt some hundreds of metres lower down: of the first there hardly remains more than the enclosing wall; the present presbytery, which is quite recent, is about on the site of the church. The total demolition by the monks themselves would have uncovered the hidden treasures and monuments, if there had been any.

"The new abbey still exists in very great part and belongs to Messrs. Sellières, who have also the abbey of Senones; both are cotton factories: Moyenmoutier is the bleaching-works. The church, which exists entire with its tower, is parochial. The Church still possesses the body of Saint Hydulphus, almost complete; the bodies of his two disciples, John and Benignus, two brothers; some bones of Saint Spinulus or Spin, another disciple. Another part was transported from the priory of Belval into the parish church of Portieux, and all the great bones which were in the abbey of Saint-Léopold, at Nancy, perished at the Revolution: — some bones of the body of Saint Genius, another disciple; the bodies of Saint Maximinus, archbishop of Trier and of Saint Boniface, the Theban, minus the heads, brought to Moyenmoutier, probably by Saint Hydulphus.

"In the shrine of Saint Hydulphus is found also a dalmatic of the seventh century which might well be that of Saint Leodegarius, rather than what was called the tunic of Saint Hydulphus, in view of this text of the chronicle of John of Bayon: '*Ego vero in ipso scrinio vidi, cum plurimis aliis ipsorum martyrum reliquiis, de saxo quo lapidatus est sanctus Stephanus, et carbones sanguineos sancti Laurentii levitae, et dalmaticam sancti Leodegarii.*'[4]

"In 1854 I published, in the *Journal of the Archaeological Society of Lorraine*, a description of this sacred vestment.

"The tomb of Saint Hydulphus exists also in the chapel of Saint Gregory, in the cemetery: it is a stone sarcophagus without inscription. — The relics of Moyenmoutier were solemnly recognised on 6 August 1854, by Mgr Caverot, bishop of Saint-Dié, after a long study of revision made by me."

The Roman martyrology marks the memory of this disciple of Jesus on 17 March, and Cardinal Baronius speaks of him in the first volume of his *Annals*.

Saint Patrick, Apostle of Ireland

373–464.[1] *— Popes: Saint Damasus; Saint Celestine I;*

Saint Leo the Great; Saint Hilary.

I will send the heralds of my word into Greece, into Italy and as far as the most distant islands, to those who have not heard speak of me and have not seen my glory. *Isaiah* lxvi, 19.

It is quite justly that the close union of the Church of Ireland with the Holy See, during the three centuries of persecution which she has just traversed, has been regarded as the source of the heroic courage displayed by her children for the defence of the Catholic faith. The Irish Catholics have believed, for 1400 years, that this union of their country with Rome is the work of Saint Patrick: thus their love and gratitude for this great apostle are equalled only by their attachment to the See of Peter. As for the Irish Protestants, although they have never shown much respect for the name and labours of Saint Patrick, they have not failed, on occasion, to claim him as one of their own; and in order to show that this great missionary thought as they do, they have dared to maintain that Rome not having sanctioned his mission, Saint Patrick would have simply established something like the Anglican church, a Church if not hostile to the successors of Saint Peter, at least completely independent. The whole life of Saint Patrick belies this lying assertion and demonstrates the union which existed at the origin between the Church of Ireland and Rome, the centre of all spiritual jurisdiction. It is only from the pontificate of Saint Celestine I that Ireland could call itself a Christian land. Doubtless some of its children had already ranged themselves under the banner of Christ; but they lived isolated so long as no Apostle visited their shores.

At that time (431) Palladius was a deacon of Rome: now it is known what was the importance of that charge in the first centuries of the Church: most of the first Popes had occupied it before being promoted to the supreme pontificate, and during the vacancy of the Apostolic See, it was the deacon of Rome who took the administration in hand. Celestine I, then reigning, separated himself from Palladius, who was his right arm, and whose learning and piety he must, better than anyone, have known, to send him as first bishop to the Scots[2] of Ireland who believed in Jesus Christ. Passing through Auxerre, Palladius begged, in the name of the Pope, Saint Germanus to go and combat Pelagianism in Great Britain.

The preachings of Palladius in Ireland produced little fruit, “for no one can receive anything on earth unless heaven send it and give it.” His stay was of short duration in that country: he had had time, however, to found three churches or Christian communities: Teach-na-Roman or the house of the Romans; Kill-fine, the present Dunlavin, and Domnach-Ardech or Donard, near Dunlavin: it is at Dunlavin that before setting out again for Rome he left the books and relics which Saint Celestine had given him, as well as the tablets which he used for writing. But Rome was not to see him again. Having crossed the first sea, as the Irish say, that is, the strait which separates Ireland from England, he traversed a part of that country and went to die at Fordun, in present Scotland. There were at Donard, in Ireland, the ashes of his two disciples Sylvester and Salonius, who were honoured as Saints.

Such are the beginnings of faith in that land which was later to be called the Isle of Saints; such is the grain of mustard seed which, cultivated by the hands of Patrick, became a great tree.

We know the beginnings of Saint Patrick only through his *Confession* which he has left us: we shall be thanked for reproducing this precious monument of autobiography, interspersing some notes in parentheses.

“I, Patricius, a wretched sinner and the least of the servants of Jesus Christ, had for father the deacon Calpurnius, son of the priest Potitus.[3] I was born (377) at Bonaven Tabernia[4] (in the neighbourhood of Boulogne-sur-Mer), in a villa which my father possessed, and where I was later captured by pirates, in the circumstances that I am going to relate. I was then sixteen years old, and had never concerned myself seriously with the service of God. The barbarians carried me off with several thousands of other captives. We were heaped into boats, and we were transported to Hibernia. The Lord willed to chastise our offences and past ingratitudes. Cast thus, a poor adolescent, among those foreign nations, my heart opened to grace; I wept for my faults, and resolved to change my life. In his merciful goodness, the Lord deigned to accept my still barren vows; his hand protected me amid so many dangers and saved my life. I was profoundly ignorant. From my childhood, I had manifested a veritable horror of study. The free life, in the open air of the fields, alone pleased me. Now, captive and exiled, I had to lead the flocks to pasture. The taste for prayer seized me little by little. I passed the days and a part of the nights in that holy exercise. I knelt on the snow, on the

frozen earth or earth soaked by the rains of winter. Six years passed thus, and I was happy in my captivity, because the Lord consoled my soul. One night, I heard, in a vision, the voice of an angel who said to me: Thy prayers and thy fasts have touched the heart of God. Thou shalt soon see thy country again. The ship which is to carry thee away awaits in the port. — Yet I was two hundred miles from the coast, and did not know the port of which they spoke to me. Nevertheless, full of confidence in the God who directed me, I took flight, I arrived happily at the port of Ben (Boyne) [*sic*]. A ship was lying there; I went on board and asked the pilot to take me with him. He refused brutally, and I was already taking the road by land again, weeping and praying, when the pilot cried to me: Come if thou wilt; only be faithful to us! — Now these men were pagans (and probably also pirates). How I should have wished that they would follow me into the faith of Christ! However, they weighed anchor. After three days of navigation, we landed in an uninhabited place, where we marched twenty-seven days. Provisions and water failed, and hunger made itself dreadfully felt. The pilot said to me: Thou art a Christian and thou claimest that thy God is all-powerful. Pray him then for us, that he may come to our help. — Be converted from the bottom of your heart, I answered, and God will save you. — Scarcely had I finished these words when we perceived a herd of wild boars. A great number were killed and abundance returned to the caravan. All praised the Lord, and testified to me the liveliest gratitude. Sorrows, trials, temptations did not fail me however. One day, one of my travelling companions presented me with a piece of meat, saying to me: It has been offered to the gods. — I thank you, I answered. — And, that day, I went without food. Another time, during the night, while I slept, I felt the shock of an enormous stone hurled upon me. I thought at first that a rock had detached itself from the mountain, and was going to bury me under its weight. I invoked the Lord. At that moment, the sun was beginning to peep over the horizon. It seemed to me that the Son of God, in his glory, was coming to my help. I rose and felt no harm. I arrived at last in my native land. I had been there two years, when, for the second time, a band of pirates carried me off again. I prayed to the Lord, and a divine voice made itself heard. Thy captivity shall last only two months, it said to me. — In effect, on the sixtieth day, I was delivered and returned to my parents, who received me with tears of joy. They promised themselves that after so many tribulations I should no more be torn from their tenderness. They repeated these words to me incessantly, and wished to make me promise never to leave them. Now, one night, I saw standing before me a heavenly personage, holding in his hand a volume which seemed a collection of letters. I am Victricius, he said to me. — And he presented me the collection of his letters. On the first page I read: *Voice of Hibernia*. As I continued reading, it seemed to me that I heard the woodcutters of Foclut (Foclayd) who, addressing me, said to me: We beseech you, holy young man, come back among us, and teach us the way of the Lord. — I felt moved to tears, I wept, and the vision disappeared. Blessed be the Lord! for since then the peasants of Foclut have answered the hope which this prophecy gave birth to in my soul. The following night, in the depth of my being or at my side, I could not say, but the Lord knows it, I heard as it were canticles of a holy psalmody, but I saw no one, and I knew not whence these voices came. I set myself to prayer, and I heard murmured in my ear this word: I am he who gave my soul to redeem thine. — At that moment, it seemed to me that within me someone prayed with groans and tears; I had the consciousness that the Spirit of God prayed in me. — The next day, I opened myself of these mysterious visions to a friend of my childhood. He answered me: One day thou shalt be bishop of Hibernia. — This word threw me into consternation, wretched sinner that I am. And yet it was fulfilled.”[5]

Some time after this, the parents of the young Patrick had to make a journey into Armorica. On arriving, they found the whole province invaded by barbarians. The father and mother of Patrick were slaughtered. The young man was reserved as a slave of value. He was sold to Picts, who took him away on their ships. The flotilla was heading for Great Britain when Gaulish ships, meeting it, seized it. Patrick changed masters without recovering his liberty. They put the helm toward Bordeaux. There, Christians ransomed the captive, who came and knocked at the door of the monastery of Saint Martin of Tours. He was admitted among the religious, and he distinguished himself there soon by his piety and fervour.

Meanwhile the divine visions ceased not to show him Hibernia as the land where he was to carry the heavenly seed of faith. After four years of cenobitic life, he left the hospitable monastery, crossed the strait, and came to evangelise the Irish city of Temoria (Tara). It was not yet the hour marked by Providence. The missionary was received by the pagan populations as an enemy. He had to leave this ungrateful land and return to the Gauls. He placed himself for three years under the direction of the illustrious bishop of Auxerre, Saint Germanus. Then, for nine years, he went to ask of the rocks of the isle of Lérins, with the solitude which they offered him, the secrets of grace and conversion of which he had need for the distant country which he had the mission to convert. Germanus of Auxerre, who had traversed Great Britain in the quality of legate of the Pope, knew that at the extremity of the north of the known world there existed a land which had not yet seen the sun of faith rise: Patrick, who accompanied him on this journey, entertained the holy Bishop with his hopes and projects of apostolate. Germanus understood the necessity of sending to Hibernia evangelical workmen. On his return from England, he sent Patrick off to Rome with letters of recommendation addressed to Pope Saint Celestine: he must have spoken to the sovereign Pontiff of the advantage there would be in adjoining as a coadjutor to Palladius a religious whom a long captivity had familiarised with the language and usages of the Irish.

Saint Patrick was accompanied to Rome by a holy priest of the clergy of Auxerre, named Segetius, who had received for instruction from Saint Germanus to represent the future apostle "as a strong man and apt to make the harvest of the Lord." A missionary whose talent and piety were attested by Saint Germanus, that is, by a bishop who had all the confidence of the Pope, could only be welcome at Rome. According to a tradition long received in the capital of the Catholic world, the whole entourage of the Pope declared unanimously that no one more than Patrick was fit for the mission of Ireland.

It was very shortly before the death of Saint Celestine that Saint Patrick asked the Apostolic See to bless his labours. Without delay, he resumed the road to Auxerre where his friend and protector, Germanus, awaited him. He was on the way to Ireland when two disciples of Palladius brought him the news of the death of their master. Then he made a detour to go and be consecrated by a bishop of England, named Amator, whose see is unknown. After having received episcopal consecration, he betook himself to his destination, accompanied by Auxilius, Iserninus and several others: the holy company landed in Ireland in the course of the summer of the year 432.

On his passage through Cumbria and Cornwall, his word and his miracles had wrought striking conversions. They wished to retain him. They sought to frighten him by the prospect of the dangers he was about to run among the pagans of Hibernia. "But," he says in his *Confession*, "the Lord reassured me in heavenly visions. One night, his angel made me read this word of the prophet Zechariah: *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye*."[6] Arrived in Ireland, he betook himself to the general assembly of the chiefs and warriors of Hibernia, which was held annually at Tara, or Temoria, in the province of East Meath. There resided the principal chief, called the king of the island; the college of the druids was installed there and formed the religious centre alongside the political centre of the whole country. Patrick preached intrepidly the faith of Jesus Christ before these fierce warriors. The son of Neill, the principal monarch, interrupted the discourse, and threatened the audacious stranger with all his wrath: but several other chiefs were converted, among others the father of Saint Benen, or Benignus, who was later to succeed Saint Patrick on the see of Armagh. Their example was soon followed by the kings of Dublin, of Munster and by the seven sons of the king of Connaught. Ulster, rebellious to all the efforts of Saint Palladius, welcomed the new bishop with enthusiasm. One of his neophytes offered him a considerable domain, near the town of Down; a monastery was erected there under the name of Saul [Sabhall-Padrigh] (Patrick's Barn). It was in fact in a humble barn that the new missionary celebrated for the first time the divine office on the soil of Ireland, and it is to recall these modest beginnings of his apostolate that the missionary bishop gave the name of Barn to his first monastery. Two other foundations of this kind, Domnach-Padrigh (Patrick's Church) and Armagh, became in a few years

considerable Christian communities. Surprised himself at the progress of his apostolate, the humble Bishop cried out: “Whence can come these marvels? How have the sons of Hibernia, who had never known the true God and who adored impure idols, become a holy people, a generation of children of God? The sons and daughters of kings solicit the honour of being monks, or of consecrating their virginity to the Lord. Lately, I was baptising a young girl of the Scots as noble as she was fair. Six days after, she came to find me and said to me: An angel appeared to me; he ordered me to remain a virgin and to have no other spouse than Jesus Christ. — She solicited urgently the veil of nuns. She received it, in spite of the threats, even the persecutions of her family. And how many other virgins and widows who thus struggle against all human obstacles, to remain faithful to their heavenly spouse! I do not know the number; but God knows it, who gives to his humble handmaids a heroic courage. Thus, who will ever tear me from this land of blessing? What remains of my family solicits me in vain that I should go once more to visit my country. They call me into the Gauls, where I should have so much happiness in contemplating the face of the Saints. But the Spirit chains me to this land which I evangelise. If I left it, I should be a deserter.”[7]

History and legend have vied in seizing on the life of Patrick. In his legend, nothing is more poetic than the meeting of the Gallo-Roman apostle with the Irish bards who formed a hereditary and priestly caste. It is among them that he recruits his most faithful disciples: it is Ossian himself, the blind Homer of Ireland, who lets himself be converted by him, and to whom he permits in his turn to sing to him the long epic of the Celtic kings and heroes.[8] Agreement is not established between them without being preceded by some storms: Patrick threatened with hell the too profane warriors whose glory Ossian wanted, and the bard replied to the apostle: “If thy God were in hell, my heroes would draw him out of it.” But triumphant truth brought peace between poetry and faith. The monasteries founded by Patrick became the asylum and hearth of Celtic poetry. Once blessed and transformed, says an old author, the songs of the bards became so beautiful that the angels of God leaned over the edge of heaven to listen to them;[9] and one understands thus why the harp of the bards has remained the symbol and blazon of Catholic Ireland.

In his history, nothing is better established than his zeal to preserve the country where he had himself undergone slavery from the abuses of servitude and above all from the incursions of those pirates, Britons and Scots, thieves and dealers in men, who made of it a sort of stud where they came to recruit their human cattle. Nothing is more authentic than his eloquent protest against the king of a British horde who, landing in the midst of a tribe baptised the day before, had massacred several of them, and carried off the others to sell them far away. “Patrick, an ignorant sinner, but constituted bishop in Hibernia, a refugee among barbarous nations, on account of my love for God, I write with my own hand these letters to be transmitted to the soldiers of the tyrant, I do not say to my fellow-citizens nor to the fellow-citizens of the saints of Rome, but to the compatriots of the devil, to the apostate Scots and Picts who live in death and who come to fatten themselves on the blood of the innocent Christians whom I have begotten to my God… Does not the divine mercy which I love oblige me to act thus, to defend those very ones who lately made me myself a captive and who massacred the menservants and maidservants of my father?”[10] Elsewhere he vaunts the intrepidity of the slave girls whom he had converted, and who defended heroically, against unworthy masters, their modesty and their faith.[11]

The trade in men and women was then practised among all the Celtic nations, as in the last century on the coast of Africa. Among them slavery and the slave trade were far otherwise difficult to root out than paganism. This trade was still in full activity in the tenth century between England and Ireland, and the port of Bristol was its principal entrepôt.

But let us resume the letter of Saint Patrick to Coroticus, for so was named that barbarian, that clan chief who had devastated Patrick’s flock: “Where then shall go,” cries the holy Apostle, “where shall go this Coroticus and the bandits whom he has raised against the Lord and his Christ? What will be the lot of the scoundrels who count as an exploit the massacre of weak women, who divide among themselves with bloodstained

hands the heritage of orphans, who believe they are founding in blood and tears a temporal royalty, less stable than the cloud or the smoke? *Peccatores et fraudulenti a facie Domini peribunt*" [Sinners and the deceitful shall perish from the face of the Lord].[12] — The fierce despoiler did not let himself be softened by this letter; he did not give back the captives. Patrick then spread throughout the whole island of Great Britain, in Armorica, in the Gauls and in Germany, copies of his letter to Coroticus. He added the following attestation: "In the presence of God and his angels, I certify that the future will be such as I have predicted. Not that I wish to presume on my ignorance or weakness, but the Lord does not lie, and it is his word that I announce. I beseech all the servants of God who shall read this letter to publish it everywhere and to make it known to the Christian people. Let it be distributed above all among the subjects of Coroticus. Perhaps one day they will come to repentance; then they will regret having dipped their hands in blood, and they will restore liberty to the captives."[13] — Some months after, Coroticus, struck with mental alienation, died in despair.[14]

During the pontificate of Saint Leo the Great, Patrick had made a journey to Rome to obtain the canonical erection of the church of Armagh as a metropolitan see.[15] On his return, he ordained in Hibernia new bishops, whose acts raise the number to thirty. We know now only two, Auxilius and Iserninus, whose name, without any mention of see, figures with that of the saint at the head of the canons of a council of Armagh. These canons are interesting from the point of view of the manners of Great Britain in the fifth century. The redemption of captives was the work of charity par excellence, in a time of perpetual invasions.

Parishes were already constituted: the pastors who had the direction of them bore the title of "abbots," doubtless because it was religious or monks who first gathered in each locality a nucleus of the faithful. They were prescribed to receive no foreign cleric or priest unless he was bearer of a letter of communion delivered by the diocesan bishop. The latter made each year pastoral visits in the territory subject to his jurisdiction. During the time he spent in a parish, all the offerings made at the altar by the Christians of the locality belonged to him: the abbot or *parochus* who should have wished to retain them for his own profit was struck with censure. Inferior clerics could not leave a church nor pass to another without the permission of the incumbent. Finally foreign bishops were not to exercise any function of their order without the express authorisation of the diocesan.[16]

Such was the religious situation of the church of Ireland after the thirty years of episcopate of its founder. Saint Patrick was then an octogenarian. He wished to inscribe, in a last page of his *Confession*, the spiritual testament which he left to his successors. "If I have not done more," he says, "let it be imputed to my incapacity and my misery. May it please God that my sons surpass me in works of blessing and in fruits of salvation! That will be my glory: *Filius sapiens gloria patris est*.[17] I confess humbly my insufficiency, but at least I can bear myself the witness of having always practised the most absolute disinterestedness. How many times, my brethren, the Christians, the virgins of Jesus Christ, the pious women deposited on the altar the offerings which were destined for me! I always took care to have them returned to them. Often I was reproached for acting thus. But I wished by that to honour my ministry in the eyes of the infidels, and to prevent even the shadow of a suspicion of avarice or cupidity. Thus, of so many thousands of neophytes whom I have baptised, none can boast of having made me accept a present for my personal use. If there is a single one, let him say so: I am ready to give back all. Beloved, it is you, not your riches, that I have sought. What had been given me gratuitously, I have distributed in the same way; the clerics ordained by my mediocrity cannot complain that I have received anything from them. Even the shoes of my feet, I would not have wished to owe to anyone's charity. To you, your goods; to me the fatigues, the dangers, the perils of every kind, at the price of which I have been able to save some souls. Jesus Christ my master was poor; I thank him for having called me to the honour of sharing his chalice. How I covet the lot of our martyrs who have shed their blood for him! I should wish that my miserable corpse, torn to shreds, might be abandoned as prey to birds of prey or to wild beasts. But since this happiness has been refused me, I humbly beseech the

God who reigns in glory to take account of my desire and to have mercy on me." The holy old man had a revelation which made known to him his approaching death. "He had gone," say the Acts, "to visit the parishes of Ulster, and was preparing to resume the road to Armagh, when the angel of the Lord warned him that he should not re-enter alive his episcopal city. Near Duna (Down), there was a monastery of pious virgins, under the direction of Brigid, the pearl of Hibernia. The blessed Bishop, surrounded by a retinue of religious and ecclesiastics, wished to visit these holy daughters and address to them for the last time his paternal exhortations. While he spoke, a brilliant light came and fixed itself on a spot in the cemetery, to the east of the church. All present asked the Saint what this supernatural manifestation meant. Patrick refused to answer, but, addressing Brigid: My daughter, explain to us yourself, he said to her, the meaning of this apparition. — The virgin answered that the place thus marked designated the tomb of a venerable servant of God who was soon to receive burial there. Patrick did not press his questioning further. On the point of leaving Brigid, he said to her in private: I am returning to the monastery of Saul [Sabhall]. Prepare the winding-sheet in which you are to bury me, and bring it promptly. — Arrived at Saul, the man of God stretched himself on his couch to die. He received the divine mysteries from the hands of Bishop Tassach, his disciple. Then, raising his arms, he blessed his own, commended them to the Lord and passed from this world to eternity, from faith to clear sight, from the sorrows of time to the endless joys of heaven (17 March 464). The pious Brigid buried him in the winding-sheet made by her. The tomb was dug in the cemetery of the church of Down, in the place previously designated."[18]

His funeral was not without marvels; angels were heard singing there, and when they withdrew, they left around his body a pleasant odour, as if the most exquisite perfumes had been poured out there. It is also said that, for twelve days, there was no night at all nor darkness throughout the whole province; and even that the darkness was not so thick during the whole year as it is wont to be. As God promised Saint Patrick that those who should be devout to his memory, and who should do some works of piety in his honour on the day of his feast, should obtain mercy at the hour of death and should not perish eternally, it is extremely advantageous to put oneself under his protection. The holiness of his manners corresponded to his great and fair actions: he recited each day the whole Psalter of David and several other prayers with extraordinary devotion; his life was a continual orison and application; he had so great a respect for the sign of the cross that he made it on himself at all moments, and that, when he met crosses, he stopped, prostrated himself on the ground and adored them most deeply; never did he travel on Sundays, being persuaded that these days ought to be employed solely in the worship of God and interior rest. Let us add to this picture some traits drawn from the Roman Breviary: "By the preaching of Patrick, Ireland, formerly a hearth of idolatry, became the Isle of Saints… He enriched his metropolitan church with relics of saints, brought from Rome. The visions from on high, the gift of prophecy, the great miracles with which God favoured him, made him shine so much that the renown of Patrick spread very far… He adored God three hundred times a day with his knees on the ground; in reciting each hour of the breviary he made a hundred signs of the cross on himself. Dividing the night into three parts, during the first he recited a hundred psalms and made two hundred genuflexions; he passed the second in reciting the other fifty psalms, plunged in cold water, his heart, eyes and hands raised toward heaven; he consecrated the third to a light rest, stretched on the bare stone. Of singular humility, he worked with his hands like the Apostle."

ICONOGRAPHY AND LEGENDS; SAINT PATRICK'S PURGATORY

1° The Apostle of Ireland is represented with a baptismal font near him, not only because of the conversion of Ireland, but because, from the day of his baptism, he restored sight, it is said, to a man born blind who, inspired by a voice from on high, went and took the right hand of the little Patrick and made him make the sign of the cross on the ground. A spring gushed from the soil; he washed his eyes, in mourning, with the miraculous water, and immediately he recovered sight. His interior eyes opened at the same time to the gift of knowledge, and this man, who had never seen letters of writing, was able to read and understand what he

said. This triple miracle, due to the sign of the cross, is recorded in the ancient office of Saint Patrick.[19] This was interpreted afterwards as a prophecy of the ministry which he was to exercise in opening the eyes of the heart to the Irish. It is told, moreover, — to exhaust the question of baptism, — that, baptising a king of Ireland, he inadvertently rested the lower end of his crozier on the prince's foot. Now as the pastoral staff ended in a point, he soon perceived his mistake on seeing the blood of the neophyte flow. The catechumen had not flinched, thinking that this ceremony formed part of the Christian rite. So much faith deserved a miracle: the Saint healed the foot he had pierced.

2° He is represented again at the feet of Pope Saint Celestine, either to express that he asked the Pope's permission to carry the faith to Ireland, — and this would not distinguish him from the other converters of nations who all hold their mission from the Apostolic See, — or more probably to show the inviolable attachment of the Irish to the Holy See. 3° A serpent coils at the foot of his crozier. This reptile is given as an attribute to Saint Patrick, because it is admitted by the Irish that he drove from their island the serpents and other venomous beasts. The fact is that the English have several times attempted in vain to acclimatise dangerous animals in Ireland.

4° Saint Patrick overthrows the idol of the Sun. Visiting the county of Leitrim, he came upon the Plain of Slaughter.[20] There stood, from time immemorial, the principal druidic idol of the Irish, called the Head of the Sun.[21] This frightful image, which was said to be of gold, appeared surrounded by twelve less great idols, which represented, as is believed, the signs of the zodiac. The horrors of pagan superstition were renewed around this dreadful idol, object of worship for all the colonies by which the island had been successively conquered. As to the ancient Moloch of the Phoenicians and Carthaginians, there were offered to it on certain days little children in sacrifice; and the cries of these innocent victims, and the tears of the poor mothers, had always remained powerless to abolish a barbarous custom of which so many examples are found among the peoples of antiquity.

To Saint Patrick was reserved the glory of destroying at once the old Irish idol and the worship that was rendered to it. Arrived on the field of Slaughter, the new Apostle preaches to the peoples the pure and holy doctrine of the Gospel: his powerful and persuasive voice is listened to. Soon, at the order of the envoy of God, the horrible idol is thrown down; its worship is destroyed for ever. Some days after, on this same theatre of blood where the dreadful head of the Sun had stood, a great church was seen to rise, where the worship of the God of the Christians, the true Sun of justice and truth, came to replace those monstrous rites which for so long had soiled and bloodied this plain of Ireland.

5° Saint Patrick commands death to give up its victims, in order that their own mouth may proclaim before the people the truth of the doctrines which he announces to them; or else he makes sure whether his order to plant a cross on the tomb of Christians, and not of infidels, has been faithfully executed, by questioning the dead themselves and learning from their mouth whether they had deserved this consoling homage. There are few lives that are embellished with more numerous prodigies than that of Saint Patrick. In Ireland the blood of martyrs has not sown Christians, since only one of the companions of the Apostle fell victim by the hands of an Irishman during the course of this peaceful crusade, and what other nation can boast of being thus as it were virgin of the blood of its first missionaries! but in return, God granted to his envoy the omnipotence of miracles to an extraordinary degree.

6° Here he is with the harp of the Irish in his hands, doubtless to express the ardent prayers of the afflicted country, for this attribute was given him only after the cruelties exercised by Anglicanism, although, strictly, this attribute, as is clear from the life of Saint Patrick, may recall his relations of good friendship with the bards. 7° He drives out demons. His historian of the twelfth century[22] relates that, when the man of God landed in Ireland, the demons, suspecting that they had to do with a redoubtable champion, formed a circle with which they girdled the whole island to bar his passage; but he raised his right hand, made the sign of the cross and passed on. He alone had perceived the infernal cohort. 8° Kneeling before a smoking cave. This is

an allusion to the celebrated purgatory of Saint Patrick. It was a cavern situated in a little island of Lough Derg, in the province of western Ulster: it opened by a well from which one descended into the expiatory depths. The Saint, in order to touch the heart of his flock, had had represented on the walls an image of the sufferings of the damned. It was there that he often withdrew himself to practise the austerities of penance and meditate on the rigour of the judgments of God. Several other Saints, after his example, withdrew into this remote cavern.

It was in this cave that the purgatory was made. On the edges of the island there were little huts to receive the pilgrims, and near Saint Patrick's well, six little round cells, three feet in diameter, as so many discomforts, to exercise the pilgrims who went there in order to anticipate their purgatory in this world, praying there and practising the austerities of penance in imitation of Saint Patrick.

The popularity of this old Irish legend, according to which one could discharge oneself of every debt contracted toward God by anterior sins by descending into Saint Patrick's purgatory as into a place of expiation, persisted long even outside the island since the great Spanish dramatist, Calderón, has left a drama entitled: *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*.

The tradition of Saint Patrick's purgatory vividly moved all the minds of the Middle Ages; it is one of the facts of which the trace is best followed across the centuries, from the sixth to the middle of the seventeenth.[23]

Messingham and numerous Irish authors trace the origin of this purgatory to Saint Patrick, that is, to the beginning of the fifth century.[24]

It would be too long to recall here the crowd of writers who have occupied themselves with this great Christian tradition.[25]

In the ancient office of Saint Patrick which was recited in Ireland, allusion is made to this purgatory. Several breviaries of the sixteenth century prove that veneration for Saint Patrick's purgatory continued until that time. Better still, at the beginning of the seventeenth, in 1622, the church of Paris inserted in its breviary, printed by order of Monseigneur de Gondi, this mention of the Irish purgatory: "Even now people go to visit a cave of penance which is called the Well or the Purgatory of Saint Patrick."

In the twelfth century, shortly after Jocelin, author of a very detailed life of Saint Patrick, a monk, a Bernardine like him, named Henry, gathered all the traditions relative to Saint Patrick's purgatory and published them. Th. Messingham had this treatise printed for the first time, in 1624, in his *Florilegium*.

From the twelfth century, the Order of Cîteaux was established in England and in Ireland where Saint Bernard had founded some monasteries. The island of Saint Patrick's purgatory found itself under its jurisdiction and the place preserved all its celebrity, for we see that Caesarius of Heisterbach, who ended his history of miracles in 1222, relates marvels of it. Religious went to make trial of the purgatory, and this author reports the history of a monk of his Order who was favoured with many visions there.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we find little concerning the purgatory: but the religious of Cîteaux celebrated it and had it celebrated in some particular churches: the office of Saint Patrick with mention of the purgatory was even inserted in the Roman Breviary which was given at Venice toward the end of the fifteenth century. The Bollandists cite on 17 March the various editions of this Breviary.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, there were still seen in the islands of Lough Derg very ancient monasteries. One of these islands was called the island of Saint Dabeoc, and the prior of the monastery bore the title of Prior of Saint Patrick's purgatory. Quite near there, in the same lake, there was another little island called the island of Saint Patrick's Purgatory. It is very small: two hundred and forty feet long, by a hundred and twenty wide.

In this island, there was seen a chapel with a little monastery guarded by a religious of Saint Dabeoc. In the middle of the island was another cell sixteen feet long, low and narrow, in which one was very ill at ease.

This is how the devotion of the purgatory was still practised in the seventeenth century: When the pilgrims landed at this place, furnished with permission from the bishop and the prior of the purgatory, the religious of the island received them, questioned them; and, when he found them well resolved to enter into purgatory, he put them for nine days in the exercises. Then they were given for chamber only one of the little round cells, three feet in diameter, which surrounded the well: they were called beds: very uncomfortable beds, however, in which it was not possible to lie down. They came out of these only three times a day to go to the chapel. During eight days, no other food than a little bread and water; on the ninth day they took nothing. The religious led the penitent in this state to the cave and shut it with a key to reopen it only at the end of twenty-four hours, during which the penitent made his purgatory. At the epoch of the Reformation, the tomb of Saint Patrick was profaned and his ashes dispersed. His crozier, called the staff of Jesus, so famous in popular traditions, was burned at Dublin. To repair so many outrages, the Irish Catholics have redoubled their love toward their father in the faith: it would be difficult to count the churches which they have dedicated to him in their country as on the land of exile where Protestant intolerance has cast them.

In France, Saint Patrick has perhaps had some relations with the church of Lisieux which has always rendered him a particular worship and which believed it possessed some of his relics. At Rouen, the beautiful church of Saint-Patrice is still today, by its magnificent windows, one of the remarkable edifices of the old Norman city.

We have followed chiefly the *Acta*; Darras, *History of the Church*, vol. xiii; de Montalembert, *Monks of the West*, vol. ii; Ozanam, *Germanic Studies*; Dr. Moran, vice-rector of the Irish College at Rome, *Essays on the Origin, Doctrines, and Discipline of the Early Irish Church*, Dublin, 1864, and the *Life of the Saint* by Maxime de Montrond.

Saint Gertrude of Nivelles, Virgin

626–659. — Popes: Honorius I; Vitalian. — Kings of France: Clotaire II; Clotaire III.

The only advantage of human grandeurs is to be able to trample them underfoot for love of God.

We shall not repeat here what we have already said elsewhere of the parents of Saint Gertrude, whether on the subject of Saint Pepin of Landen,[1] her father, and first prince of Brabant, or on the occasion of her cousin and goddaughter Saint Gudula,[2] patroness of Brussels. We shall say only that, having been brought up in the fear of God by the care of her most holy mother Itta,[3] she made such great progress in virtue that, being entirely smitten with divine love, she conceived a general contempt for all the delights and all the vain honours of the world: so that, from then on, she took a firm resolution in her heart to have no other Spouse than Jesus Christ, to whom she consecrated her virginity, as she made well apparent in the circumstance which we are going to relate.

The king of the Franks, Dagobert, who had made prince Pepin mayor of his palace, solicited him to give her in marriage to a young Frankish lord whom he wished to favour, and who had set his eyes on her to marry her. He represented to Pepin that this match was advantageous to his daughter; but, seeing that he gave him no satisfactory answer, he wished to speak of it himself to Gertrude. He had her brought into his presence, and proposed to her the husband he destined for her and whom he desired her to accept. The young princess answered him sharply that she would never take an earthly husband; that she wanted no other than Jesus Christ.

This answer was a subject of sadness and anger to the young lord who sought her; but it was an object of astonishment and admiration to the whole court and to the king himself, who, being moreover a very

religious prince, esteemed more than ever this virtuous girl, and honoured her as a great saint and a faithful spouse of Jesus Christ.

From that time, Gertrude remained always retired near her holy mother, for the space of four years (and not fourteen) that Pepin still lived; she did nothing else than practise devotion, without troubling herself with the affairs of the world: she left the palace only to go to church; when she had finished her prayers there, she returned at once to the palace to begin there other exercises of piety. Saint Pepin having died (646), Itta, following the advice of Saint Amandus, bishop of Maastricht, had a celebrated monastery built at Nivelles, where she withdrew with Gertrude, to lead a religious life there. This pious mother wished to cut her daughter's hair herself: which she did in the form of a crown; the Saint esteemed herself more glorious than if she had borne on her head all the diadems of kingdoms and empires.

They were soon followed in so holy an enterprise by a good number of girls, who formed a congregation and were called canonesses: Blessed Itta found it fitting to establish Gertrude superior and abbess of this celebrated community. Thus the mother obeyed her daughter, and the daughter commanded her mother; this holy woman remained twelve years in this humble submission, after which she died most holily, on 21 February (652). Gertrude, after the death of her holy mother, remained alone charged with the conduct of this whole company; and, because this great care would have distracted her from her ordinary exercises of orison and contemplation, she regulated things in this way: she entrusted the care of temporal affairs outside to canons, and those inside to some of the sisters, and reserved authority to herself only over the spiritual, for the conduct of her daughters; this is why she employed herself in the reading of holy Scripture with so much ardour and assiduity that she knew almost all of it by heart; and, what is more admirable, she penetrated its sense and mysteries to explain them to others. It is not hard to believe, seeing the interior and divine communications which she received from the Holy Spirit during her prayers. Here is a miraculous proof of it: One day when she was making orison before the altar of Saint Sixtus, martyr, a globe of fire appeared on her head in the sight of the other sisters; which signified, says the historian of her life, that her soul was then filled with the lights of the Holy Spirit; in effect, she was so penetrated by it that she breathed only a most ardent love for her God and a perfect charity for her neighbour. The first shone in all her actions, and the second, a point so essential to Christianity and so recommended by Jesus Christ, appeared chiefly in the hospitals which she had built, to receive there the poor, pilgrims, widows and orphans, to each of whom she furnished abundantly what was necessary.

The treatment she made her body undergo showed well enough that she cared little for it: she afflicted it so much by vigils, by fasts and by other sorts of austerities that she finally brought on herself a great languor; God made known to her by revelation that this was to lead her to death. As soon as she saw herself attacked, she resigned her charge of abbess, and substituted Saint Wilfetrudis in her place. This was a niece, aged twenty, whom she had nourished from her youth in that same house, and who made herself so perfect a servant of God that, after having administered that charge for ten years, she merited to be honoured as a Saint.

Meanwhile, the more Gertrude's strength diminished, the more her ardour for mortification seemed to increase: for, instead of relieving her body exhausted by illness, she redoubled her austerities, wearing secretly a rough hair-shirt covered with old cloth, and using only a poor veil which a passing religious had once given her as alms; this was the apparel in which she ordered that she should be buried, saying that superfluous things become neither the living nor the dead. At last, when she felt herself extremely weakened, she sent one of her canons to the monastery of Fosses, which she had had built in the diocese of Liège, to learn from Saint Ultan, brother of Saint Fursey and Saint Foillan, at what time she would depart from this world. The Saint answered the messenger: "Tomorrow, during the celebration of holy mass, the spouse of Jesus Christ, Gertrude, will go out of this life to go and enjoy an immortal life: tell her that she has nothing to fear, and that Saint Patrick, accompanied by the blessed angels, will receive her soul to put it in possession of

glory." These agreeable tidings being brought to her, her heart was filled with joy, and her mouth with the praises of her divine Spouse; the next day, which was the second Sunday of Lent, from six o'clock, she had brought to her the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, and, following the prophecy of Saint Ultan, when the priest was saying the orations before the preface, she rendered her soul to Jesus Christ, on Sunday 17 March 664 [*sic*], according to some; 659, according to others. She was thirty-three years old. According to her order, she was buried in her hair-shirt, without sheet or shroud; she had said before dying: The superfluous ornaments of tombs serve neither the living nor the dead.

The author who wrote this life, reported by Surius, relates, as an eyewitness, that a most agreeable odour exhaled from her body and filled the whole chamber, and that she appeared at the moment of her death to a holy abbess called Modesta, at the monastery of Remiremont,[4] in the Vosges, assuring her that at that same hour she was leaving the world to go to God; this abbess gave notice of it to Saint Clodulf (or Saint Cloud), bishop of Metz and son of Saint Arnulf.

Ten years after, she appeared visibly on the refectory of the college of Nivelles, extinguishing the flames of a great fire which had broken out there. Another time, a child who had drowned in a well was placed on her tomb. The mother of this child doubted the glory of the Saint. A religious defended her honour: "It is here," she cried, "O great Saint, that the power of your merits must be made to appear." At this invocation the drowned child recovered life. The abbess Agnes, who had succeeded Wilfetrudis, had a fine temple built, where she put the little bed on which our Saint had died; but, since, it was transported to another church which Saint Begga, her sister, also had built for her, and in the one as in the other, God has wrought numerous miracles. The memory of Gertrude is ever living; her benefits have never been forgotten; more than one precious souvenir of her is kept even today. Let us cite here the cup called Saint Gertrude's, a work which goes back perhaps to the sixth century, which was admired and venerated in 1864, at the exhibition of Mechelen, and which forms part of the treasure of the church of Nivelles. This cup has been the instrument of many miracles which have several times been the object of interesting narratives. — One of her relics is venerated at Cérisy-Gailly. In the images that have been made of Saint Gertrude, mice, dormice and field-mice run around her and even climb on her crozier. Here is the explanation: In the abbey of Nivelles, water enclosed under the crypt of the church was drawn, and it was used to sprinkle the fields infested with voles and other rodents, enemies of the harvests.

She is invoked especially against rats and mice, against madness; for cats, for a good lodging on a journey, against fever.

It is above all in Belgium, among the country people, that her cult is spread: Belgium counts a crowd of churches dedicated to her: where there are no churches, there is her altar or her statue. On the day of her feast, in many villages, there is the custom of offering wheat as first-fruits of the harvest, in order to preserve it, by the intercession of the Saint, from the scourge of rats.[5]

She is particularly honoured at Geertruidenberg, at Breda and at Nivelles, in Holland and in Belgium.

MONASTERY OF NIVELLES

There is not complete agreement on the Order to which the monastery of Nivelles belonged. It was, in the end, occupied by Canonesses; but at its foundation they were probably Benedictines.

In the ninth century, the ravages of the Normans overturned monastic discipline at Nivelles, as appears from a diploma of the emperor Henry IV, given in 1059. This prince divided the goods of the monastery into three parts, one for the hospital, the second for the abbess, and the third for the chapter of both sexes. This division was confirmed in 1136, by the emperor Lothair, who made of the last part seventy-two prebends for as many brothers and sisters. It is thus that the ancient monastery was transformed into a chapter of both sexes, which was composed, in the last times, of forty canonesses and thirty canons.

None were received as canonesses but those who gave proof of nobility of four paternal quarterings and four maternal quarterings. They made no solemn vows and could return to the world, with the exception of the abbess and the provostess. The abbess was the first dignitary; her nomination was reserved to the sovereign. She conferred all the prebends of the canonesses. Those of the canons and chaplains she conferred alternately with the Holy See. She was lady of the town and its dependencies, as much in the spiritual as in the temporal, and took the title of princess of Nivelles. The sovereign Pontiffs, the emperors and the dukes of Brabant granted her great privileges, among others that of coining money.

The second dignitary was the provostess, who had the right to convoke the canonesses and to preside over the chapter with a deciding vote.

The canons celebrated the office in their oratory of Saint Paul, except on the days of certain solemn feasts when they sang the office with the canonesses. The first dignity of the chapter of the canons was that of provost, and the second that of dean, who exercised the pastoral functions, and who had as assistants two vicars called *semainiers* [weekly officers]. At the end of the last century, the chapter of Nivelles shared the fate of all our religious establishments. Happily, the fine collegiate church, dedicated first to Saint Peter, and then to Saint Gertrude, was preserved from destruction; it is today the principal parish church of the town.

Pope Honorius III gave the decree of her canonisation, as Cardinal Baronius has observed in his notes on the Roman martyrology; the memory of our Saint is marked not only in this martyrology, but in those of Bede, of Usuard and of Ado, and in that of the Saints of France.

Saint Agricola, Bishop of Chalon-sur-Saône (580)

Agricola or Aregle,[1] as Saint Gregory of Tours calls him, who lived in his time, and who knew him very particularly, was of senatorial family, that is, of the first nobility of the Gauls: senatorial nobility served to distinguish the ancient Gaulish or Roman houses of the country from the Franks and Burgundians who had introduced a new nobility: that of the sword. He had been likewise well brought up in the exercises which serve to form the mind and heart, and he had a greatness of soul which repaired advantageously what the smallness of his stature might have taken from his credit and authority among the peoples who ordinarily let themselves be prepossessed by the appearance of exterior and sensible things. He was very eloquent in his discourses, very polite in his manners, very prudent in his resolutions and steps, wise and moderate in all his conduct. These excellent qualities, which distinguished him extremely in the world, were heightened and sanctified by a solid piety, and by all the other virtues befitting a Christian and a bishop. If one believes most authors, he contracted in his youth a very close friendship with the celebrated Fortunatus, Christian poet, who was afterwards bishop of Poitiers. They were instructed in the same school and under the discipline of the same master. This school was none other than Agricola's paternal house; and this common master was none other than his father, who received Fortunatus in his house, loved him, maintained him, formed him, and provided for him as for his own son. As long as so good a father lived, Fortunatus regarded Saint Agricola only as his brother; but, when he saw him dead, he conjured the son, who was already bishop, to be pleased to take his place toward him, and to hold for him the place of father and master.

It was in the year 532, under the reign of the children of Clovis, that Agricola was raised to the episcopal see of Chalon-sur-Saône, after the death of Saint Sylvester, sixth bishop of the town. The obligation to hold his rank with brilliance and to observe the proprieties of his dignity with the world brought neither change nor diminution to his first austere and penitent manner of life. He lived, according to Saint Gregory of Tours, in very great abstinence. He never dined, and began to eat only toward evening, taking only a very light meal. The application which he brought to edifying and purifying the living temples of the Holy Spirit did not prevent him from occupying himself also in building material ones, to sustain and increase the piety of the faithful: he embellished them with marble, with mosaic paintings, and with various other ornaments. He worked even at the repair and enlargement of his episcopal town, always bent on the public and private good

of his people, as much in the spiritual as in the temporal, as the common father of his church and of his country. He was no less zealous for the good of the universal Church. He subscribed to the third council of Orléans, held in the year 538, by the ministry of the priest Avolus whom he had sent there in his place. But he assisted in person at the fourth of the same town, in the year 541, and at the fifth, which was assembled in 549; and thence he betook himself to the second council of Auvergne, which was held the same year, to have confirmed there, with his colleagues, the canons and fine regulations which had been made at Orléans, and to re-establish uniformity of discipline with purity of morals and faith in the churches of France. He found himself again at the second council of Paris, assembled in the year 555, and finally at the second of Lyon, his metropolis, in the year 567. The time of his episcopate was honoured by the life and miracles of a holy priest named Desiderius, by corruption Dirié and Didier, a recluse in his diocese. To procure a new ornament for his town, he transported his body from the monastery of Gourdon, where he had died, into the church of a leper hospital which he had newly had built in the suburbs of Chalon.

Saint Agricola, after having governed his people for the space of nearly forty-eight years, died aged eighty-three, in the year 580, which was the fifth of the young Childebert, king of Austrasia, and he had for successor Saint Flavius, referendary of Gontran, king of Orléans. He was buried in the church of Saint-Marcel, where his body was found, in the year 818, with those of Saint Sylvester, his predecessor, and of the priest Saint Dirié, of whom we have spoken. Bishop Girbold made the translation of it the same year, and it is claimed that Pope John VIII, returning from Troyes to Italy through the town of Chalon, established on this occasion or authorised the public cult of these Saints. His relics are still preserved and honoured in our day, in the church of Saint-Marcel, near Chalon: they are placed on the high altar, with those of the blessed martyr Saint Marcellus. The historians of his life report a great number of miracles wrought by the intercession of this merciful servant of God. We shall relate only one trait of his beneficence. A man named Solomon, native of Touraine, blind for ten years, received in a dream the advice to go into Burgundy to the place where he would find a monastery in honour of Saint Marcellus. The voice from heaven warned him that as soon as he should have prostrated himself before the tomb of Saint Agricola, which was in this abbey, he would recover sight by the intercession of this great Saint. This unfortunate man set out under the protection of a relative who was to offer a candle at the tomb. Solomon had not yet made half the journey when his eyes began to open. He arrived at Saint-Marcel perfectly cured. He remained three whole days near the mausoleum of Saint Agricola in continual thanksgiving for so great a benefit. Then he was seen to return to his country without needing a guide.

Baillet; Legendary of Autun; History of Chalon.

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[2] See, at 17 January, the life of Saint Anthony.

[3] See at 14 October.

[4] See *Essays on the Origin … of the Early Irish Church*, by Dr. Moran, and the life of Saint Patrick, on this day.

[5] Withburga, born in England about the middle of the seventh century, was the youngest of the daughters of Anna, king of the East Angles. She had for mother Saint Hereswitha, who passed into France after the death of her husband, and for sisters Saint Etheldreda, Saint Sexburga, Saint Ethelburga, Saint Edilburga, and for brother Saint Erconwald, bishop of London. She walked worthily in the footsteps of her elders, and having consecrated herself to God from her youth, she withdrew to Holkham, far from the court, to sanctify herself. After the death of her father, she went to settle at Dereham where, at the indication of the Blessed Virgin, she built a monastery which death did not allow her to finish. She died on 17 March 683 [*sic*]. Five years after, her body having been found incorrupt, it was transported into the church. In 974 her relics were translated to Ely and united with those of Saints Etheldreda and Sexburga, her sisters.

[6] Theoctistus was a monk of Pelecete, in Asia. He had much to suffer for the holy Images during the persecution of the Iconoclasts.

[7] See our *Seraphic Palm-Tree*, vol. iii.

[8] *John* xix, 39–42.

[9] See *Annales Benedictini*, vol. ii, p. 210, and Le Comte, vol. ii, p. 817 and vol. vii, p. 74.

[10] *Hist. Med. Monast.*, part 2, p. 101. [Printed on the first page of Saint Patrick, displaced.]

[11] *Hist. Med. Monast.*, p. 223. [Likewise displaced onto the page of Saint Patrick.]

[12] *Patricius, Patrick, Padraigh, Parriz*. It is also said that his first name was *Mann* [*sic*; the usual form is *Succat*], and that the holy Pope Celestine changed this name to that of Patrick; but we have no proof of it.

[13] It must not be lost from view that the Scots, who later gave their name to Scotland, then inhabited Ireland, and that Ireland alone, in the fifth century, was designated by the name of Scotia. The mission of Saint Palladius, sent from Rome, is attested by Saint Prosper, in his *Chronicle*, published about the year 434. The authority of Saint Prosper, in history, is such that no one has ever dared contest it: the adversaries of the apostolicity of the Church of Ireland themselves acknowledge that Saint Palladius was sent by Celestine I.

[14] It is known that at that epoch laymen who were widowers, or who renounced, in concert with their wives, the rights of marriage, were frequently promoted to the clerical state and to the priesthood. Such is the sense of the words of Saint Patrick. We make this remark in order to guard the reader against the objections of Protestantism, which has more than once leaned on this text to sustain its thesis against ecclesiastical celibacy. Saint Patrick does not speak of his mother: it has been said that she was a niece of Saint Martin of Tours, but we have found on this subject only assertions and no proofs.

[15] "The general opinion in Ireland," wrote us, on 13 August 1871, M. Murphy, bursar of the Irish Seminary at Paris, "is that Saint Patrick was a Frenchman. But, as on this side of the strait there is diversity of opinions on the precise place of his birth." Neglecting what has been said in favour of this or that locality of Scotland or of Ireland, we shall say that in France two regions dispute the honour of having given birth to Saint Patrick: the Boulonnais and Armorican Brittany. Dr. Moran, vice-rector of the Irish College at Rome, author of the *Essays on the Origin, Doctrines and Discipline of the Early Irish Church*, declares for Boulogne or the territory of Boulogne. We could cite a great number of other authorities and set out their arguments, but this dissertation would carry us too far. Those whom the question interests may consult, besides the two authors we have just cited: Lanigan, *Eccles. Hist.*; Thomas Moore, *History of Ireland*, apud Boll.; the *Life of Saint Patrick*, by Jocelin, monk of the twelfth century, who says that the qualification *Taburnia* or *Tabernii*, added to Bonaven, comes from there having been near there a Roman camp composed of tents or huts, besides that it is easy enough to perceive the radical of Bononia in Bonaven; d'Anville, *Notice of Ancient Gaul*, etc.

[16] Bolland., *Confess. S. Patricii*, t. ii March, pp. 633–634.

[17] *Zach.* ii, 8.

[18] *Confess. Patric.*, ch. 4.

[19] *Ossianic*, ii, 472.

[20] La Villemarqué, *Celtic Legend*, p. 109.

[21] "*Inter barbaras gentes proselytus et profugus ob amorem Dei… Non dico civibus meis atque civibus sanctorum Romanorum, sed civibus daemonum… Socii Scotorum atque Pictorum apostatarum… Illam gentem quae me aliquando cepit, et devastavit servos et ancillas patris mei.*" Epistle of S. Patrick to the Christians, subjects of the tyrant Coroticus, ap. Bolland., 17 March, p. 533.

[22] "*Sed et illae maxime laborant, quae servitio detinentur, usque ad terrores et minas assidue perferunt.*" *Confession of S. Patrick concerning his life and conduct*, ap. Boll., p. 536.

[23] S. Patrick, *Epist. ad Coroticum*; *Patr. lat.*, t. liii, cols. 813– 818 passim.

[24] Id., ibid., col. 818.

[25] Bolland., *Act. Sanct.*, 17 March; *Acts of S. Patrick.*

[26] Bolland., *Act. Sanct.*, 17 March; *Acts of S. Patrick.*

[27] S. Patrick, *Synodus et Canones*, passim; *Patr. lat.*, t. liii, cols. 817–828.

[28] *Prov.* x, 1; xv, 20.

[29] S. Patrick, *Confessio*, ch. 21–24 passim; *Patr. lat.*, t. liii, cols. 811–814; Bolland., *Act. Sanct.*, *Vita Patricii*, 17 March.

[30] See *Florilegium insulae Sanctorum*, apud Th. Messingham.

[31] *Magh Sleacht.*.

[32] Or *Crom-Cruach*, also sometimes called *Caengroith*.

[33] Jocelinus, monk of Furness, apud Lancastrienses.

[34] See *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae*, Louvain, 1645.

[35] *Florilegium insulae Sanctorum*, cited. Cf. especially Th. Wright, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, etc., London, 1844.

[36] See *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum antiquitates*, London, 1647, in which Ussher cites Matthew Paris, Jacques de Vitry, Saint Antoninus, Vincent of Beauvais, Thomas Brompton, François Bouillon, Denis the Carthusian, Caesarius of Heisterbach and others. Ware, *De Hibernia et antiquitatibus ejus*, London, 1658.

[37] Landen, the birthplace of Saint Gertrude, is only a little village, which will take on importance because of its great central railway station. The church is dedicated to Saint Gertrude.

[38] Or Goule.

[39] Or Iduberga.

[40] Formerly *Avendum*.

[41] Local notes communicated by the Rev. Father Servais Dirks, of the Order of Minors, of Saint-Trond.

[1] Or Aregle, or Agrele, or again Agriculus: it is under this last name that Saint Gregory of Tours designates him.

18 March

Martyrologies

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

The feast of the archangel Saint Gabriel. — At Caesarea, in Palestine, the birth into heaven of Blessed Alexander, bishop, who, having come from his episcopal town, which was in Cappadocia, to Jerusalem, impelled by the desire to see the holy places, while the bishop Narcissus, already old, governed that church, took the helm of it by an order from heaven; some time after, during the persecution of Decius, a venerable old man by his great age and his white hair, he was led to Caesarea, shut up in prison, and consummated his martyrdom for the confession of Jesus Christ. 251. — At Augsburg, Saint Narcissus, bishop, who first preached the Gospel in Rhaetia (among the Grisons); afterwards, having passed into Spain, and having converted at Gerona many infidels to the faith of Jesus Christ, he received in that place, with the deacon Felix, during the persecution of Diocletian, the palm of martyrdom.[1] 4th c. — At Nicomedia, ten thousand blessed Martyrs, who passed by the sword for the confession of Jesus Christ.[2] 4th c. — In the same place, the holy martyrs Trophimus and Eucarpus. 301. — In Great Britain, Saint Edward, king, who perished by the artifices of his stepmother, and shone by many miracles. 978. — At Jerusalem, Saint Cyril, bishop, who, having suffered for the cause of the faith many ill-treatments from the Arians, and having been driven several times from his church, ended at last his life in peace, all shining with the glory of his holiness. An ecumenical council, writing to Pope Damasus, rendered an illustrious testimony to the purity of his faith. 386. — At Lucca, in Tuscany, the birth into heaven of Saint Frigidian, bishop, illustrious by the gift of miracles; his feast is celebrated principally on 21 November, day of the translation of his body. 6th c. — At Mantua, Saint Anselm, bishop and confessor. 1086.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED

At Langres and at Dijon, Saint Tetricus, bishop of Langres, whom the Lord found watching when he recalled him to himself.[3] 572. — At the monastery of La Barre, near Soissons, the translation of the relics of Blessed Pierrine or Perrette Hergoz. Pierrine was born in Belgium, of parents so poor that they were reduced to beg their bread to live; but they left her as inheritance a good otherwise precious than all the goods of the world, the fear of God. At seventeen years, she took the cord of the Third Order of Saint Francis, to weep, she said, her sins, which she did with so much sorrow that her eyes became two fountains of tears. A special virtue distinguished this young virgin: absolute obedience toward the director of her conscience, obedience without which it is impossible to make any progress in piety. At the end of some years, Pierrine retired into a hermitage near Ghent. As she was there one day in contemplation, Our Lord appeared to her, and in sign that he accepted her as his spouse, put a gold ring on her finger. The Saviour espouses souls on the cross: incomparable sufferings followed close. To crown these favours, she received the stigmata. She fell asleep in the arms of divine mercy on 16 March 1472, at the age of fifty years. — At Marcenay, diocese of Dijon, Saint Vorles, curé of that parish, and friend of Saint Tetricus, bishop of Langres. Some authors wish that Saint Vorles converted Gontran, king of Burgundy, and contributed to making a saint of the latter. 6th c. — For memory, Saint Mondericus, brother of Saint Arnulf of Metz. Named coadjutor of Saint Tetricus of Langres, he became suspect to Gontran, king of Burgundy, who had him shut up for two years in a narrow and uncovered tower on the banks of the Rhône. Delivered at the prayer of Saint Nicetius, archbishop of Lyon, he was chosen as bishop of Aire or probably of Arsat, a little town of Rouergue, whose see did not subsist long. 6th c. — At Algiers [*sic*; Carthage], feast of Saint Marcellinus, military tribune and public notary. Charged by the emperor Honorius to put an end to the schism which divided the Donatists and the Catholics, he accomplished his mission with so much success that the Donatists almost all re-entered the bosom of the Church. Count Marinus, who held for the schism, had Blessed Marcellinus arrested; iniquitous

judges condemned him to the last penalty under colour of conspiracy. The bishops of Africa, who were then assembled in council at Carthage, gave tears to his death. Saint Augustine pronounced his funeral eulogy. What sincere piety! cries the great bishop of Hippo. What modesty in marriage! What charity toward all! He spoke with modesty of what he knew best. His contempt of present things equalled his hope in the goods to come. Posterity repeats these praises. — At Escamps, near Auxerre, Saint Trétice [Trety], bishop, who, while he slept, was pierced by a sword-stroke by Rainfroy, one of the archdeacons of his church, whose life did not accord with that of this holy bishop. About 709. — In Maine, Blessed Merolus, chorepiscopus[4] and afterwards bishop, buried at Saint-Victeur of Le Mans. About 785.[5] — At Ajaccio, the feast of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Mercy, established in 1656 to thank Mary for having preserved the town from the scourge of plague: this feast is still celebrated in our days with much magnificence. From 9 to 18 March, a novena is made at the cathedral of Ajaccio, so attended that the church is always too small for the multitude: the eve, the town hall is illuminated at the expense of the commune, and on the day all the authorities assist at the solemn mass.[6] If the whole town of Ajaccio shows itself so devoted to Our Lady of Mercy, the Blessed Virgin knows well how to reward it: cholera has gone round the world; never has Ajaccio suffered from it. Famine, bombardment have been on the eve of falling on its inhabitants: but the population in all its dangers repeats full of security: Our Madonna who has always defended us, will defend us still. This has never failed to be realised. — In the country of the Morini, in Artois, Saint Kilian, apostle of Montreuil, disciple of Saint Columban at Luxeuil, colleague of Saints Gall, Magnus, Vulgan and other venerable personages of Ireland, come to preach the word of God.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Jerusalem, Saint Cyril, bishop, of the Order of Saint Basil…

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Saint Gertrude, virgin, who governed the religious of the monastery of Nivelles, and migrated to the heavenly Spouse on 17 March.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — The feast of Saint Gabriel, archangel.

Martyrology of the Trinitarians. — Feast of the archangel Saint Gabriel, who announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary the mystery of the Incarnation.

Martyrology of Saint Dominic. — At Pavia, Blessed Sybilline, virgin, of the Third Order of the Friars Preachers, who, being deprived of the eyes of the body, was only the more apt to meditate on the mysteries of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which she had above all for aim to express in her works.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order. — At Cagliari, in Sardinia, Blessed Salvador d'Orta, confessor, of the Order of Minors, who kept intact the treasure of virginity, and who is illustrious by the holiness of his life and his continual miracles. 1567.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — The feast of the archangel Saint Gabriel…

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — The archangel Saint Gabriel…

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — The archangel Saint Gabriel…

Martyrology of the Servites. — The archangel Saint Gabriel…

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Cagliari, in Sardinia, Blessed Salvador d'Orta…

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — The feast of Saint Gabriel, archangel.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Alexandria, the holy Colluthus and Collotes [Colluthus?], deacons, martyrs, with twenty-six companions. — At Nicomedia, Saint Mary, and Saints Apri[l]us, Servulus, and twenty-three others, martyrs. — At

Saragossa, in Spain, Saint Braulio or Braule, bishop of that town. He was friend of Saint Isidore, several of whose books he made known, and had great authority in the councils of his time. Year 646. — At Empoli, in Tuscany, Blessed Bartholomew of Anglario, Franciscan monk of the Observance. He entered that Order with his brother Jerome, and made himself remarked there by his austerity, which was rewarded by frequent heavenly visions. Year 1510. — In Egypt, Saint Anastasia the Patrician. 576. — At Cingoli, diocese of Osimo, Saint Candidus, Roman martyr, whose relics, taken from the catacomb of Saint Agnes, at Rome, were given to the collegiate church of Cingoli in 1651.

Saint Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem

315–386. — Popes: Saint Sylvester I; Saint Siricius. — Emperors: Constantine and Licinius; Valentinian II.

Never let our faith be alarmed; let these words of the divine Master suffice to calm our disquiet: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.* Matt. xxiv, 35.

Born about the year 315 at Jerusalem, or in its environs, Cyril applied himself early to the study of the divine Scriptures, and made them so familiar to himself that most of his discourses, even those which he made without preparation, are only a tissue of passages or allusions to various places of the holy books. He read with care the writings of the Fathers who had preceded him, and did not neglect polite letters, which give discourse its necessary charms: we see even that he refutes the pagans with their own weapons, and combats the worship of the gods by the very thing that fable had taught him of it: he knew the writings of the philosophers, and it is following their ideas that he gives, in two of his catecheses, the description of the universe. He was ordained priest by Saint Maximus,[1] who had succeeded Macarius on the see of Jerusalem, about the year 334. The new priest made, in 347, his catecheses, or instructions, to those who wished to be converted. Besides he preached every Sunday in the assembly of the faithful: he acquitted himself of these two functions with much zeal, relying less on his capacity than on the help of God, which he often begged his hearers to obtain for him.

There remain to us twenty-three of these familiar and oral instructions or catecheses, of which the first eighteen explain the creed, and the other five the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and eucharist, which the neophytes received the same day. It is a monument of inestimable price by the clearness and sequence with which Christian doctrine is expounded and defended in it against pagans and heretics. These catecheses, which lasted an hour, were given under the portico of the church, and not in the church itself, where the hearers not yet baptised could not enter. Saint Cyril gives there the name of faithful to those who, even before having received baptism, believe in heart all that the Church believes and teaches. The talent and eloquence which Cyril displayed in this series of instructions designated him naturally to the suffrages of the clergy and the people, after the death of Maximus had rendered the episcopal see vacant.

The illustrious priest became then, to the applause of all, bishop of his native town toward the end of the year 350. Ill-informed authors give us his election as anti-canonical, made by Arians; but we must rely on the testimony of the second ecumenical council, which assures the churches of the West “that this bishop, beloved of God, was ordained canonically by the bishops of his province, and that he fought for the faith on several occasions.” The beginning of his episcopate is celebrated in history by a great prodigy which God wrought to honour the instrument of our salvation: this fact is supported on incontestable authorities.[2] Here in what terms Cyril hastened to announce it himself to the emperor Constantius, in a most authentic letter, cited as being his, by Sozomen[3] (by Theophanes, under the year 353); by Eutychius;[4] by John of Nicaea, etc. On 7 May 351, at nine o’clock in the morning, an immense cross of light appeared above Golgotha, extending as far as the Mount of Olives, distant about three quarters of a league. It showed itself very distinctly, not to one or two persons, but to all the people of the town. It was not, as might be thought, a passing phenomenon: it subsisted above the earth, visible to the eyes and more brilliant than the sun, whose light, otherwise, would have effaced it. Immediately all the people ran to the church with a fear mingled with

joy: young and old, men and women, even to the most retired maidens, the Christians of the country and strangers, and the Christians who had come there from various places, all with one voice praised Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, the author of miracles, seeing by experience the truth of Christian doctrine, to which heaven rendered testimony. In this letter, Cyril gives to the Arian Constantius the honorific epithets to which he had a right as emperor, and with the design, doubtless, of bringing him back to the true faith, for he ends by wishing him to glorify for ever the holy and consubstantial Trinity. The Greek Church honours, on 7 May, the memory of this miraculous apparition of the cross.[5] Acacius, archbishop of Caesarea, at first semi-Arian and who became later one of the most fiery partisans of Arianism, raised up for Saint Cyril a long series of persecutions under various pretexts, but in reality because our Saint preserved the Catholic faith, and because, by virtue of the prerogatives granted to his see by the seventh canon of Nicaea, he demanded precedence over the other bishops of the province, and perhaps to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Caesarea. Acacius therefore cited Cyril to his tribunal, who refused to appear there, then deposed him in an assembly of Arian bishops, and drove him from Jerusalem.

One of the pretended crimes which were laid to the charge of the holy Patriarch was to have squandered the goods of the Church, and made a profane use of the sacred ornaments. A comedian, it was said, had danced in the vestment of gold thread, given formerly by Constantine to Saint Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, for conferring baptism: the comedian, in punishment of this sacrilege, had fallen dead on the spot. Now here is the true story: a great famine desolated the region, and especially Jerusalem; the poor were dying of hunger; Cyril, their bishop, who considered himself their father, having no more money to give them, sold, in effect, a part of the furniture and ornaments of the Church, stripping the material and inanimate temple, to clothe and sustain the spiritual and living temples, which are the poor: thus have taught and practised, like him, Saint Ambrose, Saint Augustine, and several other prelates, true pastors and not hirelings, who watch over all the needs of the flock of Jesus Christ. Cyril sent to his judges an act of appeal, demanding that the sentence pronounced against him be reviewed by a superior tribunal. Meanwhile he withdrew to Antioch; but, as this see was vacant, he went to Tarsus where the bishop Saint Silvanus, in spite of the complaints of Acacius, permitted him the exercise of all his functions, and even to give instructions to his people; for he saw that the faithful listened to them with pleasure. Our Saint was re-established by the council of Seleucia (359); but the Arians, by dint of calumnies, had him again deposed, the following year, in a council of Constantinople.

The emperor Constantius having died on 3 November 361, and Julian having recalled the exiled bishops, Saint Cyril returned with the others. One may see, on 24 February, how Julian set about abolishing the religion of Christ which he had renounced: no more martyrs, whose blood became a seed of Christians, or at least very few; no more open persecution, but a hypocritical tolerance, the regeneration of paganism, and above all sophisms.

One of the principal marks of the divinity of the Christian religion is prophecies: to show them false, even in the mouth of Christ, Julian undertook to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem and to re-establish there the Jewish worship. Christ had announced that this temple would be destroyed and that not a stone would be left upon a stone. Long before him, the Prophets had said that this last desolation would be without remedy; that the Jews would never more subsist as a body of nation; that they would be wandering, without king, without sacrifice, without altar, without prophets, seeking salvation and not finding it. To raise up again the temple and its worship was to belie, not only Christ, but the Prophets, it was to ruin the Old and the New Testament. A man who was an apostate, a sophist and an emperor could hardly work more powerfully, more skilfully for the ruin of Christianity; he invited therefore, by a letter full of hypocritical flatteries, for he had for the Jewish religion the most profound contempt, the Jews to assemble at Jerusalem: he told them that, in reading the holy Scriptures, he had seen that it was the moment to re-establish that nation: he invited them to pray for him. He put at their disposal a crowd of workmen, immense treasures, charged the governor of the province to favour the enterprise, and put at the head of it Alypius, his intimate friend. The Jews ran to Jerusalem all

triumphant; they thought themselves already masters of the world; they threatened the Christians to put them to the edge of the sword. Let one picture the difficult position of the bishop of Jerusalem, between the insults of the infidels and the alarms of the Christians too weak in their faith.

Full of confidence in the word of God, he maintained always that it would be accomplished; he said even that the Jews would not only prove it by the failure of their enterprise, made however in the best conditions, but that they would even help in the entire accomplishment of the prophecy, because, to lay the foundations of their new temple, they would first remove those of the old and make the slightest vestiges of them disappear; so that there would not remain, of the temple of Jerusalem, one stone upon another. It needed, to speak thus, that his faith should be great: all appearances were against him; never had work gone forward with such prodigious zest, rapidity: the most considerable materials had been assembled. They worked night and day: some Jews used shovels and baskets of silver, to do honour to so holy a work and mark their joy, their triumph. The most delicate women spared not their hands; they carried rubbish in their most precious robes; they had given their jewels, their gems, to contribute to the cost of the enterprise. A whole people stirred to rise again. Meanwhile the demolition advanced, and they prepared to place the new foundations; but it was there that God awaited his enemies to confound them. Let us hear Ammianus Marcellinus: “While Count Alypius, assisted by the governor of the province, pressed the works vigorously, frightful whirlwinds of flames sprang from the places adjoining the foundations, burned the workmen and rendered the place inaccessible to them.[6] At last, this element persisting always with a sort of obstinacy in repelling the workmen, it was necessary to abandon the enterprise.”[7] Behold in what manner expresses himself an historian who adored the idols of paganism and who was an admirer of Julian. Nothing but the force of truth could have wrung from him such an avowal.

Ecclesiastical writers enter into a more circumstantial detail of this event. We learn from them that, besides the eruptions of fire, there were also earthquakes and hurricanes; that lightning fell; that crosses were seen imprinted on the garments of those who were present, and that a light appeared in the sky in the form of a cross enclosed in a circle.[8] Several, pursued by the flames, wished to save themselves in a neighbouring church; but they could not enter, whether an invisible hand repelled them, or Providence permitted that they should embarrass one another. “Be that as it may,” says Saint Gregory Nazianzen,[9] “a circumstance universally received, and on which everyone agrees, is that, when they wished to avoid by flight the danger which threatened them, a fire issued from the foundations of the temple, soon reached them, consumed some, mutilated others, leaving to all the most visible marks of the wrath of heaven.” These eruptions recommenced every time they wished to renew the works, and ceased only when they were entirely abandoned.

This miraculous event is reported with all its circumstances by a crowd of authors who lived in the century of Julian. Saint Gregory Nazianzen spoke of it a year after it happened. Saint Chrysostom mentions it in several places of his works, as a fact which had happened about twenty years before, under the eyes of several of those who listened to him. The account of it is found in Saint Ambrose;[10] in Rufinus, who had long lived on the spot; in Theodoret, who passed the greater part of his life in the neighbourhood of Palestine; in the histories of Socrates, of Sozomen, of Philostorgius, etc. All these authors agree, as to the substance, and differ among themselves only with regard to some circumstances; but this diversity adds a new weight to their testimony, since it proves that they did not copy one another. We have seen the same prodigy attested by Ammianus Marcellinus. Libanius, a pagan like him and wholly devoted to the emperor Julian, speaks also of earthquakes which happened in Palestine. It is true that he uses reserve; but by that very fact he serves the cause of Christianity. In expressing himself otherwise, he would have unveiled the shame of his hero and betrayed his religion.[11] There is not even Julian but has rendered homage to the truth. This homage being forced, it is not surprising that he employed captious and studied expressions. The Jews, finally, who will not be suspected of having copied the Christian authors, relate the fact in question according to the tradition of

their synagogues, and almost with as much unanimity as the Christian authors. The miracle of which we have just spoken is therefore incontestable; it cannot be called in doubt without falling into the most extravagant Pyrrhonism:[12] thus we read in Socrates that the Jews cried out at first that Jesus Christ was God. Several pagans were converted on this occasion, according to the report of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, of Sozomen and of Theodoret. As to the Jews, it is not surprising that they remained in their blindness; they verify the prophecies in which their obstinacy in rejecting the light is so clearly predicted.

Julian had promised himself, says Orosius, to avenge himself on Cyril when he should be returned from his Persian war; but this return never took place. Nevertheless Cyril was still exiled in 367, by the emperor Valens, patron of Arianism; he returned in 378, when the emperor Gratian ordered that the churches should be restored to those who were in communion with Pope Damasus. He found his diocese divided by schism, corrupted by heresy: impurity, adultery, theft, idolatry, poisonings reigned there. For a little money, men cut one another's throats there like wild beasts. The council of Antioch (379), informed of the sad state of this church, and of the local rivalries which threatened to paralyse Cyril's zeal, sent, to aid him to pacify minds and to repress immorality, Gregory of Nyssa, already charged to reform the churches of Arabia; but his efforts had no success. The holy Patriarch of Jerusalem did not however despair either of the grace of God, or of his labours, or even of the dispositions of his diocesans. We have reason to believe that he succeeded, since nothing more was heard afterwards of the great corruption which had reigned there: Saint Jerome, it is true, in a letter, dissuades Paulinus from the journey to Jerusalem; but he does not say that other disorders were committed there than those which are ordinary and almost unavoidable in great cities. He assisted, in 381, at the general council of Constantinople, and subscribed to the condemnation of the Semi-Arians and Macedonians. We shall not stop to prove that he never approved their errors: his whole life declares it. If he was connected with some of them, it was before they made open profession of heresy. It is believed that he assisted also at the council which was held again at Constantinople the following year, where was recognised publicly, as we have already said, the canonicity of his election, and his constancy in the faith, attacked by his enemies. He died in 386, aged seventy years.

He is represented with a purse in his hand. As we have just seen, his largesses for the poor were so great that the Arians treated his liberalities as unreasonable. He is also represented standing, holding a book.

NOTICE ON THE WRITINGS OF SAINT CYRIL

Saint Cyril, in the quality of catechist of Jerusalem, made each year a course of instruction to prepare the catechumens to receive baptism. These instructions, known under the name of Catecheses, are eighteen in number, and addressed to those of the catechumens whom they called *competentes* or *illuminati*. Besides these eighteen Catecheses, there are five others, named Mystagogical, either because they were addressed to catechumens already initiated into our mysteries, or because our mysteries were clearly explained in them, especially with regard to the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

The Calvinists, finding the condemnation of their errors in the Catecheses of Saint Cyril, principally in the Mystagogical ones, have made all their efforts to prove that they were supposititious: but critics will not yield to their reasons so long as they have none more solid than those which have been brought forward by Aubertin, by Rivet, *Crit. sacr.*, l. iii, ch. 8, 9, 10 and 11, and by Casimir Oudin, *de Script. Eccles.*, vol. i, p. 459. The latter, whose inexactitude is known besides, has fallen, to sustain his opinion, into the grossest blunders. The Protestants of England have been of better faith, and have recognised that Saint Cyril was incontestably the author of the Catecheses which bear his name.[13]

Moreover, even if our adversaries should prove that Saint Cyril is not the author of the Catecheses which bear his name, they would at least have to avow that they were pronounced at Jerusalem about the middle of the fourth century. 1° There is found in them an infinity of passages which demonstrate it invincibly. Dom Ceillier reports them. 2° Saint Jerome, *Catal.*, ch. 112, says that Saint Cyril had composed Catecheses while

still young. Theodoret cites the fourth under the name of Saint Cyril; Leontius of Byzantium cites it also. The seventh general council, which reports the first words of the second, attributes it to the same Saint. The fear of being too long makes us abridge the citations.[14]

What we have just said concerns the eighteen Catecheses addressed to the *competentes* or illuminated. As to the Mystagogical ones, it is evident that they are a sequel of the first, and from the same hand. This appears from the conformity of style and method. 1° The author had promised them in the eighteenth of the preceding, and he speaks, in the last five, of the other eighteen. 2° They are attributed to Saint Cyril, by Eustratius, who flourished under the reign of Justinian, by Anastasius the Sinaite, by the monk Nicon,[15] etc.

The first Catechesis of the eighteen, entitled *Introduction to Baptism*, is only an invitation to receive this sacrament, whose advantages the Saint details. The second is entitled: *On Penance and the Remission of Sins*. Our Saint makes felt there the enormity of sin, whose cause he finds in free will, and in solicitations of the demon, which may however be resisted; he shows next that divine mercy pardons all sinners who are truly penitent. The aim of the third Catechesis is to show the excellence, necessity and effects of baptism. One finds in the fourth an explanation of the creed and an excellent summary of Christian doctrine. The holy Doctor makes there besides the eulogy of virginity: he recommends there to married persons to keep continence on certain days; he details there the advantages of fasting and abstinence, when they have pure motives for principle; he shows there a tender devotion to the cross, and says that it suffices to imprint its sign on one's forehead to put the demons to flight; he wishes also that the sign of the cross be made before drinking and eating, in lying down and rising up, in a word, at the beginning of each action.[16] He makes then the enumeration of the canonical books, and warns his hearers that it is from the Church that they must learn which are the books of the Old and the New Testament. The fifth Catechesis has for object to extol the excellence of faith and to mark its effects. Saint Cyril recommends there to the catechumens to keep secret our mysteries, in order not to give occasion to the blasphemies of the infidels. The sixth and the seventh contain an explanation of the first article of the creed. The errors of the Manichaeans on the omnipotence of God are refuted in the eighth. It is also proved there that it is only the bad use of riches that can ruin the rich. The ninth is a sequel of the preceding: there is found in it an admirable picture of the fair order which reigns in the universe and in all its parts. The second article of the creed is explained in the tenth: there too are read fine things on the greatness and excellence of the name of Christian. It is treated in the eleventh of the eternal generation of the Son of God, and of his temporal birth. The Saint establishes the mystery of the Incarnation in the twelfth, and answers there the objections of the Jews and heretics. The aim of the thirteenth is to show the advantages which we derive from the death of Jesus Christ, and to extol the virtue of the cross: it is seen there that, in the time of Saint Cyril, parts of the wood of the true Cross had already been distributed throughout the whole universe. The fourteenth contains the explanation of these three articles of the creed: "He rose from the dead the third day; he ascended into heaven; he sits at the right hand of the Father." It is treated, in the fifteenth, of the second coming of Jesus Christ, of the judgment which he will exercise on all men, and of his eternal reign. The explanation of the eighth article of the creed: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, etc.," makes the subject of the sixteenth and seventeenth Catecheses: there are found the most abundant lights on the marvellous operations of the Holy Spirit and on the effects which he produces in our souls. The eighteenth develops in the most solid manner the sense of the last articles of the creed: "I believe in the Catholic Church, the resurrection of the flesh and life everlasting."

The eighteen Catecheses of which we have just spoken were preached during Lent of the year 347 or 348; the five following, called Mystagogical, were during Easter week, after the baptism of the Catechumens. The Saint attaches himself there principally to explaining the nature and the effects of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, which were then administered the same day. He distinguishes there the characters imprinted by Baptism and Confirmation; he speaks there of the virtue of the exorcisms and of the blessed oil, as well as of that which is given to water by the invocation of the Holy Spirit; he expresses

himself there in several places in the most express and most precise manner on the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and says that by communion we become one same body and one same blood with the Saviour. These expressions have also been employed by Saint Chrysostom, *Hom.* 6 *in Hebr.*; by Saint Isidore of Pelusium, l. iii, ep. 195; by Saint Cyril of Alexandria, l. x, *in Joan.*, p. 862, *Dial. de Trin.*, p. 407, and by several other Fathers of the Church.

The first Mystagogical Catechesis treats of the renunciation, the profession of faith, and the ceremonies which preceded Baptism; the second treats of Baptism and the anointing with oil sanctified by the exorcisms; the third of the anointing with holy chrism or Confirmation; the fourth of the Eucharist; the fifth contains the liturgy as it was in use in the time of Saint Cyril, and teaches us in what manner Christians then communicated. “In approaching Communion,” said the holy Doctor to the faithful, “do not stretch out your hands and do not spread your fingers; but put your left hand under the right to serve it as a throne, since it must receive this great King, and, hollowing the hand, receive the body of Jesus Christ, saying Amen. Sanctify your eyes by the touch of this holy body… and take good care not to let fall the least particle of it. After having received the body of Jesus Christ, approach also the chalice of his blood, without stretching out the hands; but bow to adore it, saying Amen. Sanctify yourselves by the communion of the blood of Jesus Christ; while your lips are still moist with it, carry your hand to them to consecrate your forehead, your eyes, and the other organs of the senses, etc.” *Cat. myst.*, 5. Saint Cyril, ibid., calls the mass a bloodless sacrifice, a victim of propitiation, a supreme worship, etc. He says that prayer is made in it for the dead, the Church being persuaded that the prayers offered in presence of the holy and redoubtable victim will be of great utility to the souls of the departed.

We have still a homily of Saint Cyril on the Paralytic of the Gospel, and a letter to Constantius on the apparition of a luminous cross. We have spoken of this last piece in the life of the Saint.

Several manuscripts attribute also to Saint Cyril a Sermon on the Purification; but it appears that he is not the author of it.

1° Mention is made of lighted candles at the feast of the Purification. Now it is certain that this custom was introduced into the Church only at the solicitation of a lady of Jerusalem, named Icelia, who lived sixty years after the death of our Saint; 2° There is found in this sermon the refutation of Nestorianism, a heresy which did not exist in the time of Saint Cyril; 3° the style of this piece is altogether different from that of our holy doctor. Moreover, this sermon deserves to be read. It appears that it is the work of a priest of Jerusalem who lived in the sixth century. There is remarked, in the Catecheses of Saint Cyril, much force and justness in the reasonings: he explains there the dogmas of the Christian religion with as much clearness as precision. His style is simple and proportioned to the intelligence of those whom he was charged to instruct. He knew nevertheless how to rise when the grandeur of the subject required it. Thomas Milles gave at Oxford, in 1703 [*sic*], an edition of the works of Saint Cyril much more complete than all the preceding ones, and infinitely more exact, as much for the Greek text as for the Latin version; he joined to it notes in which is not found all the good faith and sincerity which one had reason to expect. D. Touttée, Benedictine of the congregation of Saint-Maur, undertook a new edition of Saint Cyril, which he could not give to the public, death having carried him off in 1718. D. Maran, his confrère, published it at Paris in 1720, in folio. The journalists of Trévoux, December 1721, criticised with considerable vivacity some of the editor’s notes touching the Semi-Arians, the consubstantial, and the neutrality attributed to Saint Cyril between the party of the Arians and that of Saint Athanasius. This attack was repelled by D. Maran in a *Dissertation on the Semi-Arians*, which deserves to be read, and which was printed at Paris, at Vincent’s, in 1722, in-12. Grandcolas, doctor in theology of the faculty of Paris, gave a French translation of the Catecheses of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, with notes and dogmatic dissertations. This translation was printed at Paris in 1715, in-4°. — Migne reproduced the edition of Touttée in volume xxxiii of the *Patrologia Graeca*, and M. Caillau the Latin translation of the Catecheses and of some homilies in his *Collection of the Fathers*.

We have remade the history of this life, too abridged by Father Giry. See D. Touttée and D. Ceillier.

Saint Anastasia the Patrician

576. — Pope: Benedict I. — Emperor of the East: Justin II.

There were two Anastasias who lived at the same time, and held a great rank at the court of the emperor Justinian: the one, who married the patrician Pompey, a relative of the emperor, and who, after the death of her husband, abandoned the world and withdrew near Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives, where she led a holy life; the other, of whom we have to speak here, and who is surnamed the Patrician, a title of honour which has remained to her to distinguish her from the others of the same name, and which shows that she was of a high condition. Her beauty, her virtue and her wit, joined to her birth, won her the esteem and affection of everyone. The emperor also had much consideration for her; but it was precisely this beginning of favour which raised up persecution for her on the part of the empress Theodora, and which gave occasion to her retreat from the world and her sanctification.

Theodora, who from the theatre had mounted the throne, had preserved the defects of her first condition in the sublime rank to which she had been raised. She was susceptible of jealousy, not to speak of the errors which she protected and the tragedies which she caused in the Church. She could not therefore see the merit of Anastasia recognised and applauded by the emperor without being alarmed, and conceived from then fatal designs against her.

Anastasia was warned of it, and she was advised to avert the storm by withdrawing from the court for some time; but more prudent still and more generous than she was inspired to be, and recognising more closely the fragility of human grandeurs by the lights of faith, she said to herself: “Anastasia, save thy soul; heal for ever the princess of her unjust jealousy, and strive to be thyself a princess of heaven.” She took then with her all the money she could carry, and passed into Egypt, where she built a monastery of maidens about two leagues from Alexandria, and set herself to labour seriously at her salvation. It was afterwards called the monastery of the Patrician. She remained in that holy house until the death of the empress Theodora, and then it depended only on herself to return to court to resume her rank and profit by the good graces of the emperor; for this prince, who had always preserved a particular esteem for her virtue and her merit, ordered that she be sought everywhere to bring her back to Constantinople. The report of it spread in the principal places of the empire, and reached Alexandria, even to Anastasia’s monastery. She was frightened by it, because since she had tasted the advantages of piety in solitude, the court appeared to her only as a dwelling of trouble and the theatre of the passions.

The fear of being recognised and forced to return there obliged her to withdraw further from the town and to seek in the depths of the desert a more assured asylum. She stole away by favour of night from her monastery, and went to seek in the solitude of Scete, near the abbot Daniel, the means of putting herself in safety. She threw herself at his feet, set before him the motives which had led her to withdraw from Constantinople, the graces with which God had favoured her in her monastery, and begged him to tell her what she should do to assure her salvation the better. The abbot Daniel gave her a man’s habit, shut her in a cave removed at a reasonable distance from his hermitage, and prescribed to her at the same time the rules she was to observe. Among others, he forbade her expressly to set foot outside her cell, or to permit anyone whatever to enter it. He charged also his disciple to carry her every week a pail of water which he deposited before her cell, withdrawing at once without saying a single word. Anastasia passed twenty-eight years there in fasting and an almost continual orison; God, always liberal toward those who are faithful to him, made known to her her last hour. She wished to give notice of it to the abbot Daniel; but God revealed it to him equally. He came to her cell accompanied by his disciple, gave her the holy Viaticum and received her last breath. Her cell served her as sepulchre, and the abbot Daniel taught his disciple and the other Fathers of the desert her whole history, to lead them to recognise the marvellous operations of divine grace on souls, and to

animate them to glorify him for it and to profit by those of their state. She died about the year 576. Other saints are named who concealed their sex by taking men's habits. Other examples of it are found also among the Orientals; but these actions must be regarded as above the rules, having been inspired by an extraordinary movement of the Holy Spirit. An admirable conduct, but one that cannot be proposed as a model, since as a general rule it is not permitted, and has even been expressly forbidden by several councils.

Lives of the Fathers of the Desert.

Saint Edward II, Martyr, King of England

962–978. — Popes: John XII; Benedict VII.

There is nothing constant in this world: everything in it is exposed to a thousand perils, and as high mountains are the most subject to the strokes of thunderbolt, so the most eminent conditions are more ordinarily the sport of fortune. This divine and moral truth is about to appear in the life of Edward II, king of England, who well deserves to hold a place in this collection of the Lives of the Saints. He was son of Edgar, king of the same country, and of Engelfleda, daughter of the duke Ordmer, whom this prince had married in second marriage. The queen, his mother, being dead, Edgar, his father, married a third wife named Elfrida, daughter of Ordgar, king of Cornwall [*sic*], and widow of Elwold, chief of the East Angles, and he had by her also a son who was called Ethelred; which it has been necessary to remark in order to understand the sequel of this history. Prince Edward was baptised by Saint Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, and soon gave proofs of his good nature and of the fine dispositions he had to piety: for, renouncing early the delights of the court and all that can lead to sin, he applied all his cares to make himself agreeable to God by the practice of all the virtues; so that the king his father, being delighted with it, resolved to name him, in his lifetime, his successor to the crown, in order to obviate, by this means, the troubles which might arise after his decease.

The king died on 8 July 972 [*sic*; 975], according to Cardinal Baronius; the precaution he had taken did not prevent there being then great disturbances among the English princes: Elfrida, taking the interests of her son, though the younger (he was aged only seven years), wished to make him reign to the prejudice of his brother Edward, who was of the first bed. On this dispute, the archbishops of the kingdom, Dunstan of Canterbury and Oswald of York, assembled with the other bishops, abbots, dukes and lords of the crown, and without regard to the murmurs of the partisans of Ethelred, they crowned Edward king, according to the will of Edgar. The holy archbishop always took great care of this young prince, for whom he had conceived a tender affection since he had baptised him. Thus he made such progress in so good a school that, following the footsteps of the late king his father, he rendered himself an excellent prince, as much during the troubles of war as during the calm of peace, showing himself on the one hand terrible and severe to the enemies of the State, and on the other gentle and favourable to men of good. He affectioned likewise clerics and religious, favouring them with all his power, and imitating in this his ancestors, who had had several monasteries built in England. After the public affairs of the kingdom, this most pious king took a singular pleasure in doing good to the poor, in feeding them, clothing them, distributing to them generally all they needed, esteeming that one of the principal functions of royalty was to succour the unfortunate. Thus good people blessed God in their hearts, to see their king, in his youth, give himself to these actions of piety. He was affable to all his subjects, extremely gentle toward everyone, judicious in his counsels, prudent in all his conduct, and cherishing particularly chastity; so that everyone promised himself a golden age under the reign of so excellent a prince.

This happiness, nevertheless, was not of long duration; his stepmother, being daughter of a king, could not bear that her son should not have been preferred to that of a simple princess; she sought means to harm her king and lawful lord: she soon met the occasion. One day Edward, being at the hunt and finding himself near the castle of Wareham, which belonged to his stepmother, wished to go there to see the young prince Ethelred, his brother, whom he loved tenderly; his people having strayed on the way, he went there alone:

Elfrida, being warned that he was approaching, came to meet him with assassins, feigning to be delighted to see him, and had drink brought to him. Edward, mistrusting nothing, took the cup, and, as he carried it to his mouth, the cruel princess had a dagger-stroke given him in the side. As soon as he felt himself wounded, he spurred his horse to return toward his people who were seeking him; but, losing blood abundantly, he fell stark dead on the spot, on 18 March 978, the third year only of his reign. The stepmother, seeing the king dead, to mark the great contempt she had for him, had his body dragged by the feet into the house of a poor woman blind from birth, whom this queen had nourished, in order to bury him there secretly, and thus hide her regicide. But what can human malice do against the wisdom of God? the poor blind woman approached the holy body, and at once she opened her eyes at the brightness of a great light, which, appearing in the midst of the night, lit all her house. This coming to the knowledge of this detestable princess, whom one may compare to the impious Athaliah, of whom Scripture speaks, she had this holy body thrown into a marsh, to extinguish for ever its memory, and withdrew to another place of her domain, distant some miles from the first, where this horrible murder had been committed.

Edward II is represented on his horse, drinking the stirrup-cup, while an assassin advances treacherously toward him. The young king suspected, it is said, something of the evil designs of his stepmother; but not wishing, as a true Christian that he was, to let it be believed that he returned her hate for hate, he made her the visit which brought about his death. In certain pictures, a serpent issues from the cup he holds in his hand, energetic symbol of the part the demon had in the evil action.

RELICS OF SAINT EDWARD

A year had already passed without anyone having found this holy body, when the Almighty, wishing to make known to the world the merits of his martyr, raised up some faithful, who sought it out of devotion; they discovered at last the place where it was, by means of a column of fire which often appeared above it. A great concourse of the faithful came there at once, who, weeping the loss of their king and powerful protector, took up this precious relic and put it in the church of the Most Holy Virgin of Wareham: which was done on 13 February [*sic*; see below, 18 February], the year after his decease. As for the place where this holy deposit was found, God caused a spring of sweet water to rise there, which has since been called the Fountain of Saint Edward, where several persons, afflicted with different maladies, have received healing of their ills.

Meanwhile, the report of this discovery spreading through the whole island of Great Britain, everyone detested the malice and impiety of the queen, and raised to heaven the merits, innocence and virtues of the holy Martyr. Alfer [Ælfhere], prince of the Mercians, to honour the memory of his king, invited as many bishops, abbots and other persons of mark as he could, to assist at the translation of his body. Above all, he begged Saint Wilfrida [Wulfthryth], abbess of a celebrated monastery of Winchester [*sic*], where Edith, sister of the holy king, was a nun, to be there with all her daughters. In this way the body of Saint Edward was raised solemnly, and found entire and as fresh as if he had died only a moment before: great consolation for all this illustrious company, who rendered thanks to God for making appear, by so sensible a mark, the innocence of his Martyr; his holy sister Edith, who was present, threw herself on this body, laid her cheeks against his, and bathed with her own tears the face of this dear departed, not being able to satisfy herself with contemplating him. At last, this precious treasure was deposited in the celebrated monastery of Shaftesbury, which king Alfred, great-grandfather [*sic*] of Saint Edward, had built and which he had endowed in consideration of his daughter Elgiva [Æthelgifu], who had consecrated herself there as spouse of Jesus Christ. So many marvels could not be hidden from the wretched Elfrida, murderess of the Saint; she was touched with repentance, and wished also to visit his relics; but she was repelled from them by a just judgment of God, who did not permit her to approach them, either on foot or on horseback; the Almighty thus made himself the avenger of her perfidy against the holy Martyr; nevertheless, afterwards, as penance for her crime, she had two monasteries of nuns built. These monasteries are Wherwell and Amesbury; she died in the first. Her son Ethelred, whom she had so desired to see king, was a cowardly and unhappy prince.

England, under his reign, was exposed to all sorts of calamities, and above all to the invasion of the Danes.

In the course of time, various distributions were made of the relics of Saint Edward: a part was transferred to Leominster, in the county of Hereford, another to Abingdon, in the county of Berks. The English celebrated in his honour three feasts a year, until the epoch of the schism: the first and principal was that of the day of his death, 18 March; the second, that of the day of his first translation to Wareham, 18 February, and the third, that of his elevation from the earth or second translation to Shaftesbury, 20 June. The Protestants have preserved the memory of the first and third feasts in the calendar of their new liturgy, by the effect of some shadow of veneration which has remained to them for their holy king. The martyrologies of the Catholics almost all make mention of him with the quality of martyr, doubtless to distinguish him from Saint Edward the confessor, for the Roman martyrology does not give him this title.

The Roman martyrology makes memory of Saint Edward, king and martyr, on 18 March. Surius has written his life amply, after several manuscripts, in his second volume. We have followed him in this collection, and the *Annals* of Cardinal Baronius, as also Polydore Vergil and the other historians of England.

Saint Gabriel, Archangel

Saint Gabriel is one of the seven archangels who stand always before the throne of God. His name signifies strength of God. It is by this title that he merited to announce the advent of Christ, who is and who is called the strength of God, — *Virtus Dei*, — and afterwards to strengthen the Virgin Mary, frightened at the surprising marvel in which heaven called her to take part.[1] Saint Gabriel may be considered as the angel of the Redemption. It was he in effect who dictated to Daniel his most celebrated prophecies and unveiled to him the secret of the death and reign of the Messiah;[2] it was he who announced the birth of the precursor of Jesus; it was he whom God the Father sent to the Blessed Virgin to announce to her the mystery of the Incarnation; it was he who made known to the shepherds the birth of the Saviour and showed them the means of finding him; it was he who warned Saint Joseph of the murderous projects of Herod against the divine Child. The iconographic attribute of Saint Gabriel is the lily or a banderole bearing these words: *Ave, Maria.* The lily, that symbol par excellence of virginity, refers not to the angel but to the mission he had received to guarantee the preservation of virginity to her who was about to become Mother: it seems to us, consequently, more fitting to place the lily between Mary and the messenger who salutes her than in the hands of the latter.

Father Cahier, in his *Characteristics*, says, on the subject of the annunciation: “The unicorn… was for the Middle Ages a symbol of indomitable force forgetting its power in the lap of a Virgin; hence it had become the emblem of virginity, but above all of the Incarnation of the Word in the bosom of Our Lady. An example of it is seen in an engraving… borrowed from an old German publication.[3] By a pious oddity which has its charm of naïveté, the annunciation takes there the form of a battue in which the Son of God, under the emblem of the unicorn, throws himself into the bosom of the Virgin par excellence… The hounds, pressed by the horn of the archangel Gabriel, reduce it to taking refuge in the lap of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. Other paintings or sculptures are more explicit, and the inscriptions which accompany them leave almost nothing more to seek. Thus, besides that the titles of the Blessed Virgin are inscribed there in full letters, the four dogs which the huntsman leads in leash are: Justice, Peace, Mercy and Truth,[4] and the air which the archangel sounds is the Angelic Salutation.”

Saint Frigidian or Fridian, Bishop of Lucca (6th century)

Frigidian, son of Ultach, king of Ulster, in Ireland, instructed from childhood in the mysteries of the Christian religion, and regenerated, unknown to his parents, in the sacred bath of baptism, was so inflamed for the faith with so ardent a love that he did not fear, though still young, to set out toward Rome from the most distant regions. He was welcomed honourably by Pope Pelagius I, received among the clerics, and soon established among the canons of the church of the Lateran. He remained with them the time sufficient to be

penetrated with the spirit of their rule and to accustom himself to their manner of life. Returned to his country, his parents, still infidels, strove to bring him back to the worship of idols, and to engage him in the bonds of marriage. But, by the grace of God, it was he, on the contrary, who persuaded them to abandon the impious worship of idols and to be converted to the faith. He confirmed them in this same faith by raising his own sister from the dead before them.

Then he went into solitude, built a monastery where he established canons living according to the rule which he had brought from Rome; he lived some time most holily with them. As the renown of his holiness spread everywhere in his country, he resolved, in order to escape the praises of men, to make a second time the pilgrimage to Italy. He arrived at Lucca, a town where the perfume of his holiness soon spread, so that all the inhabitants claimed him and obtained him for their bishop. In this high function, he developed divine worship considerably, and in the space of twenty-eight years that he was bishop, he built twenty-eight baptismal churches. The principal among all was that which he dedicated in honour of the Three Holy Levites, and which now bears the name of Saint-Frigidian. The Saint transported without trouble for the building of this church an enormous stone which many men together could not even move from its place: it is still preserved in the same church in memory of this miracle. Another miracle demonstrates again the credit which this holy man enjoyed with God. Saint Gregory the Great reports it in his *Dialogues*. The river Arno frequently inundated the country of Lucca and caused great damage to the inhabitants. The Saint prayed, and afterwards had a plough dragged through the fields, and at once the river, turning aside to another quarter, cleared the country of the waters which inundated it. At last Saint Frigidian, after numerous labours accomplished, rested happily in the Lord, rich in merits and full of days. His body was buried in the aforesaid church of the Three Levites. Under the reign of Charlemagne, it happened that the dead body of a young girl was laid on the bones of the Saint; at once the girl, waking from her sleep of death, cried out: “Take me away from here, for you have laid me on the body of Blessed Frigidian”; and these words pronounced, she fell asleep again. It is thus that the holy body, which had remained unknown for almost two hundred years, was discovered miraculously, and was in great veneration. The memory of this invention is celebrated at Lucca on 19 November. He is given for attributes the boat in which the boatmen once crossed, at his word, the Arno, in spite of the overflow of the waters, and a rock which he made recede: the latter is still shown today.

Proper of Ireland.

Saint Anselm, Bishop of Lucca, Patron of Mantua (1086)

Saint Anselm was born at Mantua at the beginning of the eleventh century. He gave himself first to the study of grammar and dialectic. He embraced next the ecclesiastical state, and applied himself with ardour to the study of theology and canon law, in which he made great progress. Badagius [Anselm of Baggio], bishop of Lucca, his uncle, having become pope in 1061, under the name of Alexander II, named him to the see he had just quitted. The new bishop made the journey to Germany to receive there, from the hands of the emperor Henry IV, the investiture of his see, which was done, according to the usage of the time, by the delivery of the crozier and ring. But Anselm returned without having wished to receive it on the conditions which Caesar proposed, persuaded, as is indeed the truth, that it did not belong to the secular power to confer ecclesiastical dignities thus. — Having been consecrated by Saint Gregory VII in 1073, he consented at last to receive from Henry the ring and the crozier, but he had scruples about it, and went some time after to become a monk at Cluny: an order of the Pope was needed to make him take the government of his diocese.

Returned to Lucca, he wished, in 1079, to oblige the canons of his cathedral to follow the common life, in conformity with a decree of Leo IX. The countess Matilda, sovereign of Lucca and of a great part of Tuscany, seconded him in this enterprise; but he could not overcome the resistance of the canons. These excited a sedition against the bishop, who was forced to leave Lucca: he withdrew near Matilda whose conscience he directed. The sovereign Pontiff did not leave him long in the retreat he had chosen; he made

him his legate in Lombardy, and charged him with the conduct of several dioceses which the famous quarrel of investitures had left vacant. What has immortalised in the eyes of history the great pope Gregory VII is to have wrested investitures from princes. This was the name given to the right which sovereigns claimed to have of conferring ecclesiastical benefices, and consequently of putting their creatures at the head of bishoprics and abbeys. Bishops and abbots having found themselves, under the feudal regime, above all in Germany, possessors of forests, castles and even whole towns, it was just that before ruling these domains which formed part of the empire, they should submit to the emperor and receive from him the temporal authority which they had to exercise over the countries dependent on their abbey or bishopric. But this dependence in the temporal order was not long in becoming a cause of enslavement for the whole Church. The princes demanded that at the death of a bishop or abbot the ring and pastoral staff should be brought to them, and then transmitted these insignia to those whom it pleased them to designate. The right of election was thus withdrawn from the clergy, the faithful and the religious: nomination to ecclesiastical dignities depended no more than on sovereigns. They made a shameful traffic of these dignities and found buyers of holy things. Most often they conferred them on courtiers who dishonoured the sanctuary by their disorders. Gregory VII and all that there was of holy, pious and disinterested in his century, rose against these abuses. Saint Anselm of Lucca and Mantua was one of the noblest champions of the good cause. His attachment to the chair of Peter was for him the source of numerous persecutions. This was comprehensible on the part of the minions of Caesar; but what is not comprehensible is that lives of saints which are still in everyone's hands today seek to excuse Anselm for having meddled in a question on which after all depended the future of the Church of Jesus Christ. Not only does the conduct of Saint Anselm need no palliative, but it is worthy of all praise. This holy bishop, says Fleury, lived in great abstinence, drinking no wine, and depriving himself under various pretexts of delicate meats, when he found himself at some well-served table. He slept very little, and almost never went to bed. He melted into tears in saying mass, though he celebrated it almost every day, and with whatever business he was occupied, he did not lose sight of heavenly things. In all the States of the countess Matilda, he established regularity among the monks and canons, saying that he would rather the Church had neither monks nor clerics than have unregulated ones.

He died at Mantua, his native town, on 13 March 1086, and his holiness was soon attested by numerous miracles. He had already wrought several in his lifetime, which has made him honoured with a public cult in Italy, and chosen by the town of Mantua for its patron. He was of vast erudition, and when he was questioned on some passage of holy Scripture — which he knew entire by heart — he set forth on the spot how each holy Father had explained it. Among the works which he wrote, we shall cite: 1° the *Apology for Gregory VII*; 2° the *Explanation of the Lamentations of Jeremiah*; 3° a *Collection of Canons*; 4° the *Refutation of the pretensions of the antipope Guibert*; 5° and the *Explanation of the Psalms*. He had undertaken this last work at the prayer of the countess Matilda; but death did not permit him to finish it.

He is represented before an army in rout. In the wars between the countess Matilda and the emperor of Germany Henry IV, for the cause of Gregory VII, he obtained, by his prayers, the rout of the enemies of right.

Various histories of the Church.

Blessed Salvador of Horta, Confessor (1567)

Salvador, surnamed of Horta on account of his long sojourn in the convent of Horta, in the diocese of Tortosa, in Spain, was born at Santa Coloma, diocese of Gerona, of poor and pious parents. Having lost them in his childhood, he gave his care to guarding a flock, and afterwards exercised at Barcelona the profession of shoemaker. In these various states, he regulated his conduct so well that he fixed on himself the attention of everyone. At twenty, to answer the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he entered the convent of Saint Mary of Jesus, outside the walls of the town, had himself inscribed in the Order of Saint Francis, and pronounced the

solemn vows. Given as companion to the brother cook, he filled in all simplicity the functions of this painful and not lofty employment, and soon showed striking marks of a high perfection. From then on, God granted him the glory of miracles, and the brothers were persuaded that he would illustrate the Order by an eminent holiness. But the servant of God, aspiring still to a more perfect life, betook himself to the convent of Saint Mary of Jesus, at Tortosa, then to the solitude of Saint Mary of the Angels, at Horta, where regular discipline particularly flourished; he dwelt also in another monastery, and returned to Barcelona. Everywhere he excelled in the practice of virtues. He showed an admirable obedience, observed poverty to such a degree that he was happy to lack necessaries, and kept chastity most perfect. In his ardour to mortify his flesh, he scourged himself every day, never walked but barefoot, wore under his coarse tunic the roughest hair-shirts, observed almost continually the most rigorous fasts, took on the ground, or on a simple plank, a very short sleep, in order to have more time to give to prayer and the contemplation of heavenly things. God glorified his holiness by the gift of miracles of the first order. With the sign of the cross and the sprinkling of holy water, he gave light to the blind, strengthened the gait of the lame, loosed the tongue of the dumb, opened the ears of the deaf. He revealed sometimes the secrets of hearts and made predictions. The quite particular devotion he had for the most Blessed Virgin and for the apostle Saint Paul merited for him to enjoy their presence. The report of his holiness spread on all sides, and from the most distant countries people ran in crowds to see him. The sick above all came to him to be healed. The Saint having gone to Sardinia, by order of his superiors, received in that island the warning of his approaching death, and redoubled his fervour in the practice of virtues. At last, having been attacked by a dangerous illness, he received the sacraments of the Church with the greatest devotion, then, after having kissed the image of the Saviour crucified, and exchanged delightful colloquies with Jesus and his most holy Mother, he fell asleep in the Lord at Cagliari, in the year 1567, on 18 March. At once he began to be honoured by public veneration. These marks of devotion having persevered and increased from day to day, were authorised by Pope Clement XI. He is represented surrounded by cripples and paralytics whom he heals; putting his feet on burning coals, to recall that Blessed Salvador having placed by inadvertence the soles of his bare feet on embers which were brought him in winter to warm himself, he felt no harm from them; near him is a cauldron on the fire, to recall that once he was charged with the kitchen by way of disgrace, and that another time the meal to which he had forgotten to give his care was found ready; he falls into ecstasy near a pomegranate which is served him at table and which furnishes him occasion to admire the works of God: on this occasion, he was raised from the ground in presence of numerous witnesses; — he is invoked at Cagliari against fever.

Franciscan Breviary.

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[1] Narcissus was of a noble family and of the town of Gerona. At the moment when persecution raged there, he left it, and, in company with one of his deacons named Felix, set out by the grace of God, who guided his steps toward Germany. Passing by Augsburg, he lodged without knowing it, but by a quite special permission of Providence, in the house of a courtesan named Afra, and converted her with all her family. Nine months he remained in the town, preaching the Gospel and converting a great number of idolaters; then he returned to Gerona, where he recommenced the exercise of the apostolate. His conversions excited the jealousy of the pagans who rid themselves of him by having him assassinated. The body of Saint Narcissus is at Gerona the object of a quite special cult justified by the numerous miracles due to the intercession of this holy bishop, whom it took for its patron. See, on 5 August, the beautiful legend of Saint Afra.

[2] Under Diocletian, after the burning of his palace, which was attributed to the Christians. — The unbelievers who may find this number exaggerated need only recall the massacre of Thessalonica, where Theodosius had seven thousand persons slaughtered under the eyes of the people.

[3] Tetricus was son of Saint Gregory, whom he succeeded on the see of Langres, about the year 540. Before embracing the ecclesiastical state, he had filled important posts in the world, and the manner in which he had conducted himself in them made him judged worthy of the episcopate. He did not deceive the hopes that had been conceived of him, and Gregory of Tours, who was his nephew, speaks of this prelate as of one of the most distinguished bishops of his century. Saint Tetricus assisted at the council held at Orléans in 549, at that of Paris in 557, and at that of Tours in 565. He died on 13 March 572, after having governed his church for more than thirty years: he had predicted to a prince revolted against his father an unhappy end, just chastisement which was called down on a guilty head by the violation of the great commandment protecting paternal authority.

[4] Or bishop of the country [*évêque de campagne*]. See, on the nature of the functions of the chorepiscopus, *History of the Church of Le Mans*, by Dom Piolin, vol. ii, p. 30 ff.

[5] Saint Merolus devoted the thirty years of his episcopate to repairing the evils caused to the church of Le Mans by one of his predecessors, Bishop Gauziolenus. His labours were rewarded by the affection and veneration of the people, who long preserved the memory of his pure life filled with devotedness. The Prelate, finding himself at the monastery of Our Lady of Évron, fell dangerously ill and died there the death of the just. His funeral was remarkable for a prodigy destined to confirm the opinion that everyone had of his holiness. While his mortal remains were being transported from the abbey of Évron to the town of Le Mans, an abundant rain fell continually; but the bier and those who carried it were constantly protected from it by a miracle wrought under the eyes of the multitude. The clergy and people of Le Mans rendered to the holy Bishop great honours; they buried him in the basilica of Saint-Victeur, which was the burial-place of the bishops: the diocese long regretted its holy Pastor. There was another Merolus, chorepiscopus of Le Mans, in 585, but there is no trace of cult for the latter. (*History of the diocese of Le Mans*, by Dom Piolin, vol. ii, pp. 54– 68. Paris, 1853.)

[6] Cf. *Notre-Dame de France*, province of Ajaccio, p. 408 ff.

[7] See 13 November.

[8] Socrates, l. ii, ch. 23 [*sic*]; Philostorgius, l. iii, 36; the author of the *Chronicle of Alexandria*, etc.

[9] L. v, ch. 5.

[10] *Annals*, p. 475.

[11] Our century has also been witness to a most brilliant apparition of the Cross. On 17 December 1826, at Migné, a village of the diocese of Poitiers, at the close of the exercises of the jubilee and at the moment of the planting of a cross in the cemetery, a luminous cross appeared in the sky, to the eyes of about three thousand persons, both from Migné and from Poitiers and the surrounding parishes. When the cross began to be perceived, the sun had been set for half an hour at least. The total length might be a hundred and forty feet and the width three to four feet. The bystanders were at that very instant seized with admiration and religious respect: some were seen to prostrate themselves spontaneously before this sign of salvation; others had eyes wet with tears; these expressed their emotion by lively exclamations; those raised their hands toward heaven invoking the name of the Lord. On 28 November 1827, Mgr de Bouillé, then bishop of Poitiers, published a pastoral letter to declare the apparition of Migné miraculous, relying on the authority of Pope Leo XII, who, by two briefs of 18 April and 18 August of the same year, approved the bishop's conduct in this circumstance. The Holy Father enriched the church of Migné with a cross of gold enclosing a portion of the true Cross; he granted a plenary indulgence to all who should visit, after having fulfilled the usual conditions, the church of Migné; and the bishop fixed the third Sunday of Advent for celebrating there each year the memory of so great an event. The church of Migné bears at present the name of Holy Cross. (Godescard, edition of M. Lefort, of Lille.)

[12] Saint Chrysostom, Sozomen and Theodoret say that the flames sprang from the very middle of the foundations.

[13] "*Hocque modo, elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum.*" Amm. Marcell., l. xxiii, ch. 1. These words are remarkable in the mouth of a pagan; they represent the fire as a reasoning being which acts according to the impulse of a superior power. Can one fail to recognise here the finger of God?

[14] See Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Or. 4, *adv. Julian.* According to Theodoret, the crosses which appeared on the garments of the Jews were dark and verging on black; but that does not contradict the account of Saint Gregory. The crosses in question resembled phosphorus, which is of a black colour during the day and luminous during the night.

[15] Or. 4, *adv. Julian.*

[16] In his epistle XL, written in 388.

[17] See Libanius in the history of his life, and in the funeral oration on Julian.

[18] See Warburton's Dissertation on the project formed by Julian to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. The abbé Mazéas gave a good French translation of it in 1754. It is proved in this work that the fact in question was a miracle properly so called, and Basnage's difficulties are perfectly resolved there. All the learned agree that Warburton exhausted the matter, and that he forced the unbelievers into their last entrenchments.

[19] See Cave, *in vit. S. Cyril.*; Milles, *Praef. et not. in Op. S. Cyril.*; Whittaker, Bull, Vossius, etc.

[20] See Dom Ceillier, pp. 488, 490.

[21] See Dom Touttée, Diss. 2, p. 105.

[22] See also *Catech.* iv, n. 2?.

[23] *Roman Breviary*; Homily of Saint Bernard, *Missus est*.

[24] *Dan.* viii, ix, x …

[25] *Der beschlossen Gart des Rosenkranz* … in-folio, 1505.

[26] *Ps.* lxxxiv, 11.

19 March

Martyrologies

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

In Judea, the birth into heaven of Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 1st c. — At Sorrento, the holy martyrs Quintus, Quintilla, Quartilla and Mark. — At Nicomedia, Saint Pancarius, a Roman, who had his head cut off under Diocletian, and by this punishment merited the crown of martyrdom. 3rd c. — The same day, Saint Apollonius and Saint Leontius, bishops. — At Ghent, Saint Landoald, priest of Rome, and Saint Amantius, deacon, who, having been sent by Pope Saint Martin to preach the Gospel, were illustrious by several miracles after their death. 666. — At Civita di Penne, the birthday of Blessed John, a man of great holiness, who, having come from Syria into Italy, built a monastery, and after having been the Father of many servants of God for forty-four years, rested in peace, illustrious by his virtues. 6th c.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED

At Bobbio, in Italy, Saint Bertulf, monk of Luxeuil, in France, and third abbot of the monastery of Bobbio. Bertulf was born in the bosom of paganism, but seeing his illustrious relative and friend, Saint Arnulf, bishop of Metz, renounce the world to embrace the priesthood, he felt himself animated with the desire to imitate him. 640. — At Ghent, Saint Adrian, martyr, interpreter of Saint Landoald. — Again at Ghent, with Saint Landoald, mentioned above, the Saints Julian, Vinciana and Adeltrude, his companions. 7th c. — At Saintes, Saint Leontius, bishop. 640. — At Cambrai, Saint Siagrius, regionary bishop in the country of the Nervii, sent by Pope Saint Evaristus in the 1st century.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order. — In Judea, the birthday of the patriarch Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, protector and special patron of the whole Seraphic Order.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — In Judea, the birthday of Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, principal protector of the Order of the Carmelites.

Martyrology of the Trinitarians. — The first translation of the body of our father Saint John of Matha.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Ireland, Saint Lactinus, abbot, founder of the monastery of Achadh-ur, sometimes called bishop. Year 622. — In England, Saint Alcmund, martyr, who was son of the king of Northumberland, Alchred. He was put to death by the son of a usurper. Year 800. — At Siena, in Tuscany, Blessed Andrew Gallerani, founder of the society of Mercy, which subsisted in that city until 1308, and whom the Dominicans admitted to the communion of their prayers and spiritual goods. Year 1251. — At Camerino, in Italy, Blessed John of Parma, seventh minister general of the Order of Friars Minor. He was sent to Greece to labour for the return of the schismatics into the bosom of the Church, and afterwards abdicated the dignity of general. The famous book of the Eternal Gospel, several times condemned, has been wrongly attributed to him. Year 1289. — In Italy, the Blessed Sybilline of Pavia, and Margaret of Metola, Sisters of the Penance of Saint Dominic and recluses. 1320 and 1367. — At Vicenza, Blessed Mark of Santa Maria in Gallo, of the Order of Friars Minor of the Observance. Year 1496.

Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Mother of God

If you seek Joseph, you will find him with Jesus and Mary.[1]

The just man shall flourish as the lily; his flower shall keep its brightness and its perfume for ever before the Lord.[2]

In the Old Testament, according to the testimony of Saint John Chrysostom, the most striking circumstances of the Redemption are predicted or symbolised in such manner as to be easily recognised by all. The part of Saint Joseph was announced by means of signs or figures which form for him, so to speak, an anticipated history in the books of the old covenant. Abraham, the father of believers, is the first who is presented to us as the type and image of Saint Joseph, because of his perfect obedience to God and of his faith, which never suffered the least failing. In spite of appearances, when God made known his will to him, he did not hesitate an instant; he submitted, without expressing the least doubt, without asking explanation. Let us add that, as regards obedience, the submission of Saint Joseph was rewarded in a manner yet more marvellous and brilliant than that of the patriarch Abraham: the posterity of Abraham was more numerous than the grains of sand on the seashore and the stars in the firmament; the spiritual posterity of Saint Joseph fills the whole universe. When Abraham, driven by famine, went down into Egypt, he declared that Sarah was his sister, fearing that the inhabitants, seduced by her beauty, might put him to death to take her from him. Joseph might have run the same danger, if, in the time when he lived, manners had not been changed. Under the government of the Greeks and Romans, personal liberty was more respected than under the despotic regime of the Pharaohs. Joseph moreover might have affirmed with as much truth as the great patriarch that Mary was his sister. She was his sister still, in a higher sense, by the angelic life which they practised in marriage. Finally Abraham was the father of Isaac, whom all Christian antiquity has considered as the most perfect image of the true Isaac, adopted son of Saint Joseph.

The high priest Aaron, brother of Moses, has been likewise regarded as an allegorical figure of Saint Joseph, because of his miraculous rod, which flowered and gave fruit outside the usual order of nature. After the example of Aaron, Saint Joseph carries in his hand a flowering rod. Let us contemplate again a pious personage of the old law who merited, by his position, to be regarded as a prophetic image of Saint Joseph: it is Mordecai, the uncle and guardian of Queen Esther. Not only during her childhood did he surround with cares this young orphan, whom the law had placed under his protection; but even when she had mounted the throne, thanks to divine favour, he never ceased to watch over her with a paternal attention and affection. He doubtless was not ignorant that Providence had raised her to such high destinies only for the greater advantage of the people to which she belonged by birth. Esther, in effect, was to save her countrymen from the hatred of the perfidious Haman. In recompense of his zeal and fidelity, Mordecai was to fill at the court of Ahasuerus a post of trust, and near the queen functions for which his virtues and attachment had prepared him: he became the steward of her palace.[3]

Saint Joseph was destined by Providence to cover temporarily in the eyes of men both the virtue of Mary and the mystery of the divine Incarnation. When the times shall be fulfilled, the veil will be rent, and men will know the august mystery of a God consenting to clothe himself with human form and miseries in the bosom of a Virgin. At the moment fixed in the divine plan, all uncertainty will vanish; all Christian symbols will proclaim Jesus, son of the Virgin. But it was necessary first, in the midst of a dissolute society, to assure a protector to the virginal modesty of Mary, and to preserve from calumny the miraculous birth of the Saviour.

This glorious part was reserved to Saint Joseph.

The prophecies, moreover, relating to the person of the Messiah, had announced that Christ would be born of the tribe of Judah and in the line of David. Was it not useful for the multitude accustomed to judge by appearances that the head of the holy family should belong incontestably to the tribe of Judah and to the royal race?

It is commonly admitted that Saint Matthew names the ancestors of Saint Joseph: it is the legal genealogy of Jesus. Saint Luke, on the contrary, describes the genealogy of the Blessed Virgin: it is the natural genealogy of the Saviour. Both have the same starting-point: David is the common stock; which is, in the case, the capital matter.

Thus, later and on several occasions, the mystery of the divine Incarnation not having been discovered, the Jews will salute, in their acclamations, Jesus with the title of son of David. The envious of Nazareth, witnesses of the prodigies wrought by Jesus, will say: "Is not this the carpenter's son, a carpenter himself?" Hatred and jealousy will not prevent the public fact, predicted by the Prophets, from being proclaimed: the very children, in the temple of Jerusalem, will repeat this popular and triumphal cry: Hosanna to the son of David!

Let us add that Jesus being son of Mary, lawful spouse of Joseph, belonged ostensibly to the latter: *Filius, ut putabatur, Joseph.*[4] Consequently, to trace the genealogy of the one was to draw that of the other; we speak from the point of view of the civil law, which fixes the condition of persons. Finally, we know it in an incontestable manner, Joseph and Mary are united by the bonds of blood, they belong both to the same tribe and to the same family. One important point deserved to be established and put beyond attack: Jesus through Mary, his mother, as through Joseph, his adoptive father, is son of David and son of Abraham. In his person the prophecies have been accomplished superabundantly. The real or spiritual posterity of Abraham can repeat every day in our religious edifices, to the glory of the king-prophet: *De fructu ventris tui ponam super sedem tuam.*[5] "Your throne shall be occupied by one of your descendants."

A circumstance worthy of remark, and which has fixed the attention of all historians: after the birth of the Saviour, the succession and distinction of families among the Jews fell into an entire confusion. Before history, and with the official verification of the Romans, Saint Joseph was therefore the last offshoot of the royal race of Judah; in him, as in Mary, the last drop of the royal blood of David flowed. Jesus, we cannot repeat it too often, following the predictions of the Prophets, is the son of David.

According to the custom of his country and the genius of his mother tongue, Saint Joseph, at the circumcision, at the moment when the father imposes a name on his newborn son, had received a significant name. It may be translated literally in our language thus: Growth, increase.

Several ecclesiastical writers of the Middle Ages have taken their text from the etymological signification of the name of Joseph, to make the most magnificent eulogy of this august patriarch, who had the signal honour, according to a fine expression of Saint John Damascene, of receiving from God the sacred title and authority of father. "You may conjecture," says Saint Bernard, "what sort of personage Saint Joseph was from the sole interpretation of his name, which means increase."[6]

"We do not know," says Suarez, "what were the gifts of knowledge and wisdom, or the graces, *gratis datae*, with which Joseph was favoured. The Gospel teaches us only that he received communications from angels and prophetic revelations." — "We have the certainty," he says again, "that none of the divine favours necessary to the exercise of his special functions was lacking to him."

What idea, nevertheless, can we conceive of the perfections which shone in Saint Joseph? Let us consult the sacred books. Inspired texts ordinarily say much in few words. The Holy Spirit expresses himself with a profound laconism; of our holy patriarch he will say only: "Joseph was a just man."[7] In what does this virtue of justice consist? "Justice," says the Angel of the school, Saint Thomas, "is not only that special virtue which attributes to each what belongs to him, it is still that general rectitude of the soul consisting in the union of all the virtues."[8] This passage of the Angelic Doctor is the best commentary and the most authoritative interpretation of the words of Saint Matthew. It is not besides the sentiment of Saint Thomas Aquinas alone; here is what Saint John Chrysostom says on the same subject: "The name of just," he says, "which the Holy Spirit grants to Saint Joseph, signifies accomplished in all the virtues."[9] Justice, in effect, comprises the absence of all vice and the possession of all virtue. In this sense, Scripture often employs the word justice, as when it says of Job: "He was a just and upright man";[10] and again, speaking of Zachary and Elizabeth his wife: "Both were just."[11] One of the ablest theologians sums up perfectly on this point the Catholic doctrine: "It is not rash," he says, "it is even a probable opinion, and inspired by piety, that Saint

Joseph, among all the Saints, held the first rank in the state of grace."[12]

Guided by reasons of fitness, some authors have taught that Joseph merited, like the prophet Jeremiah and Saint John the Baptist, to be sanctified before his birth. So think Isidore de Isolanis, one of the glories of the Order of Saint Dominic,[13] Morales, one of the most learned professors of the university of Alcalá, in Spain,[14] followed in this by many instructed theologians. Bossuet regards this opinion as probable.[15] We know in a certain manner the origin of Saint Joseph; the Gospel teaches it to us and returns to this subject several times.[16] His father was named Jacob; but Scripture gives us no information on this holy personage.

Moreover, all authors are agreed on this point: in the century when Saint Joseph lived, as in the most remote Hebrew antiquity, the descendants of kings lived in a happy simplicity. Those whom fortune had been pleased to load with her gifts loved to lead their flocks to pasture, ploughed their lands, sowed them and gathered their harvests. It was then a luxury envied by all, to add a vine to one's domain, to be able to rest in peace in the shade of one's fig-tree, to gather the olives, from which was pressed at the press the unctuous and perfumed liquor; the palm-tree, with its slender stem, its elegant plume of green foliage and its sweet fruits, was the most esteemed tree: it was regarded as the emblem of the just man.[17] Abundance of harvests or fecundity of flocks, during long centuries, were considered as the principal element of wealth. Industry, commerce, exchanges were then little considerable, and, we must here add, little esteemed.

Before the captivity of Babylon, heads of families were subject to the hard necessity of work; after the public calamities, the situation became yet more painful. No one, or almost no one, was exempted from this rigorous obligation. Is it useful to add that in these painful circumstances this general situation, though unfortunate, had in itself nothing humiliating? In spite of the disasters which followed one upon another, no people in the world perhaps kept more constantly than the Jewish nation its original pride. All faithfully kept their genealogies; they knew the series of their ancestors, as the Arabs of the desert, still today, in spite of the cruel clutches of misery, which too often reduce them to extremity, recall with pride the dignity and high deeds of their fathers. This loftiness of character, founded on nobility of blood, is a salient trait of the habits of all the races of the East. Saint Joseph, descendant of David and living in mediocrity, shared the common lot of many others. His youth had probably been spent in that part of Galilee primitively occupied by the tribe of Zebulon, from which went out, at the moment of the captivity, several just men, in company with Tobias, native of the tribe of Naphtali. There rose the peaceful towns of Nazareth and Cana, as well as the industrious towns of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capharnaum, not far from the fertile shores of the sea of Gennesaret. This country always passed for one of the most abundant and best cultivated of ancient Palestine. Commerce was easier and more active there than in other countries: perhaps its cause should be sought in the manners of the mixed population which inhabited the territory designated under the name of "Galilee of the Gentiles." Joseph exercised there the profession of carpenter, and had acquired a reputation founded no less on his probity than on his experience and skill. He excelled in works of wood, and some ancient writers have added that he worked at the same time iron and other metals, doubtless according to the needs of his state: which has led other authors to maintain that he united several kinds of industry, working equally stone, wood and metals, after the manner of architects, in countries where the needs of construction are few.

Saint Ambrose teaches us that he worked at felling and trimming trees, which is proper to carpenters and woodcutters.[18] Saint Justin the Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho, tells us that the Saviour, in company with his foster-father, made yokes, and he adds this touching reflection, that such an occupation suited perfectly him who was one day to say in his preachings: "Take my yoke upon you, for it is sweet."[19] Several of the holy Fathers have alluded, whether directly or by eloquent contrasts, to these obscure and common labours. In his commentary on the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Mark, Saint Jerome recalls that the divine son of Mary, in company with his adoptive father, did not disdain to make coarse works of wood, he whose mighty hands had created the dawn and the sun, source of all light.[20] Saint John Chrysostom, the prince of Christian orators, in his first homily on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, insists in the

most striking manner on this fact that Jesus was son of the Virgin, spouse of the worker in wood, because Jesus, Saviour of the human race, was to consummate our salvation on wood, instrument of the universal redemption.[21]

Saint Augustine, of so wide and sure an erudition on Christian origins, though commonly too discreet on questions of this nature, writes in a general manner that Saint Joseph built houses.[22] We must cite here what the historian Theodoret reports of Libanius. The latter, carried away in the fatal error of Julian the Apostate, asked a Christian, to jeer at Jesus Christ, what the artisan's son was doing at that moment. "He is busy," that Christian answered him prophetically, "making a coffin." Shortly after, in effect, the apostate emperor perished miserably. "The Galilean had won the victory." A deplorable end, but worthy of a monster who, a few days before being mortally wounded, had offered to the idols a frightful sacrifice in a temple dedicated to the moon, at Carrhae, in Mesopotamia. He had had the doors of this temple walled up; but it was opened a little time after his death, and there was found the corpse of a woman hung by the hair, the hands violently stretched out and the belly open. What omens was this impious man seeking in the entrails of a human victim?[23]

The flower of Christian virtues did not fail Saint Joseph. "Continence," says a pious writer, "may be regarded as the ornament of holiness."

In a discourse in which abound the most graceful images and the most pious sentiments toward the Blessed Virgin, pronounced on the day of the feast of the Nativity, Saint John Damascene, so versed in the knowledge of the most ancient Christian traditions, professes, touching the perfect continence of Saint Joseph, the same belief as Saint Jerome,[24] Saint Augustine,[25] Saint Chrysostom.[26] He compares the virginal marriage of the Mother of God to a new book written not with pen and ink, but by a divine hand. Entrusted, he says, to a man versed in the knowledge of letters, it was not opened, but remained intact. So Joseph lived with Mary.[27] Catholic tradition, as regards the purity of the spouse of the immaculate Virgin, continued through all the Middle Ages. Saint Peter Damian, in the eleventh century, attests the faith of the Church touching the virginity of Saint Joseph. The authority of this author is the weightier in that, named cardinal by Pope Stephen IX, he sums up admirably in his writings the doctrine admitted in his time, and distinguished himself constantly as much by his profound erudition as by the purity of his teaching and his tender devotion toward the Blessed Virgin. It is to him, as is known, that we owe specially the practices of piety of Saturday, consecrated in honour of the Mother of God. "Are you ignorant," he says in his *Treatise on Ecclesiastical Celibacy*, "that the Son of God held bodily purity in such esteem that conjugal chastity did not suffice in his eyes, but that he willed to become incarnate in the bosom of a virgin? That was not yet enough; not only was his mother a virgin, but also, such is the faith of the Church, he who was regarded as his father was a virgin likewise."[28]

Cardinal Baronius took pleasure in gathering a quantity of texts of the holy Fathers relating to the purity of Saint Joseph.[29] We shall not cite more. In two words Gerson expresses this sentiment: Mary made a vow of virginity, Joseph bound himself by a like vow.[30] Sandini, author of a learned book entitled *History of the Holy Family*, has been followed on this point by all modern Doctors. This writer, who has briefly recapitulated the studies of the Bollandists on this subject, expresses himself in these terms, which may be regarded as the conclusion of all that we have just said: "That Joseph lived and died a virgin is, after Saint Jerome, the sentiment of the whole Latin Church."

Let us end by citing a few lines written by one of the most devout servants of Saint Joseph, Isidore of Isolanis. "Catholic Doctors," he says, "no longer hesitate today to award to Saint Joseph the aureole of virginity: first, because they regard as a demonstrated truth that this great saint was virgin in mind and body, by vow and by state; next, because he was the first to follow and imitate the Queen of virgins; lastly, because the spouse and the bride must be adorned with the same ornaments."[31] It has been asked how the betrothal of Joseph and Mary can be explained, since on the one hand the betrothed was bound by a vow of virginity and

this ceremony constituted a bond which could no longer be broken. We share on this point the thought of those who believe that the Virgin, bound by the vow of virginity, had acted according to a direct manifestation of the will of God, confiding blindly in the dispositions which his Providence would know how to take in the future. When the moment came, she certainly knew that Joseph was the man chosen by the Lord to safeguard her modesty and protect her virginal integrity.

A few days after the betrothal, according to the Mosaic ordinances, took place the solemn celebration of the marriage between Joseph and Mary. The wedding was celebrated at Jerusalem on 23 January, according to a tradition adopted by the Church.

Did marriage really exist between Joseph and Mary? Among those who are in the slightest degree initiated into the studies of ecclesiastical antiquities, no one is ignorant that several heretics have attacked the reality of the marriage contracted between Joseph and the Virgin.

Holy Scripture, which on this point needs no interpretation, expresses itself clearly on the subject. Saint Matthew, in effect, and Saint Luke call Mary the spouse of Joseph, and Joseph the husband of Mary.[32] Is it necessary to add that these expressions suppose an anterior marriage? God was to take human nature in the bosom of a virgin; but all have thought it fitting that this virgin should be engaged in marriage. Saint Jerome gives two reasons: “Because,” he says, “the Virgin would have been exposed to be stoned, and her son branded with infamy.” — “It was also,” he adds, “in order that the virginal childbearing might be unknown to the demon.”[33]

Suarez, in volume XIX of his complete works, summing up the Catholic doctrine on the subject of the marriage which intervened between Joseph and Mary, does not hesitate to say that it is a truth of faith, and that he is in this in agreement with all theologians.[34]

This marriage, we must add, with a quantity of authors, was holy and perfect: it is the type of the mysterious union of Jesus Christ with the Church. This thought is Saint Ambrose’s.

To exhaust what it is possible to say on the chapter of the marriage of Joseph and Mary, we should have to give some details on the nuptial ring of the Blessed Virgin. For long the inhabitants of Perugia have pretended to be in possession of this ring, deposited first at the church of Chiusi, where it had been kept the space of four hundred and eighty-four years. It is not of metal; it is a circle of amethyst, on which are seen rather roughly engraved two half-opened flowers.

The uncertainty which reigns on the precise age of the Blessed Virgin, it must be admitted, is far from equalling the obscurity which envelops the question of the age of Saint Joseph when he married Mary. A number of grave historians represent him to us as a venerable old man, already bent by age, having white hair, seeming to keep only a remnant of vigour. Saint Epiphanius does not even hesitate to say that he was more than eighty years old, divine Providence showing evidently, he says, that this holy old man was destined solely to watch over the young Virgin.[35]

The painters who have been inspired by the opinion of Saint Epiphanius have, in our opinion, fallen into a grave error, if they have pretended to figure the chastity of Saint Joseph by representing him to us as a man cooled by the snows of age.

We are rather inclined to believe that a marriage between persons of ages out of proportion, as is supposed between Joseph and Mary, would be supremely unbecoming.[36] Would there not have been to fear, in an opposite sense, the inconvenience which all agree to consider as important to avoid, for the reputation of Mary, if malevolent men had remarked the consequences of the Annunciation, while she lived in company with an old man almost a hundred years old? What protection, besides, and what resources could she have expected from a decrepit old man, above all in the journeys which the holy family was forced to undertake?

Those who have embraced a different sentiment are numerous. They maintain that at the moment of the celebration of his marriage, Joseph was in the vigour of age, having scarcely passed the first flower of life. Far from having attained old age, he enjoyed all the faculties and all the rights which the Mosaic legislation recognised in men. In these few words you find expressed the opinion of Gerson,[37] Molanus, Baronius,[38] Suarez,[39] Vasquez,[40] Sandini.[41]

But we are far from sharing this opinion, expressed in terms too absolute. We admit without difficulty that Saint Joseph was not yet weighed down by old age; could we equally believe that he was then in the first maturity of age, from twenty-five to forty years? We incline rather toward the sentiment adopted by other theologians: Saint Joseph was reaching the fiftieth year of his age.[42]

What shows, says Trombelli, who cites in full the text of Cedrenus, that Joseph was not an octogenarian, is that the evangelist Saint Luke makes no difficulty of relating, at the baptism of Jesus, that he was believed son of Joseph: *Filius, ut putabatur, Joseph.* We shall not reproduce here the commentary with which he thinks he should accompany the text, because, says Saint Augustine, Saint Joseph was evidently in a state to be able to be considered as the father of Jesus.[43]

Could Saint Joseph know beforehand the mystery of the Incarnation? Who could doubt it? Saint Joseph was not ignorant of the predictions, so many times renewed, relating to the coming of the Messiah. Soon we shall see the sacred narrator reproduce the famous prophecy of Isaiah: “Behold a Virgin shall conceive,” precisely apropos of the trouble with which the soul of the venerable patriarch was agitated, and which a heavenly envoy came to calm. At that moment, no one is ignorant, all eyes were turned toward Palestine: from that sacred land it was hoped soon to see issue an extraordinary personage who was to exercise the greatest influence on the destinies of the world. A great number of pious traditions circulated; they have not come down to us, because their realisation in the evangelical history has made them fall little by little into oblivion, as a sparkling light absorbs and makes completely vanish a vague half-day. Traditions, not more marvellous, but more explicit, were preserved in the more enlightened classes of society; nothing prevents us from thinking that Saint Joseph, of the privileged tribe of Judah and of the royal descent of David, a just and upright man, of irreproachable life, was initiated into them like so many others, and possessed the full understanding of them.

Did Saint Joseph know of the Annunciation?

The weeks of the prophet Daniel were on the point of being completed. The archangel Gabriel is chosen by God to carry the great news to the Virgin Mary, and receive her consent. This important act could not take place without the formal acquiescence of the Virgin: it was not necessary that Joseph should be forewarned. The first Eve had sinned by yielding voluntarily to the suggestions of the tempter: could the reparation of the world take place without the freely given assent of the new Eve?

At the moment when the Angel came to Nazareth, charged with so noble a message, and penetrated into the most august sanctuary, where was Joseph? If Scripture is silent, may we not supply its silence up to a certain point? We are not ignorant that each day work called Saint Joseph outside his dwelling. Not that he was obliged daily to go far; but he possessed in the little town of Nazareth, as we shall see presently, a workshop, apart from his house, where he prepared the materials which he had to work, and where we shall soon contemplate him in company with the God-Man, sanctifying by his humility, his courage, his perseverance, his resignation, the humble labour which Providence had designated to his activity. While he watered with his sweat the modest works to which he devoted his strength and from which he asked his daily subsistence, a prodigy of which the knowledge would be fully revealed to him later was being accomplished in the interior of his dwelling. Saint Bernardine of Siena assures us that the venerable patriarch wished himself to accompany the Blessed Virgin to her cousin Elizabeth, and to conduct her across the mountainous region of Judea.[44] From Nazareth to the place where Saint Elizabeth dwelt with Zachary, the distance is considerable,

and the roads that lead there, little frequented and crossing Samaria, a region always inhospitable, are rugged and difficult. It is reckoned about twenty-five leagues,[45] and, as soon as one engages in the paths across the mountains, the march becomes very painful and bristling with difficulties of every kind.

At the epoch of which we speak, the roads of Palestine, even the most frequented, offered no security. Armed bands scoured the country. They uttered forcibly the cry of independence, and they were often forced to pillage to live. The Romans were without pity for these unfortunates, and pursued them to extremity. Let us add that evildoers, finding the occasion favourable, profited by it to rob and strip travellers. Could he, without making himself guilty of the gravest imprudence, in such circumstances, let a young Virgin, weak and timid, travel alone? Could Saint Joseph, whatever certain authors may say, fail in his part of guardian and protector? No; although Scripture on this subject keeps a profound silence, we believe that the most probable sentiment is that which teaches that Saint Joseph did not hesitate to interrupt his ordinary labours for some days.

In vain will it be objected to us that Saint Joseph, if he had heard the magnificent conversation exchanged between Mary and Elizabeth, could not be ignorant of the reality of the divine maternity. This difficulty cannot be of great weight in the eyes of those who know in the slightest degree the manners of the East. While Mary approaches and salutes Elizabeth, Joseph must have gone to meet Zachary. Formerly, as later, on arriving near the houses of their friends, visitors did not penetrate into the part of the building reserved to women: persons of their sex alone were admitted. Such in Palestine were the laws of ancient hospitality. On the return, Saint Joseph accompanied Mary again;[46] but this return, which should have caused him the liveliest joy, occasioned him the bitterest griefs. Three months had passed since the Annunciation, and the signs of Mary's maternity were apparent. At this sight, Saint Joseph, ignorant of what had happened, was a prey to violent trouble. He knew the virtue of his most chaste spouse; her conduct, in everything irreproachable, could give not the least pretext to the slightest suspicion. The experience of the past, a life consecrated to piety, to retreat, to silence, to withdrawal from the world, ought to have reassured him; but evidence was stronger than all reasonings.

The trouble of Saint Joseph could not be dissimulated. Mary soon perceived it; she could doubtless have dissipated it on the spot; but, strong in her innocence, enlightened perhaps by an interior light, she trusted in God, who would know well, when he judged fit, how to end all uncertainty, and to employ for it the most suitable means. The first impression however was far from favourable. The mind of Saint Joseph was beset by it; his conscience dictated to him what he had to do. His first thought was to separate from her. No certainty nevertheless, not even a somewhat founded suspicion, existed. As Joseph was a just man, he was going to stop at the resolution of dismissing her secretly. God had pity on his anguish. An Angel appeared to him during his sleep and said to him: "Joseph, son of David, make no difficulty of keeping Mary, your spouse, for that which is born in her is the work of the Holy Spirit."[47] These words sufficed to calm his disquiet and to dissipate the trouble of his mind. The Angel continues the communication which he was charged to make to him. "She shall bring forth a son, he says, and you shall call him Jesus; for he shall save his people by delivering them from their sins."

Besides the literal and natural interpretation of this passage, another explanation has been proposed: "The anxiety of Joseph," it has been said, "proceeded from another cause, that is, from his sentiments of humility, which engaged him to withdraw and to cease living with Mary. Understanding, from the eminent holiness of Mary and other arguments easier to suppose than to express, that the Virgin wedded by him had been chosen by God to be the mother of his only Son, he thought himself unworthy to live with a woman raised to so high and so excellent a dignity."[48]

Saint Bernard had embraced this opinion,[49] although several Fathers have judged it little probable. It would have to be believed, in effect, that the Blessed Virgin had instructed Saint Joseph of the fact of the Annunciation and the mystery of the Incarnation. What would then signify this word, that Joseph did not

wish to bring her to justice?[50] Moreover, the words of the Angel consoling Saint Joseph would have no more signification when he says to him: “That which is born in her is the work of the Holy Spirit.” It is certain that if Joseph had been convinced of the reality of the supernatural conception of Mary, Scripture could not have granted him the title of just at the moment when he wished to abandon her, depriving her of his help.[51]

We prefer to stop at the following sentiment, which is injurious to no one and very probably the most conformable to the truth. Saint Joseph, to whom all the virtues of Mary were perfectly known, floated in the cruellest uncertainty. This way of seeing seems conformable to the belief of the Church, expressed in the hymn of the Vespers of Saint Joseph.[52] Calm now reigns in the soul of Saint Joseph. With what intimate and pure joys was his heart not flooded when, in the morning on waking, he told Mary of the heavenly communication which he had received during his sleep! The faith of this just man was no longer obscured by any shadow. In the little child who was soon to come into the world, he recognised the Saviour promised to the universe, announced by the Prophets, awaited by the Patriarchs. Emotion seizes us involuntarily at the sole thought of what passed of the sublime, the affectionate, of simple and ravishing sensibility in the silence and obscurity of the poor dwelling of Nazareth. This profound and sweet tranquillity nevertheless was soon interrupted. An edict issued by Caesar Augustus,[53] ordering the census of the world subject to the empire of Rome, had been published solemnly in the provinces. “Joseph went up to Bethlehem, the city of David, because he was of the house and family of David, to make his declaration there, with Mary, his spouse, who was with child.”[54] The Prophet had said clearly: “And thou, Bethlehem of Judah, art not the least among the principal cities of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth the Chief who is to rule my people Israel.”[55]

Joseph and Mary, models of obedience, do not hesitate to direct themselves toward the town of Bethlehem, because they belong to the race of David. They were not, moreover, free to choose the place where they had to present themselves personally for the census. To obey the imperial prescriptions, they leave Nazareth in a very modest equipage, seeing that they were not largely provided with the goods of fortune. The Virgin Mary was carried on a humble mount, the ass, of peaceful gait; Joseph led behind the ox, companion of his ordinary labours, laden with the modest and simple provisions of the journey, that is, a few barley loaves, dried fish, dates or raisins, common food of the people. The drink was drawn from the fountains along the road.

Let us look with love on this little caravan passing. Nothing distinguishes it outwardly in the eyes of men; faith alone helps us to discover the angels who accompany it. The vulgar would doubtless esteem more the noisy and pompous cortège which escorts the mighty of the earth; we who know these august travellers contemplate them with tenderness, we follow them with eyes and heart.

In the most sunken and obscure part of a grotto two hundred paces from Bethlehem, toward the East, Jesus was born, on 25 December, in the middle of the night. The thickest darkness covered the earth; this humble cavern alone was then illuminated with a supernatural clarity. Saint Joseph, says a pious tradition, was turned toward Bethlehem at the moment when Christ made his appearance. Drawn by a lively light, he came in his turn to adore him and render him the duties which his weakness and the state of relative destitution to which they were reduced, far from their usual dwelling, required. Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes, was placed in a manger, the humblest of cradles.

Saint Joseph did not move away at once from Bethlehem. Could he have forgotten or neglected his mission of vigilant guardian of the Virgin and foster-father of Jesus? Was it not for him, in effect, in these circumstances to watch over the safety of the Child, and to provide for the needs of the son and the mother? According to the most ancient and trustworthy ecclesiastical writers, Saint Joseph had prudently thought beforehand of the necessities of the holy family: the prodigies which had been manifested to him had taught him at the same time that they could not be long in making themselves felt. Several have told us what we could easily and naturally foresee: he had gathered all the resources of which he could dispose. These resources were mediocre doubtless; but no author has written that he was ever reduced to beggary. His daily

labour had sufficed until then for his needs and those of his household, in a country and under a climate where each, from childhood, was accustomed to content himself with little. The garments, it is known, were remarkable for their simplicity; the dwellings were humble; luxury was entirely banished from them; the food was frugal; the produce of the least labours procured a relatively considerable ease. Scarcely was Jesus healed of the wounds of the circumcision when the magi arrived at Bethlehem, led by a miraculous star. At the moment of the arrival of the magi at Bethlehem, was Jesus still in the grotto of Bethlehem? Some have affirmed it, and tradition is conformable to this sentiment. Others have denied it, founding on the text of Saint Matthew, which says that they entered into the house,[56] supposing that Saint Joseph had hastened, as soon as he had had the possibility, to lead Jesus and his mother into a more suitable habitation.

Holy Scripture does not tell us whether the magi exchanged some words with Mary and Joseph. Several pious writers have wished to supply this silence, or at least have affirmed, which is very probable, that there were conversations between them and the holy family. Saint Bernardine of Siena, followed by several distinguished theologians, goes further. “Would it not be astonishing,” he says, “that the most merciful Mother of God had not addressed gentle words to these faithful and devoted men, come from so far to adore the Messiah, braving fatigues and dangers?”

We accept willingly the opinion of those who think that Saint Joseph instructed the magi of a crowd of particulars which might specially interest them.[57] Saint Joseph, whose character is sufficiently known to us, received them with extreme benevolence; he received and kept their presents.[58] One cannot, besides, with any probable foundation, call in doubt his presence at their arrival. The shepherds of the environs of Bethlehem had found him attentive and watching near the manger; the kings found him in the same dispositions. The sacred text, it is true, does not speak of it; but the monuments of tradition have supplied this silence. The artist to whom we are indebted for the precious mosaics decorating the principal arch of the basilica of Saint Mary Major, at Rome, represents Saint Joseph standing behind the Blessed Virgin, while the magi are prostrate before Jesus, offering their adorations and gifts.[59] This painting is completed by the sculptures which the learned Bottari described in the second edition of Bosio’s *Roma sotterranea*.[60]

At what moment, in obedience to the edict of the emperor Augustus, did Joseph go to present himself before the public officer to have his name inscribed in the registers of the census, as well as those of Mary and Jesus? The Gospel says nothing of it, and no historian speaks of it. He doubtless did not delay much; for, we know it besides, the Roman officials, like, in general, all conquerors, were neither obliging nor patient. It is probable however that it was only some days after the circumcision. Then, in effect, the father gave a name to his son, and this name, legally attested, took its place in the genealogical list of the family. Evidently Christ, holiness itself and source of all holiness, was not subject to the law of circumcision. But the Redeemer, come into the world to accomplish the law,[61] did not hesitate to shed the first drops of his blood under the knife of circumcision, on the eighth day after his birth.

The most common and most probable opinion is that Saint Joseph himself fulfilled this painful function of paternity, in the presence of the Virgin. Saint Ephrem says so expressly.[62] The learned Serry adopts this opinion, supported on the authority of the most ancient and best instructed Fathers of ecclesiastical antiquity. “In the old law,” he says, “this ministry was reserved to heads of families; women were charged with it only by exception, in the absence of their husbands and constrained by necessity.”[63]

The first times of the evangelical history have been studied, from every point of view, with the greatest care, and illustrated by learned commentaries drawn up by the most erudite men. Some facts nevertheless, presenting in themselves no difficulty, always present obscurity when one wishes to classify them according to a rigorous chronological order. Following the chronology adopted by the Church, after the departure of the magi, we shall place the Presentation of Jesus in the temple and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. On this subject it has been asked why Joseph contented himself with offering for the Virgin the sacrifice of the poor, above all after having received the splendid offerings of the magi? The gold put into his hands rendered

easy and fitting to him the offering of a lamb of a year. We read in the work of Ch. Trombelli the long enumeration of the explanations given on this subject.[64] One only, in our opinion, deserves to be reported, though it is a simple hypothesis: the gold of the magi, in the designs of God and the foresight of the future, was destined to facilitate to Saint Joseph and the Virgin the journey into Egypt, and to render less painful to them the first times of their sojourn in a foreign region. Such is the opinion maintained from the most remote times and admitted in modern times by Marsilio Ficino, Tillemont, Gori and several other learned authors.[65]

The holy spouses went from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, in spite of the dangers which might threaten them, and which threatened them in reality, above all since the passage of the magi through Jerusalem, the more so, as is easily understood, that the undissembled hopes of the nation were a grievance which the tyrant Herod could not forget. During the journey, Mary carried the Child in her arms. Could a mother act otherwise? She consented to share with no one this precious burden. Along the road, rather deserted in this season of the year, no one doubtless paid attention to the pious travellers directing themselves modestly toward the holy city. In the eyes of the vulgar, it was a spectacle which was seen frequently, not to say every day. Joseph, as we have just seen, led Jesus and Mary to Jerusalem, without dreading as imminent the peril to which the life of Jesus was exposed. The ceremonies were accomplished at the temple without precipitation; the expressions of the text of Saint Luke give this sufficiently to understand.[66] After which the holy family returned to Galilee, to the town of Nazareth.[67] Herod meanwhile was far from tranquil. Furious at having been deceived by the magi, who had returned home without passing through Jerusalem, as they had promised, the future appeared to him in sombre colours; his throne, ill-secured, in spite of an already long reign, seemed to him tottering. Like all satisfied ambitious men, Herod was jealous of power, decided not to recoil before any violent measure to assure its tranquil possession. His struck imagination was not long in carrying his apprehensions to the height. Then germinated in his heart the most frightful project, the murder of the children of Bethlehem and the surroundings.[68]

The crime of Herod had a painful repercussion throughout the whole land of Israel. Saint Joseph and the holy family were not safe there. The evangelist tells us so clearly: Herod could have the Child sought there to destroy him.[69] Galilee, in effect, at that epoch formed part of the States of the foreign monarch, who held them from Roman policy, commonly not very generous, as the future was not long in demonstrating. Saint Joseph did not remain long plunged in disquiet. By night, an Angel commanded him to take the Child with his mother and to flee into Egypt, warning him to remain there until he told him to return. On the spot Saint Joseph obeyed: his departure took place that same night; so teach most of the doctors and commentators.

The Gospel and tradition teach us nothing of the manner in which the holy family accomplished this long journey. One easily conceives the painful emotion of Mary bidding farewell to the peaceful house of Nazareth, carrying away her newborn son with those sweet precautions which the heart of a mother so well comprehends. She was carried by the humble mount which had recently conducted her to Bethlehem and brought her back to Galilee. Saint Joseph, in his foresight, had likewise entrusted to the peaceful animal the poor baggage and the provisions indispensable to travellers; he himself followed on foot, a staff in his hand. With a prudence inspired by the solicitude with which he watched over the precious deposit which had been confided to him, he took the least frequented roads and avoided the approach of towns. No doubt he chose the shortest road, and that, on the edge of the desert, he sought to join some caravan directing itself toward Egypt. Instead of launching out across the deserts of Arabia Petraea, of which the crossing was always difficult and dangerous, why should he not have preferred the common way which travellers still follow, skirting the shores of the Mediterranean and entering Egypt above the Red Sea, not far from the salt lakes, at that place where modern genius has dug that gigantic canal destined for the junction of the two seas? We know that there is shown, on the flanks of the holy mountain of Sinai, at a great height, a cavern where it is pretended that the holy family rested during its journey; but this indication has no probability. It cannot be called a tradition; it is scarcely, on the spot, a popular rumour. We shall not say as much of a place near

Hebron, where it is maintained that our august travellers stopped some instants. This opinion is the more probable in that most of the caravans going to Egypt make a halt not far from there.

European travellers can, by deploying some activity, go in ten days from Jerusalem to Cairo. But today, as formerly, with that gravity and slowness which characterise the Orientals, it takes commonly no less than twenty to thirty days to traverse the same route. Certainly Saint Joseph was hardly in a state to cross the desert with the resources and comfort of modern travellers. Must we however, like the naive legends of the Middle Ages, make Angels intervene continually and in a sensible manner, charged to watch, during the journey, over all the needs of Jesus and his holy Mother? Is it not more fitting, in imitation of the Fathers, to think that Jesus and Mary were subject, in the ordinary circumstances of life, to the common conditions of humanity? Arrived on the land of Egypt, Saint Joseph, according to a respectable tradition, settles at Matarea (Matariyeh), a little town called also Matarès or Matharée, six miles from Cairo, and near ancient Heliopolis, of which it was almost a suburb. Some authors have said that he withdrew to Hermopolis, in Upper Egypt; others again, that he preferred the sojourn of

Alexandria, a flourishing town, where the Jews were very numerous and possessed a synagogue long renowned; others, finally, that he stopped in no town, embracing the nomad life as offering more security. It must be avowed, history teaches us nothing certain on this subject. We adopt, as the most probable opinion, that which we mentioned first. We know positively besides, not only by the testimony of writers, but above all by the monuments of archaeology which have come down to us, that Egyptian industry worked a quantity of objects in wood of general use.[70] The simplest furnished common houses; the richest, with incrustations of ivory or metal, were the ornament of palaces. Many pieces of furniture were fashioned of cedar wood or of unalterable wood coming from the oases of the desert. In the time of Moses, the Israelites who had left Egypt and were crossing the peninsula of Sinai knew these trees well and knew how to turn them to account. Without doubt Saint Joseph, among his compatriots, easily found means to use his practical knowledge, and thus provided for the modest needs of his family.

We must insist on this last fact, the more so as all the Fathers of the primitive Church recall on every occasion the perseverance of Saint Joseph and his application to work. Never did his courage fail; never did he fall short of his title of protector and nourisher of the holy family. We could not admit the opinion of those who pretend “that the destitution of the holy family was sometimes so great that the most Blessed Virgin saw herself forced to beg from door to door.”[71] No ancient writer speaks of this fact. Certainly the maternal tenderness of Mary would not have hesitated to have recourse to this painful resource, forced by necessity. Holy Scripture, moreover, represents mendicity to us as a punishment,[72] and Deuteronomy engages the Israelites to let none of their brethren fall into this extreme distress.[73] The Saviour, in coming to dwell among men, consented to bear all our miseries. Before his public life he shared the obscure labours of Saint Joseph, his foster-father: the Gospel gives us sufficiently to understand that he had recourse solely to work to supply the exigencies of a position humble according to the ideas of the world. Joseph and Mary were resigned to the divine will. Could they however forget their native land? Their poor little house of Nazareth had for them more charms than the pyramids and pylons of Egypt. Scarcely two years had passed since their arrival on the banks of the Nile, when the Angel appeared to Saint Joseph and told him to return to the land of Israel. “They who sought the life of the Child are dead.”[74] — “Flee into Egypt,” *fuge in Aegyptum*, thus the Angel had first spoken to Saint Joseph. Now, remarks Saint John Chrysostom, he holds to him another language: “Go into the land of Israel.” The return presents no peril; it is no longer necessary to hasten.

According to tradition and probabilities, the holy family, returned to Galilee, continued to inhabit at Nazareth the house of the Blessed Virgin, where the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God had been accomplished.[75] At a short distance was situated the workshop of Saint Joseph, where, under the direction of his adoptive father, Jesus exercised until the age of thirty the humble trade of carpenter. These last facts, says the Evangelist, took place in accomplishment of what had been announced by the Prophets: “He shall be

called a Nazarene."[76]

Saint Joseph, reinstalled in his house, was not long in resuming the course of his habitual labours; Mary, as formerly, gave herself to the modest occupations of a poor household.

We may believe that the child Jesus was initiated into the knowledge of letters in the paternal house. The Jews had no public schools properly so called. The father transmitted to his children the first elements of the sciences; he made them read next the most remarkable books of the Bible, such as that of the Psalms of David and the most celebrated prophecies. Young people, having reached a certain age, went from time to time to the school of the Synagogue, where they received the lessons of the doctors. The school of the temple, at Jerusalem, was very celebrated.

Saint Joseph, we cannot doubt it, fulfilled faithfully toward Jesus all the duties of paternity. When the time had come, according to the habit of the Jews, the Saviour did not refuse to apply himself to the painful labours of his foster-father. Thus the Son of God, clothed with our humanity, lived relegated in a poor artisan's shop.

While Jesus and Saint Joseph passed their days in thankless labour, the Blessed Virgin occupied herself with manual labours. A modest chapel rises today on the site of the workshop sanctified by the sweat of Saint Joseph and of the God-Man. Formerly a fine church had been built there; a single pan of ruined wall remains. This venerable place is the sanctuary of labour: there Our Lord ennobled the profession of artisans. There he gives us, by his humility, his self-denial, his love of silence and retreat, touching lessons, of which our proud century has great need.

"Among the Jews," says Doctor Sepp, "it was a duty for parents to form their sons to work and to teach them a trade, even when they were later to occupy a high position. Saint Paul, from his childhood, had learned to make tents. Rabbi Johanan, son of Zachai, and later president of the sanhedrin, had exercised the profession of merchant until the age of forty. Rabbi Simon Hopieuli, contemporary of Gamaliel, he who put in order the eighteen benedictions which the Jews must recite each day, was a cotton merchant. Rabbi Judah and Rabbi Menahem were bakers. Another Johanan was a shoemaker. A third, of the same name, was a tanner. Rabbi Abraham ben Chaim was a dyer. Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah made pins. Rabbis Hanina, Oshaia and John were tailors. Eliezer, supreme president of the school of the rabbis of Alexandria, was a smith. We find several sages among the Jews who exercised the trade of carpenter."[77] This enumeration tends to one thing only, to show us a quantity of personages, whose names have escaped the oblivion of history, occupied in manual professions. These personages could in no way be assimilated to the Saviour of men; they may nevertheless serve us as an example to explain the position of Saint Joseph among his fellow-citizens. Prevented with numerous and extraordinary graces, the soul of Saint Joseph was filled with all the gifts which divine munificence can grant to a simple mortal. Moreover, Saint Joseph was endowed with eminent natural qualities, an upright mind, an easy conception, a superior intelligence. Among his contemporaries, he distinguished himself by an uncommon reach of mind.[78]

Scripture praises his prudence, a virtue which extends to the various measures to be taken in the grave circumstances of life. One cannot too energetically stigmatise the blasphemous talk of some rash writers mocking the simplicity of Saint Joseph,[79] that beautiful simplicity forming precisely the mark of greatness of soul and purity of conscience.

The most admirable part perhaps of the life of Saint Joseph, after his heroic virtues, is his love of silence and retreat, his hidden life at Nazareth, flowing calm and serene between Jesus and Mary. What interior was ever more worthy of the admiration of angels and men? What house on earth better ordered than that of Mary, inhabited by the divine Word made man? It is truly an image of paradise, abode of peace, concord, mutual affection. Saint Joseph and Mary, accomplished models of spouses, gave there the example of all the virtues which should shine unceasingly in the holy state of marriage, on which God bestowed his blessing in the first

days of the world. Pains and cares, joys and consolations were in common. When, wearied with the labour of the day, Saint Joseph returned in the evening to rest at the domestic hearth, he found there the sweet face of the Virgin Mother of God, his most chaste spouse. After having taken part in the labours of his adoptive father, Jesus, by his presence alone, dissipated all weariness.

"Grace," according to the language of a pious author, "does not act in the soul under the influence of the sun, nor under the dew of the clouds, but in secret and under the veil of silence and recollection."[80] Thus Saint Joseph, fleeing the tumult of the public square, isolating himself entirely, as far as the exigencies of a laborious profession could permit, is the model of the Christian workman.

Each year, says the Evangelist,[81] Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem for the solemnity of the Pasch; Jesus, having reached the age of twelve, made the journey with them.

The paschal feasts were ended; each thought of the return. From the most distant parts of Palestine it was possible to come to Jerusalem in three days; from Nazareth one could arrive there in two and a half days, passing by Samaria. This was the road habitually taken by the Galileans; some nevertheless, when the waters were not overflowing, preferred to follow the valley of the Jordan and crossed the plain of Jericho. The seven days of the Azymes being past, Joseph and Mary left the holy city and took again the road of Galilee. For the return principally, the Israelites liked to organise themselves in numerous bands, the inhabitants of Galilee more than the others, because of the troubles which had agitated the country since the definitive installation of the representatives of the Roman power. A caravan was regarded as of little consequence when it was composed of only three hundred persons; and the historian Josephus informs us that Galilee, at that epoch, counted more than a million inhabitants. One easily imagines the pressed waves of population which then descended from Jerusalem and flooded the slopes of the mountains of Judea. At the moment when so many men were arranging themselves, on leaving the streets of Jerusalem, there was naturally some confusion. At that instant, Jesus separated from his parents, and, instead of joining a company of his compatriots, he remained in the city. Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin conceived at first no disquiet at it, the more so, according to a remark of the Venerable Bede, as children scarcely arrived at adolescence were not yet obliged to march in the company of men and could mingle with the company of women. In this manner, Mary could believe that Jesus was with Saint Joseph; for his part, Saint Joseph thought that he was with his mother, in the company of the women. Both deceived themselves; but their error was not long in being dissipated. After a march of about four hours, at the rest of the first station, they perceived the absence of Jesus. They set themselves at once to seek him and to inquire after him among their relatives and acquaintances. But, to their great grief, they soon acquired the certainty that Jesus was not with the inhabitants of Nazareth; no one had seen him; no one could give news of him. Who will depict the cruel anxiety of Joseph and Mary? They did not deliberate long; on the spot they took again the road to Jerusalem, repeating all along the way their inquiries to all whom they met: their anguish went ever increasing.

It was a trial which God had prepared for them; he did not wish to prolong it too much. On the third day, they entered under the porches of the temple. What was their surprise and emotion on perceiving Jesus seated in the midst of the Doctors, questioning them and answering their questions. After the terrible disquiet which she had just experienced, Mary said to Jesus, in the tone of an affectionate reproach: "My son, why have you acted thus toward us? Your father and I sought you in deep affliction."[82] "Why did you seek me (with this anxiety)?" replied Jesus; "did you not know that you would find me in the house of my Father? for it is there that I must be."[83]

A remark has been made on this subject. It is that Mary calls Saint Joseph the father of Jesus. The miraculous birth of Jesus had not been unveiled to men: Saint Joseph was his father in the eyes of the public. Let it be permitted us, on this occasion, to place here a citation borrowed from Saint Francis de Sales. "I have been accustomed to say," says the holy bishop of Geneva, "that if a dove (to render the comparison more conformable to the purity of the Saints of whom I speak) carried in its beak a date, which it let fall into a

garden, would it not be said that the palm tree which should come from it belongs to him to whom the garden belongs? Now, if it is so, who can doubt that the Holy Spirit having let fall this divine date, like a divine young dove, into the closed and shut garden of the most Blessed Virgin (a garden sealed and surrounded on all sides by the hedges of the holy vow of virginity and wholly immaculate chastity), which belonged to the glorious Saint Joseph, as the wife or spouse to the husband, who will doubt, I say, or who can say that this divine palm tree, which bears fruits that nourish to immortality, does not belong in reality to this great Saint Joseph?"

On leaving the temple and without the slightest hesitation, Jesus followed Joseph and Mary; he went down with them to Nazareth. The sacred writer adds this significant phrase: "And he was subject to them," *et erat subditus illis*.[84] These last words, so astonishing when it is a matter of the Son of God, have given rise to the most admirable and most instructive commentaries of the holy Fathers. *Et erat subditus illis.* The promptness of the obedience of Jesus is eminently fitted to give us a just idea of his respect toward his parents, and at the same time of his perfect humility.

Saint Bernard has left us an interpretation filled with incomparable sweetness. "God," he says, "whom the Angels obey, who commands the principalities and the powers, was subject to Mary; not only to Mary, but also to Joseph on account of Mary."[85]

The most evident sign of the affectionate deference of Jesus toward Saint Joseph emerges from his whole life, since he deigned for thirty years, says Saint Jerome, to share his labour and his poverty.[86]

By this habit of daily work thus contracted in the company of Saint Joseph, and thus attested by the testimony of the Fathers of the primitive ages, we are sufficiently dispensed from refuting the opinion of those who advance without authority that the first childhood and adolescence of Jesus were solely consecrated to prayer and contemplation. Jesus most certainly applied himself constantly to these exercises of sublime piety during all his mortal life; he employed whole nights in them at times: the Gospel tells us so often. All the more are we dispensed from passing over here in silence the opinion of those who have pretended that Jesus begged from door to door to relieve his voluntary poverty and that of his parents.[87] A number of pious writers, in their works, have taken pleasure in setting in relief the virtues of Saint Joseph, from which his greatnesses emerge. Saint Leonard of Port Maurice, inscribed in the catalogue of the Saints by Pope Pius IX on 4 October 1866, pronounced an admirable discourse on the greatnesses of Saint Joseph. Here is a short extract: "Let the evangelists," he says, "keep silence on Saint Joseph, it matters little; let them abstain from exalting, as they could have done, those virtues and excellent prerogatives which raise his dignity: it suffices me that they represent him as the husband of Mary, *virum Mariae, de qua natus est Jesus*,[88] that is, as the one of all mortals who most resembles the most perfect work among pure creatures that has come from the hands of God. 'For,' says Saint Bernard, 'Joseph was made in the likeness of the Virgin, his spouse': *erat enim Joseph factus in similitudinem Virginis sponsae suae*. — Husband of Mary, that is, the one who approached nearest to that sublime creature, who rose to the highest of the heavens, and ravished in some sort from the bosom of the eternal Father his only Son. Husband of Mary, that is, one same heart, one same soul with that heart and that soul which bore the heart and soul of the Son of God. Husband of Mary, that is, the head of the first sovereign of the world, for 'the man is the head of the woman.'[89] Husband of Mary, that is, the master of that august Mistress who knew this precept of Genesis: 'Thou shalt be under the power of man,'[90] and who, so perfect in all the rest, surpassed no less all other women by the respect and submission which she bore to her spouse. Husband of Mary, that is, of that great Queen whom the Dominations, the Principalities, the Cherubim and the Seraphim glory in serving. Husband of Mary, it is enough, says Saint Bernard; you say all in saying that he was like the Virgin his spouse: *factus in similitudinem Virginis sponsae tuae*, like in features, in heart, in inclinations, in habits, like in virtue and in holiness. If Mary was the dawn which announced the Sun of justice, Joseph was the horizon illuminated by his brilliant splendours. Conclude then that, if as just man he went so far as to surpass in holiness the greatest

saints, as husband he rose even above the angels, and could see at his feet, the Blessed Virgin excepted, all other created holiness.

"Yes, Joseph was incomparably more than an angel for Mary. Let us judge of his greatness by these words of the law, which says that he who marries the queen thereby becomes king: *nubentem reginae consequens est regem fieri*. He who gives his hand to a queen receives from her the royal sceptre; at the moment when he puts the ring on her finger, she lays the crown upon his head; and, were he a simple shepherd, he enters at once into all the honours due to a king, and must be respected as such. Now, I draw from this an argument without reply: Mary is the queen of saints and angels; Joseph is the husband of Mary; therefore, according to the law, he is also the king of saints and angels. If you often honour the Blessed Virgin with these glorious titles: *Regina sanctorum, Regina angelorum, ora pro nobis*, you must honour Joseph in the same manner, and say to him: *Rex sanctorum, Rex angelorum, ora pro nobis*. What shows well that Joseph was, in effect, superior to all the angels, is the frequent messages which he received from heaven through their intervention. Angels are deputed to Joseph to confide to him the mystery of the Incarnation: *quod in ea natum est, de Spiritu sancto est*.[91] Angels are deputed to Joseph to impart to him the mystery of the Redemption: *ipse salvum faciet populum suum a peccatis eorum*.[92] Angels are deputed to Joseph when, disquieted at the state in which he saw his spouse, he wished to withdraw. Angels are deputed to Joseph when it is a question of giving a name to the divine Child. Angels are sent to Joseph when Jesus is threatened by the persecution of Herod. Angels are sent to Joseph when he must return from Egypt to Palestine. Angels are sent to him to warn him to take refuge in Galilee, in fear of King Archelaus. You see how the secret affairs which this great man had to treat with the august senate of the adorable Trinity continually set the heavenly messengers in motion; that is what is given us to understand by these words so many times repeated in the sacred text: *Angelus Domini apparuit in somnis Joseph*:[93] 'The angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph.' Tell me now whether the title of King, and of King of the angels, does not suit him, and whether it is not true that in quality of husband he was greater than the angels most exalted in heaven."

The same saint continues with the same pious enthusiasm: "However, what chiefly raises Joseph in quality of husband of Mary is that by this title he is venerated as the head of that holy family, which was neither wholly human nor wholly divine, but which partakes of the one and the other, and which, for this reason, has been called with just title the Trinity of the earth. But where ever find words to depict worthily this admirable trinity of Jesus, Mary, Joseph? God, having placed Joseph at the head of this Trinity, gives us the right to conclude that, if he was great as just man, he was no less so as husband. Render then frequent homage to the adorable Trinity in heaven, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; but honour also the holy Trinity which dwelt visibly among us on earth, Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Engrave in your heart in letters of gold these three heavenly names; pronounce them often; write them everywhere: Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Let these be the first words that you teach to your children. Repeat these sacred names several times a day, and let them be still on your lips at the moment when you render the last sigh. Let the angels imprint in letters of fire in your minds, and still more in your hearts, that if Joseph was great as just man, he was still more so as head of the holy family, in quality of husband, and that what crowns his glory is his greatness as father."[94]

Is it possible to express better than in the preceding lines the dignity, the greatnesses and the virtues of Saint Joseph? We should however keenly regret, treating this subject, to omit two passages still from the same holy orator, one of the most eloquent and most zealous panegyrists of Saint Joseph. "If," he says, "to make the greatnesses of our holy Patriarch as just man and above all as husband the better admired, I have set him over against the first Joseph, who was as his shadow, and Mary, his spouse, that radiant dawn which rejoiced the world; to show him to you greater still as father, I must consider him in his relations with the divine Sun of justice: for so is called He of whom Joseph was the father. 'Is not this the son of that artisan?' said the Jews with contempt in speaking of Jesus: *Nonne hic est fabri filius?* The son of an artisan, doubtless; but of what artisan? I shall teach you, replies Saint Peter Chrysologus: he is the son of that great artisan who fabricated

the world, not with the hammer, but by an order of his will: *non malleo, sed praecepto*; of that artisan who combined the elements, not by an effect of genius, but by a simple command: *non ingenio, sed jussione*; of that artisan who lit the torch of day in the vault of heaven, not with an earthly fire, but by a superior heat: *non terreno igne, sed superno calore*; of that artisan finally who, by a single word, made the universe spring from nothing: *cuncta fecit ex nihilo*. You are right, illustrious doctor; they should have recognised that Jesus is the Son of the great Architect of the universe. But suffer that, for the glory of Joseph, it be said also that he is the son of that poor carpenter who, in a humble shop, handles the saw and the plane. And, since the Blessed Virgin herself gives Joseph this beautiful title of father of Jesus, in saying to him: *Ego et pater tuus*,[95] a title which suits him moreover, seeing that this son is the fruit of Mary, who belongs to Joseph in quality of spouse, grant also that he is the son of that poor artisan, *fabri filius*, and that, as such, he is his subject and the companion of his labours."

Let us copy still a few words: "Uncreated Wisdom can say of itself: When Joseph, my father, was in his workshop to work, I was with him as companion of his labours: *cum eo eram cuncta componens*; when he cut or fashioned the wood, I was with him: *cum eo eram*; when he sawed it and planed it, I was with him: *cum eo eram*; when he fitted the pieces together, I arranged them with him: *cum eo eram cuncta componens*. Like him, I put my hand to the plane and mingled my sweat with his. What sublime dignity, and what greatness is that which makes Joseph appear to us as the emulator of God himself! A poor worker in wood as the emulator of the Architect of the world! Would you have more to proclaim Joseph supremely great as father, if God himself cannot make a father greater than he who has a God for son? There are three things, says Saint Thomas, which God cannot make greater than they are, namely: the humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, because of its hypostatic union with the Word; the glory of the elect, because of its principal object, which is the infinite essence of God; and the incomparable Mother of God, of whom it has been said that God cannot make a mother greater than the mother of a God: *Majorem quam matrem Dei non potest facere Deus*. You may, in a sense, add, to the glory of Saint Joseph, a fourth thing: *Majorem quam patrem Dei non potest facere Deus*. 'God cannot make a father greater than the father of a son who is God.' Avow then that if Saint Joseph was great as just man, greater still as husband, he was very great above all as father…"

Could we better close these citations than by reproducing some words of Saint Francis de Sales? We shall borrow them from his Nineteenth Conference on the virtues of Saint Joseph. "Let us pass," he says, "to the second virtue which shines in Saint Joseph: I mean the most holy humility. Oh! how admirable was this great Saint in this virtue, it cannot be said according to its perfection. For, notwithstanding what he was, in what poverty and in what abjection did he not live all the time of his life! Poverty and abjection under which he kept hidden and covered his great virtues and dignities; but what dignities, my God! To be governor of Our Lord! And not only that, but to be moreover his putative father! but to be husband of his most holy Mother! Oh! truly, I doubt not at all that the angels, ravished with admiration, came in troops to consider him and admire his humility when he held this dear child in his poor shop, where he worked at his trade to nourish both the son and the mother who were committed to him. Certainly, there is not the shadow of a doubt that Saint Joseph was more valiant than David and had more wisdom than Solomon; nevertheless, seeing him reduced to the exercise of carpentry, who could have judged it, had he not been enlightened by heavenly light, so closely did he keep shut up all the signal gifts with which God had gratified him! But what wisdom had he not, since God gave him in charge his most glorious Son, and he was chosen to be his governor! If the princes of the earth take so much care, as being a thing of the greatest importance, to give to their children a governor who is among the most capable, since God could make the governor of his Son the most accomplished man in the world in all sorts of perfections, according to the dignity and excellence of the thing governed, which was his most glorious Son, universal Prince of heaven and earth, how could it be that, having been able, he should not have wished and not have done it? There is then no doubt that Saint Joseph was endowed with all the graces and all the gifts which the charge deserved that the eternal Father wished to give him of the temporal and domestic economy of Our Lord, and of the conduct of his family, which was

composed of only three, who represent to us the mystery of the most holy and most adorable Trinity."

"But what beautiful virtues still to admire in Saint Joseph! For he was always strong, valiant, constant and persevering. There is much difference between constancy and perseverance, strength and valour. We call a man constant who holds himself firm and prepared to suffer the assaults of his enemies, without being astonished or losing courage during the combat; but perseverance regards chiefly a certain interior weariness which comes upon us in the length of our pains, which is an enemy as powerful as one can meet. Now, perseverance makes the man despise this enemy, in such sort that he remains victorious by a continual evenness and submission to the will of God. Strength is what makes a man resist powerfully the attacks of his enemies; but valour is a virtue which makes one not only hold oneself ready to fight and resist when the occasion presents itself, but attack the enemy at the very hour when he says nothing. Now, our glorious Saint Joseph was endowed with all these virtues and exercised them marvellously well. As to perseverance, contrary to this interior enemy, which is the weariness that comes upon us in the continuation of abject, humiliating, painful things, of ill fortunes, if one may so speak, or in the diverse accidents that befall us, oh! how this Saint was tried by God and by men even in his journey! The Angel commands him to depart promptly and to lead Our Lady and her dearest son into Egypt; behold him suddenly set out without saying a word. He does not inquire: Where shall I go? What road shall I take? On what shall we feed? Who will receive us? He sets out at venture with his tools on his back, in order to gain his poor living and that of his family by the sweat of his brow. Oh! how this weariness of which we speak must have pressed upon him, seeing even that the Angel had not told him the time he was to be there; so that he could establish no assured dwelling, not knowing when the Angel would command him to return! If Saint Paul so admired the obedience of Abraham, when God commanded him to go out of his land, inasmuch as God did not tell him on which side he was to go, and Abraham took good care not to ask him: 'Lord, you tell me to go out; but tell me then whether it shall be by the south gate or by the north side'; but he set out on the way, and went as the Spirit of God led him: how admirable is this perfect obedience of Saint Joseph!… To be just is nothing else than to be perfectly united to the will of God, and to be always conformed to it in all sorts of events, whether prosperous or adverse. That Saint Joseph was in all occasions perfectly submissive to the divine will, none can doubt: and do you not see it? Look how the Angel turns him in all directions; he tells him that he must go to Egypt, he goes; he commands that he return, he returns; God wills that he be always poor, which is one of the most powerful trials he can make of us, and he submits to it lovingly, and not for a time, for it was all his life."

It would be easy for us to multiply extracts of this kind on the virtues and greatnesses of Saint Joseph. We stop however here. It is enough to show at once the tender devotion of the saints toward Saint Joseph, and in what magnificent style they have made his panegyric and celebrated his praises.

At what precise epoch took place the decease of Saint Joseph? In what place did he render his soul to God? Holy Scripture does not make it known in a certain manner. Let us hear what Saint Francis de Sales says on this subject in his Treatise on the Love of God.[96] "One can hardly doubt that the great Saint Joseph had passed away before the Passion and death of the Saviour, who, otherwise, would not have recommended his mother to Saint John." The Bollandists (19 March) have set forth the same opinion. Most authors, they say, regard it as certain that Saint Joseph was dead before Jesus began to manifest himself to the world.

Let us interrogate tradition. Saint Jerome teaches us that Saint Joseph, having fully and faithfully fulfilled the mission which had been confided to him, died a short time before the baptism of Jesus by Saint John, by which the Saviour wished to inaugurate his public life. From that moment, in effect, we never see Saint Joseph appear. On several occasions however he would naturally have acted. May one not then infer, as has been done with all the characters of probability, that the foster-father of the Saviour had already departed from this sad valley of tears? Several evangelical facts confirm this sentiment. Thus, on a memorable occasion when the crowd pressed around Jesus, the Jews said to him: "Your mother and your brethren are

outside asking to speak to you."[97] "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" replied Jesus, giving a sublime lesson very well understood by all Christian centuries. "They who hear the word of God and put it in practice," said the Saviour, "are truly my mother and my brethren."[98] These words, which sectaries have ill interpreted with a perverse intention, are the most beautiful eulogy of the Virgin Mother of God, since no one in the world has more attentively gathered all the words of God, has more deeply meditated them, and has more faithfully put them in practice. In this passage, if there is no question of Saint Joseph, it is because this venerable Patriarch no longer existed on earth. Is it not the same before, at the wedding at Cana and at the baptism which Jesus received in the waters of the Jordan from the hands of his precursor? The Evangelist contents himself with telling us: *Filius, ut putabatur, Joseph,*[99] the only word consecrated in this conjuncture to the memory of the putative father of the Saviour.

His death nevertheless must have been recent. When Jesus appeared at Nazareth a short time after his baptism, and when his first miracles already awakened general attention, the name of Joseph was in all mouths.[100] Assuredly we must keenly regret that we lack details on the last moments of Saint Joseph ; it was certainly a spectacle of the most touching to the eyes of faith.

Let us leave the pious Gerson to relate the death of Saint Joseph breathing his last sigh in the arms of Jesus and Mary:

> *Venerat illa dies quae vitam morte pararet Perpetuam tibi, juste Joseph. Eo inclyta proles Christus adest cum matre pia, quibus officiose Servieras, vultu placido solantur euntem. Ora licet lacrymis oppleverit intus obortis Naturalis amor (etenim sat credere fas est), Et patrem Jesus, et sponsum flevit morientem Virgo benigna suum, fidi custodis amato Procumbit lecto; complexus membra pudicis Oscula dat labiis: Mi vir, conclamat, abisne, Deseris et viduam, passuram dira relinquis? Velle tamen Domini fiat: dilecte, valeto. Nil timeas, Dominus placida te sede locabit. Protinus ipse Joseph pretiosa morte quievit. Lugubres recipit vestes viduata Maria: Exequias reddunt devotas Nazareth urbi. Tota virum flet plebs, qui vixerat absque querela, Omnibus in commune bonus, sanctissimus herus, Certa David regis et praeclarissima proles. Nec tamen est obitus sat certa dies, quia signant Hanc varii varie pro religione colendam: Est februarius, est et martius, estque december, Primi nona dies, cum deno nona secundi, Alterius decima per quosdam et nona notatur. Sic, quaecumque dies sua nobis mors honoranda. Casta velut turtur si compare sit viduata, Sola volat repetens arentes arbore ramos, Pro cantu resonat planctu gemebunda pudico; Sic dolet abrupto vitae socialis amore Virgo gemens deflensque virum plangore modesto. At semel ut sensit subtristem filius ejus Solans alloquitur, secretaque plurima pandit, Atque futurorum seriem breviando recensit: Cara mihi in primis mater, nolito doloris Accumulare tibi causas, sed respice mentis Interiori oculo, fidei cum lumine, quales Collegio patrum bene qui vixere priorum Applausus jubilosque dedit custodis amici Decedens anima dum, limbum ingressa, propinquam, Sic etenim novit, denuntiat esse salutem: Nam Salvator adest, ego sum salvatio certa. Denique multa, mihi mater dilecta, triennii Tempore patranda, et quorum tu conscia fies; Nam praesens aderis sub me custode deinceps, Conspicies oculis tandem me scandere coelos. Scandet et ipse Joseph, ut mecum regnet in aevum; Regnabis pariter, fuerit cum vita peracta: Nomen, laus et honor dabitur per saecula vobis.*[101]

The printed French rendering, which accompanies the Latin verses in the book, is as follows: The day had come which death was to lead you to eternal life, O just Joseph. Christ, your illustrious Son, with his Mother, ever full of sweet mercy, whom you had always served with zeal, console you with a serene countenance at the moment of separation.

The love formed in us by nature floods their faces with tears; why should we make difficulty of avowing it? Jesus weeps his foster-father, and the Virgin her most chaste spouse breathing his last sigh. The Virgin does not move away from the bedside of her faithful guardian; with her chaste lips she gives him the kiss of farewell. "Dear husband," she says, "you leave me; you leave me a widow, and I must suffer the cruellest ills! May the will of God be accomplished! Dear husband, farewell! Be full of confidence; the Lord will place you in a place of rest."

Joseph then closed his eyes tranquilly.

Mary covers herself with the sad garments of widowhood. The obsequies are celebrated at Nazareth.

The whole town weeps this peaceful man, good toward all, master of incomparable holiness, worthy descendant of King David.

The day of his death is not known, however, in a certain manner. Some have fixed one day, others another, to honour his memory in February, March or December: in February, the ninth day of the month; in March, the nineteenth day; in December, the nineteenth day likewise. However that may be, as a chaste dove, suddenly deprived of her companion, flies from branch to branch, making the echo of her plaintive song resound, so the Virgin, separated from her chaste and faithful guardian, groans and lets her tears flow.

Her Son, seeing her plunged in sadness, tries to console her by unveiling the future to her: “Dear mother,” he says, “yield not to your grief; open the eye of faith and contemplate the assembly of the patriarchs receiving with applause of joy the soul of your pious guardian, who, on his entry into limbo, announces to them the hour of Redemption.

“The Saviour, in effect, is here present; I am myself the Salvation… During three years I must accomplish many great things, of which, my dear mother, you will be the witness. You will certainly be present at them. Henceforth I shall be your guardian. With your own eyes you will see me ascend to the heavens. Joseph will ascend there also to reign with me in eternity, you will reign there likewise yourself, when your life shall be ended: your name, your glory, your praises will be prolonged through the centuries.”

According to a respectable tradition accepted by the Church, Saint Joseph died on 19 March. It is not known whether he passed away at Jerusalem, or whether his body, after death, was carried to the valley of Josaphat. The Venerable Bede, conformably to a very ancient belief which has left its trace in the monuments down to our days, teaches that his body rested in the tomb, near the grotto of Gethsemani.[102] In our days, Christian travellers, whom the love of the holy places brings to Jerusalem, venerate, on descending to the empty tomb of the Blessed Virgin, the tomb, likewise empty, which is shown to them as having been occupied by the body of Saint Joseph. This indication, it must be said, has nothing improbable. If Saint Joseph did not die at Jerusalem, whither his zeal for the accomplishment of the law of God could have led him, at the approach of the feast of Pasch, toward the middle of the month of March, his body was very probably transferred there, as took place, no one is ignorant, for a great number of Israelites, who at all times insisted that their mortal remains should rest in that funereal valley, placed beneath the walls of Jerusalem, ever peopled with the lugubrious monuments of death.

We must recall here: it is a pious belief, adopted by a crowd of pious writers and often reproduced in the most learned works,[103] that Saint Joseph rose again and appeared at Jerusalem at the same time that Jesus Christ came forth victorious from the tomb, and that he was of the number of those whom the Gospel says were then recalled to life.[104] The holy Patriarch, come miraculously from the tomb, would have shown himself several times to Mary. Forty days afterwards he would have taken his flight toward the heavens, on the day of the triumphant ascension of the Saviour, and would have accompanied him when he went to take possession of his throne, at the right hand of the heavenly Father.[105] However this pious and consoling belief is not recorded in the liturgy. If the Saviour God willed, to satisfy his filial piety, to glorify the body as well as the soul of the most Blessed Virgin on the day of her assumption, one may and must piously believe that he did no less for Joseph, so great among all the Saints, and that he raised him glorious on the day when, after having raised himself, he drew so many others from the dust of the tombs.

No church glories in possessing relics properly so called of Saint Joseph. At Florence, the religious of the monastery of the Angels preserve his staff among the most precious objects of their treasury, and the Discalced keep a piece of his clothing. At Rome, in the church of Saint Anastasia, one sees one of his staffs and his mantle.[106] At Joinville-sur-Marne, in the diocese of Langres, in France, there is shown, with a just pride, “the true and veritable girdle of Saint Joseph, dearly preserved in the church of Notre-Dame.”[107] This girdle consists of a flat tissue, of thread or bark, rather thick and of greyish colour; it is a metre long and

thirty to forty-five centimetres broad; at the extremities is attached a clasp of ivory, yellowed by time; a buttonhole is also found at one of the ends. Made, according to tradition, by the hands of the Blessed Virgin, one may believe that it remained with her, as a very dear souvenir, at the death of her chaste spouse, and that later it was given to Saint John or to some other apostle. In the thirteenth century it was brought back from Palestine by the historian of Saint Louis and placed in his castle of Joinville, where it remained until the Revolution: in that baleful epoch, pious hands gathered it up with all its authentic documents.

Everyone knows the manners in which Saint Joseph is represented: we shall nevertheless recall them briefly.

1° One of the legends which was very early popularised in Christendom is that of the flowering of the staff of Saint Joseph. Here is how the fact is said to have passed: to choose a Husband for the Blessed Virgin, the high priest assembled the unmarried men of the tribe of Judah; they were made to come into the temple each with a rod. The Husband designated by heaven was to be recognised among all, either by the flowering of the branch he bore, or by the coming of a dove which would rest on it. Hence the rather frequent custom of placing in the hand of Saint Joseph a rod flowered at the top; it has many times been replaced by a simple lily, which recalls, then, his virginity in marriage.

"When I look at Joseph with a lily in his hand," says a pious and learned personage, "it seems to me that I see in this flower less still his virginity than the very heart of Mary resting in the hand of Saint Joseph." — "The lily," continues Father Patrignani, "is the emblem of pure love which has its seat in the heart: its corolla, which represents exactly a heart, symbolises outwardly this relation. What fitness is there not then in seeing in the hand of Saint Joseph the heart of Mary under the form of a lily? He was the guardian, the protector of what was for Mary as precious as her own heart, her virginity."[108]

2° Most commonly, the holy Husband of Mary is represented with the saw, the axe and even the plane, because joiners as well as carpenters have often taken him for their patron. Wheelwrights even have more than once claimed him for their protector, for it is probable, as is practised in small localities, that Saint Joseph, at Nazareth, did not devote himself to a single speciality; he must have worked wood in all its forms and for all kinds of uses. Hence it comes that in Flanders the boatmen of the Scheldt and the Meuse had Saint Joseph represented as a boat-builder.

3° He naturally forms part of all the holy families, whether at Bethlehem where the Child-God is laid in the manger, between the ox and the ass; or in the flight into Egypt; or at Nazareth, in various circumstances of the life of the Saviour. There has been discovered in the catacombs a little scene where the holy family is represented at the moment when Our Lord was found again in the temple. The three personages are placed on the same horizontal line; the Blessed Virgin on the right, Saint Joseph in the middle, and on the left the Child Jesus in a costume which resembles rather that of little boys of our towns: ample blouse, coming to the knees and tightened by a belt at the hip. The divine child, opening his hands, like the priest at the altar when he turns toward the people, seems to say to his parents: Know you not that the works of my Father claim me?[109] and the parents look at one another with an air that means: We do not grasp the sense of this language.

4° A picture by Carlo Maratta paints Saint Joseph presenting cherries to the Child Jesus; the same, holding the Child Jesus in his arms. — Francesco Amato has represented him teaching the divine Child to read. — Simon Vouet paints him asleep, while an Angel announces to him the Incarnation of the Word. — Philippe de Champaigne represents Saint Joseph leading the ass which carries the Blessed Virgin and the Child Jesus fleeing into Egypt, a fine composition. — Nicolas Poussin, Gérard, Audran and others have treated the same subject. — The rest in Egypt has been treated by Correggio. — A fine standing figure, holding the Child Jesus in his arms, reproduced in sculpture, was made by Diepenbeeck. — Another painter whose name is unknown has portrayed Saint Joseph saddling his ass and preparing to flee into Egypt. — J.-B. Tiepolo painted his death, and Simon Vouet his being carried up to heaven, etc., etc.

Saint Joseph is one of the patrons of Belgium, of Spain, of Naples, of the town of Verdun and of Westphalia. The missions of China are likewise confided to his powerful tutelage. — The trades which have placed themselves under his protection are those of the carpenters, joiners and wheelwrights. — He is invoked specially for a good death, because, say the hymns in his honour: He fell asleep in a sweet slumber, in the presence of Jesus and Mary.[110]

Besides, today that devotion to Saint Joseph has taken such happy increase, all Christians should consider him as their protector. But it is to you above all, Christian virgins, privileged portion of the family of Jesus Christ, that we recommend devotion to the glorious Saint, to whom were confided both the childhood of the Saviour and the integrity of the Queen of virgins. If a ray of the sun suffices to give the lily its dazzling whiteness, who can conceive to what degree of candour the purity of Saint Joseph rose, exposed day and night during so many years to the rays of the Sun of justice and of that mystic Moon which borrows from him its splendour? who can say with what solicitude Saint Joseph aids in their combats those who, in temptations against the beautiful virtue, have recourse to him? Heads of families should constantly place their interests in the hands of him whom the Lord has established over his own house. Religious communities have motives no less pressing than secular families to place themselves under the protection of Saint Joseph. Who better than he has practised the evangelical counsels?

Not only workers in wood, but all artisans, should choose him as their support and tutelary angel. Never was there here below a holier workman than he. And if one knew how to learn from Saint Joseph this precious art of working and praying at the same time, one would make double gain: one would assure oneself temporal life and eternal life. Teachers and youth will act wisely in taking Saint Joseph for model and guide: the masters will learn from him prudence and zeal; the pupils, obedience and docility.

Let them go also to the school of Joseph, who first of men merited to carry the Saviour in his arms, the ministers of holy Church called to touch so often the body of Jesus Christ.

“I wish,” says the Saviour in an apparition to Saint Margaret of Cortona, “that each day you should testify, by a tribute of praises, your respectful devotion toward the Blessed Virgin Mary and toward Saint Joseph, my foster-father”:[111] this recommendation is addressed to all Christians.

Could we better end than by these words of Saint Teresa, well known for her devotion to Saint Joseph: “I chose the glorious Saint Joseph for my patron, and recommend myself to him in all things. I do not remember having asked anything of God through his intercession that I did not obtain. Never have I known anyone who invoked him without making notable progress in virtue. His credit with God is of marvellous efficacy for all who address themselves to him with confidence.”

The Cult of Saint Joseph

THE CULT OF SAINT JOSEPH.

Why, it will perhaps be asked, did this great Saint, raised by the Holy Spirit to such high destinies, not receive in Christian society, from the first days of the Church, all the honours which seem due to him on so many titles? It is doubtless not impossible to lift here a corner of the veil which has for so long hidden from the eyes the clear view of the providential designs. In certain respects, it is with the cult of Saint Joseph as with that of the Blessed Virgin. Because of the little elevated ideas of men in the first epoch of the evangelical preaching, when divine honours were prostituted to a crowd of infamous idols, Providence willed that the honours legitimately due to Mary and Joseph should remain suspended for some time. This abstention however was not to last always. The enlightened Christian conscience was at last to have recourse to our natural protectors, and the most powerful with Jesus Christ. Prudence was to give place to the perfectly regulated piety of Christians.

The Greek Church appears to have been the first to render a public cult to Saint Joseph, in a general manner however and rather little defined. On the Sunday before Christmas it celebrated the feast of the ancestors of Jesus Christ and of the just men of the old law. Between the one and the other Saint Joseph, foster-father of the Saviour, occupies the principal place. The following text of Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, which is regarded as an abridgment of the primitive martyrology of Saint Jerome, may be considered as the echo of the general belief: "At Bethlehem," it says, "feast or memory of Saint Joseph, foster-father of the Lord." *In Bethleem sancti Joseph nutritoris Domini.* On 20 July the Orientals, from the highest antiquity, keep a feast of Saint Joseph; but the Bollandists think with reason that it is the feast of Saint Joseph Barsabbas or the Just, although they place at this date the death of the husband of the Blessed Virgin according to uncertain traditions. Among the Latins, the name of Saint Joseph was inserted in the most ancient martyrologies after those of Usuard and Ado. Early on his feast was fixed at 19 March. The Carmelites, say the most celebrated hagiographers, distinguished themselves specially by their devotion to Saint Joseph, which took increase in the West, above all in consequence of the crusades. The Franciscans and the Dominicans spread it in rivalry on all sides by their pious preachings, not separating the homage due to this great Patriarch from that which fervent Christians must render to Mary, Mother of God. Toward the middle of the thirteenth century, Albert the Great, of the Order of Saint Dominic, pronounced a panegyric of Saint Joseph, remained celebrated, in which breathe the sentiments of the most tender piety. Later, Jean Gerson and Pierre d'Ailly pronounced on the same subject discourses which had considerable repercussion and exercised a great influence. Finally, Sixtus IV, who had embraced the rule of the Cordeliers, pope from 1471 to 1484, instituted or renewed in the breviary the feast of Saint Joseph. The Roman breviary of 1490 bears this feast only of the simple degree; that of Pope Innocent VIII indicates it as being double. From the beginning of the fifteenth century, several churches of France had adopted this feast and celebrated it with solemnity. Germany was not long in imitating this example. Cardinal Ximenes introduced it into his church of Toledo. Pius V, in reforming the Roman breviary after the Council of Trent, ruled that the office of Saint Joseph should be of Confessors not Pontiffs, with the lessons of the second nocturn taken from Saint Bernard,[1] as we recite it today.[2] In 1621, Gregory XV made this feast one of obligation; in 1642, Urban VIII renewed this obligation; but this law has never been in force in France. In our days there has been manifested in the Church a remarkable movement of piety and zeal for the increase of the cult of Saint Joseph. On numerous and reiterated instances from the faithful of all countries, many bishops and theologians, assembled at Rome for the Vatican Council, asked the sovereign Pontiff that Saint Joseph should be declared Patron of the universal Church, and that his feast should be raised to the degree of double of the first class. Pius IX granted solemnly both requests by a decree of the Congregation of Rites dated 8 December 1870.

Besides this feast of 19 March, there are two others which are equally dear to the faithful: the feast of the Patronage of Saint Joseph, fixed on the third Sunday after Pentecost by the Congregation of Rites, in 1680, and the feast of the Betrothal or Marriage of Saint Joseph, of which the origin is thus related by Benedict XIV in his Treatise on the Feasts. A canon of Chartres, dead in the fifteenth century, asked by his will that the Chapter, on the anniversary day of his decease, should make a solemn memorial of Saint Joseph, knowing that the honours rendered to this great Saint turn to the glory of the Blessed Virgin; Jean Gerson, doctor and chancellor of the University of Paris, known for his particular devotion to Saint Joseph, proposed to accomplish the intentions of the deceased canon by the institution of the feast of the Betrothal or Marriage of the Blessed Virgin with Saint Joseph; at the same time he composed the office of it.[3] This feast does not appear to have been celebrated then outside the church of Chartres or the neighbouring countries. In the sixteenth century, Paul III permitted, by a special concession, the Friars Minor and the sisters of the same Order to celebrate a feast under the same title.[4] Pierre Dore, of the Order of Friars Preachers, composed the office of it, which was approved by the sovereign Pontiff. Finally Benedict XIII, by an indult of 22 August 1725, permitted all the churches of the Ecclesiastical States and some others to recite this office under the rite of double major, with a special memorial of Saint Joseph. Let us not omit to add that the name of Saint

Joseph is invoked in the litanies of all the Saints approved by the Church. It would be too long to make mention here of the numerous confraternities erected in honour of Saint Joseph. On 19 March, the Bollandists speak of them rather at length. They have likewise preserved for us rather ample details on the favours obtained from God through his intercession. From the epoch when Pope Clement X raised the feast of Saint Joseph to the rank of the great solemnities and gave it a proper office, the devotion of the faithful took an extraordinary increase. Rome dedicated churches to him and created confraternities under his patronage; all the countries of Italy wished to imitate the Eternal City. The first confraternity appears to have been that of Saint Joseph-in-Prison, of which Ottavio Panciroli speaks, founded in 1539 by all the Roman workmen who work in wood.[5]

To recast this life of Saint Joseph, we have abridged the remarkable history of the last and most glorious of the patriarchs, by M. l'abbé J. J. Bourassé, canon of the metropolitan church of Tours, in-8°, 1872.

Blessed Sybilline of Pavia and Blessed Margaret of Metola, two poor blind women of the fourteenth century

Epigraph: "Yes, in my flesh I shall see my Saviour. This hope rests in my heart." Job xix, 26.

In 1287, and perhaps on the same day and at the same hour, God called to the perfect life of the religious of the Third Order of Saint Dominic two souls of admirable beauty, and so alike that it is hard to distinguish the one from the other. On both he imposed the same mission, and favoured them with the same gifts; only, he assigned to the one a more painful and shorter trial, while, if that of the other was less bitter, it was more lasting. But he marked them both with his cross, and sent them into this world, to testify to the eyes of men of the pious cares which our heavenly Father takes of the unfortunate.

The one was born in upper Italy, on the smiling banks of the Ticino; the other stopped a moment on the summits of the Apennines, then descended to the humble hills of the Tiber. At last, having both accomplished the mission entrusted to them, they were rejoined in the eternal splendours, never to be separated again. They are Blessed Margaret of Castello and Blessed Sybilline of Pavia, both blind and both enlightened by the light of that heavenly science which reveals its marvels to the humble and to those who are pure of heart.

On the highest summit of the Apennines, where they separate Umbria from the Marches and from Tuscany, not far from the town which saw the birth of the king of painting, there are still today the ruins of ancient castles destroyed by time and the hand of men. One of them was that of Metola, the country of Margaret. On coming from her mother's womb, she only entered a larger prison, and soon experienced what life has most bitter: blindness, poverty and the barbarity of her parents who, instead of being moved to compassion on seeing her delivered to so many ills, formed the cruel design of abandoning her if she did not recover her sight. What appeared a frightful misfortune happened however only by a pious counsel of Providence, to withdraw her from the cruelty of parents who would have made her endure too long and too constant a torment.

It happened then that in 1292, when Margaret was five years old, Father James, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, according to the usage of the time, expressed the great truths by sculpture, rendering his pious contemplations sensible, came to die at Castello. Marvellous things were told, men spoke of cures and other graces obtained through his intercession. The parents of Margaret, having learned it, led their little daughter to the sepulchre of the blessed man, and besought God to be pleased, by the merits of his faithful servant, to open her eyes, as he had himself opened those of the man born blind, whose admirable cure is related in the Gospel. The prayer of these wicked hearts did not mount to the feet of the Eternal as an incense of agreeable odour, but rather as a nauseous vapour which he repelled; God willed to be glorified by the sorrows of his beloved servant, whom he kept under the wings of his infinite goodness. Deceived of all hope, instead of

humbling themselves in adoring the wise decisions of the Lord, the parents of Margaret grew sadder still, and left her at the foot of the altars, alone and deprived of all help; they regained their mountain in all haste, without further care for their daughter.

Margaret, having remained some time without hearing the dear voices of her father and mother, began to sob, stretching out her little hands to seek the maternal arms, and calling her cruel parents with heart-rending cries. The echoes of the temple were struck by these lamentations for a very long time before anyone perceived that she was there, groping on the ground. At last, a lady of the town, named Grigia, foreboding a frightful misfortune, lifted her up, pressed her to her breast, took her to her house, and, with the consent of her husband, resolved to serve as mother to her.

Under this hospitable roof, the poor child found affectionate cares which she would have sought in vain in her family; for, although her pious protectress was mother of several children, her generous heart sufficed for all and embraced them all in an equal charity. The development of reason, so slow usually in the blind, was admirable in Margaret, to such a point that she seemed to receive life and growth from a heavenly breath. It is true that in the unfortunate afflicted with her infirmity, reason is marvellously strengthened, because, being gathered and concentrated in a small circle of ideas, it engraves them deeply within itself and preserves them in such a way that they can no more be effaced. The imagination, which more often disturbs reason than serves it, does not people their mind with vain phantoms which it is afterwards so hard to separate from reality. In the last century, we saw a remarkable example of it in Nicholas Sanderson, an Englishman, who lost his sight scarcely a year old, so that he retained no memory of light and colours. In spite of that, by the sole force of his genius, he acquired a perfect science in mathematics, which he professed publicly at the University of Cambridge, astonished to hear a blind man demonstrate the learned theories of Newton on light and colours, and that with such lucidity and so great a depth of thought that, in this science, he had no rival to fear.[1]

But let us return to our blind girl of Metola. She soon gave proof of a lively and penetrating mind, of a happy and faithful memory; she learned in a short time the hundred and fifty psalms of David, which later inspired in her beautiful reflections, and which she recited each day to nourish her piety. This precocious development only made her feel the better her truly incomparable misfortune. Poor young girl deprived of sight, miserably forsaken by her family, alone and without resources, what would she have become, if her adoptive mother had suddenly failed her? For ourselves, we like to think that she often groaned over her lot before God, and addressed to him sighing these words of Job:[2] “Why, Lord, did you draw me from my mother’s womb? It had been better for me to die before any man had seen me, and to have passed, as one who had never lived, from my mother’s womb to a tomb.”

She said again: “Lord, I beseech you, let me not founder in the tempest which roars around me; grant rather that it be given me to cry out in the joy of my heart: My father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord, in his mercy, has gathered me up and sheltered me.”[3]

God willed to try Margaret and to purify her by new sorrows, that, distrusting herself and others, she might abandon herself entirely into his arms. There are weak and cowardly souls whom the least pain troubles and casts down, so that they fall into the mud like flowers shaken by the tempest; there are others of so vigorous a temper that tribulations serve only to increase their strength. The nobility and beauty of these chosen souls is never better revealed than when, shut up in the citadel of religious consolations, they bear a courageous defiance to all that life has most bitter, to all that death has most fearful.

Soon men spoke in the town of this poor blind girl, of her intelligence, and everyone wished to see and hear her, esteeming her rather an angel of heaven than a mortal creature. This desire came to certain nuns; but piety, which in well-born souls is a heavenly fire that inflames them with an ardent charity, is for base souls only a cloak with which they cover desires of avarice and ambition, or at least the distraction of a culpable

idleness which excites envious and malevolent reports. These nuns came then to find Grigia, and begged her to be so good as to entrust to them the blind girl of Metola, whom they would consider as their daughter, and to whom they would teach religion and all things. This pious lady, deceived by the lying faces and honeyed words of these hypocrites, abandoned Margaret to them, who, fearing to be too heavy a charge to the numerous family of her benefactress, and imagining that she would find learned and affectionate mistresses, was herself satisfied with this arrangement. But things were quite different from what she had imagined, and little by little, these wicked women detached themselves from her, to the point of coming to hate her. They subjected her to the hardest and most outrageous treatment, until, no longer able to bear the sight of her, they drove her out pitilessly. The unfortunate girl returned then to implore the charity of her adoptive mother, who received her and loved her as in the past and never again consented to be separated from her.

In this time when, drenched with tears, she groaned without consolation at the feet of the Saviour, there rose from the banks of the Ticino a groaning so similar that one would have said the faithful echo of the voice of Margaret, represented at that place where the same sacrifice was renewed. This lamentable voice was that of another unhappy blind girl, orphaned and abandoned. Born at Pavia the same year as Margaret, she found in her father Humbert Biscossi and in her mother Honorata of Yezzy attentive and affectionate instructors who, if they were not provided with the goods of fortune, were at least rich in that sweet goodness of heart which consoles life better than riches, illustrious birth and numerous and powerful protections could do. When Sybilline entered upon life, it seemed to her then that earth and heaven smiled on her, since in the caresses of her parents she could glimpse at will the serene sky, the fertile fields of Lombardy, the walls and towers, the ancient temples and sumptuous palaces of her illustrious city, and make for herself a treasure of noble ideas and dear memories capable of fecundating her reason and putting joy in her heart. As she advanced in age, her soul opened to hope, and she abandoned herself with confidence to that distant and indefinite future which appears to youth like a day of spring. Happy time, in which the imagination goes on weaving golden dreams and ever new illusions, which then vanish as life advances and one perceives the evening in the distance. But in an instant, this short dawn of Sybilline was changed into a dark, menacing and terrible night, just as an unforeseen tempest steals the light of day from the traveller and plunges him unexpectedly into darkness and terrors. She lost first her father and mother, and found herself without friends, poor and abandoned; then, a sudden and cruel malady attacked her sight, which she lost totally about the age of twelve. It is impossible to describe the grief and terror of this unhappy child, in feeling herself thus deprived of all help at an age still so tender, and disinherited at the same time of the enchanting spectacle of that nature which she had so admired in her childhood. But what was most painful to her, and she often complained of it, was that she could not help herself in anything, and saw herself in the necessity of finding her living morsel by morsel, when alms did not fail her, which happened sometimes; it was not rare either that she was made to pay for them by reproaches and humiliations. However, God, who never abandons him who trusts in him, inspired the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, known at Pavia for their piety, to take charge of this unfortunate. They joined her then to their association, lavished on her all the cares that her state required, and applied themselves above all to strengthen her in piety, that she might draw from religion the strength necessary to bear the so difficult trial which God had sent her. Then, they instructed her in the nature of the offices and the parts of vocal and mental prayer, and made familiar to her both the pious meditations of Saint Bernard and the soliloquies of Saint Augustine, so sweet, so tender, and which, after the divinely inspired books, have nothing that is superior to them. The poor child drew from them a new courage, and it seemed to her that the weight of her ills was lightened. But she had not lost the hope of recovering sight one day, and trusted for obtaining it in the intercession of her father Saint Dominic. She fasted and prayed to this intention during several months. Her faith was so lively that she was convinced that her wishes would be granted on the very day of the feast of her holy protector, that is to say on 4 August. The solemn day having arrived, Sybilline rose very early in the morning, and began to pray while awaiting the effect so ardently desired. She prayed and wept long, and her eyes did not open; then, thinking that she would obtain this grace toward

noon, she redoubled her prayers, her tears and her groans so as to touch the hardest souls: all was useless. However she did not lose courage, and continued thus until evening, seeking in vain, with her extinct pupils, to discover that light so desired: but her darkness was as deep. Then, overcome by grief, she began with a childlike simplicity to address these reproaches to her blessed intercessor: “Is it thus, merciless Father, that you can reject the humble and confident prayer, I will no longer say of your daughter, but of your wretched servant! You have no pity on me, poor unfortunate fallen into an abyss of ills, wandering in the shadows of a perpetual night, and for whom life is not a gift but the cruellest torment. On whom then will you have compassion, if not on me? Since you care not otherwise for my life, then give me back my tears, my pains, my vigils, my anxious disquiet and my long and useless waiting, that I may offer them to another protector either more powerful or more compassionate than you.” The pious legend relates that she continued thus to weep and complain as if the Saint had been present, until, seized by the hand and as if lifted from the earth, she was led in spirit into the presence of places so horrible that her heart was overwhelmed with grief and sadness, to the point that her darkness appeared desirable to her. Having prayed the Saint to make so frightful a spectacle cease, he consoled her by making her contemplate places of a beauty so new and marvellous that she could not satiate herself with admiring them; it seemed to her that she had left the earth for the joys of the heavenly Jerusalem. Then, by affectionate words, Saint Dominic engaged her to bear the cruel trial of her blindness, which God sent her to hide from her the sight of the gross and fleeting things of the world, and thus render easier to her the conquest of those ravishing places which she had just glimpsed; besides, the horror of this painful night was not to last long, and soon there would appear to her the sun of a resplendent and happy day which would have no evening, and in which she would enjoy the reward promised to those who suffer with resignation. Then the vision disappeared. Sybilline thanked God for the salutary reprimands he had made her by the ministry of his faithful servant, and submitted to carry her cross all the time that it should please God, since that was necessary for her salvation, and she carried it in effect for sixty-eight years with such courage that she seemed a miracle of strength. While Sybilline was putting on at Pavia the Dominican livery, Margaret, in spite of the painful experience she had had at Castello of the hypocrisy of those nuns who had so cruelly deceived her, wished to associate herself with the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, commonly called Sisters in Mantles or of Penance. These loved her sincerely and were always devoted sisters to her. Thus the holy Patriarch received at the same time among the number of his daughters these two poor blind and abandoned orphans, who were the worthiest first-fruits that the Third Order offered to its Founder. The one and the other, in associating themselves with the Dominican Congregation of Penance, were by that title alone instructed in the life to which they consecrated themselves. In effect, the holy Founder had organised the Third Order as a spiritual militia, which was to fight the battles of the Lord with the arms of prayer and mortification, without its being necessary for that to break or relax the natural bonds of the family, showing thus more closely to the world those sublime perfections which seem the exclusive portion of those who live retired in cloisters. The life of these two angels was so austere that one scarcely finds an example of so long and so voluntary a martyrdom among some great converted sinners, who wish to avenge on themselves a life passed in the mire of vice and the atrocities of crime. They had however passed their youth in innocence and the practice of Christian virtues. Strangers to the foolish and tumultuous joys of the world, deprived of all human consolations, isolated in the midst of the crowd, unknown or despised, they suffered a torment which all esteem the most frightful that man can endure. The biographers give on the mortifications of Margaret details which make one shudder. After the example of her holy Founder, three times a night she macerated her delicate body with disciplines given with so little mercy that after her death the flesh of her back was found bruised, torn and ulcerated. She joined to the flagellation almost daily fasts, often even on bread and water, and the fatigue of orisons and continual groans; which made of her life a sort of miracle. But while being hard and pitiless for herself, she was gentle and full of tenderness for others. She took attentive care of all the unfortunate, was moved by their ills, consoled them with kindness, instructed them and reprimanded them if they were astray, not disdaining to visit the malefactors in the public prisons to try to bring them back into the way of virtue, with that powerful word

which comes so naturally from a heart filled with love for God and for men.

Sybilline surpassed her companion by far in the austerities of penance. During three years, she was with the Sisters of the Third Order assiduous at the sermons, prayers and other pious exercises which it was customary to hold at the church of the Dominicans, and her memory received eagerly and preserved faithfully, to make it the subject of her meditations, all that she heard taught on the evangelical word. She lived with another sister of her Order in a narrow and wretched cell, I would almost say a den or a sepulchre, which, being very near the church of the Fathers, permitted her to receive from their hands the eucharistic bread. An author who knew them both, directed their conscience and has left us a short and faithful history of them, says that all their life they gave themselves to mortifications so extraordinary that they are rather to be admired than imitated. Each evening, to unite herself to the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and drink as it were of the chalice of his sorrows, Sybilline scourged her body in such manner as to tear her flesh and shed her blood in so great abundance that in winter it sometimes happened that this blood, gathered around her knees resting on the ground, froze in such a way as to keep her stuck to the earth, so that she could no longer rise except by leaning strongly with her hands. During the winter, very harsh in Lombardy, she used no fire and scarcely covered herself; thus her hands swelled and ulcerated in such a way that, in breaking the hard bread which nourished her, she soiled it with blood and pus. Then, when overwhelmed by fasting, macerations, orisons and continual tears, she was forced to take some rest, she fell asleep for an instant on a bare plank. The companion of her martyrdom, not being able to bear such a kind of life, died at the end of three years, and Sybilline, by a sort of miracle, lived alone in this species of prison and attained even an advanced age. When she believed she had conquered the rebellion of the senses and assured herself the peaceful empire of reason, she moderated her austerities a little, and enjoyed in anticipation the fruits of victory; and, as she thought that she might have overstepped the rigours of penance, she counselled the Sisters who came to visit her to be less hard on the flesh and more severe on the spirit, which is an infinitely more beautiful and more difficult victory. Think what must have been the character of this woman, for whom the martyrdom of blindness did not suffice, who wished to join to it that of solitude, almost as painful, and who, to darkness and isolation, adds still the voluntary rigours of a painful penance. And when a single one of these torments endured for some time would have sufficed to prove the virtue of a very strong man, she bore them all for more than sixty years.

But to suffer this triple martyrdom, a great abundance of heavenly consolations was needed; thus our two poor blind Dominican women asked for them constantly by prayers and by tears (see the Soliloquies of Saint Augustine). Others recreate themselves with the gay spectacle of creative science; they enjoy the brilliant splendour of the sun, the azure of the firmament, the gentle melancholies of the night, the freshness of the meadows, the murmur of the waters, the course of the rivers, the calm of the lakes, the agitation of the seas; and, what is more desirable still, their eyes are intoxicated with the affectionate look and benevolent smile of those who are dear to them, which communicates to the heart that divine ray of love: let all this be taken from us, poor blind ones, provided it be given us to contemplate you, Lord, who are the sun of justice.

This light, so long invoked and awaited, shone eternal and splendid, surrounding them on every side, and introducing them into the secret dwellings of heavenly science. They saw the mysteries of God, new heavens, new earths; the marvels of love, the triumphs of faith, the holy joys of the immortal spirits, singing hymns to Jehovah. Their soul, purified by tears and washed in the blood of the spotless Lamb, could read in the book of life mysterious and surprising things which no human language could express. Thus filled and as if intoxicated with love, they were heard to develop doctrines and prophesy the future. To Blessed Margaret were unveiled the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ, and to Blessed Sybilline those of his painful Passion. Scenes of joy or of mourning presented themselves unceasingly to their mind, and these visions were followed by reflections which it is not possible for us to render. The first meditated day and night the mysteries of the love of the Word made flesh, and fathomed that abyss of charity which made him put on our

mortal spoil, to redeem us from a terrible slavery. She could not separate herself from the grotto of Bethlehem; and it seemed to her that she was mingled with the shepherds, and confounded her voice with those of those poor folk who blessed God for having regenerated fallen humanity. The second, ascending Calvary, clasped the cross lovingly, and wept thinking of the ineffable sorrows of Jesus who shed all his blood, offering himself as a holocaust to his Father in order to expiate our sins. The one thrilled with joy, the other with bitterness; and loving and weeping, both immolated themselves in a like sacrifice. Love, that marvellous power, by a divine artifice, engraved, imprinted on the heart of Margaret the scene of her pious contemplations. Suffering gave Sybilline the crown of thorns and the scourges, so she bore in her virgin members the cruel marks of the passion of her divine Spouse. Love, more powerful than pain, consumed in a short time the strength of Margaret, who, scarcely in her thirtieth year, flew away to the heavenly fatherland, hastening by her desires the arrival of the companion of her martyrdom (1320). Sybilline, groaning and solitary, lived yet long years in her prison; at last, after having been for heaven and earth a sublime spectacle, on 19 March 1367, already an octogenarian, she went to rejoin her companion in misfortune in the bosom of uncreated light and in eternal love.

May the example of these two dear blind women bring some courage to the unfortunate tried by a tribulation so bitter; may this source of heavenly consolations, at which these unfortunates drank so largely, be open to all, and may these waters escape abundant and continual to refresh humble and pure hearts, as it is written: *Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt.*

Blessed Margaret is represented with three little stones in her hand, because after her death there were found in her heart three little carved pebbles which bore the image of Our Lord adored, in the manger, by Joseph and Mary.

We have borrowed this narrative from Father Marchese, translation of the *Année dominicaine*. The Italian author has preceded it with a dissertation in which he examines the question who are the most unhappy, the blind-born or the deaf-mutes: he finds the first more to be pitied than the second, comparing their soul to the austral lands, buried in ice and eternal darkness. If education strives to spread truth on this sterile and cold soil, the best will cannot succeed in warming and ripening this seed. “In my opinion,” adds Father Marchese, “it is very hard to conceive how a blind-born person can attain to the knowledge of truth.” — Cf. *Année dominicaine*, t. v, p. 265 ff., 309 ff. — The Bollandists give the life of Saint Margaret on 18 April, and that of Saint Sybilline on 19 March.

Saint Leontius, bishop of Saintes (640), and Saint Landoald, missionary of the Low Countries, companion of Saint Amand (666)

SAINT LEONTIUS, BISHOP OF SAINTES (640).

Saint Leontius, born about the middle of the sixth century, began to govern the church of Saintes about the year 596. There was granted to him an inexhaustible fund of science and piety. He succeeded Saint Palladius. One of the most salient acts of this episcopate was the generous and eager reception given by Saint Leontius to Saint Maclou or Malo, bishop of Aleth, in Brittany, who, fleeing the inhospitable shores of Armorica, had come to take refuge in the territory of the Santones. Leontius offered him a house near the town, with revenues sufficient for the foundation of a small community. It is reported that, under this pontificate, the isle of Ré, covered with woods, offered an asylum only to fishermen or navigators beaten by the tempest. From the century, there was seen, at the place still today called Sainte-Marie, a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, which was in great veneration in Saintonge and Aunis. Pilgrims came there from all the surrounding points. Toward the ninth century, this pious edifice, as well as the leper-house which depended on it, was overthrown by the Normans. It is again in the time of Bishop Leontius that Saint Amand chose this isle to give himself there to the contemplation of divine things.

In 625, a council assembled at Reims. More than forty bishops of the Gauls were found there, and with them Saint Leontius. He ended his holy life on 19 March 640: his body was buried beside the tomb of Saint Eutropius, which was already then placed in the crypt, in the very place where it is still seen in our days. The feast of the holy pontiff Leontius is celebrated each year on the 22nd or the 19th of March, or else on 22 November. As to his relics, it is presumed that they still rest in a pillar of the crypt, not far from those of Saint Eutropius. *Biographie saintongeaise*, by P. D. Rainguet, 1851.

SAINT LANDOALD, MISSIONARY OF THE LOW COUNTRIES, COMPANION OF SAINT AMAND (666).

Saint Amand, having resigned his bishopric of Maastricht into the hands of Saint Remaclus, to resume his first vocation, which was that of the evangelical missionaries among the faithful and infidel peoples of divers provinces, in quality of apostolic bishop, went to Rome to have approved by Pope Saint Martin the design which he had of labouring as before at the conversion of the pagans, without attaching himself to any diocese. This holy Pope was not content to receive him favourably and to approve his conduct; he chose besides, as he had been asked, excellent labourers in Rome, to go with him to labour at that ample harvest of the Gospel which the Lord was preparing in the country whither he was to send him. The chief of the co-operators associated with Saint Amand was Saint Landoald, priest of the church of Rome, of a Lombard family by origin, considered for his eminent virtue. He thought he heard the voice of God calling him by the organ of the vicar of Jesus Christ; and, all burning with the love which it inspired in him for the salvation of the peoples, he left without deliberation his country and the habits he had there, to put himself in the company of Saint Amand with the deacon Saint Amantius, and some other persons of piety whom Saint Martin joined to them: Saint Vinciana, Saint Adeltrude, Saint Julian and seven other persons, both men and women. They left Rome on the news which Saint Amand received of the ordination of Saint Remaclus, who was consecrated bishop of Maastricht in his place. When, after having visited divers monasteries of France, they arrived in the country situated between the Meuse and the Scheldt, Saint Remaclus did so much with Saint Amand that he obtained that Landoald should remain near him to relieve him in the episcopal ministry. Our Saint had a great field in the whole extent of the diocese of Maastricht to exercise his patience and charity. His vigilance and zeal were indefatigable in all that he had to do and to suffer to instruct the coarse peoples of the country, and to root out the vices which reigned in the land with ignorance. A rich and noble man, named Aper, having given him a plot of ground in the land of Wintershoven, on the river Herck, west of Maastricht, he built there a church which he had dedicated by Saint Remaclus, about the year 659, under the name of Saint Peter. After the resignation of Saint Remaclus, Landoald continued under his successor, Saint Theodardus, to labour with his ordinary activity at the work to which God had called him. King Childeric II, who then reigned only in Austrasia, having established the seat of his residence at Maastricht, was not long in recognising his holiness. He did not stop at the terms of the esteem and veneration he had for him, but he wished further to provide for his subsistence and that of the little community which he had assembled at Wintershoven. This good will of the prince obliged Landoald to send from time to time a man to Maastricht to fetch his alms. The one he employed for this was one of his disciples, named Adrian, who was assassinated on the way, near Villiers, returning from Maastricht to Wintershoven, by robbers who believed him laden with gold and silver. The Church has since honoured him as a martyr. Saint Landoald did not survive this accident much, and there is reason to believe that he died before Saint Lambert had succeeded, in the bishopric of Maastricht, Saint Theodardus, who was martyred in the year 668. He was buried in his church of Wintershoven, where God wrought divers miracles through his intercession. His body remained in the earth until, in 735, it was raised by Saint Florebert, bishop of Liège, son and successor of Saint Hubert, who had transported the episcopal see from Maastricht to that town, with the relics of the bishop and martyr Saint Lambert, his predecessor. The memory of this elevation was celebrated since on the first day of December, on which it had taken place. The fear of the Normans, who came nearly two hundred years after to ravage these provinces, was the cause that this holy body was put back into the earth, by which

means it was snatched from their fury. It was raised anew with those of the deacon Saint Amantius, of the martyr Saint Adrian, and of some others who had been of the company of Saint Landoald. This new ceremony took place in the time of the bishop of Liège, Euracle, predecessor of Notger, who had a new life of the Saint composed, after the one which had formerly been made had perished in the ravages of the Normans. The holy relics did not remain there long afterwards, for the abbot and monks of Saint Bavo of Ghent, in Flanders, who were lords of the land of Wintershoven, using their right, had them transported to their abbey in the year 980, where they were received on 25 March with much display. The solemn elevation or translation of them was made on 13 June, a day which has been erected into a feast, and which is the principal one of our Saint and his companions, after that of 19 March, which is believed to be the day of his death.

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[1] See 20 March. — St Origen, Hom. xviii in Lucam.

[2] Roman Breviary, 19 March, office of St Joseph.

[3] Esther viii, 2: *Esther autem constituit Mardochaeum super domum suam.*

[4] Luke iii, 23.

[5] Ps. cxxxi, 11.

[6] St Bernard: *Conjice quis et qualis homo fuerit iste Joseph, et ex proprio vocabulo, quod augmentum non dubites interpretari.*

[7] Matt. i, 19.

[8] *Summa theologica*, IIIa, q. 27, art. 4, ad 2.

[9] St John Chrysostom, Hom. iv in Matthaeum.

[10] Job i, 1.

[11] Luke i, 6.

[12] Suarez, *de Incarnatione*, part. iii, quaest. 29, disp. 8, sect. 2.

[13] Isidore de Isolanis, Pars i, cap. 9.

[14] Morales, In Matthaeum, lib. iii, tract. 2.

[15] Bossuet, Sermon on the Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

[16] Luke i, 27; ii, 4.

[17] *Justus ut palma florebit.*

[18] *Diptycha Mariana*, n. 27.

[19] St Hilary, In Matthaeum, cap. xiv; St Peter Chrysologus, Sermo xlviii.

[20] *Fabricavit auroram et solem.*

[21] *Per lignum salutem nostram erat consummaturus.*

[22] Cf. Th. Raynaud, *Diptychon Marianum*, p. 48.

[23] Theodoret, iii, 26.

[24] St Jerome, *Contra Helvidium*, Opera ii, col. 203, ed. Migne.

[25] St Augustine, Serm. xiv; *Summa aurea*, i, cols. 406– 407.

[26] St John Chrysostom, Hom. v in Matthaeum.

[27] St John Damascene, Sermo i in diem nativitatis Virginis Mariae, n. 7; Opera t. iii, col. 671, ed. Migne.

[28] St Peter Damian, Opusc. xvii, *de Caelibatu sacerdotum*, cap. 3.

[29] Baronius, in the *Apparatus*.

[30] Gerson, Sermo de Nativitate Virginis, t. iii, p. 1361, ed. Dupin.

[31] *Summa de beato Josepho*, part. iv, cap. 4.

[32] Matt. i, 16: *Jacob autem genuit Joseph virum Mariae*; i, 19: *Joseph autem vir ejus, cum esset justus*; i, 20: *Joseph, noli timere accipere Mariam conjugem tuam*; Luke ii, 5: *ut profiteretur cum Maria desponsata sibi uxore praegnante.*

[33] *S. Theolog. Moral.*, n. 914; *Summa aurea*, col. 1106.

[34] Suarez, quaest. 29, disput. 7, sect. 1, n. 3.

[35] Epiphanius, Haeres. lxxviii, n. 8.

[36] *Maxime indecora.* (*Diptycha Marianum*, p. 45, n. 5.)

[37] Gerson, *Sermo recitatus in concilio Constantiensi*, Consid. 3.

[38] Baronius, ad annum Christi 12, § 9.

[39] Suarez, In Summam, disput. 7, sect. 3.

[40] Vasquez, In Summam, disput. 125, cap. 11, n. 127.

[41] Sandini, *Historia Familiae sacrae.*

[42] Trombelli, Dissert. 10, quaest. 3, cap. 2, n. 7.

[43] St Augustine, *Contra Julianum pelagianum*, lib. v, cap. 12, n. 47.

[44] St Bernardine of Siena, Serm. i de S. Joseph, Opera t. iv, p. 233.

[45] Mgr Mislin, *Les Saints Lieux*, t. iii, p. 117.

[46] *Le Parfait Légendaire* [as abbreviated "Le Parf. Légend."], p. 111.

[47] Matt. i, 20.

[48] *Summa aurea*, t. i, col. 687.

[49] St Bernard, Hom. ii super *Missus est*, § 14.

[50] *Eam traducere* (Matt. i, 19).

[51] Trombelli, *Mariae SS. Vita et gesta*, Dissert. xiii, quaest. iv, n. 11.

[52] "*Almo cum tumidam germine conjugem / Admirans, dubio tangeris anxius.*" (Vespers hymn of St Joseph.)

[53] Luke ii, 1.

[54] Luke ii, 4–5.

[55] Micah v, 2.

[56] Matt. ii, 11: *Et intrantes domum invenerunt puerum cum Maria matre ejus.*

[57] Gerson, *Josephina*, distinct. 9.

[58] *Muneribus erat aptus suscipiendis atque recondendis.* (Gerson, *ibid.*)

[59] Ciampini, *Vetera Monumenta*, t. i, cap. 22.

[60] *Roma subterranea*, tab. 22, 85, 86.

[61] *Non veni solvere legem, sed adimplere* (Matt. v, 17).

[62] St Ephrem, *Sermo de Transfiguratione*, p. 41, Roman edition.

[63] Serry, Dissert. 33, n. 4.

[64] Trombelli, Dissert. 22.

[65] *Summa aurea*, t. i, col. 1143.

[66] *Summa aurea*, t. i, col. 1148.

[67] Luke ii, 39.

[68] The massacre of the children took place about the middle of the month of February, a short time after the presentation of Jesus in the temple. (Sepp, t. i, p. 107.) Cf. Matt. ii, 16.

[69] Matt. ii, 13.

[70] See *Égypte ancienne*, by M. Champollion-Figeac.

[71] Gentilucci, *Vie de la très-sainte Vierge*, p. 145.

[72] Ps. cviii, 10; Prov. xx, 4.

[73] Deut. xv, 4.

[74] Matt. ii, 20.

[75] On arriving at Nazareth, Saint Joseph devoted some days to seeing again his friends and relatives. This holy patriarch, in effect, had in that little town a rather numerous kindred, of whom we have not yet had occasion to speak. We shall say a few words, considering this indication and these details as the natural commentary on several passages of the Gospel. Taking as starting point the genealogy transmitted by Saint Matthew, we learn that Saint Joseph had for grandfather Matthan, of the tribe of Judah. Without going higher, the descendants of Matthan may clear up several points enveloped in a certain obscurity. By his wife, named Mary, he had four children, one son and three daughters: Jacob, Mary, Sobe and Anne. Jacob had only two children: Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin, and Mary, who, according to an opinion maintained by Father Pezron, was twice married: the first time to Alphaeus, by whom she had James the Less (tradition teaches us that Saint James the Less, who became bishop of Jerusalem, resembled the Saviour in a striking manner; it is for this reason that the traitor Judas agreed with the Jews who accompanied him to the garden of Olives that he would kiss Jesus, in order to spare them any error) and Joseph or Joses; the second time to Cleophas, by whom she had Jude, Simon, Mary Salome, wife of Zebedee, and another Mary designated in the Gospel under the name of *altera Maria*. We know that Zebedee had by Mary Salome Saint James the Greater and Saint John the Evangelist. As if to avoid all confusion, the name of Mary at that epoch being very widespread, Saint Matthew calls Salome the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt. xxvii, 56). Let us add here that, according to another opinion which is far from being devoid of probability, Mary, sister of Saint Joseph, had but one husband. He bore two names, as it was rather the custom in that time to have several: he was called Alphaeus, otherwise Clopas or Cleophas. By the aid of this

genealogical series one grasps without difficulty the degree of kinship between Saint Joseph and these various persons named in the Gospel. Thus the four sons of Mary, mother of James the Less, the brother of the Lord, for so the Gospels designate him, were nephews of Saint Joseph (*Maria Jacobi et Joseph mater*, Matt. xxvii, 56. Saint Mark is more precise still and says: *Maria Jacobi Minoris et Joseph mater*, Mark xv, 40). The sacred text calls them the brethren of Jesus: they were his first cousins. Besides these four sons, from the same marriage were born two daughters: Mary Salome and the other Mary, of whom we have just spoken, likewise indicated by the inhabitants of Nazareth, and under the same title as their brothers, as sisters of the Saviour. *Nonne hic est fabri filius? Nonne mater ejus dicitur Maria; et fratres ejus, Jacobus et Joseph, et Simon et Judas? Et sorores ejus, nonne omnes apud nos sunt?* (Matt. xiii, 55, 56.) These six children, on whose account, from the ancient heretics down to the false learned men of our day, for the most part Protestants, so many fables have been retailed against the perfect integrity of the Virgin Mary, have been recognised as to their origin and clearly named by Hegesippus, Eusebius, St Epiphanius, St John Chrysostom, Theodoret, the Venerable Bede, Nicephorus, etc.: as if the most ancient ecclesiastical writers had agreed together to refute the lies of modern innovators. One may consult C. de Castro, S.J., *Historia Mariana*, cap. 1. This work is reproduced in the *Summa aurea*, t. i. Sobe, daughter of Matthan, consequently aunt of Saint Joseph, had herself for daughter Saint Elizabeth, who married the priest Zachary and gave birth to Saint John the Baptist. Finally the same Matthan had again for daughter Saint Anne, married to Heli, otherwise called Heliachim, Ioachim or Joachim, by whom she had, already advanced in age, the Virgin Mary. These alliances make us know how Saint Elizabeth, niece of Saint Anne, was cousin of the Blessed Virgin, and how Joseph, in marrying Mary, conformed to the Mosaic law. He united himself to his first cousin, whose parents had no other direct heir.

[76] Matt. ii, 23.

[77] *Histoire de N.-S. J.-C.* [Sepp], t. i, p. 201.

[78] *Inter omnes sui saeculi viros ingenio valuisse.* (Isidore de Isolanis, part. i, cap. 16.)

[79] Consult Molanus, *de sacris Imaginibus*, lib. iii, cap. 12.

[80] *Mois de saint Joseph*, by a Benedictine religious, p. 80.

[81] Luke ii, 41–50.

[82] Luke ii, 48.

[83] The reply of Jesus, as we transcribe it here, is not the literal translation of the evangelical text; we have followed the sense indicated by several holy Fathers and by most of the commentators.

[84] Luke ii, 51.

[85] Hom. i super *Missus est*, n. 7.

[86] *Usque ad triginta annos parentum paupertate contentum.* (Epist. xxii, cap. 17, n. 39.)

[87] *Ii pariter refelluntur qui Christum paupertatem suam ostiatim emendicando sublevantem, victumque ab aliis exposcentem describunt.* (Serry, Exercit. xliv, n. 7, says that this opinion has as authors Michael of Cesena, William Ockham, and others little versed in the knowledge of ecclesiastical history. This sentiment was condemned by Pope John XXII.)

[88] Matt. i, 18.

[89] *Caput mulieris vir*. (1 Cor. xi, 3.)

[90] Gen. iii, 16.

[91] Matt. i, 20.

[92] *Ibid.*, 21.

[93] Matt. i, 20; ii, 13 and 19.

[94] *Works of Saint Leonard*, translation by Labis; citation from Father Marcel Bouix.

[95] Luke ii, 48.

[96] Book vii, ch. 13.

[97] Matt. xii,.

[98] Mark iii, 35.

[99] Luke iii, 23.

[100] Luke iv, 22.

[101] Gerson, *Josephina*, Distinctio duodecima.

[102] Part. 3 Op. Aloh.

[103] See Suarez, t. xix, new edition.

[104] Matt. xxvii, 52–53.

[105] Acts i, 9.

[106] Patrignani, *Devotion to Saint Joseph*, part i, ch. 9, p. 106.

[107] Such is the title of a notice on this relic which the parish priest of Joinville has just published, at Saint-Dizier, by M. Briquet, in-12, 1872.

[108] Patrignani, *Devotion to Saint Joseph*, part i, p. 23.

[109] Luke ii, 49.

[110] *Et inter ipsos jubilans / Dulci sopore solvitur.* (Hymn *Quicumque*.)

[111] Cf. AA. SS., of 22 February.

[112] Homil. super *Missus est*.

[113] The lessons of the second Nocturn are by Saint Bernardine of Siena.

[114] This office has been printed in his works, t. iv, Antwerp edition of 1706, p. 781.

[115] The office was the same as that of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, replacing the word *Nativitatis* by *Desponsationis*, until a new office should be composed and approved.

[116] Patrignani, *Devotion to Saint Joseph*, part ii, p..

[117] He died in 1737. This illustrious unfortunate lived in a profound ignorance of God. It was impossible to bring him, by way of reasoning, to admit the existence of a supreme Being, Creator, Conserver of all things. Thus his life was very dissolute. A few moments before dying, hearing it said that Newton and Clarke had recognised and adored God, he cried out: “God of Newton and of Clarke, have pity on me!”

[118] Chap..

[119] Ps. xxvi, 18.

20 March

Martyrologies

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

In Judea, Saint Joachim, father of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God; his feast is celebrated on the Sunday within the octave of the Assumption of the same Blessed Virgin Mary.[1] — In Asia, the birth into heaven of Saint Archippus,[2] companion of the apostle Saint Paul, who makes mention of him in his epistles to Philemon and to the Colossians. 1st c. — In Syria, the holy martyrs Paul, Cyril, Eugene and four others. — The same day, Saint Photina,[3] a Samaritan woman, Saint Joseph and Saint Victor, her children; and also Saint Sebastian, an officer of the army, Saint Anatolius, Saint Photius and the blessed sisters of Photina, Photis, Parasceve and Cyriaca, who all attained, by the confession of Jesus Christ, to the crown of martyrdom. — At Amisus, in Paphlagonia, seven blessed women, Alexandra, Claudia, Euphrasia, Matrona, Juliana, Euphemia and Theodosia, who were cruelly put to death in confessing the faith; Saint Derphuta and her sister imitated them.[4] About 300. — At Apollonia, Saint Nicholas, bishop, who was banished for the cult of the holy images and died in exile. 8th c. — In the abbey of Fontenelle, Saint Wulfran, bishop of Sens, who, having left his bishopric, withdrew to this monastery and died there, celebrated for his miracles. 720. — In England, the obsequies of Saint Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, who from his childhood to his death shone by holy works and miraculous actions. 687. — At Siena, in Tuscany, Blessed Ambrose, of the Order of Friars Preachers, illustrious for his holiness, his preaching and his miracles. 1286.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED

At Metz, Saint Urbicius, fifteenth bishop of that see. Saint Urbicius is one of those prelates whose zeal made the church of God grow, but whose actions are unknown. After having governed the church of Metz twenty-nine years, he went to receive in heaven the crown due to his prudence and perseverance. His body, first buried at Saint-Maximin, outside the walls, was later brought to rest in a chapel which was dedicated to him near the German Gate: it remained there until 1552, the epoch at which it was transferred to the church of Saint-Euchaire, where the Iconoclasts of took it to cast its remains to the wind. 420. — At Sens, Saint Goeric or Géry, bishop, successor of Saint Wulfran. 711. — In the diocese of Beauvais, Saint Benignus, abbot of Fontenelle and of Flay (Saint-Germer). 723. — In the diocese of Algiers, the feast of Saint Marcellinus, martyred at Carthage by the heretics, named in the Roman martyrology on 6 April. 413. — At Ghent, the venerable Petronilla, religious of the Third Order of Saint Francis, and recluse; born at Grammont, in the diocese of Cambrai. She was favoured with the stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 1472. — At Die, the

saints Mars, Higer, Nicasius, Maximus, Exuperius, Saturninus and Wilphin, bishops of that town from the 3rd to the 9th century.[5] — In Flanders, Blessed Everard, count of Mons, who, to expiate a sin of his youth, reduced himself to being a swineherd in a monastery. 13th c. — In the diocese of Strasbourg, Saint Remigius, bishop. 783.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Gerace, in Calabria, Saint Nicodemus, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil, founder of the monastery of Mammola, protector of the same town and its principal patron, illustrious by the glory of miracles. — In Palestine, the martyrdom of several holy monks, of the Order of Saint Basil, killed by the Saracens in the laura of Saint Sabas. 797.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Hilary, bishop and confessor, mentioned on 14 January.

Martyrology of the Roman-Seraphic Order or of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Camerino, Blessed John of Parma, confessor, seventh general of the Order of Minors, most celebrated for his virtues, for his apostolic legations, for his doctrine and for the report of his miracles during his life and after his death; the sovereign pontiff Pius VI approved his cult established from time immemorial. 1289.

Martyrology of the Seraphic Order of Conventual Minors. — Saint John of Parma…

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — At Verona, the entry into heaven of Blessed Evangelist and Peregrin, confessors of our Order, who shone by virtues, especially of humility and obedience, and by the gift of miracles, before and after their death.

Martyrology of the "Sémites". — Saint Patrick, bishop and confessor, named on 17 March.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

At Antioch, the saints Luke and Joseph, martyrs. — Among the Greeks likewise, the saints Rhodian, Aquila or Aigle, styled president, and Lolion, martyrs. — At Forlì, in Italy, Saint Gratus, deacon, and Saint Marcellus, subdeacon. About 400. — At Braga, in Portugal, Saint Martin, archbishop of that town, who was first bishop-abbot of Dumio, and assisted at the council of Braga in 561. 580. — Among the Greeks, Saint Thomas, patriarch of Constantinople. 610. — In Palestine, the saints John, Sergius, Patrick, Cosmas, Anastasius, Theoctistus and fourteen other religious of the laura of Saint Sabas whom the Saracens put to death in a cave by asphyxiating them with smoke. — In England, Saint Herebert, priest and solitary. 687. — At Raab or Javarin, in Hungary, Blessed Maurice the Hungarian, of the Order of Friars Preachers. Forced by his family to contract marriage, he entered religion at the same time as his wife. 1336. — At Florence, Blessed Hippolytus Galantini. He was a silk manufacturer; but, very devoted to works of charity, he founded the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, whose aim was the instruction of children of both sexes. He died in 1619. Leo XII beatified him in 1825.

Saint Wulfran, archbishop of Sens, apostle of the prisons, patron of Abbeville

647–720. — Popes: Theodore; Gregory II. — Kings of France: Clovis II; Chilperic II.

Epigraph: "Blessed is he that is found without blemish, and hath not gone after gold." Ecclus. xxxi.

It is not extraordinary to see religious drawn from their cloister to be raised to the episcopal throne, but it is rare to see bishops leave their bishoprics to shut themselves up in a cloister. It is nevertheless a fine example of Christian generosity that we are about to see in Saint Wulfran. He was born at Milly in the Gâtinais, three leagues from Fontainebleau, of a very noble family. His father, who was named Fulbert, was held in great consideration by Dagobert I and Clovis II, on account of the signal services he rendered them in the armies. Although he had great employments, he forgot nothing for the education of his son: seeing that he was of a

very good nature and that he already gave marks of a distinguished mind, he took particular care to have him study the good letters under the guidance of virtuous and learned persons. As Wulfran had an inclination to the sciences and much docility, he became in a short time very capable; but his lights, far from giving him thoughts of pride, served only to make him know better the vanity of the grandeurs of the world: so that he renounced it on receiving holy orders.

Meanwhile he was called to court, by the credit of his father and by his own merit, and served there happily the princes Clotaire III and even Theodoric III, kings of the Franks, until the death of his father. Lambert, archbishop of Sens, having died, he was elected in his place by the common consent of the clergy and people of that town. But he had scarcely governed this church two years and a half with all the vigilance of a good pastor when he felt himself interiorly solicited to go and preach the Gospel to the Frisians: he abandoned his see of Sens by a solemn abdication (693). Perhaps he acted so from scruple about his ordination; for Saint Amatus, bishop of Sens, unjustly banished by Theodoric III in 674, was still living, having survived Méry and Lambert, who had been successively substituted for him. Saint Wulfran went at once to confer on the plans of his Frisian mission with Ansbert, then archbishop of Rouen, after having been abbot of Saint-Wandrille: he made afterwards a retreat in that abbey, to which he had given his land of Milly. He obtained from the abbot Hilbert, successor of Saint Ansbert, religious to accompany him and help him in his apostolate.

They embarked at the port of Caudebec, and betook themselves to Frisia, toward the end of the seventh century. There happened on their route a thing which made known the merit of the Saint: as he was saying Mass on the sea, Saint Wandon, who was acting as deacon, wiping the paten before giving it to him, let it fall into the water; but the holy Prelate, having made his prayer, commanded him to put his hand to the place where the paten had fallen, and immediately it rose from the depth of the waters and placed itself in his hand, to the great astonishment of all who were in the vessel. This paten with the chalice was preserved at the monastery of Saint-Wandrille until the year 1621; they were then stolen by a sacrilegious man whom one cannot sufficiently deplore. As soon as they had arrived in Frisia, Wulfran addressed himself to Radbod, duke of the country, and showed him, by strong reasonings, that the gods of the Gentiles were only idols, but that the true God is an incomprehensible essence, invisible to the eyes of men, almighty and eternal, who created heaven and earth and all that is in the world, who rules it by his divine Providence, and who will come one day to judge all men. He was favourably received by this prince, who, though an idolater, gave these new missionaries entire liberty to preach to his people the mysteries of the Christian religion, and to baptise those who should wish to be converted to the faith of Jesus Christ.

The people, whose conscience was left free by the sovereign, received these holy preachers much more favourably than one would have dared to hope from those savage spirits; they listened willingly to Wulfran, and several embraced the Christian religion and had themselves baptised. The duke’s son was even one of those who became Christians: which served to win many others. The miracles which the Saint wrought contributed not a little to establish the faith in the minds of these barbarians: for it was by their means that he triumphed over the perfidy of those whom he could not convince by his reasonings.

The Frisians practised a horrible superstition: it was to make cruel sacrifices of human blood to the demons; and, in order to prevent the jealousy of the fathers, lots were drawn to know which of the children should be immolated. Now, it happened one day that a poor child, named Ovon, being led to this cruel butchery in the presence of the duke, the holy Prelate, touched with a sentiment of charity, supplicated this prince to prevent a creature made in the image of God from serving as an execrable sacrifice to the infernal spirits. Radbod excused himself on the law of the country, and said that the lot having fallen on this child, he could not be pardoned, and that he must of necessity undergo the rigour of the sacrifice; the people said the same thing: it was added however that Wulfran was free to save him by the power of his God. This unhappy victim was fastened to a gibbet, and strangled in presence of several Christians and a great number of pagans. Then

Wulfran, not having been able to bring a remedy to this evil, asked God that, for the glory of his name, he would restore life to this child, so that, by this marvel, the people might be obliged to quit their error, to adore his grandeurs and to recognise his omnipotence. Two hours after the execution, the cords which still held the child suspended broke, and the Saint, having perceived it, ran at once to him, and commanded him, in the name of Jesus Christ, to rise in perfect health. At the same hour the child rose upon his feet; and, by this miracle, he recovered temporal life and at the same time spiritual life: which was the cause of the conversion of a great number of Frisians, who, yielding to this marvel, embraced our holy faith. Two other children were also delivered from a like torment by the prayers of our Saint. However horrible this spectacle might be, the antiquity of this law had made such an impression in the minds of these peoples that it could not be entirely abolished, either by the force of reasoning or by the virtue of miracles. These barbarians were not content with a single kind of death to satisfy their superstitions: they made some pass by the edge of iron, others by divers very cruel torments, and they cast a part into the sea, so that all the elements should serve their detestable sacrifices. A widow woman had two children, of whom one was five years old and the other seven; it happened that the lot fell on these poor innocents, so that, by the rigour of the law, they were to perish in the water. The prince being inflexible to all the prayers of the holy Prelate, these unhappy victims were torn from the arms of their mother and exposed between two waters, in a deep place, so that they should be carried away by the ebb of the sea. The bystanders considered without pity these little children struggling against the waves of that element; but, in the general rejoicing of this people, the holy Prelate shed tears and prayed the divine Goodness to have regard to the innocence of these creatures. Then the waters parted in two and, surrounding these two poor little ones, served them as walls in the sight of everyone; the Christians praised the omnipotence of God, and the pagans, confounded, gnashed their teeth with rage; as for Wulfran, quite transported with joy, and trusting in the mercy of his God, after the example of the prince of the Apostles, he walked upon the waters and went to take these children who held each other by the hand, as if to help one another, and brought them to land before all the people, of whom a great part recognised the truth of the faith and was regenerated by the water of holy baptism. The prince himself declared himself at last vanquished, and his obstinacy yielding to the evidence of the miracle, he asked to be a Christian; but when all was ready for the ceremony of his baptism, and when he already had one foot in the saving waters, the demon made him change his will, by a reason as weak as ridiculous; he took it into his head to ask the holy Bishop in what place there were more of his predecessors and of the nobles of his kingdom: whether in the paradise which he promised him by the grace of Baptism, or in hell. “Be not deceived,” Wulfran answered him, “it is certain that all who have died without baptism are damned for ever, and will burn in eternal flames, and that those to whom God gives the grace of receiving this Sacrament can enjoy in heaven a joy that will have no end.” This wretched prince, on this answer, withdrew his foot from the baptistery, saying that he would not deprive himself of the company of his ancestors, who were in so great number, to live in heaven with so few poor Christians, and that thus he wished to die in the religion of his forefathers. The holy Prelate, transported with a holy zeal, replied: “Wretch that you are! is it thus that you let yourself be abused by the artifice of your enemy, and that you take pleasure in precipitating yourself into eternal pains and torments?” This obstinacy of the prince did not prevent several Frisians from being converted and believing in Jesus Christ. Meanwhile, the miracles that he had seen, combating incessantly the purity of his heart and making him feel great contradictions within himself, he sent ambassadors to Saint Willibrord, surnamed Clement, who had been consecrated archbishop of the Frisians, by Pope Sergius, in the year 696, at the request of Pepin, mayor of the palace, in order to confront him with Wulfran, and to see whether their doctrine agreed. But God gave him only three more days: and, while he thus resisted the truth, he withdrew him from the world before the arrival of Saint Willibrord, and permitted, in punishment of his crimes, that he should not have the happiness of receiving the grace of holy Baptism which he had refused.

Meanwhile, as in consequence of so many marvels the Christian religion was beginning to cast deep roots among the Frisians, the holy Prelate returned to Fontenelle, to the monastery of Saint-Wandrille, to pass the

rest of his days in solitude, under a religious habit. And as he had distinguished himself by the holiness of his examples, during the exercise of his charge, so, having changed his condition, he employed himself entirely in religious perfection and became a great model of virtue in that celebrated monastery. He made the journey to Frisia several times more; but on the last, which happened about the year 719 or 720, having had a revelation of his death, he returned to France, and fell ill as soon as he had re-entered his monastery. Before dying, he had all the religious come into the church, to recommend himself to their prayers; and, having given them his blessing, he went back to his cell, near a church of Saint Stephen which he had caused to be built. He received there the holy Viaticum, and seven days after he departed, as had been foretold him on the part of God; which happened, according to the Great Chronicle of Fontenelle, on 20 March of the year of Our Lord 720.

Saint Wulfran is sometimes painted at the moment when he prepares to baptise Duke Radbod; — the rope is also attributed to him, for having raised a hanged man to life; — he is seen casting a sounding-line from the top of a ship to recover the paten of his chalice fallen into the sea: that is why he is, in this case, represented saying Mass on his vessel, and near him the clerk holds the paten or lets it fall overboard.

RELICS OF SAINT WULFRAN.

He was buried in the church of Saint Paul, beside the tomb of Saint Wandrille, on the right hand. Nine years after, Saint Bain, bishop of Thérouanne, then fifth abbot of Fontenelle, had his body raised from the earth; it was found entire, with all its garments. It was carried to the church of Saint Peter, where it rested until the year 858, the epoch at which, to avoid the fury of the Danes, it was transferred, with the bodies of several other Saints, to the monastery of Blandigny, near Ghent. Finally, after having remained several years in this place, it was brought, in the year 1058, to the church of Notre-Dame of Abbeville, which, in the course of time, took the name of Saint-Wulfran. William, count of Ponthieu, founded there in his honour prebends for the canons who served it.

Nevertheless, there are authors who hold that the body of this holy Prelate always remained at Fontenelle, and that it was transported from there to Abbeville, in the year 1027. These precious relics are enclosed in a rich silver shrine, which is borne every year in a solemn procession, with his holy head, which is preserved separately. There is also kept, in a particular reliquary, a bone of his arm, from which two pieces were taken in 1635: one to give to the most Christian king Louis XIII, who had asked for it with insistence, and the other to give to the chapter of Sens, which ardently desired to have some relics of its holy archbishop; and it was again to content the devotion of these canons that, five years after, those of Abbeville sent them a vertebra of the same Saint.

In the year 1662, on 21 May, François Faure, bishop of Amiens, making his visitation at Abbeville, proceeded, at the request of the canons of Saint-Wulfran and of the magistrates of the town, to the opening of the shrine of the Saint, which had not been done since 1205, and by a marvel which caused an admirable gladness in the heart of all the bystanders, his sacred bones were found entire, solid and perfectly beautiful.

Several miracles have been wrought in favour of those who have honoured his precious relics, and they continued to be wrought in the time of Father Giry. All Picardy knew, in 1685, the miraculous cure of a daughter of Monchy, baron of Vismes, one of the chief men of the province. This young girl, being a boarder at the monastery of Bertaucourt, fell into paralysis, and the evil was so great that she could scarcely move or speak. She had been several months in this state when she had herself taken before the shrine of our Saint to make her devotions. Admirable thing! She had no sooner accomplished her vow than she found herself perfectly cured and returned to the monastery with a perfect use of her feet and tongue; she was still a religious there and enjoyed the same health when Father Giry related this miracle. One could recall a quantity of other miracles, but the brevity of this collection does not permit it. Abbeville had the happiness to preserve, during the French Revolution, these holy relics, which she still possesses today.

Above the wainscoting of the choir of Saint-Wulfran (of Abbeville) there was seen formerly a high-warp tapestry about four feet high, by eighty feet wide, in several pieces joined together, representing the life and miracles of the Patron of that Church, and thus forming twenty-five pictures more or less large. To judge by the costume of the personages, who nearly all wore robes with long hanging sleeves, by the order of architecture and the style of the verses which were read above each picture, this tapestry seemed to be of the time of Charles VII or Louis XI. It garnished the circuit of the choir. The smallest pictures contained only two verses; the large ones contained four and six; but always written two by two. Here they are in order [rendered into English prose; see notes (A)]:

Picture 1. — And first Saint Wulfran, from childhood, took knowledge of letters. 2. — After he had attained age and sense, he was made archbishop of Sens. 3. — The sea gave back to him the paten of the sacred divine host. 4. — Announcing the word of God, he preached it in many a place. 5. — Duke Radbod of the Frisians, baptised, and his gentlemen. 6. — By praying him who remembers pity, he saved a child from death. 7. — Two children out of the schools were given him on his word; who, put in the sea by lot, he delivered from the danger of death; and removing them from bitter pain, he brought them back to their mother. 8. — To merit eternal glory, the Saint came to live at Fontenelle. 9. — There he cured Reguault the paralytic, which was an authentic work. 10. — He ended his days in this holy place, preaching the word of God. 11. — And Sens came to render thanks to God, and to see the holy body without delay. 12. — In Ponthieu money was being coined. One of the coiners practised fraud; he gave neither good weight nor just count, nor returned the silver to the count; who, tried in this place, was found a thief by oath. 13. — This woman was here cured of the great sickness of dropsy. 14. — A pilgrim, by invoking Saint Wulfran, made a storm cease at sea when people were returning from Jerusalem, where they had not been, for the cursed Sultan forbade entry to all. 15. — A child fell on the apron of a mill, and was in great danger; the mother commended him to the Saint, and he escaped death. 16. — A prisoner made prayer to the Saint, and was out of prison. 17. — A townswoman was robbed; for this she invoked Saint Wulfran; returning from there, she seized the thief and all that goods. 18. — A man named Ralph had two sons, of whom one was in great danger; he was prayed for in a head-sickness; Saint Wulfran cured him quickly. 19. — And the other swallowed a needle, the point of which came up; for which an offering was made to the Saint, whereupon the needle went down. 20. — A child, for straying, was at sea, the wind made him drown; the sailors went fishing and found the body in their net. 21. — One of the parents so supplicated Saint Wulfran that the child had life. 22. — A carter was thrown from his cart; by Saint Wulfran he was at once healed. 23. — How this woman was healed of headache, whereupon was made joy and feast. 24. — This woman by entire faith, coming here, received light. 25. — The child through headache lost his eyes; the Saint gave them back; the parents marvelled at it, and gave an offering to the Saint.

This tapestry served, in a revolutionary festival, to decorate the altar of the Fatherland. This office tore it to shreds. Thrown into the cemetery, where no one gathered it up, it went to rot.

Besides the relics of the Saint cited above, some are still preserved at Abbeville, with the Ladies of Saint Joseph (1830), at the Holy Sepulchre; at Saint-Riquier, at Tours (1845) and at Mailly; at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois (Paris), at Sens, at Saint-Wandrille (part of the head), at Milly (1841), at Veules (Seine-Inférieure), etc.

The Roman martyrology makes memorial of Saint Wulfran on 20 March, and that of Ado on 23 April. His life was written by Jonas, religious of the abbey of Fontenelle, who lived in his time; it is reported by Surius. — We have used, to revise and complete this biography, the *Hagiographie du diocèse d'Amiens*, by M. l'abbé Corblet.

Saint Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne

687. — Pope: Sergius I.

Epigraph: "Our Father who art in heaven… thy kingdom come!"

The Venerable Bede, writing the life of Saint Cuthbert, at the instance of Eadfrith [Efride], bishop of Lindisfarne,[1] whence the see has since been transferred to Durham, seems to have observed what Saint Ambrose remarked in Holy Scripture, concerning the patriarch Noah, namely, that in the genealogy of the Saints one must have more regard to virtue, which is the ornament of souls, than to blood, which gives life to the body. This is why this author, most worthy of credence, and who protests in the preface of this same life that he has written nothing in it but what is most certain, passes over in silence the country and the parents of our Saint,[2] and, not stopping at what is of nature, begins his discourse with the marvels which God wrought in him from his childhood.

He says then that Cuthbert, being as yet only a child, aged eight years, and thinking only of taking, with his companions, the ordinary diversions of that age, was called by God to Christian perfection in the manner which follows: One day when he was with a child aged three years, this one, approaching him, exhorted him strongly to leave his play and idleness, and to think rather of sanctifying himself by the good use of the grace of God and by the practice of virtue. Cuthbert, who was too attentive to his pleasure, took this at first for a child's talk; but this poor little one, throwing himself on the ground, wept so bitterly that everyone ran to console him, and particularly Cuthbert, to whom the child said these words: "Why, most holy priest and prelate, do you do things which are not seemly to your dignity and your Order? It does not become you to play with children, you whom God has chosen to give lessons to the oldest persons." Cuthbert, astonished at this remonstrance, was immediately wholly changed, and, from the child he had been until that hour, became in a moment a most perfect man.

He withdrew to the country,[3] where he busied himself in keeping flocks; and then, profiting by the solitude and the convenience of the woods, he passed the best part of the day, and all the night, in prayer: one night when his companions were asleep, and he alone was watching in orison, he found himself surrounded by a heavenly brightness, in which he perceived the soul of the blessed Aidan, bishop of Durham, who was going to glory, in the midst of a company of angels. At the same hour, the holy shepherd woke his companions, and exhorted them to sing with him the praises of God; then, the next morning he gave back his flocks to his master, and went at the same pace to the monastery of Melrose, near Lindisfarne, to become a religious there. As soon as the prior, called Boisil, perceived this young man, he said of him to those present what Jesus Christ once said of Nathanael: "Behold a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile"; and, giving him a most charitable welcome, he inquired the cause of his journey; having learned that he wished to be a religious, he admitted him with joy into the monastery, where, a few days after, he received the monastic habit from the hands of Saint Eata, who was abbot of that religious house, and was afterwards bishop of Lindisfarne. Then Cuthbert, seeing himself consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ, entered with so much fervour into the way of perfection that he not only studied to imitate the others, but also strove to surpass them by reading, by work, by vigils, by prayers and even by abstinences; he was nevertheless constrained to moderate his austerities, so as not to ruin his strength, which he was to employ so usefully for the glory of God.

Some years after his profession, he was sent to the monastery of Ripon, which King Alchfrith had newly founded. The abbot of that house having given him the charge of the guests, he had once the honour of receiving an angel, who, in recognition of his charity, left on the table three loaves of so admirable a whiteness and so extraordinary a taste that one could easily judge they were miraculous. And this is not the only time that this servant of God received good offices from the blessed spirits; for he often merited to see them, to speak to them, and to be nourished by their ministry; and, even before he was a religious, he had been healed by an angel of an abscess which had come upon his knee, and which hindered him from walking. Being returned to Melrose, he was soon struck by the plague which infected all England; but he was delivered from it, against all human hopes, by the prayers of the religious, who had not ceased to importune heaven for his cure, knowing how necessary the life of so holy a man was to them. Nevertheless, God

permitted, to serve him for trials, that afterwards he should be subject to very lively pains.

Saint Boisil having been taken from this world, during this contagion, our Saint was elected in his place. His charity and vigilance were not shut up in this one monastery, which he edified equally by his good counsels and good examples: but his zeal carried him to be useful also to others; and because the simple English people were then extremely addicted to the superstitions of magic, which brought them back insensibly to the cult of demons, he spared neither his pains nor his time to turn them from it. He consumed there sometimes two and three weeks, even whole months, without being able to return to his convent, because he passed even to the most remote mountains, the difficulty of the roads and the poverty of the hearers turning the other preachers from going there. Our Lord gave so much force to his words, and so great a facility in persuading hearts, that the most hardened came to cast themselves at his feet to ask to do penance. The grace of miracles, which he possessed eminently, was also very useful to him: by his prayer alone, he extinguished a great conflagration which was going to make extreme ravages, as a little before he had made disappear an imaginary fire which the demon formed in the air to turn the hearers from attending his preaching. He also caused to come out, by his sole presence, that unclean spirit from the body of a holy woman of whom it had taken possession. And, since we fall on the subject of his miracles, we shall say, in general, that he cured several sick men despaired of by the physicians, and even persons stricken with plague, with water, oil and blessed bread; that he made cease, by his prayer, tempests and storms on the sea; that by tasting pure water he changed it into good wine, and that he himself, being sick on the bed of death, gave health to the religious who served him. Finally, sending his girdle to a holy abbess named Aelfflaed, he cured her of a contraction of the nerves, which had remained to her after a long sickness; and this same girdle served afterwards for other like cures, on which, nevertheless, we shall not dwell further, to return to our Saint.

After he had governed for some time the monastery of Melrose, Saint Eata, bishop of Lindisfarne, had him come near him to govern that of his episcopal city; for he had no other priests than religious for the conduct of his church, according to the first establishment which Saint Augustine, sent by Saint Gregory, had made throughout England. It is not easy to express in few words the virtues of our holy superior in this new government. He was the most patient man in the world, and the most charitable in bearing the faults of others; he remained always, whatever happened, in a perfect evenness, and troublesome or agreeable events were indifferent to him, because the unction of the Holy Spirit which filled his heart made him despise all the things of earth. His vigils were so excessive that they are almost incredible: he passed often two or three days without giving himself even the leisure to take a morsel of bread, or an hour of rest, dispelling sleep by preaching or by manual labour. He could not understand that a religious should complain that his rest had been interrupted; “because,” he said, “it is not doing him wrong to wake him, since, in breaking his sleep, one gives him the means to do something good, or to think of it.” As for holy Mass, he celebrated it with so much devotion that he never offered the holy mysteries without shedding abundant tears; thus he excited the peoples to lift their hearts to God, and to render him thanksgiving, rather by his weeping and groans than by the singing of his voice. If zeal for justice carried him to reprove vices severely, the spirit of gentleness made him always ready to pardon penitents, and he himself wept first the sins of those who accused themselves before him in the tribunal of penance, showing them, by his example, what they should do to obtain pardon of them. As to his clothing, it was such that no singularity appeared in it; but only an honest cleanliness, using only a garment of wool naturally black, and showing thus, by his example, to his religious, how they should dress.

He remained several years in this monastery; after which he withdrew, with the permission of his superior, into the solitude of an island called Farne, where no one before him had been able to dwell because of the spectres and phantoms that were seen there, and the demons who made their retreat there. But the man of God, who was furnished with the invincible arms of faith and confidence in his holy name, easily took possession of this place; he made himself there two little cells which he hollowed in the rock: one to serve

him as oratory, and the other for the uses necessary to life, and surrounded them with walls so high, made of turf, that he could see nothing there but heaven; and as water was lacking to him, he obtained, by his prayers, a fountain of fresh water, which gave refreshment to him and to those who came to visit him. At the beginning, he permitted entry to his cell to persons who came, and it was only some time after that he withdrew absolutely from the presence of men, and spoke to them no more except through a window; finally, he had it stopped up so as to converse with God alone in vigils and continual prayers.

It will perhaps be asked where this holy man took provisions in this solitude; but divine Providence, which never fails the elect, provided him with food by means of ravens, as formerly the prophet Elias, and Saint Paul the hermit: a benefit which our Saint experienced not only in this solitude, but also in other circumstances of his life: for we read that on a journey, God furnished him and his companions with something to live on, by means of an eagle which brought them a great fish. Another time, having been surprised at sea by a horrible tempest, which kept him on that element more days than he thought, he found on the water three pieces of dolphin flesh, which served to nourish him, as well as those of his suite, for the space of three days. Having need of a piece of wood twelve feet long, to stop a crack which the waves of the sea had made in his cell, God caused the waves to bring him one, such as he desired, so that it might be said of him that the sea and the winds obeyed him.

Whatever effort he made to keep himself hidden, he could not prevent an infinity of persons from coming at last to find him from all parts of Great Britain, even the most remote, whether to consult him on their conscience, or to obtain by his prayers the cure of their maladies: and it was not in vain: no one ever withdrew from him without having received the consolation he hoped, or without being delivered from the pain he suffered before. To encourage them in their troubles, he related to them sometimes his combats against the demon, and how many temptations he had overcome in that war; it had been so violent that he had sometimes seen himself on the point of casting himself from the top of his rock into the sea, or at least of abandoning his solitude. He avowed to them that the cenobitic life, where the religious remain subject to the will of a superior, and do nothing except by his order, as to fasts, vigils and prayers, was much safer than the eremitical life, and that he had even known several of these religious who surpassed him no less in purity of soul than by the grace of prophecy. Among others, he named particularly Saint Boisil, who had foretold him all that was to happen to him; he added that all his predictions had been accomplished, except one only, namely, that he should be a bishop, but that he prayed God to preserve him from it.

Since we speak of the spirit of prophecy, we may say that our Saint possessed it himself eminently. In effect, besides several other events, he predicted to Saint Aelfflaed, abbess, that King Ecgfrith, her brother, would die two years after, and that this same king would give him beforehand the bishopric to which heaven had destined him; which happened after the death of the bishop of Lindisfarne: a provincial council having been assembled, Saint Cuthbert was named bishop of that see, in presence of this most pious king, who, assisted by the prelates, went to seek him in person in his hermitage, to have him consecrated in spite of his resistance. It was by this same spirit of prophecy that he knew several things present and hidden, though far from the place where he was, such as the death of the same King Ecgfrith, in a battle against the Picts or Scots; he gave prompt notice of it to the queen.

He showed his virtues no less in the prelature than he had done in his cloister and in his hermitage. Never was a bishop more vigilant or more laborious; the zeal he had for the salvation of souls prevailed over the weakness of an old man consumed by the exercises of a rigorous penance; in the space of two years that he occupied the see of Lindisfarne, he worked more than many others had done in many years. He visited all his diocese, though in a time of plague, without leaving a single hamlet which he did not honour with his presence; and it was remarked that once, having made his visit in a little village, he asked the priest who accompanied him whether there was not yet in that place some afflicted person whom he had not consoled. He was still speaking when he perceived a poor woman who had already lost one of her children by the

plague, and who was embracing the other on the point of expiring; he was touched with compassion, kissed this child and blessed him with the mother, assuring her that her son would live, and that she, with all her family, would be no more afflicted by that scourge: which happened. The extent of his diocese was not great enough to contain the flames of his charity; it spread itself still over the neighbouring dioceses, where he dedicated churches, visited convents of nuns, and performed all the other functions of a truly apostolic man.

After having employed two years in labouring thus for the salvation of souls, he had a revelation that the time of his death was near; he resolved then to withdraw to the little island of Farne, to prepare himself there with more tranquillity. He set out on Christmas day, after having celebrated the divine mysteries of that solemnity; and, as he was going up into the vessel, one of the oldest religious who had accompanied him to the port asked him, with tears in his eyes, "when they might hope for his return"; he answered simply: "When you bring my body back to this country."

He remained nearly two months in this solitude, where he enjoyed at pleasure the repose he had so much desired. But, at last, the rigour of his penances caused him a sickness which lasted three weeks. He would never suffer anyone to be left with him to assist him in his sufferings. He was even once five days without receiving any help, because the sea was so furiously agitated that it was impossible for the religious to pass to his island. In this strange solitude, he suffered interior pains which are not conceivable; for God, wishing to finish purifying him, left him without any sensible grace and without those consolations which he ordinarily received from heaven. The demons failed not to profit by this occasion and to make their last efforts to shake his constancy; and the assaults they delivered him were so violent that he avowed to the Venerable Bede, whom he cherished tenderly, that he had never felt more furious ones in all his life. The day of his blessed departure having arrived, he had himself carried to his oratory, where he received the last sacraments with admirable devotion. At last, having his eyes and heart raised to heaven, he gave up his spirit on 20 March, in the year of Our Lord 687. He cured, the very day of his death, a religious long sick with dysentery.

In the pictures and sculptures of which Saint Cuthbert is the subject, 1° he sees a soul rise to heaven in the form of a column of fire: it is that of Saint Aidan; — an angel stands near his table, on which are loaves of dazzling whiteness; — armed with the attributes of the shepherd, he leads his master's flocks to the fields; — he is in the costume of an abbot, and a column of fire appears over his head; 2° But, according to Father Cahier, the principal attribute of the Saint would be the swan; this having been chosen to indicate the men who showed themselves particularly enamoured of the solitary life, because of the silence which this bird ordinarily keeps.

However we are inclined to believe that it is a question here of the eider duck, called Saint Cuthbert's bird, and not of the swan. Judge by what M. de Montalembert says:[4] "The Northumbrian legend gave itself free play on the occasion of the solitary sojourn of the great national and popular Saint on the islet of Farne. It attributes to him the extraordinary gentleness and familiarity of a particular species of water-birds, which came at the call of man, let themselves be taken, felt and caressed at will, and whose down was of an extreme softness. They swarmed formerly on this rock and are still found there, although their number has greatly diminished, since curious people have come to steal their nests and destroy them with gunshots. These birds existed nowhere else in the British Isles, and bore the name of Saint Cuthbert's birds. It was he, according to the account of a monk of the thirteenth century, who had inspired them with a hereditary confidence, by taking them as companions of his solitude and guaranteeing them that no one should ever trouble them in their habits." 3° Otters wipe the water which bathes his feet. Among the marvellous assistances which heaven lent him, it is told in effect that two of these animals went to warm him on the sea-shore when he came out of the waves into which he was accustomed to plunge to sing his office. — These amphibians might also express, in symbol, the retreat of the Saint in the island of Farne.

4° The cathedral of Durham formerly possessed a representation of Saint Cuthbert bearing the crowned head of King Saint Oswald. For the head of the king-martyr, gathered up by his brother, had been sent to

Lindisfarne and deposited in the shrine of the holy Bishop. The whole, transported later to Durham, was preciously preserved there in memory of the conversion of the Northumbrians, or inhabitants of Northumberland, among whom the cult of Saint Cuthbert was formerly very popular. The shepherds of this same country and the Saxon navigators on the North Sea had adopted him for their special patron.[5] Today, Saint Cuthbert is no longer known to the peasants of Northumberland and the Scottish Marches except by the legend of the compassionate otters.

RELICS OF SAINT CUTHBERT.

His body was put in a coffin which a holy Abbot, named Cudda, had given him, and buried in a shroud of which an abbess, called Vesca, had also made him a present: he kept both in his oratory. It was carried solemnly to Lindisfarne, where it was buried in his cathedral. He had some design of having himself buried in his solitude; but, at the prayer of the religious, he changed his resolution, and consented that he should be carried to his church, where several miracles have been wrought at his tomb. Other garments were given him, in order to distribute his own as precious relics. Thus God wrought so great a number of miracles by their means that those who could touch something that had belonged to him were assured of obtaining the cure of their maladies; a demoniac was even delivered, after drinking water into which a little dust had been thrown taken from the place where his holy body had been washed. Eleven years after he was found as entire and as fresh as if he had only just died; all his garments were also without corruption, as the Venerable Bede writes, both in his life and in the fourth book of the *History of England*. Four hundred and eighteen years after, he was still entire; another English historian reports that, when the perfidious King Henry VIII had the most venerable monuments broken open, to draw from them the precious relics and cast them to the wind, the body of Saint Cuthbert was found, with its pontifical ornaments, without the least appearance of corruption; the bishop of Durham, also named Cuthbert, having been consulted to know what should be done with this precious treasure, ordered, though he favoured then the party of the prince, that it should be covered again with earth, in order to prevent any insult being done to it. It is this illustrious Bishop who, having recognised his fault in having followed the passion of a wicked king, repaired it gloriously by defending the Church with Queen Catherine, and by dying at last for the faith in prison, under the tyranny of the detestable Elizabeth.

Among the precious things which were found in the tomb were: the ring of the Saint, whose stone was a sapphire, which passed to the English canonesses of Paris; a copy of the Gospel of Saint John, made after the exemplar of Saint Boisil. The body of Saint Cuthbert was found, in 1829, by workmen who were working in the cathedral of Durham, entire, well preserved, and clothed with his pontifical ornaments. It is now in the British Museum. All the martyrologies make memorial of Saint Cuthbert on 20 March. — Cf. *Acta sanctorum* and *Moines d'Occident*, iv.

Saint Ambrose of Siena

1220–1286. — Popes: Honorius III; Honorius IV.

Epigraph: "The Lord will feed him with the bread of life and understanding, and give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink." Ecclus. xv, 3.

If prodigies are the indications or presages of something extraordinary, doubtless that which happened on the day of the birth of the Saint whose life we write was a prognostic of what he was to be in the course of time: for on this same day, on which were also born Saint Thomas Aquinas at Naples, and Blessed Father James of Mevania, at Bissignano, in Calabria, there were seen to appear, at full noon, three very brilliant stars, which each enclosed a religious of Saint Dominic, to show that these three men were destined by heaven to enlighten the world by the light of their doctrine.

He was born at Siena in Tuscany, on 16 April 1220, of the illustrious family of the Sansedoni. His mother, equally noble and pious, of the family of the Stribelini, was called Justina. The two families were among the

first of the town by their riches and by the victories they had won over the Saracens. The father of Ambrose had merited by his bravery the surname of Good-Attack [Bonne-Attaque], and was called to the councils where the defence of Christians against the infidels was to be treated.

Ambrose was born quite deformed, with arms stuck to his body, legs to his thighs, his face dark and disproportioned. His mother felt extreme grief at it, and prayed God to give her the grace to bear this affliction with patience. She entrusted the child to a nurse of the town, named Flora. One day the nurse was holding him in her arms before her house, when a pilgrim, passing by, stopped and considered him with admiration. The nurse covered the child's face to hide its ugliness. The pilgrim, who was an old man, said to her: "Woman, do not hide the face of this child, for he will be the light and the glory of this town."

A year after his birth, the nurse usually carried him to the neighbouring church of Saint Magdalen, which belonged to the Friars Preachers, to hear holy Mass there. There was in this church a chapel full of relics, before which she went to pray for the health of the child. Soon she remarked, as did the religious and the neighbours, that when she placed herself in another part of the church, the child always wept, and that he said nothing so long as she remained in the chapel. One day when the nurse was leaving the church, the child began to weep extraordinarily and to turn his face toward the side of the chapel with great efforts. The religious and the bystanders, astonished, obliged the nurse to return to the chapel. As soon as she was there, the child drew from the swaddling-clothes his hands and arms, till then stuck to his side, and, raising them toward heaven, invoked three times, in a very distinct voice, the name of Jesus. At this miracle, there ran up the persons who knew how deformed the child was. The religious had the swaddling-clothes removed, and the child began to stretch out his legs, till then stuck to his thighs: his face, till then so dark, began to become quite serene and to shine with beauty, to the great admiration of all the bystanders. The news of so great a miracle caused extreme joy, not only to the mother of the child, but to all the inhabitants of Siena: all made prayers and alms to bless God for it. The father was absent at that time. Until the age of seven years, he occupied himself only in cutting little crosses, setting up oratories, singing psalms and hymns in honour of God, making devout processions with other little children; in a word, only in imitating all that he saw done in the churches.

As soon as the little child saw a book, he wished to have it to turn its leaves, as if he understood something of it, to such a degree that his mother could not say in his presence her hours of the Blessed Virgin; for, if the book was not given him, he began to weep, even all night; as soon as he had it in his hands, he was content. The father had two little volumes made with pictures, the one of persons of the world, the other of persons of religion, to see whether it was the figures or the letters that pleased the child. He presented to him first the volume with the pictures of the world: the child refused to see them. He took on the contrary a great pleasure in looking at the volume of religious pictures, but still more at the letters than at the pictures. He learned promptly to read. His greatest joy was from then on to read and hear the psalms, which his mother was accustomed to recite in her office of the Blessed Virgin. From the age of seven years, he recited it himself each day. He was only seven years old when he prescribed himself a most perfect form of life: for, from then on, he began to say every day the little office of Our Lady, to fast on the vigils of several saints, and to rise at midnight to study their lives. Being older, he showed a marvellous inclination to assist poor pilgrims, and he even obtained permission from his father to lodge five of them, every Saturday, in an apartment which he had furnished expressly. He went to wait for them at the gate of the town, and led them to the house, where, after having shown them much kindness, he washed and kissed their feet with admirable humility and tenderness. The next day, he led them to hear Mass, had them visit the places of devotion of the town, and finally, when they were about to depart, he gave them a good alms. Every Friday he went to the prisons to console those whom their crimes or debts kept shut up there. On Sundays, after Vespers, he betook himself to the hospital to serve the sick. He continued these pious exercises until the age of seventeen years; he then entered the Order of Friars Preachers.

He did not execute this generous design until after having sustained rude combats against the enemy of our salvation: once, when he had not wished to be present at a wedding to which he had been invited, this infernal monster appeared to him in the form of a religious, and, under pretext of entertaining him with some spiritual discourse, extolled to the skies the state of marriage, in order to give him a desire to engage in it. Another time, he showed himself in the midst of a wood, under the figure of a young girl of ravishing beauty, who implored his assistance; but the holy young man, discovering the snare hidden under these artifices, armed himself the one and the other time with the sign of the cross, and immediately these spectres and phantoms disappeared. Nevertheless, this prince of the proud did not hold himself for vanquished because of that; but he made yet other efforts and spared nothing to turn Ambrose from the holy enterprise of embracing the religious state. Meanwhile the grace of God, which triumphed in his heart, gave him courage enough to surmount all these stratagems, and he won at last the victory by the religious profession which he made in the year 1238. As soon as he had made his vows, his superiors judged it fitting to send him to Paris to make his studies there, which he pursued up to theology; after which he went to Cologne, in Germany, and studied under the most holy doctor Albert, surnamed the Great, in whose school Saint Thomas also was. Our Saint, being under so good a master, made so much progress in the sciences that the professors themselves came to find him in his cell to consult him on their doubts, and they returned very much enlightened and satisfied; but these frequent visits were scarcely agreeable to him, and he was vexed to see the place destined for his retreat thus changed into a place of conference and discussion. That is why he supplicated his superiors to permit him to withdraw from this embarrassment, in order to be able more conveniently to speak to God, to think of his own salvation, and to converse only in heaven: this grace was granted him; but it was not for long: for the persons zealous for the glory of God, who regretted that the public should be deprived of a man of so eminent piety and so profound erudition, obliged the superiors to engage him to teach and to preach: to which he seemed to be divinely destined. He taught then, during three years, theology at Paris; but with so high a reputation that the other colleges of the University were left to go to hear him. He preached first in Germany, then in France, and finally in Italy; and everywhere Our Lord confirmed the truths which he preached by the force of miracles, some of which are reported in the process of his beatification. The Holy Spirit was seen several times, during his sermons, to descend upon him in the form of a dove and rest on his head: which gave such authority to his words that the most hardened sinners were touched with compunction, and the most obstinate remitted their interests into his hands and were reconciled with their enemies.

He was also employed in public affairs of the greatest importance. He reunited, by his zeal and eloquence, the divided minds of the prince-electors who were on the eve of kindling, by their private quarrels, a very cruel civil war. He stopped the new heretics of Bohemia, who were going to cause a strange disorder. Gregory X gave him commission to preach the crusade: which he did with such success that in a short time a very numerous army was seen on foot for the recovery of the Holy Land. He reconciled with the Church the Sienese, who had incurred excommunication and interdict, for having favoured Manfred, bastard of the emperor Frederick II, enemy of the Church.

Some authors write that, when he entered the Consistory to ask this grace of the Pope, his face appeared quite resplendent, and that at the sight of this marvel, the Holy Father felt himself so strongly inclined to pardon the people of Siena that he cried out: “Father Ambrose, it is not necessary that you explain your mission to me; I grant you all that you wish to ask me.” This great service engaged the Sienese to take him for their patron and to keep his feast as a holiday, which they celebrate with extraordinary magnificence. He reconciled the people of Florence and that of Pisa, who were on the point of coming to open war. He re-established the peace, long broken, between the republics of Venice and Genoa. Finally, he was employed in several other very important affairs, and acquitted himself of them with all possible glory.

In this ministry, to the most ardent charity, Ambrose joined the most profound humility. A powerful man, irritated by his efforts and his successes for the general pacification, said to him one day with menace: “You

are an impostor, a seducer of the Christian people, a man full of ambition and vainglory, worthy of the last punishment, which I reserve for you, if you do not desist from your enterprise." The holy man answered him humbly: "God is called the king of peace; that is why every faithful man ought to desire peace with his neighbour. God gives it only to those who grant it with a good heart to others. What I do, I do not do of myself, but by the will of him who has power over me. Now then, if it is because of me that you are troubled, I ask your pardon for it; I pray God to pardon words uttered inopportunely, and not to impute it to you as sin. And if I deserve every kind of torment, I shall bear them with a good heart for the remission of my faults." At these words full of humility and calm, the magnate so cruel and ferocious, who had no fear of God, felt himself touched to the depth of his soul; he threw himself at the feet of the Saint and said to him: "Pardon me, servant of God, and pray for me, that he may grant me a true peace; as for me, I am ready to make it with you." The Saint raised him, embraced him tenderly, prayed for him, and found him afterwards an excellent Christian.

Blessed Ambrose said in his preachings that vengeance was a sin of idolatry, inasmuch as vengeance belongs to God alone, and that, consequently, he who avenges himself usurps the place of God. One day, in spite of all his exhortations, a man of Siena obstinately refused to pardon. Then the Saint said to him: "I shall pray for you." — "I have no need of prayers," replied the vindictive man harshly. The Saint did not fail to make for him the following prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, by the very great providence and solicitude which you have unceasingly for the human race, I pray you to interpose your power in this projected vengeance, and to reserve it to yourself, that all may know that the punishment of offenders belongs to you alone, and that sensuality may not hinder the knowledge of your justice." Ambrose taught this prayer publicly to the peoples, exhorting them to say it for those whom they should find obstinate in not pardoning injuries. At the very hour when the holy man was making this prayer for him, the vindictive man was concerting with his friends and relatives not to make peace nor to listen to Ambrose. But the prayer of the just man was more powerful. Suddenly this so hard man felt himself penetrated with compunction, all the reasons of the holy man came back to his memory, he passed two days almost without eating or sleeping. At last he came with his friends to find Blessed Ambrose, to pray him to make peace between them and to pardon him his fault.

The Pope sent him the bulls of a bishopric, with the design of raising him yet to a higher dignity; but Ambrose, who loved holy poverty more than all the grandeurs of the world, thanked him very humbly for it and would never accept it. After the death of Gregory, he withdrew into a convent to live there in solitude. It was then that the regular virtues shone marvellously in him: he swept often the church, the cloister and the dormitories; he shunned the conversation of women, even of his kindred; every Friday he fasted on bread and water. During forty-nine years that he was a religious, he never ate meat but once, by pure obedience; he slept only four hours; after Matins he remained two hours in choir in orison, and studied the rest of the night until Prime; he wore day and night a rough hair-shirt and a broad plate of lead on his loins; he practised several other mortifications which his fervour suggested to him. However, neither his great age nor his rigorous austerities hindered him from preaching, and he did it always with much fire; but at the beginning of Lent of the year 1286, he grew so animated in a sermon against usurers that he broke a vein in his chest: which made him bring up much blood by the mouth. The next day, the blood having stopped, he wished to continue the same sermon; but the vein opened again, and he vomited such an abundance of blood that he saw well that his end was approaching.

The religious had exhorted him to give himself some relaxation in so violent an exercise; but the zeal for the salvation of souls, which he cherished more than his own life, had not permitted him to discontinue except when he should see himself entirely forced by the violence of the evil. In effect, as it increased from day to day, he was obliged to take to his bed to be treated there, or rather to await there the will of God, which he recognised by this accident to be to withdraw him soon from the world.

To prepare himself for this last passage, he made a general confession of all his life, in which his confessor did not remark a single article which could have made him lose the grace of God, particularly as regards chastity, which he had always preserved most perfect and inviolable. His confession ended, he supplicated the Fathers of the monastery to leave him in repose, and asked that his chamber should be opened only to the physician, the superior and the infirmarian brother, in order to prepare himself the better, by this solitude, to die in Jesus Christ; but when he was near this last moment, he was well pleased to see all the religious around his bed, to be assisted by their suffrages. Being then furnished with the Sacraments of the Church, and succoured by the prayers of his confrères, he raised his eyes to heaven, and peacefully gave up his last breath, which was the beginning of his eternal happiness, on 20 March, in the year of Our Lord 1286, and of his age the sixty-sixth. The abridgment of his life, printed in Italian, on the occasion of his beatification, relates up to a hundred and eighty miracles which he wrought, all authentic and verified, among which is remarked the resurrection of sixteen dead. The sovereign Pontiffs have often been solicited to proceed to the decree of his canonisation. Pope Eugenius IV permitted the Sienese to celebrate every year his feast, in the church of Saint Dominic, publicly, as of a canonised saint, on the Friday before Passion Sunday. Since then, the popes Gregory XIII, Sixtus V, Gregory XIV and Paul V have granted plenary indulgence to those who visit his sepulchre on the day of his feast. Pope Gregory XV permitted the whole Order of Saint Dominic to celebrate his office as of a confessor not a pontiff.

In the images and sculptures which have been made of Saint Ambrose, the town of Siena is often placed on his hand, to recall the service he rendered to his country.

He also bears the lily for having preserved his virginity until death. To the prayers of the Blessed is owed the conclusion of a great number of marriages which did not seem likely to be arranged. Thus the custom has been preserved at Siena of lighting a candle before his tomb for the success of betrothals.

The Rev. Father Jean-Baptiste Feuillet, religious of the same Order, in the province of Saint-Louis, has composed his life at great length in the third volume of his *Année dominicaine*, on 26 March, the day on which his feast is celebrated at Siena.

Saint Martin of Dumio, Saint Benignus of Flay, Blessed Remigius of Strasbourg and Blessed Everard

SAINT MARTIN OF DUMIO, ARCHBISHOP OF BRAGA, IN GALICIA, AND TODAY IN PORTUGAL (580).

This Saint, who was a native of Pannonia, made himself so skilled in the sciences that, in the judgment of Saint Gregory of Tours, he surpassed all those of his century. He made a pilgrimage to Palestine to visit the holy places; after which he passed into Galicia, where the Suevi, infected with the Arian heresy, had established their domination. He instructed in the faith there King Theodomir, who had been cured of leprosy by the intercession of Saint Martin of Tours. By his preachings, the new Apostle brought back this part of Spain to Catholic unity. He built there, about the year 560, several monasteries, of which the principal was that of Dumio, near the town of Braga, today in Portugal. He took the direction of this monastery. The bishops of the province erected it into a bishopric, out of respect for the extraordinary merit of the Saint, whom they raised to the new see in 507. The kings of the Suevi wished that Martin should be the bishop of their court; which caused him to be called Bishop of the royal family by the author of an ancient notice of the country. He continued his first kind of life, and governed his religious always with perfect regularity. He was afterwards raised to the see of Braga, metropolitan of all Galicia.[1] He has always been regarded as one of the most brilliant lights of the church of Spain, and as one of the most beautiful ornaments of the monastic state. Fortunatus, who addressed to him the first verses of his fifth book, says of him that he had inherited the name and merit of Saint Martin of Tours. He served the Church no less by his writings than by his virtues. He died

on 20 March 580, and is honoured on this day. His body was carried from Dumio to Braga in 1606.

The writings of Saint Martin of Dumio are: 1° A Collection of eighty-four Canons. It is addressed to Nitigius, bishop of Lugo, and divided into two parts, of which the first concerns bishops and clerics; the second concerns laymen. This Collection is found in the various collections of the councils and in the appendix of the first volume of the *Bibliothèque canonique* of Justel, Paris, 1661.

2° *Formula of an Honest Life*, or treatise on the four cardinal virtues. This book is addressed to Miro, king of Galicia, who had asked the Saint to give him instructions on the manner in which he ought to conduct himself. It has been printed in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, t. x, p. 382, and in the *Spicilegium* of Father d'Achery, t. x, p. 626.

3° The preceding treatise is followed, in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, by a book of Saint Martin, entitled *On Morals*. It is a tissue of moral maxims, equally fitted to form man to virtue and to the practice of the duties of civil society.

4° There are still some other writings of our Saint, among others a collection of sentences of the solitaries of Egypt, which is found in the appendix of the *Lives of the Fathers* by Rosweyde. See, on the writings of Saint Martin of Dumio, the learned cardinal d'Aguirre, *Notitia Conc. Hispan.*, p. 92. See Saint Isidore of Seville, in *Catal.* and in *Chron. Suev.*; Saint Gregory of Tours, *Hist.*, l. v, c. 38, and *de mirac. S. Martini*; Mabillon, saec. i Ben.; Ceillier.

SAINT BENIGNUS, ABBOT OF FLAY (723).

Benignus, born of Maurinus and Inga, both of the race of the Franks, imitated, though still young, the example of Ansbert and of the two brothers Benignus the elder and Gennard, his relatives, who, offering a great spectacle to angels and men, had bidden farewell to the most brilliant secular positions to follow Jesus poor and crucified. Hidden with them in the retreat of Fontenelle, he exercised himself in the practice of all the virtues, principally of humility. He would have desired to remain all his life in the lower degree of the diaconate: but Saint Bain having been called to the see of Thérouanne, the esteem and admiration which his brethren had for him led them to choose him to succeed him.

The death of his parents having made him master of their immense fortune, he gave to the abbey of Fontenelle a third of his goods, which were situated in the Vexin, the Saintonge and elsewhere. He decorated the basilica of the monastery with precious ornaments. Meanwhile the Neustrians, not being able to resign themselves to being governed by the same mayor of the palace as the Austrasians, chose, after a terrible war, Ragenfred, who drove Benignus from Fontenelle, although he was very agreeable to the kings, sons of Saint Bathildis, and put the intruder Wando in his place. Yielding to persecution, the blessed Abbot withdrew to Flay, near Saint Gennard. He gave proofs so manifest of wisdom and religion that, his cousin having laid down the abbatial crozier, he was instituted fourth Abbot of this monastery, to the applause of all.

The government of Benignus was happy for the religious of Flay. While war, around their asylum, overturned everything, he maintained them in the peace which the world can neither give nor take away, and taught them to aspire only to the goods that change not. He assisted, in the midst of princes and bishops, at an assembly presided over by the king, to free his religious from the unjust spoliations of which they were victims on the part of men of the world. When Wando was sent away from Fontenelle, he recovered that abbey without however abandoning Flay. He was not long in passing to a better fatherland, in the year of our salvation 723, and was soon inscribed in the annals of holiness. His body, placed in a remarkable shrine, was raised behind the high altar of the monastery, and has remained, for several centuries, in veneration among the faithful people.

[Source line, as printed:] Proper of Beauvais.

BLESSED REMIGIUS, BISHOP OF STRASBOURG (783).

Blessed Remigius, bishop of Strasbourg, nephew of Saint Odilia, was the son of Count Hugh, and grandson of Adalric, duke of Alsace. He was brought up in the abbey of Munster, in the Val Saint-Grégoire, four leagues from Colmar, and took the government of this monastery after Agoald, a pious and learned man. In 776, he succeeded, on the see of Strasbourg, Heddo, his cousin, founder of a school which became in the sequel so flourishing. He enjoyed the favour of Charlemagne, and consecrated to the service of religion and the relief of the poor his goods, which were considerable. He made the pilgrimage to Rome, where he was very well received by Pope Adrian I, who gave him the relics of Saint Sophia and of her three daughters, Saint Faith, Saint Hope and Saint Charity, who had suffered martyrdom under the emperor Hadrian. On his return, he placed their bodies in the monastery of canonesses of Eschau, founded by him in an island formed at the confluence of the Rhine and the Ill. The year which followed his journey to Rome, Remigius received a flattering testimony of the esteem and confidence which the Church of Strasbourg then inspired. A regionary bishop of Switzerland, named Rapert, established the monastery of Werd, in an island of the Aar, and made donation of it to the cathedral of Strasbourg. Among the other monasteries he founded, are cited those of Schönenwerd, in Switzerland, and of Eschau, where he had his tomb built.

In the year 778, he made his will, by which he instituted as his universal heiress the Blessed Virgin Mary, beseeching her to watch over the accomplishment of his last wishes. This will, which is a curious monument of jurisprudence at the epoch of the second race of our kings, is signed by five bishops and forty-two witnesses of both sexes. Blessed Remigius died on 29 March 783, and on 18 May of the same year his body was carried to Eschau. It does not appear that any cult was ever rendered to him in his diocese; but Pope Saint Leo IX, who was of the same family, authorised the celebration of his feast for the abbey of Munster, where he continued to be honoured as blessed until the destruction of that abbey.

[Source line, as printed:] Dictionnaire de Pelin.

BLESSED EVERARD, COUNT OF MONS (13th century).

Blessed Everard, count of Mons, having taken part in the war of Brabant, reproached himself keenly for a fault he had committed on that occasion. He left his country secretly, clothed in poor garments so as to be recognised by no one, and made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to Compostela. On his return, he engaged himself as swineherd at the abbey of Morimond. Some years after, the servant of an officer who had served under the orders of Count Everard, having come to the farm which he inhabited, to ask his way, recognised him by his voice and the features of his face. Surprised at such a meeting, he ran to warn his master, who, having recognised the count in his turn under his disguise, embraced him weeping for joy and testified to him a great surprise mingled with respect. The abbot of Morimond, informed of the fact, went to the farm and questioned the holy penitent, who avowed the truth to him and confessed to him his former fault pouring forth a torrent of tears. The abbot consoled him, encouraged him, and counselled him to come and take the religious habit in the abbey, in order to continue his penance there under another form. Everard obeyed with humility. Later, he founded the abbeys of Einberg and Mont-Saint-Georges, in Germany. He died after the twelfth century. His name is read in the menology of Cîteaux under 20 March, the day on which the Cistercians honour him.

Blessed Evangelist and Peregrin, Blessed John of Parma and Blessed Hippolytus Galantini

BLESSED EVANGELIST AND PEREGRIN, OF THE ORDER OF HERMITS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE (13th century).

Two young men of the town of Verona offered in the thirteenth century to their fellow-citizens the touching spectacle of a friendship all the more solid in that it was founded on virtue. They were named Evangelist and Peregrin, were born at the same epoch, and the same sentiments of piety animated them both. It was by frequenting the same school that they made acquaintance and bound themselves together in the most intimate manner. When they had finished their studies, they thought of choosing a state of life. They determined for the religious profession, and gave the preference to the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine, in consequence of a vision with which they had been favoured. Entered and admitted into the convent of the Augustinians which was situated outside the walls of Verona, the two friends showed themselves fervent novices and spared neither fasts nor prayers to triumph over their passions and conquer the enemy of salvation. Their custom was to pray often in the open air, on their knees, and with eyes raised to heaven. The prior of the convent having asked them why they prayed in this fashion, they answered him humbly that they saw in that place the Blessed Virgin with her divine Son and Saint Anne, such as they had appeared to them when they had taken the resolution to enter the Order of Saint Augustine. These heavenly favours altered in nothing their humility. They put their happiness in filling the lowest offices of the house, and in rendering to their brethren all the services they could. God was pleased to grant to the prayers of his servants the healing of several sick persons. While they walked both with equal step in the paths of perfection, an angel came to announce to Evangelist that God was about to call him to the heavenly fatherland. At the appointed moment, this good religious knelt down and peacefully rendered his soul to his Creator. Peregrin, afflicted by the death of his friend, asked the Lord urgently to reunite him with Evangelist in glory. The latter showed himself to him during his rest, all resplendent with light; he made known to him that his decease was near and that his end would be happy. Peregrin rendered thanks to God for this consoling assurance which he received, and a few hours after he passed gently from earth to heaven. The two friends were put in the same tomb, and several miracles, wrought by their intercession, engaged the faithful to honour them with a public cult. The Augustinian religious having been, by the effect of wars, obliged to leave their first convent and to establish themselves within the town of Verona, brought thither the bodies of the two blessed and placed them at an altar dedicated to them in the church of Saint Euphemia, which they served. This cult has been preserved down to our days, and Pope Gregory XVI approved it by his decree of 17 November 1837. The friendship which united Blessed Evangelist and Peregrin ought to serve as a model to Christians. Virtue had formed their bond, and it helped them to animate each other mutually in the ways of religious perfection. Alas! the friendships of the world are very different! They have for bond only human motives and often the inclination to the same passions. One hears in society nothing but complaints against the inconstancy, perfidy and ingratitude of the friends of the world. Need we be astonished? The reason is quite natural; they cannot esteem each other, that is why they part with so much ease.

[Source line, as printed:] Drawn from their life, which is found in the collection of the Bollandists, vol. vi of July, and from the *Hagiologium italicum* by Cornaro; Godescard, Lille edition.

BLESSED JOHN OF PARMA, GENERAL OF THE FRANCISCANS (1289).

This holy religious, who bore the name of the town where he saw the light, was born of illustrious parents in the first years of this thirteenth century, so fertile in great men and great works. Having an excellent mind, he made such progress in his studies that, after having taken the degree of doctor, he was charged with teaching logic in his native town. At the age of twenty-five, John determined to settle among the Franciscans, whose modesty and piety had touched him. After having made his novitiate, he finished his studies at the University of Paris. Successively charged with the ministry of preaching at Bologna and at Naples, he acquitted himself of this double function with such success that all who heard him were touched and enlightened. His doctrine equalled his facility of elocution. He assisted, in 1245, at the Council of Lyon; after the holding of the council, he was called to Paris to teach in the University. He was the first Italian who occupied a public chair in that town.

In 1247, his brethren elected him general by common accord. His first care was to visit all the convents subject to his jurisdiction, and to re-establish discipline there, which the weakness of his predecessor had rendered less severe. With this view, he assembled several chapters. It was while he was holding that of Sens that King Saint Louis, who was setting out for the crusade, came to recommend himself to his prayers. The good king gave, on this occasion, a proof of the esteem he professed for the servant of God: he went to dine with the Friars Minor, and took at table the last place. Edward III, king of England, had no less consideration for John of Parma. When the latter had gone to salute him while he was visiting the convents of his kingdom, the monarch, informed of the holiness of the Franciscan, ran to meet him and embraced him tenderly. At this epoch, Innocent IV still occupied the Holy See; his affection for the Blessed had not varied since the Council of Lyon. In 1249, the Greeks having manifested the desire to reunite with the Roman Church, this Pontiff thought he could choose no better legate than John to treat this delicate affair. His mission succeeded perfectly with the emperor John Ducas and the patriarch of Constantinople; but subordinates, fierce partisans of schism, killed the ambassadors whom they had sent to the Pope. The affair rested there. Shortly after, a riot raised by the secular doctors of the University of Paris against the Dominicans had obliged these religious to leave their chairs. John, fearing the same disgrace for the Friars Minor, hastened to Paris and had the happiness, by his gentleness as much as by his eloquence, to parry the blow. In 1254, he resigned the generalate in favour of Saint Bonaventure. He lived thirty years more, which he passed in solitude. Toward the end of his life, his zeal for the good of religion led him to supplicate Pope Nicholas IV to entrust him with a new mission in the East, to cement peace between the Latins and the Greeks, but the Lord was content with his good will. He died on the way, at Camerino, on 20 March 1289. There are few Saints who have travelled so much as Blessed John of Parma; he always walked on foot, and refused even a mount to betake himself to Constantinople. Pius VI beatified him in 1781.[1]

BLESSED HIPPOLYTUS GALANTINI, FOUNDER OF THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE IN ITALY (1619).

Blessed Hippolytus Galantini or Galanti was born at Florence itself, on 12 October 1565, of parents whose probity and virtue were the principal riches. His youth was so edifying that, scarcely twelve years old, he drew upon himself the attention of the archbishop of Florence, Alexander de' Medici, afterwards pope under the name of Leo XI, and was charged by this prelate to teach the first elements of religion to other young people of his age. For long years, he divided his time between the work which his profession required (he was a manufacturer of silk stuffs), works of charity, and the care of his own sanctification.

One is astonished that, without riches, without protectors, without knowledge, he could have done so much good in a city such as Florence. He founded a congregation solely occupied in instructing in the truths of religion and in forming to virtue the children of both sexes, and even adult persons who lived in ignorance of their duties and of the first mysteries of religion. The number of souls he drew by this means from the abyss of perdition and despair is almost infinite.

The zeal of Hippolytus had numerous imitators throughout Italy, and, in a few years, there was established there, under the name of the Order of Christian Doctrine, a multitude of congregations, which proposed to themselves the same aim and followed the same rule that he had given to his own. He died in the odour of sanctity on 20 March 1619, aged only fifty-five years. He had received several times the gift of prophecy. His name is still today in great veneration in Tuscany and the adjacent provinces. He was beatified by Leo XII, on 31 May 1825. Rohrbacher. — We give in the *Palmier séraphique*, vol. iii, a very detailed life of Blessed Hippolytus Galantini.

[2] The life of Saint Joachim being closely connected with that of Saint Anne, we shall give it, with that of the blessed Mother of Mary, on 26 July.

[3] In the Epistle to Philemon, the great Apostle calls Archippus the companion of his combats (verse 2). — In the Epistle to the Colossians (iv, 17) we read: "Tell Archippus this word from me: Consider well the ministry which you have received in the Lord, in order to fulfil all its duties." Some translate *from the Lord*, in order to conclude that Saint Archippus was one of the seventy-two disciples. The manuscript of Florus and the chronicle of Alexandria give him this title. What office did Archippus exercise at Colossae? Was he bishop, priest or deacon? Saint Ambrose calls him bishop of the Colossians. The martyrology of Galesinus, and Saint Thomas in his commentaries, likewise do him the honour of this high dignity.

[4] Saint Photina is the Samaritan woman converted by Our Lord Jesus Christ. Her relics are at Rome, in the church of Saint Paul outside the walls. Particles of the well near which took place the conversation of the Saviour with the sinful woman are found at Bologna, in the church of Saint John. The legend of Saint Photina is very obscure: she is said to have preached the faith at Carthage, and to have died under the reign of Nero, after three years passed in chains. Her son Victor is said to have been governor of a province and to have converted Saint Sebastian, officer of the army. — Cf. AA. SS. on 20 March. The Spaniards credit Saint Photina with a conversion otherwise important: that of Domnina, the very daughter of Nero, who is said to have taken at baptism the name of Anthusa, and to have received this sacrament from the hands of Photina, with a hundred of her servants.

[5] They were first exposed naked to the gaze of the crowd; then their flesh was cut with razors; they were torn with iron claws; finally they were condemned to perish in the flames.

[6] The Christian religion was announced at Die toward the end of the 2nd century. Saint Mars is designated as the first bishop of that town: he sat in 220; which authorises the belief that the voice of preachers had made itself heard there several years before. — Saint Mars had for successor Saint Higer, and then Saint Nicasius. The latter was the only bishop of the Gauls who assisted at the famous council of Nicaea, in 325. — The pastors who succeeded Saint Nicasius are little known. Among them was Saint Maximus, who lived in the 5th century. The head of this holy Prelate was formerly preserved with care in the church of Ainay, at Lyon. — Saint Exuperius and Saint Saturninus were the worthy heirs of the see and of the virtues of Saint Maximus. Their names were formerly read in the sacred diptychs of the church of Die. — Saint Wilphin lived at the beginning of the 5th century: he wrote, in prose and verse, the history of Saint Marcellus, one of his most illustrious predecessors; this history is unfortunately lost. The Church formerly celebrated a feast in his honour on 20 March. As it was impossible for us to learn whether a public cult was rendered to the predecessors of Saint Wilphin, we have united them all on 20 March. If their actions are devoted to oblivion, their name and the report of their holiness has crossed the centuries: it is just to grant at least a remembrance to these benefactors of Dauphiné. (See *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Valence*, by M. l'abbé Nadal. Valence, 1855.)

[7] This island has since been called Holy Island, that is, the Holy Island, because of the great number of Saints who lived there. It is four miles from Berwick.

[8] The Celtic or Irish origin of Cuthbert is affirmed by most authors: a life published in 1838 by the Surtees Society gives him for mother the daughter of the king of Leinster, become the slave of the king of Connaught, who had abused her after cutting the throat of all her family: the child, born of this outrage, carried by his mother into Brittany, had been named Nulhoc, that is, "groaning", on account of the tears of his outraged mother. *Moines d'Occident*, t. iv.

[9] In the valley of Lauderdale, near Melrose, on the confines of Scotland and of present England, the ancient kingdom of Northumbria.

[10] *Moines d'Occident*, tome iv, page 411.

[11] See the *Moines d'Occident*, t. iv.

[12] One of the churches of the Suevi in Spain. The town of Braga had received early the lights of the faith, and was afterwards delivered among the first from the yoke of the Saracens. For this reason its see long disputed with that of Toledo the primacy of all Spain. The bishopric of Dumio was united to that of Braga in the seventh century.

[1] See, for more details, our *Palmier séraphique*, t. iii.

21 March

Martyrologies

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

At Monte Cassino, the birth into heaven of Saint Benedict, abbot, who re-established in the West the monastic discipline almost entirely ruined, and propagated it marvellously. His life, resplendent with virtues and miracles, was written by Pope Saint Gregory. 543. — At Alexandria, the memory of the holy Martyrs who, under the emperor Constantius and the prefect Philagrius, were massacred by the Arians and the pagans, who fell upon them in the churches. 342. — The same day, the holy martyrs Philemon and Domninus. They were natives of Rome and gave themselves in the provinces to the ministry of preaching, when they were arrested and put to death. End of the 4th c. — At Catania, Saint Berillus, who was ordained bishop by Saint Peter, and, after having converted a great number of Gentiles to the faith, rested in peace in extreme old age. — At Alexandria, Saint Serapion, anchorite and bishop of Thmuis, a man of great virtues,

who went to the Lord in the exile to which the fury of the Arians had driven him. — In the territory of Lyon, Saint Lupicinus, abbot, whose life was illustrious by the glory of holiness and miracles. 480.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED

At Sion, in the Valais, Saint Elias, solitary and bishop, who rests in the Isle of Saint Julius, in the lake of Orta, in the diocese of Novara. — At Molesme, in Champagne, the decease of Saint Robert, abbot of that place, monk of Moutier-la-Celle, at Troyes, institutor of the Order of Cîteaux, canonised by Honorius III.[1] 1108. — At Saint-Bernard, near Rupelmonde, in Flanders, the venerable Henry, abbot of that place. 12th c. — In the diocese of Rouen, translation, in 1202, of the relics of Saint Hildevert, bishop of Meaux and patron of Gournay.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Martyrologies of Saint Benedict, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — At Monte Cassino, the birth into heaven of our holy father Benedict…

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At Monte Cassino, the birth into heaven of the blessed patriarch Saint Benedict, who, by the institution of the rule which he received from God, re-established in the West the monastic discipline, almost entirely ruined, and propagated it in a marvellous manner; who, according to the testimony of Pope Saint Gregory, who wrote his life full of virtues and miracles, full of the spirit of all the Saints, begot for heaven innumerable sons, for the nations innumerable apostles, and for the Church bishops and Fathers likewise without number, and filled the whole universe by the greatness as well as by the inexplicable multitude of his merits.

ADDITIONS MADE FROM THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS

In Ireland, Saint Endeus [Endée], brother of Saint Fanchea, abbot of Aran; he built ten monasteries in that country. Year 540. — Among the Greeks, Saint James the Younger. Year 824. — At Rome, Blessed Santuccia, foundress of the Servants of Mary. These religious occupied the ancient buildings of the Templars on the Via Julia. The church which was called Santa Maria in Julia took afterwards the name of Saint Anne, on account of the ring of this latter Saint which was found there. 1305. — At Lucca, Blessed Benedict, priest. About the 14th c. — At Cortona, in Tuscany, Blessed Ugolino, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. Blessed Ugolino of Cortona is painted with a lily issuing from his heart, because thirty years after his death this flower was seen to sprout on his tomb on several occasions: he had made himself remarkable by a great devotion to Mary and a great love of holy purity. About 1410. — At Antioch, Saint Callinica, a young virgin of admirable beauty, who was burned alive, with Saint Basilissa, for having refused to marry and to renounce Jesus Christ. About 303. — At Rome, another Saint Callinica, Saint Basilissa and their three companions, virgin martyrs; Saint Matidia, sister of Trajan, and the venerable Droselle, daughter of that emperor. 116. — In Germany, there is honoured on this day the memory of Blessed Clementia of Hohenberg, who showed herself in the world the model of Christian virtues and became a religious after the death of her husband. 1176. — At Coria, in Spain, Blessed Alphonsus Rojas who was professor at Salamanca, tutor of a young duke, parish priest and canon of Coria, and finally religious of the Order of Saint Francis.[2] 1617.

Saint Lupicinus, abbot of Lauconne in the Jura

480. — Pope: Saint Simplicius. — King of Burgundy (first kingdom): Chilperic.

Lupicinus was the younger brother of Saint Romanus, abbot of Condat.[1]

Still young, he was engaged in the embarrassments of the world, the contact of which made him lose nothing of that tender piety which he had constantly practised during his childhood. As soon as God, in taking from this fervent Christian his wife and his father, had thus broken a part of the bonds which held him in the

world, Lupicinus went to rejoin his brother Romanus in the deserts of Mount Jura. Hell, jealous of all the good which this reunion was going to procure to religion by giving birth to so many holy houses, which were to become in the West the rivals of the Lauras of the Thebaid, set everything in motion to destroy it at its very beginning. If we believe Saint Gregory of Tours, it was not only by interior temptations that the demon attacked the two holy solitaries; but he molested them day and night by a thousand ill treatments, to such a point that, wearied by his pursuits, they resolved to quit these places and took again the road to their country. They lodged first with a poor woman who inquired whence they came and what was their design; the two brothers having satisfied her questions, she represented to them how shameful it would be for them to let themselves be conquered so cowardly by him whom the friends of God had so often conquered. The truth which spoke by the mouth of this woman made them enter into themselves; they took courage again, returned to their desert, and, by force of prayers, obtained from the mercy of God, not only to persevere in the resolution they had formed to pass their life in solitude, but also to be delivered from the assaults of the demon.

They had established their dwelling under the thick branches of an enormous fir, at the bottom of a gorge dominated by high mountains, and beside a fountain which is called today the Bugnon. This was the cradle of the monastery of Condat. It was there that the pious anchorites received their first disciples, and initiated them into that life of renunciation of which they had been the first to give the example in the Sequania (Franche-Comté). Soon the number of monks gathered under the direction of Romanus and Lupicinus increased so much that it was necessary to think of building a new monastery, to send a part of the religious there. This colony, placed specially under the direction of Lupicinus, established itself, about the year 445, a league from Condat, in a rather fertile plain, called Lauconne, and where the village of Saint-Lupicin rises today. This new house, founded on the model of the principal monastery, adopted its rules and usages. An oratory was raised there; isolated cells were built there for each monk, and the religious divided their time there between work and prayer. The monks of Condat and Lauconne proposed to themselves above all to imitate the life of the anchorites of the East. They read every day the rules of Saint Pachomius, of Saint Basil, of the monks of Lérins, of Cassian, and found their models in the Lives of the Fathers of the desert.

The austerity of Lupicinus, tempered by the paternal direction of his brother, maintained discipline among the religious. Until Saint Eugendus [Oyend], fourth abbot of Condat, there was no rule specially drawn up for this monastery. The example of Lupicinus was the best of rules.

Above all severe toward himself, he seemed to be inspired by the most rigid austerity only. He was always clothed in a tunic of hair very inconvenient and the more fit to maintain him in sentiments of humility in that it was composed of skins of divers beasts, ill dressed and coarsely sewn; his cowl could at most shelter him from the rain, but not from the cold, which was rigorous at Lauconne; he wore wooden shoes in his monastery, and took shoes only when it was necessary to go out for the service of his neighbour. He had no bed; when all his religious were lying down, he entered the chapel, where he passed a part of the night in meditation; when he felt himself overcome by fatigue, he took a little rest on a bench. In the depth of winter, he presented to the fire a long piece of tree-bark made in the form of a cradle, and when it was a little warmed, he lay down in it, covered only with his clothes.

Although several writers[2] have remarked that the Gauls were not of a complexion such that they could fast as rigorously as the religious of the East, Lupicinus did not fail to go still further than most of them by the austerity of his abstinences and the length of his vigils.[3] Ordinarily he took nourishment only every three days; he never drank wine after he had left the world; he abstained even from water the last eight years of his life: when thirst took him, he quenched its ardours little by little by dipping his hands in a basin of water, without taking any other refreshment; never, in his sicknesses, did he suffer that oil or milk should be mixed with his broth, although the use of them was permitted to the infirm in his monastery; near to death, a prey to the fits of a burning fever, having perceived that water in which a little honey had been put was being

administered to him, he refused this drink. With such a spirit of self-denial, Lupicinus was prepared for all sacrifices. God imposed on him however one very painful to his heart, and harder than all his bodily penances. About the year 460, his brother Romanus died in his arms, at the monastery of La Balme, of which their sister Iola was abbess. From then on, Lupicinus had to bear alone the heavy task of directing all the communities of the Jura. He remained at Lauconne, where a hundred and fifty monks were then gathered, and placed, some time after, Saint Minasius or Minausius at the head of Condat, to administer that monastery under his direction.

Lupicinus governed his religious with as much zeal as prudence. Severe toward proud and obstinate men, he knew at need how to unite gentleness to austerity of character, and to show himself indulgent for faults that attested more weakness than malice. In the year which followed the death of Saint Romanus, two brothers, having formed the design to flee together from the monastery, gave each other rendezvous for the night at the church, to pray there again before leaving. They went there in effect in the midst of darkness, and when they had prayed an instant: “As for you,” said one of them then, “carry off from here my hoe and my axe, while I go quietly to your cell to take your tunic and your cowl, and, having thus carried off all that belongs to us, we shall meet again in the place agreed.” The darkness was deep and the two religious thought themselves alone. But Lupicinus was in the church, meditating and praying in the silence of the night, as he often did, and he had heard everything. When he saw that the two brothers had prepared everything for their departure, and that they were about to set foot outside the monastery, he cried out from the corner of the church where he had withdrawn: “My dear children, since you have come to pray with me before departing, you will not refuse me the kiss of peace at the moment of leaving me.” At these unexpected words, the two unhappy brothers fell struck with stupor. They shed tears, and their sighs attested that they felt keenly the remorse of their conscience. Lupicinus came to them, called them by their name, and, stretching out his hand over them, embraced them with a kindness which completed winning them. He addressed no reproach to them, but, without saying anything more to them, he knelt with them and continued to pray. Divine grace did the rest. The two monks, touched with a lively sentiment of repentance, made numerous signs of the cross on their eyes and on their breast, and, after having prayed an instant, they returned each to his bed, full of shame and fright. They were so trembling that, on their way, they did not say a word to each other of what had just passed. However, the confusion which they had felt and the benevolence which Lupicinus had shown them made them hope that they would obtain from him the pardon of their fault.

This narrative sufficiently testifies to the gentleness which Lupicinus knew how to employ at the right time. But what attests also his discretion is that, for nearly twenty years, the holy Abbot never spoke of this adventure to anyone. One of these two brothers having died, Lupicinus then assembled the community, and thought he could relate this story in presence of the one of the two monks who was still living. He drew from it useful lessons for the consolation and edification of all. “See,” he said to them, “my dear children, what wiles and what artifices the demon employs to conquer the friends of Christ. But if God permitted his servants to be tempted for a moment, it was to make his mercies shine upon them, for he held out his hand to them when they staggered, and did not suffer them to become the prey of the ancient serpent.”

The life that was led at Condat and Lauconne was a life of sacrifices. Thus it happened rather often, as we have seen, that monks, even among the best and most tried, grew weary of this kind of life and yielded to the desire to seek elsewhere more ease and liberty. A few months after the adventure we have just related, one of the most virtuous brothers, named Dativus, let himself be seduced by the wiles of the demon. He was a man of great gentleness, profound humility, admirable obedience. God had prevented him with the most abundant graces. But he had the misfortune not to arm himself with the shield of prayer to repel the artifices of the spirit of darkness. He admired his own virtues, grew proud of his humility, and lost little by little the spirit of prudence and discernment. He had one day a dispute with some other religious. The debate grew embittered insensibly. His contradictors irritated his self-love, while other brothers, taking his part, and exciting him in

private by insidious reports, pushed him at last to leave the monastery. Dativus made a bundle of his clothes, and went out secretly so as to be held back by no one. Then he directed himself in all haste toward the town of Tours, and betook himself at once to the basilica of Saint Martin, to make his prayer there. But he had no sooner entered the church than a possessed man ran to him calling him by his name: “Ah! there is our monk of the Jura! Hail, our dear Dativus. It is well, since you are now one of ours. You have only to continue.” Dativus, trembling to see himself thus recognised and believing himself made a sport of by the demon, began to heave deep sighs. After having prayed some instants, he hastened to take again the road to his monastery, where he asked urgently to be received anew. For some time, this monk, become more attentive to watch over his sentiments and his steps, lived in an edifying and regular manner. But at the end of two years he let himself be seduced again, as the first time, by the inspirations of pride, and took his tunic and his tools of work to go out, in the eyes of the whole community. Saint Lupicinus, regarding him as lost if he departed a second time, began to shed bitter tears over this strayed sheep, and to pray for his conversion. Meanwhile Dativus, having loaded his baggage on his shoulders, remained at first half an hour, quite struck dumb, in the court of the monastery. Then, throwing his burden in the vestibule and addressing these ironical words to the demon of pride who tempted him: “Come,” he said, “you who counsel me to flee, carry this burden yourself, if you wish me to follow you.” Immediately the vain imaginations of Dativus disappeared from his mind. He embraced with joy all the brothers who had been witnesses of his temptation, and remained from then on faithful to the duties of a good religious.

Happily for the monasteries of Condat and Lauconne, these trials and temptations, which had occurred sometimes among the monks, did not trouble the community gravely, and did not prevent peace and charity from habitually reigning there. Lupicinus, who watched over everything, provided with solicitude for the temporal needs of the cloister. Sometimes the harvests which an ungrateful and sterile soil furnished did not suffice for the nourishment of the monks and the nuns he had to govern. Then, like a new Moses, the holy Abbot prostrated himself humbly before the Lord, and implored with confidence the mercy of the good Master, who promised to give his servants their daily bread. His hope was not confounded, and God multiplied miracles to come to the help of his elect. Thus, one year when the community was very numerous and a multitude of seculars had come to seek asylum at the monastery, the food resources were exhausted there in a short time, and hunger began to be felt there. The steward saw with dismay that there was no more food than for fifteen days, while the harvest was still three months distant. He took then with him five of the oldest religious, went to find Saint Lupicinus, and avowed to him, with tears in his eyes, that the community was exposed to die soon of dearth. The holy Abbot, full of an unshakable confidence, raised at once his thought to Him who is the living bread come down from heaven, and cried out: “Come, my dear children, let us enter the granary where we still have some sheaves, and pray with faith. Have not we also abandoned the towns to follow the Lord and hear his word in the desert?” He enters then the granary, prostrates himself with face to the ground, and prays with fervour Him who said in the Gospel: “No one shall leave for me his house, or his brothers, or his sisters, or his father, or his mother, or his children, or his goods, but that, even in this world, he shall receive the hundredfold.” Then the holy Abbot rose, stretched out his hands lifting suppliant looks toward heaven, and, in the transport and ardour of his faith, addressed to the Lord this fervent prayer: “Almighty God, you who, by the mouth of your servant Elias, promised formerly to a poor widow that the flour and oil of her vessels should not diminish until the day when the rain from heaven should fall again on the earth, cast your eyes on your Church, which is placed henceforth under the protection of your Son Jesus Christ, her eternal Spouse; and, as you have given us the bread of the divine word, grant us also material bread; grant that, until the day when we can obtain new harvests, corn may not cease to abound in the granary of your servants.”

All the brothers who were present answered: Amen. Then Lupicinus, turning toward the steward: “Have these sheaves threshed,” he said to him, “which the Lord has blessed. For God hears the prayers which faith inspires, and it is of us also that he said these words: they shall eat, and there shall be still food left over.”[4]

God rewarded miraculously the confidence of his servant. The sheaves were threshed without being able to exhaust them, and, until the time of the harvest, they furnished corn in abundance for the needs of the religious and strangers. Among the witnesses of this miracle was Saint Eugendus, then a novice, and who became later abbot of Condat. It is from him and from several ancient monks who had participated in the fruits of this miraculous blessing that the historian of Condat learned all the details of this miracle.

Such a prodigy granted to the faith of Lupicinus attested sufficiently that heaven approved his conduct and wished to bless his government. For in effect with him the severity which chastises was never separated from the charity which heals and consoles. The needs of his monks touched him always more than his own, and he took marvellous care of all who suffered. While applying himself to maintain among them an austere discipline, to forbid them not only every action but also every unregulated word, he watched also to keep them from excessive mortifications, and taught them that the way of discretion is the safest and the most Christian. The epoch in which Saint Lupicinus lived at Lauconne was an epoch of great upheavals for his country; after having passed, about the year 412, from the domination of the Romans under that of the Burgundians, it scarcely breathed, protected by the sceptre of the princes of that nation. Envenomed hatreds had taken birth in the bosom of political divisions, and the vanquished party furnished for a long time victims to the suspicious police of the victorious party. It is in these critical circumstances that appears in all his charity the priest of Christ, who sees only brothers in all men, without asking whether they are of the party of Paul, of Apollos, or of Cephas.

Saint Lupicinus, guided by love of his neighbour, made often the journey to Geneva, where Chilperic, king of Burgundy, father of Saint Clotilda, made sometimes his residence; he obtained frequently from this prince his mercy or his justice in favour of unfortunates compromised or oppressed for political facts; his ascendancy became so great at this court that he caused liberty to be given back to numerous inhabitants of our regions whom certain lords, by virtue one knows not of what right, claimed as their serfs. Let it not be said then that priests are the enemies of liberty; they are its firmest support, since they are ministers of Jesus Christ whose work was to destroy slavery.

Chilperic took our Saint in singular affection, made him magnificent presents for the churches of his monasteries, and offered him considerable lands for the maintenance of the monks. Lupicinus refused them, fearing that these possessions might injure the spirit of poverty in which he wished to maintain his communities; only he begged the king to assign them rather a certain quantity of fruits each year for their subsistence. The prince granted him what he desired, and had furnished every year to the monastery of Lauconne 300 bushels of corn and as many measures of wine for the nourishment of the religious, and a hundred pieces of gold to buy them clothing. This abbey enjoyed this rent still long after the kings of France, descendants of Clovis, had made themselves masters of the kingdom of Burgundy.

Saint Lupicinus survived nearly twenty years his brother; he took care of the abbey of Condat, after the death of Saint Romanus, and kept the direction of all the monasteries which they had founded in the Vosges and in Germany. The long life he led to beyond eighty years, one may say under the blows of a severe discipline, was regarded as the greatest of the miracles God has wrought in his favour. He died about the year 480, at the epoch of the birth of Saint Benedict.

The regularity which he had established with his brother in the monasteries of their institution was preserved long in all its purity at Condat and at Lauconne, which was the particular place of his retreat, where he was buried and where he had left at his death a hundred and fifty religious, all imitators of the severe virtue of their master.

Usuard and those who followed him have almost all marked the day of the feast of Saint Lupicinus on 21 March in their Martyrology. The Benedictines honour him with Saint Romanus and Saint Eugendus as saints of their Order, because the monasteries of the Jura embraced afterwards the rule of Saint Benedict.

The parish of Saint-Lupicin has preserved to this day a filial cult for him who was its true founder. Until 1793, there was solemnly celebrated there, on 21 March, the feast of the holy Abbot, and on 5 July, the finding of his relics. At the request of the parish priest of this parish, these feasts have since been transferred to the third Sunday of March and the first Sunday of July. That of July is the only one that is solemnly celebrated today at Saint-Lupicin. On that day, the relics are brought down on the altar and remain for eight days exposed in the church to the veneration of the faithful. Besançon and Saint-Claude say his office on 21 May.

Lauconne scarcely subsisted more than a hundred and fifty years as an abbey; it was reduced to a priory and subjected to the monastery of Condat. The relics of the holy Abbot have always been preserved with care in the church of the borough which formed near Lauconne and which bears today the name of Saint-Lupicin. The gilt wooden shrine which encloses them is placed under the high altar of the parish church; it bears this inscription: *Relics of Saint Lupicinus, 1689*. This date is that of their finding.

Before the revolution of 1790, on 6 June, day of the feast of Saint Claudius, the clergy of Saint-Lupicin, followed by a great concourse of people, brought processionally the relic of the holy Abbot to the church of the chapter, and after a Mass sung with great solemnity, it was carried back with pomp to the borough of Saint-Lupicin, accompanied to a certain distance by the clergy and by the population of Saint-Claude. This ceremony, which owes its origin to a vow made by the village of Saint-Lupicin, in 1638, when a frightful contagion was ravaging these regions, is still observed at present, with this difference that the relic of Saint Claudius comes out of the cathedral and accompanies that of Saint Lupicinus to outside the town.[5] The image-makers have represented Saint Lupicinus under different forms: 1° He finds a treasure in digging the earth. This resource came to him very opportunely at a moment when he did not see how he could feed the companions of his retreat; 2° the same fact is rendered in another manner: angels show him a cave full of gold pieces (Benedictine calendar, 22 March); 3° he may also be represented as a hermit and as founder of a monastery with an edifice on his hand.

Drawn from Saint Gregory of Tours, *de Vit. Patr.*, cap. 1; from the Bollandists, 21 March; from the *Histoire de l'Église gallicane*, by Longueval, t. ii, liv. iv; from Mabillon, *Ann. Ben.*, t. i, lib. i, p. 23; from Tillemont, t. xvi, p. 142; from Bulteau, *Histoire de saint Benoît et des Moines d'Occident*, liv. i; from the *Hagiographie de Belley*, by Mgr Depéry, and from the *Saints de Franche-Comté*.

Saint Benedict, first abbot of Monte Cassino, patriarch of the monks of the West

480–543. — Popes: Saint Simplicius; Vigilius. — Emperors: Zeno; Justinian.

Epigraph: "The mountains… There on high God has taken up his dwelling; churches have risen. Faith, taking possession of the mountains, has made of them monstrances from which the Blessed Sacrament shines. If this falls, other things will fall." *Parf. de Rome*, ch. 28.

Berthaire, most holy abbot of Monte Cassino and most illustrious martyr of Jesus Christ,[1] considering the time at which Saint Benedict came into the world, makes a remark approved by Cardinal Baronius and by other learned authors; namely, that this great Saint appeared there as a light in the midst of darkness, or as a physician sent by God to heal the wounds of humanity at that epoch; for then there was no king or sovereign prince on earth who was not atheist, idolater, or heretic, so corrupt was the age.

He was born about the year 480, in the country of the Sabines, which is called today Umbria or the duchy of Spoleto, and in the town of Norcia; some have written that he was, by his father Eutropius, of the ancient family of the Anicii, which gave to Rome a great number of consuls and emperors, and by his mother Abundantia, the last offshoot of the lords of Norcia. Saint Gregory, pope, who is the first author of his life, assures us that the name of Benedict was given him to mark mysteriously the heavenly blessings with which

he was to be loaded.

He showed from his childhood strong inclinations to virtue; and, at an age which seems to have levity for its portion, he testified already a great maturity in his actions, despising all the things of earth and breathing only those of heaven. He was sent at seven years to study at Rome, and he made there, in the seven other years that he remained there, notable progress: he gave ground to hope, if he continued his studies, that he would become one of the ablest men of his time; but, fearing that the bad example of a dissolute youth with which this city was filled might make some impression on his heart, he resolved, at fourteen years, to withdraw from it secretly: he preferred to remain less learned and become more virtuous than to make himself perfect in human sciences and become vicious. In consequence of this resolution, he abandoned Rome and all the relatives and friends he had, and, by a wise folly and a learned ignorance, to use the terms of Saint Gregory, he went to seek in the deserts, and outside the commerce of the world, a kind of life in which he could serve God with more fervour and less peril. His nurse, who was named Cyrilla, and who loved him tenderly, followed him: and it was on her account that, having arrived at a village called Affile, he wrought the first of his miracles of which the knowledge has come down to us; this woman having broken by chance an earthen vessel which she had borrowed from some poor people of the place, the Saint joined the pieces together, and restored it by his prayer to the same state as it was before; in memory of this miracle, the inhabitants fastened it at the door of their church, where it remained until the irruption of the Lombards. Benedict was soon regarded as a Saint in all the neighbourhood: this was an extremely powerful motive for him to withdraw from it. He stole away then secretly from those who had been witnesses of the prodigy, and from his nurse herself, and went to a place distant from Rome forty miles, called Sublacum,[2] where there were monks who lived in very holy austerity. Saint Hildegard assures us, in her revelations, that he was led there by two angels, who had also drawn him from Rome. As he was climbing a mountain to find the place he desired, God permitted that he should be perceived by one of these solitaries, named Romanus; this one, admiring his fervour, offered to assist him and to co-operate in his pious design in all that should be possible to him. Benedict having accepted this offer, Romanus gave him first a religious habit, then he led him into an extremely secret and almost inaccessible cavern, which nature had cut in the hollow of a rock, and which is now called the Holy Grotto. It was in the year 494.

It was there that this great Saint, covered with a hair-shirt and separated from all men, began that terrible penance, the thought of which is capable of astonishing the boldest. Romanus nourished him there for three years, letting down to him from time to time, in a basket, a morsel of bread, which made all his subsistence. He did not break his silence for that, but he called him with a little bell fastened to the cord of the basket. The common enemy of men, not being able to bear either the austerity of the one or the charity of the other, broke this bell one day. But his malice did not hinder them from always continuing their holy commerce, until it pleased God to discover to the world the holiness of his servant, and to make him appear there for the salvation of an infinity of persons. Here is how the thing happened.

A holy priest, parish priest, if tradition is believed, of a borough called Monte Preclaro, distant four miles from this grotto, had had a dinner prepared for himself for the day of Easter; Our Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said to him: “My servant dies of hunger in a cavern, and thou preparest thyself delicious dishes.” At this voice, he rose, and taking what had been disposed for his table, set out to seek the unknown saint. He walked a long time among the mountains and rocks without knowing where he was going or where he ought to go; but the hand of God conducting him, he arrived at last at the grotto of Benedict. He found the Saint there, put himself in prayer with him, and, after the orison, invited him to take the food which Our Lord sent him, because it was that day the feast of his Resurrection, on which the Church is accustomed to break the fast. Saint Benedict, knowing that God had sent him, acquiesced in his prayer: they ate together of what he had brought, and after a conversation full of light and unction on the means of pleasing God and reaching perfection, they separated, the priest returning to his church and the Saint remaining in his grotto, full of

gratitude toward his divine benefactor. Some time after, shepherds perceived him from afar, and even had fear of him, first because he was covered with the skins of beasts, then because they could not imagine that a man like others could make his ordinary dwelling in these rocks. But having approached, they recognised with their own eyes and by the salutary instructions which he gave them that he was in effect a man, and several were so touched that from coarse as they were they became men of grace and spiritual persons, as Saint Gregory remarks. It is thus that this admirable Solitary was discovered little by little, and afterwards several persons of the neighbourhood came to visit him, and, bringing him what was necessary for his living, they received from him a far more excellent food, that is, the word of God.

Such happy beginnings having cast terror into the mind of Satan, he resolved to stifle in its cradle this nascent holiness. To succeed, he took the figure of a blackbird, and, under this figure, he came to flit about him, and approached even so near that the holy young man might easily have taken him with his hand; but as this brave soldier of Jesus Christ was already well experienced in the spiritual warfare, suspecting what it was, he made on himself the sign of the cross: which made this prestige vanish at once. However he felt at the same instant so furious a temptation of the flesh that he was on the point of succumbing to it, and that, in the trouble in which he was, he began almost to deliberate whether he should not leave his solitude. But the spirit of grace was stronger in him than this temptation, and gave him on the spot the address and courage to strip himself and cast himself naked into a field of thorns and brambles, in the midst of which he rolled so long that, by an infinity of scratches and wounds, he made blood flow from all parts of his body; thus, by sensible pain and by these streams of blood, he extinguished the ardour that concupiscence had kindled in his members. Afterwards, the seraphic Saint Francis, visiting by devotion the grotto of Saint Benedict, embraced and kissed by devotion these brambles and thorns, and, making over them the sign of the cross, changed them into roses which have since served to give health to a quantity of sick. The victory of our Saint was so perfect that he was endowed, from that day, with an angelic purity, and that the demon had no more power to tempt him on that matter.

After this triumph, he became from soldier captain, and from novice grand master in the school of virtue. In effect, he began from then on to give lessons in it, whether by word of mouth or by his good examples, to several who came to range themselves under his discipline. The abbot of a neighbouring monastery[3] having died, the religious cast their eyes at once on him and elected him in his place; but as they had fallen into a great relaxation and could not bear the force of his remonstrances, they soon repented of their choice, and went to such an excess of fury as to conspire together his death and to put poison in a glass which they presented to him. They could not however harm him, because God, who reveals when it pleases him the most secret thoughts of men, made known to his servant the peril in which he was, as if a stone had fallen in it. The conspiracy being thus discovered, the Saint said to them without being troubled: “God pardon you, my brothers! Had I not well told you that your manners agreed in no way with mine? Seek another abbot who may govern you to your liking; for myself, I shall not remain longer with you.” Saint Benedict left then this place where he produced no fruit, and withdrew to his first solitude; having now only the body on earth, he led a life more angelic than human, absorbing himself in the contemplation of the divine perfections, and studying to form in himself an image and living resemblance of them. But the charity which consumed his heart not being able to hide its flames, several persons, desirous of imitating him, came to this desert; soon, instead of one monastery which he had left, he founded twelve; in each he placed at first twelve religious with a superior to conduct them. And, as for him, as superintendent of all, he watched over them and went from one to another to assist them in their needs. These monasteries were in the province of Valeria, not far from one another; that of Saint Scholastica, where the Saint made his residence, and that of the Holy Grotto are the only ones that subsist today.[4] There are no more in place of the others but ruins and some cells. He was sought not only by those who wished to leave the world and enlist under the banner of the cross: he was sought also by several lords, who, from a singular esteem for his person, brought him their children, that he might form them with his own hand to the practice of virtue, and that they might learn human sciences under

the masters whom he would give them: Equitius brought him his son Maurus, aged twelve years, and Tertullus, patrician, brought him his son Placidus, aged only seven years. This may give ground to believe what some authors have written: our Saint, according to them, made a journey to Rome during the foundation of these first twelve convents, and wrought there so many miracles during two years that he won the esteem and affection of the whole senate and of the most considerable persons of the town. It is true that Saint Gregory does not speak of this journey: but he may have omitted it, either to abridge or for other reasons that we cannot know. There has already been spoken, in the life of Saint Maurus, of the signal miracle which the holy Abbot made him work, to withdraw little Placidus from a lake where he was going to be drowned; Saint Maurus walked on the waters with dry foot and as on firm land. Saint Gregory marks still others which preceded his departure from the solitude of Sublacum. In one of his monasteries, there was a religious who could not remain at prayer; but as soon as the brothers prostrated to make it, he went out of the oratory to give entire liberty to his thoughts. The superior corrected him often for it; but as it was without success, he led him to Saint Benedict, so that the authority of so great a man might gain over him what his remonstrances could not obtain. This poor Brother promised well to be more fervent in future; but his resolution lasted only two days: so that the superior was obliged to give notice to the Saint that the scandal continued. He came himself to apply the remedy and brought Saint Maurus in his company; having put himself in prayer with the brothers, he saw a black boy who pulled the religious by his robe: “Do you perceive,” he said to the superior and to Saint Maurus, “him who is debauching this Brother?” They answered no: “Let us pray then Our Lord,” he added, “that he may discover to you this secret.” At the end of two days, Saint Maurus saw him, and Saint Benedict having followed this vagabond, who had gone out, according to his custom, he took a rod and struck the culprit with it: which delivered him entirely from this temptation of the demon. Among the twelve houses he had had built, there were three on the rocks which had no water. The religious, who had extreme pain to come to seek it below in the lake, because the descent was difficult and dangerous, begged him to provide for it or to change their dwelling; he promised to content them, and, having made a fervent prayer, he caused to spring from the rock a fountain whose waters still flow abundantly down to the plain. One of his novices, a Goth by nation, working near the lake, to clear its banks, gave so great a blow into the wood that the iron of his instrument, detaching itself from the handle, leaped into the water without any means of drawing it out. The Saint came there, took the handle from the hand of his novice, put it in the lake, and at once the iron rose of itself, and, swimming on the water, came to refit itself in its handle. The Saint gave the instrument back to the novice, and having consoled him, commanded him to continue his work.

These prodigies and an infinity of others made the reputation of this new Elisha fly on all sides; but the demon, whom so happy a progress put in extreme rage, undertook to trouble his repose by means of an envious man. This was an ecclesiastic, named Florentius, who dwelt near the chief of the twelve monasteries: that in which Saint Benedict ordinarily made his residence. This man, truly unworthy of his Order and of his character, attacked the Saint first by secret slanders: “He was not so holy as he made himself out; he was in reality only a hypocrite and a trickster, who, under fine appearances of virtue, was machinating some evil design.” But seeing that he advanced nothing against his reputation by all his evil talk, he tried to take his life by a poisoned loaf, which he sent him as a mark of friendship and benevolence, as one sent still, in the last century, blessed bread. The Saint thanked him for it very civilly, although he was not ignorant of the quality of this bread. But a raven, which he nourished from his hand, having flown toward him, the Saint ordered it to take the bread and carry it to a place withdrawn from the sight of men; the animal did not dare to do it for fear of the poison, until the holy Abbot assured it that it would receive no harm from it, because he did not command it to eat it, but only to carry it to an unknown place, where it could harm no one. This is not all: this wretched man bethought himself of another malice still blacker than the preceding: he hired seven girls of evil life and had them enter secretly into the garden of the monastery, to dance there shamelessly and to commit a thousand insolences in sight of the cells of the religious. Not having been able to harm the holy Abbot, either in his reputation by slander, or in his life by poison, he wished at least to afflict him in his

children by the scandal he would give them; this was to touch him in the apple of his eyes. Thus the holy Father, who had not been moved either by the calumnies of his persecutor or by the attempt he had committed against his person, in wishing to make him die, gave up the game this time, and, yielding to the storm, withdrew from this monastery with some of his disciples. But what can the malice of man do against the wisdom of God? The calumnies had dissipated, and the attempt, having been discovered, had had no effect; likewise, the victory which Florentius claimed to have won by the flight of the Saint was not of long duration; as he was diverting himself on a gallery of his lodging, it collapsed under his feet and crushed him in its fall, the rest of the house remaining entire, such as it was before. On this subject, we do not wish to omit an act of the perfect charity of Saint Benedict: seeing that his disciple Maurus appeared joyful in informing him of the death of Florentius, and in sending him word that he might well return in safety, since his enemy was no longer in the world, he reproved him bitterly for it and imposed on him a severe penance. On this occasion, Peter the Deacon, after Saint Gregory, cries out that this great man was filled with the spirit of all the Saints, since he shows the spirit of Moses, in drawing water from a rock; the spirit of Elias, in making himself obeyed by a raven; the spirit of Elisha, in making iron swim on the waters; the spirit of Saint Peter, in giving to Maurus, his disciple, the power to walk on a great lake as on firm land, and the spirit of David, in pardoning so generously him who sought to destroy him and in weeping bitterly his death. This was not the only good that God drew from the malice of the priest Florentius: for Saint Benedict having absented himself, as we have said, with some of his children, God made him know that he wished to make use of him for the conversion of several souls, that he would favour him in all that he should undertake, and would render his name and his congregation celebrated throughout the world. The Saint blessed God for so favourable a disposition and left with joy the rocks of Sublacum, sanctified by his penances and by so many miraculous works that he had wrought there, to betake himself where heaven called him. It was to Monte Cassino, situated in the kingdom of Naples, twelve and a half leagues from Sublacum, and eighteen leagues from Rome. Two angels, in the form of young men, led him there and put him in possession of the place which, from a bishopric that it was, was changed into a celebrated abbey, head of an infinity of monasteries of the Order founded by this glorious Patriarch. There were still, on this mountain and in the environs, as in several other provinces of Italy, some remains of paganism, among others a temple of Apollo, where this idol was honoured as a God by the peasants of the country. The first thing Saint Benedict did, after a retreat and a fast of forty days to dispose himself for the functions of the apostolate, was to overthrow the altar, to break the idol in pieces, and to burn the neighbouring grove, which served the superstitions of paganism; having thus purged the temple, he changed it into an oratory to which he gave the name of Saint Martin, and built another in honour of Saint John the Baptist, on the same spot where the idol of Apollo had been before. He laboured next, by fervent preachings, at the conversion of the surrounding people, and not content to do it by himself, he trained his religious to so holy a ministry; and thus, as much by their means as by his great miracles and his wholly heavenly life, which admirably sustained his word, he made everywhere a considerable change; in a very short time, the country was cleared of the superstitions and vices which Satan had sown there, and which the prelates had let grow there by their negligence. Such was the origin of the celebrated monastery of Monte Cassino, of which the great Saint Benedict laid the first foundations in the year 529, in the forty-eighth year of his age, the third of Justinian, under the pontificate of Felix IV, Athalaric being king of the Goths in Italy. The demon, terrified by so many glorious victories, renewed his first persecutions against the Saint. It was not by night nor in dream that he appeared to him: he obsessed him continually under horrible figures, casting fire from his eyes, his mouth and his nostrils, and saying to him in fury: “Benedict! Benedict!” and as the Saint made no show of seeing or hearing him, in order to testify more contempt, this enemy added: “Cursed be thou, and not blessed![5] what hast thou come to do in these quarters? What hast thou to do with me? Why dost thou take pleasure in persecuting me?” All these efforts being useless, he undertook to thwart the construction of the new monastery which the Saint was beginning to build. One day, when the brothers wished to lift a stone to put it in work, he placed himself upon it and made it so heavy that it was quite impossible to move it. The Saint was told: he came to the place, made the sign of

the cross on the stone, and the blessing had so much force that this stone passed all at once from this extreme heaviness to an extraordinary lightness, so that it was lifted without any difficulty. It is still kept at present at Monte Cassino, in memory of the miracle. Immediately after, a hole was dug, by order of the Saint, on the very spot from which it had been drawn, and a little idol of copper was found there. The religious carried it into the kitchen without any design; but there appeared at once so great a fire that it seemed to wish to consume all the offices; each set himself to extinguish it by throwing water on it, but the Saint, having come down at the noise he heard, showed them that the flame was only imaginary, and that it was only a prestige which had deceived their sight. Another time, when the religious were working by obedience to raise a wall, the demon came into his cell, and told him impudently that he was going to visit his workmen. The good Father understood well what he meant, and sent on the spot to the brothers to warn them to be on their guard. Scarcely had they received this notice when a pan of the wall fell and crushed under its ruins a little novice, a child of patrician race. This accident afflicted his confrères infinitely; they went to find their holy Abbot, and set before him with sighs the misfortune of this young man. He commanded that the body of the dead be brought to him, but it was so broken that it had to be carried in a sack. He made a prayer for him with extraordinary fervour, and, scarcely had he finished it, when the dead man rose again and returned to the same state in which he was before this accident. The Saint, to triumph more perfectly over the enemy, ordered him to return to work and to rebuild, with the others, the wall under which he had been crushed. Thus all the artifices of the demon could not hinder him from building this house, which was to be the dwelling of so many Saints, and the head of that Order which was soon to spread throughout the world.

The conduct of Saint Benedict was all the more admirable and salutary in that he saw the most secret thoughts of his religious and the faults they committed in his absence. Two of them, having gone out with his permission, entered the house of a pious woman, where, against obedience, they let themselves go to take a meal. On their return, the Saint asked them whether they had not eaten somewhere; they assured him that they had not, fearing the reprimand they deserved; but the Saint marked out to them so distinctly where they had eaten, what had been served them at table, and how many times they had drunk, that, recognising that the spirit of God had discovered them, they threw themselves at his feet and asked pardon, both for their transgression and for their lie. He contented himself with the shame they received from the one and the other fault, persuaded that this supernatural gift would render them henceforth more circumspect and more zealous for observance. He discovered likewise to a secular, who was accustomed to come to see him fasting to receive his blessing, that he had eaten on the way out of complaisance for him who kept him company; a truth which drew tears from the eyes of this good man, and made him admire the prophetic spirit with which the holy Patriarch was filled.

But this prophetic spirit appeared with far more lustre in the meeting he had with Totila, king of the Goths. This prince, who was ravaging all Italy, having heard it said that Benedict was a great Prophet, from whom nothing could be hidden, wished to assure himself of it by his own experience; he advanced toward his monastery, and sent word to him to come in person to meet him. Before approaching it, to try the Saint the better, he had one of his squires clothed as a king, had him accompanied by his guards and the first officers of his court, and commanded him to march before him in this equipage, to see whether Benedict would let himself be deceived by it. The squire obeyed, went as far as the enclosure of the monastery and to the place where the Saint was; but this great man was not moved by all the tumult of these barbarians, and, as soon as he thought the squire could hear him, he cried out: “Put off, my son, put off these royal ornaments: they do not belong to you.” At these words, this squire, who before made himself proud, and all those of his suite, prostrated themselves on the ground, and, not daring to approach the Saint or speak to him, they returned to tell Totila what they had seen and heard. Totila came himself, and, having perceived Saint Benedict who was seated on a stool, he threw himself also on the ground without daring to advance nearer. The Saint cried to him two or three times to rise; but he had to come and raise him himself. Then he spoke to him with more force and liberty than ever the prophet Nathan had spoken to David, since, without using parables or fearing

to shock a king who made all Italy tremble, he reproved him for his crimes, and predicted to him the last adventures of his life: “You do much evil,” he said to him; “you have done much; it is time that you put an end to your iniquities; you will enter Rome, you will cross the sea, you will reign nine years, and in the tenth you will die.” At this oracle, Totila was struck with a new fear: he commended himself earnestly to the prayers of the Saint and withdrew. From that time he was not so cruel as he had been before. He took Rome, passed into Sicily, and, at the end of ten years, by a just judgment of God, lost kingdom and life. Saint Gregory reports still several other prophecies made by Benedict. Saint Sabinus, bishop of Canosa, who visited him every year, saying to him that Rome would perish by the cruelty of Totila, he assured him that it would not, but that it would perish by thunderbolts, tempests, floods of water and earthquakes; which the event has justified. A cleric of the church of Aquino was possessed by the demon; he was brought to Benedict by Constantius, his bishop, who had not been able to obtain his deliverance at the sepulchre of several Martyrs to whom he had already addressed himself; the Saint prayed for him and delivered him; but, at the same time he warned him never to eat flesh, and not to have himself promoted to sacred Orders; threatening him, if he undertook to ascend to them, to be seized the very same day by the demon again. The cleric submitted long to this advice; but, after several years, vexed to see that the least clerics passed before him, and regarding the command of the Saint as a thing which time had abolished, he had the temerity to take a sacred Order; and at the same time the demon entered into his body, and tormented him without respite until he had taken his life. Theoprobus, one of the religious of Benedict, a personage of great merit, entered one day his cell, and found him weeping bitterly. He waited long without seeing the end of his tears; at last he asked him what cause he had to weep so. “I weep,” he answered, “because God has just made me know that this monastery and all its dependences will be ruined and destroyed by the barbarians, and I have scarcely been able to obtain that the souls should be saved.” This is what has been seen since, in the irruption of the Lombards: for the abbey of Monte Cassino was ruined, but no one fell into the hands of these infidels. A personage of high condition having sent to the Saint, by his valet, two flasks of wine, this valet hid one on the way, and contented himself with presenting the other. The Saint received it very kindly and with thanks; but, as the valet was taking leave, he warned him not to drink of the flask he had hidden without first seeing what there was in it. This poor lad was much astonished; but he was far more so when, looking at his stolen flask, he saw a serpent come out of it. This miracle made so much impression on his mind that he asked the habit of lay brothers, and had the happiness to make profession in the Order. Saint Gregory calls him *Exhilaratus noster*, our brother Exhilaratus; which shows that he was himself of the Order of Saint Benedict. During the mission which Saint Benedict made, he converted all the idolaters of a borough near Monte Cassino. In this same place a monastery of nuns was built of which he reserved the direction; one day, having sent one of his disciples to make them an exhortation, these holy women pressed him so strongly to accept some handkerchiefs that he took them and hid them in his bosom. On his return, the holy Patriarch gave him a terrible reprimand: “How is it,” he said to him, “my brother, that you have let iniquity enter into your bosom?” He was much surprised at this reproach, no longer remembering what he had done. But the Saint added: “Was I not present when you received handkerchiefs from these servants of God, and when you hid them in your bosom, to possess them against the spirit of poverty and obedience?” These words were a thunderclap to this poor religious: he prostrated himself at the feet of his abbot, and, asking penance, he cast far from him these handkerchiefs which complaisance or avarice had made him accept. If the Saint saw so clearly future things and distant things, he read also very distinctly what was hidden in the secret of the heart. Witness that young religious, son of a man of condition, to whom Saint Gregory gives the quality of defensor: as he held one evening the candlestick while the Saint took his refection, he was attacked by a thought of pride, and said to himself: Am I of birth to serve this man, to hold the candle for him and to stand like a valet while he is at table and eats? But the Saint, penetrating by the spirit of God what he was turning over in his imagination, said to him: “What are you thinking of, my brother? make the sign of the cross on your heart: do you not see that it is the prince of the proud who suggests these fine ideas of grandeur to you and tempts you?” He commanded him also to give the candle to another and to remain at rest the rest of the

supper, and it was known afterwards from himself what had obliged the Saint to give him so humbling a lesson. Here are still other marvels of this incomparable man. Famine being one day extremely great in all the country, there was neither flour nor corn left in the monastery, except five loaves which were about to be served as the last in the refectory: the religious testified anxiety at it, fearing that this dearth would reduce them to the last extremities. But the Saint, after having gently reproved them for their little faith, consoled them and assured them that, if that day they were in need, the next day they should have bread in abundance. In effect, the next day two hundred measures of flour were found without anyone being able to know who had brought them there. What we are going to relate is yet more surprising. A rich and pious man begged him to send some of his religious to build a monastery on one of his estates of Terracina, in Italy. The Saint sent some there, with an abbot and a prior to preside over them, promising them to be there himself on a certain day, to mark out to them the places where the oratory, the refectory, the guest-chamber and the other offices of the convent were to be built. In the night before the appointed day, he appeared in a dream to the abbot and to the prior separately, and marked out to them with much prudence all the places where they were to construct these offices. The next day, they communicated their visions to each other, which were entirely conformable; however, seeing that the Saint had not come on the named day, they came to find him and told him that, as he had failed in his word, they had been obliged to come to receive his orders. But the Saint answered them: “How, my brothers, can you say that in truth? Did I not satisfy my promise? Did I not appear to you both during your sleep, and did I not mark out to you distinctly the whole plan of the edifice?” Then he recommended them to return and to build the convent in the manner he had designated to them: which they did, admiring the spirit of their holy Father, who, though still engaged in a body, seemed to have the same virtue as the spirits that are entirely separated from matter. His threats were no less terrible than his word was efficacious. In a convent of women dependent on him, there were two religious of great birth who often ill-treated in words the religious whom he had destined for them to take care of their temporal affairs. As he was warned of it, he sent them word to correct their tongue, or else he would excommunicate them; which he said nevertheless, not by actually fulminating anathema against them, but only by threatening them. However they did not correct themselves, and God, wishing to punish them for their insolence, they both died a few days after. They were buried in the church, and prayers were made for them, according to custom, without regard to this excommunication, which passed only for comminatory. But strange thing! every time the deacon said as usual: “Let those who are excommunicated go out from here,” their nurse, who often brought offerings for their relief, saw them rise from their tomb and go out of the church. This having happened several times, she remembered the excommunication with which the holy Abbot had threatened them, and gave him notice of what was passing. Then he took an offering, blessed it, and ordered it to be presented to God for them; and, after this action, they remained at rest in their sepulchre. A thing almost similar happened to a novice who loved his parents extremely: having gone out to pay them a visit, without having taken the blessing of the holy Abbot, he died the very day he arrived at their house. He was buried; but as if the earth had some horror of containing him, it cast him up as many as three times. His parents, extremely confused and troubled, had recourse to the blessed Patriarch, supplicating him, with tears, to give his blessing to the deceased. He had pity on them, and gave them, from his own hand, a consecrated host (so Saint Gregory reports it), with order to put it on the stomach of the dead man. This remedy was all-powerful, and the earth afterwards received him in peace. This practice of enclosing the body of Our Lord with the dead was afterwards abolished at the third Council of Carthage, and at that of Toul.

Another religious, who did not know well enough the happiness of his profession, asked the Saint urgently to return into the world: he refused him long so unjust a request; but as this wretched man, to carry by force what he could not obtain by prayer, lived very licentiously and with scandal in the cloister, he was at last obliged to expel him as incorrigible. So shameful a banishment did not fail to be very agreeable to this poor blind man; but he was scarcely outside the monastery when he saw a furious dragon coming to him, its mouth open to devour him. He called at once, with a great cry, the brothers to his help: they came to him and

saw nothing; but finding him quite terrified and all palpitating with fear, they brought him back to the convent. He promised to be more faithful to his vocation: which he accomplished afterwards, feeling himself infinitely obliged to the Saint for having made him see the infernal dragon that wished to engulf him.

We do not wish to forget what Saint Gregory assures he learned from some ancients, who had been disciples of this great servant of God; he cured, by his prayers, a young boy covered with leprosy; he also restored health to a man whom his enemy had poisoned. But what follows will appear far more remarkable: a poor unfortunate, but a man of good, came to find him and set before him that he was in great trouble, because he owed a considerable sum, and had not wherewith to pay it. The Saint told him that he had not at the moment this sum, but that he should return two days after, and that God would provide for his need. He returned, and the Saint, having made his prayer, found on the chest of the monastery the money he needed, and something more, without anyone having put it there; he reserved nothing of it for himself, but had the whole given to this poor man, both to pay his debt and to help afterwards his subsistence. His charity appeared no less on another occasion: it was a time of famine and extreme dearness; a subdeacon, named Agapitus, came to the monastery and asked urgently for oil: there was no more than a very little at the bottom of a glass bottle. The Saint told the cellarer to give it to him, being well persuaded that what is given on earth is reserved in heaven. But the cellarer, fearing that the community would suffer by it, neglected his command, and would not even share it with him who asked. This disobedience having been reported to the servant of God, he entered into a holy anger; and that there should be nothing in his convent against obedience, he had the bottle thrown out of the window. There was below a precipice and rocks; nevertheless, the oil was not spilled, and the bottle received no damage. The Saint sent to draw it out, and gave it sound and entire to the subdeacon. This miracle was followed by a second: after he had made a severe reprimand in full chapter to that proud and disobedient officer, a cask which was empty appeared at once full of an excellent oil, which filled the whole community with admiration, and showed well that he who gives alms lends at usury to an almighty God.

A Gothic and Arian soldier tormenting a peasant cruelly, all the recourse of this unfortunate was to tell him that he had given all his wealth to Saint Benedict, and that, to have it, it was necessary to go to find him. The Goth accepted his proposal willingly, and, having bound his arms with strong thongs, he compelled him to march in this state before his horse, and to lead him to Monte Cassino. They found the Saint alone, seated and reading in a public place of the monastery. Scarcely did the Goth perceive him when, in his ordinary pride, he began to cry like a madman: “Up, up! give back what thou hast to this man.” The Saint, without being moved or quitting his book, raised his eyes to look at him, and, at the same instant, the thongs with which the peasant was bound broke, and the barbarian, frightened, was obliged to throw himself on the ground and ask mercy. The Saint, without interrupting his reading, ordered the brothers to give him to eat, and then, having made him return, gave him a severe reprimand, and warned him that it was time to put an end to his violences. By this means, the peasant found himself delivered from the danger that threatened him. The servant of God wrought no less a miracle in favour of another peasant: this man having lost his son, brings the body of the deceased to Monte Cassino, in order to ask the resurrection of him. It was not the first that he had obtained from God; nevertheless, touched with a profound sentiment of humility, he said, with tears in his eyes, to the religious with whom he had just been working in the fields: “Let us withdraw, I pray you, my brothers, let us withdraw; these actions that are asked of us belong to the Apostles, and not to weak creatures like us.” But the peasant, without regard to his excuses, or to the sadness he testified at being asked a prodigy of such importance, presses him vividly, and swears firmly that he will not leave him until he has raised his son; Benedict is at last constrained to yield. He lies down then first on the dead one; then, having withdrawn, he raises his hands to heaven, and says: “Lord, have no regard to my sins, but look upon the faith of this man, who asks that you raise his son, and restore to this body the soul and life which you have taken from it.” These words were followed by the miracle: the dead one began to move, and the Saint, having taken him by the hand, gave him back safe and sound to his father. On this subject, Saint Gregory remarks that

sometimes he wrought these marvels by authority, as in the deliverance of the peasant, and other times by prayers and tears, as in the cure we have just related.

We do not wish to take up again here what passed in his last conversation with his dear sister Saint Scholastica, nor how he saw her soul fly away to heaven in the form of a dove, since we have spoken sufficiently of it in the life of that Saint. But we cannot dispense ourselves from writing what happened to him on the day of the decease of Saint Germanus, bishop of Capua. That day, a holy deacon, named Servandus, abbot of an ancient monastery of Italy, had come to see him, to converse with him, according to his custom, on the affairs of eternity. Night having interrupted their conversation, Servandus withdrew into a room below that of the Saint, which was at the top of a tower, and the disciples of the one and the other lodged beside. Benedict was watching in prayer, standing at his window to contemplate better the marvels of heaven. In the midst of his prayer, he saw suddenly an admirable light, which chased away all the darkness of the night, and which made a day incomparably more beautiful than those which the sun makes in full summer in a perfectly serene time; and, at the same instant, the whole world was represented to him as gathered in a single ray of sun. This marvel already filled all his mind, when another came which increased his admiration; he saw the soul of this holy bishop of Capua, which angels raised to heaven in a globe or sphere of fire. He wished to impart to the abbot Servandus so charming a vision, which was not to contribute little to the honour of the holy deceased. For that, he called him three times by his name; but when he went up, the light was beginning to dissipate: he could see only the remains of it. He marked nevertheless the day and the hour, and it was soon known, by a messenger sent expressly, that it was just the moment at which Saint Germanus had died. The admirable reflections which Saint Gregory makes on this vision, and the terms in which he explains it, have made some authors believe that, according to this great doctor, and according to truth, Saint Benedict, at this instant, saw clearly the divine essence, and in it, all creatures; as several theologians, after Saint Thomas, believe that Moses saw it on the mountain of Sinai, and Saint Paul in his rapture. It is truly an incomparable privilege, and one which has not its equal among all the privileges here below. However, we do not wish more to assure it than to dispute it to this heavenly man, who was destined to be the great Patriarch of a perfectly faithful people: we mean the religious of the West. The time at which he composed his rule is not entirely certain; Saint Hildegard assures, in her Revelations, that she learned from the Blessed Virgin that he composed it while still at Sublacum; nevertheless, it is very probable that he retouched it since that time, and added to it several things which experience and the marvellous propagation of his Order made him judge to be necessary; and it may be that the admirable light which he received in the vision of which we have just spoken contributed much to its last perfection. However that may be, nothing can be added to the praises which the Fathers and the authors who have lived since have given it. Saint Gregory the Great says that the life of Saint Benedict being wholly holy, it cannot be but that his rule also was wholly holy, because this great man prescribed no other laws than those which he already gave by his examples; he adds that this rule must be placed in the rank of his miracles, and that it is above all admirable for the wisdom and discretion which it keeps in all its ordinances. Divers councils, held in France and in Germany, have also spoken of it with much honour; and, to say all, it was called by excellence the Holy Rule. Another Saint Benedict, founder of the abbey of Aniane, and afterwards abbot of Inden, near Aix-la-Chapelle, showed, by an excellent book called the *Concord of Rules*, that it was entirely conformable to that of the holy Fathers who had preceded our Saint; and, since this concord, it was the rule of the whole monastic Order in Europe, the monasteries that were older than Saint Benedict having submitted to it. There are even good authors who hold that it was received everywhere before that time, that is, before the year 817; and that the Concord which the holy abbot of Inden made was only to renew the zeal and observance, which had weakened extremely, in several places, through the misery of wars: which we leave to learned critics to examine. We add only that this rule extended much during the lifetime of the holy Patriarch; for it is thought that he carried it himself to Rome, and that it found there a great number of disciples: it is certain that he sent it to Sicily by Saint Placidus, to France by Saint Maurus, and to Sardinia by Saint Raynerius. It is time to

come to his blessed decease. God had revealed to him the time of it several months before, and he had declared it to his disciple, Saint Maurus, before making him depart for France. Six days before this term, having had the sepulchre opened where his sister, Saint Scholastica, slept, he was seized with a fever which tormented him extremely; it did not hinder him, nevertheless, from preparing himself for this last passage with all the ardour and piety that can be imagined in a man who breathed now only for heaven.

On the sixth day, however weak he was, he had himself carried to the oratory consecrated to Saint John the Baptist: there, sustained on the arms of his disciples, he received the body and blood of his Saviour; then, placing himself at the edge of the grave, but at the foot of the altar, and with arms extended toward heaven, he died standing while pronouncing a last prayer. It was Holy Saturday, 21 March, in the year of Our Lord 543: he was aged 62 or 63 years.[6]

At the moment when the holy Patriarch died, a religious who was in the same monastery, and Saint Maurus, who was at Font-Rouge, near Auxerre, in France, saw as it were a great street, covered with precious carpets and bordered with an infinity of torches, which extended into heaven, and a venerable man all resplendent who said to them: “This is the way by which Benedict, the beloved of God, has gone up into heaven.” Thus he accomplished the promise he had made, to let his absent disciples know the blessed moment when he should go to enjoy glory. Benedict was of tall and well-proportioned stature, and in his exterior he had a gravity mingled with so much gentleness that he obliged all who looked at him to love and respect him. His abstinence was prodigious; in Lents, he ate only twice a week and then contented himself with bread and water. Benedict lived a virgin and died a virgin. He loved solitude extremely, and although his Order extended on all sides, one scarcely finds that he went out twice from Monte Cassino. It is that he found his delights in making orison and in conversing alone with his God. His body was buried in the chapel of Saint John the Baptist, which he himself had built and which he had destined for his sepulture; Our Lord has honoured him there no less after his death by miracles than he had done during his life. Whole books have been made of them, which can be seen in the great libraries and in the continuators of Bollandus. Saint Gregory paints in two words the character of the glorious patriarch of the monks of the West: he says of him, in relating his return from Vicovaro to Sublacum, that “he dwelt with himself.” These words carry with them the idea of the greatest, the most sublime perfection. What is it, in effect, in the language of the Saints, to dwell with oneself? It is to join the solitude of the soul to that of the body; it is to empty one’s heart of all attachment to earthly things; it is to concentrate oneself in the knowledge of God and of oneself. A man may be alone, may be shut up in a cloister, without possessing the great art of dwelling with himself. Such are all those who, after having separated from the world, let their imagination wander over a thousand objects which at first dissipate them, then captivate their heart, exciting in it a crowd of frivolous and often criminal desires. It is not sufficient then to put a bridle on one’s tongue and to contain one’s senses; one must, to be truly solitary, impose an absolute silence on all the faculties of one’s soul, and possess it in a continual recollection, fix one’s thoughts only on God and on oneself, purify one’s affections and inflame them by the contemplation of the sovereign good.

Of all the virtues, there was none whose practice Saint Benedict inculcated more strongly than humility; he has marked twelve degrees of it in his rule: 1° to excite oneself to a lively compunction of heart, to fear God and his judgments, to walk unceasingly humbled in the divine presence; 2° to renounce entirely one’s own will; 3° to obey promptly and without reserve; 4° to bear patiently sufferings and injuries; 5° to discover humbly one’s most secret thoughts to one’s superior or one’s director; 6° to be content and rejoice in humiliations; to take pleasure in exercising the lowest ministries, in wearing poor garments, etc.; to love simplicity and poverty; to regard oneself as a bad servant in all that is ordered; 7° to esteem oneself the most miserable, the last of men, the greatest of all sinners;[7] 8° to avoid singularity in words and in actions; 9° to love and observe silence; 10° to guard oneself from a vain joy and from immoderate laughter; 11° not to speak in a loud voice, and to observe the rules of modesty in all one’s words; 12° to be humble in all one’s

exterior actions. Saint Benedict adds that, when one shall have passed through these different degrees of humility, one will arrive at that perfect charity which casts out fear.

We shall not recall all the attributes which, in the arts, characterise Saint Benedict: we shall mention those which are more or less founded on history.

1° The Orsini of Rome wish that Saint Benedict of Norcia should be of their blood: thus will be met some images of the founder of the Benedictines with the coat of arms of the Orsini.

2° The silence habitually kept has several times been rendered, by the artists of the Middle Ages, by means of the finger severely applied to the mouth. The life of Saint Benedict, in effect, was very retired for thirty years; he left the monastery only for the affairs of his Order or to form his sister Scholastica to perfection. Silence and monastic life are things so linked together that Cîteaux and Cluny had adopted a system of signs to supply speech when it was necessary to communicate one's thought outside the necessary times where conversation was permitted. 3° Saint Benedict rolls in a bush to drive away the memory of a woman whom he had met at Rome. The monks of Subiaco still show a thorny shrub of which all the leaves are marked with a little black serpent and which would be the lasting memory of the victory of the holy young man over the assaults of the demon.

4° There is put in his left hand either a cracked glass from which a liquor escapes, or a chalice from which a serpent issues, as sign of the poisoned drink that the undisciplined monks of Vicovaro had served him. In this representation, a nimbus crowns his head and the abbatial crozier adorns his right hand.

5° But the principal sign by which Saint Benedict is recognised is his cross or medal. This symbol alludes to the sign of the cross by which our Saint escaped the poison that had been prepared for him. By wearing it, one hoped to put an obstacle to spells and to find help to overcome the temptations of the demon. Experience showed that this hope was well founded: thus the medal of Saint Benedict spread much among the faithful. Mgr Gaume has, for some years, so to speak, renewed this devotion in France.[8] 6° There is often placed near him a raven or a blackbird.

7° Near him again a broken sieve to recall the first miracle of a man who wrought so many others: the mending of an earthen vessel which his nurse had broken.

8° In several old pictures, he appears with great rods in his hand. This attribute designates either the practices of penance, or the correction or discipline which the founder of a great monastic Order must necessarily exercise.

9° Totila, king of the Goths, falls at his feet: the Saint predicts his death. 10° The little bell which the demon breaks to disgust Saint Romanus from bringing him his food; the dove which he saw rise to heaven at the moment of the death of his sister; the luminous staircase by which he was seen going himself to heaven; the globe of fire which he perceived at the moment when the soul of Saint Germanus of Capua mounted to heaven, are so many attributes under which Saint Benedict has been painted and may still be painted.

He is the Patron of Monte Cassino and of the Benedictine abbey of Seligenstadt, in Hesse-Darmstadt.

Saint Benedict is invoked against spells, inflammations, erysipelas, poison, stone and gravel. The efficacy of devotion to Saint Benedict, with regard to the malady of the stone, is founded on the cure of Saint Henry II, emperor of Germany, who was afflicted with this redoubtable malady. The fact is not only attested by the historians of the devout emperor; but it is established by the celebrated altar-piece of Basel.

Cult and relics of Saint Benedict — The abbey of Monte Cassino — Historical notice on the Order of Saint Benedict

CULT AND RELICS. — ABBEY OF MONTE CASSINO.

The monastery of Monte Cassino having been ruined by the Lombards, in 583, the relics of Saint Benedict, buried under the ruins, remained there long unknown. Saint Aigulf, religious of the abbey of Fleury, afterwards called Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, having been sent to Monte Cassino, about the year 660, by Saint Mummolus, his abbot, had the happiness to find them in the ruins and to bring them to France, to his monastery. This translation having been made on 11 July, the memory of it was celebrated on the same day in all the monasteries of France; and, on 4 December, another solemnity took place, called that of the *Illation*, in memory of a second translation which was made of the same relics, when, having been transferred to Orléans, for fear of the Normans, they were brought back to the monastery of Fleury.

The religious of Monte Cassino, in Italy, pretend, against those of Fleury, in France, that they are in possession of the blessed remains of their holy Patriarch, and produce in their favour a bull of Pope Urban II, by which he pronounces anathema against those who shall deny that the body of Saint Benedict is at Monte Cassino; but as the most enlightened, and above all Cardinal Baronius in his Annals, have well recognised that this bull was supposititious, and that, moreover, the ancient tradition, confirmed by an infinity of miracles, favours entirely the religious of Fleury, we are obliged to recognise with them that it is France, and not Italy, that possesses so great a treasure. However a small portion of the relics of Saint Benedict must have been carried back to Monte Cassino, following the claims of Blessed Carloman, uncle of Charlemagne and monk of that monastery, claims supported by Pope Saint Zachary. Mgr Bernier, bishop of Orléans, having visited Fleury-sur-Loire, on 15 October 1805, found in the shrine containing the relics of Saint Benedict: 1° twelve bones, among which were the two femurs and several fragments of bones; 2° several bulls of divers popes, relating to these holy relics; 3° a manuscript book, composed by the Benedictine Sandot, having for object to establish the authenticity of the relics.

The Benedictine nuns of the Perpetual Adoration, at Paris, obtained, on 3 August 1810, a fragment of one of the ribs of Saint Benedict. In 1838, the bishop of Orléans had the intention of sending to the abbey of Solesmes, in the diocese of Le Mans, where the work of Saint Benedict was being rebuilt, the relics of the Saint preserved at Fleury-sur-Loire; but the population having had knowledge of this project, opposed it with threats. The bishop recoiled before this sort of riot, and contented himself with sending to Solesmes a part of the skull, taken from behind. This signal relic is preserved with great honour in the church of the abbey. The Trappists obtained, under Mgr de Beauregard, numerous fragments of the ribs of Saint Benedict. Mgr Dupanloup gave an entire rib to the abbey of Einsiedeln, and another rib to the monastery of La Pierre-qui-Vire. To ratify and complete what we have said, according to the authors, in the note on page 573, we shall give here the interesting information which was addressed to us, on 3 June 1872, by Dom Alberic M. Panella, provost of the Order of Saint Benedict, at Subiaco, on the miraculous statue of Saint Benedict and the two monasteries of Saint Scholastica and the Holy Grotto of Subiaco: “The marble statue which represents Saint Benedict at the age of fifteen years is placed in the grotto which he inhabited for the space of three years. This statue is not kneeling (as the French travellers have said), but seated on a stone, in the attitude of contemplation. It is very true, as you believe, that there escapes from the grotto, and even sometimes from the statue, a species of sweat or manna; which is regarded as the presage of imminent calamities. I shall only cite some recent dates:

“1853, 29 and 30 June, sweat in the whole grotto and on the whole statue: dearth, epidemic, especially at Rome and its suburbs; earthquake, Eastern war;

“1858, oozing in the grotto on the day of the Corpus Christi: war of Lombardy the following year;

“1859, on 5, 6 and 7 July, oozing in the grotto, sweat on the statue: battles of Solferino and Castelfidardo;

“1860, from 13 November to 25 June of the following year, oozing in the grotto without interruption: the events of which Italy was the theatre at that epoch are sufficiently known;

“1870, oozing in the grotto in the month of May! War between France and Prussia, invasion of Rome;

“1871, from the beginning of June to 24 August, a drop remains suspended, without ever falling, then withdraws. This has been interpreted as the announcement of a new scourge whose effect divine mercy has suspended.

“This liquor is preserved and given to some persons: extraordinary graces are obtained by its means.

“The two monasteries of Saint Scholastica and the Holy Grotto are in the following conditions: Before all, it must be known that in 1850 Pius IX called from Genoa Father Abbot Casaretto with a colony of young religious of a monastic reform which this Father Abbot had made for several years, that he might people these monasteries and cause to flourish again there the ancient Observance of the illustrious Congregation of Monte Cassino. The thing has succeeded, not without great difficulties. This reform has spread throughout Europe and even beyond. Consequently, the Holy Father permitted proper constitutions to be drawn up, which have been definitively approved, this year 1872. Pius IX seeing thus renewed and rejuvenated the Congregation of Monte Cassino, distinguished it from the other by calling it Congregation of Monte Cassino of the Strict Observance.

“The monastery of Saint Scholastica of Subiaco has become the residence of the abbot general of this new Congregation. The Holy Grotto is frequented by a great number of pilgrims.”

Here, on the abbey of Monte Cassino, is an interesting note written by M. de Montalembert: “The traveller who visits the abbey of Monte Cassino finds at each step the memories of Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica, to which is joined that of Abundantia, that happy mother who preceded her blessed lineage into heaven. One enters the monastery by a long and sombre grotto made of pebbles, in which, according to tradition, Benedict would have dwelt. Above, one is shown the cell and the window from which the pious solitary saw the soul of his blessed sister take her flight toward heaven. In this cell, erected into a chapel, a graceful picture represents this touching episode of the life of the holy Abbot. The appearance of the brilliant basilica and its double forecourt at the summit of this rustic solitude of the Apennine is marvellous. On entering the first of these forecourts, one perceives at once on each side of the stairs the colossal statues of Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica.

“In the middle of the first court is a well: according to the traditions of the cloister, it is the symbol of that living water of Scripture, which springs up into eternal life. A wide and handsome staircase leads into the second forecourt, around which gratitude has placed the statues of the benefactors of the abbey: there live again Gregory the Great, Gregory II, Zachary, Victor III, Benedict XIII, Benedict XIV, Urban V and Clement XI, beside Ferdinand IV, Charles III of Bourbon, Robert Guiscard, Lothair III and the illustrious Charlemagne. But let us enter the church; its brilliance and magnificence dazzle the eyes; marble and gold shine everywhere in its enclosure: of the three doors that answer to the three naves, one of them, ordered at Constantinople by Desiderius, in 1066, offers remarkable sculptures: there are seen in silver letters the names of the lands, castles and villages dependent on the abbey. Rich chapels, numerous pictures, among which is remarked in the middle nave the Consecration of the church, by Pope Alexander II, a vaunted fresco by Giordano; the cupola by Corenzio; the high altar, adorned with precious stones, alabaster, black and green antique, lapis lazuli and brocatelle; finally, a superb organ-case, concur to the ornament of this magnificent temple.”

Saint Benedict is the father of that immense Benedictine family whose influences have been so great in the religious, social and literary world. Before him, the monastic Order already existed, not only in the East, where it had cast a vivid lustre, but even in the West, since the fourth century. With the aim of satisfying in a vaster and more intelligent manner the aspirations to cenobitic life which were manifesting themselves in the Church, Saint Benedict composed a Rule and retained, from the ancient institutes, the common celebration of the divine offices, a severe fast and abstinence; work, divided into manual operations and readings: but these various exercises were tempered by a discretion and wisdom which were not long in making the new Rule

received in all the monasteries of the West. This was the means which Providence used to save Christianity and civilisation, so gravely compromised by the invasion of the barbarians and the forced renewal of European manners, after that great event. The Benedictines were the apostles of the Anglo-Saxons, the Germans, the Slavs, the Scandinavians; they preserved the deposit of letters; they cleared the forests, built towns, and they were seen simultaneously seated on the chair of Saint Peter, on the divers sees of Christendom, in the council of emperors and kings. Here is, in abridgment, the history of the divers branches of the Institute of Saint Benedict. Saint Benedict founded first twelve monasteries in the solitude of Subiaco, where he began his career. Later he betook himself to Monte Cassino, where he built the celebrated abbey which must be considered as the centre of the whole Order.

Sicily was the first country to which the Rule of Saint Benedict was carried. This great patriarch sent Saint Placidus there, about the year 534. Some years after, Saint Maurus was designated to go to France where he arrived in 543. He built on the Loire the monastery of Glanfeuil, which has taken his name. The new Institute spread rapidly, not only in the Gauls and in Italy, but also in Spain, throughout Germany and the kingdom of the North. The relaxation which had crept into this holy institution made a reform necessary, in the ninth century. It took place in all the monasteries of France and of the other countries subject to Louis the Debonair, by the care of this emperor and the zeal of Saint Benedict, abbot of Aniane. The council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 817, proclaimed articles of observance which gave a new life to this vast body. Since that epoch, the internal vigour of the Benedictine Order has produced new reforms, whenever relaxation has made it necessary. The first reforms themselves took the name of *Orders*, principally when they began in some new monastery which produced a filiation; such are the Orders of Cluny, of the Camaldolese, of Vallombrosa, of Grandmont, of Cîteaux, etc., although these institutions are themselves, properly speaking, only branches of the Order of Saint Benedict. The reforms which took place by the union of several monasteries already existing, which engaged to keep the same constitutions and observances, took the name of *Congregations*, leaving the appellation *Order* to the whole ensemble of the Benedictine family.

The first and most illustrious of the Reforms is the Order of Cluny. Founded in 910, it counted under its jurisdiction up to two thousand monasteries; but because of relaxation, wars, nationalities and the commend, one saw, after three centuries, this vast power reduced to very feeble proportions. It underwent a last reform which commenced in 1612, through the care of Dom Jacques d'Arbouze, grand prior, and took the name of *Strict Observance of Cluny*. The Order of the Camaldolese was founded, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, by Saint Romuald, in 1012. Its principal seat is at the abbey of Camaldoli, in Tuscany. Dom Paul Giustiniani began a celebrated reform of this Congregation on Mount Corona, in 1510. In 1036, the Order of Vallombrosa was founded by Saint John Gualbert. It has had no reform. In 1082, the Congregation known under the name of Grandmontines, because of the abbey of Grandmont, near Muret, was founded, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, by Saint Stephen of Muret. In 1098 was founded the Order of Cîteaux, which is, after that of Cluny, the most important fraction of the Benedictine family. It counts three founders: Saint Robert, abbot of Molesmes, Saint Alberic and Saint Stephen. Fifty years after its establishment, five hundred abbeys had already issued from it, and after a century the total number exceeded eighteen hundred. The name Daughters of Cîteaux is given to the four abbeys of La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux and Morimond, because they are the first of the filiation of that abbey. The principal reforms of the Order of Cîteaux are, in Spain, the Congregation of the Observance, founded in 1425 by Dom Martin de Vargas; in Tuscany and Lombardy, the Congregation called of Saint Bernard, founded in 1497; the Congregation of the Feuillants, established in France in 1574 by Jean de la Barrière; the *Strict Observance of Cîteaux*, which owes its origin to Denys l'Argentier, abbot of Clairvaux, in 1615. Then come three reforms of too slight an extension to be counted among the Congregations. These are: Orval, reformed in 1605 by Bernard de Montgaillard; La Trappe, in 1662, by the famous abbé de Rancé; Sept-Fons, in 1663, by Eustache Beaufort. Since the suppression of the monastic Orders in France by the Constituent Assembly, the title of abbot general of Cîteaux has devolved on the abbot of the monastery of Saint Bernard at the Baths, at Rome, and the divers monasteries of La Trappe

established in France since 1815 are governed by the abbot of the great Trappe, near Mortagne, who, by virtue of an apostolic decree of 1835, takes the title of vicar general of the abbot of Cîteaux. In 1099, the Order of Fontevrault was founded by Blessed Robert of Arbrissel. In 1109, the abbey of Tiron was founded, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, by Blessed Bernard. In 1119, Saint William of Vercelli was preparing on Monte Virgiliano, soon called Montevergine, near Naples, a new monastic institution which was to increase the number of the Benedictine Congregations.

In 1156, the Guillelmites were founded, near Siena, by Saint William of Malavalle. The Humiliati were founded at Milan, in the twelfth century.

In 1231, Fabriano, in the March of Ancona, saw the rise of the Congregation of the Sylvestrines. In 1254, the Order of the Celestines was founded, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, by Saint Peter of Morrone (Celestine V), in the kingdom of Naples.

In 1319, the Congregation of the Olivetans, so called because of the abbey of Monte Oliveto, near Siena, which was the cradle of this new work, was founded by Saint Bernard Ptolomei. This last Congregation was the only one that the fourteenth century saw arise. The Order of Saint Benedict had weakened, and, to save its remains, the best means was to reform the entire Order; this is why, in a celebrated constitution called the *Benedictine Bull*, Pope Benedict XII, in 1336, promulgated regulations intended to bring back the Observance into all the Benedictine monasteries. This bull divides the Order of Saint Benedict into thirty-seven provinces, and it counts in this division whole kingdoms as provinces, such as Scotland, Bohemia, Denmark, etc. In 1408, Louis Barbo, provided to the abbey of Saint Justina of Padua by Pope Gregory XII, began, the following year, a reform which soon extended throughout all Italy, to such a point that the abbey of Monte Cassino, in 1504, solicited to be itself united to this Congregation. Out of honour for the see of Saint Benedict, the sovereign Pontiff decreed that the reform of Saint Justina should take the name of Congregation of Monte Cassino, keeping, however, in the second place, the title of Saint Justina of Padua. At present, the wars which have devastated Italy for half a century, having brought about the suppression of the abbey of Saint Justina, have led the Congregation of Monte Cassino, itself already much weakened, to strike from its title the name of that same abbey. In 1418 there began, in the abbey of Melk, an important Congregation which reformed all the monasteries of Austria; it owed its origin to the piety of the archduke Albert V of Austria. In 1419, the Congregation of Bursfeld, in Germany, was founded by John de Mede. However, this Congregation was powerless to retain in its bosom all the abbeys which had at first shown themselves disposed to take it for their centre. In the seventeenth century, divers fractions of this body constituted themselves into Congregations. Thus, in 1602, the Helvetic Congregation began, formed of nine abbeys of Switzerland, of which Saint Gall was the principal and Einsiedeln the second; in 1686, Pope Innocent IX erected the nineteen monasteries of Bavaria into a Congregation under the title of the Holy Guardian Angels. Four other German Congregations were constituted, namely: that of Saint Peter, of Salzburg, formed of nine abbeys; that of Swabia, whose principal monastery was at Constance and which counted eleven abbeys; another of Swabia, different from the preceding, and whose chief place was a monastery of Augsburg, composed of seven abbeys; finally that of Alsace and Breisgau, which had eleven. In Spain, the Congregation of Valladolid, whose head was the monastery of Saint Benedict founded in that town in 1391, began only in 1436, and was approved by

Innocent VIII only in 1492. This reform was in full exercise in 1493, when Ferdinand V and Isabella decreed that all the Benedictine monasteries should be incorporated into it. The abbeys which did not merge into this Congregation formed the Claustral or Tarragonese Congregation. In 1488, a reform was preparing in the abbey of Chézal-Benoît, in the diocese of Bourges. It was composed of only five abbeys and merged, in 1634, into the Congregation of Saint-Maur. In 1566, the Portuguese Congregation, erected by Pius V, counted more than twenty abbeys. About 1569, the Congregation of Saint-Vaast, established by Dom Sarrazin, counted seven abbeys. In 1580 was formed the Congregation of the Exempts, whose principal

monasteries were Marmoutier, the Trinity of Vendôme, Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, Redon, etc. The abbey of Saint-Denis having joined it afterwards, this Congregation changed its first name to that of Congregation of Saint-Denis. The monasteries which composed it merged into that of Saint-Maur. In 1600, the Congregation called of Saint-Vanne and Saint-Hydulphe was founded by Dom Didier de la Cour. It counted up to forty monasteries; but its greatest honour was to give birth to the Congregation of Saint-Maur (1618), which counted up to a hundred and eighty monasteries. It is known what immense services the Congregation of Saint-Maur rendered to historical science, as much by its researches on ecclesiastical antiquity as by its labours on our national origins. Some of its members attempted to restore it in 1817; but the lack of a legal authorisation caused the enterprise to miscarry.

In 1617, the Congregation of the English Benedictines was founded by Dom Sigebert Buckley; it was able to form several houses in England.

In 1618, the Congregation of the Low Countries began with the reform of the famous abbey of Saint-Hubert, in the Ardennes. It was composed of only a small number of monasteries and was destroyed by the conquest, at the end of the last century.

The Benedictines, in the days of Chivalry, produced valiant military Orders, such as those of the Temple (1146), of Calatrava (1158), of Alcántara (1177), of Avis (1204), of Christ, in Portugal (1319), of Montesa (1316), of Saints Maurice and Lazarus (1572), of Saint Stephen, in Tuscany (1561), etc.

Such is the abridged picture of the principal Congregations of the Order of Saint Benedict, up to the epoch of the violent destructions which annihilated them.

Since that ill-fated epoch, several Congregations have arisen, of which two were erected by Gregory XVI. The first was founded by King Louis I of Bavaria, in his States, with the aim of propagating religious instruction there. It counts several monasteries of which the principal is Saint Stephen of Augsburg. The second was erected by apostolic letters of 1 September 1837, under the title of Congregation of France, succeeding to the Congregations of Cluny, Saint-Vanne and Saint-Maur. The seat of this Congregation, whose first origin dates from 1833, is at the monastery of Solesmes, diocese of Le Mans, which has been erected into an abbey, with right of filiation. The third was canonically re-established, in 1872, under the title of Congregation of the Celestines of the Order of Saint Benedict. The seat of this Congregation, established first at the monastery of Notre-Dame de la Ducherais, in the diocese of Nantes, was transferred to the suburb of Taillebourg, at Saint-Jean d'Angély (diocese of La Rochelle).

Besides these foundations, there is also that of the Benedictines of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in 1850, by the Reverend Father Muard, at the monastery of La Pierre-qui-Vire, in the diocese of Sens. Quite recently, the Congregation of the Olivetans has just been re-established in the diocese of Auch. A Congregation of Cistercians was formed, in 1849, in the diocese of Avignon, first at Notre-Dame de la Cavalerie, afterwards in the ancient abbey of Sénanque. These religious devoted themselves principally to agriculture, like the Trappists. The number of the Benedictine nuns, or religious living under the Rule of Saint Benedict, has been immense; for, besides an infinity of monasteries of women subject to the ordinaries, most of the Congregations of which we have spoken, up to and including that of the Olivetans, have produced one or more branches of nuns of their reform. There were formed, moreover, some Congregations of Benedictine women, among which one must distinguish that of Our Lady of Calvary, established in 1617 by Antoinette d'Orléans; and that of the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, founded in 1653 by Catherine Mechtilde de Bar.

Saint Basilissa, Saint Callinice and their three companions, Saint Matidia, sister of Trajan, and the Venerable Droselle, daughter of that emperor (c. 116) — 21 March

SAINT BASILISSA, SAINT CALLINICE, AND THEIR THREE COMPANIONS, SAINT MATIDIA, SISTER OF TRAJAN, AND THE VENERABLE DROSELLE, DAUGHTER OF THAT EMPEROR (116).

About the year 116 of Jesus Christ there lived at Rome, in a house not far from the palace of the emperor Trajan, five Christian maidens who gave themselves to the practice of the evangelical counsels: their union was like a little convent, which shows that the religious life began with Christianity, although it was organised and regularised only later by Saint Antony, Saint Macarius, Saint Syncletica, Saint Basil, Saint Caesarius, Saint Benedict, etc. History has forgotten the names of three of these virgins; of the other two, one was called Basilissa and the second Callinice. These holy maidens occupied themselves with good works outside, as much as the time of persecution in which they lived permitted. After the example of most of the holy women of the first centuries of the Church, they gathered and buried above all, with zeal, the bodies of the martyrs.

Now it happened that a daughter of the emperor, named Droselle, already a catechumen, doubtless at the persuasion of her aunt Saint Matidia, heard speak of the manner of life of these holy spouses of Jesus Christ, and sought their company. Often, during the night, she escaped from the imperial palace and, accompanied by some attendants, came to take part in the exercises of the pious community. In spite of the most minute precautions, these sorties awakened suspicions: they were warned of it by one of the emperor's counsellors, named Hadrian, who aspired to the hand of the first. Trajan, informed, gave order to soldiers to watch all persons who should go out of the palace, to follow them to the place whither they went, and to bring them back by force with their accomplices. The occasion was not long in presenting itself: the guards saw one evening, but without recognising her, the princess go out furtively with her companions; they followed them to the house of the five pious virgins and arrested the whole holy assembly in the name of the emperor. Let one judge of the stupefaction and anger of Trajan when, the next day, he perceived his daughter in the midst of these abhorred Christians. He began by having her put in secret confinement in a chamber of the imperial dwelling, where everything was tried, but in vain, to tear the faith from her heart. Then he had brought before him the five Christian women whom he regarded as guilty of treason against majesty. As they refused to find evil what was good and to burn incense to the idols, he condemned them to a torture unheard of until then. They were stripped — these pure virgins — of all their garments; they were gathered into one and the same bath, and molten tin and lead were poured over their bodies. The innocent doves were not long in expiring in this horrible torment, and all their souls went to heaven to plunge into the bath of eternal delights. It was 21 March of the year 116, about.

To insult the Christians, to insult above all a virtue unknown in the world before them — holy modesty — Trajan ordered that the cauldron, the lead and the tin which had served for the torture should be melted, and that with the whole there should be made five statuettes of vestals, which were exposed naked at the entrance of the bath where the martyrdom of the five virgins had taken place — so far had corruption entered into pagan manners! so deep was human nature sunk in the mire! so little had the world, before Jesus Christ, consciousness of its horrible degradation! It is perhaps the place here to say a word of the origin of the monasteries of women. From the second century — all the ecclesiastical histories bear witness, the menologies of the Greeks speak of it — there were women who, in private or in community, led the pure life of virgins: they served the priests out of charity or piety. Hence their name of *Agapetae*, which expresses their mission of devotion. There were also deaconesses who helped above all in the administration of baptism, so long as this Sacrament was administered by immersion. But they were not religious in the sense which has since been attached to that word: they were so in substance, not in form. They lived in their own dwelling, solitary or gathered in small number; did not forbid themselves works of outward mercy — just as our modern congregations — and withdrew by this sort of voluntary retired life from the whirlwind of the world. As to the first foundress of monasteries of maidens or widows properly so called, it is difficult to designate her surely. The greater number, however, recognise Saint Syncletica, contemporary of Saint

Antony, as mother and foundress of the first religious women properly so called. Is it because we possess the instructions of Saint Syncletica to her daughters and that of no other have the admonitions come down to us, that the general opinion has pronounced in her favour? That seems to us rather probable. One has so grown accustomed to accepting ready-made opinions when they do not contradict apostolicity — one of the marks of the true Church — that we are tempted to believe it. Be that as it may, one has just seen a little convent in full exercise at Rome from the beginning of the second century. Because Saint Basilissa, Saint Callinice and their companions have not left us a code of religious rules, is it to say that they were not true nuns as to the practice of the evangelical counsels? Simple reason leads us to see clearly that the Gospel was practised as perfectly, if not more, in the cradle of the Church as in the following centuries. Therefore, in our opinion, there have always been monks and solitaries, nuns and religious women, persons of both sexes making of prayer and the exercise of works of mercy their sole bond.

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[1] See 29 April.

[2] See our *Palmier séraphique*, vol. iii.

[3] See the life of Saint Romanus on February.

[4] Sulpicius Severus, Henschenius, Bulteau, etc.

[5] In the question of abstinence, account must be taken even more of the climatic conditions than of the complexion of the Westerners.

[6] *Comedent, et supererit.* (4 Kings [2 Kings in modern numbering], iv, 43.)

[7] Of the monastery of Lauconne there remains only the prior's house, the structure of which lets traces of an eighth-century architecture be seen. The convent of La Baume has also disappeared; and what the hand of man had left standing of the monastery of Condat, called successively monastery of Saint-Oyend and abbey of Saint-Claude, was devoured by flames in the fire which destroyed the town, on 13 June 1799.

[8] See, on Saint Berthaire, 23 October.

[9] Fifty miles west of Rome, in the mountain mass where the Anio hollows the deep gorge which separates the Sabine country from the country formerly inhabited by the Aequi and the Hernici, the traveller, ascending the course of this river, arrives at a sort of basin which widens between two enormous walls of rock and whence a cool and transparent wave falls from cascade to cascade as far as a place named Subiaco. This grand and picturesque site had attracted the attention of Nero. He had the waters of the Anio held back there by dikes and built, below these artificial lakes, baths and a delightful villa, which drew from its position the name of *sublaqueum* and of which shapeless remains are still seen. *Moines d'Occident*, t. ii.

[10] Vicovaro, anciently called *Varronis vicus*, was situated between Tivoli and Sublacum.

[11] On these two convents of Saint Scholastica and of Saint Benedict of Subiaco, which still exist after having doubtless suffered many vicissitudes, we must stop our gaze an instant. From their bosom have also issued a crowd of learned men. If the glory of this ancient cradle of the Benedictine Order, hidden so to speak like that cradle itself in the hollow of solitary mountains, has not the brilliant lustre of that of Monte Cassino, an interest no less lively, though more mysterious, hovers nevertheless here over these pious monuments of another age, which enclose so many memories. So the pilgrim to Rome scarcely fails to come to visit them; and the aspect of these deserted places, mingled with the great things they recall, always fills his soul with a sweet and profound emotion. Subiaco, about thirteen leagues from Rome, is situated in the midst of the mountains. The traveller who goes there rests agreeably toward the middle of his road in traversing the cool valleys of Tivoli, following the winding course of the Anio. He can then, on the way, dream and meditate in peace to the dull noise of its cascades and cascatelles. After a few hours' walk more, he arrives at the little town of Subiaco, where he contemplates a fine triumphal arch erected in honour of Pius VII, of sweet and holy memory. On leaving the town, he meets, at the distance of a mile, the convent of Saint Scholastica. It is there that is the novitiate of the Benedictines, with the residence of the abbot. The position of this first convent is singularly picturesque. A road traced along a torrent leads there; some olive trees and holm oaks decorate the flank of these mountains. From the monastery, the charmed eye discovers a magnificent view. The little town of Subiaco, seated at the bottom of the valley, or grouped on a hill, produces above all an admirable effect. The abbatial church is large, its construction appears modern. Turning to the right, one descends into two chapels cut in the rock; it is there that the first abbots of the Order were buried. These chapels, of Gothic construction, are painted in fresco. The chapter-room is in its turn adorned with pictures of the Saints of the Benedictine Order. Saint Benedict, Saint Maurus, Saint Placidus, Saint Romanus, etc., inhabited, it is said, this chamber of the convent, which is thenceforth singularly venerable. The library is beautiful, and contains a great number of precious manuscripts. There is in this monastery a college of young Romans, after the model of that which exists at Saint Paul outside the walls of Rome. They are about twenty in number; they wear the habit of the Order, and sing the office with the religious and the novices. Such is at present still the ancient convent of Saint Scholastica, which was for a long time very celebrated. It is known that it was regarded as the chief house of the Congregation of Saint Justina, before its union with that of Monte Cassino. About ten minutes' walk farther, ascending again, one arrives at the convent of Saint Benedict, which depends on that of Saint Scholastica. Seven or eight Fathers only inhabit it. These are they who receive strangers and fill the functions of the holy ministry toward the pilgrims, whose affluence, on certain days, is great at the gates of the old convent. They come there to venerate the miraculous statue of Saint Benedict, preserved with religious honour in the grotto where the Saint took refuge when, at fifteen years,

he withdrew from Rome to retire into the desert. This statue, of white marble, represents the holy Patriarch kneeling. According to an ancient and respectable tradition, it covers itself at certain epochs with a sweat which flows during several weeks. It is the presage and announcement, it is said, of great events. The sweat flowed in 1847, as if to announce the Roman revolution and its memorable consequences. This marvellous water is religiously preserved in the treasury of the convent, very rich in relics. The monastery being hollowed in the rock, the chapels are arranged in tiers one above another, which forms a very singular view. Six of them are counted thus, communicating by stairs, and having for vault the rock itself. In some, this natural vault is painted in fresco. The monastery of Saint Benedict of Subiaco is dominated by an enormous block of rock which, itself separated from the mountain by a wide crevice, resembles rather, in its form, a sword of Damocles suspended over the head of the religious, and ready to crush them. But the good monks fear nothing: their Father Benedict, they say, himself supports this stone which sheltered his first house. Near the convent, finally, is the torrent into which Saint Placidus fell, and whence he was miraculously saved by Saint Maurus, who walked on the waters at the command of Benedict, after having received the blessing of the holy Patriarch. — *Dictionnaire des Abbayes et Monastères.*

[12] Benedict, in Latin *Benedictus*, blessed.

[13] There is nevertheless discussion on this chronology, as has already been remarked in the life of Saint Maurus; for it appears, according to the paschal cycle, that in the year 543, the day of Easter could not be 22 March, but 5 April: this makes some authors say that the Saint died on the Saturday, eve of Passion Sunday, which was in fact, that year, 21 March; and others that he died only on 24 April, which in fact then fell on the eve of Easter. But the ancient belief of the Church and of the whole Order of Saint Benedict is contrary to this second opinion, and the Acts of Saint Maurus say expressly that this death took place on Holy Saturday, after the days of the Supper and of the Pa[ssion].

[14] There would be presumption and pride in preferring oneself to the last of sinners. Several reasons may be brought: 1° The Judgments of God are unknown to us, as Saint Augustine, *de Virginit.*; Saint Thomas, 2. 2. q. 161, a. 6, ad 1; Cassian, Saint Bernard, etc., have observed. 2° If the greatest sinners had received as many graces as we, they would have made a better use of them and would have preserved themselves from those falls which have soiled our innocence. 3° The sight of a sinner whom one cannot excuse, instead of inspiring us with pride, ought to make each of us make this reflection: Who am I, in comparison with so many souls who march with great steps in the career of virtue? In acting thus, we shall practise the maxim of Saint Paul, who commands us never to prefer ourselves to anyone whatever, and to place ourselves always lower than others. If corrupt nature revolts, charity, which always judges favourably of the neighbour, must stifle its cries.

[15] See his opuscule on this subject, Paris, Périsse; and *Trésor des vivants et des morts*, Paris, Bray.

22 March

Martyrologies

[Daily martyrology blocks (Roman; of France, revised and augmented; of the religious Orders; additions after the Bollandists and other hagiographers).]

22nd DAY OF MARCH

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY.

At Narbonne, in Gaul, the birth into heaven of Saint Paul, bishop, disciple of the Apostles, who is regarded as being the same as Sergius Paulus, proconsul, who was baptised by the apostle Saint Paul: this Apostle, going to Spain, left him at Narbonne with the episcopal dignity. He acquitted himself actively of the ministry of preaching, and flew away to heaven, resplendent with the glory of his miracles. 1st c. — At Terracina, Saint Epaphroditus, disciple of the Apostles, ordained bishop of that city by the apostle Saint Peter.[1] 1st c. — In Africa, Saint Saturninus, martyr, with nine others. — The same day, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Callinice and Basilissa. 252. — At Ancyra, Saint Basil, priest and martyr, who, after having endured the most cruel torments under Julian the Apostate, rendered his soul to God. 363. — At Carthage, Saint Octavian, archdeacon, and several thousands of martyrs, who were put to death by the Vandals, on account of the Catholic faith. 4th c. — In the same place, Saint Deogratias, bishop of Carthage, who ransomed several of the faithful whom the Vandals had carried off from the city and led into captivity, and, celebrated for other holy works, rested in Our Lord. 457. — At Osimo, in the March of Ancona, Saint Benvenutus, bishop. 1276. — In Sweden, Saint Catherine, virgin, daughter of Saint Bridget. 1381. — At Rome, Saint Lea, widow, of whom Saint Jerome described the virtues and blessed passing. About 384. — At Genoa, Saint Catherine, widow, remarkable for her contempt for the world and her charity toward God.[2] 1510.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

At Béziers, Saint Aphrodisius,[3] first bishop of that city, ordained by Saint Paul of Narbonne, who, after having established Christianity in that place, died a peaceful death. — In Périgord, Saint Avitus, solitary.[4] About 518. — At Troyes, Saint Camelianus, bishop, whose relics were preserved in the abbey of Saint-Loup.[5] About 536. — At Maaseik, in the Low Countries, the translation of the holy virgins and abbesses Herlindis and Relindis.[6] — At Avignon, Saint Rufus, whom Saint Paul of Narbonne established at the head of the church of Avignon. 1st c. — At Cologne, Saint Richeza, queen of Poland.[7] 1063. — In the country of the Atrebates, Saint Diogenes, a Greek by origin, sent into the Gauls by Pope Saint Siricius, about the year 390. Consecrated by Saint Nicasius of Reims, he laboured to instruct the people until the moment when the Vandals slaughtered him in the church which he had built at Arras. “Remember your pastors, and, considering what their end has been, imitate their faith.”

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — In the Thebaid, Saint Euphrasia, virgin, of the Order of Saint Basil, whose entry into heaven is celebrated on 11 March.

Martyrology of Saint Dominic. — At Siena, in Tuscany, Blessed Ambrose, of the Order of Friars Preachers, illustrious by his holiness, his preaching and his miracles. Clement VIII had him inscribed in the Roman martyrology.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Osimo, in the March of Ancona, Saint Benvenutus, bishop and confessor, of the Order of Minors, remarkable for the integrity of his life, for his pastoral solicitude and illustrious by his miracles: the sovereign pontiff Martin IV placed him in the rank of the Saints. 1276.

Martyrology of the Conventual Minors. — At Osimo, Saint Benvenutus … 1276.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — Saint Gertrude, virgin, whose birth into heaven is celebrated on 17 March.

Martyrology of Saint Augustine. — At Cortona, in Tuscany, Blessed Ugolino Zefferini, confessor of our Order. It is reported that after his death lilies came out of his side, as testimony of his chastity. 1370.

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — At Osimo, Saint Benvenutus … 1276.

ADDITIONS MADE AFTER THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS.

In Friesland, Blessed Elkon of Liaukama, abbot of the monastery of Lidlum, of the Order of Premonstratensians.[8] 1336. — In Switzerland, the Venerable Nicholas of La Roche or of Flüe, solitary, who, after having been a soldier and married, withdrew into a desert region, with the consent of his wife, and lived there in a narrow cell, where he was favoured with heavenly visions and the gift of prophecy. Many miracles were wrought at his tomb.[9] 1417.

Saint Sergius Paulus, bishop of Narbonne (1st century) — 22 March

1st century.

“Sergius Paulus, a prudent man …”

Acts of the Apostles, xiii, 7.

“The prudent man is he who sees from afar …”

Isidore of Seville, book x of the *Etymologies*.

According to the ancient traditions of the churches of France, Italy, Spain and the Catholic world, Saint Paul, first bishop of Narbonne, is the same as Sergius Paulus, proconsul, converted by the apostle Saint Paul in the island of Cyprus. Learned men, it is true, have contested it in the last century: nevertheless, as it is the testimony of several centuries, as many martyrologies, and above all the Roman, have not made difficulty in subscribing to it, and as, moreover, if the contrary opinion has some proofs to lean on, it has not lacked a very solid answer, we have thought that, without entering further into the discussion, we could safely stop at the ancient tradition.[1]

The Paul of whom we speak was of the most illustrious families of Rome, and had passed through the most considerable offices of the Republic: sent proconsul to Cyprus, to govern it in the name of the emperor and the senate, he wished to hear Saint Paul, who was preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in that island, with a great reputation; for his preaching was sustained by an admirable holiness of life, and by miracles so frequent and so unheard-of that he made it well seen that God Himself authorised his doctrine. Our Saint was then residing at Paphos; and as the Apostle came there also, he caused him to be told the desire he had to see him. This was not, nevertheless, without difficulties: for he had beside him a Jew, a magician, named Elymas, or Bar-Jesus, who, playing the prophet, turned him aside as much as he could from listening to this new Teacher and from embracing the religion which he announced; but the nascent grace was stronger in him than the suggestion of this instrument of the devil. The Apostle came therefore to find him, accompanied by Saint Barnabas, who was his colleague in the preaching of the Gospel; he showed him the falsity of the pagan religion, which, in recognising several gods, recognised none that was true; and the solidity of the Christian religion, which adored no other God than the Creator of heaven and earth, with His Son Jesus Christ, come into the world to draw men from the darkness of their ignorance. Elymas, present at this instruction, took pleasure in contradicting what the holy Apostle said, for fear that, the proconsul being converted, he should lose all the credit he had with him. But Saint Paul, looking at him with an indignant eye and a severe face, said to him, by a sudden motion of the Holy Spirit: “O wicked seducer! child of the devil, enemy of all justice, wilt thou then never cease to thwart the straight ways of the Lord? Know that the hand of God is about to weigh upon thee, and that thou shalt remain blind without seeing the sun, until a certain time which His justice has marked.” This terrible sentence was instantly executed: the magician lost his sight, and was constrained to ask for someone to lead him by the hand.[2] As for the proconsul, he drew a marvellous fruit from it; and, admiring at once the arm of God and the holiness of his doctrine, he believed in Jesus Christ, and made it his glory to be the disciple of Saint Paul. It is said that it was from him that the Apostle borrowed this name of Paul, for before, in the Acts of the Apostles, he is called only Saul, and it is only after this conversion that he begins to be called Paul.

This is all that the sacred text teaches us of Sergius Paulus;[3] so that it is necessary to draw from the tradition of the Church and from ecclesiastical authors the rest that we have to say of his life.

The new neophyte, brought to the faith in a manner so miraculous, did not hesitate an instant to make to his convictions the most painful sacrifices. Faithful to the voice of God who called him to the apostolate, he set in order the affairs of his government, and followed to Rome those from whom he had received the benefit of religion, wishing to share their labours and their destinies. This was to run to meet the greatest dangers. In effect, Claudius had been succeeded by the emperor Nero, too well known for his cruelty for our holy apostles to be ignorant that in betaking themselves to the city of the Caesars they exposed themselves to torments and martyrdom. This consideration did not stop them; perhaps it was even for them a motive for undertaking this journey, so great was their desire to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

They had no sooner arrived at Rome than the tyrant gave the order to arrest Saint Paul and to cast him into prison. Paul-Sergius was likewise seized on his side, and threatened with the most horrible tortures if he refused to deny his faith and to return to the worship of idols. But he refused generously to obey impious orders and confessed Jesus Christ with admirable courage in the midst of the cruellest tortures. “At the time,”

says the author of the Acts of the Saint,[4] "when a sacrilegious prince pursued the Christians with fury and tore their bodies to pieces, there was remarked among the generous confessors our bishop Paul, valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, running to the combat, girded with the sword of religion, covered with the shield of devotion, the breastplate of faith and the helmet of confession. He gave glory to Jesus Christ, our head, before the multitude, without fearing their threats. Nothing could shake the courageous athlete, neither hunger, nor contempt, nor the most frightful torments. The demon, irritated in some way by his heroism, invented new kinds of tortures hitherto unheard of. They tore his body, they pulled out the nails of his fingers, and bruised him with blows. But this refinement of cruelty served only to make him win a more brilliant victory over the enemies of religion. A crowd of confessors gathered the palm of martyrdom without having suffered as much as Saint Paul. God wished, doubtless, to preserve his life miraculously, that he might become the light of our regions, and procure for us and for our descendants the benefits of the vocation to the faith."

In effect, the Apostle of the nations, restored to liberty after a captivity of two years, thought seriously of executing the design he had formed of going to evangelise Spain.[5] He set out with several disciples, among whom were Saint Crescens and Saint Paul-Sergius, crossed the Gauls preaching the Gospel, and, to finish winning to Jesus Christ these fair countries, conquered by Roman arms, he left in the midst of them some of the zealous missionaries who accompanied him.[6]

Saint Paul-Sergius stopped first at Béziers, which lies on the road to Narbonne and to Spain. He preached there with great success and built several oratories to celebrate the holy mysteries. The report of the marvels he wrought there having spread as far as Narbonne, where the worship of the pagan divinities was in great honour, the inhabitants had him begged to come in their midst to instruct them in the new religion which he announced. The Saint yielded to their prayers, not thinking he ought to let escape so favourable an occasion of extending the kingdom of God; and, after having ordained bishop Saint Aphrodisius, whose merit he knew, he confided to him the government of the Church of Béziers, and went to Narbonne, where he was received as a father in the midst of his children. Soon the city changed its face; the temples of the false gods were abandoned, and on their ruins several churches rose; the old superstitions disappeared, and truth, announced with the zeal with which our Apostle was animated, made each day new conquests, in spite of the obstacles it met in the passions and prejudices of this idolatrous people, strongly attached to its errors. This sojourn and these preachings of Paul-Sergius at Béziers appear the more likely in that this city lies on the road he had to follow in going to Narbonne.

It is natural to think that, having set out from Rome with the apostle Saint Paul, and having accompanied him into the south of Gaul, he had the desire to follow him into that country, where, according to the gravest testimonies, he announced the holy word with such great fruits of salvation that the pagan authorities were moved by it and took the resolution of driving from the land all the evangelical labourers. This mission, attested by a crowd of respectable writers, finds a proof of great force in an inscription which seems made to preserve the memory of it, and which the historians report to us in these terms: "To Nero, Caesar Augustus, for having purged the province of brigands and of those who taught men a new superstition." Thus, in the time of the emperor Nero, Christianity had been preached in Spain, since he is congratulated for having expelled from it the apostolic missionaries, so visibly designated by those who taught a new superstition. But who are the missionaries who, at that epoch, spread the good news in this country? Do not the most ancient and most universally accredited traditions speak to us of the apostle Saint Paul and of Saint Paul-Sergius, bishop of Narbonne? Hence the popularity with which the name of this holy Prelate was surrounded in Spain, from apostolic times, and the profound veneration that has been preserved there for him, to the point of attributing to him the first successes of evangelical preaching in these divers provinces and of regarding him as their Apostle.

This tradition has perpetuated itself from century to century, and, on the testimony of the authors of the *Gallia christiana*, it was still so lively in the seventeenth century that one saw at certain times of the year a prodigious crowd of the faithful run from all parts of that kingdom to the places where his mortal remains rest. Tamayo Salazar, in his martyrology of the saints of Spain, confirms this general belief in these terms: “Saint Paul-Sergius, disciple of the Apostles, came to Spain with the apostle Saint Paul and announced the gospel at Cordova, at Barcelona and in most of the cities of the province.” The preaching of Saint Paul-Sergius in several parts of this country appears therefore a fact acquired to history.

Several authors even pretend that he came there at two different epochs, and they say that after having left Spain at the moment when the missionaries were expelled from it, as has been seen above, he returned there in consequence of a warning that he received from heaven. Here is what Peter Mulard, priest of the church of Saint Paul of Narbonne, who composed in 1364 the life of this holy Bishop from ancient manuscripts, relates on this subject: “The apostle Saint Paul, after his glorious martyrdom under the emperor Nero, appeared miraculously to Saint Paul-Sergius and ordered him to go to Narbonne and to Spain to preach there anew the kingdom of God .”

“On returning from this mission,[7] where he made numerous conversions, he came back to Narbonne, which he had the happiness to bring wholly to the faith. Having learnt by three successive apparitions of the apostle Saint Paul that his end was approaching, he consecrated bishops the deacon Stephen and the priest Rufus, designating the first for his successor at Narbonne, and the second to occupy the see of Avignon. This was the last act of his life; for soon after he gently rendered his soul to his Creator in his own church, where he was at prayer, and where he was buried amid the tears of his diocesans.” Some authors have written that Paul-Sergius shed his blood for the faith and gathered the palm of martyrdom. But this opinion does not appear to have any other foundation than the horrible tortures that he had to suffer at Rome, and which should have led him to death, had he not been preserved miraculously.[8]

Saint Paul bequeathed to the city of Narbonne an imperishable glory. This thought is like the echo of the centuries; for already in his time Prudentius had expressed it in his divers poems, where these verses are found:

Surget et Paulo pretiosa Narbo,

which has been translated by these two French verses, more faithful than elegant:

Narbonne, through her Paul, illustrious and precious, Is not the least famous of the greatest cities.

The metropolis of Narbonne has always held a very distinguished rank among those of the Gauls, and even among the Churches of Spain, in the time when Narbonne was placed under the domination of the Goths.

Cult and relics of Saint Sergius Paulus

CULT AND RELICS OF SAINT SERGIUS PAULUS.

The body of this holy Bishop, said Father Giry in 1685, rests in the suburb of Narbonne, in a collegiate church dedicated under his name, except nevertheless some part which is said to be at Rochechouart, in the diocese of Limoges. At the epoch of the French Revolution the body of Saint Paul was profaned and delivered to the flames. Particles of this precious treasure were nevertheless snatched from the fury of impiety, put into a shrine made on the model of the ancient one, and placed, as formerly, on the tabernacle of the high altar of his church, where they are always the object of the cult not only of the inhabitants of the city, but of those of the surroundings and the neighbouring countries. Each day a great quantity of candles burn in honour of the glorious Apostle, and it is rare that a day passes without one’s seeing pious faithful circulate nine times around his tomb, by way of a novena of prayers.

But it is above all on 22 March and 11 December that one is witness of a spectacle which recalls the ancient days of faith. At these two times of the year the whole city and the surrounding country hasten in rivalry to pay to their holy patron the tribute of their respect and love: to the point that his vast church cannot contain the crowd which flocks to it from all sides, from four o'clock in the morning until six in the evening. And this is not a vain demonstration, nor a remnant of habit without true religious significance. The people of Narbonne have so much confidence in his intercession that they invoke him in all their afflictions, and that his memory often suffices to inspire them at death with the most Christian sentiments. It is not rare either to hear in the houses, and sometimes in the midst of the streets, this invocation: *My God! Saint Paul!* which marks how popular the name of the apostle of the region still is, in spite of the weakening of faith and the empire of material interests. These sentiments, it must be said, are not peculiar to the inhabitants of the city; the following fact furnishes a very striking proof of it. For more than thirty years the feasts of 22 March and 11 December have not been announced in the parishes neighbouring Narbonne, and nevertheless they continue to furnish for these solemnities a great number of pilgrims, who offer in this religious pilgrimage the finest examples of piety. Another rather important remark has been made, because it confirms the ancient traditions on the preachings of Saint Paul-Sergius: it is that on 22 March the greatest concourse of strangers comes from the places which he must have crossed to come to Narbonne. If one believes an ancient tradition, the present church of Saint Paul, built at the epoch of transition between the Romanesque period and the ogival period, contains within its vast and magnificent enclosure the site on which our Apostle had an oratory raised in honour of the Blessed Virgin, which had disappeared from the soil one knows not at what epoch. Not far from this church there is a small square which bears the name of the Place of the Infidels, and a street called the Holy Street. The chronicle of the country explains these singular denominations, saying that the inhabitants of the Little Square at first resisted the preachings of Saint Paul, whereas those of the Holy Street showed themselves docile to them, embracing Christianity immediately. We believe it useful to give the legend of the feast of Saint Paul-Sergius, of 11 December, the day of his death, inserted in the proper of the Saints of the diocese of Carcassonne, to which Narbonne now belongs, approved by the Congregation of Rites, because it contains the abridgment of the facts that we have just reported and gives them a high authority, by clothing them with the approbation of the bishop and of the Roman tribunal.

"Paul, first bishop of Narbonne, so celebrated in the Church in the fourth and fifth century, was a of the Apostles, according to the ancient tradition of Narbonne and of Vienne, attested by Usuard and Ado, and designated by the apostle Saint Paul, in his journey from Rome to Spain, to preach the Gospel to the people of Narbonne, as Saint Trophimus to the inhabitants of Arles and Saint Crescens to those of Vienne. If one believes the author of his acts, he would have suffered much at Rome for the faith, before being sent into the Gauls. He travelled through the southern provinces announcing the word of God with a burning zeal which brought to Christianity a great number of pagans. On arriving at Béziers he consecrated an altar to the true God; it is even commonly thought that he had a cathedral church built there. His reputation for holiness having then spread in the neighbouring countries, the city of Narbonne sent him a deputation to beg him to come there to preach the true religion and to be its bishop. He yielded to its wishes, persuaded that by the number of its inhabitants and its relations with strangers it would furnish him easy means of extending the reign of Jesus Christ.

"Having therefore ordained Aphrodisius bishop of Béziers, he went immediately to Narbonne, where his happy arrival is still celebrated on the eleventh day before the calends of April (22 March). He first raised there a small oratory, and soon the number of the faithful becoming considerable, he built another church, which he dedicated to the most holy Virgin. Finally, after having drawn upon himself the general admiration as much by the practice of the most sublime virtues as by the brilliance of his miracles and the extent of his conquests in the midst of pagan populations, he fell asleep peacefully in the Lord. He was buried in the church which he had had built beyond the bridge, and this place became celebrated by the miraculous cures obtained through his intercession, and the cult that was rendered there to his pious remains, carefully

preserved through the centuries. But toward the end of the eighteenth century, and during the troubles with which France was then agitated, his body, violently taken from the shrine which enclosed it, was thrown into a fire prepared expressly by impious men. Happily some parts, snatched from the flames by persons animated by a courageous zeal, were replaced in the church dedicated in his name, and are there the object of a universal respect and cult."

We have completed the life of Saint Sergius Paulus, by Father Giry, by means of that which was composed, in 1837, by M. l'abbé Robitaille, titular canon of Arras, and which is followed by a dissertation in which it is proved that the converted proconsul is the founder of the church of Narbonne. We point out this excellent little work with the more pleasure in that it is sold for the profit of a good work. We regret that lack of space prevents us from reproducing the part of M. l'abbé Robitaille's work entitled: *Testimonies on which is founded the tradition of the apostolate of Saint Paul-Sergius*. We refer to it, as well as to the general dissertation on the evangelisation of the Gauls in the first century, which will find its place in one of our last volumes.

Saint Lea, widow (384) — 22 March

384. — Pope: Saint Damasus I. — Emperor: Theodosius the Great.

Lea was a Roman lady who, after the death of her husband, embraced the austerities of penance. She wore the hair-shirt, passed the greater part of the nights in prayer, and exercised herself continually in the practice of humility. She died in 384. Saint Jerome draws a very beautiful parallel between the death of Saint Lea and that of a pagan named Praetextatus, who was taken from the world the same year, after having been created consul.

And since Saint Jerome himself made the eulogy of Saint Lea, we should doubtless be blameworthy if we made use of other terms than those of this great Doctor. Here, then, is what he writes of her to the widow Saint Marcella: "Who can give to blessed Lea the praises that she deserves? She so consecrated herself to God that she deserved the quality of abbess in her monastery, and the title of superior over so many virgins who recognised her as their mother. After the pompous garments which she had used according to the vanity of the world, she covered herself with a sack to mortify her appetites, and studied perfection, passing whole nights in watchings and prayers, in order to teach devotion to her companions by the example of her actions rather than by her discourses and remonstrances. Her humility was so profound that, after having commanded others, she had become the servant of everyone; but she was the more perfectly the servant of the Son of God as she wished to be less mistress among creatures. Her furniture was very poor, her garments without luxury, and her living very austere. She had not her head covered with pearls, nor her face heightened with paint. She practised Christian virtues without hypocrisy, and did good in such a way that she looked for the reward only in eternity, because she refused to receive in this world the price that was due to her. Now, for some little labour, she enjoys an accomplished rest, having been received by the choirs of angels, and introduced into the bosom of Abraham, whence, with poor Lazarus, she sees the rich man and the consul, who was clothed in purple, no more with his triumphal robe, but laden with a garment of confusion; he asks a drop of water to refresh himself, without being able to obtain it. Oh! how well things have changed face! He who was lately seen at the summit of honours and dignities, he who went up pompously to the Capitol, as if he had triumphed over enemies, and who had been received with the applause of all the Roman people; he who, by his death, had filled the whole city with mourning, is now reduced to misery, and lodged not in the palace and in the heavenly court (as his unhappy wife publishes it with much impudence), but in exterior darkness, which shall never end. And our blessed Lea, who had made her retreat in a little corner, in order to appear poor and to be esteemed foolish before the world, is today received at the banquet of the Lamb, and says with the Psalmist: 'We see things in the house of our God in the manner in which they were announced to us.'[1] This is why I represent to you, with tears in my eyes, and declare to you that one must not

wear two robes during this life, nor cover one's feet with skins of animals, which are the affections and dead actions of the flesh; nor seek the graces and favours of the world, signified by the staff, which are all conditions mysteriously forbidden by the Saviour under the symbol of these allegories. We must not undertake to serve at the same time Jesus Christ and the world, but we must live with so much moderation that eternal goods may succeed to temporal ones, and recognise that, if our body approaches each day its end and its ashes, all the rest, in the world, is not of longer duration." This is the language of Saint Jerome. He makes mention again of Saint Lea in the fifteenth letter to the same Saint Marcella; but she must not be confounded with Laeta, to whom he addresses the seventh, to instruct her in the manner in which she should bring up her daughter. The latter had married Toxotius, son of Saint Paula, and had had by him a daughter called Paula, like her grandmother, and, after the death of her husband, had withdrawn from the world. As for our Saint Lea, the name of her husband is not known.

The Roman martyrology makes memory of Saint Lea, as does Cardinal Baronius in his Annals, in the year 382.

Saint Catherine of Sweden (1381) — 22 March

1381. — Pope: Clement VII. — King of Denmark, Norway and Sweden: Olaf V.

The cross is the ladder of heaven.

We are going to see, in this history, a fine proof of that word of Our Lord: "That a good tree produces only good fruits, as an evil tree produces only evil ones";[1] for blessed Catherine was a branch of a most holy stem, namely: of Saint Bridget of Sweden and of Ulf, prince of Nericia, her husband. It appeared, from the beginning of her life, that the heavenly Spouse had chosen her for one of his well-beloved spouses; for she accepted eagerly, to suck, the breast of every virtuous woman who offered it to her; but she repelled with anger all those who were not so, making thus appear an aversion for vice at an age which was incapable of recognising its ugliness. Being weaned, she was put into the hands of a virtuous abbess, to be brought up under her guidance. But one night when this religious was at Matins, the devil, taking the form of a bull, threw the child with his horns out of the cradle, to kill her, and left her half-dead in the middle of her chamber. The abbess having found her in this state, took her in her arms, and then the evil spirit appeared to her and said: "Oh! how willingly I would have finished her, if God had permitted me!" At the age of seven years she played one day at jackstraws with the other little boarders, at a time when her duty called her elsewhere; but the heavenly Spouse, who wished to make of her a Saint, did not let this childish trait pass without correction, and the night after, the demons appeared to her in the form of jackstraws, and whipped her so roughly, to wean her from these vain and puerile recreations, that she had no longer a desire to stop at them. She was no sooner marriageable than her father commanded her to marry. This command appeared entirely opposed to her inclination and to the resolution she had taken to remain chaste: she acquiesced in it nevertheless, counting on the help of God and on the favour of the most holy Virgin, that her marriage might be made without prejudice to her virginity: which came to pass; for, having married a lord named Edgar, she made him see so well the beauty of continence that she persuaded him to keep it, by making a vow of chastity; and in this way they deceived the world, the one and the other, under the name and appearances of marriage.

She had a brother named Charles, who was a light and worldly prince; unable to endure that his sister should live in this fashion with her brother-in-law, and above all taking offence at the simplicity of her garments, he tried to make her change her conduct; but Catherine, far from leaving what she had so holily begun, counselled on the contrary the wife of Charles, called Gidda, to strip herself of all that savoured too much of the world and the pomp of the world: in which she succeeded most happily. After the death of her father, Saint Bridget, her mother, having gone to Rome by a divine inspiration, she followed her thither also with the consent of her husband; being arrived there, she did not lack subjects of combat to preserve the flower of her

inviolable chastity: for, some time after, the rumour of the decease of her husband having spread in the city, a lord cast his eyes on her to marry her; and, seeing that he could hope nothing by the ordinary ways, he took the resolution of carrying her off. In effect, as she was going one day to the church of Saint Sebastian, accompanied by some pious ladies, this sacrilegious man put himself in a state to execute his design; but a stag, which presented itself suddenly in the middle of the road, amused him, and while he ran to force it, Catherine escaped from his hands. When she re-entered her mother's house, the latter, to whom God had revealed the danger run by her daughter, cried out: "Blessed be, my child, the stag of which heaven has made use to deliver you from the snare that was laid for you." From then on Catherine kept a more severe retirement and went out only rarely. However, another time when she was going with her mother to the church of Saint Lawrence outside the walls, she found herself in a like danger; but this lord who awaited her, being about to lay hand on her, lost his sight suddenly. Recognising his fault, he came and cast himself at her feet, and, having asked her pardon, he recovered, by her prayers and by those of her mother, the good that his rashness had made him lose. Afterwards he himself rendered testimony of this miracle in presence of the Pope. She did not run lesser hazards elsewhere than in Rome; particularly once when, going to Assisi with the same Saint Bridget, to visit the church of Saint Mary of the Portiuncula, she was surprised in an inn by bandits, who cast an eye of covetousness on her; but she was again delivered miraculously from this peril: for there was heard at once around the inn a great noise, as of men of war, and a voice resounded in the air which commanded to seize these robbers: which gave them such a fright that they all took flight. The next day, as the Saints continued their road, these same robbers returned to execute in full daylight what they had been unable to do during the night: but God having struck them also with blindness, they could not see his servants when they passed near the place where they had placed themselves in ambush. This visible protection of heaven so increased the fire of divine love and the affection for virtue in the heart of Catherine that her holiness continually acquired new degrees. Humility was her dear virtue, and praises gave her as much confusion and sorrow as humiliations and contempt caused her satisfaction.

But the enemy of salvation, who had been able to gain nothing against our Saint, bethought himself of a ruse which nearly succeeded. The little liberty which remained to her for visiting the places venerated by the faithful rendered the stay at Rome wearisome to the young widow. Her mother and her confessor had in vain represented to her that this was a temptation; sadness followed closely upon weariness; she grew pale and wasted away before one's eyes. The two pious women put their confidence in Mary, asking her, by fervent prayers, to know the will of the Lord. Their confidence was rewarded: Catherine saw, in a mysterious dream, the Mother of mercies, who testified to her, with a severe air, that she had no help for a person forgetful of her promises, and ready to sacrifice her duty to the desire of seeing her country again, where inevitable dangers awaited her. The pious Princess was no sooner awake than, detesting her cowardice, she went and cast herself at the knees of Saint Bridget, renewing to her her promise never to leave her.

Besides vocal prayer, which she had always cherished from her childhood, she made each day four hours of meditation on the sorrowful Passion of her Saviour, to whom she offered herself unceasingly in sacrifice. One day when she was at prayer, at Rome, in the church of Saint Peter, a lady, clothed in white and with a black mantle over it, appeared to her and told her to pray to God for the wife of her brother Charles, who had died, and that in a few days she would receive from her a rich legacy, because she had left them by will the golden crown which she used, according to the custom of the country. This benefit served only to satisfy better the great charities which she exercised in the city of Rome; there was no hospital that had not a share in her liberalities. Now, although her equipage and the furniture of her lodging were very poor, nevertheless, on certain occasions, God made her appear pompously clothed; and, by agreeable appearances, he covered her chamber with tapestries of great price, and her bed with purple curtains and coverings of cloth of gold, to content the eyes of those who stop at the exterior.

She passed twenty-five years with her mother, both at Rome and in the journey to Jerusalem, on which she accompanied her. After the happy decease of Saint Bridget, returning to Sweden, she carried her body there and several other relics of saints with her; then, having finished her obsequies, she entered the monastery of Watzen,[2] of which she was recognised as superior. She then began to instruct the nuns in the rule which her mother had left in writing; but as God glorified the sepulchre of this holy widow by several miracles, the king of Sweden, and all the prelates and princes of his kingdom, wishing to obtain from the Pope that he should proceed to her canonisation, judged fit that her daughter Catherine should return for that purpose to Rome. She went there according to their desire; but on account of the schism which arose in the Church in the time of Urban VI, she could not bring that affair to an end; she did not however leave that great city without leaving there evident marks of her holiness; for a woman who was ill, wishing neither to confess nor to prepare for death, she betook herself to prayer and implored the divine mercy for her. Then there came out of the Tiber a black and thick vapour which surrounded her house and so obscured it that the persons who were in it could not even see one another, and there was made there so frightful a noise that the sick woman, all terrified and almost beside herself, called Catherine and promised her, with tears in her eyes, to do all that she should command. She confessed, and the next day she ended her days with every appearance that God had pardoned her her sins. Another, who had had several bad confinements, finding herself with child and near her term, begged this holy Princess not to forget her in her prayers; the Saint gave her good hope and promised to assist her. In effect, she did so much by her instances with God that this woman was happily delivered of a daughter, who was named Bridget.

After a sojourn of five years in the city of Rome, where, in the pursuit of the canonisation of her mother, she received many praises in full Consistory from the very mouth of the sovereign Pontiff, she took again the road to Sweden to withdraw to her solitude. Her reputation was so great that she was received and treated with an extraordinary respect and honour by all the princes and prelates, as well of Italy as of Germany, with whom she passed. All this journey was glorious for her, on account of the miracles which were wrought by her intercession. It is related, among others, that a man of her suite having fallen all asleep from the top of a cart, and having been crushed under the wheels, the virtuous Princess made her prayer, touched him with her hands and healed him. She did as much for another who had fallen from the roof of a building upon stones, and had so broken his limbs that he could not move; she rendered him also, by her touch, so perfect a health that he returned at once to work with the other workmen, giving a thousand praises to God and to his benefactress, who had so promptly obtained his cure.

Catherine being returned to Sweden, her health began to weaken. She had the custom, from the time she lived with her mother, of confessing every day, and she always continued it afterwards, above all in this last illness. But, on account of the weakness of her stomach and her vomitings, she did not dare receive the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar; she had it nevertheless brought to her to adore it and to humble herself in its divine presence. At last, lifting her eyes to heaven and commending her soul to God, she passed from this world to a better, in the year of grace 1381. The acts of her life say that it was the eleventh day before the calends of April, which is 22 March. But, as they add that it was the eve of the feast of the Annunciation, several have believed that an error had slipped in: that 11 had been written for 9, which is the 24th of the same month. It is a difference of little importance, and which could not dispense us from following the date of the Roman Martyrology.

There appeared above the monastery where the Saint had died a star, which followed her body to the church, and stood in the air before the coffin until the end of the burial. Several miracles were wrought at her sepulchre. We have of Saint Catherine of Sweden a book entitled: *Consolation of the Soul*. She says herself in her preface that her work is composed of maxims drawn from Holy Scripture and from different treatises of piety. Here are the different ways of representing Saint Catherine of Sweden: 1° During her childhood, Mary appears to her at night and praises her for the modesty with which she takes her rest; 2° a stag at her

side. We have just said in what circumstance this animal turned aside the attention of a ravisher who aimed at the virtue of the Saint. But there is another trait of her life which may have furnished the image-makers with the motive for placing a stag near her: it is related, therefore, that as she was crossing a wood while her husband was hunting, a doe pressed by the dogs threw herself toward our Saint, who obtained mercy for that charming beast; 3° in a group with her mother Saint Bridget, in the costume of pilgrims; 4° meditating the Passion of the Saviour to recall her devotion to the sufferings of Jesus Christ: she passed, in effect, each night several hours shedding abundant tears before a crucifix; 5° with a lily in her hand, symbol of her virginity during her marriage and of her religious profession after the death of the prince her husband; 6° she has been represented sometimes in her bed, visited by a priest who carries the Eucharist, because, in her last illness, being unable to receive the viaticum on account of her stomach pains, she asked to be able at least to adore Our Lord in his august Sacrament; 7° she is represented again either in the costume of an abbess, holding a crozier and a small church; on her head a crown recalling her noble origin; or occupied in tending and dressing the wounds of the poor.

Saint Catherine of Sweden is invoked against abortion and against floods.

Surius reports her life in his second volume. It is also found at the end of the *Book of Revelations* of Saint Bridget, her mother.

Saint Rufus, founder of the Church of Avignon (1st century) — Saint Deogratias, bishop of Carthage (457) — 22 March

SAINT RUFUS, FOUNDER OF THE CHURCH OF AVIGNON (1st century).

It is an ancient tradition of the church of Avignon that Saint Rufus, its first bishop, was the son of that Simon the Cyrenian who helped Jesus to carry his cross. It is said that Simon had left Libya and the city of Cyrene, his native land, after the loss of his fortune, and that he had come to Jerusalem with his two sons Alexander and Rufus. Having been witness of the marvels which Jesus wrought, he believed in him and was counted among his disciples. After the ascension of the Saviour, Rufus attached himself to Saint Paul and came to Rome with the Doctor of the nations. It is of him, it is believed, that Saint Paul speaks in the epistle to the Romans when he says: “Salute Rufus, elect in the Lord” — a brief eulogy which shows sufficiently the holiness of blessed Rufus.

He followed Saint Paul into Spain, where that Apostle established him head of the nascent Church of Tortosa. At the request of the inhabitants of Valencia, moved by the marvels wrought at Tortosa, he sent to that city some of his disciples to carry there the light of the Gospel. He then passed the Pyrenees with Paul-Sergius, whom the Apostle of the Gentiles had ordained bishop of Narbonne, and came to found the church of Avignon. He propagated the Gospel in an astonishing manner in the region and had built, it is said, a chapel on the Rock, where, according to tradition, Charlemagne afterwards had the basilica of Notre-Dame des Doms raised.

Laden with years and merits, Rufus fell asleep in the Lord about the year 90. The Roman martyrology mentions him on 12 November: the churches of Avignon and of Tortosa celebrate his feast on the 14th of the same month.

His body rested for long centuries in the oratory which he had founded. When the congregation of canons called of Saint-Rufus transported itself to Valence in Dauphiné, the relics of the Saint were placed in the cathedral of Avignon and enclosed in a silver shrine. Sacrilegious hands profaned and dispersed them during the Revolution. Let us add some words on the celebrated congregation of Saint-Rufus which we have just named. The cathedral of Avignon was served for a long time by canons who lived in common, and who, afterwards, embraced the rule of Saint Augustine, which they still observed in 1485, the epoch of their

secularisation. It appears that toward the middle of the eleventh century they had relaxed from their primitive fervour, since in the year 1039 four of them, namely Arnold, Odilo, Pontius and Durand, animated by the spirit of God, resolved to separate from them. Wishing to practise more perfectly the common life in a voluntary poverty, they retired into a little church dedicated in honour of Saint Rufus, which Benedict, bishop of Avignon, gave them with the consent of his chapter, with some lands that depended on it. The exemplary life that they led in their new solitude soon drew to them companions who joined them, and their little dwelling became, in a short time, a great edifice. They soon formed a congregation which spread not only in France, but even in Spain and Italy. It possessed several abbeys and priories, and received numerous privileges from the sovereign Pontiffs. It obtained a proper office and particular constitutions, with power to elect a superior general, and the monastery of Saint-Rufus of Avignon was recognised as the mother-house of the congregation. These religious remained in that city until they were constrained to leave it by the fury of the Albigensians, who in 1210 ruined from top to bottom their church and monastery. They came then to Valence, and built themselves a new dwelling in the island of Éparvière, which is near it, and which Abbot Raynaud had bought from Odo, bishop of Valence. They dedicated the church likewise to Saint Rufus, and they established this new monastery head of the whole congregation.

But civil and religious wars having again ruined their establishment of the island of Éparvière, they transported for the third time the head of their Order into a priory which they had within the enclosure of the city of Valence; King Henry IV approved this translation. The order of Saint-Rufus gave three Popes to the Church, namely: Anastasius IV, Adrian IV and Julius II. Adrian was English by nation, and had put himself in the service of the abbey. His virtues and talents caused him to be admitted among the religious, and some time after he was elected general. Grave affairs having called him to Rome, Eugene III, who recognised his merit, made him cardinal, bishop of Albano, and sent him to Norway, where he preached the Gospel with such success that on his return he was raised to the Holy See. He died in 1159.

The cardinals William of Vergy, Amadeus of Albret, and Angelic of Grimoald of Grisac were also of this congregation, which had forty-five generals, among whom are counted several bishops.

The canons of Saint-Rufus did not give in to the novelties of Jansenism. Their fidelity to the Church in this circumstance does honour to their sentiments and zeal. Would to God that they had preserved in all things these excellent dispositions! They would not have been among the first, toward the end of the last century, to give the example of an unhappy defection. For more than fourteen years they solicited their secularisation, which was granted by Pope

Clement XIV and pronounced by the bishop of Valence in 1764.

Proper of Avignon; Hagiological History of Valence; Historical Dictionary of Vaucluse, etc.

SAINT DEOGRATIAS, BISHOP OF CARTHAGE (457).

The city of Carthage fell into the hands of the Vandals in the month of October, in the year 439. These barbarians, who followed the Arian heresy, drove from its Church the holy Bishop Quodvultdeus,[1] who was, with nearly all his clerics, exposed at sea on a half-broken ship. This Church thus remained without a pastor until, after a desolation of fourteen years, Genseric, at the prayer of the emperor Valentinian, permitted that there should be given to it for bishop an excellent priest named Deogratias, who was consecrated on 25 October. He was a man of an admirable holiness of life, who consoled and strengthened greatly the Church of God in its afflictions, by his discourses and by the example of his virtues. The barbarians and the Arians could observe once more that true virtue and gratuitous charity are found only in the Catholic Church. In effect, two years after his election, God permitted Genseric to take the city of Rome, to pillage what remained of the riches of so many kingdoms it had conquered, and to carry off the greater part of the Roman people into captivity. This multitude of prisoners having been cast upon the shores of Africa, the Vandals and the Moors shared them among themselves: and, according to the custom of barbarians, they separated

without any compassion husbands from their wives, and fathers from their children. Bishop Deogratias, full of charity and led by the spirit of God, employed, to ransom them, all the vessels of gold and silver destined for the ministry of the altars; and by this means he restored the wives to their husbands and the children to their parents. But as there were no houses in Carthage capable of lodging so great a quantity of people, he chose for that two churches which were very large, had them filled with beds and straw mattresses, and took care that there should be given each day to these poor people what was necessary for them to live. As several among them had remained sick from the agitation of the sea, to which they were not accustomed, and from the sufferings of so cruel a servitude, this holy Bishop went at every moment to visit them, took physicians with him, had carried all that they could need, and had it given to them in his presence. He was not content to employ himself during the day in these exercises of charity; he went again during the night to see them all one after another in their beds to know in what state they were, without his extreme old age and the weakness in which he found himself being able to turn him aside from a work of mercy which was so painful to him. The Arians, whom his virtues offended, tried several times in vain to make him fall into their snares and to tear his life from him in a violent manner. He died after an episcopate of three years and some months. His death was wept by the captives of Rome with tears so abundant and so sorrowful that they made it known that never had they been more abandoned to the discretion of the barbarians than when they were deprived of his presence, and God took him from them for heaven. The people of Carthage, on their side, had so much love and esteem for this holy Pastor that it could not have been prevented from tearing the members of his body to pieces to make relics of them, if, by a wise counsel, he had not been secretly buried at the time when the public prayers were being made. The Roman martyrology makes mention of him on this day with praise: but in the calendar of the church of Carthage, drawn up toward the end of the fifth century, his feast is marked on 5 January, as well as that of Saint Eugenius, his successor.

Modern Algeria makes his office on 29 October.

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[2] Besides the bishop of Terracina, there was a Saint Epaphroditus spoken of in the epistles of Saint Paul, who was bishop of the Philippians (*ad Philip.* ii and iv); there is a third who was bishop of Andrana, in Thrace. “These must be,” says Baronius, in the year 60 of his Annals, “three different persons, unless one admits that the same occupied the divers sees of Philippi, of Terracina and of Andrana, which we do not think,” adds Baronius in concluding. Modern authors, M. l’abbé de Maistre among others, in his *History of the Seventy-two Disciples*, make but one person of the three Epaphroditi. The Bollandists content themselves with reporting the documents of the case.

[3] See 14 September.

[4] See 28 April.

[5] Saint Avitus was in the army of Alaric when he was taken prisoner, at the battle of Vouillé or Voulon, about 507, and led to Paris by the soldiers of Clovis. Having paid his ransom, he took the monastic habit in Poitou; he then led the eremitical life at Mauroy, then at Ruffec, in Périgord; he died there in 518.

[6] See his notice at 28 July.

[7] Herlindis and Relindis, abbesses of Eyck, a monastery situated between Maastricht and Roermond, near the Meuse, were daughters of Count Adelard. Both brought up in a monastery, they took there a taste for the cloister life. The count, their father, therefore built for them the monastery of Eyck, where several young persons came to place themselves under their direction. The two sisters, charged in common with the government of the community, received the abbatial blessing from the hands of Saint Boniface and Saint Willibrord, about 722. In the moments destined to manual work, they made church ornaments or copied the books of the divine office. After the death of Saint Herlindis, which happened about the year 745, Relindis asked of heaven the grace to be soon reunited to her sister; her prayers were granted, for she died a short time after. — We make mention again of these two holy maidens in the martyrology of France, on 6 February and 12 October.

[8] Saint Richeza flourished in the eleventh century and died at Cologne, where her tomb was formerly seen in the collegiate church of Our Lady of the Greeks; she is named Saint at the foot of her portrait, which is painted on one of the windows of that church. She was honoured at Sulfelt, in the landgraviate of Thuringia.

[9] Blessed Elkon was put to death in 1332 or 1336, by lay brothers whom he had exhorted to correct their disorders and to confess. He is honoured as a Martyr at Terporte, in Friesland.

[10] See his life at 31 March.

[11] Testimonies on which this tradition rests:

1° The contrary opinion appeared only in the seventeenth century. (See Rohrbacher, *Hist. univ.*) 2° It is conformable to the teachings of the Holy See. (See Hincmar, *Opusc. et epist.*, vol. ii, p. 426.) 3° The tradition of the province of Narbonne is in harmony with the whole of the facts and testimonies which establish the evangelisation of the Gauls in apostolic times. 4° No fact, no testimony of any value can be invoked in favour of the contrary opinion, from the cradle of Religion to the seventeenth century. 5° The present Roman martyrology, which is the reproduction of a little martyrology existing in the eighth century, reports the tradition as we give it here.

6° We shall say as much of the martyrology of Usuard of the end of the ninth century. 7° The martyrology of Notker of 879 is not less formal.

8° Saint Ado, the celebrated archbishop of Vienne, teaches the same thing in his book of the *Feasts of the Apostles*.

9° The martyrology of Bede and several others, as well as manuscripts cited by the Bollandists at 22 March, speak in the same manner.

10° Father Longueval, impressed by these proofs, could not help recognising at least that Christianity had been preached at Narbonne from the first century. (*Preliminary dissertation.*) 11° Fleury embraces our opinion plainly. (Book ii, n. 7.) 12° The authors of the *History of Languedoc*, in spite of their respect for Gregory of Tours, will not abandon the tradition of Narbonne.

13° Several manuscripts recently discovered come to confirm the defenders of the church of Narbonne. (See *Monuments inédits*, vol. ii, p. 374; M. Faillon, *Life of Saint Magdalen*; Dom Piolin, *The Church of Le Mans*; Feller; Migne's *Patrologia*, vol. v, p. 80; M. Arbellot, *Life of Saint Martial*; the *Chronicle* of Dexter, contemporary of Saint Jerome.) 14° At the moment of the reaction of the seventeenth century, powerful voices rose in favour of the ancient tradition. Let us cite: Saint Francis de Sales, Claude Robert, Cornelius a Lapide, de Sponde, du Saussay, Baronius, Mabillon, de Marca, Noël Alexandre, the two Pagi, the authors of the *Art de vérifier les dates*; and in our days, the abbé Faillon, Rohrbacher, Darras, the abbé Blanc, the abbé Chaussier, of Metz, the abbé Latou, of Toulouse, the abbé Arbellot, of Limoges, Father Piolin, of Le Mans, M. Corblet, of Amiens, M. Sabatier, of Beauvais, etc. Among these last there are some converted from the science of the eighteenth century. Their adhesion has only the more value.

[12] Bar-Jesus, that is to say Elymas, was called son of Jehu, or son of Joshua, for that is what Bar-Jesus signifies. Elymas, an Arabic term, signifies magician; which makes one conjecture that this Jew was a stranger in Cyprus, and that apparently he had come there from Arabia. The name of magician was not then extremely odious. These sorts of people made themselves sought for on account of the extraordinary effects that they produced by their enchantments, whether to heal the sick, or to exorcise the possessed, or to cause the recovery of what was lost. The devil raised up a great number of them then, to try to decry the true miracles of Jesus Christ and of the Apostles. Saul charges Elymas with a salutary confusion to make him enter into himself. The penalty with which he struck him was to be only for a time, only to soften his heart and give him the spirit of penance. In effect, several Fathers of the Church believe that he was converted (Dom Calmet).

[13] *Acts of the Apostles*, ch..

[14] These Acts, drawn from ancient manuscripts, were edited by Bosquet, in the seventeenth century, and by the Bollandists. See at 22 March.

[15] Rom. xv, 28.

[16] This journey of the Apostle and his preachings in southern Gaul are attested by Saint Epiphanius, Theodoret, Saint Chrysostom, Saint Jerome and by several other ancient writers. The Spaniards also wish that he was their Apostle, and that, having received the mission from Saint Paul, he travelled through their fairest provinces to propagate the Gospel there. The small distance that there is from Narbonne to Spain renders this opinion rather probable; moreover, as we see by a hundred examples, the first preachers of Christianity did not attach themselves so much to one church that they did not carry the faith into other provinces, and even into the most distant places, to verify these words of the prophet Isaiah: "Who are these that fly as clouds?" (Is., 8) and these others of the King-Prophet: "The sound of their preaching has spread through all the earth" (Ps. xviii, 4).

[17] This is borrowed from an abridged life of the Saint, composed by Peter de Natalibus, contemporary of Peter Mulard, but younger than he. The narrative of Peter de Natalibus was collected by the Bollandists: it is conformable to the ancient traditions of the churches of the Gauls, set down in the chronicle of Dexter. See vol. of Migne's *Patrologia*.

[18] According to certain Acts of Saint Paul of Narbonne, two deacons, whom the Saint had severely reproved for their disorders, had the malice to put a woman's shoes under his bed, and accused him afterwards of having committed a sacrilege with her. To clear himself of this crime, he assembled some neighbouring bishops who held a synod expressly. While they were examining the affair, there was seen at the top of the church an eagle to which a raven brought food, and which neither the cries of the people nor all the arrows shot at it could make depart. But God bore witness to the innocence of Saint Paul in a far more fearful manner: while everyone was at prayer, the devil entered into the bodies of these deacons and forced them, by his violences, to confess the falsity of their accusation. They came and cast themselves at the feet of Paul to beg him to deliver them; but, as he was as humble as he was chaste, he wished that this grace should be granted them by the common prayers of the clergy and the people. It was obtained at last with many tears, and these wicked men, having at last come to themselves, confessed anew the holiness of their Prelate, and avowed that it was only the spite of having been reproved which had led them to forge this imposture. They begged him to forget it; but he had already done so, and he loved them afterwards even more than before. The eagle departed also at the same time from the place where it had stopped, and it was seen no more. The bishops who had come to the synod returned with extraordinary admiration for the virtue of Paul, whose great merit this occasion had made known. We should have difficulty in assuring that this history suits this disciple of the apostle Saint Paul; but to whomsoever it may suit, it was too remarkable not to be reported in this collection (Giry). — This trait does not appear to belong to the life of Saint Paul-Sergius: first, because such an accusation is not likely against an immediate disciple of the Apostles, known by his eminent virtues, the heroism of his courage and his profound contempt for worldly enjoyments; secondly, because there could not at that epoch be bishops and priests in sufficiently great number to form this assembly; thirdly, finally, because the authors of collections

of councils place one at Narbonne, in 257, whose aim was to judge a bishop of that city, named Paul, accused of incontinence, circumstances which are of a nature to show that it is a question of him of whom the fact reported above treats. And in effect, we have found nowhere a council held at Narbonne in the first century. — Let us note also that Saint Gregory of Tours, who does not excel in unravelling facts and times, will have confounded the Paul of the third century with Sergius Paulus, apostle of Narbonne in the first century.

[19] Ps. xlvii.

[20] Matt. vii.

[21] The monastery of Saint Saviour of Watzen, in the diocese of Linköping, was founded by Saint Bridget, in 1344: but it was rebuilt in a more convenient place, in 1334, and the bishop of Linköping solemnly the religious men and women.

[1] See, for Saint Quodvultdeus, the Roman martyrology on the 26th, and the martyrology of France on 37 October.

23 March

Martyrologies

[Daily martyrology blocks (Roman; of France, revised and augmented; of the religious Orders; additions after the Bollandists and other hagiographers).]

23rd DAY OF MARCH

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY.

In Africa, the holy martyrs Victorian, proconsul of Carthage, and two brothers of Aquae Regiae, as also two others, both named Frumentius, and merchants, who, as Victor, an African bishop, writes, having been tormented by frightful tortures in the persecution of the Vandals, under King Hunneric, on account of their constancy in the confession of the Catholic faith, won a brilliant crown.[1] 484. — Again in Africa, Saint Fidelis, martyr. — In the same country, Saint Felix and twenty others. — At Caesarea in Palestine, the holy martyrs Nicon and ninety-nine others.[2] 3rd c. — Moreover, the crowns of the holy martyrs Domitius, Pelagia, Aquila, Eparchius and Theodosia.[3] — At Lima, in Peru, Saint Turibius, archbishop, by whose zeal faith and ecclesiastical discipline spread in America; his feast is celebrated on 27 April. 1606. — At Antioch, Saint Theodulus, priest. — At Caesarea, Saint Julian, confessor. — In Campania, Saint Benedict, monk, who, having been shut up in a burning furnace, was found the next day without any injury. 550. — At Barcelona, Blessed Joseph Oriol, priest. 1702. Beatified by Pius VII in 1806.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

At Paris, the first finding of the sacred bodies of Saint Denis and of his companions Rusticus and Eleutherius. — At Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, Saint Eusebius, bishop, second of that name, who, before his episcopate, subscribed to the fourth council of Paris, whither he had been sent by Victor, his predecessor, mentioned by Gregory of Tours.[4] About 600. — At Paris, the venerable Claude Bernard, native of Dijon, priest, very zealous for the relief of the poor, buried in the church of the Charity.[5] 1641. — At Limoges, the feast of Saint Cessator or Cezadre, bishop of that city, whose entry into heaven is on 15 November.[6] — At Cahors, Blessed Francis of Cardaillac, of the Order of Saint Francis, bishop of that city.[7]

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

Martyrology of Saint Basil. — At Caesarea in Palestine, the holy martyrs Nicon and ninety-nine other monks, of the Order of Saint Basil, who, put to death by divers tortures, won the palm of martyrdom.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Peter Damian, cardinal, bishop of Ostia and doctor of the Church, who flew away to heaven on 22 February.

Martyrology of the Conventual Minors. — Blessed Salvator of Horta,[8] a Spaniard, confessor, of the Order of Minors of the Observance, who, remarkable for his chastity, the holiness of his life and his miracles, fell

asleep in the Lord at Cagliari, in Sardinia, on 18 March. 1567.

ADDITIONS MADE AFTER THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS.

At Verona, in Italy, Saint Proculus, confessor and bishop of that city; his body was found again in 1492 with those of three other saints, at the restoration of the church dedicated to him at Verona. 4th c. — In England and in Brittany, Saint Fingar or Guigner, Saint Piala, virgin, and their companions, martyrs.[9] About 455. — In Africa, the Saints Liberatus, physician, with his wife, his two sons and another child, and Crescens, priest, martyrs, under Hunneric. About 484. — In England, Saint Ethelwald, priest and solitary, whose remains were raised and solemnly translated in 1160. About the year 700. — At Constantinople, Saint George the Younger, wonder-worker. Having left all to enter the narrow way, he had the happiness to die in the church of Saint John the Evangelist, seven days after his arrival in the capital of the Eastern empire. About the 11th c. — At Ariano, in the kingdom of Naples, Saint Otho, solitary, whom Saint Benedict cited as a model of obedience to a prisoner to whom he appeared. His body was transferred to Benevento in 1230. About the year 1120. — At Gubbio, in Umbria, Blessed Peter, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. He was general or at least provincial of his Order. 13th c. — At Alberschwende, near Bregenz, in the Tyrol, Blessed Merbod or Marbett, priest and martyr. 1120. — Near Nuremberg, in Germany, Saint Philothea, virgin. 1430.

Saint Victorian and several other holy martyrs (484) — 23 March

484. — Pope: Saint Felix III. — Emperor: Zeno.

The combat of these glorious confessors of the name of Jesus Christ is too illustrious and too touching not to edify the readers. Here is about what Victor of Utica says of it in the history which he composed on the persecution of the Vandals:[1] Where shall I find words to represent worthily what passed in the person of Victorian, proconsul of Carthage, native of the city of Hadrumetum? He was the richest man in Africa, and he had always shown much fidelity in the employments with which King Hunneric had charged him. This impious prince sent word to him, in very civil terms, that if he obeyed his wishes without resistance he would love him particularly and give him the first rank among his officers. But this great servant of God had answer made to him, by the same envoy: “That nothing was capable of separating him from the faith and love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the confidence he had in the help of so powerful a master, he was ready to suffer rather all sorts of torments than ever consent to the impiety of the Arians. He could have him burnt and exposed to beasts, or overwhelmed by other tortures; but he would never gain on him that he should leave the Catholic Church, in which he had been baptised. So detestable an action would expose him, as an ungrateful and perfidious man, to pains that would never end; but even if that were not so, and there were no other life than the present life, nor eternal reward prepared for those who shall have conquered, he could not resolve to quit the true and only religion, and to fail in fidelity to him who had entrusted to him the precious deposit of his grace.” This answer so irritated the fury of the tyrant that he made him suffer torments whose length and cruelty surpass all that could be said of them. The Saint endured them all in view of God with an incomparable joy, and having happily finished his course, he went to receive in heaven the crown of martyrdom which he had so justly merited.

Who could also explain, as is fitting, the combats of the other martyrs who were executed in the city of Tabaye, and above all of two brothers of the city of Aquae Regiae? Having promised each other, by oath, in the humble confidence which they had in God, to die both of one same torture, they obtained from the executioners not to be separated, either in place or in pain. They began by hanging them with great weights attached to their feet; and when they had been nearly a day in this torment, one of them, succumbing to the pain, begged to be unfastened and to be given some respite. The other, seeing this from the gibbet where he was also hanging, and fearing that he should renounce the faith, cried to him: “Take good care, my brother, not to make this request; that is not what we promised to Jesus Christ, and I should myself accuse you of

infidelity before his dreadful tribunal if you persisted in it; for we have sworn on his body and on his blood to suffer death together for the confession of his name." By these words and other similar ones he so encouraged his companion to sustain the combat that the latter, instead of wavering as before, cried with a strong voice: "Add tortures to tortures, and let there be no cruelties that you do not exercise against us; whatever torments my brother suffers, I am ready to suffer them." They were then burnt with plates of red-hot iron, they were torn with iron claws, they were tormented long and in a thousand ways; the executioners, fearing at last that their patience would serve rather to convert the Arians than to shake the Catholics, were constrained to leave them, all the more as one saw in them neither bruises nor any other mark of the torments they endured. They arrived nevertheless happily at the palm of martyrdom. And at the same time two merchants, who were of the city of Carthage, and who both bore the name of Frumentius, were put to death; and, by a happy bargain, bought with the price of their blood the evangelical pearl and the kingdom of heaven.

The Arians exiled besides a great number of ecclesiastics of Carthage. There were found among them many children destined for the service of the altars; twelve were sent for to bring them back to Carthage. At the sight of the persecutors, they embraced the knees of their companions, and violence had to be employed to tear them away. Each day they were cruelly whipped and beaten with sticks; but it was impossible to obtain from them anything contrary to their faith: they confessed Jesus Christ generously to the end.

Victor of Utica reports still the victories of many other Saints, martyred under the same Hunneric; but as it is only these who are named on this day in the Roman martyrology, we shall content ourselves with the narrative we have just made. The persecution of this prince raged particularly in the year 484.

Saint Toribio or Turibius, archbishop of Lima (1606) — 23 March

1606. — Pope: Paul V. — King of Spain: Philip III.

The balance of the sanctuary is the doctrine, the morality of Jesus Christ: it is on this doctrine and this morality that the examination of our whole life will turn, on the day of justice.

Saint Toribio or Turibius,[1] second son of the lord of Mogrovejo, in Spain, was born on 16 November 1538. He made known from his childhood a decided taste for virtue and an extreme horror of sin. Having one day met a poor woman transported with anger on the occasion of a loss she had just made, he spoke to her in the most touching manner on the fault she was committing, and gave her, to appease her, the value of the thing she had lost. He had a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin; each day he recited her office with the rosary, and he fasted every Saturday in her honour. While he attended the public schools he cut off a part of his dinner, though very frugal, to assist the poor with it. He carried the austerities of mortification so far that it was necessary to moderate his zeal. He began his higher studies at Valladolid, and went to complete them at Salamanca.

King Philip II, who knew him early, made particular account of him. He rewarded his merit by distinguished posts, and made him president or first magistrate of Granada. The Saint filled this charge during the space of five years with an integrity, a prudence and a virtue which acquired for him a general esteem. It is thus that God prepared the ways for his elevation in the Church.

The unhappy state in which religion was in Peru required a pastor who should be truly animated by the spirit of the Apostles; and this pastor grace had formed in the person of Turibius. The archbishopric of Lima having become vacant, he was named to it by the king. Never perhaps was a choice seen more universally approved. Turibius was regarded as the only man capable of remedying the scandals which hindered the conversion of the infidels. The Saint was consternated on learning the news of his nomination: he cast himself at the feet of his crucifix, and there, melting into tears, he prayed God not to permit a burden to be imposed on him which could not fail to crush him. He wrote to the king's council letters in which he

represented his incapacity in the strongest colours; he passed then to the canons of the Church which expressly forbid the raising of laymen to the episcopate; but no regard was had to his letter, and he had to give his consent. His humility however did not remain without reward; it was for him the source of those abundant graces whose effect was manifested afterwards in the exercise of his ministry.

Turibius wished to receive the four minor orders on four different Sundays, in order to have time to perform their functions; he received afterwards the other orders, then was consecrated bishop. He embarked without delay for Peru, and landed near Lima in 1581. He was then in the forty-third year of his age. The diocese of Lima has a hundred and thirty leagues of extent along the coast, and comprises, besides several cities, an innumerable multitude of villages and hamlets scattered over the double chain of the Andes, which are counted among the highest mountains of the world. Some chiefs of the Europeans who first made the conquest of this country had let themselves be led by the motions of an inordinate ambition and an insatiable avarice; they had stripped themselves of every sentiment of humanity and had treated the savages rather as tyrants than as conquerors. The country was afterwards set ablaze by the fire of civil wars and domestic dissensions. There was everywhere nothing but cruelties and perfidies, treasons and disorders. In vain the court of Spain wished to oppose the evil: it had thrown such deep roots that it appeared incurable.

The holy Archbishop was moved to tears at the sight of so many evils, and he resolved to undertake everything to arrest their course. A consummate prudence, joined to an active and vigorous zeal, smoothed all difficulties for him. Little by little he succeeded in extirpating public scandals and in establishing the reign of piety on the ruins of vice. Immediately after his arrival he undertook the visitation of his vast diocese. It would not be possible to give a just idea of the fatigues and dangers which he had to undergo. He was seen climbing steep mountains, covered with ice or snow, in order to go and carry words of consolation and of life into the poor cabins of the Indians. Often he travelled on foot; and as apostolic labours bear fruit only so far as God seconds them, he prayed and fasted unceasingly to draw divine mercy on the souls entrusted to his care. He placed everywhere learned and zealous pastors, and procured the help of instruction and of the sacraments for those who inhabited the most inaccessible rocks. Persuaded that fidelity to discipline influences manners much, he made it one of the important objects of his solicitude. He ordained that in future diocesan synods should be held every two years and provincial synods every seven years. He was inflexible with regard to the scandals of the clergy, above all when it was a question of avarice. As soon as the rights of God and of the neighbour were injured, he took up their defence without regard to the quality of persons; he showed himself at once the scourge of public sinners and the protector of the oppressed. The firmness of his zeal raised up persecutions against him from the governors of Peru, people who, before the arrival of the virtuous viceroy Francis of Toledo, blushed not to sacrifice everything to their passions and private interests. He opposed to them only gentleness and patience, without however relaxing anything of the holiness of the rules; and as some bad Christians gave to the law of God an interpretation which favoured the disordered inclinations of nature, he represented to them, after Tertullian, that Jesus Christ “called himself the truth, and not custom,” and that at his tribunal our actions would be weighed, not in the false balance of the world, but in the balance of the sanctuary. With such a conduct the holy Archbishop could not fail to extirpate the most inveterate abuses:[2] they were accordingly seen to disappear almost all. The maxims of the Gospel took the upper hand; and they were practised with a fervour worthy of the first centuries of Christianity.

Turibius, to extend and to perpetuate the work of his zeal, founded seminaries, churches, hospitals, without being willing to permit that his name should be inserted in the deeds of foundation. When he was at Lima he visited every day the poor sick in the hospitals; he consoled them with a paternal goodness and administered the sacraments to them himself. The plague having attacked a part of his diocese, he deprived himself of his necessaries in order to provide for the needs of the unfortunate. He recommended penance as the only means of appeasing the irritated heaven; he assisted at the processions, melting into tears; and with his eyes fixed on

a crucifix, he offered himself to God for the preservation of his flock. To these acts of religion he joined prayers, watchings and extraordinary fasts, which he continued as long as the plague made its ravages felt.

He affronted the greatest perils when it was a question of procuring for a soul the smallest spiritual advantage. He would have wished to give his life for his flock; and he was unceasingly in the disposition to suffer everything for the love of him who redeemed men by the effusion of his blood. When he learned that poor Indians were wandering on the mountains and in the deserts, he entered into the sentiments of the good shepherd and went to seek these strayed sheep. The hope of bringing them back to the fold sustained him in the midst of the fatigues and dangers which he was obliged to undergo. He was seen traversing without fear frightful solitudes inhabited by lions and tigers. He made the visitation of his diocese three times. The first of his visitations lasted seven years, the second five, and the third a little less. The conversion of an innumerable multitude of infidels was the fruit of it. The Saint, being on the road, occupied himself either in praying or in conversing of spiritual things. His first care, on arriving anywhere, was to go to the church to pour out his heart at the foot of the altars. The instruction of the poor retained him sometimes two or three days in the same place, although the most necessary things for life were lacking there. The most inaccessible places were honoured by his presence. In vain were represented to him the dangers to which he exposed his life; he answered that, Jesus Christ having descended from heaven for the salvation of men, a pastor ought to be disposed to suffer everything for his glory. He preached and catechised with an indefatigable zeal; and it was to put himself in a state to fulfil better this important function that he learnt, at a very advanced age, the different languages which the savages of Peru spoke. He said Mass every day with an angelic piety, making a long meditation before and after this great action. He confessed ordinarily every morning to purify himself more perfectly from the least stains. The glory of God was the end of all his words and all his actions, which rendered his prayer continual. Nevertheless he had still hours marked out for prayer; then he withdrew in private and treated with God of his needs as well as of those of his flock. In those moments a certain exterior lustre shone on his face. His humility yielded not to his other virtues: hence that extreme care to hide his mortifications and his other good works. His charity for the poor was immense; his liberality embraced them all indistinctly. He interested himself however in a particular manner in the needs of the bashful poor.

Our Saint had the glory of renewing the face of the Church of Peru; and if he was not its first apostle, he was at least the restorer of piety, which was nearly generally extinguished there. The decrees passed by the provincial councils which were held under him will be for ever authentic monuments of his zeal, his piety, his knowledge and his prudence. They have been regarded as oracles, not only in the New World, but also in Europe and at Rome itself.

Turibius fell sick at Santa, a town which is a hundred and ten leagues from Lima: he was then occupied in making the visitation of his diocese. He predicted his death and promised a reward to him who should first inform him that the physicians despaired of his life. He gave to his servants all that served for his use; the rest of his goods was bequeathed to the poor. He wished to be carried to the church to receive the holy Viaticum; but he was obliged to receive Extreme Unction in his bed. He repeated continually these words of Saint Paul: “I desire to be loosed from the bonds of the body, to be reunited to Jesus Christ.” In his last moments he had sung by those who were around his bed these other words: “I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: We shall go into the house of the Lord.” He died on 23 March 1606, saying with the Prophet: “Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” The following year his body was transported to Lima, and it was found without any mark of corruption. The author of his life and the acts of his canonisation report that in his lifetime he raised a dead man and healed several maladies. After his death, several miracles were wrought by the virtue of his intercession.[3] Turibius was beatified in 1679 by Innocent XI, and canonised in 1726 by Benedict XIII. Saint Toribio, whom he is also called Saint Thorive, is represented giving alms to the poor. From his youth in Spain he had received the name of father of the poor; but become archbishop, he put no more bounds to his alms, he called the poor willingly his creditors. — He is honoured particularly in Peru.

Godescard drew this life, which we borrow from him, from the Acts of the canonisation, and from the life of the holy bishop of Lima, by Cyprian de Herrera.

Saint Liberatus, martyr (484) — 23 March

The history that we are going to relate to you is not long, but it is very instructive, since it will make you understand the difference that exists between carnal or natural love and spiritual love, which has its source in God.

“Five hundred years after Jesus Christ, there was in Africa a celebrated physician, named Liberatus, who was imprisoned for the faith, with his wife, but each separately, so that they could neither see nor speak to one another. Someone went falsely to tell the wife: ‘Be no longer rebellious to the orders of the king; your husband has submitted to them.’ She answered: ‘I wish first to see him; afterwards I shall do what God will inspire me.’

“She was led to the Forum, where she found her husband and an immense crowd. Indignant at the sight of Liberatus, for she had given credit to the lie that had been told her, she apostrophised him sharply in these terms: ‘Wretch, what hast thou done? For some moments of earthly happiness thou hast renounced the grace of God and eternal happiness! Of what use to thee will be the riches that thou mayest still acquire? Will they preserve thee from the eternal flames?’ Liberatus answered her: ‘Art thou mad? Of what art thou speaking? Who could tell thee that I had renounced the faith? Never shall I cease to adore Jesus Christ, as every true Catholic Christian must do.’ In this manner the imposture of the heretics was confounded. Liberatus was therefore exiled with his wife and his children. But before expelling them, it was wished to try yet one last effort: an attempt was made to appeal to their feelings for their children. They began by shutting up the parents and the children separately. Liberatus could not help weeping, but his wife said to him: ‘Wilt thou lose thy soul on account of thy children? From this day they are no longer ours, but Jesus Christ’s, who will know well how to take care of them. Dost thou not hear that they too cry out: We are Christians?’”

Another historian reports that later Liberatus died a martyr, at the same time as his heroic wife.

Abridged from A. Stolz, Lives of the Saints.

Saint Philothea, virgin (1430) — 23 March

O power of virtue! Here is a poor girl whose very name is not known and who nevertheless, by her love of heaven, has left a memory whose sweet perfume has crossed the centuries! This pious virgin, who has been surnamed Philothea, on account of her ardent love for God, came into the world in a village near Nuremberg, in Germany. She was poor and she was beautiful. What dangers to run in such conditions! However, the good education which she received from her parents opened to her the paths of virtue, from which, God helping, she never strayed. — At the age of fourteen years, she offered to the Lord, like a bouquet of sweet odour, the lily of her virginity: it was not with impunity that she thus declared war on the passions and on the tempting demon. Satan sent his legions to frighten her by great noises, as formerly Saint Antony; but the name of Jesus is powerful; Satan ruined neither the house inhabited by the holy girl, nor the edifice, a thousand times more precious, of her virtues.

One day — it was an autumn day — she began to desire to know whether the Saviour Jesus loved her. Now, while she was working at her little garden, whose vegetables nourished her, she saw suddenly rise in a corner of bare earth beautiful violets, which perfumed the air and rejoiced her heart no less than her eyes. This amiable answer of the heavenly Spouse did not fail to trouble her somewhat: nevertheless she gathered the sweet little flowers and kept them carefully, that they might serve to recall to her unceasingly the gardens of heaven, paradise, whose name means: garden of delights.

Now, later, the sweet child began to doubt: she feared that the violets might have come naturally. She asked therefore the divine Betrothed for another testimony of his love. Jesus did not despise the prayer of his artless lover: in the very place where the miraculous flowers had grown, he had his angels deposit a ring sparkling with brilliants, on the bezel of which two clasped hands were engraved. O blessed Philothea, who shall tell your joy when your glance met this gift of heaven? She fell on her knees to gather the ring, kissed it, put it on her finger and never left it until her death.

Philothea confessed often and communicated every time she was permitted. He who entered into her soul under the sacramental species wished to give a last mark of his tenderness to this simple child of the fields, happier in her humble retreat than the queens of the earth in their palaces: the divine Saviour showed himself to her ravished eyes under the form of a child whom she could press in her arms and cover with chaste kisses. A short time after, Philothea left her mortal remains to the earth, which will keep them until the last day, while her soul went to enjoy in heaven, face to face, the presence of her beloved Jesus. It was in the year 1430.

Divers collections of Lives of Saints.

Blessed Joseph Oriol (1702) — 23 March

Joseph Oriol was born at Barcelona in 1650; he lost his father while still in the cradle: happily the shoemaker whom his mother married again was a pious man who loved the orphan as his son. Entrusted early to the care of the chaplains of Santa Maria del Mar, Joseph filled the functions of choir-boy at the same time as he learned to read and write; his piety drew already the looks and attention, for he often passed long hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. By the care of the chaplains, who thought of making him a priest later, he followed the courses of the university. His mother had fallen into misery through the death of her second husband; he found a refuge with his nurse, a poor woman of the people, but very attached to the child whom she had held at the baptismal font. The conduct of Joseph Oriol was exemplary; loved by his comrades and cherished by his masters, he was seen to go out only to go to church or to betake himself to the classes of the university. His life passed thus for seven years. He was visited by a malady of which God healed him suddenly without the help of art. In 1674 he received the title of doctor, and in 1013 he was raised to the priesthood. To relieve his mother, he entered as tutor into a powerful house; the exemplary and penitent life which he led there caused him to be considered and venerated there as a saint. At twenty-seven years, following a miracle by which God made him understand that he was far from perfection, he devoted himself to a continual fast which lasted to the end of his life: bread and water taken in small quantity, and toward evening, were his only nourishment. His austerities could not remain hidden, and it was often for him, in the streets of Barcelona, the occasion of insults and outrages which rejoiced his heart. The linen he wore was coarse and covered rough hair-shirts; he ill-treated his flesh with cruelty, scourging himself to blood, sleeping only two hours each night and on a chair.

In 1686 he lost his mother; relieved by death of the care of feeding her, he set out for Rome. He made the journey on foot, and nothing could express the joy which he felt in visiting the tombs of the Apostles and the sanctuaries of the eternal city. In 1687, after several months' stay at Rome, Innocent XI gave him a benefice at Barcelona; he returned therefore to his native city, where he continued to live in the most complete poverty. He had rented on the highest floor of a house a little room in which there was found for all furniture a crucifix, a table, a bench and some books; this sufficed him; as to the revenues of his benefice, they passed entire into the hands of the poor. His solicitude for the suffering members of Jesus Christ extended to the other world, and he saw to it that Masses should be said for the repose of their souls. The time which he gave neither to the poor nor to prayer was consecrated to hearing confessions. He directed many souls in the ways of the highest perfection; he was reproached with being too austere in his direction, with permitting his penitents mortifications which harmed their health; on this accusation the bishop forbade him confession, but

the Saint announced that this would last little; in effect, the bishop died soon after, and he who succeeded him gave him back all his powers. He found still the means of instructing little children, and of evangelising the soldiers, whom he won by his gentleness and affection. Suddenly he felt himself seized with the desire of martyrdom, and set out from Barcelona without warning anyone, to go and labour at the conversion of the infidels. Two priests who met him had much trouble in making him understand that such an enterprise required reflection, and in bringing him back with them. When the people knew what had just passed, they gathered in crowds around him to beseech him not to abandon them, but his resolution was unshakable; he made his will and set out for Rome, in order to put himself at the disposal of the Propaganda. He had with him no resource, but Providence provided for the few needs of its servant; he fell ill at Marseilles. The Blessed Virgin appeared to him, and told him that God, content with his sacrifice, ordered him to return to Barcelona, to consecrate the rest of his life to the care of the sick and to their cure. He was 47 years old.

His life from then on was no more than a perpetual miracle, all nature seemed to obey him. The boat on which he had embarked to return to his native city was assailed by a frightful tempest; the Saint made the sign of the cross over the sea, and the winds subsided, and the waves grew calm. During this short voyage the sailors often saw him in ecstasy, raised several feet above the deck of the boat. When he entered Barcelona, the joy was general; everyone blessed God at seeing the Saint return; the poor above all shed tears on seeing their protector again. He wrought successively several miracles, the report of which spread through the city, and the sick ran to him to receive the cure of their infirmities; his reputation extending more and more, he was visited from more than two hundred leagues. Before laying his hands on those who implored the relief of their ills, he made them a little exhortation, and engaged those who were in a state of mortal sin to go first to confess and to return afterwards. The miracles multiplied on the steps of Joseph Oriol, and a volume would have to be written if one wished to give the detail of them.

He had a thousand ingenious means of hiding his miracles and of causing their cause to be attributed to anything other than his holiness. His confessor having forbidden him to work miracles in the church on account of the tumult which resulted from it, the Saint obeyed, and would not work one more, until this same confessor, having broken his thigh, was obliged to give back to the Saint the permission which he had taken from him. The demon, jealous of the servant of God, and having been unable to gain any victory over his soul, set about ill-treating his body. The Saint came out several times all bloody from the hands of his enemy. God granted to Joseph Oriol, with the gift of miracles, the gift of prophecy; he foretold several events which were accomplished to the letter; he announced the hour of his death.

The malady which was to lead him to the tomb took him on 8 March 1702. He wished to die poor as he had lived; during the fifteen days that he suffered, his friends did not leave him an instant, and as he saw them weeping, he strove to console them, promising to love them in heaven even better than he had loved them on earth. After having received the last sacraments on the 22nd, he asked that the *Stabat Mater* should be sung to him, and expired fixing his eyes on the crucifix.

He was aged fifty-two years and four months (23 March 1702). The crowd which ran to see him on his death-bed was such that there was much trouble in restraining it. His funeral was magnificent, but it was necessary to close the church in order to proceed to his burial. All the objects which had belonged to him had been shared as relics. Pius VII beatified Joseph Oriol on 15 May 1806.

Divers collections of Lives of Saints.

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[1] See this day.

[2] Baronius is mistaken here both as to the place of the martyrdom and as to the number of those who endured it. Saint Nicon was a native of Naples, and it is at Taormina, in Sicily, that he was put to death with a hundred and ninety-nine others, under the reign of Decius. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, at 23 March.

[3] Saint Domitius suffered under Julian the Apostate: he was of Phrygia. There is no information on the Martyrs whom Baronius joins to him in the same mention, except that all are honoured among the Greeks. *AA. SS.*

[4] Saint Eusebius is celebrated for his charity. This virtue, which ought to make the character of a good pastor, appeared in him with much brilliance. It was the presage and the cause of his elevation to the sovereign priesthood: one day when he had listened to the complaints of the poor, he was suddenly proclaimed bishop by the people and the clergy. His life was so holy that no difficulty was made in comparing him to the Apostles. Like them he preached without respite the word of God; he had the consolation and the glory of bringing back double to heaven the talent that the Lord had entrusted to him. (Boyer de Sainte-Marthe, *History of the Church of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux*, pp. 10–12.)

[5] See his life in the volume consecrated to the Venerables.

[6] See his notice at 25 March.

[7] See our *Seraphic*, vol. iii.

[8] See above, page 499.

[9] See 14 December.

[10] See, in the life of Saint Fulgentius, on 1 January, a note on the Vandals.

[11] Turibius Alphonsus Mogrovejo.

[12] The Indians were plunged in infamous disorders; they were passionate above all for the wines of Spain; they gave all their gold to have them, and their drunkenness ceased only when they had no more to drink: but the Europeans were not less guilty in treating them with the utmost cruelty. They carried avarice to such a point that, to glut it, they left every sentiment of religion and humanity. The missionaries wished in vain to oppose the scandal caused by their compatriots; they were not listened to. The Dominican Fathers addressed themselves more than once to the court of Spain to ask for the suppression of an evil which hindered the progress of the Gospel and which attacked the most sacred rights of humanity. At last Ferdinand, king of Castile, declared the Indians free, and the Spaniards to employ them henceforth to carry burdens, and to use stick or whip to chastise them. The emperor Charles V gave severe orders to prevent their being ill-treated, and even made wise regulations in their favour: but they were not conformed to. The officers who styled themselves conquerors of Mexico and Peru did not like to be controlled. Bartholomew de Las Casas, Dominican and bishop of Chiapa, in New Spain, made four journeys to the court of Castile, where he pleaded strongly the cause of the Indians. He obtained ample rescripts from the king, and was declared protector of the Indians in America; but something else was needed to reduce men who were armed. Las Casas, despairing of seeing things change face, gave up his bishopric into the hands of the Pope in 1551, and returned to the convent of Valladolid. Restored to retirement, he composed two books entitled, the one *On the destruction of the Indians by the Spaniards*; the other, *On the tyranny of the Spaniards in the Indies*. He dedicated them to King Philip II. The governors of Peru found apologists. Unhappily for them, they were defended only by overturning the principles of natural right and the right of nations. The archbishop of Seville and the universities of Salamanca and Alcalá prevented the printing of the work of these apologists.

The two books of Las Casas having been translated into French, the people of the Low Countries, who had taken arms against the Spaniards, read them eagerly; they applied to the Spaniards in general what was said of the governors of Peru, and took thence occasion to obstinate themselves more and more in their revolt: but that was reasoning ill. A nation is not responsible for the crimes of some individuals. The country whence some monsters came had produced a great number of holy missionaries animated by a truly apostolic zeal, and zealous defenders of the Indians. The great argument of Las Casas rested on this principle, that a conquered people could not, without injustice, be reduced to the condition of slaves. The king's council and the theologians adopted this principle, with regard to the Indians who had not been taken with arms in hand. See Father Charlevoix, *Hist. de Saint-Domingue*.

[13] See, on the miracles wrought by the intercession of Saint Turibius, the Acts of his canonisation, and Benedict XIV, *de serv. Dei canoniz.*, Rome, 1738, in-fol., vol. iv, *Tr. de miraculis*, ch. 16, p. 196.

24 March

Martyrologies

[Daily martyrology blocks (Roman; of France, revised and augmented; of the religious Orders; additions after the Bollandists and other hagiographers).]

24th DAY OF MARCH

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY.

At Rome, the holy martyrs Mark and Timothy, who, under the emperor Antoninus, were crowned with martyrdom.[1] 2nd c. — In the same place, Saint Epigmenius,[2] priest, who accomplished his martyrdom by the sword, under the judge Turpius, in the persecution of Diocletian. — Again at Rome, the martyrdom of Saint Pigmenius,[3] priest, who, under Julian the Apostate, was thrown into the Tiber for the faith of Jesus Christ, and perished drowned in the river. 363. — At Caesarea in Palestine, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs

Timolaus, Dionysius, Pausides, Romulus, Alexander, another Alexander, Agapius, and another Dionysius, who, having been struck with the axe under the governor Urbanus, in the persecution of Diocletian, merited the crowns of eternal life. 303. — In Mauritania, the birth into heaven of Saint Romulus and Saint Secundus, brothers, who suffered for the faith of Christ. 304. — At Trent, the martyrdom of Saint Simeon, a little child, cruelly massacred by the Jews, and who afterwards shone by numerous miracles. 1475. — At Synnada, in Phrygia, Saint Agapetus,[4] bishop. — At Brescia, Saint Latinus, bishop. — In Syria, Saint Seleucus, confessor.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

In England, Saint Hildelith, brought up in France, abbess of Barking, in the county of Essex, near London.[5] About 720. — At Cologne, Saint Joannet or Janot, a young child taken at Siegburg while he was going to school, and killed by Jews in hatred of the Christian religion, like Saint Simeon, honoured on the same day. — In the diocese of Châlons, anniversary of the Apparition of Our Lady of the Thorn.

MARTYROLOGIES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

Martyrology of the Trinitarians. — At Rome, Blessed Joseph-Mary Tommasi, regular cleric, priest, cardinal of the holy Roman Church, confessor, who, during his earthly life, bore the patronage of the whole Order of the Most Holy Trinity, for the redemption of captives, before the Holy See. 1713.

Martyrology of Saint Dominic. — The feast of Saint Gabriel, archangel …

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — Solemn memory of Saint Gabriel, archangel …

Martyrology of the Capuchins. — The feast of Saint Gabriel, archangel, who announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary the mystery of the Incarnation of the Lord, whose office is celebrated throughout the Order of Minors, by concession of Pope Alexander VI.

ADDITIONS MADE AFTER THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS.

At Seleucia, in Pisidia, Saint Artemon, ordained bishop of that city by Saint Paul, at the time of his passage through that country. 1st c. — At Caesarea in Palestine, thirty-five martyrs whose names are unknown, and who suffered under Julian the Apostate. 363. — Among the Greeks, Saint Zacharias, recluse; and Saint Martin, of Thebes. — In Ireland, Saint Domangart, bishop, son of the tyrant Eochaid; Saint Patrick, after having cursed the father, blessed the son. This one has been supposed brother of Saint Muran. 6th c. — At Catania, in Sicily, Saint Severus, bishop. About 800. — At Brescia, in Italy, Saint Latinus, bishop: he succeeded, in the year 88, Saint Viator, and died under Domitian. He was buried and has been honoured in the church of Saint Afra, which he had, it is said, caused to be raised. — At Asti, in Piedmont, Saint Bernulf, bishop of that city, martyr and patron of Mondovì. He was massacred by the Saracens, who had invaded France and Italy. 10th c. — At Bucchianico, in the Hither Abruzzo, Saint Aldemar, priest and religious of Monte Cassino. 11th c. — In Tuscany, Blessed Bertha, of the congregation of Vallombrosa. 1163. — At Norwich, in England, Saint William, child and martyr, also massacred by the Jews. 1137. — In Sweden, Saint Catherine, daughter of Saint Bridget, who, after the death of her husband, having remained a virgin, became the companion of her mother, whose remains she later brought back to Sweden.[6] 1381.

Saint Simeon or Simon, child, martyr (1475) — 24 March

1475. — Pope: Sixtus IV. — Emperor: Frederick III.

The city of Trent, bordering on Italy and Germany, and very renowned for the famous general Council which was celebrated there in the sixteenth century, saw itself bloodied, nearly a hundred years before, by the murder of an innocent, whom the Jews put to death. This child was called Simon, or, as some authors say, Simeon. His father was named Andrew, and his mother Mary; Catholics, but poor, they dwelt in a place

called the Ditch, at the end of the same city. He was born in the year 1472, on 26 November, a Friday, a day particularly destined to the memory of the Passion of the Saviour, whose likeness he was to bear. It happened then that some Jews, who dwelt at Trent, preparing for their paschal ceremonies, wished to have a Christian child to put to death.

They engaged one of them, called Tobias, to commit this detestable theft, and to bring them, at whatever price, one of the little Christian children he should find in the city. He did not fail; meeting this little Simeon, who was beautiful as an angel, aged only twenty-nine months, less three days, he stole him at the very door of his parents' house, in that place of the Ditch, and carried him noiselessly to a Jew called Samuel, where all the others of that reprobate nation had a rendezvous. It is not easy to express the howlings that these wolves uttered on seeing in their power this innocent lamb.

On the evening from Thursday to Friday of Holy Week, they carried him into their synagogue to an old man named Moses, who first stripped him, and, for fear that by his little cries he should make himself heard by the neighbourhood and thus cause their cruelty to be discovered, this wretch wound a handkerchief round his neck to stifle his voice. Holding him thus on his knees, after cruelties which chaste ears cannot hear, he cut a piece from his right cheek, which he put in a basin; then all the bystanders each took off a part of his living flesh and collected his blood to suck it and feed on it.

When the miserable chief of these infanticides had glutted himself with the flesh and blood of this child, he raised him upright on his feet, though already half dead; and, having commanded one of his executioners, named Samuel, to hold him with arms extended in the form of a crucifix, he exhorted all the others to pierce him with needles in all his innocent limbs, without leaving him a single place, from the sole of the feet to the head, which had not its own wound. This martyrdom lasted not less than an hour, during which these furious tigers, in order not to be touched by the dying plaints of this poor child, themselves howled like madmen, saying these words in their language: "Let us kill this one like Jesus, the God of the Christians, who is nothing, and let our enemies thus be for ever confounded." At last this innocent Martyr raised his eyes to heaven as if to take it to witness the tortures he was made to endure unjustly, then, lowering them toward earth, he rendered his spirit to Him for whose glory he was dying. It was Good Friday, 24 March, in the year of Our Lord 1475. The Jews, thinking to cover their crime, hid this little body under casks of wine, in a cellar; but the report of it was already spreading in the city, by the voice of the other children who, seeing Simeon's parents in distress, cried publicly that he must be sought in the houses of the Jews. These wretches, for fear of being discovered, threw him into a stream which flowed beneath the synagogue; and, to appear still more innocent, gave notice to the judges that in such a spot there appeared a body on the water. Justice went there and found this victim treated in the manner just stated. The bishop, assisted by his clergy, had him transported like a precious relic to the church of Saint Peter. God, whom this blessed Simeon, virgin, martyr and innocent, had glorified, not by speaking but by suffering, as formerly the little innocents whom Herod had massacred in Judea; God, I say, has also glorified him on his side by the multitude of miracles which have been wrought by the touch and in the presence of his sacred remains. As for the Jews who had committed this murder, they did not escape, even in this world, the avenging hand of God; for justice, having seized them, made them pay the penalties which were due to so unheard-of a cruelty.

The martyrdom of this most holy Innocent is excellently written in the second volume of Surius, by John Matthias Tiberinus, doctor of medicine, who had visited his holy body by order of the bishop, and who dedicated his history to the Senate and people of Brescia. The Roman Church has made so much account of it that she has inserted it in her martyrology, on 24 March, the day on which it happened. See Surius and the Bollandists, who have inserted the instruction of the trial and the report of the physician Tiberinus, who visited the body of the young Martyr. See also Martène, *Ampl. coll.*, vol. ii; Benedict XIV, *de canoniz.*, book i, ch. 14, and the life of Saint William of Norwich, which we give on this day.

Saint William of Norwich, martyr in England (1137) — 24 March

This Saint was also the victim of the implacable hatred of the Jews against our holy religion. He suffered in the twelfth year of his age: he was lately apprenticed to a tanner of Norwich. The Jews drew him into their house some time before the feast of Easter of the year 1137; when they were masters of him, they put a gag in his mouth, then, after having done him a thousand outrages, they crucified him, and pierced his side, in derision of the death of Jesus Christ. On Easter day they tied his body in a sack, and carried it near the gates of the city, with the design of burning it there; but having been surprised, they left it hanging from a tree. On the spot where he had been found a chapel was built, known under the name of Saint-William-in-the-Wood. The body of the Saint, who had been glorified by miracles, was carried, in 1144, into the cemetery of the cathedral church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity; it was put six years after in the choir of the same church.

We learn from Mr. Weever that formerly the Jews of the principal cities of England carried off male children to circumcise them, crown them with thorns, scourge them and crucify them in derision of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It was in this manner that Saint Richard of Pontoise died. Matthew Paris and Capgrave report also that Saint Hugh, a child, was crucified by the Jews at Lincoln, in 1254. Some authors have pretended that these horrible cruelties had been practised in all times by this people: but this is a calumny, and natural equity forbids making the body of the nation responsible for the crimes of some individuals. The name of Saint William of Norwich is marked on 24 March in the English calendars. Pope Benedict XIV shows, book i *de Canoniz.* ch. 14, p. 103, that one ought not to canonise children who die after baptism and before the use of reason, although they are Saints. He founds himself: 1° on this, that they have not practised virtues in the degree of heroism required for canonisation; 2° on this, that such canonisations have never been in use in the Church. An exception is made for children, even unbaptised, who have been massacred in hatred of the name of Jesus Christ. We have an example of it in the holy Innocents, to whom Saint Irenaeus, Origen, etc., and the most ancient Missals give the title of martyrs, and whose cult dates from the first centuries of the Church, as we see by the homilies of the Fathers on their feast. It is for the same reason that there have been put in the number of martyrs the children massacred by the Jews, in hatred of Jesus Christ, such as Saint Simon of Trent, Saint William of Norwich, Saint Richard of Paris, etc. The diocesan bishop decreed to the first a public cult with the quality of martyr, and this cult was confirmed by the decrees of the popes Sixtus V and Gregory XIII. The second, who was twelve years old, and consequently the age of reason, ought rather to be called adult than child. See the history of his martyrdom and his miracles, by Thomas of Monmouth, a contemporary author; the Saxon chronicle, which is of the same century, and the history of Norfolk, by Blomefield.

Our Lady of the Thorn [Notre-Dame de l’Épine], in the diocese of Châlons — 24 March

The beautiful and magnificent church of l’Épine has always excited the surprise and admiration of those who visit it; and the numerous strangers, on seeing it for the first time, are astonished that a village so inconsiderable possesses a monument worthy certainly, by its architecture and its proportions, of being put in parallel with the noble and ancient cathedrals of the Christian world. Many even ask every day whether it was not formerly a more important town, reduced to its present state by time, by civil or foreign wars and by the proximity of the city of Châlons. They do not know that it is to its church alone that l’Épine owes its existence.

This village, situated about nine kilometres from Châlons-sur-Marne, on the high road from that city to Metz, and composed today of four hundred and sixty-one inhabitants, was, at the end of the twelfth century, only a hamlet, or rather a manor-house with a farm, bearing the name of Sainte-Marie. This domain, as well as the land of Melette, belonged to the monastery of Toussaints, near Châlons, and to the Benedictine religious of Saint-Jean of Laon; it was sold only later, in 1550, to the noble family of Clément, thenceforth surnamed de

l'Épine. Independently of this manor-house, there was, at the place where is now the chapel of Saint John the Baptist, in the church of l'Épine, a little oratory dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and to the holy Precursor of Jesus Christ. It was a chapel of help and a dependency of the parish church of Melette, which, today a simple hamlet of l'Épine, was at that epoch a rather important village on the road from Châlons to Sainte-Menehould, extending along the river Vesle, nearly to the territory of Saint-Étienne-au-Temple, and forming the seventh canton of Courtisols.

Two hundred years after, during one of the most deplorable epochs of our history, when the English and the Burgundians were tearing France, on the site of this modest oratory a vast church rose from its foundations and lifted itself as if by enchantment. When one contemplates the architecture of this monument, when one admires the riches which are displayed on the flanks of its naves, which cluster on its portals, which shelter under its archivolts, or spring forth on its pillars, the thought is carried naturally to the causes which could have brought about this foundation in times when Champagne, like the rest of France, was a prey to the horrors of war. If we question the chronicles and the traditions, here is what they teach us. In the year 1400, on 24 March, eve of the feast of the Annunciation, a shepherd of the farm of Sainte-Marie, and another of Courtisols, of the canton of the Ayeuls, near Châlons-sur-Marne, finding themselves toward evening in the neighbourhood of the chapel of Saint John the Baptist, guarding their flocks, perceived suddenly at some distance, in the midst of a large thorn bush, a brilliant light. At this sight the sheep and the ewes fled all frightened toward the plain; the lambs alone dared approach the bush. Curious to know what might be the cause of this extraordinary light, the two shepherds came also on their side, but they were so dazzled by its brilliance that they fell fainting and remained for some time unconscious. Having at last recovered from this weakness which fright had caused, they discovered in the midst of the bush a little statue of the Blessed Virgin holding her Son in her arms. The light increasing as night approached, people ran there from all the places whence it could be perceived, particularly from the villages of Courtisols, of Melette and of La Croisette, and, by an astonishing prodigy, it lasted all night as well as the following day. As the place is very elevated and dominates on all sides a vast plain, it was seen from more than ten leagues around, say the chronicles.

The brightness having dissipated and the report of this event having soon spread, the bishop of Châlons, at the head of his chapter, the parish priests of the neighbouring villages with that of Melette, and a considerable crowd betook themselves in procession to the place to venerate the image of the Virgin; and although it was still only the month of March, all remarked with astonishment that the bush, which at first had appeared all in flames, was covered with foliage and with as beautiful a verdure as it could have been in full summer. Having taken up the statue, the bishop transported it with respect into the chapel of Saint John the Baptist.

Placed later in the church of l'Épine, this statue of the Blessed Virgin, about fifty centimetres high, of a rather yellow stone, of a very fine grain, moderately carved and painted in all its parts, has always been and is still there in great veneration, not only among the inhabitants of the country, but also among the strangers whom it draws there in great number; this is what has rendered this church a place of pilgrimage very much frequented, above all in the month of May, and at the time of the four great feasts of the Annunciation, of the Assumption, of the Nativity and of the Immaculate Conception. At the moment of the French Revolution, entrusted by M. Bertin, parish priest of l'Épine, to an inhabitant of the country whose fidelity and discretion he knew, this statue remained hidden during the Terror, until, less gloomy days having begun to shine on France, the same M. Bertin believed he could undertake to keep it himself.

The bush where the statue was discovered no longer exists. It disappeared when the ground was prepared and the foundations of the Church laid.

The place it occupied at the moment of the event is not known; it is probable that it must have been at the spot where the high altar is erected, the most important object of a Christian Church. There exists at l'Épine a

confraternity of the Blessed Virgin which, in 1859, counted twelve hundred members.

The church of Our Lady of l'Épine has this peculiarity among all the places of pilgrimage dedicated to Mary, that its two principal feasts, the Assumption and the Nativity, are there almost exclusively reserved to little children. Since its foundation, each year, at the time of these two great solemnities, a very great number are brought from all parts to the altar of Mary; some led solely by the piety of their parents, others because they have been placed for a certain time under the protection of the Blessed Virgin.

Extract from a notice on Notre-Dame de l'Épine, by the parish priest of the place.

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[1] Mention is made of these two Martyrs in a letter of Saint Pius I to Justus, bishop of Vienne. Baronius (year 156, n. 1) esteems that Timothy was cousin of Saint Novatus, brother of Saint Pudentiana and Saint Praxedes, son of the senator Pudens and of Priscilla.

[2] Saint Epigmenius is spoken of in the Acts of Saint Crescens, whom Saint Epigmenius had baptised.

[3] The martyrdom of Saint Pigmenius is told in the Acts of Saint Bibiana, 2 December.

[4] Eusebius, says Suidas, praises Saint Agapetus much: he tells marvellous things of him, such as resurrections and other miracles. Maximin (235–238) wished to put him to death while he was a soldier, because his prodigies excited the admiration of everyone. This is what Suidas reports, but these things are not found in the works of Eusebius that remain to us.

[5] Hildelith was an Anglo-Saxon princess who passed into France about the middle of the seventh century. She took the veil there in the monastery of Chelles, in the diocese of Paris — today of Meaux. She was recalled to England to aid, in the government of the monastery of Barking in Essex, Saint Ethelburga, who was its first abbess. Hildelith succeeded her about the year 630 and was buried, after her death, in the church of the abbey. She is named in the calendars of England, and before the Reformation the English honoured her with much devotion. The abbey of Barking subsisted until Henry VIII. It had been founded in 655 by Saint Erkenwald, afterwards bishop of London, who put at its head his sister Saint Ethelburga. Several English authors have pretended that Barking was the first monastery of women founded in England; but that of Folkestone, in the kingdom of Kent, was older.

[6] See 22 March.

25 March

Martyrologies

25th DAY OF MARCH[1]

ROMAN MARTYROLOGY.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. — At Rome, Saint Quirinus, martyr, who, under the emperor Claudius, after the loss of all his goods, after the horrors of the dungeon, after the tearing of the scourge, was killed with the sword and thrown into the Tiber; the Christians found his body in the island of Saint Bartholomew, and buried it in the cemetery of Pontianus. 269. — In the same place, two hundred and sixty blessed Martyrs. — At Sirmium,[2] the passion of Saint Irenaeus, bishop and martyr, who was first afflicted with the most frightful torments, under the governor Probus, in the time of the emperor Maximian, then tortured for several days in the prison, and ended his martyrdom by beheading. 304. — At Nicomedia, Saint Dula, servant of a killed for the preservation of her chastity: which won her the crown of martyrdom. — At Jerusalem, the memory of the holy Thief, who, having confessed Jesus Christ on the cross, merited to hear from his mouth these words: "Thou shalt be today with me in paradise."[3] 33. — At Laodicea, Saint Pelagius, bishop, who, in the time of the emperor Valens, having suffered exile and other ill-treatment for the Catholic faith, rested in the Lord. About 389. — At Pistoia, the holy confessors Baronto and Desiderius. About 700. — In the island of Aindre, now surrounded by the waters of the Loire, Saint Hermeland, abbot, whose glorious life is attested by miracles. About 718.

MARTYROLOGY OF FRANCE, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

At Paris, Saint Richard, a child of twelve years, whom the Jews put to death after having exercised on him unheard-of cruelties; the prodigies which God has since wrought by his intercession show evidently the price and glory of his martyrdom. 1180. — At Marsolles, near Landrecies, in Hainaut, Saint Humbert, confessor,

founder of that monastery. About 682. — At Argensolles, in the diocese of Soissons, Blessed Ida, first abbess of that monastery, of the Order of Cîteaux. About 1250. — At Limoges, Saint Cessator, bishop. About 732. — In the diocese of Nevers, pilgrimage of Our Lady of l'Épeau, especially frequented by young girls who wish to obtain a good husband. This church was founded by Hervé de Donzy and Mahaut de Courtenay. In spite of their riches, these spouses were not happy: they were tormented by remorse for having married, though relatives: they caused the cause of their unhappiness to cease. Our Lady of l'Épeau was raised as the monument of expiation and of gratitude. Such is the foundation of the popular belief of the young girls of the Nivernais. 1214. — In the diocese of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, patronal feast of Our Lady of Good News, place of pilgrimage near that city. This sanctuary was, it is said, raised by the wife of a crusader to thank God and the Virgin for the good news which was announced to her of the return of her husband, whom she no longer hoped to see again. — Not far from La Châtre, in the diocese of Bourges, discovery, in the year 1013, by a young shepherdess, of a miraculous statue of the Virgin floating on the water of a fountain, and foundation of the celebrated pilgrimage of Vaudouan, which exists still in our day. The profaner who, in 1793, dared to tear the statue from the sanctuary and threw it into the fire after having sawn it, bore to the tomb the penalty of his crime: attacked shortly after by a grave malady, he remained bent toward the earth, without ever being able to straighten himself, struck at the place of the vertebral column which the statue had touched in its sacrilegious removal. — At Le Puy en Velay, beginning of the Jubilee of Our Lady, in the years when the feast of the Annunciation falls on Good Friday. — At Fécamp, Our Lady of Salvation. It is the most celebrated sanctuary of the land of Caux, and the most frequented of the pilgrimages of the diocese, after Our Lady of Good Help of Rouen. From the Middle Ages, people came there from Germany, Flanders and other countries to ask for the cessation of the scourges which desolated Europe. In the evil days of the Revolution, the faithful could not be prevented from going to pray there. In our day, they assemble there especially on the Saturdays of March and on the day of the Annunciation, which is the patronal feast. This chapel, so dear to all, is dearer still to sailors. The sailor above all feels how much he loves it, when he must set out for the Newfoundland bank, or for seas still more distant. Never does he leave the shore without having gone beforehand to say a last farewell to it, nor the port without lowering three times in its honour the flag of the ship. On the happy day of return, from as far as they perceive the blessed chapel, they salute it with an *Ave Maria*; and if they have made it some vow in the height of the tempest, hardly are they entered into port and landed, when, silent, eyes lowered, without even looking at their relatives who have run to embrace them, holding in one hand a candle, in the other their tarred hats, bare-headed, shoes on arm, prayer on the lips and gratitude in the heart, they direct themselves toward the sanctuary of Mary. Behind them advance, also in silence, their fathers and mothers, their wives and children, their brothers and friends; they kneel there with all their heart, they accomplish their promises there, and one more ex-voto goes to seek a place among those which already hang on the walls of the chapel. — In the diocese of Rouen, patronal feast of Our Lady of, in the canton of Cany. The statue was, it is said, found by a shepherd. Carried elsewhere, always returned to the coast. It is especially visited by sailors who leave the port of Saint-Valery and return to it. — At Lourdes, in the diocese of Tarbes, the Blessed Virgin appears to Bernadette Soubirous[4] and says to her: "I am the Immaculate Conception." 1858.

ADDITIONS MADE AFTER THE BOLLANDISTS AND OTHER HAGIOGRAPHERS.

At Altona, in Germany, Saint Eynard, hermit. — In England, Saint Aelfwold, bishop of Sherborne. The year 1050. — At Norwich, in England, Saint William, martyr. This is again a child killed by the Jews, like Saint Richard, mentioned above, and several others, immolated notably in the years 1160, 1181, 1205. This one was crucified on the eve of Easter, in the year 1144. — In Umbria, Blessed Thomas, hermit, of the Order of Camaldoli. The year 1337. — Saint Dismas, the good Thief. — In Ireland, Saint Cammin, abbot. The church of the place where he built a monastery is still called today Temple-Cammin. About 503. — Saint Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High, 6th c. before Jesus Christ. — The patriarch Isaac, 1716 before Jesus Christ, and Rebecca his wife. — The Passage of the Lord or the Passover, and passage of

the Red Sea by the Israelites, or deliverance from the captivity of Egypt. 1646. — Saint Abel, first of the Just and of martyrs; first figure of Jesus Christ.[5] — It was judged fitting to assemble on 25 March those of the Saints of the Old Testament who represented Jesus Christ in a more particular and more sensible manner in his passion, conformably to the opinion which holds that this day was that of the death of the Saviour.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin and the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ — 25 March

1

Upheld by Mary, one does not fall; protected by her, one does not fear; aided by her, one arrives at the port.

Words of Saint Bernard placed beneath the statue which was seen, before the Revolution, at the entrance door of La Trappe.

These two mysteries, which are like the principle and the foundation of our religion, have between them so great a relation and so close a connection that they properly make only one, and that it is impossible to separate them. We shall relate in few words what the Evangelists, the Councils and the Fathers of the Church teach us of them, and what the faithful are obliged to know and believe of them, with some circumstances which concern the feast that is celebrated on this day.[2] The Evangelist Saint Luke is the one who has treated it most fully. Here is a short paraphrase of what he says of it:

The blessed moment destined from all eternity for the reparation of the human race having arrived, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin named Mary, who had espoused a man of the house and race of David, called Joseph. This angel, having entered the chamber where she was at prayer, said to her: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, thou art blessed among women.” At these words the Virgin, who was extremely humble, was surprised; and she thought within herself what this form of salutation might be, so new and so unheard-of: but the angel, recognising her trouble, added: “Fear not, Mary, thou hast found grace before God; thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord shall give him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign for ever in the house of Jacob, and of his reign there shall be no end.”

The Virgin, who had made the vow of perpetual chastity and who was resolved to keep it until death, hearing speak of conception, of bringing forth and of a son, asked the angel how these things should be done, seeing that she knew not her husband, and that, after the vow she had made, she could not know him. The angel replied to her: “The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: and therefore the Holy One that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Then he reminded her of the miracle which God had just wrought in favour of her cousin Elizabeth, who, although naturally barren and already very old, had conceived a son and was six months with child: which showed evidently that nothing is impossible to God. The Virgin asked no more to give the consent which heaven and earth, angels and men, the just and sinners awaited with impatience, and which was to be a source of happiness and joy for all ages. But she expressed it in a manner so humble and so modest that one cannot consider its terms without admiration: “Behold,” said she, “the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.”[3] It was at that moment that the ancient promises of God were fulfilled; that a woman enclosed a man, that a Virgin conceived a son, that God was made man, that a Saviour was given to the world, and that he who was God infinitely above us began to be Emmanuel, that is to say God with us, and of the same nature as ourselves. This is what we call the mystery of the Incarnation, and what Saint John expressed by these words: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Here is what must be known for a greater elucidation of this marvel, which is the masterpiece of the hands of the Almighty. At the same time when the august Mary offered her virginal womb, to be the nuptial bed where the alliance of the divine nature with human nature, and of the eternal Word with our flesh, was to be made, the power of the Most High strengthened her, sustained her and overshadowed her, so that she might bear the greatness of his operation; and the Holy Spirit, following the word of the angel, descended into her soul and into her body: into her soul, to make her produce acts conformable to the dignity of this mystery; into her body, to work there three prodigies, in which consists the whole economy of the Incarnation. First, taking some drops of the purest blood of this Virgin, who was herself purer than the angels and than the rays of the sun, he formed a little human body, composed of all its organs and all its members, and entirely disposed to receive a rational soul: which he did, not by succession of time, like other mothers in whom nature acts alone; but in an instant, because, as Saint Thomas says, the more perfect a workman is, the more promptly he can accomplish and perfect the works he undertakes: so the Holy Spirit, a workman infinitely perfect and whose power has no limits, had no need of time or succession to form and organise this body, which he produced for the eternal Word. Then, at the same moment, he created and drew from nothing a rational soul, the most excellent and most perfect that was ever created, and united it by a natural bond to this body which he had just formed, or rather which he was actually forming. By this union he composed a humanity perfect and accomplished in every point, without anything lacking to it of its faculties and natural properties.

Finally, in this same instant, as this body and soul united together, and this human nature composed of the one and the other, were to have, according to the natural course, a created substance which would have made them a human person and a mere man, he arrested and prevented this natural result, by uniting them by a physical and substantial union to the divine Word, to subsist in him and by him, thus raising this nature to the infinite happiness of belonging to the Word as his own nature, and of having no other *suppositum*, other hypostasis, nor other person than he. I say that these three things were done at the same moment, because, as Saint John Damascene says, never was the flesh of this child flesh without being animated by a rational soul, and never was it animated by a rational soul without being united to the divine Word;[4] but its conception, its animation and its union were made together, so that the human nature which it composed should never belong to any other than the Word, and should not have its own person before being and subsisting in the person of the Word. Moreover, although we say that it was the Holy Spirit who wrought these marvels, we do not nevertheless exclude the persons of the Father and of the Son, since it is certain that the exterior works of God are done indivisibly by the three Persons of the adorable Trinity. Thus, the Father and the Holy Spirit incarnated the Son and gave him this new nature, and the Son incarnated himself and took this nature for himself; but we attribute this great work to the operation of the Holy Spirit, as the work in which appears the sovereign excess of the goodness, love and indulgence of God for men, and in which was made the most excellent of all unctions and of all sanctifications, that which comes from the immediate and substantial union of the Divinity with a created nature.

From what we have just said follow great and admirable truths which it is necessary to enunciate in few words. First, the Child who was conceived in the womb of the holy Virgin, and whom afterwards was called Jesus and the Christ, is really and truly the Son of God, the eternal Word, the second Person of the most holy Trinity, and he never was other than this Person. In effect, each thing is lawfully named and designated by its proper *suppositum*; now this child never had any other *suppositum* than the very Person of the only Son of God, since, as has been said, his humanity was united to this Person from the instant of its formation and conception; it is therefore with truth, and in all propriety of speech, that we say that this Child is the Son of God, the divine Word and the second person of the most holy Trinity.

Secondly, this same child who is Jesus Christ is consequently our true God, and one only God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. For, since he is the only Son of God, he must necessarily be what the only Son of

God is. Now the only Son of God is our true God, and the same God as the Father and the Holy Spirit, being consubstantial with them, and having indivisibly with them one same nature and one same substance, which is the divinity.

Third truth: Jesus Christ has two perfect natures in one single Person: the divine nature which he receives from his Father, and by which he is God; the human nature which he receives from his mother, and by which he is man; with this difference, that the divine nature belongs essentially and eternally to his person, and is not distinct from it; whereas the human nature was united to him only in time, and might not have been united to him. Thus, in Jesus Christ and in the mystery of the Incarnation, there is, so to speak, something opposed to what we revere in the mystery of the Trinity. For in this mystery there is plurality of persons and unity of nature, and, on the contrary, in Jesus Christ there is unity of person and plurality of natures. This is what the Church has defined in the general Councils of Ephesus and of Chalcedon, two of the four which Saint Gregory the Great respected no less than the four Gospels. For in the council of Ephesus she defined, against the heretic Nestorius, that Jesus Christ is one in a single person, which is the unique Person of the divine Word; and in the council of Chalcedon she defined, against the heretic Eutyches, that Jesus Christ has two perfect natures, without confusion, without mixture, without change of one into the other, and without the Divinity having absorbed humanity into itself.

Fourth truth: All that belongs of itself to the person, such as substance, is unique in Jesus Christ; but all that belongs to nature is double there. Thus, in another Council, namely in the third of Constantinople, the Church has again declared against the Monothelites that there are in Jesus Christ two understandings, two wills and two operations; because the divine nature has in him all that is proper to it: to know, to will and to operate divinely. The human nature has also what is proper to it: to know, to will and to operate humanly; but these human operations receive an infinite excellence from the union and the direction of the divine nature. Notwithstanding this distinction of operations, by a great mystery which the theologians call communication of idioms, what is of God is attributed to man, and what is of man is attributed to God, on account of the unity of the person; for the same person operates by the divine nature what befits the divinity; and operates by the human nature what befits humanity. Thus we say truly that Jesus Christ is almighty, that he is the creator of heaven and earth, that he preserves the world by his power and governs it by his providence, and we say with no less truth that God fasted, that he prayed, that he died for us and that he rose again for us.

Finally, not to extend ourselves further on a mystery which, to be worthily explained, would require several volumes, the fifth truth is that the holy Virgin is truly and properly Mother of God. In effect, Jesus Christ being God, not by an accidental union of a human person with a divine person, as the impious Nestorius said, but by the excellence and the right of his unique person, which is God; this adorable Virgin cannot be mother of Jesus Christ without being also Mother of God. Now she is mother of Jesus Christ, she conceived him in her womb, she produced him from her substance, she co-operated in his formation much more than other mothers co-operate in that of their children, since she gave him all the matter of which his body is composed, whereas other give at most only a small part: she is therefore properly and truly Mother of God. Thus, those who have disputed this admirable quality to her did so because they divided Jesus Christ, and because, instead of confessing him Man-God and God-Man, without division of the man and of God, they recognised him only as a divine man. But the Church, which does not divide Jesus Christ, and which adores him as her God, because he has no other person than one of the persons of the Divinity, has always revered the holy Virgin as Mother of God. It is a name which she gives her, not only in her prayers and in her litanies, but also in the canon of the Mass and in the celebration of the most holy mysteries; and it is again a quality which she confirmed to her in the council of Ephesus of which we have just spoken: this Queen of angels and men was there solemnly proclaimed Mother of God, and Nestorius, remaining obstinate in his heresy, was struck with anathema and sent into exile: divine Justice pursuing him still, his tongue rotted, was eaten by worms, and he died miserably. This is not the place to extend ourselves on the excellences of this dignity of mother of God:

we shall have occasion to speak of it in the particular life of the holy Virgin. It suffices to say here, in passing, that it is the most excellent that can be communicated to a mere creature: it has been in Mary a source of so many graces and prerogatives that there is no tongue, in heaven or on earth, capable of explaining them.

After these beautiful truths, must it not be recognised that it is with great justice that Mary cries in her canticle: “He that is mighty hath done great things to me”? In effect, he never did nor ever will do anything on earth, nor in heaven, which approaches what he did in the womb of Mary. On earth, he communicates himself according to the order of nature and of grace, and raises men to his image and to the quality of his adopted children. In heaven he communicates himself in the order of glory. But in the womb of Mary he communicates himself in a manner far more sublime, namely in the order of the hypostatic union. He makes, not that man should be the friend of God, or child of God, but that he should be truly God; so that it may be said that God is man and that man is God. Moreover, although human nature terminated this union only considered quite bare and according to what it has of the substantial, because the divine substance was the first gift and the first grace which it received from the liberal hand of God; nevertheless it must be recognised that at the very moment when it was united to him, it received also, as an appanage of so great a gift, all the ornaments of grace and glory of which a created nature is capable. God gave to his soul sanctifying grace in so eminent a degree, or rather in such a plenitude, that there is no human or angelic mind which can conceive its immensity. Thus we learn from Saint John that he did not give him this grace by measure, as to the other Saints, but that he gave it to him whole and in all its extent. Thus this soul is holy with a double holiness: with an uncreated holiness, by its union with the divine nature, the most excellent of all unctions; and with a created holiness by the possession of this grace, the expression of the Divinity. And yet one must not believe, with Felix and Elipandus, who were condemned at the Council of Frankfurt, under King Charlemagne, that Jesus Christ is son of God by adoption. Sanctifying grace works this effect in angels and in men, who are not raised to natural filiation; but it cannot work it in Jesus Christ, who, being Son of God by nature, is not capable of this relation and of this quality of adoptive Son. Secondly, God gave to this soul not only all the divine and human sciences which can be conferred on a created intelligence, but also the blessed science, the beatific vision; he gave it to him in the same perfection in which it possesses it now in heaven: so that Jesus Christ was from that moment as happy and as glorious, according to his soul, as he is at present and as he will be in the extent of all ages. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit poured himself out on this soul with all the plenitude of his gifts and favours; the prophet Isaiah had foretold it by these words: “The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,” that is to say on Jesus Christ; “the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and finally the spirit of the fear of the Lord.” Saint Paul says it even more briefly when he declares that all “the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and all the fulness of the divinity dwell in him.” Finally, there is no virtue, except those which necessarily include some imperfection, such as faith, hope and penance, with which this wonderful soul was not adorned, but in a manner so noble and so lofty that they were from then on incapable of receiving any increase. And one must not be astonished at it; there is no excellence and perfection which is not due to a nature which has risen to this supreme degree of honour of being united to the nature of God. Our Lord coming into the world to be the head of angels and of men, and the inexhaustible source whence heaven and earth would draw all their treasures, it was necessary that he should possess grace, and all the appanages of grace, in the highest degree and in the most excellent manner in which they can be possessed. As to his sacred body, he received also a great beauty, a perfect proportion of his members, a just temperament of his humours, and above all a marvellous purity, to which that of the rays of the sun and that of the purest spirits of heaven is in no way comparable. He had still a right to the qualities of glorified bodies, to impassibility, immortality, agility, clarity, and to those ineffable pleasures which his senses and sacred members have enjoyed since the moment of his resurrection. These qualities themselves were naturally to overflow from the glory with which his soul was clothed; but he came into the world to give us examples of mortification and patience, and to redeem us

by his sufferings and by his death: a thing impossible had he enjoyed impassibility and immortality. His divine power therefore prevented this overflow of the divine nature into the human nature, which the personal union of these two natures was to produce, and he willingly consented to be himself deprived of these excellent gifts which would have put an obstacle to the designs of his Father, and to the charge that he accepted at the moment of his entrance into the world.

This, then, is in what consists the great mystery of the Incarnation which the Church honours today with so much joy and solemnity. Let us adore it from the bottom of our heart. Let us not imitate the apostate angels who, according to the opinion of several theologians, refused to adore it when God made them the proposal of it at the moment of their creation. But let us imitate the faithful angels who adored it with all the deference and submission of which they were capable, and accepted very willingly Jesus Christ God-Man and Man-God for their head and their sovereign. Let us glory in being the subjects of this Sovereign, in being the members of this Head, in being the children of this Father; and let us consecrate to his honour and service all that we have of power, whether in our body or in our mind.

There would be marvellous things to say here: 1° on the design of this mystery, which was to overthrow the demon, to destroy sin and to repair the ruins which the one and the other had caused in our nature; 2° on the need we had of it for this reparation, and to make us recover the right to the kingdom of heaven from which the disobedience of Adam had excluded us: God alone not being able to satisfy sufficiently, a Man-God was needed to accomplish this great work; 3° on the proportion of this means to its end, which is so great that Saint Anselm and the other holy Fathers make no difficulty in saying that God could do nothing in which his wisdom and goodness would appear with more brilliance and more glory; 4° on the preparations of the whole Old Testament for the execution of this great sacrament, the desires of the Patriarchs, the predictions of the Prophets, the figures of the law, the sighs of the Just and the expectation of all the human race; 5° on the interior acts which the Blessed Virgin made during the whole angelic salutation, and in that blessed moment when she consented to the proposition of the Angel; 6° on the admirable operations of the soul of Our Lord at the moment of his creation and of his union. But these are subjects on which there are quantities of meditations; given the brevity to which we are bound, we can refer the reader to them. Granada has excellent ones in his spiritual works, and his Catechism above all is nearly all full of these pious considerations.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

It remains for us to say that the feast of the Annunciation and of the Incarnation of the Word is of very great antiquity in the Church, since not only Saint Augustine, Saint Chrysostom, Saint Epiphanius and Saint Athanasius, but also Saint Gregory the Wonder-worker, who preceded them all, and who lived in the third century, make mention of it, and have made excellent homilies on this subject. There is even much appearance that it is of apostolic institution, or rather that the Blessed Virgin herself gave it its beginning, since, according to the rule of Saint Augustine, the ancient and universal practices of the Church, of which we do not see the origin, must be referred to those first times. It has always been kept on 25 March, the day, as the same Saint Augustine says, on which it is believed that the eternal Word was incarnated. At the tenth Council of Toledo, celebrated in the year 656, it was ordered that this feast should be solemnised on 18 December, eight days before that of Christmas, because its proper day ordinarily falls in the week of the Passion, a time of tears and penance rather than of joy and consolation; nevertheless, it was soon afterwards restored to its proper day, on account of the greatness of the mystery which it contains, on condition of transferring it after Easter, when it falls on a day occupied by the ceremonies of the death or the resurrection of the Son of God. Alone, by an honourable privilege, the church of Our Lady of Le Puy en Velay is authorised to celebrate it on Good Friday, when it falls there; then there are in this church very great indulgences in the form of a jubilee.[5] There are several congregations whose principal aim is to honour the Annunciation of Our Lady; above all one and the other Order of the Annunciades: we mean that of Bourges, founded by Blessed Joan of Valois, and that of Genoa, founded by the venerable mother Mary-Victoria

Fornari.

Pope Gelasius I made mention of this feast in 492. The council of Constantinople, which ordained, in 692, that the Mass of the presanctified[6] should be said on all days of Lent, excepted the Saturdays, the Sundays and the feast of the Annunciation.[7] The tenth council of Toledo, of the year 656, calls this solemnity the feast by excellence of the Mother of God.[8] It was decided by Urban II, in the council held at Clermont in 1095, that every day the bell should be rung, in the morning, at noon and in the evening, and that each time the Angelic Salutation should be said. This is what is called the Angelus. The aim of the sovereign Pontiff was to lead the faithful to praise and thank God for the benefit of the Incarnation. The popes John XXII, Callistus III, Paul III, Alexander VII and Clement X have strongly recommended this practice of devotion, and have attached indulgences to it. Benedict XIII has granted particular ones to those who, when the Angelus rings, should recite devoutly and on their knees the Angelic Salutation.

Saint Hermeland or Erbland, abbot (718) — 25 March

718. — Pope: Gregory II. — King of France: Chilperic II.[1]

The holy Abbot whose life we are going to relate was of an illustrious family. He was born in the diocese of Noyon. He made appear, from his childhood, what he would be one day; in effect, surmounting already, by the ardour of his devotion, all the delicacies of the flesh, he made himself so admirable among his school-fellows that everyone regarded him as a model of virtue and holiness. The designs of his heart, at that young age, were to follow Jesus Christ in his abjection, in his poverty and in the contempt of all the vain greatnesses of the earth; but his parents, opposing his pious resolutions, and wishing to advance him in the world, sent him to court, where he was not long in making his fine qualities shine; he so won the good graces of Clotaire III that the king made him his chief cup-bearer, in order to approach him nearer to his person. Erbland accepted this charge against his will, because he feared that it would engage him so far in the world that it would not be easy for him to withdraw when he would, as was his design. In effect, his parents and friends, seeing him in great credit with the king, persuaded him to accept the hand of the daughter of one of the first lords of the court, who would hold himself much honoured by his alliance. They even pressed him so strongly that, overcome by their importunities, he consented to the betrothal; but while the day fixed for the wedding was awaited with impatience, he conceived more than ever the resolution to renounce absolutely all the things of the earth, in order to follow, poor and naked, Jesus Christ to Calvary. He discovered his design in secret to the king, begging him most humbly not to hinder him, and to permit him to withdraw from the embarrassments of the world into some monastery, there to serve God, and to pray the rest of his days for the prosperity of his States. The king, who would have much wished to keep near his person so faithful a servant, at first showed a great repugnance to the execution of this design; but seeing his perseverance, and fearing to offend God if he hindered the sacrifice that Erbland wished to make, he permitted him to withdraw. Seeing then the accomplishment of his desires, he takes leave of the king and of the court with much more pleasure than he had entered it; and, in the same step, he goes to the abbey of Fontenelle, in Normandy, where the venerable Lambert then held the place of superior. He asks of him the holy habit of religion: he receives it, makes his novitiate, and, at the end of the year, pronounces his vows, according to the custom of the Order, to the great contentment of all the religious, but principally of the holy abbot, who rendered infinite thanks to God for having sent him as disciple a man whom he could already respect as his master. To comprehend in few words all his perfections, his history says that his charity was fervent, his faith and his obedience admirable, his hope firm, his prayer continual, his patience invincible: he was discreet in his abstinences, constant in his watchings, exact in all regular observances: in a word, he was so perfectly adorned with all the virtues that he appeared like a star among all his confrères. Abbot Lambert had him ordained priest by the archbishop Saint Ouen. Erbland acquitted himself so worthily of this holy ministry that, offering each day at the altar the divine Sacrifice, he made himself a living victim by his continual macerations.

At this same time, Saint Pasquarius, bishop of Nantes in Brittany, desiring to people his diocese with holy religious, in order to confirm, by their holiness and by the good examples of their life, the truths which he himself preached by living voice to the Christians, sent to beg the venerable Lambert to give him twelve of his religious, promising to have a monastery built for them in the place which should be judged most fitting in all his diocese. The holy Abbot consented only after having obtained that this place should be exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, and that letters patent and the king's privilege should be obtained for that, so that these religious might receive no trouble when they were once established there. This article being settled, Lambert cast his eyes on Saint Erbland, to make him head of this new house; he asked him nevertheless for his consent before engaging him in it. But the holy religious, well grounded in the virtue of obedience, gave an answer which should be written in letters of gold: "My Father, seek not here, I beseech you, my will, which I have absolutely abandoned to your good pleasure; I shall go wherever you send me, as willingly as if God himself commanded me with his own mouth to go there." Erbland set out therefore from Fontenelle with the blessing of his abbot, in the company of twelve religious; and, pursuing his journey, he came in a few days to Nantes, to the cathedral church of the blessed apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, where the holy bishop Pasquarius received him, and his, with the same affection as he would have received angels of paradise, esteeming himself very happy to possess such holy persons in his diocese. Erbland reiterated to him the same proposal that his abbot had made, touching the exemption of the monastery from the jurisdiction of the Ordinary. The bishop granted it to him and gave him also the choice of the place which he should judge most convenient to build it there. Our Saint chose an island (which he called *Antrum*, retreat, and which was afterwards named the island of Aindre), of a league and a half of extent or thereabouts, which was at the mouth of the Loire, in the Ocean, and inhabited only by shepherds and other people who keep flocks: he judged this place the more suitable for the religious life in that seculars could approach it easily only by the favour of boats, when the sea was high. Near this island he saw another, of the same form, but smaller, which he called *Antricinum*, or little cave: it is called today Aindrette. There was found there a very small church, with an oratory dedicated to Saint Martin. Erbland therefore had his monastery built in the island of Aindre, with two beautiful churches, which Bishop Saint Pasquarius afterwards consecrated, the one under the name of the Prince of the Apostles, and the other under that of Saint Paul, his co-operator in the preaching of the Gospel. He kept also his word for the exemption; and King Childebert III ratified it, taking the abbey and all its dependencies under his royal protection: he sent letters patent of it to blessed Erbland. There soon issued from this new house so good an odour of holiness that several persons, touched with the desire of a more perfect life, despised the delights and greatnesses of the world to embrace the lowliness and contempt of the Cross under the monastic habit. Parents offered their children there, to learn the elements of virtue, and even belles-lettres: everyone blessed the heavenly Father for having raised up these holy religious to banish from the province the ignorance of the maxims of the Gospel.

It is not possible to express what were the care and vigilance of the holy Abbot to acquit himself well of his charge: he behaved in it with so much zeal and prudence that he neglected neither the temporal nor the spiritual of his brethren, giving them all the time of the day to bring them to perfection, and reserving for himself only the night, which he passed entire, after a light rest, in the praises of God and in the contemplation of heavenly things; and, to rid himself of the throng of seculars who, under pretext of bringing alms to the convent, paid him too frequent visits, he often withdrew, particularly during Lent, to the island of Aindrette, with some of his brethren, employed himself there more than usual in recollection of mind and mortification of body, by means of abstinences and other austerities; he prepared himself to offer himself as a living victim to the eternal Father on the holy day of Easter. During these retreats it happened one day that, as he was walking with his religious on the bank of the Loire, one of them came to speak of a fish called lamprey, which he had seen at the bishop of Nantes's. The holy man said to him: "Think you that God cannot give you here a similar one?" While he said this, a lamprey leaped from the river and came to cast itself on the sand; the man of God had it taken and divided in three, and, reserving one of the pieces to himself, he

sent the other two to his monastery; although it was very little, by an admirable multiplication there was enough for the whole community of the brethren, which was very large. This is not the only miraculous action that God wrought by his means: he relit one day, by the sign of the cross, the lamp of one of his religious, which an impetuous wind had extinguished, and, afterwards, the wind had no more power to blow it out, until this religious had arrived at the place whither it was to lead him. Another time, the count of Nantes and of Rennes, named Agatheus, who doubted his holiness and wished to try him, having come to see him, the Saint multiplied, by his blessing, a little wine which he had had presented to him in a glass, and obliged him, by this miracle, to cast himself at his feet, to ask his pardon for his suspicion, and to make himself docile to some very salutary instructions which he gave him for his salvation. In a journey which he made to Coutances, in Normandy, a rich inhabitant of that city, named Launé, who had received him in his house, although he had only about a pint of wine, did not fail to have it served to a great number of persons who had run to see him, and even to a quantity of poor and passers-by, who surrounded his lodging for the same purpose: nevertheless the wine did not fail, and, after the meal, there was found in the vessel more than there had been before: which caused it to be said in the country that nothing could be given to this great servant of God without receiving, from this life, a very ample reward.

But if nothing was lost in giving to him, nothing was gained either in taking from him what belonged to his monastery: witness that villager who, having stolen eggs from him, was forced to return them when, after having walked all night, he found himself in the morning, with his animals, at the gate of the abbey. Witness also that other who, having cut a part of the housing of Erbland's horse, was seized with so great a fire in his whole body that, feeling himself burn alive, he was obliged to implore his help with cries which sufficiently showed the excess of his pain.

God gave him also the spirit of prophecy to know things absent and the most secret thoughts. As he was one day at his prayers in the church of Saint Peter, he saw the soul of Saint Maurontius, first abbot of Saint-Florent-le-Vieux, ten leagues distant: it was being conducted to heaven by the angels; he gave notice of it to his religious, who afterwards recognised the truth of the revelation by the agreement of its date with the decease of that holy personage. He saw also taking the same road the soul of one of his disciples, whom he had sent into Aquitaine to govern another monastery, of which he likewise had the direction, and which was distant from his own at least forty leagues; and as some young brethren thought within themselves that their Abbot, already old, might well be mistaken in this, he, by the same light which had made him see this soul go to heaven, discovered their secret thoughts and rebuked them severely for their little faith.

All these favours of heaven were so many powerful motives for the holy Abbot to redouble his fervours and to walk with greater steps in the way of perfection. As he laboured at it with all possible ardour, he had a revelation that his hour was near. To dispose himself for it, he resigned of his own accord the charge of superior, giving power to the religious to elect another in his place; and, taking four of his children with him, he withdrew to a small hermitage of Saint Leger, martyr, which he had had built outside the gates of his monastery, on the east side, to pass there the rest of his days in a more perfect union with God.

The religious, seeing themselves deprived of their Father, elected Adalfrid to succeed him; but he, growing proud of this new honour, began to appropriate the goods of the monastery and to ill-treat his brethren. Saint Erbland, being warned of it, sent word to him to amend, if he would not soon experience the effects of the anger of an avenging God; but Adalfrid making little account of these warnings, the Saint said to his desolate religious, who made complaints to him of it: "My brothers, say not a word; a little patience, and you will soon see him punished for his crimes." Three days after, the unworthy abbot saw himself struck in the night as by a blow of a stick by the servant of God, and at once, feeling himself devoured by a cruel fire in his entrails, he lost at the same time life and abbey, in the very first year that he possessed it. After the death of Adalfrid, all the religious begged their holy Father to name himself a superior who should be according to the heart of God and his own; he did so by giving them a religious called Donatus, whom he had himself brought

up from his youth in virtue and good morals. A short time after, seeing approach the hour when he was to receive the reward of his labours, he gave notice of it to his brethren, and exhorted them all with much fervour to persevere constantly in their vocation, then gave them his last blessing; and, being provided with the divine sacraments of the Church, he exhaled his blessed soul into the hands of his divine Creator, without any appearance of pain, as if his body, which had always been so free from all movements contrary to chastity, had been exempt from suffering the agony of death.

Saint Erbland is represented stretching his hand toward trees to drive away the caterpillars that covered the place of his prayers and fell on his book. They all disappeared in one night.

He is painted also blessing a barrel whose wine he multiplies. The vessel which served for the miracle he wrought before the count of Brittany was long shown to the pilgrims who betook themselves out of devotion to the monastery of Aindre.

There is placed also at his feet the lamprey which came to be stranded before him at the moment when one of his monks coveted one of those fish.

He is invoked as protector of cows in certain parts of Brittany, perhaps on account of the word *herbe* [grass], which forms the beginning of his name.

Saint Erbland is honoured with a particular cult at Indre, at Indret and at Saint-Herblain, in the Loire-Inférieure, at Bagneux, near Paris.

RELICS OF SAINT HERBLAND.

He was buried in the church of Saint Paul, near the oratory of Saint Wandrille, first abbot of Fontenelle. God wrought several miracles at his tomb, by his merits and intercession. Some years after he appeared to a good religious called Sadrevert, commanding him to tell the abbot to have his body transported to the church of Saint Peter; which is not read without marvels.

The greater part of his relics were transported, in 869, to avoid the profanation of the Normans, to the monastery of Beaulieu in Touraine, and afterwards to the castle of Loches. The parish church of Saint-Hermeland at Rouen, the collegiate church of Saint-Mainbœuf of Angers, the parish of Bagneux, in the diocese of Paris, formerly venerated a part of the body of this holy Abbot. The church of Nantes keeps the feast of this Saint on 26 November, the day of some translation. At Paris, memory of him is made on 18 October. The monastery of Aindre was destroyed by the Normans. There is now in the island of Aindrette a celebrated cannon-foundry. Here, on the relics of Saint Hermeland, is what I find in a notice made on my church, six months ago, by a curate of Loches, M. l’abbé Bardet: These relics were given, about the year 965, by the count of Anjou, Geoffrey Greymantle, to the church of Notre-Dame of Loches, which he had just built at his own expense. They remained there the object of public veneration, and in spite of the revolutions they were still there in 1818, the epoch at which M. Nogret, parish priest of Saint-Ours, and today bishop of Saint-Claude, with the authorisation of the archbishop of Tours, ceded the greater part of them to the city of Nantes. We have now at the parish only a tibia.

The church of Loches possesses besides a girdle of the Blessed Virgin. Its authenticity rests on a donation made by Geoffrey Greymantle; he had received it from King Lothair. (*Gesta consulum Andegavorum*, pp. 85–87. *Historia comitum Andegavensium*, p. 325.) Since that epoch it has been in great veneration at Loches. It was exposed to the veneration of the people twice each year, on 3 May and 15 August. The king, the queen, the princes and princesses of the blood, as also the baron of Reuilly, alone had the right to bring it out on other occasions. The old Chronicles of the ancient chapter of Notre-Dame of Loches make known the name of a great number of kings, of princes of the blood, who, coming to their castle, used this privilege.

The Bollandists, on this day; Mabillon, vol. iv; Bulteau, book i, ch. 37; Albert the Great; Dom Lobineau; Godescard; Baillet; — Extract from a letter of the parish priest of Loches, 7 December 1852.

Saint Richard, child, martyr (1180) — Saint Melchizedek, king of Salem — 25 March

SAINT RICHARD, CHILD, MARTYR

1180. — Pope: Alexander III. — King of France: Philip II, Augustus.

Toward the end of the reign of Louis VII in France, and at the beginning of that of Philip Augustus, his son, who reigned some time with him, there was seen at Paris a fact almost similar to the one of which we spoke yesterday, which happened in the city of Trent, with this difference, that the martyr was of the age of reason, and that thus his victory was more remarkable and more glorious. He was a young boy called Richard, of a very good family, aged only twelve years. The Jews having seized him about the feast of Easter, drew him into their house and led him into a vault underground. The chief of the synagogue, questioning him on his belief and on what his parents taught him, he answered with a firmness worthy of a Christian: “That he believed in God the Father almighty, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified and dead under Pontius Pilate.”

The rabbi, offended at this profession of faith so full of candour, addressed himself to the Jews accomplices of his crime, and commanded them to strip him and scourge him cruelly. The execution followed the command at once; the holy youth, being stripped, was beaten with a fury which could suit only children of the race of Canaan. While some treated him in this manner, the others, who were spectators of the tragedy, spat in his face, and, by a horrible contempt of the Christian faith which he professed, uttered a thousand blasphemies against the divinity of Jesus Christ, whereas the martyr unceasingly blessed him, pronouncing no other words, amid all these torments, than the sacred name of Jesus. When these tigers had sufficiently delighted themselves with this first torture, they raised him on a cross, and made him suffer all the indignities which their sacrilegious ancestors had formerly made our divine Saviour endure on Calvary: however their barbarity could not shake the courage of the Martyr; but, keeping always the love of Jesus in his heart, he never ceased to have it in his mouth, until at last his little body, weakened by pain, let his soul go out with a sigh, and with the same adorable name of Jesus.

An impiety so detestable, committed in the midst of a most Christian kingdom, did not remain unpunished. The king even wished to exterminate all the Jews who were found in France, because almost everywhere they were accused of similar crimes, besides their usuries: he contented himself with banishing them from the kingdom.[1]

God willed to render illustrious the memory of the holy Martyr, who had died for the cause of his Son. The tomb which had been erected for him in a cemetery called of the Little Fields became celebrated by the miracles which were wrought there every day; which led the Christians to lift his holy body from the earth and carry it solemnly to the church of the Innocents, where it remained until the English, having made themselves in some fashion masters of France, and particularly of Paris, under the feeble king Charles VI, carried off this precious treasure to honour it in their country, then Catholic, and left us only his head. It was still seen in the eighteenth century in this same church of the Innocents, enshrined in a rich reliquary. The history of the martyrdom of Saint Richard was composed by Robert Gaguin, general of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity; it is found also in the *Annals and Antiquities of Paris*, in the martyrology of the Saints of France, and in several historians who have written the deeds of our kings, particularly in Scipio Dupleix, where he treats of the reign of Philip Augustus, in the year 1180: he remarks, with Cardinal Baronius, in the twelfth volume of his Annals, that eight years before, other Jews had committed a similar crime in the city of Norwich, in England, in the person of a child called William, whom they had also crucified; but having

buried his body outside the city, it was discovered by an extraordinary brightness, which led the Christians to transport it with honour into their church. Polydore Vergil speaks of this child in his *History of England*, and the religious Robert of the Mount, in his supplement to Sigebert; so that we have already four holy innocents martyred by the Jews: Simeon at Trent, Janot in the diocese of Cologne, William at Norwich, and our Richard at Paris.[2] We can still add to them a fifth, of whom Raderus speaks in his *Holy Bavaria*: namely, one named Michael, a young child of three years and a half, son of a peasant named George, of the village of Sappendelf, near the city of Naumburg. The Jews having carried him off on Passion Sunday, to satisfy their rage against the Christians, bound him to a column, where they tormented him, for the space of three days, by strange cruelties: thus they opened his wrists and the tops of his feet, and made him various incisions in the form of a cross all over the body, to draw all the blood from it. He died in this torture in the year of Our Lord 1340.

SAINT MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF SALEM (19th century B.C.)

Saint Melchizedek, king of Salem, was a contemporary of Abraham. He came to meet this Patriarch on his return from the expedition in which he had delivered his nephew Lot from the hands of the kings his neighbours. Melchizedek offered him the consecrated bread and wine, for he was priest of the Most High. "May the Lord, God Almighty," he cried, "Creator of heaven and earth, bless Abraham; blessed be God by whose protection our enemies are delivered into your hands." Abraham offered to the King-Pontiff the tithe of all the spoil. It is a beautiful figure, that of Melchizedek, the King-Pontiff, priest of the Most High, the first to whom the Bible gives this title, whose name signifies King of justice, whose dwelling is Salem, the city of peace, the future Jerusalem where the King of justice, Jesus Christ, will come to reign. The offering of Melchizedek is also symbolic: the bread and wine which he presents to the victorious Patriarch are the figure of the eucharistic bread and wine with which Jesus Christ will nourish souls victorious over the passions. The priesthood of Melchizedek is the image of the immortal priesthood established by Jesus Christ in the Church. — *Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek.* Ps. cix, 5; Gen. xv, 1. — According to a pious tradition, Salem would be the same city as Jerusalem; Melchizedek would therefore have offered his figurative sacrifice at the same place where the true High Priest Jesus Christ was to institute the sacrifice of the new covenant under the species of bread and wine. The holy Fathers are also persuaded that it was Jesus Christ whom Abraham regarded in the person of Melchizedek when he paid him the tithe and received his blessing. The Church has not assigned any particular cult to Saint Melchizedek; but what honour has she not done him by inserting him in the canon of the Mass, where she qualifies him as sovereign Pontiff and where she speaks of the offering of bread and wine which he made before Abraham as of a holy sacrifice and a spotless host as agreeable to God as the sacrifice of Abel and that of Abraham? — The Latin martyrologies mark Saint Melchizedek on 25 March; the Ethiopians honour him on 12 April.

After Baillet.

The patriarch Isaac (1716 B.C.) — 25 March

Isaac, patriarch, son of Abraham and of Sarah, was born in the year 1896 before Jesus Christ. He was called Isaac, that is to say Laughter, because when an angel came to announce to Sarah, then ninety years old, that she would have a son, she could not help laughing at a promise which she did not at first believe. He was twenty-five years old and was the joy and consolation of his parents, of whom he was the only son, when God, to prove the faith of Abraham, ordered him to immolate him. Abraham obeyed without hesitation, and already he raised the knife over his son to consummate the sacrifice, when an angel stayed his hand. Fifteen years after, he made him marry Rebecca, niece of Sarah his mother, who after twenty years of marriage had at one birth Esau and Jacob. Having reached the age of a hundred and thirty-seven years, become blind and seeing himself near his end, he wished to give his blessing to Esau, his eldest son; but Jacob, advised by Rebecca, passed himself off as his brother and received the blessing destined for Esau. Isaac, warned of this

substitution, ratified it and retracted nothing of the wishes he had made to Jacob. He lived still forty-three years and died in his hundred and eightieth year. His two sons buried him in the field of Ephron, beside Abraham and Sarah. It may be affirmed that Isaac, like Abraham and Jacob, was canonised by the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, when, to show that they enjoyed life after their death, the Saviour said that God was always called their God, he who is the God of the living and not of the dead. The Church has always honoured Isaac as one of the most perfect figures of Jesus Christ that the shadows of the Old Testament produced. He represented the Son of God, not in a single action like most of the other types of the Messiah, but before his birth, in the promises made to his father Abraham, in his miraculous birth, in the whole course of his life, and principally in his voluntary immolation, where he let himself be treated as a victim and showed himself obedient to his father unto death, as the apostle Saint Paul says of Jesus Christ.

The holy Fathers have given, on their side, the greatest praises to the virtues of Isaac: how comes it then that the Greek Church, which has rendered a cult in its liturgy to all the Saints of the Old Testament, has forgotten Isaac? The Latins have inscribed him, on 25 March, in several martyrologies, from the ninth century of the Church. The Christians of Egypt and of Ethiopia honour him on 1 May together with Jeremiah.

The Jews have also instituted a sort of feast for the birth of Isaac, as being the first effect of the promises of God to Abraham relative to the Messiah. This feast is marked on the 6th of the month of Marchesvan, which is among them the eighth of the year.

After Baillet.

Saint Dismas, the good Thief (33) — 25 March

If one believes a pious tradition, Saint Dismas was the good thief converted by our divine Saviour, a short time before his death, while he was still fastened to the cross. Saint Anselm, proposing to one of his sisters a meditation on the childhood of Jesus, relates the following story, not as a sure fact, but as a legend very widespread in his time. “Dismas lived in a forest near Egypt, when Mary, fleeing the anger of Herod, was betaking herself there, carrying with her the child Jesus. He was an assassin by profession, and son of the chief of a band of evil-doers. Now, one day when he was in ambush, seeing arrive an old man, a young woman and a little child, judging rightly that they could offer no resistance, he went toward them with his companions, with the intention of ill-treating them; but he was suddenly ravished by the supernatural grace which embellished the face of Jesus, so that instead of doing them any harm, he gave them hospitality in the cave which he inhabited, and prepared for them all that was necessary. Mary was happy to see the caresses and the care that this robber lavished on her well-beloved Son; she gave him thanks for it with all her heart, and assured him that he would be rewarded for it before his death. The promise of the Most Holy Virgin was realised later: Dismas was crucified with the Redeemer of the world, and he obtained at his last moment the grace of repenting of his faults, and, having confessed publicly the divinity of Jesus Christ while the Apostles had taken flight, he had the happiness of receiving the first-fruits of the redemption, and of entering, a short time after with Jesus Christ, into possession of the kingdom of heaven.” The cross on which the good thief died was long preserved in the island of Cyprus. Titian introduced the good thief into his great composition entitled the *Triumph*, which represents the triumphal march of the just in the train of Jesus Christ; — Michelangelo, in his figures of the last judgment, makes him advance carrying a cross on his back; — a window of the thirteenth century, at the cathedral of Bourges, represents him dying on the cross and delivering his soul to an angel who bears it away into the heavens.

On a banderole which floats in the air near the mouth of Saint Dismas are read these words addressed by the good thief to Jesus Christ: “Lord, remember me when thou shalt come into thy kingdom.” This is the popular image, such as the artist Callot, for example, made it.

When he is represented dying near Our Lord, he is constantly placed on his right. The good thief is the special protector of those condemned to death. — He is invoked to be preserved from the pains of torture, from final impenitence and from thieves. The Middle Ages has handed down to us the prayer or versified antiphon which was addressed to him by persons whose goods were exposed to the rapacity of robbers.

Imparibus meritis pendent tria corpora ramis; Dismas et Gestas, media est divina potestas; Alta petit Dismas, infelix ima Gestas. Nos et res nostras conservet summa potestas. Hos versus dicas, ne tu furto tua perdas.

For different reasons three bodies are hung on the gibbet: Dysmas on one side, Gestas on the other, in the middle the almighty God; Dysmas ascends to the heavens, Gestas descends to the abysses. May the sovereign power preserve us and our goods. Recite these verses so as not to lose, by theft, what belongs to you.[1]

Saint Anselm, Meditat. xv, and Father Cahier.

Saint Quirinus of Tegernsee, martyr (269) — 25 March

This Saint Quirinus is the same as Saint Cyrin or Cyrinus, of whom we make mention in the acts of the holy Marius, Martha, Audifax and Abachum, on 19 January. According to his own acts, transmitted to the Bollandists by the Benedictines of Tegernsee, Quirinus was son of the Roman emperor Philip, who is said to have been the first to embrace the Christian faith. After the assassination of this emperor by Decius, the empress Severa was obliged to hide with her son Quirinus. Pope Fabian[1] baptised him at the age of seven years; but twenty years after, Claudius II having learnt that a descendant of the unfortunate Philip remained, had him apprehended and thrown into prison; it was there that the Persian nobles who had come to Rome to put their gold and their charity at the service of the martyrs visited him. Eight days after this visit, Claudius II had his prisoner throat-cut without noise and by night. His body, which had been thrown into the Tiber, was buried by Christian hands in the crypt of Pontianus. In 746, Pope Zachary gave it to Albert, count of Bavaria, who, to receive and honour these holy relics, had the monastery of Tegernsee built. All the documents that the Bollandists have had in their hands make Quirinus son of the emperor Philip, but without proofs; it is to be supposed that the good German monks wished to ennoble their Saint to render him more recommendable. Tradition is respectable, but on one condition: that it can be attached to something, and its links followed from century to century. This pious invention, moreover, takes nothing from the merit of Saint Quirinus and the authenticity of his relics. There were several illustrious saints of the name of Quirinus, Cyrinus or Quirin. We shall occupy ourselves here only with the two martyrs of Rome, mentioned, the one on the 25th, the other on 30 March by Baronius. Father Cahier, who enjoys a deserved authority for hagiographical questions, makes nevertheless a confusion concerning the saints of the name of Quirinus. The Roman martyrology cites in effect two, one on 25 March, and it is the one to be distinguished by the surname of Tegernsee, and the other on 30 March; this last was a military tribune under Hadrian, gaoler of Pope Saint Alexander and father of Saint Balbina. His relics were sent to France by Pope Saint Leo IX, who made a present of them to his sister; the priory of Saint-Quirin in Lorraine was built to receive them. His head was given to the town of Neuss, in the region of Cologne. But it is the relics of Saint Quirinus, martyred under Claudius, which were given in the eighth century to the abbey of Tegernsee, in Bavaria. A hymn of the Middle Ages, which Father Cahier himself cites, vol. i, p. 368 of his *Characteristics*, bears witness to it, and the author from beyond the Rhine was right to speak of Saint Quirinus, martyred under Claudius, instead of Saint Quirinus, martyred under Hadrian. In his table of patronages, Father Cahier himself distinguishes the two saints, although he confounds them again in the hagionymic table at the end.

The tortures endured distinguish still the two saints of the name of Quirinus: that of 25 March or of Tegernsee alone was beheaded and thrown afterwards into the Tiber. It is doubtless from the tomb of Saint Quirinus, at Tegernsee, that a miraculous balm flowed. Now, does not this miracle of the marvellous balm

flowing from the tomb of Saint Quirinus suffice to explain the presence of arms and legs placed as ex-votos before his altar at Tegernsee, without attributing to him the torture of the cut-off legs, of which the Roman martyrology and the Bollandists do not speak for the martyr of 25 March, whereas they name it in regard to Saint Quirinus of the 30th?

Cf. AA. SS. — We shall return on 3 May, in the Acts of Saint Alexander, to Saint Quirinus, honoured in Lorraine and at Cologne.

Saint Irenaeus, bishop of Sirmium, martyr (304) — 25 March

Saint Irenaeus, bishop of Sirmium, capital of a part of Pannonia,[1] was arrested during the persecution of Diocletian.[2] He was led before Probus, governor of the province, who said to him on seeing him: "The divine laws oblige all men to sacrifice to the gods. — *Irenaeus.* The fire of hell shall be the portion of whoever sacrifices to the gods. — *Probus.* The edict of the most clement emperors orders that one sacrifice to the gods or undergo the penalty decreed against the refractory. — *Irenaeus.* And the law of my God wills that I undergo all sorts of torments rather than sacrifice to the gods. — *Probus.* Either sacrifice, or I shall have you tormented. — *Irenaeus.* You could not give me a greater pleasure, since thereby you will make me a partaker of the sufferings of my Saviour." Then the proconsul had him stretched on the rack, and, during the torture, said to him: "Well, Irenaeus, what say you now? Will you sacrifice at last?" Irenaeus answered: "I sacrifice to my God by confessing his holy Name, and it is thus that I have always sacrificed to him."

Meanwhile the whole family of the holy Martyr was plunged in the liveliest grief: there were seen around him his mother, his wife and his children; for this holy man was married when he was raised to the episcopate; but he kept continence after his ordination, conformably to the canons of the Church. His children embraced his feet, crying: "O most beloved of fathers! have pity on yourself and on us." His wife, all in tears, threw herself on his neck, and pressed him tenderly. "Preserve yourself," she said, "both for me and for the innocent pledges of our love." His mother, in a voice broken by sobs, uttered lugubrious cries, which her servants, her neighbours and her friends accompanied with their own; so that around the rack where the Saint was tormented, nothing was heard but plaints, groans and lamentations. To all these violent assaults

Irenaeus opposed these words of the Saviour: "If any man shall deny me before men, I will deny him before my Father who is in heaven." He made no other answer to such pressing solicitations; raising his soul above the sentiments of nature, he considered only the invisible spectator of his combats, and regarded only the crown of glory which awaited him, and which seemed to say to him: "Come, hasten to possess me." — "What!" resumed the governor, "will you be insensible to so many marks of affection and tenderness? Will you see so many tears shed for you without being touched? It is not unworthy of a great courage to let oneself be softened. Sacrifice, and do not lose yourself in the flower of your age." — "It is in order not to lose myself," answered Irenaeus, "that I refuse to sacrifice." He was sent to prison, where he suffered divers tortures.

Some days after, the Saint was led back before the proconsul, who pressed him again to sacrifice; he asked him then whether he was married, whether he had children. Irenaeus answered in the negative to these questions. "But," resumed Probus, "who then were all those people whom your lot afflicted so keenly at the first hearing?" — *Irenaeus.* Our Lord Jesus Christ has said: "He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, brothers or kinsmen, more than me, is not worthy of me; thus, when I raise my eyes to the God whom I adore, and think of the felicity which he has promised to his faithful servants, I forget that I am father, husband, son, master and friend. — *Probus.* But you are none the less all that; let so many motives therefore engage you to sacrifice. — *Irenaeus.* My children will not lose much by my death: I leave them for father the God whom they adore with me; so let nothing hinder you from executing the orders of the emperor. — *Probus.* Once more, obey, otherwise I shall be forced to condemn you. — *Irenaeus.* I have

already told you, you could not give me a greater pleasure." — Then Probus pronounced the following sentence: "We order that Irenaeus, for having disobeyed the edicts of the emperors, be cast into the river."[3] — *Irenaeus.* After so many threats, I expected something extraordinary, and you content yourself with having me drowned; why do you act thus? You wrong me; you take from me thereby the means of showing the world that Christians, who have a lively faith, despise death, with whatever torments it may be accompanied." Probus, outraged at seeing himself braved, added to the sentence that the Saint should have his head cut off before being cast into the river. Irenaeus gave thanks to God that he made him win as it were a second victory.

When he was on the bridge of Diana, whence he was to be cast into the river, he took off his robe, then raising his hands to heaven, he made this prayer: "Lord Jesus, who hast deigned to suffer death for the salvation of men, command that heaven open and that the angels receive the soul of thy servant Irenaeus, who gives his life for the glory of thy name and for thy people of the Catholic Church of Sirmium." This prayer ended, he received the blow which separated his head from his body, after which he was cast into the river. His martyrdom happened in the year 304, on 25 March, the day on which his name is marked in the Roman martyrology.

Taken from the genuine Acts of his martyrdom, published by Henschenius and Dom Ruinart. See Tillemont, vol. iv, and Dom Ceillier, vol. iii; Madame de Broglie has given place to Saint Irenaeus in her beautiful book of the Christian Virtues.

Saint Humbert of Marolles or Maroilles, priest and religious (682) — 25 March

Humbert was born at Mézières, on the river Oise, in the province since called Upper Picardy, toward the confines of the Vermandois and of the Thiérache, two leagues from Saint-Quentin. He had for father and mother Evrard and Popita, both of a very distinguished race in the French nobility: and the virtue of Evrard was of so great an example in the world that he received from it the title of Blessed. Humbert appeared from his childhood prevented by a singular grace which carried him toward God long before he could have knowledge of evil. His parents, seeing that he breathed only piety, and that he devoted himself to God of his own accord, had no scruple in destining him to the service of the altars. It was with this view that they afterwards led him to a monastery, at Laon, where he received the clerical tonsure; and they placed him in a monastery of the city, to have him instructed in piety and letters. He finished the course of his studies and was raised to the priesthood in the same house. He did not fail to remain still some time in the monastery of his ordination, and he continued to give the religious there great examples of humility, mortification and detachment, until the death of his parents obliged him to go and dispose of the inheritance they had left him. He left the city of Laon with the blessing of the bishop and the permission of the superiors of the monastery, and returned to Mézières, where he led a very retired life. A short time after, he received in his house Saint Amand, who had just resigned his bishopric of

Maastricht, and who was passing on his journey to Rome with Nicasius, monk of his abbey of Elnon, which afterwards bore his name. He followed them into Italy; and his piety appeared so satisfied with this first pilgrimage which he made to the tombs of the Apostles and the martyrs that it is claimed he undertook yet a second afterwards to Rome, where it is added that he offered to the Roman Church the lands he possessed; but that the Pope ordered him to employ them rather in founding some pious and charitable house in his country. On returning from this second journey, he went to see Saint Amand in his monastery of Elnon, on the Scarpe; and, after having maturely deliberated with him on the place he should choose to serve God in retirement, he withdrew into the monastery of Marolles or Maroilles, situated in Hainaut, in the diocese of Cambrai, on the little river Helpe, which discharges thence into the Sambre. It was a house built a short time before by Count Rodobert or Chonebert, in the country of which he was lord, and which was called the canton of Famart or Famars, because, perhaps, of some ancient temple raised to the god Mars in those places.

Humbert having proposed to end his days in this monastery of Marolles, gave to it in perpetuity the greater part of the land of Mézières-sur-Oise, by a title of the year 671, dated the twelfth year of King Childeric II. A donation so considerable procured such an increase to the monastery that several, forgetting its first foundation made sixteen or seventeen years before, persuaded themselves that Saint Humbert was its founder. It was there that our Saint finished sanctifying himself in silence, retreat, penance and prayer, without going out except to give himself sometimes the consolation of going to see Saint Aldegund, abbess of Maubeuge, with whom he was in a very close union of charity and prayers. It is believed that he was abbot or superior of Marolles: he had at least disciples, in whose arms he died, about the year 682, on 25 March.

They embalmed his body with rich perfumes, and buried it in a chapel which he had built. The cult of Saint Humbert was publicly established from the time of Louis the Debonair, who qualified him Saint in a patent. The martyrologies of the Low Countries, of France and of Germany mark his principal feast on 25 March, the day of his death, and that of his translation on 6 September.

M. Desmelles, parish priest of Maroilles, transmitted to us the following note on the relics of Saint Humbert: "The church of Maroilles possesses the head of Saint Humbert. Wishing to see it close at hand, I opened the reliquary in presence of two witnesses. I found, besides the perfectly preserved head, two ribs and the bone of a thumb, whose authenticity is attested by a parchment act signed by all the relics of the abbey, and furnished with the seal of the abbots of Maroilles, of Le Cateau and of Liessies. With the permission of Monseigneur, I disposed of the bone of the thumb in favour of the church of Estaires, and of a rib in favour of the church of Romeries, of which Saint Humbert is the Patron.

"The reliquary which encloses the head of Saint Humbert is the same as that which existed before the Revolution. It was carried to Avesnes, with the other objects of the Church, stripped of its ornaments of silver and precious stones, then thrown like a piece of wood. Religious men who followed these pious riches to withdraw them from profanation gathered the reliquary, kept it hidden during the storm and gave it back to the Church …

"The altar of Saint Humbert is often visited by the parishioners and by strangers. On 7 September, the day of the patronal feast, the church is visited all the morning from three o'clock in the morning.

"The breviary signals no miracle that Saint Humbert would have wrought during his life or after his death.

"Saint Humbert is always represented with a bear and a stag at his side. It is said that, in a journey he made to Rome, a bear devoured the ass which carried the baggage and that, in punishment, the bear was condemned to carry the provisions. The presence of the stag is justified by saying that a stag pursued went and lay down beside Saint Humbert praying in his oratory and that, out of respect for the holy man, the hunters spared the poor animal."

After Baillet and local notes.

Saint Cessator or Cezadre, bishop of Limoges (732) — 25 March

In the time of Charles Martel, when innumerable Moors, Saracens and other infidel barbarians, issuing from Spain, were invading France, inundating Aquitaine, and carrying everywhere iron and flame, the churches had need of pastors endowed not only with great piety, but also with a singular firmness and an invincible courage. God therefore, by his paternal providence, destined for the church of Limoges Saint Cessator, an intrepid and generous man, to deliver it from its imminent perils.

When he had visited his diocese, and had with an altogether episcopal solicitude provided that the parish priests and other immediate pastors should watch with quite particular care over the guarding of their respective flocks, on account of the misfortune of the circumstances, he himself, the better to drive off the wolves that threatened all his sheep, levied soldiers, marched to meet the enemy, and valiantly exposed his

life to dangers, for the preservation of the faith and for the salvation as well of the souls as of the bodies of his dear diocesans; he joined his troops to the invincible army of the Franks, and, in the memorable battle of Poitiers, contributed much to the rout of the barbarians.

Proper of Limoges.

Saint Baronto and Saint Desiderius, hermits (700) — 25 March

In the time of King Theuderic III there lived a gentleman of Berry, named Baronto, who, after having passed some years in marriage, and having had among other children a son named Agloald, was touched by God with a grace whose light discovered to him the vanity of the world and the solidity of eternal goods, and made him take the resolution to think no more but of his salvation. He was not long in perceiving the difficulty there would be in executing his design well while remaining in the ordinary course of the life of the world, where he found unceasingly the objects which had formerly led him to offend God: so that, to begin his penance by cutting off the occasions of sin, he withdrew with his son Agloald into the abbey of Longoret or Saint-Cyran, in the diocese of Bourges, today of Nevers. Having consecrated himself to God under the discipline of that house, he soon gave there all the marks of a sincere conversion, by the fervour with which he acquitted himself of all the exercises of the religious and penitent life. One day, on coming out of Matins, he fell into a swoon or apoplexy which tormented him at first by great pains, and which, having afterwards taken from him sensation and intercepted respiration, gave the religious reason to believe that he was dead, or was about to die. They divided into bands; and, succeeding one another, they recited prayers in his chamber, as is the custom to do before the dying or dead bodies. Baronto remained in this state of immobility until the next morning. Toward daybreak he came to himself, and said three times: *Glory be to thee, Lord.* This return surprised and rejoiced at the same time those who were present: and, after thanks had been rendered to God for his recovery, he related to the community what had passed in his imagination during his ecstasy. According to what he had believed he saw, two demons had taken him by the throat, and had tormented him until the hour of Terce. Then it had seemed to him that the angel Raphael, having come to his help, had detached his soul from his body to lead it toward heaven, where he had shown him some Blessed whom he had known on earth; that having appeared before Saint Peter, patron of Longoret, the demons had accused him of several sins which he had indeed committed in the world; but that the Apostle, taking up his defence, had declared that they were expiated by his alms, by his confession to the priest, by his penance, and by his religious profession; that Saint Peter having driven away the demons, ordered two children clothed in white to show him the torments of hell, and to lead him back afterwards to his monastery; and that he recommended to him not to fall again into the faults he had committed before his conversion, to distribute to the poor the rest of the goods he had reserved in the world, and to remain faithful to his vocation. Baronto accompanied this narrative with many very extraordinary circumstances; which led one of the religious who heard it to take the pen at once to draw up a historical relation of it, which subsists still today.

This vision nevertheless made so great an impression on the mind of Baronto that, pressed by the desire of tending to a greater perfection, he asked permission of his abbot to leave the country and to go in search of a desert outside the kingdom. It was hard to grant it to him: but having obtained it at last after long instances, he went to Rome to visit the tomb of Saint Peter, in acknowledgment of the grace he had received from God through his intercession, and he withdrew afterwards into the territory of Pistoia, in Tuscany, where he built a cell between two mountains. He lived there like a person who would not have been of this world, who would have no attachment to the earth, no tie with men. His prayer was continual, and he enjoyed beforehand the presence of God and of heavenly objects by contemplation. The care he took to hide himself did not prevent his being soon known. His reputation drew near him a holy solitary of the neighbourhood, named Desiderius, who wished to profit by his examples. Soon after, four young men, strongly touched by the desire to save themselves, joined them and submitted to the discipline of Saint Baronto. Having built a church, they served

God together in the exercises of prayer and penance; and, joining all the advantages of the cenobitic life to those of the institute of the most retired anchorites, they attained in a short time to an eminent degree of virtue. Saint Baronto died first, and was buried in their church. Desiderius followed him some years after, and God then called the four who remained, at some distance from one another. They were all buried in the same place with much honour: and the miracles which were wrought at their tomb served greatly to confirm the persuasion that was held of their holiness.

After Baillet.

Our Lady of Le Puy and Our Lady of France — 25 March

If one believes legends of a high antiquity, a pious widow, born near Velaune, the ancient capital of the Velay, and converted by Saint Martial, suffering for a long time from a fever rebellious to all remedies, addressed herself to the Blessed Virgin, who made her understand that health would be restored to her on Mount Anis: so was called the summit of a truncated cone on which the church of Le Puy is today built.[1] The sick woman, arrived at the place indicated, rests and falls asleep on a square stone, in the form of an altar, which she finds there; and, in her sleep, she sees a troop of angels; in the midst of them, a lady clothed in royal garments, radiant with brightness. "Behold," said to her one of the heavenly spirits, "the Mother of the

Saviour; she has chosen this place for her sanctuary; and that you may not take what I tell you for a dream, you are cured." At these words the vision disappears, and the sick woman wakes full of health.

Saint George then governed the church of the Velay. Informed of the fact, he climbed Mount Anis, perceives a part of the plateau covered with snow, although it was then the 11th of July, the time of the strongest heats, and in the midst of this snow a stag which, taking its course at his approach, traces by the impression of its steps the enclosure of a church. The holy bishop surrounds with a hedge of thorns the marked enclosure; and Saint Martial, who was evangelising the neighbouring countries, having come to visit Mount Anis in his turn, which renown already signalled to public attention, designates the place of the altar, and leaves as relic to the future church a shoe of the Blessed Virgin, which he had brought from Rome.

However, the church remained in the state of a project until the episcopate of Saint Vosy, about the year 220. Then a paralytic lady, of the village of Ceyssac, having had herself carried to the same stone as the widow of Velaune, and having had there the same vision, heard the same words, and obtained a similar cure, hastened to warn Saint Vosy. The latter, after three days of fasts and prayers, mounts the rock followed by all the people, and finds the enclosure formed by the hedge still covered with a thick snow. At this sight, seized with a holy transport, he cries out: "This is the house of God and the gate of heaven," and he takes the resolution to transfer thither the episcopal see, which was then at Saint-Paulien. For this the consent of the Pope was needed; he goes to Rome, obtains the necessary authorisation, and brings back with him Scrutarius, a young Roman of senatorial race, as skilful in architecture as he was pious and modest. They put hand to the work at once: rich and poor, all lend their help. There, they seek not art and ornamentation: it is a perfect unity of forms; they are mouldings of the most ordinary kind; they are mosaics of stones of different colours, forming squares and lozenges; it is finally the architecture of the epoch, solid, but perfectly simple. Thus, in seven years, they finished the apse and the first cupola, that is to say the rond-point which is occupied today by the stalls of the chapter and what is called the angelic chamber.

This edifice finished, the bishop and the young Scrutarius judged it fitting to go and give an account of it to the Pope, and to ask permission to make its solemn consecration. Scarcely had they gone a quarter of a league when two old men clothed in white, each carrying a golden casket, present themselves to them, hand them relics which they say come from Rome, invite them to return, barefoot, to carry them to the church of Mount Anis, "whose consecration," they add, "is being made at this moment by the ministry of angels." And at once they disappear. The prelate and his companion, seized with respect, take off their shoes, return with

the precious caskets, and tell those whom they meet what has just happened. The news spreads everywhere with the rapidity of lightning. The people run, join the bishop, and a procession is formed, which soon arrives at the top of Mount Anis. The doors of the church open of themselves, the sanctuary appears lit by a multitude of torches, and the altar sprinkled with an oil whose perfume embalms the whole church. The bishop, in his rapture, intones the canticle of thanksgiving, the bystanders pursue it with joy. The prayer finished, more than three hundred torches are gathered, of which two are still preserved in the treasury of the church, and, from that day, the cathedral of Le Puy is known by the fair name of *angelic church*, which all the centuries have preserved to it.[2]

Renown carried far the news of these prodigies: people ran to the new sanctuary, and, happy to shelter in its shade, several fixed their dwelling in the neighbourhood, until forming in a short time a little town, then a greater city, which became the capital of the Velay, as it was already the seat of the bishops.

Although the greatest splendour of the church of Le Puy springs from the angelic chamber, whose erection was so full of miracles, it is true to say that the miraculous statue, which was venerated there for several centuries, has influenced its glory still more. This image had been brought from the Holy Land, in 1254, by Saint Louis, who came expressly to Le Puy to make homage of it to the basilica of Mary. It was of hard wood, of sethim according to some, of cedar or ebony according to others, and represented the Blessed Virgin seated on a sort of stool, holding the Child Jesus on her knees. Bandages tightly bound after the manner of Egyptian mummies enveloped the image of the Son and of the Mother, and let only their faces be seen. For five centuries the glorious Virgin of Mount Anis received the homage of eager crowds, when in 1793 she was torn from her sanctuary by incredulous fanaticism, dragged ignominiously through those streets formerly witnesses of her triumph, and burnt on the Place du Martouret, amid the insane clamours of some furious men, but amid the consternation of the whole sound part of a eminently Catholic population.

Happily the reign of impiety never lasts long. Immediately after the Revolution, a new statue, a faithful copy of the old, put again before the eyes the features that centuries had venerated; the piety of the faithful resumed its impulse, and Mary received and receives still every day, under her new image, as many testimonies of confidence and love as under the old, so dear to our ancestors.

This statue was not the only wealth of the church of Le Puy. The possession of the most signal relics formed one of its other glories. It had of them, toward the end of the last century, a considerable number, as the inventory preserved of them proves; and gold, silver, precious stones adorned the reliquaries in which they were kept. But in ’93 revolutionary impiety delivered to the flames most of these relics, and the reliquaries which enclosed them became the prey of cupidity. Of so many riches there remains nothing remarkable but two signal relics of the true Cross; one, with its reliquary, given by Pope Innocent III; the other, coming from the abbey of La Chaise-Dieu, to which Clement VI had sent it. The church of Le Puy formerly possessed a considerable fragment of the crown of thorns, of which Saint Louis had made it a present in 1239; but this fragment having passed to the principal church of Saint-Étienne in Forez, with the letter signed by the pious monarch, which establishes its authenticity, Cardinal de Bonald, when he was bishop of Le Puy, seemed to wish to compensate his cathedral for this loss, and gave it a slight particle of the holy thorn.

All conditions, from the highest to the humblest, seem to have given themselves rendezvous at Our Lady of Le Puy, and that in all ages of history, from the foundation of this sanctuary. There are seen popes and kings, princes and great lords, saints of whom several are canonised, all the classes of the people and of society. The popes who have visited this illustrious basilica are: Urban II (1095), Gelasius II (1110), Callistus II (1111), Innocent II (1130), Alexander III (1162).

The kings and princes who came to bow their foreheads before the madonna of Le Puy are: Charlemagne, Louis the Debonair, Charles the Bald, Odo, Robert, Saint Louis and Margaret of Provence his wife, Philip III, Philip IV, Charles VI, Charles VII, Louis XI,[3] Charles VIII, Francis I; Raymond, count of Toulouse, and

Alfonso II of Aragon: these last two put an end to their long enmity by embracing before the altar itself. In 1062, Bernard, count of Bigorre, came to make homage to it of his county in a celebrated diploma, wholly imbued with the Christian spirit. But it was not only kings and great lords who visited the angelic church. The Saints, who have in the highest degree the instinct of good, came there first. We see there three abbots of Cluny: Saint Majolus, who healed a blind man at Le Puy, Saint Odo and Peter the Venerable. We see there Saint Robert, founder of La Chaise-Dieu; Saint Stephen, founder of the Order of Grammont; Saint Odo, abbot of Le Monastier; Saint Hugh of Grenoble, Saint Dominic, Saint Antony of Padua, Saint Colette, and above all Saint Vincent Ferrer, who came there preceded by a hundred penitents clothed in sacks, marching barefoot, two by two, and who, for want of a church large enough to contain the multitude that had run from fifteen to twenty leagues to hear him, had an amphitheatre with an altar set up in the immense meadow of the Breuil, which comprised, besides the place of that name, all the ground occupied by the prefecture, the court, the museum and the promenade. There, while the Saint prepared to offer the holy sacrifice, the penitents gave themselves, before the astonished multitude, a rude discipline, exhorting sinners to imitate their example; then, covered with blood, they mounted the amphitheatre following a banner on which was painted the scourged Saviour. During the Mass, which was always sung, Vincent completed the melting of hearts by pouring out a torrent of tears. He then took the word, and thundered against vices with the liberty of an apostle and the ardour of a soul inflamed with the love of God. He preached thus for fifteen consecutive days without his voice altering or even weakening, although his worn body seemed near fainting. A still greater prodigy: although, being a Spaniard, he hardly knew French, he made himself understood by all, and the conversions were innumerable. Saint Francis Regis showed no less devotion toward the Virgin of Mount Anis. Attached by his superiors to the mission of Le Puy, he drew at the feet of Mary the grace of the apostolate, and thence spread through the towns and countrysides of the Velay to evangelise them. Like these saintly persons, the venerable mother Agnes, that precocious prodigy of holiness whom God loaded with such extraordinary graces, made her delights of the angelic church; she renewed there the vow of perpetual virginity, and when she was obliged to go away to be superior of the monastery of Langeac, at least once a day she knelt, her face turned toward Le Puy, to offer her homage as formerly to the Mother of God. Finally, M. Olier, that man of God who founded the company of the priests of Saint-Sulpice, had the tenderest devotion for this sanctuary of Mary. In 1652 he wished to pass through Le Puy to betake himself to Viviers, whither his duty called him; and as soon as he arrived, he went up to the cathedral and remained there long in prayer, offering himself to Our Lord and to his holy Mother. In 1655, feeling his end approach, he made a second time the pilgrimage to Le Puy, and here is how he himself gives account of it: “I am,” he wrote, “in a place where I would end my life with joy, at the feet of Our Lady of Le Puy, to whom I am indebted for every sort of grace.” Unable to remain always present in body in this church, he left near the image of Mary a silver statue, in which he had had himself represented in the posture of a suppliant, bowed before her, with a gold medal on which was engraved the seminary of Saint-Sulpice which he presented to her, conjuring her to take it under her protection. Stimulated by so many fine examples, the masses pressed before the Virgin of Mount Anis. People ran there not only from all the provinces of France, but from foreign kingdoms, even from Greece and Poland. Spain above all sent so many pilgrims that a hospice was built at Toulouse to receive them on their passage. “We come,” they said, “to honour and pray Our Lady of France.” On the principal feasts of the year, relate the chronicles, the beaten roads were no longer sufficient; people marched across the neighbouring fields. Such was even the ardour of piety that quite often, in the depth of winter, the greater part of the road was made barefoot; and as soon as, from the heights of the neighbouring mountains, the venerated sanctuary was perceived, people fell on their knees on the snow, on the ice, on the cold stone, and sometimes even in the mud, and saluted Her whom they came to visit with so much fatigue.

Everything conspired to encourage these pilgrimages. The town of Le Puy had a hospice to lodge the pilgrims; the State, more indulgent toward those whom sickness surprised there, required only the presence of two witnesses for the validity of their will, whereas elsewhere it required seven. The tribunals even

sometimes imposed this pilgrimage as an expiatory penalty for offences. But the sovereign Pontiffs invited to it far more powerfully by their indulgences. Pius VI attached a plenary indulgence to the visit of the church, on whatever day of the year it might be, provided one communicated there; and he added to it the privilege of the Roman stations, in such a way that by going to pray at the seven altars designated by the Ordinary, one gained the same indulgences as by going to pray at the seven great churches of Rome. Besides all these favours, the Holy See granted another quite special one, which no other church in the whole of Christendom enjoys, namely the grace of a jubilee every time that the Annunciation coincides with Good Friday: a very ancient concession, since in 1418 Elias de Lestrange, bishop of Le Puy, represented to Pope Martin V, in the Council of Constance, that his church had been in possession of this jubilee from time immemorial, and that three cardinals present confirmed this assertion.

The last jubilee of the eighteenth century was that of 1785: eighty thousand pilgrims were counted there, that is two or three times fewer than at those which had preceded it. The jubilee which followed was long awaited and fell only in 1842; but, an admirable thing, after so many upheavals in ideas and in things, people ran to it as formerly, and there were found there no fewer than a hundred and fifty thousand pilgrims.[4] Soon after, the Holy See granted to Christendom two consecutive jubilees; and the year 1853 bringing a new jubilee to the angelic church, one might have believed that it would no longer have for the peoples the same interest; but that would have been an illusion. Never, on the contrary, was a more magnificent jubilee seen. The cold was of the severest, snows covered all the mountains, the public roads were blocked; no matter, no difficulty stops them; they cut a way through ice and snow, and nearly three hundred thousand pilgrims come to gain the jubilee. There is not in the town where to lodge them: they withdraw into the churches and pass the night praying Mary, singing her praises, and the bishop, giving account of these things in a pastoral letter, can say: “Henceforth we shall believe better what the ancient documents of our church tell us of past jubilees; what did our fathers admire that we have not admired ourselves? Was there, at any other epoch, a more general stir, a more numerous concourse, a greater eagerness? We might almost have said: Was there more of signs of a lively faith? … more conversions in all ranks of society?”[5]

The glory of Our Lady of Le Puy was necessarily to rebound upon the bishop and the chapter, who every day officiated in the presence of this powerful queen and formed as it were her court. Thus several sovereign Pontiffs, such as Leo X in 1030, Paschal II in 1105, Eugene III in 1145, took pleasure in declaring by express bulls the bishop of Le Puy withdrawn from all metropolitan jurisdiction, a suffragan of the Holy See, on which he was to depend for ever like the primates and the patriarchs; and that is why we see several bishops of Le Puy have themselves consecrated at Rome or elsewhere, by the very hand of the Pope.

To this first privilege the Holy See added the Pallium, an honorific insignia given at first by the sovereign Pontiffs to those whom they judged worthy of it, and later reserved specially to archbishops and primates. In 1040, Pope Leo IX wrote to the bishop of Le Puy, Stephen of Mercœur: “We grant the pallium to your fraternity, out of respect for the blessed and glorious Virgin, Mother of God, whose memory is more loved and venerated in your church than in the other sanctuaries dedicated to her.” The kings of France on their side conferred on the bishop of Le Puy all the privileges in their power: they constituted him lord of the town, and invested him with all the authority attached to that title.

The Revolution of ’93 made these prerogatives disappear, and the see itself was suppressed. But as soon as the concordat of 1802 had given back its bishop to Le Puy, the Holy See at once decorated him with the pallium, the only privilege which has remained to him of his glorious past.

The chapter of Le Puy, in its turn, had its share in the testimonies of honour with which it was wished to surround everything that belonged to the angelic church. Honoured like the bishop by the sovereign Pontiffs with the privilege of depending only on the Holy See, it received also that of being unable to be struck by any censure, so that the divine service could never cease in so august a church.

The canons had moreover the privilege of wearing the mitre when they officiated at the great solemnities.

Love and veneration for Our Lady of Le Puy did not delay to draw upon the holy mountain numerous religious and charitable establishments. Almost all the congregations approved by the Church held it an honour to have representatives near her sanctuary, which thus became as it were a resplendent centre of light, projecting on all sides its brilliant rays.

The Benedictines established themselves there in 993; the Dominicans were installed there by Saint Dominic himself in 1221, and their general chapter was held there three times; in 1147 there were counted up to eighteen hundred professed. The Cordeliers followed close upon the Dominicans; their monastery had the glory of receiving the mortal remains of Bernard of Quintavalle, the first companion of Saint Francis of Assisi, and of having Saint Antony of Padua for guardian. The Carmelites came to Le Puy in 1286, and the Jesuits in 1588. The Capuchins arrived soon after the Jesuits, in 1607. But it was above all for virgins to gather round the Queen of virgins, and they did not fail there. The Poor Clares began in 1430, brought by Saint Colette herself, their foundress, of whom are still kept a Psalter which Benedict XIII had given her, some furniture and some garments that belonged to her, as well as her cell, one half of which serves as chapel for the public, and the other half as interior oratory for the community. The church of the Poor Clares has the privilege of the Portiuncula indulgence. In 1605, Madame de Pollalion arranged the establishment of the Dominican nuns, of whom Mother Agnes was a member, and who are now settled at Langeac. The Ursulines followed close upon these, and were merged in the community of the religious of Notre-Dame, who planted themselves at Le Puy almost at the same time, devoted like them to the education of youth, and were called Daughters of Saint Mary. There came next, in 1630, the Visitation; some years after, Notre-Dame du Refuge; then the house of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, devoted to the instruction of young girls, the education of orphans, the care of the sick and of poor families; finally, the ladies of the Child Jesus, whose sublime devotion to everything good, and above all to the instruction of the poor, covers the whole country as with a network of beneficence; a precious institute which directs forty-four establishments and is composed of ladies properly so called, commonly named the *demoiselles de l'instruction*, and fifteen hundred affiliates. There was besides, on every square and in every street, some oratory, some cross or some niche which enclosed the image of the patroness of the Velay, and beside it a lamp which is still lit every Saturday, on the eves of feasts of the Blessed Virgin, or when a neighbour has some cure or other grace to ask. Below the niche one reads almost always this recommendation:

> *If Mary's love be graven in thy heart, forget not, passing by, to say to her an Ave. [prose rendering of a French rhymed quatrain]*

When a funeral passes before these holy images, everyone stops; the clergy sing:

> *Maria, Mater gratiæ, Mater misericordiæ, tu nos ab hoste protege, et hora mortis suscipe. — Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy, defend us against our enemies, and at the hour of death receive us in thy maternal arms.*

The celebrant adds: *Ora pro eo* (or *ea*), *sancta Dei Genitrix*: pray for him, or for her, holy Mother of God, and sings a prayer to commend the soul of the deceased to the Blessed Virgin. While the peoples, thronging into the angelic church, continued the age-old traditions of piety toward Mary, Mgr de Morlhon, bishop of Le Puy, conceived the great and bold thought of adding a new glory to his church by raising upon the Corneille rock, which is contiguous to it, a colossal statue of the Virgin Mary. From this pedestal, which rises seven hundred and fifty-seven metres above sea level, and seems to have come from the hands of the Creator for such a design, Mary would dominate all France, would reign over it like a queen over her subjects prostrate at her feet: this would indeed be Our Lady of France. (5 March 1853.) While the artist,[6] a victor, arranges his model to deliver it to the founder who is to execute it, there occur the happiest and most providential coincidences. Pius IX, wishing to raise to the height of a Catholic dogma what had until then been only the free and traditional belief of the Church, convokes to Rome two hundred bishops, to enhance by their presence the solemn proclamation he is to make there of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. The bishop of

Le Puy obeys the call of the vicar of Jesus Christ; but, before leaving, he prescribes the laying of the first stone of the monument which is to crown the Corneille rock, for the day, and if possible for the very moment, when the sovereign Pontiff shall proclaim to the four winds of the earth the glorious privilege of Mary immaculate. Docile to the voice of the prelate, the clergy of Le Puy took pains to approach as nearly as possible his pious intentions, and on 10 December 1854 the first stone of the pedestal was laid and blessed. The bishop, on his return, appeals to France and to the world to furnish the considerable expenses of the monument he meditates: “This is not a local work,” he says to them, “but truly a national work; it is France called to make her profession of faith in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and to erect a commemorative monument of the great religious fact recently accomplished at Rome.” This consideration casts over the work a holy prestige, and France, which had received the words of the sovereign Pontiff with the double charm of her obedience to the Holy See and of her filial piety toward Mary, France, which moreover loves all great things, seized with sympathy such a proposal; from the court to the hamlet, offerings arrived in proportion to the expense. Pélissier, the hero of the Crimea, had written to Le Puy: “Ask the Emperor for cannon, he will tell us to take them, and we shall take them.” The bishop, in fact, ventures to make this request on 5 September 1855; the cannon are promised him, and three days after, Sebastopol is ours; its cannon are ours; they will come to France to be transformed into the image of Mary, and these instruments of death will represent for all centuries her gentle face. On 19 April 1856 the imperial promise receives its accomplishment: a hundred and fifty thousand kilograms of cast iron, in pieces of ordnance coming from the Crimea, are put at the disposal of the bishop; and thus, a marvellous thing, the forced subscription of Russia bears the first expenses of an excellently Catholic work.

After four years of labour, in the month of September 1860, all is consummated. Not only is the statue cast, but the enormous blocks of which it is composed are hoisted upon the Corneille rock and built up one upon another, up to the brow and the crown of the colossus. The pedestal alone is seven metres above the rock, the statue sixteen metres above the pedestal; consequently the crown of the statue is at seven hundred and sixty-four metres above sea level. The Virgin stands on a half-sphere of five metres in circumference, crushing the head of an enormous serpent seventeen metres long, and holding on her right arm the divine Child who blesses France. Her feet are one metre ninety-two centimetres in length, her hair seven metres, her forearm three metres seventy-five centimetres, her hand one metre fifty-six centimetres, and her circumference, at the point of its widest development, measures seventeen metres: prodigious dimensions, such that no existing monument in cast metal has hitherto attained like proportions.

And, a remarkable thing, this gigantic colossus has lost nothing of the suave sentiment, of the profound religiousness of its model. Beautiful near, beautiful far, it has remained a work of poetry and of art; and the noble and gentle face of the Virgin bears an imprint which one hardly thinks of asking from colossi: beauty, harmony, grace and charm. The bishop of Le Puy fixed the 12th of September for the ceremony of inauguration, and had his people prepared for it by a novena which the great preacher of our epoch, Rev. Father Félix, came to preach. On the appointed day the whole population of the Velay seemed to have come down to Le Puy, as in the epochs of its great jubilees. Twelve prelates, among whom three archbishops were distinguished, were present.

So fair a day could not remain without an anniversary. By pastoral mandate of 18 August 1861, this anniversary is celebrated on the Sunday after 12 September.

Extract from Notre-Dame de France, *by M. Ramon*.

Our Lady of Lourdes — 25 March

> *The poor are the friends of God. At all times, and with rare exceptions, apparitions, visions and private revelations have been the privilege of those indigent and little ones whom the world disdains. — Lasserre, Notre-Dame de Lourdes.*

The little town of Lourdes is situated in the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées, at the opening of the seven valleys of the Lavedan, between the plain of Tarbes and the first escarpments of the mountains. Lourdes was formerly, by its fortress and its position, the key to the Pyrenees: it is so still today from another point of view: one must necessarily pass through it to go to the thermal waters of Barèges, Saint-Sauveur, Cauterets, Bagnères, Luchon, Pau. “The whole city and the fortress are situated on the right bank of the Gave, which, after breaking, as it comes from the south, against the enormous rock that serves as pedestal to the stronghold, makes at once an elbow at a right angle and takes abruptly the direction of the west.” An old bridge, built upstream, at some distance from the first houses of the town, opens a communication with the country, the meadows, the forests and the mountains of the left bank. “On this latter bank, a little below the bridge and opposite the Castle, an intake made in the Gave gives birth to a very strong canal. This canal rejoins the Gave a kilometre downstream, after having passed by only a few metres the Massabielle Rocks, whose base it bathes.

“Now, in 1858, there was hardly, in the environs of the little town, a more solitary, wilder and more deserted place than these Massabielle Rocks, at the foot of which the Gave and the canal of a mill rejoined.

“A few steps above this confluence, on the bank of the stream, the steep rock was pierced at its base by three irregular excavations, rather strangely superposed and communicating with one another, as might the holes of a gigantic sponge.” It was necessary to give an idea of the country where the scenes we have to describe are to pass.

The 11th of February 1858 was *jeudi gras* (Fat Thursday, in the carnival days before Lent). While everywhere joyous gatherings were being prepared, three young girls whose parents had not even wood to cook their meagre meal went to seek some on the bank of the Gave, in the direction of Massabielle. Two of them crossed the canal that separated them from the solitary grotto opened at the foot of the rock and began to gather up the branches with which the ground was strewn. The third, a sickly child, hesitated some time before the coldness of the water; she decided at last to cross. Bent over her feet, she was taking off her shoes when a sudden gust of wind made her raise her head. The air was calm, the trees motionless. She stoops to take off her second stocking. The wind blows again and goes to strike the excavation. The little girl looks there, astonished: a wild rose-bush, hanging from the rock, was swaying feebly.

Suddenly, above the grotto, a dark opening, hollowed like a window into the heart of the rock, fills with a magnificent light, and in this brilliance more beautiful than that of the sun there appears a young Lady, of an aspect full of sweetness, divinely beautiful. Her dress was graceful and simple: a white robe; a long white veil, falling from her head in broad folds; a blue girdle floating down below the knees; on each of her bare feet a golden rose, blossoming and shining. The child, struck down with surprise and admiration, uncertain, rubs her eyes, looks again… the Lady was smiling at her deliciously from the midst of the light. Fallen on her knees, she seizes her rosary, carries its cross to her forehead to make the sign of the cross, but her hand falls back as if paralysed. Presently the Apparition, taking the golden crucifix of a rosary which she carried, makes with it upon herself a great sign of the cross. The child can then sign herself. The Lady folds her hands and rolls between her fingers the white beads of her long rosary, whose yellow chain sparkles: her lips did not move. The child imitates this attitude and these movements, and recites the *Hail Marys* of her rosary.

The mysterious woman invites her by a gesture to approach, but she does not dare. At last the Vision, still smiling, disappears.

Dazzled in her soul, charmed and not knowing what to believe, the girl crosses the canal, and arrived under the rocky vault, questions her companions, one her younger sister, the other her friend, who at that moment were playing together. They had seen nothing.

This child, Bernadette Soubirous, was 14 years old. Born of poor parents, puny, wearied with asthma from the cradle, still very ignorant of her catechism, she had not made her first communion. Of a mind slow for

instruction, of a gentle and loving character, simple and naïve, ordinary in nature in every respect, perhaps a little more inclined to piety than children of her age, nothing in her could foreshadow the glorious destiny which was beginning at that moment. Bernadette confided to her mother what she had just seen. The mother was alarmed; sinister ideas took hold of her mind. She dreaded above all a malicious illusion of the demon, and she forbade her daughter severely to return to the bank of Massabielle.

The report of the vision spread through the quarter. On Sunday, 14 February, some little girls, goaded by curiosity, wrested toward noon from Mrs Soubirous the permission to take Bernadette to the Grotto. They pass by the church, and fill a little bottle with holy water to defend themselves against the Vision and drive it away, if it was a malignant spirit. The Lady appears in the niche of the rock. Bernadette warns her friends of it, then throws several times toward the Vision her holy water, telling it to approach if it comes from God. The Lady, already smiling, smiles more sweetly when the drops of water rise toward her feet, draws nearer, bows with an ineffable serenity and benevolence. Bernadette falls on her knees, takes her rosary, and, with fixed eye, face transfigured, prays, looks with love… In the evening, almost the whole town heard told the strange spectacle of Massabielle. On Thursday, 18 February, two grown persons were directing themselves secretly with Bernadette toward the Grotto, before sunrise. The child arrived first, and already the gentle Lady whom she came to seek was before her in the splendour of her aureole when her companions joined her. One of them, suspecting that this unknown being might be a soul of Purgatory, had brought paper and ink to give it the means of making itself known. After a prayer on her knees, she sends Bernadette to ask the Vision to write its name and the motive of its coming. The Vision smiles and replies: “What I have to say to you, there is no need to put in writing… Do me the favour of coming for fifteen days.” The child binds herself. The Lady resumes: “And I, I cannot make you happy in this moment, but in the other, I promise it to you.” Bernadette returns to her companions, who were praying while following her with their eyes, and repeats to them what she has just heard. They make her go again near the niche, to inquire whether it will be permitted them also to come. “I wish it,” answers the Lady, “and I desire that there be people.” The third apparition ended on these words.

Bernadette’s new accounts changed the thoughts of the mother, who thought she should not oppose the promise made to the Lady to come to the Grotto. The next morning she accompanied her there and saw the singular beauty of her daughter and the extraordinary happiness that beamed in that gaze fixed on the niche. A fairly numerous group of women of Lourdes had gathered before the rock and were observing the child.

From then on the crowd of the curious went on swelling each morning. All the environs already knew the marvels that astonished Lourdes; Bigorre and Béarn were stirred by these strange rumours, travellers spoke of them in distant towns, the newspapers lent their thousand voices to the news. From all sides people ran to see Bernadette. The most eager took their place under the rock long before the break of dawn. Several thousands of persons of every condition accumulated rapidly in the environs of the Grotto and spread over the other bank of the Gave.

The sun had not yet appeared when the child arrived accompanied by her mother or more often by one of her aunts. She knelt, a candle in one hand, took her rosary in the other and said the *Hail Marys* on the beads, looking toward the oval opening above the Grotto. Often a slight movement took place in her, her whole being seemed to rise; she grew pale, her eye became fixed.

She was seen to make in the first moments graceful salutations, then she signed herself with the crucifix of her rosary with such nobility of movement and so respectful and tender a piety that a man said one day: “It is only in heaven that one makes the sign of the cross like that.” She folded her hands and recited her rosary.

The crowd, silent and moved, contemplated the child in her striking beauty. Bernadette, transfigured, no longer seemed herself. Her white face was as if lit by a reflection of glory; her inflamed, eager looks never tired; they plunged, insatiable, into the hollow of the rock; sometimes two tears escaped from her eyelids and

stopped on her cheeks. Only she was perceived; but people said: “She sees!…”

She saw, and of all that surrounded her she saw nothing, nothing but the Lady. And the Lady showed herself, as the first time, with her white robe and veil, her blue girdle, the yellow roses on her bare feet, and with the charm of her young and radiant face, in the blossoming of an ineffable tenderness. She saluted with head and smile, then made a sign of the cross, holding the crucifix of her rosary, and interlaced her hands; the golden chain and the white beads then flowed under her fingers. The Lady spoke to the little girl in the language of the people, in patois, and the child answered her aloud. But no one ever saw the movements or heard the sounds of this marvellous conversation. Bernadette received there three secrets which concern only herself.

At last the Lady disappeared, the light vanished after her. And Bernadette, coming out of the joys of ecstasy, losing her supernatural beauty of a moment, resumed her ordinary face and life, saw the crowd again and went home to remain the whole day a prey to the general curiosity.

One day the Lady gave an order to Bernadette: “Go and tell the priests that a chapel must be built here and that people must come here in procession.” The child went to carry this word to the parish priest of Lourdes; later she received the same command again. In the middle of the fortnight the Vision, pointing to the back of the Grotto, said: “Go drink at that fountain and wash yourself in it: you will eat of that herb which is there.” Bernadette obeyed. But at the place indicated there was no spring, she saw hardly any moisture. At a sign from the Lady, she makes a little hole in the sand, and at the bottom a little muddy water gathers. In the hollow of her hand she carries some three times to her lips without daring to touch it. At last, after a new look toward the niche, she drinks this repugnant mixture, then wets her face with it and goes to eat some leaves of an herb that grew beside.

About the same time the Lady said again to Bernadette: “You will pray for the conversion of sinners… You will kiss the earth for the conversion of sinners.” And the child was seen to climb on her knees the slope that rose beneath the niche, repeating: “Penance! Penance! Penance!” She was seen to press her lips on the ground. Since then she had several times to climb the incline of the Grotto in expiation of the sins of men and to kiss the earth often; it was ordered her again to go and drink, but the water had increased, she filled her hand with it repeatedly and drew it in without difficulty. These strange actions of Bernadette surprised the crowd, who received the explanation of them only late and slowly, and shocked even religious minds. Some saw in them only illusion or imposture. Many others, subjugated by these extraordinary spectacles, believed in a divine apparition and affirmed loudly that this woman so beautiful, so radiant, so good, could be none other than the Virgin Mother of God, and that truly it was She. A greater number perhaps doubted and awaited events. There was a great combat of opinions. Meanwhile the believers began to say to themselves that the water the girl drank would have a supernatural virtue. No spring had hitherto appeared at the Grotto, and behold now one flowed there at the very place and from the moment when Bernadette’s hands had stirred the sand. People went to draw from the nascent Fountain.

A workman named Louis Bourriette, who had irremediably lost an eye in the explosion of a mine, washed with this water, praying the Blessed Virgin, and suddenly recovered the fullness of his sight.

An infant at the breast, who had not yet walked, was about to die. Croisine Ducontè, his mother, against all prudence and human hope, carried him to the Grotto and plunged him in the little basin of the Spring. The child came back to life and two days later left the cradle, alone, and walked without help. Several other ills were thus cured. The reports of miracles spread.

Bernadette had been faithful to the rendezvous at the Grotto; only twice she waited in vain for the Lady, the Lady did not show herself.

The 4th of March ended the fortnight of announced apparitions. Never had the town of Lourdes seen so vast an assembly. In the surroundings of Massabielle thousands and thousands of the curious pressed, all eager to

witness the dénouement of these unheard-of events. Nothing extraordinary marked the last coming of the mysterious Lady. The child, in all the beauty of her ecstasy, contemplated, prayed, drank at the Fountain, climbed on her knees, kissed the earth; one felt, as on the preceding days, the invisible presence of heaven.

The Vision had not named itself, and it was to be believed that it had disappeared never to return. Faith was gaining. More and more the popular voice affirmed that the Lady of the Grotto was indeed Mary. Bernadette was venerated as the privileged child of the Blessed Virgin and the crowds continued to go to pray at Massabielle. But this pious belief was ardently contradicted. From the first apparitions, the police tried, by intimidation, to prevent Bernadette from returning to the rock. They threatened her and her parents with prison, they subjected them to close surveillance. Bernadette, the poor and weak child of fourteen, calm and courageous, baffled the ruses and braved all the terrors. She went, in spite of men, where God called her. Hostile opinion accused her of playing a sacrilegious comedy to extort money or seek notoriety; an attempt was made to pass her for cataleptic and hallucinated, and later the police wished to carry her off on that pretext. So many wretched calumnies. The child, candid and simple, was incapable of any feigning, she never accepted either money or gifts, in spite of the temptations of her poverty; and it had to be acknowledged that her brain was sound, her imagination perfectly regulated and serene.

The fountain slowly became more abundant and wrought astonishing cures. To deny the miracle, it was pretended that the water was mineral. A ridiculous explanation of instantaneous cures almost as diverse as human infirmities. But it is recognised by all that the Fountain of Massabielle is nothing but ordinary spring water.

Bernadette frequented the Grotto. On 25 March, feast of the Annunciation, she found there an enormous crowd. The Lady appeared to her in the same brilliance of glory and with the same benignity. Toward the end of the ecstasy, the child asked her name twice; two long smiles alone answered her. She insisted. At this third prayer, the Lady smiled again, then separates her hands, crossed at the height of the girdle, raises them, joins them before her breast in a gesture of divine majesty and grace, and, her eyes toward heaven, says: “I am the Immaculate Conception” — then disappears.

The child kept this memory of another world, but did not understand the words Immaculate Conception, which she heard for the first time.

On Monday, 5 April, the day after Easter, She who had just revealed herself at last and who was called the Immaculate Conception came again. The crowd saw that day a spectacle which crowned the past astonishments. Bernadette, captivated in her whole being by the beauty of the Vision, joined, without perceiving it, her two hands above the candle she held, resting on the ground and lit. For more than a quarter of an hour the flame burned between the palms of those tender child’s hands, and passed through the fingers. Bernadette, motionless, still smiled. A physician was there. He took, immediately after the ecstasy, the hands of Bernadette, he found them white and intact.

The concourse continued to flow to the Grotto; people prayed there incessantly; but the civil authority, pretending to prevent a superstition from taking root, after having taken the advice of the Minister of Worship, closed the entrance of the Rock with a fence of planks, and forbade access under penalty of fine. Its prohibition was braved. There were reports and judicial condemnations. On 16 July, feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Bernadette, going to pray opposite the Rock, on the opposite bank of the Gave, had again, and for the last time, the vision, more splendid than ever, of the heavenly Lady.

Until then the ecclesiastical authority had remained a stranger to everything. But before so many marvels so persevering, Mgr Laurence, bishop of Tarbes, resolved to intervene. The events of the Grotto belonged essentially to the religious domain: it was for the bishop to judge them. At the end of July 1858, a mandate instituted a commission of ecclesiastics and learned men to study these facts.

The barrier was maintained before the Rock of Massabielle, in spite of the protests of the country; at the beginning of October an order of the head of State had the Grotto reopened and gave back to the pilgrimage its liberty.

Bernadette had made her first communion this same year. Since the apparitions she has been visited by thousands of persons; and this child of feeble intelligence, without any brilliant quality, with simplicity alone, and no doubt thanks to a mysterious influence which God communicated to her, has produced an immense edification. She felt herself called to the recollection of the religious life. In July 1866, when her mission at Lourdes was entirely accomplished, when she had assisted at the opening of the chapel, she departed for the convent. Today, a Sister of Charity of Nevers, ever simple and pious, she exercises, in that town, the office of infirmarian to the sick religious at the mother-house of her congregation. The Grotto, more and more celebrated, attracted ever-renewed floods of pilgrims. Often, here and there, a new miracle was seen to burst forth. At last, after long studies in which Theology and Science examined everything, the apparitions, the cures attributed to the water of the Grotto, the bishop of Tarbes pronounced his judgment. In a mandate of 18 January 1862, he proclaimed that the Lady who appeared to Bernadette was really the Immaculate Mary, Mother of God, and authorised the cult of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The Prelate had published at the same time the account of seven cures, all of the year 1858, which, recognised among many others as absolutely miraculous by the physicians of the commission, had served him to pronounce his sentence.

Mgr Laurence announced the erection of the chapel which the Blessed Virgin herself had asked on the place of the visions. He appealed to the generosity of all who love the glory of the Queen of heaven. The works began in mid-October 1862. The edifice is thrown upon the crest of the rock of the Apparition and the Grotto remains uncovered before the free space. On 14 April 1864, the bishop of Tarbes, amid a magnificent concourse, solemnly blessed, at the Grotto, a statue of white marble, representing the Virgin at the moment when she said: “I am the Immaculate Conception,” and placed on the very spot where her feet rested. The subterranean church or “crypt” of the basilica was inaugurated and the holy sacrifice for the first time celebrated at the Grotto, on 21 May 1866, in a splendid feast, to which more than two hundred priests and an immense multitude of the faithful had given rendezvous. Missionaries have since been established in the chapel for the spiritual service of the pilgrims. The work of the great church continues. The concourse is incessant before the Grotto. Mary encourages it by multiplying there miracles on bodies and on souls. The water of the Fountain is asked for the sick in all directions, at all distances. And there is no week in which several graces obtained far away by the use of this water are not announced, water without natural virtue, but which receives from the invocation of Our Lady of Lourdes a power superior to that of every human remedy.

Here is a cure which happened in Belgium on 27 November 1869, whose echo was great in that kingdom.

M. Pierre Hanquet, of Liège, afflicted ten years ago with a softening of the spinal marrow, had progressively lost his strength. From 1864, for five whole years, he languished in his bed, without movement and almost without nourishment. To the disease of the spinal marrow were joined phthisis, abscesses, then an obstinate erysipelas. His body burned, while he felt his legs always icy. No rest was possible for him. Toward the end of 1869 the near time of his death was calculated. He addresses himself to Our Lady of Lourdes; on the evening of 27 November he drinks water of Massabielle; his brother bathes with it the parts attacked by the disease, both invoking the Virgin of the Grotto. At that moment Pierre Hanquet endures intolerable tortures; his last hour seems come. In a supreme effort to relieve his suffering, he puts his foot to the ground; clinging to his bed, he straightens, with cries of pain, his back, for two years bent like a barrel-hoop. A minute and a half later he was walking, free, entirely cured, vigorous. His whole organism had recovered its play and strength. Pierre Hanquet enjoys the well-being of full health. Two physicians have loudly declared that this cure is supernatural.

The water serves the Immaculate Virgin to bring grace to hearts; hidden or striking conversions are due to it. The mere invocation of Our Lady of Lourdes has brought back many souls. Let us cite a fact of 1870.

An old Protestant lady, of a distant town, had always resisted the respectful and tender efforts which her Catholic family made to bring her to the true Church. She was going to die, and there was no more hope. Her daughters turn to Our Lady of Lourdes. One of them makes the pilgrimage, and a novena is begun. In those nine days signs of change give birth to hope. Suddenly the dying woman is struck by a flash of grace and asks to become a Catholic. The same day she abjures, receives Baptism, and, in her first communion, the holy Viaticum. The next day, 2 July, feast of the Visitation, she died in the Lord.

Eighteen apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, in full daylight, under the open sky, almost all before the eyes of an immense crowd who saw the reflection of it on the angelic face of the child… and the Blessed Virgin, four years after the glory that Pius IX gave her by the proclamation of the dogma of her Immaculate Conception, saying in the Grotto: *I am the Immaculate Conception* — behold then the origin of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The pilgrimage of the Grotto is thus linked to the greatest and best-loved religious event of the century. Human wisdom wished to stifle it at its birth. Infinite mercy has triumphed.

And now Our Lady of Lourdes reigns; her empire extends from day to day over the confidence of the peoples, by striking prodigies and by the innumerable multitude of hidden graces. In the smiling sanctuary of the Grotto, she consoles, she heals, she purifies, she makes herself loved. Souls feel that the Queen of heaven has come there to lavish the riches and reveal the divine charms of the Immaculate Conception.

Extract from Notre-Dame de Lourdes, *by M. Lasserre, and from a notice which is sold for the benefit of the pilgrimage.*

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[1] The Bollandists placed at the end of their last volume of March the following eulogy of this month, borrowed from the synaxary of the Greeks:

"The venerable Moses declared this month the principle and the first of all months. We know that in this month God made all things pass from non-being to being, that he gave to the earth the command to produce herbs and seeds, to the sea to smooth its waves to receive the navigator, to the heaven to clothe itself with light, to the tempests to flee into their dens, to the darkness to dissipate. It is on the 25th of this month that the hand of the Almighty kneaded the body of man. It is in this month that the people of Israel was delivered from the servitude of Pharaoh, that it passed the Red Sea, celebrated the Passover, and that finally it entered into the land of promise. In this month the Son of God descended from heaven into the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary and borrowed from her the mortal envelope of our flesh. In this month he suffered death on the cross and gave us, by his resurrection, a pledge of our own. We believe that it is in March that the general resurrection, the universal judgment and the eternal reparation of all things will take place: so it has been called with reason the month *artion*, that is to say the perfect month, all things having been or being to be brought to their end in it. The Hebrews called this month Nisan (it was the first of the sacred year), and the Italians *Primus* or first, until Romulus who called it Mars to recall the dedication of a temple which he had raised to the god of war. But might it not also be that this month was named *Martius* by alteration of *Artius*, which means complete and perfect, in opposition to the month of February, which is shortened and truncated? It is of the month of February, it seems to me, that Our Lord said in the Gospel: 'If those days were not shortened, no flesh would be saved' — *Nisi abbreviati fuissent dies isti, non fieret salva omnis caro* — the work of redemption having to be accomplished entire in the month of March."

It is again on the 23rd of March, according to a pious belief, that Saint Michael would have triumphed over Satan and his angels, that Adam would have been buried on the mountain of Calvary, that Abel the Just — virgin, priest and martyr — would have been sacrificed to the hatred of his brother, that Melchizedek would have offered to the Most High the bread and the wine, that Abraham would have led Isaac on Mount Moriah to immolate him, that Saint Veronica would have died, that Saint John the Baptist would have been put to death, that Saint James, apostle, would have been martyred, that Saint Peter would have been delivered from his prison, etc. Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, at 25 March.

[2] In Pannonia, today Hungary.

[3] In certain countries the memory of the good thief is honoured on 24 April; among the Greeks it was on the 23rd of the same month.

[4] See below, page 639, the account of the eighteen apparitions of Lourdes.

[5] See 30 July.

[6] In a great number of countries the Annunciation is called the feast of Our Lady of Good News.

[7] See, in our *Seraphic Palm-tree*, on this day, the lives of Blessed Jeremias Lambertenghi, priest of the first Order of Saint Francis; of Father Nicholas Viger, the apostle of Holland in the sixteenth century; of Francis of Cammarata; of Blessed Matthew Rotolo, hermit of

the Third Order; of Joan-Mary of the Cross, Poor Clare; of Blessed Bernardine of Foligno, and of Blessed Clare of Sambuca.

[8] A church called of the Annunciation occupies the site of the house of the Blessed Virgin at Nazareth: it is enclosed in the convent of the Franciscans. An altar marks the place where the Blessed Virgin was, and two columns of granite, that where the angel stood. — Mgr Mislin.

[9] St. John Damascene, book iii of the *Faith*, ch. 2.

[10] We devote today itself a chapter to Our Lady of Le Puy; it will be found further on.

[11] The Mass of the presanctified (*Missa praesanctificatorum*) is a Mass without consecration, but in which communion is made with hosts consecrated the day before or some days earlier. In the Latin Church this Mass is said only on Good Friday; in the Greek Church, on all days of Lent. This usage among the Greeks of preserving the holy Eucharist for the following days proves evidently in favour of the Catholic Church, which preserves it in the tabernacle, recognising in it the real presence of Jesus Christ.

[12] Thomassin, *Des Fêtes*, p. 29.

[13] *Festum sanctae Virginis Genitricis Dei festivitas matris … nam quod festum est matris, nisi incarnatio Dei?* Council.

[14] He is also called Erblon, Erblain, Herbland; in Latin *Ermenlondus* and *Hermelandus*. He is called Saint Erblon, Saint Arbland, Saint Erblain or Herblein in the dioceses of Nantes and of Rennes; Saint Herband in those of Tréguier, of Saint-Pol de Léon and of Quimper; Saint Herbland and Herblain in those of Paris and of Rouen.

[15] It would be too long to examine here to what degree the Jews were guilty of the enormous crimes that were imputed to them. What is certain is that they had become the object of general hatred, and that the Popes and councils alone saved them, sometimes at least, from the fury of the people and from the edicts of proscription of princes. In certain countries, in certain cities, frightful massacres were made of them, or they were obliged, by threats and tortures, to embrace Christianity. Alexander II, to cite only two examples, praised the Spanish bishops who had opposed these violences; the fifth council of Tours (1163) forbade the crusaders to persecute the Jews.

[16] It is wrongly that the continuators of Bollandus take from the city of Paris the honour of the martyrdom of Saint Richard, to give it to that of Pontoise; for if this holy young man had been massacred at Pontoise, how would he have been buried in a cemetery of Paris, which is seven leagues distant from it, and is not of the same diocese? how would there have remained in Pontoise no trace nor any memory of it? how would all the French historians who have spoken of it have assured that he was of Paris, and that he had been martyred at Paris? how would Robert Gaguin, who wrote his life on the tradition which reigned in his time, not have made at least mention of Pontoise? They found themselves on the authority of Robert of the Mount, who lived at the same time, and who says, in passing, in his Supplement to the chronicle of Sigebert, that a young child called Richard had been put to death at Pontoise by the Jews, and thence carried to Paris; but they should have considered that this historian, being far from Paris, and a subject of the king of England, who then held all Normandy, might well have false memoirs, and that it is much more fitting to hold to the testimony of Rigord, historiographer of Philip Augustus, and contemporary. After having said that the Jews who dwelt at Paris slaughtered every year a Christian child, in hatred of Jesus Christ and of his religion, this author relates for example the massacre and crucifixion of Saint Richard, buried in the cemetery of the Little Fields: which he could not have done if this Saint had been martyred by the Jews of Pontoise, and not by those of Paris. But the place of his triumph matters little to us; what we must consider is that he fought, that he conquered, and that he won the crown of martyrdom.

[17] The good thief bears the name of Dysmas in the gospel of Nicodemus, and the bad thief that of Gestas; in the *Collectanea* of Bede they are named Matha and Joca; in a Life of Jesus Christ, by Jerome Xavier, ch. 7, printed by the Elzevirs in 1666, they are called Lustin and Vissimus. The last would be the one on whom the shadow of the body of Jesus Christ fell, which, according to the legend, brought about his conversion. But the common tradition, above all in Germany, gives them the names of Dysmas and Gestas. Caesar de Nostradamus, son of the celebrated mathematician-astronomer, composed a little poem entitled *Dysmas, or the good Thief.* Toulouse, 1606.

[18] See the life of Saint Fabian, on 20 January.

[19] Sirmium, today Sirmich, is now only a village of Hungary. It is to the south and twenty-two leagues from Buda.

[20] See also the Acts.

[21] The Bosreth, which flows near Sirmich, and which falls a little below into the Save.

[22] Hence it comes that the town bore at first the name of Anis, and took only about the seventh century that of Puy, which comes from a Celtic word signifying elevation or height.

[23] The square apse built by Saint Vosy is still seen today at the extremity of the great nave of the cathedral of Le Puy.

[24] The kings of France were honorary canons of Our Lady of Le Puy. In an ordinance relating to an exemption from taxes, Louis XI had these remarkable words written: “Whereas among all the churches of our kingdom,” he says, “the holy church of Le Puy was founded and built by the disciples of Jesus Christ, by virtue of the authority of the apostle Saint Peter; whereas the glorious Mother of God is visited there, prayed to, honoured with an incomparable devotion, and the brilliance of her innumerable miracles fills the whole universe, we confirm all its privileges.”

[25] *The Triumph of Mary, or Account of the Jubilee of 1842.*

[26] *Account of the Jubilee of Our Lady of Le Puy in 1853.*

[27] M. Bonnassieux of Paris, whose work merited the prize *hors ligne* at the European competition which was opened and in which France, Germany and Italy took part.