Mgr Paul Guérin

LES PETITS BOLLANDISTES: LIVES OF THE SAINTS, VOLUME VII

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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 VII, which covers 14 June – 2 July.

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.

14 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, the ordination of Saint Basil, bishop, who, in the time of the emperor Valens, shone with a marvellous lustre by his learning, his wisdom and all sorts of virtues, and defended the Church against the Arians and the Macedonians with an admirable constancy. About 379. — At Samaria, in Palestine, Saint Elisha,[1] prophet, whose sepulchre makes the demons tremble, according to the report of Saint Jerome. The prophet Abdias[2] reposes there also. 835 before Jesus Christ. — At Syracuse, Saint Marcian, who was ordained bishop by Saint Peter, apostle, and, after having preached the Gospel, was killed by the Jews, m» s.. — At Soissons, the holy martyrs Valerius and Rufinus, who were beheaded, after many torments, in the persecution of Diocletian, by the command of Rictiovarus. About 287. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Anastasius, priest, Felix, monk, and Digna, virgin. 853. — At Constantinople, Saint Methodius, bishop.[3] 846. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Ethère, bishop. About 620. — At Rodez, Saint Quintian, bishop.[4] 527.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Bourges, Saint Simplicius, bishop, praised in a letter of Saint Sidonius Apollinaris to Saint Perpetuus of Tours. He was engaged in marriage and had several children when the bishops of the province assembled at Bourges, in 472, to give a successor to Saint Eulodius. All the votes united on Simplicius, already celebrated for his holiness. He acquitted himself with zeal of his new charge, opposed vigorously the heresy of the Arians, and combated the simony which infested his clergy. He died, after four years of episcopate, on the 1st of March, the day on which he is also mentioned in the martyrology of France.[5] 477. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Bohoa or Bobolin, bishop. About 718. — At Paris, the decease of Saint Euspicius, priest, founder of the abbey of Saint-Mesmin, near Orleans. He was a priest of the clergy of Verdun when the inhabitants of this town deputed him to Clovis, who was besieging the place (498), to make him desist from his enterprise. The king let himself be touched, and charmed with the virtues of Euspicius, he even wished to place him on the see of Verdun, then vacant by the death of Saint Firmin. The humble priest refused and caused the choice to fall on Saint Vannes, his nephew; he then followed Clovis, who gave him, near Orleans,

a land where he had the abbey of Micy or of Saint-Mesmin constructed, of which he was the first abbot. Beginning of the sixth century. — At the abbey of Moissac, in the diocese of Cahors, Saint Leophaire, Liphary, Naufary or Naufray, honoured as a bishop. — At Verdun, the venerable Richard, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Vannes of this town, whose life was written by his disciple Hugh of Flavigny. Year 1046. — At Lanslevillard, in the diocese of Maurienne, Saint Landry, curé of this parish, eleventh century. — In the diocese of Autun, the Blessed John of Portugal, religious of the monastery of the Cordeliers of Châlon, who edified this town for a long time by his virtues. 1525. — In Bresse, Claude-Antoine Billaud, priest, victim of the revolutionary furies. 1794.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Basilians. — At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, the ordination of our Father Saint Basil the Great.

Martyrologies of the Benedictines, of the Camaldolese, of Vallombrosa. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Anastasius, priest, Felix, monk, and Digna, virgin, who suffered in the persecution of the Arabs.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — At Samaria, in Palestine, Saint Elisha our Father. — At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, the ordination of Saint Basil.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Laodicea, in Phrygia, Saint Antheon, martyr. — At Ephesus, in Asia, the holy Miggene, Gallian, Juvin or Vivin, martyrs, indicated in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — In Africa, the holy Quintian and Theodolus, and the holy Thecla and Festina, martyrs. — At Sphecia, in the island of Euboea, the holy Antoninus, Afra, Cantionella, martyrs. — At Lucera delli Pagani, in Apulia, Saint Mark, bishop of this town and patron of Bovino, where his body was transported. About the year 328. — At Pembroke, in Wales, Saint Uogmaël, in whose honour an abbey was founded in the twelfth century in the borough which bears his name. He was, under the name of Saint Toël, titular patron of a chapel, to-day destroyed, which was situated on the territory of the parish of Pomérit-Jandi, formerly of the diocese of Tréguier. Sixth century. — Among the Greeks, Saint Julitta, different from the saints Julitta of Ancyra, of Caesarea and of Seleucia. — At Benevento, in Italy, Saint Martian, bishop of this see, sixth century. — In Calabria, Saint Gerasimus, monk of the Order of Saint Basil. — In the diocese of Salzburg, Saint Hartwich, archbishop of this see, who distinguished himself by his charity and his self-denial during the plague and famine which ravaged this part of Germany in 994. After having passed long years in the practice of all the virtues, he ended his glorious career by a holy death. 1023. — At Sant'Angelo in Vado, in Italy, the Blessed Castora Gabrielli, widow, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, and the Blessed Bartholus, of the Order of the Servites. The first was buried at Macerata, in the March of Ancona, and her body is exposed every year to the veneration of the faithful, on the day of the Ascension. Fourteenth century.

Saint Rufin and Saint Valère, Martyrs in the Soissonnais

287. — Pope: Saint Caius. — Emperor: Diocletian.

Cuncti martyres devotissime percolendi sunt, sed specialiter ii venerandi sunt a nobis quorum reliquias possidemus.

We must have a great devotion for all the Martyrs, but we must honour above all those whose relics we possess.

S. Ambrose, Serm. Lxxxiii.

Rufin and Valère, according to some, were noble Romans, come with other evangelical workmen to implant the Christian religion in Belgic Gaul and the Soissonnais; according to other authors, they were natives of the

very country where they were martyred, that is, of a borough situated on the Vesle, a league and a half from Braine, and which later took the name of Bazoches, where the imperial palace was. What is beyond doubt is that Rufin and Valère were placed in charge of the guard of the grain destined for the provisioning of the imperial palace raised by the Romans in this country. These two fervent Christians did not lose sight of the obligations of their baptism and of the mission which had been confided to them at their departure from Rome, and, whether by their edifying and mortified life, or by their discourses, or by their alms, they gradually won the confidence and affection of the populations in the midst of which they lived; so the name of Jesus Christ began to be venerated in the whole country and many solicited the grace of regeneration. This was at the epoch when the Prefect of the Praetorium, Rictiovare, was traversing Belgic Gaul to execute the sanguinary orders of the emperor Maximian Hercules and destroy to the last vestiges of Christianity. On leaving the town of Fismes (Marne), where he had just caused Saint Macra to undergo martyrdom, he stopped at the imperial palace of which we have spoken above. He soon discovered that the two stewards were Christians, and he ordered them to be brought before his tribunal; but they, having been informed in time of his designs, had taken flight and hidden themselves in a cave, near the public road, not far from Bazoches, and whose entrance was obstructed by thick thorn bushes, resolved to wait in this dark place until the persecution should have passed or to spring from it into the career of combat. But having soon been discovered by the satellites of the tyrant, they were arrested, loaded with chains and led to prison in the palace of Bazoches. Brought before his tribunal, the two stewards underwent an interrogation in which, by setting forth the purity of their faith, they brought out the opposition of the new religion to that of Rome.

“Rufin and Valère,” said the governor to them, “what God do you adore?” — “We adore,” they answered, “one only God, almighty, immutable, eternal, creator of all visible things, filling all, governing all, and one only Lord Jesus Christ, restorer of all that is in the heavens and on the earth. As to those gods, vain simulacra formed by the art of men from a matter subject to corruption and alteration, to which he has given a form and the genius of beauty, we do not adore them. For the divine substance does not draw its origin from itself. Existing before time, it is not subject to its vicissitudes. It suffers no diminution, but remains eternally in the fulness of itself; it is always simple, uniform, constant, perfect. It is by His Word that the world was made with its ornaments, it is by His Spirit that every creature is established and governed, and it is to Him that we immolate each day a host of praise and that we offer the sacrifice of a contrite heart.” — The prefect said: “Our invincible princes command you to quit a superstition which makes you adore a crucified God to honour the powerful gods of the Roman Republic, for it is a crime to abandon the religion of one’s ancestors, which raised the Empire, which governs and protects it, and to pass, through levity, to puerile novelties.” — Rufin and Valère answered: “We are not ashamed of the cross of Christ who gave salvation to the world, nor of Him who, by His death, procured us resurrection and life.” And they unfolded to him the mysteries of the Son of God, to which they added, according to the acts of their passion, a crowd of other considerations no less spiritual on the redemption of men, on the new religion, on the ridiculousness of the false gods, the crimes and infamies which the pagans attributed to them, their contradiction with the morality taught by the philosophers, the vanity of idols and the impotence of those gods. — “Too long,” cried the prefect, “has our moderation borne your calumnies against our gods. If, conformably to the orders of the Augusti, you do not render them the worship that is due to them, I will make you endure various torments.” And he ordered that they be loaded with chains and put in prison in the hope that they would apostatise, but he deceived himself; the holy confessors, rejoicing to participate in the sufferings of Jesus Christ, found these chains light, far from succumbing under their weight.

The next day, the prefect had them appear again before him and tried on them the seductions of flattery and presents:

“Believe me, Rufin and Valère, honour our Gods Jupiter and Mercury, Diana and Venus, and at once I will heap upon you gold and silver and you shall be the first in the palace of the emperor.” — “May thy gold and

thy silver," they answered, "be with thee in hell, and may they be poured liquefied into thy mouth, there where thou shalt see the demon thy father burn in an inextinguishable fire; but for us, nothing can separate us from the charity of Christ."

Rictiovare, indignant, ordered then to stretch Rufin and Valère on the rack and to beat them with thongs armed with lead. The martyrs, during this torment, said: "Many are the tribulations of the just, but the Lord will deliver them from each of them; the Lord watches over the keeping of their bones, not one of them shall be broken."

But the more they invoked the God of majesty, the more the tyrant gave severe orders to increase their torments; he urged the executioners to discharge on them all the vigour of their sinewy arms. In which he was perfectly obeyed; and the whole frame of the body of the blessed martyrs was dislocated, to the point that the bones were put out of joint and that scarcely a slight breath was heard escaping from their breasts.

The tyrant then said: "Take them off the rack and lead them back to the dungeon until I have invented some new tortures." The Blessed, having re-entered the prison, sang the praises of the Lord and said: "Help us, O our Saviour, and for the honour of Thy name, deliver us." In the night, an angel of the Lord appeared to them and said to them: "Rufin and Valère, act manfully and let your heart be strengthened, our master will not delay to admit you into the ranks of the holy martyrs; there you shall receive the crowns he destines for you and which I am going to show you at this moment." Speaking thus, he placed these crowns on their heads; they were of a marvellous beauty, and resplendent like emeralds.

The morning having come, Rictiovare ordered the holy Martyrs to be presented to him again. He saw with astonishment on their cheeks the freshness and bloom of roses, and on their bodies the whiteness of lilies. But instead of attributing this prodigy to a divine virtue, he attributed it to magic. He treated these innocent men as scoundrels and impious, and ordered his guards to tie their hands behind their backs to drag them after him. They went thus the space of five or seven thousand five hundred paces, to near a place named Quincampoix, and their heads were cut off near the public road, on the banks of the Vesle, on the 18th of the calends of July. — According to the most common opinion, it would be on the very site of the château of Bazoches, where a fountain recalls their memory, that they were beheaded and their bodies thrown into a sewer. The faithful drew them out to give them an honourable sepulture.

The persecution having passed, their bodies were raised from the earth and an enormous tomb was built for them. It is from under this edifice that their relics were drawn anew to be placed in the basilica which was built in their honour at Bazoches.

The fear of the ravages of the Normans caused the bodies of the holy Martyrs to be transported in the ninth century sometimes to Reims, sometimes to Soissons; but when the danger had passed they were returned to the basilica of Bazoches. — At the beginning of the seventeenth century the relics of Saint Rufin and Saint Valère were placed at Soissons in the church of Saint-Stephen. In 1617 they were deposited at the cathedral, the aldermen having presented a petition to the bishop Hennequin to prevent the religious of the abbey of Saint-Paul from carrying them off with them to Reims, where they had bought by exchange a new convent.

Saint Loup, thirteenth bishop of Soissons, at the beginning of the sixth century, had established a college of seventy-two clerics at Bazoches, in the church dedicated to Saint Rufin and Saint Valère. It is the first seminary of the diocese of Soissons. It subsisted for four hundred years after the death of its founder. Bazoches gave, in the thirteenth century, three bishops to the see of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius. James of Bazoches consecrated Saint Louis, in 1226, and Milo of Bazoches, Philip the Bold, in 1272. — The third bishop native of Bazoches is Nivelon II, predecessor of Milo. The new Proper of Soissons puts the feast of Saint Rufin and Saint Valère on the 15th of June, instead of the 14th, the day of their death. — These holy martyrs are the patrons of Bézu-le-Guéry, of Coulonges, of Loupeigne, of Vierzy and of Vregny, as well as of Braine, of Mont-Notre-Dame, of Paars and of Sermoise, situated near the Vesle, in the diocese of

Soissons. We have composed this life after Tillemont; the *Acts of the Martyrs,* by the Reverend Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France; the *Annals of the Diocese of Soissons,* by the abbé Pécheur; and local Notes furnished by M. Henry Congnet, dean of the chapter of the cathedral of Soissons.

Saint Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea, Doctor of the Church

329–379. — Popes: Saint Sylvester I; Saint Damasus. — Emperors: Constantine I; Gratian.

Clades una et calamitas erat quod non sæpe posset martyrum pro veritate certamina imitari.

He regretted deeply one thing, that he could not endure several martyrdoms for the defence of the truth.

S. Greg. of Naz., Funeral Oration on Saint Basil.

Saint Basil, of a family in which holiness seemed hereditary, was born at Caesarea, metropolis of Cappadocia, toward the end of the year 329. Those from whom he had received life were born also in the same country. His father, however, was a native of Pontus, and his ancestors had long enjoyed there a high consideration. Saint Macrina was his paternal grandmother. This saint and her husband, whose name has not come down to us, were despoiled of their goods and suffered cruel tortures for the faith, under the reign of Maximin II, in 331. Having another time taken flight to escape the searches of the persecutors, they remained seven years hidden in the forests of Pontus, where God, according to Saint Gregory of Nazianzus,[1] provided miraculously for their subsistence.

Saint Basil the Elder and Saint Emmelia, whom God made use of to give to the world the holy archbishop of Caesarea, rendered themselves recommendable by the practice of all the Christian virtues. Heaven blessed their marriage by the birth of ten children. Nine of them survived him and all distinguished themselves by an eminent holiness; those who remained in the world, says Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, appeared not to yield in piety to those who embraced the state of virginity to consecrate themselves more perfectly to the service of God. Saint Macrina was the eldest of all these children; she helped her mother in the education of her brothers and sisters, and laboured in concert with her to inspire them with lively sentiments of religion. There were four boys; Saint Basil, Naucratius, Saint Gregory of Nyssa and Saint Peter of Sebaste.

Saint Emmelia owed to her prayers the birth of her son Basil; but scarcely was he in the world when he caused lively alarms to the tenderness of his family. He was attacked by a dangerous malady which the physicians judged incurable. The recovery of his health was regarded as the fruit of the prayers which had been made for him. We learn these particulars from Saint Gregory of Nyssa.

He was sent, from his childhood, to Saint Macrina the Elder, his grandmother, who lived in the country, near Neocaesarea, in Pontus: it was there that he drew the first principles of virtue. “I have never forgotten,” he said afterwards, “the strong impressions which the discourses and examples of that holy woman made on my soul still tender.” His father, who passed the greater part of his life in Pontus, and who was the ornament of this province, as much by his piety as by his eloquence, charged himself with teaching him the first elements of literature; and he did so until his death, which happened a short time after the birth of Saint Peter of Sebaste. The young Basil was then sent to Caesarea, where the sciences were very flourishing; he distinguished himself there above those of his age by the rapidity of his progress, and he drew at the same time by his regularity and fervour the admiration of all persons who knew him. He was, says Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, “above his age by his instruction, above his instruction by the firmness of his morals: a rhetorician among the rhetoricians, even before sitting before the chairs of the sophists; a philosopher before the dogmas of philosophy, and, what is greatest, a priest for the Christians before the priesthood.”

The ablest masters of Caesarea having nothing more to teach him, his parents had him set out for Constantinople, where Libanius, the most celebrated rhetorician of his time, and one of the first men of the empire, gave public lessons with universal applause.[2] This great master knew how to distinguish Basil in the

crowd of his disciples; he could not weary of admiring in him the happiest dispositions for the sciences, joined to a rare modesty and an extraordinary virtue. He says, in his epistles, that he felt as it were ravished out of himself every time he heard Basil speak in public. He always kept up with him afterwards a correspondence of letters, and he ceased not to give him marks of that high esteem and that profound veneration which he had conceived for his merit.[3] From Constantinople, Basil betook himself to Athens, with the design of drawing there new knowledge.[4] This city had always been regarded as the temple of the muses since Pericles. People went there from all parts to form themselves to that purity of language and that antique elegance which have rendered so celebrated the good writers of Greece.[5]

It was in 352 that Saint Basil arrived at Athens. He found there Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, with whom he had formed at Caesarea the most intimate liaison. As the latter knew already the manners of the Athenians, he gave wise advice to his friend, and disposed all minds to receive him well. The gravity of Basil, joined to the advantageous idea which had been conceived of him, preserved him from the ill-treatment to which the newcomers were always exposed on the part of those who frequented the public schools.[6] The friendship of our two Saints was very different from that of young men, which is ordinarily founded only on interest or love of pleasure. They loved each other because they esteemed and respected each other mutually. There was besides in them an admirable conformity of inclinations and an equal ardour for the acquisition of virtue and of the sciences. Their sole object was to consecrate themselves perfectly to the service of God; and, to attain this great end, they seized all occasions of animating and sustaining one another: but as abuses may glide into even the holiest friendships, they were continually on their guard, so as not to fall into the snares of the enemy. They prayed assiduously, and lived in a continual mortification of their senses. To judge of them by the gravity of their conduct, one would have taken them for angels stripped of body. With this vigilance over themselves, they found in their reciprocal friendship a thousand consolations and a thousand means of urging one another to the practice of good. They lived together and had a common table. Their union was never interrupted by diversity of sentiments, and they appeared to have but one will. The spirit of property did not reign among them. In all their actions, they considered only the glory of God: it was there that they referred their labours, their studies, their vigils, their fasts and generally the employment of all the faculties of their soul.

But vainly would they have taken the precautions of which we have just spoken, to put their innocence out of danger, had they not been faithful in avoiding bad company. This is the remark made by Saint Gregory of Nazianzus.[7] “We had,” says he, “no liaison with the students who showed coarseness, impudence and contempt for religion: we frequented only those who were peaceable and regular, those whose conversation could be profitable to us. We had persuaded ourselves that it was an illusion to mingle with sinners under pretext of labouring to convert them, and that we must always fear lest they should communicate their poison to us.” Saint Gregory of Nazianzus adds, speaking of himself and his friend: “We knew only two streets of the town: the one led to the church and to the sacred ministers who celebrated the divine mysteries there and fed the flock of Jesus Christ with the bread of life; the other, for which we had not at all the same esteem, led to the public schools and to those who taught us the sciences. We left to others the streets by which one went to the theatre, to the spectacles and to the places where profane amusements were given. Our sanctification was our great affair; our sole aim was to be called and to be effectively Christians: it was in that that we made all our glory consist.”

Saint Basil became very able in the knowledge of the different parts of literature. He knew that this knowledge contributes much to extend the faculties of the mind, and that it is absolutely necessary to whoever wishes to excel in any science, above all in the oratorical art, which was in great esteem among the Greeks and the Romans. Having the design, as his friend had, of putting himself in a state to serve the Church usefully, they applied themselves both to perfect themselves in true eloquence. Saint Basil excelled also in philosophy, in poetry and in the other parts of literature. If one reads attentively his writings, and above all

his book of the Creation or of the work of six days, which he entitled *Hexaëmeron*, one will recognise that he had on natural history ideas more just and knowledges more extended than Aristotle, in spite of the helps which the treasures of Alexandria procured for the latter. He possessed so superiorly dialectic and the art of linking consequences to principles that one could not resist the force of his reasonings; they were so linked and so pressing, according to Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, that one would have had more trouble to extricate oneself from them than to get out of a labyrinth. He took a general tincture of geometry, of medicine, and of other similar sciences, being persuaded with reason that without this tincture one can hardly excel in any art in particular; but he despised all that was useless to a man solely devoted to the defence and glory of religion. By thus setting bounds to his curiosity, says Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, he showed himself no less admirable for what he neglected in the sciences than for what he learned in them. The course of his preliminary studies being finished, he applied himself seriously to meditate on Scripture, that inexhaustible source of sentiments and knowledges which raise man to heaven. He read also the works of the Fathers of the Church with much assiduity. By all these means united, he amassed a rich treasure of sciences, and rendered himself capable of exercising, with that superiority which is known, the important ministry of the divine word, and of contributing with a marvellous force to the advancement of piety in souls. Basil was soon regarded at Athens as an oracle to be consulted on the sciences, whether divine or human. The students and masters of this town, full of esteem for his merit, employed all sorts of means to fix him among them; but they could not succeed: Basil believed that he was accountable to his country for the talents which God had given him. Having therefore left his dear Gregory at Athens, he set out in 335 to betake himself to Caesarea in Cappadocia, whither Gregory was not long in following him. Though he was still young, he opened in this town a school of rhetoric. His friends determined him also to join the bar: for it was by these two ways that orators and persons of quality began to make themselves known and perfected themselves in eloquence. Already philosophy had raised Basil above ambition, and he felt only contempt for distinguished places and for all the vain advantages he might promise himself in the world. He had always led a very regular life and had occupied himself only in seeking the kingdom of God; but the honourable reception made him in his country, joined to the applause he received on all sides, exposed him to a very delicate temptation, that of vainglory. No sooner had he perceived the danger he was running than fright seized his soul. A short time after, he resolved to renounce the world entirely, in order to withdraw further from the precipice on the brink of which he had walked. Saint Macrina, his sister, and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus contributed not a little to strengthen him in this resolution. In representing to him the advantages of voluntary poverty, they made arise in him contempt for a perishable glory and inspired him with an ardent desire to tend to perfection. Basil, by their advice, gave to the poor the greater part of his goods, and, like a man who comes out of lethargy, he began to see the light of heavenly wisdom, and to feel all the nothingness of created things. In these dispositions, he consecrated himself to the labours of penance by embracing the monastic state. Libanius was singularly struck by so generous a contempt of the world, and could not weary of admiring the greatness of soul which was the principle of it. Saint Basil and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus often put eloquence in the number of the things which they abandoned in renouncing the world; but by that they understand that vain assemblage of flowers and ornaments which have no other effect than to charm the ears. Perhaps they speak of the profane use of eloquence, which one did not renounce at their age without making a great sacrifice. Whatever their thought may be, one sees by their writings that they did not condemn eloquence considered in itself; and their example will always serve to confound those who, under pretext of imitating the simplicity of the Apostles, announce the word of God with a rusticity which comes from their sloth or their ignorance.

But let us let Saint Gregory of Nazianzus speak, and we shall see what he thought on this point. “After having abandoned the world,” says he, “I have reserved to myself only eloquence. I do not repent of the pains and fatigues which I have undergone, both by sea and by land, to acquire the knowledge of this art; I would wish, both for myself and for my friends, that we possessed all the force and all the perfection of it.”[8] He says in another place:[9] “Of all that I possessed, eloquence alone remains to me; I offer it and consecrate it

entirely to my God. The voice of His commandments and the impulse of His spirit made me abandon all the rest, in order to exchange what I had for the precious stone of the Gospel. I have therefore become, or rather I desire ardently to become that happy merchant who gives perishable goods to procure eternal ones: but, in quality of minister of the Gospel, I devote myself solely to the care of preaching it; this is my portion, and never shall I fail in the duty which is imposed on me."

Basil, after his retreat, wished to live no more but for God. Persuaded that the name of monk would serve only for his condemnation if he did not faithfully fulfil the obligations of his state, he undertook, in 357, to travel in Syria, in Mesopotamia and in Egypt. His aim was to visit the monks and hermits who inhabited the deserts of this country, in order to acquire a perfect knowledge of the duties to which his new kind of life subjected him. He was greatly edified on seeing these holy solitaries, who showed by their whole conduct that they regarded themselves as strangers on earth, and as citizens of heaven. Their examples and their discourses strengthened him still further in his first resolution. We learn from himself[10] that in all his journeys he chose as directors only those whose faith was conformable to that of the Catholic Church.

In 358, he returned to Cappadocia. Dianius, his bishop, who had formerly baptised him, ordained him lector. This prelate made profession of being attached to the doctrine of the Church; but he had the imprudence to engage in steps favourable to the Arians. This conduct caused lively grief to Basil, who respected Dianius as his pastor, and who besides remarked in him several fine qualities; but the obligation of keeping unity in the faith acting on him more powerfully than any other motive, he separated from his communion, above all when he had seen him subscribe the formulary of Rimini. The Saint left Cappadocia in 358, and retired into Pontus, where he chose for dwelling the house of his grandmother, which was situated on the bank of the Iris, at Annesi. Emmelia, his mother, and Macrina, his sister, had founded there a monastery for persons of their sex. This monastery was then governed by Macrina. Basil founded one for men on the other side of the river, and had the direction of it during four years, that is to say until the year 362, at which epoch he resigned this place in favour of Saint Peter of Sebaste, his brother. At seven or eight stadia from the monastery of Saint Macrina was the church of the Forty Martyrs, enriched with a considerable portion of the relics of these blessed soldiers of Jesus Christ, and so renowned in the writings of Saint Basil and of his friends. This church was not far from Neocaesarea.

Besides the monastery of which we have spoken, Saint Basil founded several others, both for men and for women, in different places of Pontus. He kept a general inspection over these communities, even during his episcopate. It was for their instruction that he composed his ascetical works, among others his great and his small rules. He gives in them to the state of the cenobites the preference over that of the hermits; the former appeared to him in general much safer than the latter. Often he repeats there that a monk ought to disclose to his superior what is most secret in his soul, and submit in all to his decisions. At the same time that he prescribes hospitality toward strangers, he forbids that delicate dishes be served to them; which, according to him, would be as ridiculous as if the monks changed their dress to receive them. An austere life, he continues, speaking to his religious, will deliver you from useless visits, and will keep far from you persons who have the spirit of the world. Your table should preach sobriety even to strangers.[11] He makes the enumeration of the canonical hours and shows the excellence of them. By that of Prime, he says,[12] we consecrate to God the first-fruits of our thoughts, we fill our hearts with pious sentiments and with that salutary joy which the thought of God excites in us.[13] The monastic Constitutions which bear the name of Saint Basil differ in several articles from the rules of which we have just spoken, and are not attributed to this Father by the ancient authors: they appear to be of a somewhat later date.[14] The Rule of Saint Basil is followed still to-day by all the monks of the East, even by those who call themselves of the Order of Saint Anthony.

Basil has painted himself in his writings with the greatest truth: but he must be represented in his retreat, in order not to deprive his virtue of the homages that are due to it; besides, considered in this respect, he has

always served as model to those who, in the different ages, have wished to attain an eminent holiness. He never wore but one tunic and one mantle; he lay on the hard ground, watched sometimes whole nights and made no use of the bath, which was a great mortification in hot countries, above all before linen was used. He covered himself during the night with a hair-shirt, which he left off by day, in order to hide from men his love of penance. He accustomed himself, in spite of all the repugnances of nature, to suffer the excessive cold which reigns on the mountains of Pontus. Each day he made but one meal, and this meal consisted of a little water and bread, to which he added some herbs on feast days. The food he took was in so small a quantity that one would almost have said he lived without eating. Saint Gregory of Nyssa compared his abstinence to the fast of Elias; and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus said to him, on the occasion of his extreme paleness, that his body appeared scarcely animated.[15] He adds in another place,[16] still speaking of the Saint, that he was stripped of goods, of flesh, and almost of blood. Basil informs us himself that he treated his body as a slave always ready to revolt if he did not take care to hold it continually in bridle. One sees by his epistles that he was subject to frequent and even continual infirmities. He says in a letter that in the time when he was in the best health, he was weaker than sick persons abandoned by the physicians ordinarily are.[17]

The mortification of the senses was accompanied in him by that of the will; and this one was in some manner a prodigy: he joined to it also an extraordinary humility. It was by an effect of this virtue that he had so ardent a desire to bury himself so to speak in solitude and to live entirely unknown to men. Solitude, however, communicated to him nothing sad nor austere; he was of a gentleness and patience proof against all events. His unalterable gentleness of character had caused Libanius the greatest admiration; it drew a new lustre from an amiable gravity by which it was tempered. The least fault against chastity made him shudder, and his love for this virtue led him to build several monasteries for virgins to whom he gave a written rule.

During a famine which made its ravages felt about the year 359, he sold the rest of his goods to assist the unfortunate. He wished to live, says Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, in the greatest poverty possible, and nothing could ever shake him in his resolution. By stripping himself of all he possessed in the world, he put himself in a state to pass more surely the stormy sea of this life. His stripping was so entire that he reserved not the smallest part of his goods; and even when he had been raised to the episcopate, he had, to furnish his subsistence, only the liberalities of his friends. To follow in perfect nakedness Jesus crucified, such were his riches. In the different exercises of monastic life, he strove to imitate and even to surpass the excellent models he had seen in Syria and in Egypt. After the example of these pious solitaries, he wore a garment made of a coarse stuff which he fastened with a girdle; but these external marks of penance were in him, as in them, only the symbols of a great depth of humility, of detachment and of mortification. He divided his time between prayer, manual labour and meditation on Scripture. Often he went to the neighbouring villages to teach the principles of the faith to the peasants and to exhort them to the practice of virtue.[18] Something at first was lacking to his happiness, because he did not enjoy the presence of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. He therefore wrote him several letters to engage him to come and share with him the charms of solitude, and he pressed him in the liveliest manner not to refuse him the help which he expected from his company and examples. In one of his letters, he depicts to him admirably the advantages which retreat furnishes for praying with fervour and for gaining a complete victory over the passions. A monk, according to the definition he gives of him, is a man who prays continually; who sanctifies manual labour by a continual union with God, above all by the chanting of psalms; a man whose heart is always raised toward God and who has no other object than to adorn his soul with the virtues by the meditation of the holy books. He says that a monk should live only on bread and water, and make but one meal a day; that his sleep cannot be prolonged beyond the middle of the night, and that, rising then, he must persevere until day in prayer. Basil, according to the report of the two saints Gregory, drew his true portrait in the letter here in question. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus yielded to the invitations of his friend and went to join him in Pontus. Shut up both in a poor cabin, they led there a very austere life. They had a little garden whose soil was extremely sterile and

which they cultivated themselves.[19] Gregory, having been since drawn from his solitude, bitterly regretted the tranquillity and happiness which he and Basil enjoyed, chanting the psalms, watching in prayer, which raised their souls to heaven, exercising their bodies by manual labour, which consisted in carrying wood, cutting stones, planting trees, digging canals,[20] etc. The two Saints had also regulated hours for the study of Scripture. In 362, Basil took with him some of his monks, and returned to Caesarea in Cappadocia.

Julian the Apostate had been clothed with the purple the year before. On his accession to the empire, he wrote to Basil, whom he had formerly known at Athens, to invite him to come to his court. The Saint answered him that he could not yield to his desires, because of the kind of life he led. The prince dissimulated for the moment his resentment; but when Basil had arrived at Caesarea, he wrote him a second letter full of artifice, in which, after having told him that he always preserved the same sentiments for him, he ordered him to pay a thousand pounds of gold to the officers charged with his finances; adding that in case of refusal he would have the town of Caesarea razed.[21] The Saint was not at all frightened by such threats; he answered tranquilly that he was not in a state to furnish such a sum and that he had not even wherewith to subsist for a day. Taking then a firmer tone, he marks to the prince that he is surprised to see that he neglects the essential duties of sovereignty and that he kindles against himself the heavenly wrath by openly despising the worship of the Lord.[22] The emperor was keenly nettled by this refusal, and he swore to immolate Saint Basil and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus to his resentment, after his return from the expedition of Persia, where, as is known, he perished in 363. About the same time, Dianius, bishop of Caesarea, fell sick. He sent for the Saint; he protested to him that, in subscribing the formulary of Rimini, he had not known the venom it contained; that never had he had any other faith than that of the Fathers of Nicaea, and that he declared himself sincerely attached to it. On this declaration, Basil was reconciled with him. Dianius being dead, Eusebius, still a layman, was elected to fill his see. A short time after, this prelate raised Basil to the priesthood; but a sort of violence had to be done to the Saint to engage him to consent to his ordination. This is what we learn from Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, who, on this occasion, wrote to him to console him and to give him advice relative to the circumstances in which he found himself.[23]

Basil continued to live at Caesarea as he had lived in his retreat. He established there monasteries for persons of both sexes. To his labours ordinary ones he joined the preaching of the word of God. Eusebius, in ordaining him priest, had proposed to himself to attach to him a man who could instruct the peoples and help him in the government of his diocese; but, by one of those weaknesses into which fall those who do not take care to watch over themselves,[24] he afterwards fell out with him and even drove him from his church. The people of Caesarea and several bishops declared against Eusebius and highly condemned his conduct. The Saint felt a great joy at seeing himself in liberty again; he went out secretly from the town, and returned to Pontus in 363. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus went to join him there.

Some authors have reported that Saint Basil had been for some time in correspondence and united in communion with Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of Sebaste and Silvanus of Tarsus, who were the heads of the party of the Semi-Arians: for these three prelates then hid their errors under orthodox declarations. Saint Athanasius and Saint Hilary behaved toward them as Saint Basil, of whom we speak, when they wrote their books on the Synods. Meanwhile, Valens, associated in the empire (364) by his brother Valentinian, who abandoned the East to him, having let himself be seduced by Eudoxius of Constantinople and by Euzoïus of Antioch, declared himself the protector of Arianism. In 366, he made a journey to Caesarea, with the intention of putting the churches of that town into the hands of the heretics. Basil was then recalled by the bishop Eusebius. Alarmed at the danger which the faith was running, he hastened to fly to its succour. He showed so much zeal and prudence that the Arians were obliged, after several useless attempts, to desist from their pretensions. The discourses which he delivered confirmed the people in the doctrine of the Church. He did not confine himself to forearming the faithful against the venom of heresy; he exhorted them also to practise the Gospel in the most perfect manner. He reunited divided hearts by sincere reconciliations, and

succeeded in stifling all the seeds of discord. During a famine which desolated the country, he gave proofs of a boundless charity and made the poor find an assured resource in the alms of rich persons. He washed their feet, served them at table and distributed to them with his own hands all the provisions necessary to their subsistence. Such conduct gained him the friendship of Eusebius; this prelate even conceived for him a high esteem and undertook nothing of importance any more without having consulted him. After his death, which happened about the middle of the year 370, Basil was elected to succeed him. The news of this choice caused an extraordinary satisfaction to Saint Athanasius, and he announced from that time the victories which Saint Basil would gain over the reigning heresy.

This new dignity made the virtues of Basil shine more than ever; he appeared to surpass himself as much as he had previously surpassed others. He preached morning and evening, even on the days when the faithful are busy at their ordinary labours. His audience was so numerous that he gives it the title of sea.[25] They ran to his discourses with such eagerness that he compares himself to a mother who, when her breasts are exhausted, does not cease to present them still to her child, in order that by this she may prevent its cries. His flock, as he informs us himself, had so great a hunger for the word of God that he was obliged to make his voice heard at a time when a long illness had ravished his strength from him, and when he was scarcely in a state to speak.[26] He established at Caesarea several practices of devotion which he had seen observed in Egypt, in Syria and in other places, above all that of assembling in the morning at church to make prayer in common and to chant certain psalms before sunrise. Most of those who were at this assembly appeared penetrated with a lively compunction and shed a torrent of tears.[27] The people communicated on Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and all the feasts of the martyrs.[28]

The province having been afflicted with a great drought, Basil asked of heaven the cessation of the scourge; and his prayers, according to the report of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, were heard. No bishop carried further than he the love of the poor, of whom he regarded himself as the defender and the father. Not content with making abundant alms, he founded at Caesarea a vast hospital, called by Saint Gregory of Nazianzus a new town, which, on account of its founder, was named Basiliad, and which was famous long after the episcopate of the Saint. “It may,” adds Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, speaking of the same hospital, “be counted among the wonders of the world, so great is the number of the poor and sick who are received there, so admirable are the order and the care with which the various needs of the unfortunate are provided for there.” Saint Basil went there often to console those who suffered and to instruct them to make a good use of their pains. They were moved with tenderness especially over the deplorable state of those whom vice, schism and heresy had turned aside from the way of salvation; he solicited their conversion by fervent prayers and continual tears. There were neither pains nor dangers which could slacken his zeal when it was a question of bringing them back to God. Nothing proved better the force and activity of this zeal than the victory which he gained over the emperor Valens.

This prince, seeing that Basil was like an impregnable tower against which the efforts of heresy could do nothing, resolved to employ against him the ways of rigour. Already he had by this means cast lively sentiments of fear into the soul of the orthodox bishops. After having traversed several provinces where he had discharged all his resentment on those who would not embrace Arianism, he arrived in Cappadocia. His intention was to destroy the archbishop of Caesarea, in whom he found more resistance to his wishes than in all the other prelates. He had himself preceded by the prefect Modestus, with order to engage Basil, by threats or by promises, to communicate with the Arians. The prefect, having seated himself on his tribunal and having around him the lictors armed with their fasces, cited the archbishop to come and appear before him. Basil presented himself with a serene and tranquil countenance. Modestus received him with civility, and pressed him, by insinuating words, to do what the emperor required of him. This means not having succeeded with him, he assumed a threatening air, and said in a tone of anger: “Do you think what you are doing, Basil, in wishing to oppose so great an emperor, to whose wishes everybody obeys? Do you not fear

to feel the effects of the power with which we are armed?"—"Basil. To what, then, can this power extend?"—"Modestus. To confiscation of goods, to exile, to torments, to death."—"Basil. Threaten me with something else; for nothing of all that makes impression on me."—"Modestus. What do you say?"—"Basil. He who has nothing is safe from confiscation. I have but a few books and the rags which I wear; I do not imagine that you are jealous to take them from me. As to exile, it will not be easy for you to condemn me to it; it is heaven, and not the country which I inhabit, that I regard as my fatherland. I fear torments little. My body is in such a state of leanness and weakness that it will not be able to suffer them long; the first blow will end my life and my pains. I fear death still less, which appears to me a favour; it will reunite me sooner to my Creator, for whom alone I live."—"Modestus. Never has anyone spoken to Modestus with such audacity."—"Basil. It is doubtless the first time that you have had to do with a bishop. In ordinary circumstances, we bishops are the gentlest and most submissive of all men; we have no pride with the least private person, much more with those who are clothed with such a power; but when it is a question of religion, we look only to God, and we despise all the rest. Fire, the sword, wild beasts, claws of iron are then our delights. Employ, then, threats and tortures, nothing will be able to shake us."—"Modestus. I give you until to-morrow to deliberate on the course you have to take."—"Basil. This delay is useless; I shall be to-morrow such as I am to-day."[29]

The prefect could not help admiring the intrepidity of the holy archbishop. The next day, he went to find the emperor, who had arrived at Caesarea, and informed him of all that had passed. Valens, irritated at the bad success of the conference, wished another to be held, at which he assisted with Modestus and one of the officers of his household named Demosthenes. This attempt succeeded no better than the preceding. The prefect made a third; but it served, like the others, only to cover the Saint with glory. At last Modestus said to the emperor: "We are vanquished; he is a man above threats, invincible to all discourses, unshakable to all persuasions. One may try to cast down those who have less courage; but as for him, he must be driven out by open violence, or one must not expect to make him yield by threats." Valens therefore left him in peace for some time. Having gone on the day of the Epiphany to the great church, he was as much surprised as edified at the fine order and the respectful manner with which the divine office was celebrated there. What struck him above all was the piety and recollection with which the archbishop was penetrated at the altar. He did not dare to present himself for communion, for fear that it might be refused him; but he made his offering, which was accepted like that of the orthodox, Basil believing that on such an occasion it was prudent not to observe the ecclesiastical discipline in all its rigour.

Meanwhile the emperor, besieged by the Arians, soon changed his dispositions; he let himself be persuaded to give an order for the exile of the archbishop of Caesarea: but God visibly took in hand the cause of His servant. On the very night of the day on which the order had been despatched, Valentinian-Galates, son of Valens, and aged about six years, was attacked by a violent fever, for which the physicians could bring no remedy. The empress Dominica said to the emperor that this illness was a just punishment for the exile of the holy archbishop; she added moreover that she had been much disquieted by frightful dreams. Thereupon Valens sent for Basil, who was preparing to leave the town. The Saint had no sooner entered the palace than the young prince found himself better, and Basil assured them that he would not die, provided they engaged to have him brought up in the maxims of the Catholic doctrine. The condition having been accepted, he betook himself to prayer, and the child was cured. Valens, besieged anew by the heretics, did not keep the word he had given; he permitted an Arian bishop to baptise his son, who fell sick again and died a short time after.[30] This blow did not convert Valens; he condemned Basil a second time to exile. When the order had been brought him to sign, he took one of those reeds which were then used instead of pens;[31] but it broke in his hands, as if it had refused to serve iniquity. He asked a second and a third, which broke likewise. Having asked a fourth, he felt in his hand and even in his arm an extraordinary trembling and agitation. Seized with fright, he tore the paper and left the archbishop in peace.[32] The prefect Modestus showed himself more grateful than Valens toward Basil. As he had been cured by his prayers of a dangerous illness, he published

aloud that he was indebted to him for his life; thenceforward he was always sincerely attached to him.

This was not the only persecution which Basil suffered, nor the only service which he rendered to the Church. Eusebius, vicar of the prefect of the praetorium of the East, or governor of the provinces of the diocese of Pontus, uncle of the empress Dominica, and an Arian like her, was one of the persecutors of Saint Basil, and it was on the occasion of a widow of great birth, whom an assessor of this magistrate wished to marry by force. She took refuge in the church and went to embrace the altar, whence she hoped she would not be torn. Eusebius demanded her, and Saint Basil refused to give her up, first on account of the sanctity of the asylum, and then because bishops are obliged to protect widows and virgins. The governor, transported with anger, sent his people to seek this woman even in the chamber of Saint Basil, hoping by this to decry a Saint whose exemplary chastity was sheltered from all suspicion. Eusebius did not stop there: he gave order also that Saint Basil should be brought to him to oblige him to answer before him like a criminal. Being seated on his tribunal, and Saint Basil standing, he commanded that the wretched mantle which covered him should be torn from him. The Saint offered to strip himself still of his tunic, if he wished. This generous disposition offended Eusebius still more, who dared to threaten to have him struck. The holy bishop presented his body, that is to say the skeleton of his bones covered with his skin, to receive the blows. The governor, irritated yet more, as if the Saint had insulted him, said to him in fury that he would have him torn with iron claws and have the liver torn out from his entrails. Saint Basil answered him smiling: “You will oblige me by delivering me of a thing which is so incommodious to me.” Meanwhile, the noise of what was passing spread through the town of Caesarea, which was at once moved at the peril of its bishop. Each regarded the injury done him as his own evil. All the world in uproar began to rise and to march for the defence of the common father of the people. The armourers, the embroiderers and clothiers, who worked for the court, showed themselves the most ardent. Each made arms for himself of the tools of his trade or of what came under his hand. They ran to the place where the governor was, the torch in one hand, stones or sticks in the other; the women themselves armed themselves with their spindles and distaffs, and all the people together, following only the movement of its fury, sought the governor to put him in pieces. This man so proud, seeing himself so suddenly surrounded by an unforeseen danger, changed in an instant his language and bearing; he appeared trembling and humbled, reduced to playing the part of a suppliant. Saint Basil himself had compassion on him, and employed his authority to draw him from the peril and to save his life. He displayed always the same constancy and the same zeal. He did not complain when his doctrine was distorted to render him odious, nor even when he was ill-treated. He watched not only over the clergy of his diocese, whose regularity all the world admired, but over the bishops and the metropolitans of the eleven provinces of which he was primate; he came to an understanding with other prelates, above all with the sovereign Pontiff, to root out abuses in the whole Church, and to destroy the heresies. He converted many heretics, among others the Macedonians.

He had in 273 an illness so dangerous that his life was despaired of: it was even once thought that he was dead.[33] He saw himself obliged to have recourse to the remedies of medicine and to make use of hot baths. At last the evil diminished, and he succeeded in recovering an entire cure. The re-establishment of his health put him in a state to continue his ordinary labours for the utility of the Church.

Three years after, Demosthenes, vicar of the prefect of the praetorium, had the government of Cappadocia. He declared himself the protector of Eustathius of Sebaste and of all those who professed Arianism. At the same time he stirred up a violent persecution against the Catholics and above all against the friends of Saint Basil. This persecution lasted all the rest of the reign of Valens, who died in the month of August of the year 378. Gratian, successor of this prince,[34] gave peace to the Church.

The same year, Saint Basil fell sick and felt that he ought to prepare himself for the passage to eternity. The news of the danger his life was running was no sooner spread than consternation became general. A prodigious concourse was made to his house, so lively was the interest taken in his health; but the Saint was

touching the moment when his labours were to be crowned. He died on the 1st of January 379, after having said: “Lord, into thy hands I commend my soul.” He was aged fifty-one years.

We shall add to what we have already said of his love of poverty that he left nothing wherewith to have a stone tomb made for him; but his diocesans, not content with raising to him in their hearts a durable monument, honoured him also by magnificent funeral rites. His body was carried by the hands of Saints and accompanied by an innumerable multitude of people. Each hastened to touch the pall which covered him, as well as the bed on which he was borne, in the persuasion that he would derive some benefit from it. Groans and sighs stifled the chanting of the psalms. Pagans and Jews wept with the Christians: all deplored the death of Basil, whom they regarded as their common father and as the most celebrated doctor of the world. Those who had known him took pleasure in recounting his smallest actions and in recalling what they had heard him say. Several affected to imitate his exterior, his gait and even his slowness in speaking. He was copied even in the form of his bed and of his garments.

It is from Saint Gregory of Nazianzus that all these particulars are learned. In the panegyric which he pronounced in honour of his friend, he painted his virtues with the liveliest and most touching colours; and one may assure that his discourse will be no less immortal on earth than the memory of him whom he had charged himself to celebrate.[35] Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Amphilochius and Saint Ephraem also made panegyrics in honour of the holy archbishop of Caesarea. According to the first two, the Greeks, immediately after his death, celebrated his feast on the 1st of June, the day on which they still keep it to-day. The Latins have moved it to the fourteenth of the same month, which was the day of his episcopal ordination.

Theodoret gives Saint Basil the title of Great, and this title has been confirmed to him by the suffrage of following ages. He is called by the same Father the torch of the universe; by Saint Sophronius, the honour and ornament of the Church; by Saint Isidore of Pelusium, a man inspired of God; by the General Council of Chalcedon, the Great Basil, the minister of grace, who has explained the truth to all the earth. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus says, speaking of the writings of Saint Basil:[36] “When I read his treatise on the creation, it seems to me that I see my Creator draw all things from nothing. When I read his works against the heretics, I believe I see the fire of Sodom fall on the enemies of the faith and reduce to ashes their criminal tongues. If I run through his book of the Holy Spirit, I feel in me the operation of God, and I no longer fear to announce the truth aloud. In reading his explanation of Holy Scripture, I penetrate into the deepest abyss of mysteries. His panegyrics of the martyrs make me despise my body and inspire me with a noble ardour for the combat. His moral discourses help me to purify my body and my soul, that I may become a temple worthy of God and an instrument fit to praise Him, to bless Him and to manifest His glory with His power.” He is represented 1° carrying a church on his hand, to mark that he is the founder of the Basilians; 2° presenting to a poor man a tray laden with food, doubtless because he had founded a hospital where he served the sick and fed the unfortunate; 3° receiving the offerings of the faithful; 4° before the prefect Modestus, whom he confounds by his answers.

WRITINGS OF SAINT BASIL.

In the indication of the works of Saint Basil, we shall follow the order in which they are arranged in the edition in 3 vols. in folio.

The first volume contains: 1° The Hexaemeron, or the explanation of the work of the six days, in nine homilies. This work has always been singularly esteemed by the ancients and the moderns, as much for the erudition displayed in it as for the incomparable elegance which is remarked in the composition. 2° Thirteen homilies on the Psalms. Saint Basil, according to the report of Cassiodorus, had explained all Scripture; but his explanations have not come down to us. The commentary on Isaias cannot be contested to the holy Doctor, as Dom Cellier has proved against Dom Carnier. 3° The five Books against Eunomius. This is a refutation of Arianism; it was written against the apology for that heresy made by Eunomius. This heresiarch,

born in Cappadocia, had been raised to the diaconate by Eudoxius, Arian patriarch of Antioch. He had in his party still more reputation than Aetius, whose disciple he was. Having caused great troubles at Antioch, at Chalcedon and at Constantinople, he was exiled by the emperor Theodosius to Halmyris, on the Danube. A short time after, he was permitted to return to Caesarea, in Cappadocia. He retired to an estate which he had at Dacora, in the same province, and died there in 393. He was not content with maintaining that the Word was a pure creature, he added to Arianism several other errors. The works contained in the second volume are: 1° Twenty-four Homilies on various subjects of morals and on the feasts of the martyrs. Those in which the holy Doctor combats usury, gluttony and drunkenness should chiefly be distinguished for their beauty and elegance. 2° The Ascetica. Under this title are comprised three detached discourses entitled Ascetica: the treatises on the judgment of God and on Faith, the Morals, the Great Rules (fifty-five in number), the three hundred and thirteen Small Rules. Saint Basil composed these works at different times, for the instruction of those who had followed him in his retreat or who had ranged themselves under his guidance. The Morals are a collection of passages of Scripture on penance and on the principal duties of the Christian life. In the same volume are two discourses which have no particular title, some regulations for the punishment of monks and nuns, monastic constitutions. It is not certain that the two discourses are by Saint Basil. The Regulations and the monastic Constitutions cannot be attributed to him.

One finds, in the third volume: 1° The book of the Holy Spirit, which is addressed to Saint Amphilochius, and which was written in 375. The divinity of the Holy Spirit is proved there by various passages of Scripture, by the creation of the world, by the gifts of grace and of miracles, and by all the divine attributes which are recognised in Him. The author proves the same thing by the tradition of the Church, of which he shows admirably the use and the necessity, c. xxvii, p. 54. The divinity of the Holy Spirit, as well as the necessity of tradition, is also very well proved in the first of the books against Eunomius. 2° Letters, to the number of 336. Photius proposes them as models to those who wish to excel in the epistolary style. Three are called canonical. The Saint fixes in them the term of the public penance which was to be enjoined on sinners. Beveridge has given a good edition of them in the collection of the canons of the Greek Church. In the letter to Caesaria, which was written in 372, Saint Basil says that, during the persecution of Valens, a time when the priests saw themselves often under the necessity of hiding, it was permitted to the faithful to carry the Eucharist to their homes and to communicate themselves.[37] In letter 207, p. 311, he makes a fine apology for the monks who rose at midnight to pray, who praised God in the continual exercise of compunction. The only vengeance he wishes to draw from their enemies is that they should also determine themselves in tears and penance. In another letter, he exhorts Suranus, his relative, who was duke or governor of Scythia, to continue to relieve the Christians who were suffering in Persia, and begs him to procure him relics of the Martyrs who had lately given their lives for Jesus Christ.[38] Saint Basil often exhorts the faithful to celebrate the feasts of the Martyrs.[39] He testifies a great veneration for the relics of the Saints, before which he says that Christians pray in their needs, and that it is not uselessly that they claim the intercession of these friends of God.[40]

3° The book of Virginity is unworthy of Saint Basil, although it bears the name of this Father and was written in the same century. It is addressed to Letoius, bishop of Melitene, to whom Saint Gregory of Nyssa wrote his canonical letter. Letoius was made bishop only in 381, two years after the death of Saint Basil. One finds, in the book of Virginity, two examples of sacramental confession, p. 646. Saint Basil himself often inculcates the use of aural confession of sins.[41]

We have, under the name of Saint Basil, a Liturgy which is followed by almost all the Greek Churches, at least since the sixth century.[42] The liturgies of the Copts and of the Egyptians are only a translation of it, according to Renaudot.[43]

We learn from Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, from Saint Proclus, from Peter the Deacon, from the seventh general council, etc., that Saint Basil had compiled a liturgy; but we dare not affirm that it is precisely the same as that which bears his name to-day, and which is followed by the Greeks, the Copts, the Arabs, etc.

Erasmus, in the fine preface which he placed at the head of the edition which he gave of the works of Saint Basil, calls this Father the most accomplished orator who ever appeared; he adds that his style should serve as a model to those who aspire to true eloquence. His judgment has been confirmed by that of modern critics. Bollin says that Saint Basil must at least be placed in the first class of orators, and regarded as one of the ablest masters of eloquence. But let us hear Photius, who was so good a judge in this kind. "Whoever," says he, cod. 141, "wishes to become a panegyrist or an accomplished orator will have need neither of Plato nor of Demosthenes, if he takes Basil for model. There is no writer whose diction is purer, finer, more energetic, nor who thinks with more force and solidity. He unites all that is needed to persuade, with sweetness, clearness and precision. His style, always natural, flows with the same ease as a brook which comes out of its source."

Like Thucydides and Demosthenes, he thinks much and knows how to link together the thoughts which present themselves in crowds to his mind. There is as much clearness in his expressions as there is vivacity and justness in his ideas, brilliancy and fecundity in his imagination. In him, depth does not harm the harmony of the periods. He possesses so well the art of transitions and that of placing figures to the purpose that he disputes the palm with Plato and Xenophon in sweetness. What renders him above all recommendable is the talent of conceiving things without confusion, of presenting them in a suitable light, of animating them, of communicating to them a sort of life, of carrying the light into what is most obscure, and of imprinting on the mind of his readers those lively images which he had himself formed.

The best edition that we have of the works of Saint Basil is that which the Benedictines of the Congregation of Saint-Maur gave at Paris. The first two volumes appeared in 1721 and 1722, by the care of Dom Garder. Dom Prudent Maran published the third volume in 1730, and joined to it the Life of the holy Doctor.

This edition has been reproduced by MM. Gaume and by the abbé Migne. For the history of this Life, we have followed and most often reproduced Godescard, who has brought out its principal features better than Father Giry. See the panegyrics and funeral orations pronounced in his honour by Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Saint Amphilochius and Saint Ephraem, who all had known him particularly, as well as the ancient ecclesiastical historians; Hermant, Tillemont, Cave, Jos. Assemani, in Calend. univ. ad 1 jan., vol. vi, p. 4; Fialon, literary study on St Basil.

The Venerable Richard, Abbot of Saint-Vannes of Verdun (1046)

Among the saints whom God made use of to re-establish in the north of France the monastic state, which long wars and above all the invasions of the Normans and the Hungarians had almost entirely annihilated, we must count the blessed Richard, abbot of Saint-Vannes of Verdun. He was born of an illustrious family of the kingdom, and made brilliant studies at Reims, whose schools enjoyed at that epoch a great reputation. Richard acquired virtue and learning there, and made himself admired by the amiable qualities of his heart. The archbishop of Reims, wishing to attach him to his church, appointed him canon and precentor of his metropolitan church; but Richard felt that God called him to another kind of life and to a more entire retreat from the world. He was wholly penetrated with this idea, when one day the noble count Frederic, a relative of the emperor Saint Henry, came to communicate to him the design he had formed of leaving the world to embrace the religious state. Richard saw in this meeting a warning from heaven. He communicated in his turn to Frederic the sentiments with which his soul was filled, and both, with hearts full of joy, betook themselves to the abbey of Saint-Vannes, at Verdun. On the death of the Irishman Finden, who governed this community, the bishop of Verdun, Haimon, chose Richard to succeed him. The new abbot was not long in conciliating the respect and affection of the religious by the wisdom and firmness which he displayed in his administration. There was in his manners a sort of irresistible charm, which won all hearts; therefore many had given him the surname of Grace of God, to indicate this particular gift which heaven had bestowed on him. The reputation of the humble abbot of Saint-Vannes became such that many princes, prelates and noble

lords entrusted to him the direction or the Reform of the monasteries which were subject to them, or which were found in their States. At the request of Baudri, bishop of Liège, he undertook the Reform of the abbey of Lobbes which, for the temporal, depended on that diocese. Baldwin, count of Flanders, submitted to him also, with the same intention, the monasteries of Saint-Amand, of Saint-Bertin, of Saint-Josse-sur-Mer, and several others. Gerard I, bishop of Cambrai and of Arras, who had for Richard a quite particular affection, entrusted to him the Reform of that of Saint-Vaast of Arras, where the venerable abbot had to deploy all the resources of his zeal and prudence.[1]

This important work of the re-establishment of discipline sometimes raised very lively oppositions, which, without being general, became none the less an obstacle to good. More than once even, the life of the holy reformers was not safe in those asylums of religion, where, beside pious, gentle and peaceful souls, one found also ardent natures, inflexible characters and often former men of arms, to whom violence was not yet quite foreign. Richard met, at the monastery of Saint-Vaast of Arras, one of those religious whom passion drove to a horrible attempt and whom repentance afterwards led to the heroism of virtue. Leduin, such was his name, bore only with ill-concealed spite the changes made by the Blessed in certain practices contrary to the prescriptions of Saint Benedict. This sentiment, nourished in his heart, raised there one of those tempests which become the more terrible as they surge up in a soul which grace envelops so to speak on all sides. One night, then, while the community was plunged in the deepest sleep, Leduin, accompanied by another religious to whom he had inspired his hatred, rises in silence, and, taking a sword which he hides under his robe, goes to Richard, who was resting on his couch. The unhappy man was about to strike, when suddenly his arm stiffened and refused to serve his vengeance. In spite of the fury which transported him, Leduin understood that heaven itself took the defence of his victim. This thought made him at once return into himself and cast trouble and remorse into his soul. Some hours later, all the religious arrived at the choir to sing the office. Leduin, in spite of the violent fever which had seized him and the terrors with which his soul was filled, betook himself to his ordinary place, in the midst of his brethren. He saw a few steps from him the venerable abbot whom he had wished to assassinate, and his presence awakened in him the most poignant remorse. The remembrance of Jesus Christ, whose sorrowful passion was recalled on that very day, contributed still to inspire the soul of the guilty man with sentiments of sadness and repentance. Suddenly, at the moment when the prayer was being sung: “Lord, have mercy on us,” Leduin, leaving his place, comes and throws himself at the feet of the venerable Richard, and repeats these words with the most touching accent: “Lord, have mercy on me.” The abbot raises him with kindness, and, as the office was ending, takes him aside and asks him what this sorrow and these tears mean which he sheds in abundance. Leduin, prostrate again on the ground which he struck with his forehead in sign of repentance, was suffocated by sobs and had all his limbs violently agitated. Making an effort over himself, he at last speaks to answer Richard, who presses him to tell him the subject of such sorrow. “My father,” said Leduin, “I have sinned against heaven and against you: I who no longer wished to be your son, I made myself your persecutor.” Then drawing the sword which he held hidden under his garments: “Behold,” he continues, “the sword which I raised this night over your head to strike you; but the Lord defended you. I drew the sword against you; but He to whom strength belongs stopped my arm; He delivered you from death and delivered me at the same time from the misfortune of committing a homicide. Pardon me then, for I am disposed to be converted, to yield to your warnings and to submit to the rules established by you: only pardon me the offence of which I have made myself guilty toward you and pray to God for me.” The venerable Richard received with kindness the penitent son whom grace brought back to his feet. He gave him all the testimonies of the most sincere affection and the assurance of pardon. From that day, Leduin became the model of his brethren, and, in the sequel, he was chosen to fill the functions of abbot under the venerable Richard himself, whom important affairs often called outside his community.

After having laboured long and with great success at his mission, the Blessed felt inspired with the desire to undertake the journey to Jerusalem. He went there with seven companions whom he edified by his spirit of

penance and his tender piety. On his return to France, he went to preach in Normandy the Truce of God, by which it was sought to put an end to the continual wars which many lords made on one another. This last work accomplished, the worthy abbot re-entered his monastery of Saint-Vannes, where, until the end of his life, he continued to give to his spiritual children the examples of religious perfection. He died in the arms of the bishop of Verdun, on 14 June 1040. He was buried in a vault under the high altar of the church of his monastery, whence he has since been transferred under a marble tomb.

The abbé Destombes: *Lives of the Saints of the dioceses of Cambrai and Arras* [*Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras*].

Saint Landry, Parish Priest of Lanslevillard (11th century)

Among the religious who came to console and bring back to God the unhappy populations of the diocese of Maurienne, after the expulsion of the Saracens, was Landry. Nothing is known either of his parents or of his birth, of which not even the date is known. Tradition teaches us only that he was born at Bonneval or at Lanslevillard and that, disgusted with the world, he had retired to La Novalaise to consecrate himself to the Lord, in prayer, labour and the observance of the Rule of Saint Benedict, which that monastery had adopted since the year 726. His superiors, who appreciated his merit, charged him to serve, with the help of another religious, Lanslebourg, Bessans, Bonneval and Lanslevillard, where he fixed his residence. Tradition shows us Saint Landry visiting his parish frequently, to console the afflicted, end quarrels, reconcile enemies and recommend to all, after the example of Saint John, to love one another. It is not known how long Landry exercised this ministry as meritorious before God as it was fruitful for souls; it is known only that it ended in martyrdom. Bonneval was composed, in the time of our Saint, of two hamlets: that of l'Ecot, and that of Faudant. The inhabitants of the latter were in great part Saracens whom the mines discovered in the neighbourhood had attracted. They had acquired considerable riches; but at the same time luxury, frequentation of the infidels, the privation of priests and of religious succour during many years, had developed among the Christians of this hamlet the germ of all vices. Landry ran in search of these strayed sheep. But all the efforts he made to bring them back to the fold were useless: he gathered only hatred, and at last some of the most hardened, no longer willing to bear the quite evangelical firmness of his reprimands, resolved to rid themselves of him. One day when the Saint was going to l'Ecot, they waited for him on the way, fell upon him and cast him into the river Arc.

The Lord Himself warned the inhabitants of Lanslevillard of the death of their beloved pastor. Suddenly the bells ring as on great feasts. These unaccustomed sounds put the population in commotion. They run to the belfry: but find no one there, and yet the joyous peals continue. Then the anxiety is at its height: all the people go to the church to wait till it please God to make His will known. Scarcely are they assembled there when the processional cross, rising to the height of a man, advances toward the door. The priest who serves the parish with Saint Landry follows it, vested in surplice and stole, and the people accompany him, desirous of seeing the end of so marvellous an event. The procession goes down the road which leads to the river. At last the cross, which no one has carried, stops near a cavern hollowed under a rock which the waves of the Arc bathe. They enter, and the first thing they perceive is the body of Saint Landry, the head resting on the right hand, itself resting on a stone; in the left hand he holds a palm. After having venerated the holy body which the Lord confides to the filial piety of the inhabitants of Lanslevillard, they put it in a winding-sheet of which four persons take the corners, and the procession resumes, singing hymns, the road to the church.[1] The body of Saint Landry was deposited in the sacristy, where it remained until 1765. On 23 July 1764, Mgr Filippa de Martiniana, returning from a mission which he had himself presided at Bessans, sealed the shrine in which the holy relics had just been transported, and permitted them to be exposed publicly to the veneration of the faithful. M. Esprit Combet, parish priest of Lanslevillard, had, in spite of strong oppositions, caused a chapel to be opened, on the Gospel side, to receive them. It was blessed on 19 March

1765, under the title of Saint Joseph. On the 10th of June following, the shrine was solemnly placed there on the altar, after having been carried in procession to the place where the body had been found and where there had been raised, in honour of the Saint, a little oratory which still exists, beside the road which leads to Bessans.

During the evil days of the Revolution, the holy relics had much to suffer from profanations. However, God did not permit them to be wholly lost. What remains of them rests in a magnificent shrine of gilded wood, which decorates the chapel of Saint Joseph of Lanslevillard. The shrine is about five and a half feet in length by three feet in width; angels surmount it, holding a crown.

The body of Saint Landry is almost entire; there are lacking only some bones, the right arm, the skull and the upper jaw, with which the church of Lanslebourg has been enriched, at an epoch unknown. But the seals of the reliquaries which enclose them having been broken, these last relics are to-day deprived of authenticity.

There is still in the church of Lanslevillard a little reliquary, in the form of an arm, which is carried in the processions and in which there was put, in 1809, some flesh of the left arm of Saint Landry. Nothing is so touching as the confidence which the inhabitants of Upper Maurienne have always had in Saint Landry. The prodigies which led to the discovery of his body in the eleventh century were a sufficient testimony of the glory which he enjoyed in the bosom of God. Therefore the parish of Lanslevillard honoured him at once as a Saint and as its natural protector. The feast of Saint Landry was celebrated, before the Revolution, on 10 June. Its origin must go back several centuries, for no vestige of its institution is found. The reliquary which contains flesh of the arm of Saint Landry was exposed on the high altar; then they sang the *Veni Creator* and the *Iste Confessor*, and went in procession to the chapel of Saint Joseph. There the parish priest, after having sung the prayer of the Saint, blessed the people with the reliquary, and they returned to the church singing the Ambrosian hymn. At the altar of Saint Joseph, the parish priest blessed the people a second time with the reliquary, and the ceremony ended with the celebration of the holy sacrifice and the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

This feast, interrupted since 1793, was re-established in 1847, by Mgr Vibert, and fixed on 14 June. We have abridged what we have just said of Saint Landry from the detailed notice which may be read in the *Hagiological History of the diocese of Maurienne* [*Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Maurienne*], by the abbé Truchet, parish priest of Saint-Jean-d'Arves.

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[2] He left the plough to follow Elijah and received from him, with his sacred mantle, the prophetic spirit and the gift of miracles. He made wholesome the waters of the fountain of Jericho, which were noxious, cursed the children of Bethel who insulted him, and who were at once devoured by bears, predicted to Joram and Josaphat, who saw themselves on the point of perishing of thirst with their army in the midst of the deserts, that they would find water in abundance and that they would beat the Moabites; put an end to the barrenness of a woman of Sunam; raised from the dead some years afterwards the son whom this woman had lost; cured Naaman of leprosy; struck with blindness the soldiers of Ben-Adad, and predicted to King Joas, besieged in Samaria, that he would triumph over the Syrians. He died at Samaria. Saint Jerome says that in his time the tomb of the Prophet was seen at Caesarea. Some of his bones, escaped from the profanations of the soldiers of Julian the Apostate, were carried to Alexandria, in 463, into the monastery of Saint Paul the Leper, another to Constantinople, another into Abyssinia. In 761 the church of Saint Lawrence of Ravenna was enriched with these relics. In the church of Saint Apollinaris, of the same town, a head which was believed to be that of the Prophet was long preserved. The Carmelites honour the holy Prophet with a particular cult. — The author of Ecclesiasticus (xlviii, 13–15) makes his eulogy thus: "Elijah had been taken up in a whirlwind of fire, but his spirit rested entire upon Elisha. In the days of his life, no prince made him tremble, no human power triumphed over his courage, no threat turned him from his road, and his very bones preserved the virtue which the Prophet had had. He strewed his life with prodigies and his death was itself fruitful in miracles."

[3] See his Life on the 19th of November.

[4] Sprung from one of the most illustrious families of Sicily, he took the habit first in a monastery of the island of Chios, which he had founded. The holy patriarch Nicephorus attached him later to the church of Constantinople, where he had much to suffer for his zeal against the heresy of the Iconoclasts. The times having become better, the empress Theodora had him placed on the see of Constantinople, become vacant by the death of Nicephorus, who expired in exile. The new patriarch applied himself to make the heresy disappear completely; he succeeded in it and instituted, by gratitude, the feast of Orthodoxy. He died after an episcopate of four years, and his feast began to be celebrated under Saint Ignatius, his successor. Saint Methodius left penitential Canons, Sermons, and a Eulogy of Saint Denis the Areopagite.

[5] He was successively bishop of Rodez and of Clermont, in Auvergne. The Roman martyrology gives him this last title on the 13th of November, which is thought to be the true day of his death. We consecrate a notice to him under that day.

[6] See the 1st of March and the 17th of June.

[7] Or..

[8] Libanius, a pagan in religion, taught rhetoric at Constantinople, at Nicomedia and at Antioch. He was singularly honoured by Julian the Apostate. He survived the emperor Theodosius, who raised him to the dignity of prefect of the praetorium. We still have by him Epistles, Orations and Declamations, in which frequent invectives are found against the emperor Constantine the Great and against the Christian religion.

[9] Libanius, ap. S. Basil., Ep. 145, 152.

[10] Saint Basil makes an excellent remark in his treatise *De legendis gentilium libris*. Scripture and the maxims of eternal life ought, he says, to make the principal study of Christians; but it must not be concluded from this that eloquence and the other parts of literature are useless to them; on the contrary, they must be regarded as the leaves which serve the fruits for ornament and protection. Starting from this principle, he wishes that youth be prepared for the sublime study of the sacred oracles by the thoughtful reading of the best poets and the best orators of profane antiquity; he orders at the same time that discretion be used in the choice of the books which are put into the hands of young people. One must, he adds, forbid them absolutely all those in which examples and maxims capable of corrupting their hearts would be found.

Julian the Apostate felt better than anyone the utility which our religion drew from the study of the belles-lettres; he judged that it would be impossible for him to annihilate Christianity, as he had proposed to himself, so long as it should have for defenders the most learned men of the empire, such as a Saint Athanasius, a Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, a Saint Hilary, a Diodorus of Tarsus, an Apollinaris. This is what led him to forbid Christians to teach grammar, eloquence and philosophy. The Fathers were not the only ones who regarded this edict as a signal act of tyranny; the pagans bore the same judgment of it. One may see what Ammianus Marcellinus says of it, who was of the religion of Julian, and the panegyrist of this prince, bk. xxii, ch. 10; bk. xxv, ch. 4. One will also read with much satisfaction what concerns this trait of history, in the History of the Lower Empire, by Le Beau, bk. xii, no. 24, vol. iii, p. 171. This historian observes, after the testimony of the Fathers and of the contemporary historians, that Julian gave a second edict, by which Christians were forbidden to read the profane authors. To supply this loss, Apollinaris and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus composed poems on subjects of piety; but one was not compensated for the masterpieces of antiquity by works made in haste, whatever beauties they might otherwise contain.

[11] The Greek language was preserved in the East with a great part of its primitive purity, until the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, in the middle of the fifteenth century. The taste for fine literature perished sooner in the West. It began to decline under the reign of Tiberius, and it vanished entirely at the arrival of the Barbarians, whose incursions brought back the darkness of ignorance.

[12] S. Greg. of Naz., Or. xx.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Or. iii.

[15] Or. xii.

[16] Ep..

[17] *Regulae fusius explicatae*, rule xx.

[18] Ibid., rule xxxvii.

[19] Dom Cellier, vol. iv, p. 384, has solidly refuted Bulteau, who, in his *Histoire monastique d'Orient*, bk. ii, had advanced that the hour of Prime was unknown, in the time of Saint Basil, to the monks of Cappadocia.

[20] See Dom Ceiller, vol.

[21] Ep. VI.

[22] Or. xx.

[23] Ep. cclvii.

[24] Ep. ii, Benedictine ed.

[25] Naz., Ep. VIII.

[26] Ep. ix.

[27] S. Bas., Ep. ccvii.

[28] Ep..

[29] Ep. XI.

[30] The expression which Saint Gregory of Nazianzus uses gives ground to believe that Eusebius acted from the motive of a secret jealousy.

[31] Hexaem., hom. ii and iii.

[32] In Ps.

[33] Ep..

[34] Ep..

[35] S. Greg. Nyss., in Eunom., bk. i, p. 818; Theodoret, bk. iv, ch. 16; Rufinus, bk. ii, ch..

[36] See Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Theodoret, Socrates, Sozomen.

[37] There are still to-day peoples in the East who use reeds to write.

[38] See Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Ephraem and Theodoret.

[39] Ep. cxli.

[40] Valens, having been defeated in Thrace by the Goths, whom he had himself infected with the Arian heresy, was burnt by these peoples in a cottage where he had taken refuge.

[41] Or. xx.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ep. xciii, p. 186.

[44] Ep. clv, p. 244.

[45] Hom. in Quadrag. Mart., p. 155; Hom. in Barlaam Mart., p. 139, etc.

[46] Ep. xcv, clxxvi,, etc.

[47] In Ps. XXXII, Ep. canonic. ii, can. xxxiv, and Reg. brev., ch. 228.

[48] See Peter the Deacon, *De incarnatione*, ch. 8.

[49] *Liturgie orient.*, vol. i, and Father Le Brun, *Liturg.*, vol. ii.

[50] The blessed Richard is found in the catalogue of the abbots of these monasteries; he is the thirtieth in that of Saint-Amand, the twenty-eighth in that of Saint-Vaast of Arras.

[1] All these facts were represented on two plates of brass which were placed on each side of the high altar. They were sold, in the eighteenth century, by the communal council, which, with the price it derived from them, bought the three lamps which are in the choir of the church.

15 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

In Lucania, near the river Silaro, the triumph of the holy martyrs Vitus, or Guy, Modestus and Crescentia,[1] who, from Sicily, were brought into that province under the emperor Diocletian, and, after having courageously endured, by divine help, the cauldron of boiling lead, wild beasts and racks, finished the course of their glorious combat. About 303. — At Dorostorum, in Moesia, Saint Hesychius, soldier, who was arrested with the blessed Julius, and martyred after him under the judge Maximus, 3rd century. — At Cordova, in Spain, Saint Rénilde, martyr. 853. — At Zephyrium, in Cilicia, Saint Dulas, martyr, who was beaten with rods for the name of Jesus Christ, under the president Maximus, stretched on a gridiron sprinkled with boiling oil, passed through many other tortures, and, victorious, received the palm of martyrdom. 304. — At Palmyra, in Syria, the holy martyrs Lybie and Léonide, sisters, and Entropie, a girl of twelve years, who attained the palm of martyrdom by divers torments. — At Valenciennes, the decease of Saint Landelin, abbot.[2] 686. — At Clermont, in Auvergne, Saint Abraham, confessor, illustrious for his holiness and his miracles. 472. — In the Valais, on Mount Jou, Saint Bernard of Menthon, confessor. 1008. — At Venice, the blessed Gregory-Louis Barbadigo.[3] 1697.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the dioceses of Lyon and of Paris, Saint Ferréol, priest, and Saint Ferjeux, deacon, martyrs, whose constancy Saint Gregory of Tours praises.[4] 211. — At Espalion, on the Lot, in Rouergue, Saint Hilarian, massacred by impious men, 8th century. — At Séez, Saint Lothaire or Loyer, bishop, who was drawn from a hermitage to be placed on that episcopal see before Saint Godegrand, brother of Saint Opportuna. 756. — In the ancient diocese of Léon, to-day the diocese of Quimper, Saint Vouga or Vio, bishop, who left his see of Armagh, in Ireland, to live as a solitary in the deserts of our Brittany. In the last century, there was still

shown, in the chapel of Saint-Vio, in the parish of Tréguennec (diocese of Quimper), a part of the relics of our Saint, as well as a missal which was pretended to have served him. The churches dedicated in his honour prove that a public cult has always been rendered to him in Brittany. 585. — At Soissons, Saint Rufin and Saint Valère, martyrs, named yesterday. About 304. — At Beauvais, Saint Constantine, bishop of that town and confessor. About 700. — At Montbrison, in the diocese of Lyon, the decease of Saint Albrique or Aldrique, bishop of Autun. It is reported that, having gone to Montbrison for the provincial synod, he fell ill in that town and was buried there in the church of Saint-André. The footwear and the girdle of the holy bishop are preserved there, and this last relic has already miraculously cured more than one sick person. — At Pibrac, diocese of Toulouse, Saint Germaine Cousin. About 1601. — At Limoges, Saint Saumay or Psalmodius, solitary, who miraculously healed the daughter of the duke of Aquitaine of a viper's bite. 589. — At Viviers, Saint Mélan, bishop of that see, apostle of the Vivarais and confessor,[5] 6th century. — At Nogent-le-Roi, in Bassigny, the venerable Jeanne Mance, virgin. She devoted herself to the relief of the sick and travelled over Canada with that intention to create hospital establishments there, and founded the Hôtel-Dieu of Montreal (Lower Canada). She died there in the odour of sanctity, and was buried in the church of that house. 1673.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — In the Valais, on Mount Jou, Saint Bernard, who founded in that place a monastery of Canons Regular, whose Order he had embraced in the town of Aosta; he died at Novara, in the monastery of Saint Lawrence, and was buried there; but his head was carried to Mount Saint Bernard. 1008.

Martyrology of the Premonstratensians. — Saint Isfrid or Isfroi, who, from prior of the monastery of Jerichow, became bishop of Ratzeburg, and flew away to heaven, illustrious for the zeal he put into confirming the Vandals in the faith, and, among other miracles, by the healing of a blind man. 1204.

Martyrology of the Benedictines, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — Saint John of Saint-Facond.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At La Cambre, in Brabant, in the monastery of Saint Mary, of the Order of Cîteaux, Saint Aliz of Scarembec, virgin of an extraordinary holiness, which shone forth by great miracles. She migrated to her heavenly Spouse on the 11th of this month.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — Saint John of Saint-Facond.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — Saint Basil, bishop.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — At Rome, on the Janiculum, Saint Nicholas, of Forca-Palena, in the diocese of Sulmona, propagator of the Order of Saint Jerome, of the congregation of Saint Peter of Gamba-Curta, of Pisa, and founder of the monastery of Saint Onuphrius, of Rome, of Saint Mary of Graces, at Naples, who, after long pilgrimages and numerous bodily afflictions, rendered his soul to God on the 29th of September. His body rests under the high altar of the church of Saint Onuphrius, where it is surrounded with a great veneration. Clement XIV confirmed, in 1774, the cult which had been rendered to him from time immemorial. 1449.

Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Margaret, queen of Scotland, mentioned on 10 June by the Roman martyrology. — At Alexandria in Egypt, Saint Cerdon, fourth bishop of that town. Year 110. — In the ancient town of Barbary, in Mauritania, the saints Gaian, Jovian, Philip, martyrs, mentioned by the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — In Lucania, the saints Nivile, Candide, Cantien, Cantianilla, Proie, Chrysogonus, Anteon, Quintian, Theodulus, Jocundus, Silvius, martyrs, indicated by the same. — At Aquileia, the saints Clement, Prodite and four of their companions, martyrs, cited in the martyrology of Saint

Jerome. — At Constantinople, the saints Mucius, Megetias, Mingin, martyrs. — In Abyssinia, Saint Timothy, martyr, and Saint More, his wife, 3rd century. — Among the Greeks, Saint Nerse and Saint Vetula, martyrs; and the saints Fortunatus, Achaicus, Stephanas, called apostles, that is to say confessors of the faith. — At Naples, Saint Fortunatus, ninth bishop of that town. His body was buried first beyond the walls of the town, in a church dedicated under his invocation; afterwards it was transferred to the church of Saint Stephen of Naples. It rests at present in the church of Saint Euphebius, of the same town, enclosed in a leaden shrine with that of Saint Maximus, another bishop of the same see. About the year 350. — In Egypt, Saint Orsisius, abbot, second successor of Saint Pachomius in his monastery of Tabennisi, in the Upper Thebaid. He gloriously continued the work so well begun by Saint Pachomius, governing with wisdom the numerous monasteries dependent on that of Tabennisi and founding new ones. He had great relations with Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, to whom he had been recommended by the great Saint Antony, the most celebrated of the solitaries of the Thebaid. He is sometimes called Orcese, Orsiese and Oriese. About the year 380. — At Winchester, in England, Saint Edburga, daughter of King Edward I. About the year 960. — At Oviedo, in Spain, the blessed Peter, surnamed the father of the unfortunate, of the Order of Friars Minor. He founded the first monastery of his Order at Oviedo, where he died after having long edified all those who had any relation with him. The inhabitants of Oviedo surround his tomb with a quite particular cult. 1216. — At Sainte-Marie d'Aspre, in the Basilicata, in Italy, the blessed Angelo of Cingoli, second superior of the Order of the Clarins, an institute which bore at first the name of Hermits-Celestines, and which was subject to the ordinaries under the Rule of Saint Francis. He led a quite angelic life and numerous miracles illustrated his tomb. 1337. — At Kiev, in Russia, Saint Jonas, archbishop of that see, and thaumaturge. 1470.

Saints Vitus, Modestus and Crescentia, Martyrs

About 303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.

Ipsa mors martyrum præmium vitæ est.

Martyrs find in their death the reward of their life.

S. Ambr., Orat. de fide resurr.

Vitus, called also Vit or Guy, was of an illustrious family of Sicily, and son of a lord named Hylas, whom his employments and his riches caused to be much honoured in the country. This man was a pagan and extremely given to the worship of the false gods; but Vitus had the happiness to have for governor a Christian named Modestus, and for nurse a Christian woman, named Crescentia, who brought him up in a just aversion for idols, and in a sincere and ardent love for Jesus Christ. He was baptised without his father's knowledge; and, as he was prevented with an extraordinary grace, he shone among the infidels by heroic actions and by the zeal with which he won souls to God; he received also the gift of miracles; and, by his prayers, the blind recovered sight, the sick health, and the possessed were delivered from the tyranny of the demon.

Vitus was only twelve years old when Valerian came to Sicily, on behalf of the emperor Diocletian, less as prefect and governor than as persecutor of the Christians and executioner. Among those who were denounced to him was Vitus, who, small as he was, did not fail to be considered by the idolaters as the strongest and most dangerous of their enemies. Valerian sent for Hylas, his father, and told him that, having learned that his son was of the sect of the Christians, he had the right to have him arrested and to punish him according to the imperial laws; but that in consideration of him he was willing to suspend this prosecution, in the hope that his father would bring him back to his duty; Hylas must therefore employ all his paternal authority, and even something more, to make him quit the worship of Jesus Christ and bring him to the worship of the gods, which was the religion of the empire. Hylas promised to do so; and, in effect, having returned home, he employed all sorts of means to win, or, to speak better, to seduce this blessed child. He

embraced him, bathed his cheeks with his tears, represented to him that, if he did not yield to the wishes of the emperor, he was about to lose in an instant, not only all the great goods which he had acquired for him and of which he was the sole heir, but also honour and life; that he was about to defame his family and leave his father in a bitterness and a grief which would soon lead him to the tomb; finally, he tried to inspire him with contempt for a religion in which a crucified man was adored, a man dead ignominiously on a gibbet; but all these artifices made no impression on the invincible heart of Vitus; on the contrary, as he was very well instructed in the holiness of our mysteries and the extravagance of the worship of the gods, he spoke of it divinely to his father, and gave him powerful reasons to oblige him to follow his example; protesting to him, moreover, that neither promises, nor threats, nor losses of goods, nor torments, however cruel they might be, nor death itself, could ever separate him from the charity of Jesus Christ. Valerian was informed of the bad success of Hylas with Vitus; learning, besides, that this child continued to work prodigies which propagated Christianity, he had him arrested and commanded that he be brought before his tribunal. He asked him why, being as yet but a child, he resisted the wishes of his father and did not submit to the laws of the emperors, and whether he did not know well that he, Valerian, had order to chastise roughly such obstinate persons and even to put them to death. The child answered “that he disobeyed the emperors and his father only to obey God, who was his sovereign lord and his first father; as to the punishments, he would endure them very willingly rather than adore demons, who are the sworn enemies of men.” Hylas, who was present, cried out with grief and said “that he was very unhappy to have a son foolish enough to ruin himself by his obstinacy.” But Vitus answered that “far from ruining himself, he was working for his salvation by remaining faithful to Him who, having given him life, would give him also immortal glory.” The prefect, losing patience, commanded that he be given blows with a stick; which was executed, but without the martyr losing anything of his courage and resolution. The prefect added: “Let him be stripped and scourged as he deserves!” The executioners made ready to obey; but their arms lost their strength and became withered; the same happened to the hand of Valerian, which he had stretched out to pronounce this sentence. Then this judge cried out that “this child was a magician and that he knew how to use sorceries”; but the Saint answered “that he was no magician, and that he had never learned any other sorcery than to praise and bless Jesus Christ, who is the all-powerful master of all creatures.” He afterwards healed his own persecutors, to show that the spirit of Jesus Christ is a spirit of simplicity and gentleness, and that His true disciples have only love for all their enemies.

Valerian, touched by this miracle, gave Vitus back to his father, with order to spare nothing to make him change his sentiment. The father, imagining that the best means was to plunge him into delights, tried to soften his heart by a thousand caresses; fed him more delicately than usual; surrounded him with feasts, with dances, entrusted him to young maidservants charged to corrupt him. But the holy child, in the midst of all these snares, did nothing but groan and sigh; and, having perpetually his eyes bathed in tears and his heart raised toward heaven, he said to God: “Lord, despise not and abandon not a contrite and humbled heart.” A magnificent chamber was also prepared for him, the furniture of which was set off with embroideries of gold and precious stones, and he was obliged to lodge in it; but scarcely had he made his prayer there when a heavenly light and a delicious perfume filled it and twelve stones of a marvellous colour and brilliancy appeared in it. The domestics were witnesses of this prodigy, and cried out in admiration that nothing like it had ever been seen even in their temples. Hylas ran to see what was passing in the chamber of his son, and he saw there twelve angels of an unspeakable splendour and beauty; but scarcely had he seen them when he found himself blind and felt an insupportable pain in his eyes. He went at once to seek a remedy in the temple of Jupiter; but it was without any result; he had to humble himself before his son, and pray him to restore him the sight which his curiosity and his incredulity had taken from him. Vitus knew well that so great a benefit would not convert him; nevertheless, to show the infinite power of Jesus Christ and to win a part of the bystanders to the faith, he put his hand on his eyes, and, having made this prayer: “Lord, who gave sight to a man who was blind from his birth, give it also to my father, that Your enemies may be confounded,

and that those who confess Your name may be filled with joy," he healed him perfectly, appeasing all his pains and giving him back the faculty of seeing. This miracle did not hinder this unnatural father, who feared to lose his fortune by irritating the mind of the prefect, from tormenting his son and forming the design of putting him to death. But an angel appeared to Modestus, governor of Vitus, and ordered him, on behalf of God, to take him with him and carry him away to Italy; they embarked therefore on the sea, accompanied by Crescentia, and arrived, under the conduct of this blessed spirit, in the kingdom of Naples, on the bank of the river Silaro. An eagle fed them there for some time, during which they busied themselves in praising God and thanking Him for the abundance of His graces; but as Vitus worked great miracles, and the possessed published everywhere his coming, he was soon recognised, and people hastened to come to see him and to bring him sick persons to be healed. It happened at that time that the son of Diocletian, that great persecutor of the Christians, was possessed by a demon who tormented him cruelly. This prince employed all sorts of superstitions for his deliverance; but the demon always answered insolently that he would not go out before Vitus, who was in Lucania, came to drive him out. The emperor therefore had Vitus sought on all sides; he was found at last, was brought to Rome with Modestus and Crescentia, and was made to enter the palace. Diocletian asked him whether he could heal the young prince. He answered him: "That he could not, but that Jesus Christ, who is an all-powerful God, could, by his means." Diocletian begged him to employ all the credit he had with that God. Vitus approached the possessed, and, laying his hands on his head, he spoke to the demon, in the name of Jesus Christ, with a force and authority so great that he constrained him to go out: this was done with a horrible noise, and many idolaters, who had insulted the holy Martyrs, were struck dead.

Diocletian, far from recognising the power of Jesus Christ who had just delivered his son, spared nothing to corrupt the young Vitus and detach him from Christianity. He offered him for that his favour and friendship, a lodging in his palace, a place at his table, a great part of his treasures and even a portion of his empire. But the admirable Servant of God answered him generously "that what he offered him was nothing in comparison with what he wished to take from him; that Jesus Christ was an incomparable treasure which he would not quit for all the empires of the world; that, possessing Him alone, he possessed all things, and that thus he had no need to deliberate on his proposals." The emperor told him that he spoke like a child; but that, if he despised his favours, he would make him suffer torments so terrible and so unheard-of that he would at last succumb to them. "I speak as servant of the true God," answered Vitus; "but know that tortures give me no fear, and that I await them on the contrary with impatience, to endure something for my Master." On this answer, this ungrateful and unfaithful emperor commanded that Vitus, with the two persons who accompanied him, should be cast into a dungeon and each loaded with a chain of the weight of eighty pounds, without anyone being permitted to visit them or give them any relief. This order was executed; but the holy Martyrs, who were stripped of the help of men, were visited by the angels and by Jesus Christ Himself, who filled their prison with a light and an odour wholly heavenly; then He encouraged Saint Vitus, saying to him: "Courage, Vitus, my son, persevere constantly in fidelity to my service; I shall be with thee until the end of thy combats."

Diocletian, having learned that the dungeon had become for the Martyrs a place of delights, had them drawn out of it and then had Saint Vitus cast into a burning furnace in which he had had put pitch-resin and molten lead. But the Saint, having made the sign of the cross and invoked Him who preserved the three children in the midst of the furnace of Babylon, remained there without any harm and came out of it without the violence of the fire having singed a single one of his hairs; it seemed, on the contrary, that he had acquired in this furnace a new beauty; he said to Diocletian: "Is it possible, wretch, that thou dost not recognise thy blindness, and that so many prodigies do not convince thee of the sovereign and infinite power of the God of the Christians?" But this Pharaoh, more hardened than ever, had the martyr exposed to a terrible lion whose roaring alone terrified all the assembly; the lion, instead of throwing himself on the Martyr and devouring him, came gently to fawn on him and lick his feet: which was the cause of the conversion of a great number of idolaters. The emperor, attributing this new miracle to the magic art, in which he persuaded himself that

the Christians were very learned, had Saint Vitus stretched with Saint Modestus and Saint Crescentia on the rack, and, by the violence of the tortures, their bones were dislocated, their sinews broken, and their bodies so torn that one saw even their entrails. The weather was very fine and the sky serene; but Saint Vitus having made his prayer in the midst of his torments, the air was troubled in an instant, thunder began to rumble in a frightful manner, and this noise, joined to an infinity of lightning flashes, filled all the amphitheatre with a horrible fright. The thunderbolt then fell on the temples of the idols, which crushed many pagans by their ruins. The emperor himself fled, full of confusion and spite at seeing himself vanquished by a young child.

Then an angel came down from heaven, unfastened the Martyrs from the rack, restored them to health and brought them back miraculously from Rome to the bank of the river Silaro, whence Diocletian had had them brought. When they had arrived there, Saint Vitus made his prayer to God and asked Him that, after having rendered them, by His grace, victorious over so many torments, He would deign to withdraw their souls from the dangers of this world, to go and enjoy Him in eternity. His prayer was heard, and a voice from heaven made known to the holy Martyrs that the time of their reward was come. They rendered thanks to God for it; and when the same Saint Vitus had begged those who were present to bury them in that place, and had assured them that one would obtain by his intercession and by that of his blessed companions all that one should ask of God for his salvation, they sent their souls to heaven laden with merits and glory; which happened on the 15th of June of the year 303, or about.

Saint Vitus is represented in a cauldron full of resin, pitch or molten lead; he is often accompanied by his nurse, Saint Crescentia, and by Saint Modestus, his foster-father, who shared with him this torture, but died only on the rack. — In Italy, he is found represented here and there holding a dog on a leash, perhaps to express the touching fidelity of his governors who gave themselves up to martyrdom to save from apostasy their nursling whom an idolatrous father surrounded with satanic seductions. — The Germans are accustomed to paint Saint Vitus with a cock, perhaps because of their custom of invoking this young martyr against too prolonged sleep and lethargy and to obtain to awake exactly at a fixed hour. — Finally he is found represented having at his sides lions and other fierce animals to recall that he was exposed to the beasts.

Saint Vitus is the patron of comedians and dancers, by allusion, no doubt, to the affection known in medicine under the name of Saint Vitus’s dance. — He is invoked against chorea and too prolonged sleep, perhaps because he suffered martyrdom early, and while still a child. — He is invoked also, and we have said why, for dogs and against rabies.

Worship and Relics

The bodies of our holy Martyrs were buried by the faithful in a place named Mariano. Afterwards, that of Saint Vitus was transported to Rome, and thence it was brought to Saint-Denis, in France, by the abbot Fulrad, under the reign of Pepin, father of Charlemagne. But, several years after, the faith having been carried into Saxony, and the Order of Saint Benedict having founded there a celebrated monastery, called New Corbie, Warin, who was abbot of it, begged Hilduin, abbot of Saint-Denis, to give him this precious treasure to enrich his church with it; which he did, with the consent of the king and emperor Louis the Debonair. So, in the year 836, the relics of Saint Vitus were transported with great solemnity to New Corbie, which is called Corvey, in Saxony, on the Weser, between Westphalia and the duchy of Brunswick. This translation was made with a pomp so solemn that nothing like it had yet been seen in this kind. It was only a procession of priests, of monks, of peoples in crowds, from Saint-Denis to Corvey, along a road of nearly a hundred and fifty leagues. His relics worked many miracles at Saint-Denis; but he who wrote the history of this translation says that they worked more than four hundred of them in the twenty stations of this journey, and that they brought with them abundance and happiness into that country. Saint Wenceslas, duke of Bohemia, obtained some bones of him for Prague, capital city of his State. The three holy martyrs are patrons

of Ligny-sur-Canche, in the diocese of Arras. Relics of Saint Vitus are preserved at Saint-Paul and with the Ursulines of Abbeville, at the Carmel of Amiens. These acts are drawn from an ancient manuscript which Surius has given us. Baronius speaks also of Saint Vitus, of Saint Modestus and of Saint Cresconce, both in his Annals and in his Martyrology.

Saint Constantine, Bishop of Beauvais

700. — Pope: Sergius I. — King of France: Childebert III.

Utile et salutare est cum se episcopus fratribus præbet imitandum.

It is a useful and salutary thing that the bishop be able to give himself as a model to his brethren.

S. Cyprian, Epist. iv.

Constantine descended from the noble family of the counts of Bulles, in the Beauvaisis. He was brought up at the celebrated school of the Palace, which has given to our kings able ministers, to the State intrepid warriors, and to the Church Pontiffs, priests, religious, often as remarkable for their virtues as for their learning. Among his fellow-students we see Saint Philibert, the future founder of Jumièges, and Saint Amalbert, with whom he lived in a laudable emulation of piety and study.

The Saint renounced, while still young, the honours which awaited him in the world. Queen Bathilde and Saint Ouen, her minister, seeing in him dispositions for the religious life, contributed much, by their counsels, to the resolution which he took of withdrawing into a monastery. Philibert had already preceded him there, and was guiding toward heaven a holy and numerous phalanx of religious. Jumièges, founded and governed by this pious abbot, counted nine hundred monks and fifteen hundred lay brothers.[1] Constantine went to increase the number of these faithful servants of Jesus Christ. No sooner was he consecrated to God in the abbey of Jumièges than he put his hand generously to the work of his sanctification. At the same time that he adorned his mind by the study of the holy Letters, he formed himself to humility, to self-denial and to patience. To hinder his body from becoming an instrument of sin, he subjected it to fasting and to rough penances. He did not think he derogated from the nobility of his extraction by working with his own hands, like the humblest of his brethren.

Raised to the priesthood, Constantine, accompanied by some religious of Jumièges, often went out of his abbey to evangelise the neighbouring populations. In his apostolic journeys, he did not forget to visit the Beauvaisis, where he possessed rich domains. Everywhere that he made his voice heard, he won the respect and admiration of the peoples, and awakened in hearts the love of the law of God. Never did he go away from the diocese of Beauvais without leaving to the poor, to the churches and to the monasteries, marks of his generous liberality. The town of Beauvais soon found the occasion to show to the zealous and charitable religious, at the same time as its gratitude, the high esteem which it had for his learning and virtues. Clement, its bishop, being dead, it had Constantine for his successor, after the fast and prayers customary at that time in such a circumstance. Constantine, dreading the responsibility attached to the dignity which was offered him, opposed a lively resistance to the wishes of the people of Beauvais. Obedience alone could get the better of his refusal. Convinced by his superiors that his elevation was the work of God, he at last consented to receive the episcopal unction. According to the ecclesiastical jurisprudence of that epoch, having had his election agreed to by the king, he was consecrated in the assembly of the bishops of the province.[2]

The new bishop arrived in the midst of his flock with the resolution to sacrifice to it his goods, his strength and even his life, if need were. He showed himself the debtor of all, reserving however a larger share, in his solicitude, to the little ones, to the ignorant and to the afflicted. His zeal, blessed by the Lord, contributed to the return of a great number of sinners and to the perseverance of the just. Persuaded that the prayers and merits of pious souls disarm the wrath of heaven and draw down on men the divine mercies, he founded new

monasteries, endowed the old ones and laboured to maintain in all a wise discipline. The abbeys of Précis-sur-Oise and of Tussonval[3] were erected by his care; those of Saint-Lucien and of Saint-Denis saw their prosperity increased and made firm by his gifts and by the constancy which he put into defending their rights;[4] while, under his paternal supervision, the communities of the Oratory and of Saint-Germer observed their Rules with edifying punctuality.

Constantine enjoyed great credit with the kings Thierry I, Clovis III and Childebert III. He sat several times in the solemn assemblies of these princes, and defended there the interests of religion and of the Church with an independence as firm as it was respectful. Indifferent, for himself, to the honours and goods of this world, he made turn to the profit of the convents and of the poor the ascendancy which his virtues gave him over the heart of the powerful of the earth. He often gave proofs of his tender devotion toward the Saints, whose cult is so proper to bring back and sustain the faith of Christians; he was seen honouring with his presence the solemn translation of the relics of the blessed martyr Firmin, in the cathedral of Amiens. The name of this glorious apostle recalled besides memories too dear to the Church of Beauvais for gratitude not to make it a duty for Constantine to go and take part in a ceremony destined to raise its glory.[5]

Our Saint had preserved, in the midst of the honours of the episcopate, the humility and the habits of a religious. He loved much the solitary life from which he withdrew himself only for the accomplishment of the duties of his charge or the exercise of charity. Often he went to shut himself up and pray for the needs of his diocese, in a little cell of the monastery of Saint-Lucien. Sometimes also, he took pleasure in visiting the abbey of Jumièges, and in recollecting his soul in this pious asylum, witness of his first steps in the religious life. During a deadly epidemic which decimated the members of this community, Constantine hastened to bring them help, devoting himself courageously to the service and relief of the sick, tending them with his own hands, consoling them in their sufferings and preparing their souls to appear before God. Before regaining his diocese, foreseeing that the hour of his death was not far off, he expressed the wish to be buried in the midst of the beloved family of Saint Philibert, and designated himself the place of his sepulture. A short time after, he made donation of his castle of Bulles to the religious of Saint-Lucien, laid down the burden of the episcopate and went to ask of that same abbey of Jumièges the rest and the calm necessary to the soul ready to undertake the journey of eternity. The death of the Saint happened about the year 700. Several miracles having taken place at his tomb, his body was raised from the earth and solemnly transferred into the church of the monastery. In the ninth century, the fear of the Normans led the religious to commit it a second time to the earth. It was exhumed afterwards, placed in a rich reliquary, and exposed to public veneration. In the year 1667, a religious of the abbey of Jumièges, the reverend Father Dom Césarée Robillard, expressed himself in these terms, on the subject of the cult rendered to the holy bishop: “We celebrate from time immemorial, in this monastery of Jumièges, the feast of the translation of the saints Constantine and Peregrinus, confessors and pontiffs, and make the office of it. Formerly, great feast was made of it with copes, as is seen by a very ancient manuscript Directory, which has, I think, more than six or seven hundred years.”

This religious adds that the relics of these two Saints were preserved at Jumièges until the epoch when the abbey was pillaged by the Huguenots. *Life of the Saints of Beauvais*, by the abbé Sabatier.

Saint Bernard of Menthon, Apostle of the Alps, Founder of the Hospices of Saint Bernard

1008. — Pope: John XVIII. — Emperor of Germany: Henry II.

Singularis profectio est vocatio, qua in beneficiorum cælestium agitur spécula.

It is an admirable vocation that which gives us in prospect the heavenly goods.

S. Laur. Just. Lib. ii de Spirit. resurr., c. 22.

Saint Bernard was born in Savoy, in the month of June of the year 923, of Richard, lord of Menthon, and of Bernoline of Duingt, granddaughter of the knight Oliver, count of Geneva, peer of France and companion of the conquests of Charlemagne. Honours, riches, alliances, everything concurred to render this family one of the most powerful of the country. His virtuous parents put all their care into cultivating early the excellent dispositions of this child, sole object of their tenderness. From the most tender age, he showed a decided taste for religious exercises and a great facility for the instruction which he received in the bosom of his family. At the age of seven, a preceptor was given him, a man distinguished by his talents and virtues; the pious Germain made him make great progress in the sciences; this wise man showed himself worthy to be the guardian angel of this child of benediction. His first studies being advanced, his parents judged it fit to send him to Paris, under the conduct of his preceptor, to make there more extended and more solid studies; he was only fourteen years old when he arrived in that city. He made his course of philosophy, and gave himself up afterwards with much application to the study of law and above all of theology; always docile to the wise counsels of his guide, faithful to the impressions of that holy religion which filled all his thoughts, he knew how to put his virtue sheltered from all seductions.

The sight of the disorders and of the frightful ravages which vice caused among the young students of his age revolted his innocent and pure heart; surrounded by perils, suspended on the brink of an abyss, his looks were raised toward heaven; it was then that he confided to his preceptor the lively desire which he felt to enter the ecclesiastical career to flee further from the corruption of the age. His preceptor, without however combating his design, made him observe that he ought to decide nothing in this regard without having beforehand, in an affair so important, consulted God, his director, prudent persons and his inclinations. Bernard followed this counsel, and, on the advice of his director, he consulted God during the three years that he studied theology.

So long a trial, far from discouraging him, only augmented his inclination and his fervour; then he formed the resolution to live no more but for heaven and to seek in the sanctuary a sure asylum for his virtue: he frequented the sacraments twice a month; he kept away from the pleasures and diversions permitted to young people of his rank; always he had in remembrance the piety and the knowledge which are necessary to a priest. His director declared to him at last that the state to which God called him was the priesthood and that his salvation was attached to it. This decision fixed for ever his vocation; he made at the instant a vow of virginity and of entering the ecclesiastical state; his preceptor, who shared his designs and who had formed the resolution to embrace the religious state, strengthened Bernard in his vocation; and, in order to omit nothing which could assure their choice, they prayed Saint Nicholas to be the protector of their enterprise.

Meanwhile the parents of Bernard, unable to bear a longer absence of their only son, recalled him to the castle of Menthon; the father, in having his education attended to, had proposed to himself to make of him an accomplished gentleman, capable of sustaining a lofty rank and the glory of his family; the heir of his name and of his fortune had to be a great man, according to the ideas of the time. Bernard, who knows that obedience is the first virtue of a well-born child, betook himself without hesitation to the bosom of his family. Arrived at the castle of Menthon, he tasted with delight the pleasure of finding himself again in the bosom of his family. All the nobility of the neighbourhood had come to take part in the feast, each hastened to welcome a young man to whom so many interests were attached; they gave themselves up with transports to the amusements, to the artless pleasures of that age. It is known what were the courtesy, the gaiety and all the amiable follies which embellished the feasts of an old Gothic manor. Bernard, who had renounced the pleasures of the world, was little sensible to the rejoicings which his return caused, therefore his father could not help making him feel his indifference, and, as if to restore him from the fatigues of the journey, which he pretended on this occasion, and with the intention of making him more joyful, he declares to him his designs: “My son,” said he to him, “it is time to settle your lot and to discharge on you the fatigues of a painful administration: you are to be the consoler of my old age; on you depends all my happiness; it is you who must perpetuate my family, of which you are the only hope. You must therefore decide to conclude soon an

honourable alliance which I have arranged for you." At this discourse, trouble seizes the young Bernard; he throws himself at the knees of his father, beseeching him not to impose on him engagements which frighten him.

Out of consideration for the heart of his father, he dares not disclose to him his soul; he contents himself with being surprised at it; he excuses himself on his youth, and the lively desire which he had to travel for his instruction furnishes him a plausible motive; but the baron of Menthon, instead of letting himself be softened, flew into a passion against his son and threatened to deprive him of his succession, if he did not yield at once to his wishes.

The baroness joined her husband to exercise on the heart of her son a more irresistible power: caresses, tears, prayers, threats, this tender mother employed everything. How resist the accents of the maternal voice? Bernard, quite moved, not knowing how to defend himself, contented himself with asking some delay.

The baron, persuaded that the vocation of his son and his disgusts for the world had been inspired by the pious Germain, took the course of removing this importunate counsellor; Germain, who on his side burned with the desire to follow his vocation, profited of the occasion to withdraw to Talloires, where lived some cenobites under the guidance of Saint Benedict, and where he found the peace of soul which he sought.

The removal of Germain made nothing change in the wishes of Bernard; it was from then on on the contrary that he conceived for purity that lively love which only influenced more all his conduct. Meanwhile the father, persuaded that his son would be vanquished as soon as he should see her whom they proposed to him for spouse, ordered him to go and pay a visit to the baron of Miolans, who had come to see him on his return from Paris; he thought even that he ought to conduct him himself into the family of the spouse whom he had chosen for him.

Marguerite of Miolans united all the most distinguished qualities to captivate the heart of a husband; but that of Bernard could attach itself to no perishable good; Marguerite obtained only his respect and esteem; the parents, who could not suspect what was passing in the mind of Bernard, believing they perceived his sympathy in this interview, thought no more than of settling the conditions and the preparations of the marriage; all are in joy, except Bernard: his conscience and his tastes repel the chains which they wish to impose on him. However he dares not pronounce; filial piety cannot struggle with paternal pretensions; the contract is drawn up; seeing no means of refusing, the young baron signs it. The day fixed for the ceremony advances; they must set out for Miolans. Bernard dissimulates his chagrin during this journey, having unceasingly in his mind the vow which he had made at Paris, until, returned to the castle of Menthon, on the eve of the celebration of the marriage, he retires in the evening to his chamber, and there, prostrating himself before a crucifix, he addresses to God this prayer: "Lord, you see the extremity to which I find myself reduced; you know that I belong to you and that I cannot be yours without practising this virtue which I have vowed to you and which made you choose the holy Virgin for Mother; and since I could not be my spouse's without ceasing to be yours as much as I ought, if my sacrifice pleases you, help me, Lord, to present it to you, by teaching me the means of removing myself from her who is on the eve of separating me from you." Then, addressing himself to Saint Nicholas: "Great Saint," says he to him, "you who declared yourself formerly for virgins whom necessity was about to ruin, will you refuse me the help which I ask of you, to remain a virgin, as I have promised to my God? It is you yourself who made me know that I was one day to be wholly His; let it be you then, great Saint, who help me to preserve for Him my soul and my body in an inviolable purity."

One is easily heard when one makes vows only to please heaven! He believes he hears a voice which commands him flight. He traces some lines to make known to his parents the designs of the Lord on him and to give them the last farewell. The prayer which he has just made fills him with a wholly divine strength; not being able to go out by the doors, which were all shut, he escapes by a window of his chamber, breaking an

iron bar which made an obstacle to him. The window by which his escape took place is still shown to-day. From there, wandering at random, he arrives, after some days' march, at the gates of the town of Aosta, where he presents himself to the venerable Peter of la Val-d'Isère, archdeacon, who received him with much benevolence and charity; he had the happiness to meet another father in this person of high holiness.

This flight, which had set Bernard at rest, did not produce the same effect in the castle of his father; the officers who went in the morning to dress him, finding the door shut, were forced to break it open. There was found, instead of a spouse whom they sought, a letter addressed to his father, in which he sets forth to him that he would be unworthy to be called his son, if he dissembled to him his vocation; that if he owes him education, he owes to God the first grace; that His divine will must be listened to when it speaks.

He declares to him the vow of chastity which he made at Paris, begging him not to blame him if he leaves all to follow God; that he abandons his fortune to follow that of Providence; that he abandons his spouse, in order not to fail in his word, having promised fidelity to the cross; he ends thus: "I beseech my charitable mother to accept with you the resolutions of my heart, since I withdraw from you only to find you all again one day in the blessed eternity."

We leave to the reader the care of guessing the trouble which this terrible news caused in the castle; we shall say only, in a few words, the resentment which the baron of Miolans felt, and how sensible he was to an affront of which the lord of Menthon was not at all guilty; it is reported that he would have drawn vengeance for it by force of arms if Marguerite, throwing herself at the feet of her father, had not interceded to obtain his pardon; and if she had not chosen herself for spouse Jesus Christ, in a convent of Dauphiné.

Meanwhile the holy fugitive took great care to conceal his country and his family at Aosta; he even changed his name. Whether Bernard had confided to the archdeacon the secret of his noble origin; or whether the wise old man respected the mysterious silence of the young stranger, it is certain that he knew how to appreciate the treasure which heaven confided to him. He charged himself with cultivating this young plant; he found consolation in forming a subject endowed with such happy dispositions and whose glorious career he seemed to presage. In the shade of the sanctuary, this new Samuel breathed the calm of the peace which the world had not been able to give him. Wholly given to recollection, to prayer, to study, docile to the lessons of the virtuous archdeacon, he ceased not to adorn his beautiful soul with the knowledges and virtues which the priesthood requires, to which he was not long in being raised. Peter of la Val-d'Isère spoke often to the canons of the virtues and talents of the stranger; charmed with his merits, they wished to receive him among them and obtained him a canonry.

The zeal and talents of Bernard called him to apostolic functions; it would have been difficult for him to contain in himself the divine fire which consumed him. His labours in the work of the missions were not long in being accompanied by the most abundant fruits and the most happy. His benefactor, the venerable archdeacon, having come to die, Bernard was elected to succeed him in this dignity. The bishop of Aosta, who knew also all his merit and his prudence, desiring to rest on him for the conduct of his diocese, named him grand vicar; this new employment made all his zeal shine forth and what a strong soul inspired by the love of God can do; soon the Valley found itself renewed by his care. His apostolic labours extended further into the dioceses of Novara, of Sion in Valais, of Tarentaise and of Geneva; everywhere he is seen to display his indefatigable zeal, everywhere his prodigious efforts obtain the happiest successes.

Persuaded that vices have never more empire than under the reign of ignorance, source of all disorders, he organised public instruction, very much neglected in that country. Bernard gathered worthy and capable men at the city; he founded schools in the country districts; he made it a duty to accept for this mission only virtuous and instructed men; by his assiduous visits, he re-established the respect which is due to churches, and put again in vigour ecclesiastical discipline by the observance of the canons and by the piety of which he himself gave the example.

While this holy man marked thus each day by some good works, he learned the disasters which idolatry very frequently caused on the Alps, by attacking the travellers and pilgrims who betook themselves to the tombs of the holy Apostles, by the two Roman ways which existed.

One of these ways established communication between the valley of Aosta and Upper Tarentaise, cutting the Graian Alps by the mountain called Colonne-Joux, on account of a column consecrated to the worship of Jupiter. The other way traversed the Pennine Alps and led into the Valais, by a narrow and difficult pass, named Mont-Joux. On this mountain existed an ancient pagan temple in which a statue of Jupiter-Pennin was still adored; Olympus, driven from every side, had taken refuge on this last rampart where it believed itself impregnable.

The travellers who escaped the violence of the tempests and the rigours of the cold, as well as the cruelty of the brigands, descended to the city half dead with fatigue and terror and made a frightful picture of the dangers they had run and of the horrible cruelties experienced by their brethren, victims of the monsters who inhabited those places.

Bernard could not resist longer the movements of his heart; inspired by this sublime religion, which knows no obstacle when there are tears to wipe away, he took the resolution to go and plant the cross on the summit of the Alps and to set up there a hospitable tent. The enterprise was perilous; it was a question of conquering an almost inaccessible desert and of humanising the ferocious inhabitants of this last lair of idolatry. It is known how difficult it is to extirpate old prejudices, above all when ignorance and fanaticism are bound to an infamous cupidity; our Saint did not at all let himself be cast down by all these difficulties; his great confidence in Providence smoothed all the ways for him; his very life, he made the sacrifice of it.

We relate, after Richard of la Val-d'Isère, successor of Saint Bernard, who was witness of his miracles on the Alps, how he brought remedy to so many evils. "It was after a mission that Saint Bernard executed his design; having left at the foot of the mountain the bishop, the clergy and the people who had come there in procession, he went up accompanied by nine French pilgrims who had been cruelly ill-treated in their passage over the Alps, where a brigand called Procus, adorer of the idol and surnamed the Giant on account of the greatness of his stature, had just taken from them one of their companions, as by right of tithe. Arrived near the idol, at the foot of which was the Giant, this monster of cruelty showed himself under the form of a dragon ready to devour them; but the Saint, having made the sign of the cross, undertook to throw him down, and full of an intrepid zeal and of a holy confidence, he cast his stole round his neck, which was changed at once into an iron chain, except the two ends which he held in his hand. It is thus that a zeal accompanied by prayer and by confidence in God disarms hell." The companions of Saint Bernard put him at once to death. The two ends of the stole of Saint Bernard are still preserved in the treasury of the relics of the abbey of Saint-Maurice, in Valais; whence this custom of seeing Saint Bernard represented everywhere holding the demon enchained. The body of this monster of iniquity was put in a grotto near the monastery; for, in digging the foundations of the church which subsists to-day, a stone in the form of a sepulchre was unearthed, which bore this epitaph: *Here lies a magician, called Procus, minister of the demon.*

But our Saint, little content with his victories if he could not assure their fruits and put in safety these two mountains, thought it necessary to establish there a sure asylum for the travellers, and with this intention, he laid, in the year 962, the foundations of the two hospitals which are there still to-day, called by his name: the Great and the Little Saint Bernard. The savings which he made on his benefice, and the pious liberalities of the bishop of Aosta and of several other virtuous persons furnished him with considerable sums with which he soon put the two houses in a state to receive and lodge all the travellers. He had them inhabited and served by religious, under the title and the Rule of the canons regular of Saint Augustine, such as they subsist still to-day. The two houses established on the ruins of idolatry appeared, in the judgment of all the world, of so great an advantage for the safety and convenience of travellers that, in his lifetime even, there was given him the so glorious name of Apostle of the Alps and father of the poor. Idolatry could not hold out before so

much charity and so many miracles; he converted even to Jesus Christ a rich man named Polycarp, who had raised the carbuncle to Jupiter on the Graian Alps. In a few years the pious cenobites of Saint Augustine made the name of Bernard blessed in all Europe; the gratitude of the travellers was not confined to a sterile admiration: the princes of the Church and the great of the earth wished to associate themselves with the merit of so great a work, to offer to Bernard the means of perpetuating this establishment of charity in these places where an almost perpetual winter reigns.

The high opinion which was held of his merit and of his holiness no longer permitted him to live unknown; his great reputation became for the Saint the cause of a rather singular trial: pilgrims returning from Rome passed through Menthon, where they were well received; conversation began after supper; the baron of Menthon questioned the strangers on the curious things which they had observed in their journey; they set before him what they had seen most interesting, and in particular they made known to him that the route of the Alps was beginning to be well frequented; that the grand vicar of Aosta procured for all travellers help of every kind, with the most admirable charity; that they themselves had been very well received in the hospitable houses which he had caused to be built at the highest point of Colonne-Joux; in a word, that the personage passed everywhere for a just man and a saint; that he had even worked prodigies in overthrowing an idol by a sign of the cross, in throwing down a giant and in forbidding the demon to make any more the desolation of this country; that, in short, he had destroyed idolatry and brought back to the worship of the true God the inhabitants of these mountains.

The baron and the baroness of Menthon, who had not yet ceased to regret their only son, resolved to go to this extraordinary man, to pray him to consult heaven on the fate of their lost child; the baron of Beaufort discouraged them from it on account of their great age; but it was reserved to themselves to discover him whom they had wept for so many years. Arrived at Mont-Joux, with the baron of Beaufort who had wished to accompany them, the first person who presented himself to them was the illustrious archdeacon.

The angelic countenance of the Saint, his polite and honest manners, although it was more than twenty-six years that he had quitted the world; that great charity which embellished his exterior filled them with the hope that they would learn by his organ what had become of their son. What a painful combat for Bernard who has recognised his father and his mother! Though absolute master of all his senses, nature on this occasion did not fail to awaken in him sentiments which the most solid virtue cannot stifle, but can hardly dissimulate; it is what Saint Bernard did. The baron of Menthon had nothing more pressing than to acquaint the archdeacon with the subject of their journey; he told of the flight of his only son, their regrets, their tears, which for more than twenty-six years had not been able to dry up; and after many complaints: “I perceive,” he concluded, “that my wishes are useless; and since it is the will of the Lord that this son has abandoned me, I resign myself to it; if at least I knew him in a place of safety.” It is hard to form an idea of the sufferings which the Saint must have experienced in hearing repeated the afflictions which he had caused to his parents by his flight, and what violence he must have done himself to hide outwardly what was passing in the depth of his soul. “Doubtless,” he said to them, “with the most amiable modesty, it is heaven which inspired your son with so extraordinary a resolution. Console yourselves; hope that God will perhaps bring him back at the moment when you will think of it the least.” The mother, taking up speech then, cried out: “How I pity the unfortunate mothers who go sometimes so far as to ask of heaven children who must cause so much grief to the authors of their days!…” The archdeacon answers her: “God put the heart of Abraham to a much harder trial; but the faith of that patriarch gave him back his son. If God has willed to exact of you a sacrifice of this kind, murmur not against His divine Providence: the way of the cross is the road of the Christian.” After having said these words, the Saint separates himself from them and goes to prostrate himself at the foot of the Crucifix. During his absence, the two strangers communicate to one another the presentiments which had taken possession of their soul. The features of the venerable archdeacon had recalled to them those of the tender object of their love… But they repel an idea so inconceivable…; they then keep silence, and their tears

continue to express sentiments which their words can no longer render…

At last, the man of God re-enters the room: “Console yourselves,” said he to them, “your son is in perfect health: he abandoned you only to follow his vocation…”

Then his tears, too long compressed, flow in abundance; he is no longer master of the impulses of his heart. He throws himself on the neck of the old man, saying: *It is I who am your son Bernard!* — “O my son!” cries his father…; and his mother, drunk with joy, repeats: “O my son!…” She wishes to continue, but her words expire on her lips… There was an instant of silence which the pen retraces with difficulty, the heart alone will be able to render it. Meanwhile the baron of Beaufort, who was present at this touching scene, fearing fatal consequences for paternal tenderness, took speech, proposing to the father as well as to the archdeacon a means of consoling them, by proposing to ask a bishopric for the Apostle of the Alps; the Saint answered him that the charges and above all the brilliant dignities of the Church made him tremble and that he would always refuse, as he had already refused the bishopric of Aosta, which had been offered him by the bishop himself. The Saint thanked his parents for all the most obliging offers which they made him; only, as he desired to make prosper the two establishments which he had founded, he asked them only to help him with their fortune to augment the revenue of his hospitals, declaring to them the vow which he had made never to change either state or country.

After having given, for some days, free course to the effusion of their sentiments, the father and mother of Saint Bernard returned to the castle of Menthon, admiring the ways of Providence and blessing God like the old man Simeon, when he had seen the object of his long desires; they saw again full of joy and consolation their ancient dwelling. Henceforth complaint will no more rise in the depth of their heart; they will not cease to unite their voices to celebrate the benefits of the Lord; too happy to have a Saint in their family, they will strive to imitate his virtues. Meanwhile Bernard continued his labours and applied himself to perfecting his work; his most assiduous cares were applied to forming disciples whose zeal and devotion should be sheltered from relaxation and from all vicissitudes. He betook himself alternately from one to the other of his two monasteries, to direct his confrères, to console them and to share their labours. His presence alone was for them the most efficacious of all lessons.

He took also much care to follow the rules and wise constitutions which give stability to establishments and perpetuate their happy fruits. Bernard spoke the language of faith to docile hearts; the divine fire which consumed him passed into the soul of his dear hospitallers. While Bernard was labouring with so much zeal to strengthen his work, he received the news of the death of his parents; it was Germain, his former friend, who was charged to inform him of this loss.

This news touched our Saint keenly; but he moderated his grief on learning that they had died in such a manner as to live with the Lord; he knew also how to resign himself to the will of God; he did not fail nevertheless to pray all his priests to offer during a year the holy sacrifice of the Mass for the repose of their souls.

Having nothing more which could attach him to the earth, Saint Bernard gave himself more than ever to the care of his hospitals. The considerable sums which the heirs of his parents sent him, and the funds which were assigned him on all sides, contributed even to receiving graciously all travellers. In the meantime, an English gentleman, curious to see for himself all that public report spread of it, passed by these hospitals, made, in gratitude for the charity with which he was received, a cession of all that he possessed and ended by entering the Order. In spite of the Saint’s particular attachment to his establishments, his ardent zeal for truth and religion impelled him to set out for Lombardy, where heresies had manifested themselves; success crowned the enterprise; he obtained the conversion of the heretics. It was then that, foreseeing that he had need of the confirmation of the Holy See to assure the existence of his hospitals, he went to Rome in the year 996. Pope Gregory V received him with the tenderest affection and granted him several privileges; he

permitted him, among others, to receive novices to religious profession to perpetuate his nascent congregation.

Returned to Mont-Joux, Bernard applied himself nearly nine years to forming himself, in piety, in knowledge, and above all in the practice of charity, a quantity of virtuous subjects who presented themselves for the novitiate; he represented to them with a kindness and an insinuating gentleness that, being destined by their state of canons hospitallers to pass their days in lodging and succouring strangers, charity must be their continual study. He gave them in all the example: he received the passers-by and served them himself; he had above all a quite particular care of the sick.

Meanwhile his strength beginning to diminish, he felt the term of his career approach; but God, who is pleased to make known those who seek most to hide themselves, reserved for him another glory before his death. In a rather considerable town, two lords of Novara, distinguished benefactors of his hospitals, had between them a quarrel which might bring about their ruin; our Saint, having learned it, did not hesitate, in spite of his age and weakness, to go and reconcile them; he had again the happiness to succeed on this occasion. He even preached in this town, at the monastery of Saint Lawrence, with a marvellous force and unction. As he was preparing to return to his hospitals, he fell ill; he had called at once some of his religious who betook themselves to him. He then gave them his last advice, recommending them to flee all novelty in matter of religion, to remain inviolably attached to the chair of Saint Peter, to regard hospitality as a sacred duty which they could not neglect without crime; he forbade them even ever to let any inn be built on the mountain, because it would be directly opposed to his last will, and because it would hinder a good work such as hospitality; he recommended to them further the exact observance of the Rule of Saint Augustine, which he had given them, and to have his body carried to the monastery, to be buried in the place of sepulture of the travellers. Then he asked of them the last sacraments, which he received with an admirable fervour and piety. He recited afterwards the psalms of penance, and, seeing the angels descend to meet him, he rendered his spirit to God to be associated with their happiness, on the 28th of May of the year 1008, at the age of eighty-five, in the monastery of Saint Lawrence, at Novara, in Milanese territory. According to these dispositions, his modest inheritance belonged to his Congregation and his body was to repose in the sepulchre of the hospitals; but the Benedictines of Novara kept the holy relic in their monastery, which was afterwards ruined by Charles V, in 1352. Thence the body of the Blessed has been transferred into the cathedral church of Novara, where it is preserved with great veneration. His head is at Mont-Joux, in the diocese of Aosta, in the monastery which bears his name.

Scarcely had he left the earth when the admiration and gratitude of the peoples decreed him a religious cult, authorised besides by incontestable prodigies and by the approbation of the Church; Pope Innocent XI had him inscribed in the catalogue of the Saints, in the year 1681.

He is represented: 1° enchaining the demon near the mountain which has taken since then the name of the Saint. This might seem a manner of saying that he established the worship of Our Lord on that summit where idols had been honoured. Perhaps also it would be pretended to express in this way the numerous misfortunes and losses of men which the Saint obviated by the hospitaller establishment which he instituted on so dangerous a road; 2° shut up in the castle of his father, where he is delivered by Saint Nicholas, who makes him escape by the window.

Notice on the Great Saint Bernard

The part of the Alps where the hospice of the Great Saint Bernard is situated was known anciently under the name of the Pennine Alps or, according to some, Poenine. This word appears derived from Pennus, an ancient divinity adored in the Valais. Doctor Schidner pretends that it comes from Poeni, Carthaginians, by reason of their famous passage of the Alps. It was called also Mont-Joux, on account of Jupiter to whom a temple had been erected there. The plateau on which the hospice sits is raised 1237 toises above the level of

the sea, according to MM. de Saussure and Pictet. The mean height of the barometer there is 20 inches and two lines.

Starting from Martigny, the road which leads to the Great Saint Bernard has eight leagues of ascent more or less rapid. One crosses successively the valleys of Saint-Branchier, of Orsières, of Liddes, and one arrives at the borough of Saint-Pierre. It is impossible to render the diverse impressions which the traveller experiences in the midst of these gigantic masses of rocks which rise over his head. Impetuous torrents whose waters break with great noise among the rocks, at frightful depths; old trees half fallen or rolled down by the avalanches; enchanting sites which you discover all at once, after having been as if lost in gloomy labyrinths; bottomless abysses, horrible precipices, a vast silence, everything provokes at once admiration and terror.

After one has left the borough of Saint-Pierre, one sees the spectacle which this road presents change all at once. The ascent becomes more rapid and nature wilder and more arid. Soon one perceives neither fir, nor chalet, nor cultivation. One discovers heaps of rocks broken by lightning, or ruined and worn by time, crosses which recall the memory of the dead, summits which lose themselves in the clouds: one hears, during the greater part of the year, the winds which roar, the avalanches which rumble and freeze with fright.

Before arriving at the Hospice, one crosses a last valley which bears the name of Valley of the Dead. One meets there first a little building called the Chapel of the Dead; it is destined to receive the corpses of the unfortunate victims of storms and cold. Then one reaches another building which serves as an asylum to those who are assailed by the tempest. It is in this latter place that the Maronier, or servant, betakes himself each day, in winter, carrying with him all that is necessary to succour travellers.

At last, one arrives at the Hospice of the Great Saint Bernard, situated on a plateau which has only a few toises of width. Below, and quite near the Hospice, on the side of Aosta, is found a little lake fed by the melting of the snows. At a short distance from the monastery, one discovers still the remains of a temple of Jupiter. The soil, or rather the rock, is uncovered only during three months: during all the rest of the year, winter reigns in these high regions. For all vegetation, one sees there, in the month of July, some mosses and some poor turf. The winds blow with impetuosity in this narrow gorge: one cannot make the smallest shrub grow there. All that is necessary to life is carried there on mule-back. The snow falls there in such quantity that often it hides almost entirely the hospice. This is the abode of the children of Bernard of Menthon. The congregation is composed of a provost, a prior, a cantor, a sacristan, a procurator and some other canons regular of Saint Augustine. Their ordinary dress is that of the secular priests, with the exception of a narrow scarf of white linen which they wear constantly. Vigorous servants, followed by dogs whose instinct is almost intelligence, go, each day, during these long winters, to a great distance from the convent. The religious betake themselves also to various points, either to observe from the height of some rock, or to dig in heaps of snow and remove the buried corpses, or, finally, to conduct and even carry, at need, travellers to the Hospice. We shall not enter into the detail of the touching cares which they lavish on them. One will agree, says M. de Saussure, in his *History of the Alps*, that nothing but the sight of the rewards of the future can engage men of an honest condition to devote themselves to a kind of life so sad and so painful.

We have made use, to compose this life, of a pamphlet entitled: *Life of Saint Bernard of Menthon, Glory of the Alps and Founder of the Hospices of Saint Bernard* [*Vie de saint Bernard de Menthon … fondateur des hospices du Saint-Bernard*]. Annecy, 1852.

Saint Germaine Cousin, Virgin, Shepherdess of Pibrac

1579–1601. — Popes: Gregory XIII; Clement VIII. — Kings of France: Henry III; Henry IV.

Familiaris est Dominus simplicibus, quibus non dedignatur arcana sua revelare.

God loves simple souls; He does not disdain to reveal His mysteries to them.

S. Albert the Great, De Parad. animæ.

Germaine Cousin was born at Pibrac, a little village fifteen kilometres from Toulouse, about the year 1579. Her father was a poor cultivator, to whom tradition gives the name of Laurent, and her mother was called Marie Laroche; but their honest manners and their ardent piety made up for the earthly goods of which they were destitute. The child who came to increase this indigent family appeared, from the first moments, devoted to suffering and to afflictions. She brought with her at birth cruel infirmities, being crippled in the right hand and attacked with scrofula. Scarcely out of the cradle, she became an orphan; God took her mother from her. Her father was not long in marrying again, and he had children by his second wife. She, as almost always happens, instead of taking pity on the orphan whom Providence confided to her, had for her only looks of hatred and contempt, to which she soon joined the most barbarous treatment. Thus our Blessed one, already poor, infirm, orphan, was placed under the yoke of a cruel stepmother. These were the first graces of God, who cast at once into the crucible the gold of this fair soul, to draw from it the treasure with which He wished to enrich earth and heaven. This is the school in which Germaine learned early humility, patience and the other virtues. She loved suffering as a sister born with her, placed with her in her cradle, and who was her constant and sole companion from her first cry to her last sigh. Under pretext that it was a great danger for their other children to live with a scrofulous girl, her stepmother persuaded her husband to keep her away from the house, entrusting to her the keeping of the flocks. Scarcely out of childhood, she filled, until the end of her life, the humble function of shepherdess. In this trade in which one lives too often with oneself, or almost always with the same persons, Germaine lived continually with God: so, far from losing her innocence, like many children, or from remaining in ignorance of spiritual things, she found in solitude a source of light and blessing. The great God who hides Himself from the learned and the proud, but who takes pleasure in revealing Himself to the little and the humble, made Himself heard to her heart. She knew early what those never learn who do not ask Him to instruct them. Surrounded by the creatures of God, she heard them praise God: all the movements of her heart united with their eternal canticle. The world had nothing more to teach this ignorant girl who knew God, and nothing to give this indigent girl who loved God. Prevented by such a grace, the solitude which her profession imposed on her became delicious to her, not so much because she was there sheltered from the harshness and ill-treatment of her stepmother as because she enjoyed there the presence of Him whom her heart sought alone. She was to say like a Father of the desert: *O beata solitudo! O sola beatitudo!* “O blessed solitude! O sole happiness!” After the example of the greatest Saints, she created for herself a retreat in the very retreat. Never was she seen to seek the company of the other young shepherdesses: their games did not attract her, and their laughter did not trouble her recollection. If sometimes she spoke to the girls of her age, it was to exhort them gently to remember God. Submissive to the orders of Providence, she occupied herself solely with giving to God, in a manner ever more perfect, what He wished of her in the state in which His merciful and wise hand had placed her. She esteemed her poverty and her infirmities as means of salvation. Exposed to the rigours of the seasons, she saw in them, she blessed in them, occasions of penance. After God had testified to her His complacency by suspending for her, poor little one, the ordinary laws of nature, she did not pray Him to heal a single one of the evils which overwhelmed her. It seemed to her better, when God loved her, to remain in the refuse of the world, and to keep this burden of misery which detached her from herself. She bore with no less constancy and resignation the pains, quite otherwise sensible, which struck her heart. There was nothing for her in the heart of her father, who ought, by his caresses, to have made her forget the harshness of her stepmother: no place was made for her at the hearth: far from satisfying in anything the greatest need, that of being loved under the roof which saw us born, she was scarcely granted in her father’s house an asylum and a shelter. The stepmother, ever irritated, sent her away into some corner and reduced her to taking her rest in the stable or on a heap of vine-cuttings, at the end of a passage. Little satisfied with so much harshness, this woman, by a caprice of her wicked humour, forbade Germaine still to approach the other children of the family, her brothers and sisters, whom she loved tenderly, seeking all occasions of serving them, without testifying any

jealousy of the odious preferences of which they were the object and she the victim.

God taught her to love sufferings enough to accept with joy humiliations and injustices. She kept silent and hid herself: and as if her cross had seemed to her still too light, she added to it austerities. She refused herself during her whole life all other nourishment than a little bread and water. In spite of her weakness and her infirmities, she assisted every day at the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The very obligations of her state did not dispense her from it. Full of confidence, she left her flock in the country and ran to take refuge at the feet of the divine Shepherd. Such conduct would have been blameworthy in many others, and those have a devotion ill understood who, to satisfy it, neglect the duties of their state. But Germaine only obeyed the inspiration of God; she knew that no accident would happen to her flock and that the good God would keep it in her absence; so, even when her sheep were grazing on the edge of the forest of Boucône, bordering the fields of Pibrac, and in which wolves are in great number, our holy shepherdess, at the sound of the bell, planted in the ground her crook or her distaff and ran at the call of Him who said: “Fear nothing, little flock, I shall be with you.” On her return, she found her sheep where she had left them, tranquil and in safety as in the fold; never did the wolves carry off a single one of them, and never did this flock, guarded by the distaff of the absent shepherdess, stray beyond the limits which she had marked for it, nor cause the least damage in the neighbouring fields. And as God had been pleased to bless the flocks of Laban, under the conduct of His servant Jacob, so He blessed that which His handmaid Germaine led. In all the village, there was none more numerous, there was none more beautiful. The stepmother none the less took occasion of the absences of our Blessed one to overwhelm her with reproaches and insults, in spite of the remonstrances of the inhabitants of Pibrac, more than once witnesses of the prodigy which enveloped the flock when the innocent shepherdess was at church.

Saint Germaine had a devotion the greater to the holy Sacrament of our altars as she must have known the sacrileges which the Protestants committed on all sides in the churches of the environs: one may suppose that she was devoured by a holy ardour to repair so many outrages, weeping at the feet of her Saviour over the blindness of those who fail to recognise the excesses of His love. She was not less assiduous in having recourse to the sacrament of Penance, to receive with more fruit the body and blood of Our Lord: persuaded of the necessity of its help for whoever wishes to follow with constancy and firmness the way of justice, she was seen to approach it every Sunday and every feast of the year. The fervour with which she received holy communion offered a spectacle so touching that those who saw her were ravished by it, and that the impression of it could not be effaced by a long succession of years. From her tender age she had given proofs of that tender and solid piety toward the Mother of God which, according to the doctrine of the holy Fathers, is a mark of predestination. Her rosary, which she recited often, was her only book. She found in the *Ave Maria* an inexhaustible source of lights, of consolations and of ravishments. She pronounced it still with a more tender heart at the hours when the sacred bronze invites us to salute with the angel, with Saint Elizabeth and with the Church, Mary full of grace. At the first sound of the bell, she knelt down, in whatever place she found herself. She was often seen to kneel thus in the midst of snow and mud, without taking the time to seek a better place, and if the bell made itself heard at the moment when she was crossing the brook which waters the territory of Pibrac, without hesitating, she fell on her knees in the water and made her prayer. All the feasts of the Queen of the saints increased the fervour of Germaine: she applied herself to sanctify them by some works of piety and penance. One of these works which the love of Jesus and of Mary inspired in her was to gather around her, when she could, some of the little children of the village. She applied herself to make them understand the truths of religion, and gently persuaded them to love what she herself loved solely.

As she sought in all things the interests of her Saviour and not her own, the world, which does the contrary, was bound to be indignant at finding in her the condemnation of its maxims and of its conduct: it laughed at her simplicity and tried to discourage her by its raillery; but, after the example of her Saviour, she opposed only silence and prayer to her enemies. In recompense, heaven willed to show by miracles how agreeable to

it was this girl so poor and so forsaken.

To go to the village church, she was obliged to cross a brook which she forded, without difficulty, in ordinary times, but which storm rains rendered sometimes impassable. One day, some peasants, who saw her coming from afar, stopped at some distance, asking one another, in a mocking tone, how she would pass: for the night had been rainy, and the brook, extremely swollen, rolled with din its waters which would have opposed a barrier to the most vigorous man. Germaine arrives without thinking of the obstacle, perhaps without seeing it; she approaches: O marvel of divine power and goodness! the waters open before her, as formerly before the children of Israel, and she passes without wetting even her dress. At the sight of this prodigy, which God renewed afterwards very often, the peasants looked at one another with fear, and the boldest began to respect her whom they had wished to mock.

If anyone on earth could believe himself dispensed from exercising charity by giving alms, it was our Blessed one. Certainly, she had nothing superfluous to give, since even the necessary was lacking to her. What covetousness to cut off in this life of privation and penance? What saving to make on the fruits of the labour for which she received only a little bread and water, insults and ill-treatment? But, on the other hand, how, on seeing a poor man, would she not have seen in this poor man Jesus suffering? and how could she have seen in sufferings Him who had loved her unto death, without succouring Him? She shared her bread with Him in the person of the poor. Her pious liberalities, which God multiplied perhaps, rendered her fidelity suspect: she was accused of stealing the bread of the house. Her stepmother readily believed her guilty and asked no more to treat her with the last rigour. One day, during the greatest severity of winter, she learns or believes she perceives that our Saint had carried away, in her apron, some little pieces of bread. She runs at once after her, full of fury, a stick in her hand and already gesticulating, throwing insults at her before having been able to reach her. Two inhabitants of Pibrac, who were walking in that direction, seeing this woman beside herself, guessed her project and followed her doubling their pace, with the charitable design of stopping the blows ready to fall on the innocent victim. They rejoin the stepmother then, and, learning the subject of her outburst, they arrive with her beside Germaine: her apron is opened; but, instead of the bread which they thought to find there, there fell from it only beautiful and fresh flowers tied in a bunch. The soil of Pibrac had never produced the like, and whence could they come in this rigorous season, if not from heaven? Seized with admiration, the witnesses of this miracle went at once into Pibrac to publish what they had just seen. From that time she was regarded only as a Saint. Her father, taking more tender sentiments, forbade his wife to ill-treat her any more and wished to give her a place in his house with his other children. But the humble shepherdess refused such a favour; she begged him to leave her in the obscure place where her stepmother had confined her.

After having thus sanctified her by humiliation and sufferings, God withdrew her from this world when men, become more equitable, were beginning to render to her virtue the honours which it deserved. One morning, her father, not having seen her go out as usual, went to call her under the staircase where she had wished to continue to take her rest. She did not answer; he went in and found her dead on her bed of vine-cuttings. She had doubtless fallen asleep in prayer. God had called her: “Come, my sweet dove”; — *Veni, columba mea*, He had said to her, and her soul had departed toward her Well-Beloved, who addressed to her such tender invitations. This was in the year 1601, toward the beginning of summer. She was twenty-two years old. On the very night of her death, two religious going toward Pibrac, surprised by the darkness, had been obliged to rest among the ruins of the old castle of the ancient lords of Pibrac, situated on the road which led to the dwelling of the parents of the servant of God and to wait there for day. In the midst of the darkness, they saw pass two young girls, clothed in white, who were directing themselves toward the farm; some instants after, the apparition took the same road again, but in the midst of the two virgins there was another, clothed also in white and crowned with flowers. Astonished at this vision, the two religious thought that a holy soul had quitted the earth. The next day, at daybreak, the religious entered the village: they asked whether anyone was

dead; they were answered in the negative, for it was not yet known that God had called to Himself the pious Germaine. At the news of her death, the crowd ran to see her; the funeral rites were celebrated in the midst of an immense concourse of people: they wished to honour her whom they had too long despised and too late known.

She was buried in the parish church of Pibrac, according to the custom of that epoch, in front of the pulpit. However, her place had nothing which distinguished it from the others, and was marked by no inscription. The memory of her good examples and of her virtues did not perish among the inhabitants of Pibrac. But those who had known her disappeared little by little; the place where she reposed was forgotten, when at last it pleased God to manifest aloud the glory of His humble servant and to give her in some sort a new life. This was about the year 1644, on the occasion of the burial of one of her relatives, named Endoualle: the bell-ringer, preparing to dig the grave in the church, had scarcely raised the first paving-stone when a buried body appeared. At the cries uttered by this man, frightened to find a corpse, some persons, come to hear Mass, ran to him; they saw and they have attested that the body was at the level of the ground, and that the part of the face which had been touched by the pickaxe offered the aspect of living flesh.

The report of this strange event having at once spread, the inhabitants of the village came in crowds to the church to see, for themselves, what had been announced to them. Then, and in presence of all the people, this body, which could only by miracle be thus raised almost to the surface of the ground, was entirely uncovered. It was found entire and preserved from corruption: the members were attached to one another and covered even with the epidermis. The flesh appeared sensibly soft in several parts; the nails of the feet and hands were perfectly adherent: the tongue itself and the ears, merely dried, were preserved like the rest. The linens and the shroud which clothed these precious remains had taken the colour of the earth; but they had not been more affected than the body itself. The hands held a little candle and a garland formed of pinks and ears of rye. The flowers were only slightly faded, the ears had lost nothing of their colours; they still contained their grains, fresh as at harvest time. On one of the hands a deformity was remarked, and the neck bore scars; by these signs, all the old people of the parish published that this was the body of Germaine Cousin, dead forty-three years, whom they had themselves known and whose funeral they had seen. All the memories at once awoke: the miraculous apparition and the miraculous preservation of this body astonished no one any more. It was placed upright, near the pulpit of the church, and it was left there in the same situation, exposed to the sight of all the world, until a new miracle gave occasion to place it more decently. About the year 1645, Dame Marie de Clément Gras, wife of the noble François de Beauregard, feeling some sentiment of repulsion for this body which was placed near the bench which she occupied in the church, had ordered that it be removed. A short time after, this lady was afflicted with an ulcer in the breast, and her only child, whom she was nursing, became ill and was soon at the last extremity. The physicians and surgeons of Toulouse, whom she sent for on various occasions, could give no relief to her extreme sufferings. Her husband then recalled to her the contempt which she had testified for the body of Germaine, and told her that perhaps God had been offended at it and wished to punish her by this cruel evil from which she suffered. At these words, the lady of Beauregard, returning into herself, knelt down humbly and asked pardon.

The pardon was not long in coming. During the following night, the sick woman, waking suddenly, saw in her chamber a great brightness and believed she even recognised the blessed Germaine, who assured her of her cure and of that of her child. Full of joy, she called her domestics and told them what had just passed; casting her eyes then on the wound, she found it already almost entirely closed. She had her son brought to her at once, and the child, perfectly cured, sucked abundantly the milk which he had refused for several days.

From the next day, the lady of Beauregard betook herself to the church, where she publicly repaired the outrage which she had done to the remains of the blessed Germaine. Penetrated at the same time with gratitude, she offered a leaden case to receive this holy body. The parish priest and the most notable inhabitants themselves enclosed in it the venerable deposit, and it was carried into the sacristy.

Sixty years had elapsed since the death of Germaine, and a great number of graces and miracles had been obtained by her intercession, without the episcopal authority having appeared to have any knowledge of them; but God wished that the name and works of His servant should come out of this long obscurity.

On 22 September 1661, Jean Dufour, priest venerable for his virtues and his piety, archdeacon of the metropolitan church and vicar general of the archbishop of Toulouse, Pierre de Marca, came to Pibrac to make the pastoral visitation in the name of that prelate. His presence had attracted a considerable crowd, and the curious had entered with him into the sacristy. There, his attention was attracted by the case which enclosed the remains of Germaine. Astonished to see a coffin in such a place, he had it opened, after having taken some information. The witnesses were in great number: the body was found such as it had been seen sixteen years before, enveloped in the same way, intact, admirably preserved and flexible.

Then there were related to the vicar general the particulars of the life of Germaine, and in what manner her body had been taken out of the earth. To add more force to these narratives, God permitted that two old people, Pierre Paillés and Jeanne Salaires, aged both of them eighty years, should meet there to confirm all the depositions. Not only had they known Germaine, but they were the very ones who were present at the miracle of the flowers.

Wishing to assure himself of their veracity, Jean Dufour had pointed out to him in the Church the place where the body had stayed more than forty years. By his order and in his presence, the grave was opened, it was dug, and, at the ordinary depth, there were found the broken and decomposed remains of that woman named Endoualle, buried twenty years before in the very place whence the body of Germaine had risen by miracle. One could therefore no longer doubt the nature of the soil: it was by the sole will of God that the remains of His servant Germaine had been preserved from the common corruption. The parish priest of Pibrac then made known to the vicar general an authentic register of the numerous cures wrought by the intercession of Germaine. These relations were signed by the persons cured, attested by the witnesses, certified by the notaries. Several inhabitants presented themselves, declaring that they had received similar graces, and confirming by their words these numerous written testimonies.

The vicar general admired the ways of Providence, had the coffin closed and drew up a *procès-verbal* of the whole. At the same time, he forbade the parish priest, under pain of excommunication, to expose the body to public veneration or to change it from the place where it had just been replaced in the sacristy. He permitted, however, to receive the offerings which the faithful might make in the name of the pious Germaine, until it should please the Lord to manifest more clearly His will in this regard, as well as the holiness of the person of His servant, and until the Church had otherwise ordained. From year to year, new and numerous prodigies showed visibly that God willed to glorify, in the eyes of men, her whose condition had been so low, humility so profound, life so poor and so hidden. For this reason, in 1700, it was seriously thought of asking the Holy See for her beatification, and of beginning, for that purpose, the informative process of the Ordinary. Already a juridical inquiry into the virtues and miracles of Germaine Cousin had been ordered, not only by the archdeacon Jean Dufour, grand vicar of the archbishop Pierre de Marca, but also successively by several other bishops, and, among others, in 1698, by Colbert, who occupied at that time the see of Toulouse. Jacques de Lespinasse, syndic of the commune of Pibrac, was charged to pursue the cause in quality of postulator.

At his request, on 5 January 1700, the reverend Father de Morel, vicar general of the archbishop Colbert, betook himself to the church of Pibrac to begin the process. This first visit was followed by two others, during which he proceeded, as we are about to say, to the inquiry which he has left us.

The report of his arrival having spread, had attracted a great concourse of people. The first day, he had the consolation of giving communion to nearly five hundred persons. Each time that he resumed the course of his operations, he celebrated holy Mass and made an exhortation to this multitude of people who ran from all

sides.

Several still had seen the relics when they were raised from the earth. They were shown to them, and they assured that they were entirely the same.

The reverend Father de Morel took care to have summoned all the persons who could attest some miracles. He heard himself their depositions, made under the guarantee of oath.

He drew up a *procès-verbal* of the state in which he found the body, which was recognised to be exactly such as it had been described in 1661, by the archdeacon Jean Dufour.

Besides, his prudence obliged him to have the same examination made by two master surgeons, on whom he imposed beforehand the solemn oath to tell in all the truth. One reads in their acts, after the detail of the verification, that they remarked that the body had never been embalmed, so that it could not have been preserved without alteration by natural means, and that Providence alone could have wrought this prodigy.

It is fitting to add here that the reverend Father de Morel and the surgeons tried to break the linens and the shroud, in which the body of Germaine had been wrapped; but whatever effort they made, they could not succeed. Everything which touched this blessed body had been withdrawn, like itself, from the ordinary effects of death and time.

Let us return to the history of the blessed Germaine:

The acts of the inquiry of 1700 were confided to a Minim religious, whom an obedience called to Rome. At the same time, the title of postulator was despatched to that same city to the parish priest of Saint-Louis des Français. But, on the one hand, the religious who had carried the papers of the process received, from the day after his arrival, the order to depart for the missions of the Levant; and, on the other hand, after the remission of the papers to the Congregation of Rites and a beginning of execution, the preparatory labours were soon stopped for want of resources to meet the expenses of the procedure. In the revolutions which followed, these first labours were lost.

However, the confidence of the peoples in the prayers of Saint Germaine and the concourse to her coffin went on increasing. God was ever pleased to reward the piety of the faithful by new graces and numerous miracles. The archives of Malta have preserved the memory of them. The *procès-verbaux* of the general visitation of the grand priory of Toulouse, to which Pibrac belonged, attest these facts unanimously: “We saw in the sacristy,” say the visitors, “a little monument where reposes the body of the devout and blessed Germaine, who was born and died at Pibrac, working miracles: which attracts a great concourse of infirm and crippled faithful, who recover instantaneously health or obtain an improvement in their condition by her intercession with the all-powerful God.” So the funereal days of 1793 were reached. Impiety reigning as sovereign applied itself to withdraw from the veneration of the faithful and to destroy everything which had a religious character. It wished to annihilate the body of the holy shepherdess, which had been preserved until then in a perfect integrity, such as it had been found a hundred and fifty years before, at its miraculous exhumation.

A manufacturer of pewter vessels, member of the revolutionary district of Toulouse, the too famous Toulza, whose name has remained covered with public execration, charged himself with this sacrilegious operation. Four men of the village were requisitioned to help him. One of them ran away, the others consented willingly to the ingratitude and infamy which were asked of them. After having taken the body out of the leaden case, which was confiscated to make bullets, they buried it in the very sacristy, and threw upon it abundantly water and quicklime, in order to assure its prompt and complete dissolution.

A prompt chastisement struck these three wretches: one was paralysed in an arm, the other became deformed; his neck stiffened and turned his head hideously toward one of his shoulders; the third was attacked with a pain in the loins which bent him so to speak double, obliging him to walk with the body

entirely bent toward the ground. This last carried his infirmity to the tomb. The other two, more than twenty years after, had recourse humbly to the innocent virgin, whose precious remains they had so unworthily profaned, and obtained their cure from her prayers and from the clemency of God. As soon as times became better, the mayor of Pibrac, Jean Cabriforce, and the abbé Montrastruc, intruded administrator though he was of the parish, yielding to the wish of the population, had the grave opened. They had the consolation to see that the villainous plot of the revolutionaries had not entirely succeeded. Except the flesh, which the quicklime had devoured, the rest of the body had been preserved miraculously.

The silk shroud which surrounded the head, flowers, several other objects, hurriedly buried with the venerable relic by the violators of 1793, were found intact. The whole, carefully collected and wrapped in a very beautiful shroud, gift of the piety of the people, resumed its place, in the sacristy, at the same spot that the faithful of Pibrac and the pilgrims from outside had known for so long.

Besides, the misfortunes of the epoch could not interrupt the concourse of the afflicted who came, beside the coffin of Germaine, to pray her to intercede for them. The diocesan authority even had to set bounds to this devotion; for, in the desire to venerate more closely the relics of the servant of God, Catholics entered the church of Pibrac, served, as we have just said, by a schismatic, and took part there in its reprobated worship. On this occasion, the venerable Catholic administrator of the church of Toulouse, Mgr Du Bourg, who died bishop of Limoges, addressed to them this instruction:

“The canons of the Church,” said he to them, “forbade the faithful to prostrate themselves before the sepulchres of the martyrs to implore their help, in order to obtain health, when they were in the power of heretics; and our sovereign Pontiff forbids us to enter the churches of the constitutionals, as Paul V, whose Brief he cites, forbade it to the English. A like prohibition has been renewed by the ecclesiastical superiors. These regulations must be recalled to the memory of the faithful who inhabit the country, and who, in their infirmities, go to present their vows at the foot of the precious ashes of this holy girl, known under the name of Saint Germaine. It is never permitted to do an evil for a good, whatever it be; one does not honour the saints, one does not merit their benefits by an act contrary to the fidelity due to the Church.”

These counsels were printed in a religious journal, the *Catholique du pays*, which the pious administrator caused to be published each month, in order to supply the lack of instructions of which the misfortune of the times then deprived Christians. The Gospels and Epistles of Sunday were reproduced in it with some explanations. Different points of doctrine were set forth in it; religious news was reported in it; warnings were given in it to the faithful; good works were announced in it; there was even proposed in it a subject of prayer. Finally, this periodical sheet was consecrated to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a devotion then very widespread and to which everything leads to believe that France owed the end of her misfortunes.

A blind man was the distributor of the journal and carried it secretly to the Catholic families of Toulouse. With no other guide than his stick, he went through all the streets, climbed to all the storeys, and thus baffled the revolutionary police, so minute and so tyrannical in the matter of religion. Submissive to the ordinances of legitimate authority, Catholics no longer entered the church of Pibrac. They contented themselves with going to pray outside the cemetery, on the side corresponding to the sacristy, where the body of the Blessed reposed. The Lord, rewarding the devotion and above all the obedience of these fervent Christians, granted them extraordinary graces, whose chain those years of dolorous memory could not interrupt nor stifle the echo.

At last the schism disappeared; peace, in restoring unity to the church, restored also its temples. Thenceforth the faithful could have the consolation of approaching the coffin of the pious shepherdess, of touching it, of contemplating with their eyes her venerable remains. The pilgrimage of Pibrac resumed a new splendour.

In the last days of the year 1813, the Confraternity of the Holy Thorn, established at Toulouse, after the Revolution, by a holy priest, and composed of the most fervent Catholics, bitterly afflicted at seeing the

captivity of the sovereign pontiff Pius VII prolonged, asked of God his deliverance. Confident in the credit of Saint Germaine, the confrères, in this painful circumstance, implored her support with God, and made a vow to go every year on pilgrimage to her tomb, if the Lord should deign to hear their prayer.

Some time after, the Holy Father, leaving his prison without however having yet regained his liberty, took the road to Italy through the south of France. On 2 February 1814, he passed sadly along the walls of Toulouse, in a carriage locked with a key. An immense population, run together from all sides, pressed on his passage. On their knees, and with tears in their eyes, they implored with love the blessing of the illustrious and holy captive. One distinguished above all the numerous confrères of the Holy Thorn, raising their hands to heaven, conjuring the Lord to finish His work and to give back at last to his see the head of the Church.

From that year, the Confraternity of the Holy Thorn accomplished its vow and has not ceased, since that time, to go to Pibrac on the day of Saint Peter. Mass and Vespers are sung in the village church with the greatest solemnity. It is usual to see there on that day as many as eight or nine hundred persons approach the holy table.

Pope Leo XII favoured this pious pilgrimage with a plenary indulgence.

For the Saint Peter's day of 1849, the concourse at the tomb of the blessed Germaine was more considerable than ever. The confrères came again this time for the end of the exile and the return to his see of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the illustrious successor and friend of the Pontiff who had been the object of their first vow.

Presented to the Lord by the pious shepherdess, their prayers were heard. The following night, the French army took by assault the holy city, occupied and profaned by hordes of impious men come from all corners of the world, and replaced on his throne the immortal Pius IX. It is told that from the beginning of the siege (in the first days of June), one of the confrères, a grave man, of a recognised and honoured piety, was pursued night and day, above all in his prayers, by the thought that Rome would be taken as soon as after the pilgrimage of the Congregation to the tomb of the blessed Germaine, and that in consequence he ought to ask of the superiors its anticipation, in order that the capital of the Christian world might be sooner delivered. After having resisted several days this thought, he could not help any longer communicating it to the director of the Confraternity, who would change nothing in the ordinary usage. Nevertheless the siege was prolonged and really had its end only the night which followed the day of the pilgrimage.

The nearer one approached the epoch marked by divine Providence for the exaltation and glorification of her humble servant, the more one saw increase the number of the faithful who came to implore her protection or to attest their gratitude.

Winter as well as summer pilgrims flocked to Pibrac, not only from the neighbouring cantons, but even from the most distant provinces of France. They kept themselves in the church with respect and recollection, and the greater part communicated there. One remarked among them persons of the highest class of society, priests in great number; some bishops also were seen there. Two illustrious princesses who, both of them, long knew the sorrows of exile, regretting that they could not visit themselves the tomb of Germaine, had their offering carried there. The religious congregations, established at Toulouse or in the environs, the daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul, the sisters of the Cross, the ladies of the Sacred Heart, often made of it the aim of a pious excursion; the Jesuit Fathers sent there from time to time their novices; the parish priests of the neighbourhood had taken the custom of going there every year, accompanied by the children of their parish admitted to first communion.

It must be said that the cult rendered to the venerable Germaine went even too far, for it exceeded the bounds wished by the Church, in the honours to be rendered to the servants of God whose holiness she has not yet recognised. The sacristy having become too narrow for this affluence of visitors, a new one had to be built, finer and more spacious, to which the body was transferred. But this construction being damp and defective,

at the end of some years, it seemed fitting to deposit the relics in a healthier place, and the venerable parish priest of Pibrac, M. Dupoix, carried as much by his tender devotion as by the grateful piety of the faithful, carried them into the church. There was made in the wall of the chapel of Saint Francis de Sales, exposed to the south, an opening which the devotees of Germaine, directed by the zealous curate of the parish, M. Montagne, to-day parish priest, hastened to adorn with a magnificent grating and precious marbles, enriched themselves with an inscription in letters of gold. The body was exposed to the veneration of the faithful, happy to see it. The priests opened the grating every day, and passed a part of the morning in making the blessed bones touch linens which, carried afterwards to the sick, often restored them to health. This translation and this exposition in the holy place formally violated the wise decrees of Urban VIII. The counsels of a Roman ecclesiastic, attached to the holy Congregation of Rites and called to Toulouse by Mgr d'Astros, soon caused this public cult to be suppressed. It would have been an insurmountable obstacle to the success of the process of beatification which it had been resolved to undertake a second time.

The body of the servant of God was placed outside the church, in a monument constructed on the soil of the cemetery.

It was time to resume this cause, begun a hundred and forty-three years before. A longer delay might lose it for ever. Tradition, which had been preserved with the help of miracles, passing without alteration from fathers to children, was about to grow obscure or disappear. The troubles of the Revolution, above all the wars of the Empire, by retaining and dispersing youth far from the paternal hearths, had broken the chain hitherto so clear of domestic testimonies. The new generations could attest only the general memory of the heroicity of the virtues of the Blessed and the evident continuity of the miracles. It was important to question the old people, those who, born in a more tranquil time, and knowing hardly any other history than that of their village, knew it perfectly for having gathered it from their ancestors, almost contemporaries themselves of that shepherdess whose life was the great local event. God seemed to preserve these witnesses laden with years to give them time to hand over to the Church the deposit of the pious traditions which otherwise were about to die with them.

However, before putting his hand to this great work and embracing so many fatigues and sacrifices, the wise archbishop consulted his colleagues in the episcopate, wishing to assure himself whether the reputation of the virtues and miracles of Germaine was as established and widespread as was said. One of his priests went through the dioceses where the virgin of Pibrac was known, charged to gather all the testimonies which concerned her, and to ask at the same time the bishops for their concurrence. *Procès-verbaux* legally attesting more than four hundred miracles or extraordinary graces attributed to the intercession of Germaine Cousin, and thirty postulatory letters of French archbishops and bishops who, jointly with the Chapter of their cathedral and their clergy, united with the archbishop of Toulouse to solicit of the Holy See the beatification of the servant of God: such was the result of these preliminary steps.

The venerable metropolitan hesitated no more, and he entrusted specially the care of the cause to the zeal of the priest whom he had already employed in it. Among the numerous miracles of which we have just spoken, we shall relate only those which God has wrought in our century to glorify His servant:

A young man of the parish of Mauvesin, in the diocese of Auch, named Dominique Gauté, lost his sight suddenly and remained entirely blind. He left his country to go and consult the most celebrated physicians, and succeeded only in acquiring the sad certainty that he would not be cured. He had been attacked with amaurosis, an evil incurable by its nature. His brother George, who had accompanied him, no less desolate than he, then told him to have recourse to Germaine, and both soon made the pilgrimage to Pibrac, with a lively hope and a lively faith. They heard Mass, commending themselves to the servant of God. The eyes of Dominique were covered with a linen which had touched the body of the shepherdess. God willed to try them a little, and the two brothers went out of the church and set out again on their way as they had come, but nevertheless full of hope. They were right to hope. Soon Dominique could perceive in the distance the sails

of the windmills which were turning, and before re-entering his parish, he had recovered sight.

Elisabeth Gay, a girl of eighteen years, long blind in consequence of a humour which had borne itself to her face and eyes, was cured at Pibrac, where her parents had taken her. Until her death, which came only long after, she had no return of the evil from which she had suffered.

M. de Castex, parish priest of Angoumer, attests that Françoise Perrière, his parishioner, blind from her birth, was cured by means of a linen which had touched the body of Germaine.

On the first of August 1839, a child of ten months, blind, son of Antoine Nous, patron on the canal of Languedoc, was carried to Pibrac. The child recovered sight by the intercession of the blessed Germaine. An inquiry drawn up on this subject, by M. the abbé du Bourg, vicar general, is deposited in the archives of the archbishopric of Toulouse.

Antoinette Estelle, an inhabitant of Pibrac, attests that her son had lost sight at the age of two years and a half. Different objects were placed before his eyes, the gesture of striking him was made with the hand, his eyelids remained motionless. He was carried to the tomb of Germaine, and he saw: “He is now forty-three years old,” adds the happy mother, “and he has preserved sight and the memory of the grace which Germaine obtained for him.”

A more signal miracle rewarded the faith of Bertrande Lafon. It is saying too little that the intercession of Germaine gave sight to her son: it gave him eyes. This child, named François, was born with an infirmity worse than blindness. When his eyelids, always closed, were lifted, one distinguished neither pupil nor cornea; but only a shapeless matter like a piece of flesh.

Two able physicians of Toulouse, MM. Massol and Duclos, after having tried for three months all the resources of their science, ended by declaring to Bertrande that there was nothing to be done, that her child was born blind and would remain blind. In her affliction, Bertrande did not despair of the divine goodness. She implored the protection of Germaine, and, that very evening, in laying down little François, she placed on his eyes a linen which had touched the body of the blessed shepherdess. About midnight, she was praying still beside her dear child, asking God to cure him, when suddenly she thought she perceived above the cradle a light, a sort of aureole. Her prayer became more fervent. Feeling as if assured in her heart of obtaining what she asked, she forgot sleep and prayed until day. Then, approaching the cradle, she removes with a moved hand the linen which covered the face of the child. Heavenly goodness! this little face, formerly so dull, is animated by two lively and brilliant eyes which fix themselves on her. Her child sees her and smiles at her! Mad with joy, she is agitated, she weeps, she cries miracle! and, rushing to the window, she calls by gesture and voice all her neighbours, crying to them to come and see what God had just done for her. The neighbours, who knew how she grieved over the sad state of her child, thought that the excess of sorrow had taken away her reason. They went up with a feeling of compassion, to calm her and prevent her from going to some dangerous extravagance. They saw her happiness. The child smiled as if he had been conscious of the grace which he had received, and looked at them with his beautiful eyes quite full of life; and all together rendered thanks to God who deigns to grant men such favours by the merits of His Saints.

Several paralytics received the use of their limbs by the intercession of our Blessed one. We shall content ourselves with relating the recent cure of Jean-Charles-Raymond Cahusac.

A malady of the spine had for several months deprived him of the use of his limbs. He could neither stand nor walk. When he was held perpendicular, his legs were floating like those of a skeleton; if his feet were set on the ground, they bent at the joints, without offering to the weight of the body the least resistance. The paralysis of these lower extremities was complete, there was atrophy. The cares of medicine had been entirely fruitless. On 28 April 18iO, he was carried into the church of Pibrac.

During the Mass, at the moment of the elevation, the young sick one rises and kneels, saying: I am cured! He remains in this position until the end of the Mass. Immediately after, he walks lightly leaning on the arm of the baroness de Guilhermy, his grandmother. It was about nine o'clock in the morning. At five o'clock in the evening, the same day, he walked on foot, without being supported, through several streets of Toulouse, paid visits, went up stairs. Seized with astonishment, the distinguished physician who had attended this young child until then declared that God alone could have wrought this cure so sudden and which has been perfectly sustained.

To say all in a few words, one may advance that there is no kind of maladies and infirmities which God has not cured miraculously to glorify the humble shepherdess, and almost always instantaneously at the sole invocation of the name or at the contact of the precious relics. We are going to point out some miracles which, after mature examination, have received the approbation of the Congregation of Rites and have been confirmed as such by the sovereign Pontiff.

About the year 1845, there were, in the community of the religious called of the Good Shepherd, at Bourges, seventeen religious, fifty-nine penitents and forty young girls: in all a hundred and sixteen persons. This number ever increasing and the resources diminishing, the house found itself in distress. In this embarrassment, Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, superior of the monastery, felt herself moved to ask help of the blessed Germaine. She ordered to begin a novena of prayers in all the classes; she wished that each day some passages of the life of the Blessed be read, that a medal with her image be placed in the granary, and that each Sister carry one on her, praying with a lively faith. Two lay-sisters were charged to make every five days the bread necessary for the consumption of the Community; they used each time twenty-four baskets of flour, which gave forty large loaves, weighing each twenty pounds. Full of confidence, the superior ordered the Sisters to use for the next batches only sixteen baskets of flour, instead of the twenty-four which were necessary, and she prayed the venerable Germaine to supply what would be lacking. The sisters obeyed, but no miracle. The loaves were scarcely sufficient for three days. At last, the third time, the good mother addressed herself to the venerable Germaine and besought her not to permit that the loaves be so small. The two bakers, vexed at being still obliged to make the bread with eight baskets only for each batch instead of twelve, experience having proved to them that the thing did not succeed, resolved, the dough being made, to fill the baskets well, so that it might be clearly seen that there was a smaller number of loaves and that the superior might know well that one could not succeed in what she desired. But as the baskets were being filled, it was seen that the dough did not diminish in proportion in the kneading-trough. There was enough to fill all the baskets; there remained even enough to add to all the loaves and two or three pounds more in the trough. There were therefore in this batch, with eight baskets, twenty loaves which were still larger than the ordinary loaves produced by twelve baskets of flour: it was the same for the second. The miracle being known, the religious, the pupils ran to the oven to see with their own eyes the bread which God had given them. The superior had thanks rendered to God and to the blessed Germaine, who had remembered their distress; the same prodigy was renewed twice more.

The temporal benefits of our Blessed one for this house did not stop there; to the multiplication of the bread succeeded the multiplication of the flour. In the same year 1843, there were in the granary three hundred measures of flour which, begun on 4 November, should have been exhausted in the first days of the following month of January. However the flour lasted until the month of February. There was therefore a miraculous increase of about a hundred and fifty measures. On the first Sunday of January, the superior had led the religious into the granary, in order that they might see with their own eyes the miracle which nourished them. Prostrate and letting their tears flow, they bowed the head and remained some time praying with arms in the form of a cross.

Jacquette, daughter of Jean Catala and of Louise Morens, was born on 7 April 1821. At the age of three months, she had smallpox. Promptly cured, she was well until eighteen months; but then she was seized with

an evil which cast her into an extreme weakness, and which, growing from day to day, reduced her to the saddest state. The ankle and the knee-cap swelled extraordinarily; the legs and thighs grew so thin that the skin was stuck to the bones; a slow fever consumed her. Her mother, in her solicitude, made her take for a long time a multitude of remedies, and, at last discouraged, let the evil follow its course. The pains of the unhappy little girl, far from diminishing, increased with age. At the beginning, she had been able to take some steps, though with much pain; soon her twisted feet and her extreme weakness obliged them to keep her unceasingly in bed or tied on a chair. At times also her belly swelled, and she then suffered frightful colics. The desolation of her parents was beyond measure, above all that of her mother, who saw her deprived of all hope of cure. In the excess of her misfortune, this mother drew a boundless confidence in the mercy of God; and as she had a great devotion to the blessed Germaine, she made a vow to go three times on pilgrimage to Pibrac, the first two times alone, the third time with her child. She soon acquitted herself of the first part of this vow. Domestic affairs having supervened, they hindered her long from accomplishing the last, or perhaps her faith had wavered. However that may be, it was only at the end of three years that she led the infirm child to Pibrac, in 1828; the little infirm girl was in her seventh year. Here is her deposition: “I set out on foot,” she says, “with one of my friends. Before us walked a beast of burden laden with two baskets. In one I had my little Jacquette, in the other another of my children, and, between the two, a third aged ten years. The journey had nothing extraordinary. We entered the church. It was a Sunday, and Monsieur the parish priest was preaching. I took place on a bench with my children, Jacquette between her brother and me; and we both kept her. I followed the Mass. When they rang for the Sanctus, Jacquette uttered a cry, and I heard myself a cracking which seemed to me to come from her bones. I was in a state difficult to explain. It came to my mind that my daughter was cured; this thought came unceasingly to distract me from my prayers. At the moment of communion, I recommended to my eldest to watch over his sister: on account of the looks of those present, it had been repugnant to me to tie this poor little one to the chair, as I did ordinarily. I arrived at the holy Table. When I was kneeling there, great God! behold Jacquette withdraws from the hands of her brother and comes to kneel beside me, quite alone, without anyone supporting her, without anyone guiding her! My emotion redoubled and I cannot tell what passed in me, when I saw this innocent, imitating what she saw me do, take the cloth as if to communicate. With my hand, I made a sign to Monsieur the parish priest that she was not to communicate, and I returned to my place. She followed me. She sat down; she remained seated without needing to be supported. Her feet had resumed their natural position. She was quite joyful. At the blessing of the priest, seeing everyone kneel, she rises without being helped, and, taking a chair on which she was seated, she turns it with skill and kneels on it. My vow was accomplished. I set out again at once, my heart ravished and full of gratitude for so prompt a cure. Neither my children, nor I, nor the person who accompanied us, thought even of eating. We arrived at Toulouse about three o’clock in the afternoon. As soon as we had arrived before the house, Jacquette perceiving her father began to cry: ‘I am cured! Take me in your arms, and then set me on the ground, and you will see how well I walk, and how Germaine Cousin has given me back health.’

“In effect, the father took her in his arms, then set her on the ground and saw her walk at that very instant, in presence of the inhabitants of the quarter, which is very populous. She walked free and agile, without fatigue, without the least difficulty. She was well cured, and, from that day, she has felt no more any evil.”

Philippe Luc, a child of the village of Cornebarrieu, was about twelve years old, when he experienced in the hip very lively pains which the least movement excited and which could not be made to disappear. After two years, a tumour came there which burst under the action of an ointment and which closed after having suppurated slightly, but which was not long in re-opening with an alarming character. Three able physicians, consulted in turn, recognised a fistula. It was two lines wide, two inches deep, livid and violet; the edges of the opening were depressed and callous. The sick boy was advised to have himself carried to the Saint-Jacques hospital of Toulouse. There, during two consecutive months, the physicians tended him with all possible zeal, but without result. The fistula had always made progress: it reached to the bone, which

began to be carious. The child left the hospital and returned to Cornebarrieu sicker than he had departed. It was then that he felt born in his heart a lively confidence that he would obtain his cure by the intercession of the blessed Germaine. Cornebarrieu is only a league from Pibrac; but it was a long distance for the poor sick boy. He set out nevertheless on foot, with his mother, suffering pains so acute that he was obliged to stop rather long at half-way. At last he arrives, he hears Mass and prays beside the tomb of Germaine. He obtains nothing, but he loses neither confidence nor hope. During the return, he excited himself in his sentiments, saying to his mother that Germaine would certainly grant him later what she seemed still to have refused him. Returned home, he lay down, and his mother, having wrapped the wound with the linens which they had placed on the body of the Blessed one, he fell asleep peacefully.

After a short sleep, Philippe called his mother and asked her to dress his wound anew. She runs up with eagerness as she was accustomed to do. She removes the linens: they were dry, the fistula was entirely closed.

The physicians were struck with astonishment: “I remained stupefied,” says M. Laurent Stevenet, one of them, “when this child was presented to me perfectly cured. I examined the place where the wound was: a well-formed scar showed that the evil had existed; but now it existed no more; there was no deformity in the bone, not the least disposition to a return of the evil. The fistula was closed, no other opening had been made. I must indicate still a marvellous character of this cure: it is the mobility of the skin and the resumption of the fibrous tissue which forms the internal scar of the fistulous cavity.”

Germaine was beatified by Pope Pius IX, on 7 May 1834. It would be too long to describe with what pomp, what piety, what concourse of the faithful, feasts were at once celebrated in honour of the Blessed one, at Toulouse and at Pibrac. In that village, native place of Germaine, holy communion was distributed to eight thousand persons, and many were obliged to withdraw from the altar, sad and resigned, without having been able to appease their spiritual hunger. In three days, about seventy thousand faithful, in the height of the harvest, in very hot days and after a year of dearth, ran to a little village to honour a shepherdess; they pressed to kiss, to see these bones, to which, when they formed part of a living body, a shelter under the thatch was refused, and which are venerated to-day in a shrine glittering with gold and light, awaiting that, reunited to the soul, they share in its immortal glory.

Monseigneur Pie, bishop of Poitiers, and the Rev. Father Corail, of the Society of Jesus, have made the panegyric of the Blessed one; the discourse of the venerable and eloquent successor of Saint Hilary is found at the end of the *Life of the blessed Germaine*, by M. L. Veuillot.[1] Let us learn above all, in meditating this poor, humble and hidden life, that the Lord casts down false greatness, confounds false science and false wisdom, and that He raises the humble and him who puts before all sciences that of Jesus crucified. Our shepherdess never frequented any other lessons than those of religion. “One asks whether she knew how to read,” says Monseigneur the bishop of Poitiers, “and everything leads to believe that, of the alphabet, she never knew but the sign which our fathers never forgot to put at the frontispiece of the Christian Abecedary: I mean the Cross of God. But what she learned under the empire of divine grace, at the school of this cross of the Saviour and at that of the secret inspirations of the Holy Spirit, took the place for her of all other knowledges. Her ignorance was so learned, her simplicity so enlightened in the eyes of God, that, not content with giving her in the heavens the aureole of the elect, He has willed to glorify her tomb, for two centuries, by an uninterrupted series of miracles, and to crown at last her head with the radiant nimbus by which the Church signals juridically the holiness of her children.” On 29 June 1867, the sovereign pontiff Pius IX, after having approved new miracles, inscribed her in the book of the Virgins.

She may be represented with a crook, a watch-dog or a simple sheep, to mark the office of shepherdess which she filled; with flowers in her apron, or with a distaff. We have given in her life the explanation of these characteristics.

Saint Abraham, Abbot of Saint-Cirgues, at Clermont (472)

Saint Abraham came into the world in Syria, on the banks of the Euphrates, toward the end of the fourth century. After having made great progress in the ways of God, into which he had entered from his youth, he thought that, to succeed in them and to perfect himself in them, he ought to imitate the great patriarch of the people of God, whose name he bore, and go out like him from his country. He wished to go and see the holy anchorites of Egypt, to try to make models of them for himself; but he was taken by Saracens who, after having stripped him, ill-treated him unworthily in hatred of Jesus Christ, and put him in irons in which they kept him for five years.

After God had delivered him, he quitted the East. Crossing then the Mediterranean, he came into the Gauls, and stopped in the town of Clermont, in Auvergne, beside a church of which the foundations had just been laid, and which he finished building himself in honour of Saint Cirgues,[1] martyr. To this church he added a monastery, where he formed a great number of disciples by his examples and instructions, and where he attained himself to the highest perfection. Saint Abraham was even favoured during his life with the gift of miracles. We choose one among a thousand. On the day of the feast of Saint Cirgues, a crowd of pilgrims flocked to the church, and the monastery was accustomed to furnish them with the wine necessary for their refreshment. Saint Abraham recommended one day to the cellarer to hold ready, for this occasion, casks full of wine. “You do not consider, my father,” replied the steward, “that besides the crowd which is to fill the town to-morrow, you have invited Monseigneur the bishop, the count of Clermont and the notables of the country, and that nevertheless there does not remain to you in the cellar a measure of wine.” The holy abbot then went down to the cellar: “Do us this favour, O my God,” he cried, “that the wine fail not before all this people, who are going to come to honour your servant, have drunk enough of it.” His prayer was heard. Not only did the wine not fail, but it was ascertained that it had not even diminished.

Our holy Abbot reached a rare old age; his blessed death happened about the year 472. His body was buried in the church of Saint-Cirgues, which was formerly a parish of Clermont. Those who are tormented with fever ordinarily find relief before his tomb.

Proper of Clermont; Cf. J. Branche: Lives of the Saints, Men and Women, of Auvergne [*Vies des Saints et Saintes d’Auvergne*].

Saint Psalmodius or Saumay, Solitary in the Limousin (589)

Psalmodius, contemporary of Gregory the Great, sprung from a noble family, in Great Britain, was brought up in divine letters and Christian manners by Brendan, abbot. He was still young when one day, having fallen asleep by the sea-shore, on a bundle of seaweed, the seaweed was raised by the waters, until the waves, withdrawing by the ebb, left him safe and sound on the shore, occupied in singing the praises of God. A little later, wishing to give himself more freely to contemplation, he withdrew to Saintes, a town of Aquitaine, where the bishop Saint Leontius received him with honour. A miraculous fact came to confirm the opinion which Saint Leontius had conceived of his holiness. The bishop having had water preserved in which Psalmodius had washed his hands, a blind woman bathed her eyes with it, and at once recovered sight. The report of his miracles attracted so many people that he was obliged to go away from Saintes to find solitude again. He came into the Limousin, found in a very thick wood, not far from Eymoutiers, a place such as he desired, and settled there to pass his days in contemplation and prayer. Each day he recited, besides other prayers, the whole Psalter, whence came to him the name of Psalmodius. He fasted every day, except on feast days. He healed, with holy water, the daughter of the duke of Aquitaine, who had been bitten by a viper. He delivered a possessed person, and restored sight to a blind woman. But these prodigies procuring him a glory from which his humility suffered, he asked God to withdraw from him the power of working miracles. He flew away to the abode of immortal glory on 15 June. His body was buried at Eymoutiers (Haute-Vienne),

where he is religiously honoured. *Proper of Limoges.*

Saint Landelin, Founder of Lobbes, and First Abbot of Crespin (686)

Landelin, of the noble race of the Franks, was born under the reign of Dagobert, between Bapaume and Cambrai, in a villa named the Valley or Vaulx. From his childhood he showed a happy natural disposition, and his parents confided the care of his education to Saint Aubert, bishop of Cambrai. The latter exhorted the young man to live piously and holily, and forearmed him against the dangers of the world. On the other hand, some members of his family neglected nothing to turn him from heavenly things and make him prefer the pleasures and delights of the earth. He ended by lending an ear to their perfidious counsels; he showed himself rebellious to the exhortations of the bishop, and even left him, and soon threw himself into all the excesses of a guilty life, even to putting himself at the head of a band of robbers. The good Father already wept for his disciple as dead. After a rather long interval of time, the horrible and unforeseen death of one of his companions struck Landelin with so great a terror that, abandoning all the rest, he came to throw himself at the feet of the bishop to implore the remedy of penance.

His master received him with a great effusion of joy and tenderness; for some time he made him follow the exercises of the clerics while leaving him the secular dress. Landelin renounced the world this time for ever: his virtues progressed from day to day; he entered orders, made three times the journey to Rome to venerate the tomb of the holy Apostles, and everywhere he edified strangers by his piety and charity, as he had edified his brethren by his obedience, his humility, his gentleness. When he was a priest, he asked and obtained of Saint Aubert the permission to withdraw into solitude to weep there over the disorders of his past life. He chose for the place of his retreat the desert of Laubac, where he exercised himself in works of penance. A great number of disciples having come to put themselves under his direction, he founded the monastery of Lobbes, on the Sambre. He soon built two others, that of Aune or Aine, and that of Wallers. He endowed these monasteries with the goods which he held from the liberality of the kings of France. These monasteries once founded, judging himself unworthy to govern them, he entrusted them to the direction of Ursmar and of Dodo, whom he had caused to be raised to the episcopal dignity. Then, wishing to give himself more completely to God in prayer and mortification of the body, he plunged, accompanied by Saint Adelin and Saint Domitian, into a thick forest, between Mons and Valenciennes. The three solitaries lived there in cells of tree branches. Their renown attracted them disciples; they built a chapel which was the grain of mustard-seed from which rose the abbey of Crespin, on the river Hon, not far from the Scheldt and the town of Condé. Thinking then that, to work a great good, it would be well to separate Adelin and Domitian, he sent them to different places to labour at the glory of God and the sanctification of souls. The first settled near the river Hon, the second on the Raine. As for himself, he remained in the monastery of Crespin, of which he took the government, and prepared for death by meditation on divine things. Saint Landelin, in fact, was not far from the term of his long penance. Attacked suddenly by a violent fever, he sent for his religious and, bidding them farewell, he declared to them that it was for the last time that they saw him on earth. At these words all melted into tears, but Landelin reassured them: “Be not saddened at my death, my children,” said he to them, “Jesus Christ, your first father, will always be with you, and the enemy of your souls will not be able to harm you.” He then had himself laid on ashes and peacefully gave up his soul to God. It was on 15 June 686.

His body was buried in the monastery of Crespin itself.

Proper of Arras; — Cf. Destombes: Lives of the Saints of the dioceses of Cambrai and Arras; Van Drival: Hagiology of the diocese of Arras.

Saint Lothaire or Loyer, Bishop of Séez (756)

Lothaire was a Lorrainer, sprung of very noble blood. Some hagiographers make him the son of Lambert, prince of Moselle and Lorraine. He was brought up at the court of the kings of France and bore arms. But, having seen die his wife Tarente, daughter of Astolf, king of the Lombards, he opened his eyes to the inconstancy of human things, embraced the poverty of Jesus Christ, and, renouncing the world, entered upon the paths of a calmer and surer life.

He divided his goods among his sons, and, taking a poor habit, set about visiting the places of pilgrimage. Then he sought in the roughest deserts of Neustria a solitude where he could dwell unknown to all. He found it near Argentan, on a hill then covered with great trees; he built himself there a cell in the form of a tomb; and, forgetting the world and himself, he gave himself night and day to prayer, to fasting and to God alone. The desert became peopled, by reason of the crowd of the faithful whom the miracles of the holy anchorite drew there, and a village formed there which took the name of the pious solitary, commonly called Lohier or Loyer; it is to-day Saint-Loyer-des-Champs (Orne).

But the renown of his holiness spread more and more. The result was that the inhabitants of Séez asked for him as bishop, and in spite of his resistance he was raised to that see by the unanimous suffrages of the people.

He governed and defended his Church with as much wisdom as courage. After a long episcopate, feeling himself broken by labours and years, he asked his diocesans for permission to lay down the mitre, and took again the road to his hermitage. There he lived still many long years, preparing himself by prayer, fasts and mortifications for his blessed death which happened on 15 June of the year 756.

Proper of Séez. — We give, in the Supplement, details on the relics of this holy Bishop, from documents which reached us only after the printing of this Notice.

Saint Hilarian, Priest and Martyr in Rouergue (8th century)

Saint Hilarian was born in the eighth century, at Espalion or in the neighbourhood, of noble and pious parents who took care to give him a Christian education. He was instructed in letters sacred and profane, of which he acquired a thorough knowledge. His virtues were still more remarkable than his learning: early he made himself admired by the fervour of his piety and the candour of his soul which expressed themselves in his exterior. His smiling and agreeable countenance, his amiable and gentle manners, the distinction and beauty which reigned in his whole person were only the sweet reflection of the beauty and serenity of his innocent and virtuous soul. So many qualities drew to him the esteem and affection of all: he was chosen to be raised to the sublime functions of the priesthood.

Hilarian, by his knowledge and virtues, drew the eyes of the illustrious Charlemagne: this prince entrusted to him the direction of some schools; and he professed such esteem and such veneration for this holy priest that he chose him for his confessor. He could have occasion to make use of his ministry, during the sojourn which he sometimes made in his villa of Cassaneuil, situated on the solitary banks of the Lot. Hilarian gave himself therefore with success to the work of the moral regeneration of his country, which, for a long time, had been converted to Christianity.

But, in that troubled epoch, one could not promise oneself a tranquillity of long duration. The Saracens, several times repulsed from Rouergue by Charlemagne, made often in that country incursions and ravages, even under the great emperor. They established themselves in inaccessible forts, and thence, as from a lair, they darted in all directions to plunder, when they saw themselves out of the reach of their conqueror. Thus they remained for some time masters of the territory of Espalion; and, under their domination, religion was persecuted and the priests dispersed or put to death.

Hilarian would not abandon his people in the persecution; he hid with his mother in some unknown retreat; and thence he betook himself to all the places where his ministry could be useful. And in order to celebrate with more security the holy sacrifice, he often went to Lévignac, only a quarter of a league from the church of Perse, which he served; and, as he had to cross the Lot, several times, for lack of a boat, he spread his mantle on the waters, and by this means passed and repassed the river.

His enemies often strove to seize him, to make him perish; but heaven protected him visibly for some time, not wishing to deprive the people too soon of the help of his ministry. One day even, his persecutors having tried to pursue him beyond the Lot, were submerged in its waters in crossing them. In that same place, there is seen a cross before which the procession formerly stopped, on the days of the Rogations. There is shown also, in the neighbourhood, a rock hollowed in the form of a sarcophagus and to the measure of a man, a cavity which is believed to have formed itself to receive and hide the Saint, one day when he was sought to be put to death. A cross is also planted there on the rock, and the procession likewise made a station there. It is told that the mother of Hilarian, full of anxiety for the life of her son so often exposed, said to him sometimes: “My son, you will end by leaving your head in one of your excursions.” — “Mother,” he answered with playfulness, “if it happens to me to lose my head there, I shall bring it back to you.”

At last heaven willed to crown so many virtues and so much devotion by the glory of martyrdom. The holy priest was overtaken one day by his persecutors, who cut off his head. The valiant athlete of Christ gave his life willingly for his divine Master; but, as soon as the murderers had gone away, he rose, took in his hands his bloody head and washed it himself at a fountain called since Fontsange; he communicated to it thus, it is said, a miraculous virtue; the inhabitants of that country often come to draw from it.

The holy Martyr, having then taken up his head, directed himself thus toward the dwelling of his mother and came to place his head in her hands, as a pledge of filial piety, according to the promise which he had made her of it in his lifetime. Others pretend that he carried it into the church of Perse. His faithful people buried the body of the holy Martyr in that church, and, penetrated with the most legitimate admiration for his virtues and for his glorious death, hastened to render him a public cult and to invoke him as protector and patron.

A manuscript on parchment, dated 1450, recalls with what concourse of people and what pomp the feast of the Saint was celebrated on 15 June. On the occasion of the ravages exercised by the plague, in 1451 and in 1456, the inhabitants of Espalion vowed themselves to Saint Hilarian. One may still see, on the two columns of the high altar of the parish church of Espalion, a bas-relief which represents the martyrdom of Saint Hilarian and the miracle which accompanied it. This sculpture dates from the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth.

On 12 October 1524, François d’Estaing, bishop of Rodez, made his pastoral visitation to the town of Espalion and consecrated there solemnly the church of which we have just spoken; the *procès- verbal* makes mention of a relic of Saint Hilarian which was venerated there. The inhabitants of the town profited by the presence of their pastor to make the opening of the tomb of their holy patron, in order to effect the translation of his relics to a more honourable place. The pious François d’Estaing wished himself to preside at the ceremony. A procession was organised with extraordinary pomp, and the crowd pressed into the church of Perse, too narrow to contain it. This church, built in the century, still subsists and is a fine monument of Romanesque architecture. They proceeded therefore to the opening of the massive and voluminous tomb of the holy Martyr. The prelate gathered carefully all the bones of the body and of the head, which were found enclosed in this tomb, as well as shreds of priestly vestments which time had not yet consumed. These relics, deposited on the altar, were carefully put in order by the pious prelate and placed by him in a precious shrine; he ordered that this shrine be enclosed in its turn in a vase of copper or bronze, and exposed to the veneration of the faithful in an elevated place. A *procès-verbal* of a visitation of the same bishop recorded the presence of a relic of Saint Hilarian in the church of Flaujac. The abbey of Bonneval, in Rouergue, possessed a very precious silver shrine where a bone of the arm of Saint Hilarian was kept. Another relic of Saint Hilarian was

venerated at Thérondels, where it had been brought by a vicar general of Voyer de Paulmy, in 1668, as the *procès-verbal*, still existing, attests. There was preserved before the Revolution, in the church of Perse, an ancient gilded shrine, which contained almost all the bones of one body, very white and very solid. It is believed that these were the relics of Saint Hilarian; but this shrine was sold by the revolutionary profaners and the bones thrown to the wind.

Abridged from the Life which M. the abbé L. Servières has given of it, in the Saints of Rouergue.

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[1] The dioceses of Mainz, of Naples, of Montpellier and of Nevers make a particular office of it on this day; those of Cologne, of Viviers, of Limoges and of Lyon, a simple commemoration.

[2] The dioceses of Cambrai and of Arras make a particular office of it under this day.

[3] He was born at Venice in 1028, was consecrated bishop of Bergamo in 1657, created cardinal three years after by Alexander VII, and transferred in 1664 to the bishopric of Padua. That town was indebted to him for the establishment of its seminary, which still makes to-day the ornament, not only of the State of Venice, but also of Italy and of all Christendom. He placed there able professors in theology and foreign languages, formed there a library of the best books in every kind, and founded there a printing-house for the use of this library. His death was edifying as his life had been holy. Divers miracles wrought by his intercession having been proved, Clement XIII published the bull of his beatification on 13 February 1761.

[4] See on the following day.

[5] This venerable prelate is known by the large liberalities which he made to his church and by the acts of the fifth council of Orléans, celebrated in 549. Among other goods, he gave to his church the monastery of Chassiers, which he had founded and endowed.

[6] The abbey of Jumièges was founded, in 655, by Saint Philibert, to the west, and about five leagues from the town of Rouen, in a peninsula formed by the Seine. It was of the Order of Saint Benedict. It underwent, at the Revolution, the fate of the other religious houses.

[7] Before the election of Constantine, a bishop of the province had caused to be published the twenty-fifth canon of the council of Reims of the year 625, couched in these terms: “None shall be elected bishop of a town but a person who is of the country, and the election shall be made by the suffrage of all the people, with the consent of the bishops of the province. If anyone is elected to the episcopate by another way, let him be deposed and let those who shall have ordained him be suspended for three years from the functions of their ministry.” (*Dict. univ. des Conciles*, by M. Peltier, vol. ii, p. 485.)

[8] Abbey destroyed, near Chambly, or Blaincourt (Oise).

[9] Let us cite also the monastery of Sainte-Marie on the Loire, whose endowment he received and confirmed with fourteen other prelates. His signature is found at the deed drawn up to this end. — Father Mabillon had this deed engraved as it was originally written, and has preserved it to us in vol. i of his *Diplomatique*, p. 383: the signature of Constantine is seen there.

[10] The place where the relics of Saint Firmin reposed had been revealed in a supernatural manner to Saint Salvius, bishop of Amiens. The bishops of Noyon, of Cambrai and of Thérouanne were also present at this celebrated translation.

[11] *Life of the blessed Germaine*, by M. L. Veuillot; *Eulogy of the blessed Germaine*, by Mgr l’é- [breaks off in the print].

[12] Several hagiographers think that this Saint Cirgues is the same as Saint Cyr, son of Saint Julitta, whose life we give on 16 June.

16 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Besançon, in the Gauls, the holy martyrs Ferréol or Fargeau, priest, and Ferjeux, or Feugeon or Ferhdtion, deacon, who were sent by Saint Irenaeus, bishop, to preach the word of God, and endured several torments under the judge Claudius, who had their heads cut off.[1] 212. — At Tarsus, in Cilicia, the holy martyrs Cyr and Julitta, his mother, put to death under the emperor Diocletian; Cyr was only a little child of three years; but, on seeing his mother in the hands of the executioners, who were scourging her cruelly with ox-sinews, in presence of the president Alexander, he uttered such great cries, without being able to be appeased, that his head was broken against the steps of the tribunal. As for Julitta, after this flagellation and other great torments, she was beheaded, and thus finished the course of her martyrdom.[2] 30i. — At Mainz, the martyrdom of Saint Aurea, of Saint Justina, her sister, and of their companions, who, celebrating the holy mysteries in the church, were massacred by the Huns, who were ravaging Germany. 451. — At Amathus, in

Cyprus, Saint Tychon, bishop, in the time of Theodosius the Younger, 5th century. — At Lyon, the decease of Saint Aurelian, bishop of Arles. 551. — At Nantes, Saint Similian, Simulin, Sambin or Semblin, bishop and confessor. 310. — At Meissen, in Germany, Saint Bennon, bishop.[3] HOC. — At the village of La Louvesc, in the diocese of Viviers, Saint John Francis Regis, confessor, of the Society of Jesus, a man of an admirable charity and patience in his labours for the salvation of souls. He was placed in the number of the Saints by Pope Clement XII. 1640. — In Brabant, Saint Lutgarde, virgin. 1246.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Mende, Saint Ilpide, martyr, who, after having buried a great number of martyrs whom the persecution reaped every day, merited to be joined to their company by a glorious death, 3rd century. — At Auxerre, Saint Censurius or Censoir, bishop of that see, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of 10 June.[4] — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Domnolus, archbishop of that see, which he governed with as much piety as wisdom. Among his virtues, one remarked above all his charity for the poor and his generosity for the redemption of captives, a work to which he consecrated considerable sums. About 627. — At Chaumont-Porcien, in the diocese of Reims, the holy Bertaud and Amand, priests and solitaries, under whose invocation the ancient abbey of Chaumont-la-Piscine was dedicated. It was a monastery of the Order of Prémontré founded, in 1140, by Reginald of Roset; it gave birth no doubt to the present borough of Chaumont-Porcien, to-day chief town of a canton of the department of the Ardennes. About 540. — At Ruffey, in Franche-Comté, the martyrdom of Saint Antidius, bishop of Besançon.[5] 411. — At Limoges, the apparition of Our Lord to Saint Martial.[6] — At Avranches, Saint Ausbert or Autbert, who, on the testimony of Sigebert, had the church of Saint-Michel-du-Mont built, where he was buried. About 720. — At the Forest, in Brabant, Saint Alêne, virgin and martyr. 640. — At Périgueux, Saint Leontius or Leo, bishop of that see and confessor. His body was buried in the church of Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux where it remained long in great veneration. When this church was ruined, excavations were made on its site and there was discovered, among other tombs, that of the holy bishop, which the gold ring that he wore on his finger with his cipher made recognised. His relics were then transferred to the church of Saint-Etienne, and enclosed in a silver shrine. This translation took place in 1034. In 1127, these precious remains were profaned like many others and thrown to the wind.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Meissen, in Germany, Saint Bennon, confessor, of the Order of Canons Regular, and bishop of that town, who remained invincibly attached to Saint Gregory VII, in the defence of ecclesiastical liberty.

Martyrologies of the Benedictines, of the Camaldolese and of Vallombrosa. — Saint Basil, bishop…

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At Cuistres, in Brabant, Saint Lutgarde.

Martyrology of the Franciscan Friars Minor. — At Gniezno, in Poland, the blessed Jolenta, daughter of Béla IV, king of Hungary, who, having been married to Boleslas, grand duke of Poland, embraced, after her separation from him, the monastic life in the Order of Saint Clare; she exercised herself there in the practice of all the Christian virtues, until, laden with merits, she flew away to the heavenly Spouse on 11 June.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — Saint Leo III, pope, mentioned on 12 June.

Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Africa, the saints Cyriacus, Valeria, Marcia, Diogenes and Mica, martyrs, entered in the martyrology of Saint Jerome and in several others. — At Messina, in Sicily, the saints Saturninus and Cendene, mentioned by the same. — At Volaterrae (to-day Volterra), in Etruria, the holy Actinea and Grécinienne, virgins and martyrs, honoured in the church of Saint-Just of the Camaldolese of that town. Reigns of Diocletian and

Maximian. — At Apollonias, in Asia Minor, Saint Mark, bishop and martyr. — Among the Greeks, the martyrdom of five confessors of the faith, natives of Nicomedia. — At Rome, the torture of forty martyrs who were burnt together in hatred of religion. — At Spoleto, in Umbria, Saint Maurus, priest, with his son, Felix, and his nurse, strangers come from Caesarea to Rome, who delivered the country from a monstrous serpent, and whose holiness was revealed by miracles. 6th century. — In the diocese of Constance, in Germany, the holy Cuoégonde, Mechtonde, Wibrande and Chrischone or Chrétienne, virgins. Their bodies were raised from the earth, in 1504 (16 June), and deposited with honour in the church of Eichsel, in the diocese of Constance, with the exception of that of the last, which came to enrich the church of Sainte-Chrétienne-du-Mont, in the same diocese. 9th or 10th century. — At Carrara, a fortified town of the duchy of Modena, Saint Cecard, bishop of the ancient see of Luna, in Etruria (present diocese of Sarzana), and martyr. In 1600, his body was raised from the earth and placed in a fine marble chapel in the church of Carrara. He is the patron of that town and is invoked with success in every kind of need. 10th century.

Saint Ferréol[7] and Saint Ferjeux,[8] Founders of the Church of Besançon

212. — Pope: Saint Zephyrinus. — President of the Sequania: Claudius.

Martyres usque ad mortem suorum corporum pro veritate certarunt, ut innotesceret vera religio, falsis religionibus fictisque convictis.

The Martyrs fought for the truth even to sacrificing their bodies to death, in order to make known the true religion by unmasking the falsity of the other pretended religions.

S. Aug., De civit. Dei, lib. iii, cap. 27.

The death of Saint Pothinus, founder of the Church of Lyon, left to Saint Irenaeus the care of cultivating a soil fertilised by the blood of martyrs. Understanding all the importance and all the difficulties of his mission, he went to Rome to take the orders of Pope Saint Eleutherius, and received from his hand the episcopal consecration. Returned to his church, he strove to imitate, in administering it, Saint Polycarp, his master, that perfect model, formed himself in the school of the disciple who had reposed on the heart of Jesus Christ. Therefore, without ceasing to devote himself to his people, he applied himself to form priests full of zeal and talents, after the example of the great bishop of Smyrna, whose clergy had been a nursery of Saints. Under the inspiration of the illustrious doctor, Lyon became in the West what Smyrna had been in the East, the hearth of tradition, the gymnasium where orthodoxy strengthened itself by the discussion of doctrines, the seminary of apostles and martyrs. Then began the great missions undertaken under his orders. He sent almost at the same time Benignus to Dijon and to Langres, Thyrsus and Andochius to the banks of the Ain, Felix, Fortunatus and Achilleus to Valence, Ferréol and Ferjeux to Besançon.

Ferréol and Ferjeux, intimate friends according to some, brothers according to others, had received birth in Asia Minor. According to the custom of the time, they finished their studies in the schools of Athens, where they made themselves remarked by the elevation of their mind and by the extent of their knowledge. Having had the happiness to know and adore Jesus Christ from their childhood, they carried into the practice of the Christian virtues the beauty of a soul which error and vice had never soiled. Full of youth, of strength and of zeal, they shone in the sanctuary like precious stones whose purity equals their splendour. Ferréol was a priest, and some critics believe even, not without reason, that he had received the character of bishop. Ferjeux, who was only deacon, assisted his companion in the celebration of the holy mysteries, and occupied himself particularly with the care of the poor and of widows. The two brothers arrived at Besançon about the year 180, toward the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Tradition teaches us that from their entry into that town, striking signs announced the ruin of paganism. The priests of the idols were troubled, the demons no longer gave their accustomed oracles, fatal presages appeared in the entrails of the victims, and it was thought that the angered gods refused the incense of mortals.

The two strangers lived poorly and preached, sometimes in the towns, sometimes in the surrounding country, the evangelical truths. This new doctrine astonished at first those who heard it, for minds preoccupied with all the errors of idolatry could hardly accommodate themselves to the depth of our mysteries, and the rigour of Christian morality naturally revolted hearts accustomed to refuse nothing to their desires. However grace triumphed little by little over the passions as well as over the prejudices in the soul of some pagans. The numerous miracles of the two apostles attested the divinity of their mission; their virtues, more eloquent still than their words, completed the crediting of it, and God, who has promised all to those who invoke Him by imitating Him, deigned at last to let Himself be moved in favour of a land watered with so many sweats. As the number of the faithful increased in this new Christendom, Ferréol and Ferjeux redoubled their zeal and fervour. They gave the day to the labours of preaching, and passed the night in the exercise of prayer. Not far from Besançon is found a deep grotto, hollowed in the rock, and the access to which was long defended by the bushes which covered it. This solitary crypt served as asylum to the two apostles. It was probably the first church of the Sequania. While paganism celebrated its orgies in sumptuous edifices, the assembly of the Christians, not numerous and still very timid, gathered at nightfall in the holy darkness of this humble retreat. Ferjeux read first some writings of the Prophets or of the Apostles, and Ferréol explained them afterwards, exhorting the faithful to put into practice the fine lessons contained in the reading of the day. “The Church,” he said, “believes in God, Father almighty, creator of heaven, of earth, of the sea, and of all that they contain, and in one Jesus Christ, Son of God, incarnate on account of our salvation, and in the Holy Spirit, who foretold by the Prophets the designs of God, the coming of Jesus Christ, His miraculous birth, His passion, His resurrection from the dead, and His ascension into the heavens. The Church believes that He rose there with our flesh, and that He will come in the glory of His Father to raise all men, in order that, according to the order which the Father has given, every knee may bend at the name of Jesus Christ Our Lord, our God, our Saviour, our King, that every tongue may confess Him, that Jesus Himself may judge all men, that He may condemn to fire the rebels and the apostates, the impious, unjust, iniquitous and blasphemous men, that He may admit to incorruptibility, to a happy life, to an eternal glory, the just, equitable men, submissive to His precepts, faithful to His love, either from the beginning of their life, or since their return to God by penance.”[1] After having recited this symbol, which Saint Irenaeus had composed, Ferréol developed some important point of Christian doctrine. After the example of his master, who held it himself from the holy bishop of Smyrna, disciple of the Apostles, sometimes he taught the unity of the divine nature in the trinity of persons; sometimes he recounted the benefits, the miracles and the life of the Saviour; sometimes, dwelling on the institution of the Eucharist, as much to satisfy his love as on account of the importance of the matter, he recalled the figures which announced this august sacrifice, the manner in which Jesus Christ instituted it, the ineffable prodigies which are wrought in it, and the dispositions which must be brought in receiving it.[2] “Jesus Christ,” he said further, “left here below a society of which He confided the care to the zeal of His Apostles and of their successors. Where the Church is, there is also the Holy Spirit. Where the Holy Spirit is, there is found the truth; therefore the truth is in the Church. She was founded and constituted at Rome by Saint Peter and Saint Paul. It is in her that the faithful find the tradition transmitted by the Apostles; it is to her that all the Churches spread over the earth must necessarily unite. After having founded the Church, the Apostles confided the government of it to Linus, of whom Saint Paul speaks in his epistles to Timothy. To Linus succeeded Anacletus, who had in his turn Clement for successor. The see of Rome was then occupied by Alexander, Sixtus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter and Eleutherius, who reigns to-day.”[3] When the instructions were ended, they rose and addressed in common prayers to the heavenly Father for the perseverance of the Christians and for the conversion of the infidels. Saint Ferréol offered then the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist. After having nourished himself with the divine manna, he turned toward the people and presented to them the living bread come down from heaven. Each of those present received it from his hand in the transports of a tender and sincere piety. Saint Ferjeux, fulfilling then his ministry as deacon, gathered in a blessed veil what remained of the heavenly food, and carried it to the absent brethren whom their infirmities or other grave reasons had kept far from the assembly of the faithful.

However the apostolate of the two disciples of Irenaeus did not last very long; God made known to the apostles of Besançon and of Valence the designs which He had on them. Wishing to dispose them beforehand to the witness of blood which they were to render Him, He instructed them of their fate by an extraordinary way. Felix, Fortunatus and Achilleus occupied at the gates of Valence a humble cabin, which had become the cradle of a new Christendom, as at Besançon the grotto of the holy Ferréol and Ferjeux. One day Felix recounted to his two companions a vision which he had had. “I saw enchanted places which a heavenly light lit. In the midst was a tabernacle sparkling with gold and precious stones. Five spotless lambs were feeding in the midst of roses and lilies. I heard then a voice which cried to me with force: ‘Courage, good servants, because you have been faithful in small things, I shall set you over greater. Enter into the joy of the Lord your God. Come, disciples of Irenaeus, join your brethren.’” At these words, Fortunatus and Achilleus cried out in the transport of their love: “Glory be rendered to You, O divine Jesus, who deign to sustain our weakness by the promises which You have made to Your servant Felix. Now, O king of glory, fill us all with Your heavenly consolations, that we may be worthy to suffer death for Your name.” This prayer was scarcely finished when a Christian sent by Ferréol and Ferjeux came to give them on their part a letter conceived in these terms: “Ferréol and Ferjeux, to the most pious brethren of Jesus Christ, Felix, Fortunatus and Achilleus, health in Our Lord. He whose wisdom governs time and rules the world has been pleased to disclose to His servants the secrets of His heart and to exhort them to a courageous perseverance in their faith. Having fallen asleep in one of the night watches, I saw in heaven, around a luminous cross, five angels resplendent with brightness, who held, each in their hands, a brilliant crown made of the purest gold and adorned with precious stones. As I was considering quite beside myself so ravishing a spectacle, a heavenly voice said to me with force: ‘Come, disciples of Irenaeus, receive the reward which your Father has prepared for you. You have done on earth the will of God, possess now in the heavens an eternal kingdom.’ Let us therefore revive our courage, let us watch, pray with fervour, that Satan may not rob us of our treasure.”

The apostles of Valence answered those of Besançon by the account of the vision of Felix. From then on the five disciples of Irenaeus, adoring the designs of the Lord, redoubled their zeal and multiplied their prayers in view of obtaining the grace of martyrdom. Felix, Fortunatus and Achilleus had the happiness to die first for the name of Jesus Christ. They owed this favour to the arrival of the Roman general Cornelius who was visiting, in the name of the emperor, the Lyonnese provinces, accompanied by the prefects of the principal towns, come to meet him to execute his bloody orders.

The apostles of Besançon were not long in rejoining in heaven the other companions of Saint Irenaeus. Among the distinguished personages who had come to meet Cornelius was found Claudius, prefect of the Sequania. After having been present at the interrogation and at the torture of the three confessors, he thought that the occasion was favourable to complain of the progress which Christianity was making at Besançon, whether he wished by that to make his court to Cornelius, or he thought to serve the cause of the emperors, or finally the conversion of his wife to the new religion appeared to him an outrage grave enough to be denounced to the Roman general. “Two strangers,” he said to him, “have recently arrived in our town to preach a new doctrine. They adore a crucified man, persuade virgins not to marry, and have pushed audacity so far as to draw my wife into the practice of their worship.” — “Invincible gods!” cried then Cornelius, “your name would then be despised and your power annihilated by these Christians! What are we doing, dear Claudius? I shall give you my will in writing, and when you are returned to the Sequania, you shall make these two men undergo torments such that their very partisans in will be frightened and will renounce Christianity.” — “Your orders shall be executed,” answered Claudius.

Scarcely has the prefect arrived at Besançon when he sends to seek Ferréol and Ferjeux. He presses them to sacrifice to the false gods, offering them, if they consent to do so, the most brilliant rewards. At this proposal, the two confessors hasten to mark their foreheads with the sign of the cross, to fortify their soul against temptation. Then Ferréol, taking up speech: “May your money perish with you,” he answered the prefect;

“do with us what you please, we have no hope and confidence but in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” This confession increases the jealousy and fury of the tyrant. He orders that the two apostles be stretched on a rack, and cruelly scourged. During this flagellation, God, in His mercy, renders them insensible to pain; an angelic sweetness shines on their forehead, and the people, struck by this spectacle, testify aloud the admiration which it inspires in them. Claudius, blushing to avow himself vanquished, imagines then that by gaining time he will triumph over the holy perseverance of the two confessors. He therefore causes the torments to cease, and orders that they be led back to prison.

Three days after, Ferréol and Ferjeux appear again before the governor of the province. “Sacrifice to the gods,” cries Claudius, “or die.” — “I am a Christian,” answers Ferréol; Ferjeux repeats the same words: “I am a Christian!” At these words, the wrath of the prefect knows no more bounds. He makes a sign to the executioner, who stretches them again on the rack. Their tongue is torn out; but, by an unexpected prodigy, these eloquent mouths do not cease to speak. This miracle only hardens the heart of the tyrant. By his orders, thirty sharp awls are driven into the feet, the hands and the breast of the two apostles; but their courage grows with the torments, and their serenity disconcerts the persecutors more and more. Enormous nails in the form of a crown are planted in their head; but they smile, under the bloody diadem, at the murderer who tears them. At last, their heads are cut off with a sword; they were still praying, their prayer was finished in heaven.

Such are the acts of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux. They were put to death on the 16th of the calends of July in the year of grace 212.

They are represented side by side, holding in their hand their heads which the executioner has just struck off; it is the ordinary characteristic of beheading.

Worship and Relics

The saints Ferréol and Ferjeux, so gloriously martyred at Besançon, were soon known and invoked in all the Gauls. There is found in a Gallican missal, a work of the fifth century, a Mass composed in their honour. A martyrology of the same time, which is attributed to Saint Jerome, makes mention of their heroic death. Saint Germain of Paris consecrated an altar to their worship, and as Christianity spread in the country watered with their sweats and fertilised with their blood, a number of churches were placed under their title. One counts still to-day several which honour them as their patrons. These are, in the diocese of Besançon, the churches of Saint-Ferjeux (Doubs), Lavernay, Miserey, Vaux, Villers-Buzon, Amagney, Trepot, Flangebouche, Cubrial,

Fontenelle-lez-Montby, Étray, Étouvans, Seing, Chenevrey, Bard-lez-Pesmes, Gevigney, Betoncourt-sur-Mance and Saint-Ferjeux (Haute-Saône), and in the diocese of Saint-Claude, the churches of Saligney, Aumont, Fay and Champagne.

The bodies of the holy Martyrs were gathered with care by their disciples, and buried in the grotto which had served them as retreat during their apostolate. Forgotten for some time, their memory was recalled to the respect and veneration of the faithful, and it was reserved to Saint Agnan to discover and recognise their bodies. On 5 September 370, says the legend, a military tribune, appointed to the guard of Besançon, went out one day to make a hunting party. Scarcely had he advanced a mile and a half from the city when his dogs, having started a fox, he set about pursuing it. The animal, hard pressed, fled into a cave where the dogs could not reach it. Now this subterranean grotto was none other than the very crypt where the sacred remains of our holy apostles had been deposited. The tribune persists in pursuing his prey. He orders his soldiers to widen the opening of the cave, and, when they have gone down into it, they suddenly discover the sepulchre where reposed the bodies of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux. The tribune at once had the bishop informed of this marvellous event. Saint Agnan hastened to run to the spot, for he already knew that popular tradition placed in that place the tomb of the holy Martyrs, and he seized with joy this happy occasion to manifest his zeal for

their glory. By his order, the monument was at once opened, and there were found the bodies of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux. The Martyrs still offered the glorious traces of the torture in which their constancy had shone, for their venerable heads bore the nails with which they had been pierced: a glorious crown which girded their foreheads and attested at once the cruelty of the executioners and the courage of the victims. Saint Agnan wished that this precious treasure should henceforth repose in a more suitable place. The tribune and his soldiers formed a guard of honour around the holy Pontiff, and the bodies of the Martyrs were at once brought back in triumph into the city of Besançon. They were deposited with the greatest respect in the cathedral church of Saint John the Evangelist, in the year 370, under the reign of the emperors Valentinian and Valens. Too happy to have found such a treasure, Saint Agnan occupied himself from that moment with having a church built on the very crypt where the holy relics had been discovered, and when this edifice was finished, he had the remains of the Martyrs carried there, embalmed them and covered them with a tomb of alabaster on which they were represented. God glorified the tomb of His servants. This solitude, formerly inaccessible, became thenceforth the meeting-place of all the pious faithful. The peoples ran to venerate the sacred remains of our fathers in the faith, and miraculous graces obtained by invoking them attested more than once their power with God. Beside the church raised on the sepulchre of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux, Saint Agnan had a house built for a community of clerics subject to the rules of the religious life. They were destined to watch over the guard of the holy relics and to serve God by honouring His Martyrs. The monastery of Saint-Ferjeux was inhabited from the 10th century by some undisciplined and ignorant priests who watched with little zeal over the preservation of the holy relics. Several attempts had already been made to carry them off, when Hugh I, archbishop of Besançon, resolved to put in safety this precious deposit. He ordered a solemn procession to the tomb of our apostles and invited to it the people and the clergy. Never did a greater concourse of the faithful answer the call of the prelate. An immense crowd, run together from the most distant country districts, came to hear the Mass which he celebrated pontifically, and accompanied him to the grotto of Saint-Ferjeux. The archbishop had the sepulchre opened in presence of all the assembly. The agreeable odour which exhaled from it was, for the people and for the bishop, a new testimony of the merit and glory of the two Martyrs. At the sight of their bodies, those present shed tears of tenderness, and several were ravished in ecstasy by the sweet joy which they felt. Hugh I put a part of these relics in the altar of the grotto and brought the other back to the cathedral of Saint John where they were deposited under the altar of the Blessed Virgin. This translation took place on 30 May 1033; the Church of Besançon still makes memory of it, each year, in the office and in the Mass of that day. On 2 September 1246, William, archbishop of Besançon, had an authentic recognition made of the relics of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux. He took them from the altar where his predecessor had placed them, and put them in shrines of gilded wood, in presence of John, bishop of Lausanne, of Séguin, bishop of Mâcon, of Alexander, bishop of Châlons, and of several other prelates. On 31 May 1421, eve of the feast of Pentecost, Robert de Combeton, abbot of Saint-Paul, transferred a part of these relics from the cathedral of Saint John into the abbatial church of Saint-Vincent. On 8 May 1424, Thiébaud de Rougemont, archbishop of Besançon, put in a new shrine those which had remained in the cathedral of Saint John. It was on this occasion that some parts of the holy bodies were detached to enrich some churches. The parishes of Sainte-Madeleine and of Saint-Pierre obtained each a rib, the Cordeliers of Salins a bone, and the prelate kept two teeth for himself. Antoine de Vergy, archbishop of Besançon, placed them, in 1539, in a silver shrine of the weight of forty marks, offered by the chapter and the governors of the town. Finally, on 12 June 1636, as the Swedes were ravaging the country districts of Franche-Comté, the relics which were still in the grotto of Saint-Ferjeux were solemnly transferred into the abbey of Saint-Vincent. The abbot and the religious of this monastery, holily jealous of the sacred deposit which had been confided to them, established in their church a pious association, destined to invoke specially the holy apostles, and to render to their relics the veneration which was due to them. Pope Clement X, by a bull given in 1674, granted to this confraternity a great number of indulgences. Finally, Antoine-Pierre II de Grammont, archbishop of Besançon, having examined the statutes which it presented to him, recognised that it would contribute to the increase of religion, and approved it by an ordinance rendered on 16 June 1736.

The association established in honour of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux still subsists to-day in the ancient church of Saint-Vincent, become the parish church of Notre-Dame. As to the remains of the illustrious protectors of Besançon, the town has had the happiness to preserve them. Particles of them exist in the church of the metropolis, in that of the seminary, in the grotto of Saint-Ferjeux and in several other churches and chapels. There is preserved in the church of the diocese of Saint-Pierre the head of Saint Ferréol, on which the archbishops of Besançon took oath on the day of their consecration.

It is the parish of Notre-Dame which possesses to-day the most considerable portion of the relics of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux.

The Church of Besançon celebrates, on the 21st of the same month, a feast which is connected with the worship of our holy Martyrs, and of which it is just to say here a few words. The town of Besançon has distinguished itself at all times by its unshakable attachment to the Catholic religion. In vain the innovators of the 16th century tried to sow their errors there, they could not succeed. To avenge themselves, the Calvinists imagined, in 1373, to surprise the town during the night and to punish it for its fidelity to the ancient faith. They descended in fact the Doubs in light boats, and succeeded, protected by the darkness of the night, in scaling the suburb of Battant. The guards were cut to pieces, and the heretics were on the point of entering the town; but the intrepid archbishop Claude de la Baume, jointly with the count of Vergy, governor of Franche-Comté in the name of the king of Spain, put themselves at the head of the burghers, fell upon the Calvinists, killed a great number of them, made many others prisoners and thus delivered the town. The inhabitants attributed the victory which they had just gained to the protection of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux, during whose octave this affair had taken place. The archbishop instituted an annual feast to render solemn thanks to the Almighty, who had so visibly protected the town. The arm of the illustrious Martyrs has not been shortened, and the piety of our century has nothing to envy that of preceding ages. In 1849, as cholera threatened to invade Franche-Comté, Mgr Mathieu, archbishop of Besançon, commended his flock to Our Lady of Gray and to the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux. The town of Gray was attacked by the scourge, but the rest of the diocese was spared. To testify his gratitude toward Mary and our holy patrons, Monseigneur the archbishop, aided by the offerings of the faithful, offered to Our Lady of Gray a statue in silver, adorned with precious stones. It is with the same views that, having discovered new relics of the saints Ferréol and Ferjeux, he made a present of them to the metropolitan Chapter, after having enclosed them in a very rich reliquary, in the form of a shrine, which is carried in procession to Saint-Ferjeux, on the day of the feast of the Deliverance.

One reads on this shrine the following inscription: *Sanctis Ferreolo et Ferrucio, urbis Bisuntinæ et totius diœceseos defensoribus et patronis, in memoriam præstitæ salutis tempore cholera-morbi, J.-M.-Ad.-C. Mathieu, Arch. Bisunt., voto vovens gratus solvit et venerabili capitulo dono dedit, die quindecima junii, anno Domini MDCCCL.*

Abridged from the Lives of the Saints of Franche- Comté, by the professors of the college of Saint-François-Xavier of Besançon; — Cf. Hunckler, Lives of the Saints of Alsace.

Saint Quirig or Cyr and Saint Julitta, Martyrs, Patrons of the Diocese of Nevers

304. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.

Martyrium appellatur tam corona quam baptismus, quia baptizat pariter et coronat.

Martyrdom is called at once crown and baptism, because it baptises and crowns equally.

S. Cypr., De singular. cleric., c. xx.

The edicts of Diocletian against Christianity having arrived in Lycaonia, Domitian, who was governor of it, executed them with the utmost cruelty. A woman of Iconium, named Julitta, who was of the number of the

faithful, resolved to take flight, conformably to what is counselled in the Gospel for times of persecution: she therefore escaped to Seleucia with Cyr, her son, who was only three years old, and two girls who served her. She did not hesitate to quit all the advantages of which she might have enjoyed in the world; for she was sprung of the blood of the kings of Asia, and possessed considerable goods. Besides, her heart had never been attached to riches, and she had made use of them only to satisfy the indispensable needs of nature.

On arriving at Seleucia, she soon learned that the governor, named Alexander, hated the Christians no less than the prefect of Iconium; she therefore set out to go to Tarsus of Cilicia; Alexander entered that town at about the same time as she. Having been recognised, she was arrested with her son whom she held in her arms, and was led before the tribunal of the governor. The two girls of her suite abandoned her and fled, for fear that their persons also might be seized; but they kept within reach, in order to observe at least at a distance the tortures and the combat of their mistress.

Alexander asked Julitta what were her name, her rank and her country. She answered these various questions only by these words: “I am a Christian.” Then the governor, outraged with anger, had her child taken from her, then ordered that she be stretched and beaten with ox-sinews. As for little Cyr, he had him brought to him. Nothing was more lovable than this child: a certain air of dignity which announced his illustrious birth, joined to the gentleness and innocence of early age, interested in his favour all who were present. It was with much trouble that he was torn from the arms of his mother, and he continually stretched his own toward her in the most touching manner. His cries and his tears marked all the pain which he felt at the violence done him. The governor put him on his knees, trying to kiss him and to appease him; but the child always had his eyes on his mother, and sprang strongly to her side. He scratched the odious face of the governor and gave him kicks in the stomach; and when his mother, in the midst of the torments, cried: “I am a Christian!” he at once said again: “I am a Christian!” Then the furious monster seized the child by the foot, and, from the height of his seat, threw him to the ground. The head of this noble and innocent victim was broken against the edges of the steps; by the violence of the blow, the brains spurted out, and the whole tribunal was sprinkled with blood. Thus the child gave up his soul into the hands of God his Father, of whom he had shown himself worthy.

Julitta, having seen what had passed, thanked God for having granted to her son the crown of martyrdom. The joy which she testified increased still the fury of the judge. He ordered the executioner to raise the Martyr and hang her up to flay her alive, then to pour boiling pitch on her feet. During the execution, a herald cried to Julitta: “Have pity on yourself, and sacrifice to the gods; deliver yourself from these tortures, dread the frightful death which has just struck your son.” But the blessed Martyr, unshaken in the midst of the tortures, raised her voice in her turn, and answered with a generous constancy: “I do not sacrifice to demons, to deaf and dumb statues; but I honour Christ, the only Son of God, He by whom the Father created all things: I am in haste to find my son again. It is in the kingdom of heaven that it will be given me to see him.” After this answer, the governor, seeing that he could not overcome the courage of his victim, condemned her to have her head cut off: he ordered besides that the body of Julitta and that of her son be carried to the place where the corpses of malefactors were thrown. The remorse and confusion which he experienced on the occasion of the crime which he had committed in making a child of three years perish had made him like a wild beast which follows only the fury of a blind impetuosity.

The executioners closed the mouth of Julitta by means of a gag which they fastened violently, then they led her, according to the orders of the tyrant, to the place of execution. Julitta asked them by signs for a few moments to pray to God. The executioners let themselves be moved; they granted her a moment, and loosed the gag. Then the Saint knelt down, and made to God this prayer: “I render You thanks, Lord, for having called my son before me, and for having deigned to grant him, for the glory of Your terrible and holy name, in exchange for a passing and vain life, eternal life in the abode of the Blessed; receive also Your unworthy servant, and may I have the happiness of being united to the prudent virgins, to whom it was given to enter

into the dwelling of the heavenly spirits, where nothing defiled can enter, where my soul will bless God Your Father, the Creator and Preserver of all things, as well as the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen." At the moment when she was finishing saying this last word, the executioner, brandishing his sword with effort, struck off the head of the generous Martyr. This took place in 304, or at the latest the following year. The two girls of her suite secretly carried off her body with that of her son, and buried them in a field near the town.

When Saint Cyr and Saint Julitta are represented together, Saint Julitta, a young woman richly costumed, to recall her royal origin, gives her right hand to her child and holds a palm in the other hand; a like palm is in the right hand of little Saint Cyr. M. Chantrier had the happy idea of representing Saint Cyr without palm, but seeking to raise himself to seize the palm of his mother; one sees at their feet a royal crown and a sceptre. — When Saint Cyr is alone, he is naked, mounted on a wild boar; it is thus that he is seen on the arms of the chapter. On the pilgrim medals of Issoudun, he is only beside his boar, which he holds by the bristles or by the ears. Elsewhere, the picture is completed by placing Charlemagne, either standing, or kneeling, before the holy child, often piercing with his sword the furious animal. It is thus that he is seen on a pillar of the cathedral, on one of the medals of Issoudun, on the windows of Saint-Saulge, diocese of Nevers, and of Saint-Julien-du-Sault, diocese of Sens. — This manner of representing Saint Cyr recalls the following dream of Charlemagne: It seemed to him one day, during his sleep, that he was hunting, when suddenly, finding himself alone in the middle of a forest, he perceived a furious wild boar which was about to spring on him; his first thought, in this pressing danger, was to throw himself on his knees and implore the protection of God. At the same time, he saw beside him a naked child, who promised to deliver him from the peril which he was running, if he would give him a veil to cover him. The emperor did not hesitate to make this promise; at once the child leaped on the boar, and, holding it by its tusks, he led it to the emperor who pierced it with his sword and killed it.

Worship and Relics

Some years after the death of our holy Martyrs, the great Constantine put an end to all the persecutions directed for so long against the Christians, by declaring himself a disciple of Jesus Christ. One of the servants of Saint Julitta was still living; she made known the place where she had deposited the bodies of the holy Martyrs. One reads in their Acts that, after this discovery, "the faithful of the country hastened to procure for themselves some portion of their relics, hoping to find in them a safeguard against the accidents of life, and that they went in crowds to their tomb to glorify God there." The most ancient houses of Lycaonia took glory in recognising Saint Julitta as their relative; every year, according to the report of Theodore, bishop of Iconium, they assembled to celebrate her feast, with a pomp worthy of a Saint and of a daughter of kings. Saint Amator, bishop of Auxerre,[1] predecessor of Saint Germain, in a journey which he made in the East, brought back, it is said, from Antioch, the bodies of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta. He gave an arm of Saint Cyr to Savinus, a man of quality and companion of his journey, and enclosed the rest at Auxerre, in the church which afterwards bore his name; but, fearing that this precious deposit might come to be dissipated and lost, whether in the wars, or in other public calamities, he placed it in a wall on which he had painted a little image of Saint Cyr and an inscription which was to serve as authentication; then, by means of a counter-wall, he hid this tomb. Long did the inhabitants of Auxerre ignore the precious deposit which they possessed; it was only in the time of Saint Jerome, bishop of Nevers, that it was discovered. This holy bishop had a quite particular devotion to Saint Cyr and to Saint Julitta, his mother. He had had built in their honour a chapel adjoining his cathedral, and desired to put his whole diocese under their protection, by dedicating to these Saints the new church which he hoped to have built, when it should please Providence to second his wishes.

Soon, thanks to the liberalities of Charlemagne, he undertook the reconstruction of his cathedral. In the meantime, the wall which Saint Amator had had built at Auxerre fell down suddenly, and uncovered the sacred deposit which the holy bishop had hidden, with the images of the saints and the inscriptions which

indicated the names and the relics of each. The peoples betook themselves in crowds to Auxerre to venerate these precious relics; Jerome betook himself there himself, and was happy enough to obtain a part of them; the arm of the holy child was handed to him, that same arm, it is said, which Saint Amator had formerly given to Savinus, and which the latter left at Auxerre when he set out for Poitou. Jerome transported with solemnity this precious treasure to Nevers, where it was received with joy and happiness. A great number of miracles were wrought by his intercession, and the sick, cured of their infirmities, proclaimed afar the praises of the holy Martyrs. The arm of Saint Cyr was deposited in the new basilica and, from that epoch, Saint Cyr and Saint Julitta became the patrons of the diocese of Nevers. At the end of the year 1857, in a drainage operation, there were found at Imphy a certain number of pieces of money of Pepin, the most part unpublished. One of these pieces, stamped on one side with the monogram of Pepin P. R. *Pipinus rex*, bears on the reverse this exergue: *Sancti Cirici*. It is known that, during the wars of Aquitaine, Pepin held his headquarters at Nevers, from 761 to 763. — Was the cult of Saint Cyr already famous in the Nivernais at that epoch? This curious piece authorises the thought. In that case, Saint Jerome would have found it established, and would only have given it more extension. Tedalgrin, bishop of Nevers, who mounted on that see in 932, received from Guy, bishop of Auxerre, a part of the head of Saint Cyr, which king Raoul had enshrined in gold. Nowhere was the cult of Saint Cyr spread so much as in the diocese of Nevers; four days in the course of the year were consecrated to honouring the young Martyr and his holy mother. In the Breviary printed in 1494, by the care of Pierre de Fontenay, bishop of Nevers, one finds, on 4 June, memory of Saint Cyr and of his companions, martyrs; on the 16th of the same month, the solemn feast of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta; on 15 July, their martyrdom; and finally, on 27 October, the feast of the Reception of the arm of Saint Cyr. Besides the cathedral of Nevers which is under the title of Saint Cyr, the parishes of La Nocle, in the deanery of Flours, and of Chevannes, in that of Brinon-les-Allemands, are placed under his patronage.

A great number of churches, in France, took glory in possessing a part of the relics of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta; such as those of Issoudun, in the diocese of Bourges; of Saint-Cyr-de-Berchères, in the diocese of Chartres; of Saint-Cyrgues, in the diocese of Clermont in Auvergne; of Saint-Sernin of Toulouse, where considerable portions of them are still seen; the convent of the Mathurins of Arles, whence, with the authorisation of Pope Clement VII, there was transported, in the sixteenth century, to Villejuif, in the diocese of Paris, a bone of a leg of Saint Cyr, and a part of the jaw of Saint Julitta.[2] Sancerges, in the diocese of Bourges, which honours Saint Cyr as its patron, must also formerly have possessed some relics of this holy Martyr. Saint-Amand, in Hainaut, also possesses some relics of Saint Cyr.

Many other localities are placed under the title of this holy Martyr, such as Saint-Cyr-sur-Loire, near Tours; Saint-Cyr, in the diocese of Limoges, in the archpriesthood of Rochechouart; Saint-Cyr-le-Cordière, near Toulon, in the diocese of Fréjus, etc. In 1493, Philibert de Champange made over to the cathedral the rather important relics of Saint Cyr which he had in his possession.

As for the gold reliquary given by king Raoul, it is not known today what became of it. The relics of Saint Julitta and of Saint Cyr remained enclosed with others in the glazed retable which surmounted the altar of Saint Julitta, formerly named of Saint Cyr. It was demolished, in 1858, to be replaced by a Romanesque altar more in keeping with the style of the chapel. On 2 Brumaire of the year II (24 October 1793), the representative of the people Fouché, having ordered the churches of the department of the Nièvre to be stripped of all that they could have of precious things, the episcopal vicar Goussot succeeded in saving the relics deposited in the cathedral. These relics, accompanied by their authentications, were transported to Nolay, where they are still found today in several reliquaries.

The most precious of these reliquaries is the one called the Christ of the Relics, on account of the great number of relics enclosed in the cross. They have been verified anew and authenticated by Mgr Dufêtre, bishop of Nevers. One remarks there among others a bone of Saint Julitta, of ten centimetres, and a bone of the arm of Saint Cyr, of five centimetres. It appears that Sieur Goussot could carry off only a part of the relics

deposited in the retable of Saint Julitta, for the Abbé Guérin, on his side, saved a tooth of Saint Julitta, and a bone of Saint Matthew. These two relics were deposited in the reliquary of the cathedral, sealed with the seal of Mgr Charles de Houdet d'Auzers, with an authentic act of 28 November 1830. The other relics enclosed in this reliquary are those of Saint James the Greater, of Saint Sulpicius, archbishop of Bourges, of Saint Anselm, of Saint Jerome, bishop of Nevers, and of Saints Eugenia and Euphemia; plus a rather considerable bone of Saint Cyr. Finally one possesses, at the bishopric, the lower jaw of Saint Julitta, in which there remains only one tooth, and fragments of bones of Saint Cyr; these relics had been at first examined by Mgr d'Auzers and sealed with his seal; this seal has since been replaced by that of Mgr Dufêtre.

Several churches of the diocese of Nevers have also relics of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta, deposited in the tomb of their altars; we can cite among others the churches of Saint-Benin-d'Azy, of Donzy, of Fours, of Arbourse, of Saint-Agnan of Cosne. In 1845, Mgr Dufêtre detached some particles of the bones of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta, in favour of the church of Saint-Cyr-sur-Loire, in the diocese of Tours. The ceremony of the solemn translation of these relics, so precious for this parish, took place on 20 July, and Mgr Dufêtre was pleased to preside himself at this feast, which had drawn an immense crowd. Some years later, in 1856, the parish of Angres, in the diocese of Arras, obtained the same favour. On 16 June 1857, there took place, at Nuits-sur-Armançon, the solemn translation of the relics of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta.

Saint Cyr and Saint Julitta are named in the Roman martyrology under 16 June; but it is more probable that they were martyred on 15 July. It is on this last day that their feast is celebrated among the Greeks, among the Muscovites,[3] among the Armenians[4] and among the Nestorians.[5] The Abyssinians[6] honour them two days before the 19th of their month of Hamle and on 20 January.

Drawn from their sincere acts, published by Dom Roinart; from the *Hagiologie Nivernaise*, by Mgr Crosnier. — Cf. Tillemont, t. v, p. 349; Father Papebrock; the *Acts of the Martyrs*, by the Reverend Benedictine Fathers.

Saint Alène or Aline,[7] Virgin and Martyr

640. — Pope: Séveria. — Kings of France: Sigebert II; Clovis II.

Non ideo laudabilis virginitas quia in martyribus reperitur, sed quia ipsa martyres faciat.

Virginity is not praiseworthy because it is found in martyrs, but because it makes martyrs.

S. Ambr., lib. 1 de Virginitate.

Alène was born in the first years of the seventh century of noble and powerful parents; her father, called Levolde, was chief or lord of Dielbeck in Brabant, and her mother had the name Hildegarde. Like the greater part of the inhabitants of the country, they were idolaters and very attached to their false divinities. One day when Levolde, according to his custom, had gone hunting, he met, on the banks of the Senne, a Christian whom the preaching of the apostles of the Gospel had lately won to Jesus Christ. Conversation being begun between them, they soon came to speak of the new doctrine which was heard announced in Brabant, and both with an equal ardour set themselves to defend their religion. The discussion was being prolonged, when the Christian, to end it and no doubt in the hope of an easier success, proposed to the lord of Dielbeck to receive hospitality at his house. "Tomorrow," said he, "when the sacred mysteries shall be celebrated, you will see for yourself how good the God of the Christians is, and how happy those are who hope in Him."

This proposal was indeed of a nature to astonish Levolde: a secret curiosity determined him to accept, and he betook himself to the Forêt, where all the regard due to his rank was shown him. The house inhabited by the fervent neophyte, and which afterwards was changed into a church by Saint Amand, contained a little chapel in which a priest who served God with much piety sometimes celebrated the sacrifice of the Mass. It was there that the converted family assembled, with some of the faithful of the neighbourhood, to assist at prayer,

at the teachings of the faith and at participation in the Sacraments, thus renewing, in the forests of Belgium, the touching scenes which the Church had offered in the catacombs of Rome or in the deserts of the Thebaid.

The priest therefore celebrated the divine sacrifice at the rising of dawn, in the presence of Levolde, who considered attentively what was passing under his eyes, and listened to all the words that the assembly pronounced. What ardent wishes, what fervent prayers then mounted to heaven for his conversion! but the hour of grace had not yet arrived. Obstinately attached to his idols, he despised in his heart the law of Jesus Christ, and it is with these sentiments that he returned to his castle. There he related to his wife and to Alène his daughter all that had happened to him, and blaspheming the God of the Christians, he swore that his own gods were greater and more powerful. How admirable are the ways of God, and how well He knows, by all kinds of means, how to arrive at the sanctification of His elect! These words, which should have, it seems, confirmed in error two idolatrous souls, became the beginning of the conversion of Alène who, by the shedding of her blood, will later obtain that of her very parents. From that moment, in fact, grace began to act on this innocent young girl who, without being able to explain to herself what was passing in her heart, felt a lively desire to see the Christian of whom her father had spoken to her, and in whose house he had received hospitality. Something urged her to seek to know that law of the Christians which he despised and held in horror. For that it was necessary to use skill and to act with the profoundest secrecy, for on the one side Alène dreaded the anger of Levolde, who would not fail to oppose her design, on the other she feared that the guards of the castle might perceive her. Forgetting therefore the timidity natural to her sex and the dangers of a nocturnal flight, she set out alone, across copses and woods, and arrived at the Forêt without having met anyone on her way. It was there that grace awaited her, and it triumphed easily in a simple and upright heart where truth found no obstacles. With what ardour Alène prayed in that modest and solitary oratory, where God began to communicate Himself to her! What pious desires she formed for the salvation of her father and of her mother! What love of God was kindled in her heart, when she considered the inestimable grace which He had granted her! It was during this time that Saint Amand, as one sees in very ancient hagiographers, instructed the pious neophyte in religion, and had the consolation of baptising her: it did not seem possible that she should continue long to come to this place without her father’s having knowledge of it.

In fact, Levolde, informed of the frequent visits which his daughter paid to the Christian family of the Forêt, abandoned himself to all the brutality of his character; and his fanatical attachment to idolatry making him still more furious, he gave at once to his men-at-arms the severest orders. What were these orders? In what manner were they executed? What sombre incidents marked the tragic event which then took place? One does not find in the authors an account which offers sufficient guarantees of authenticity to enter into this detail. Let us confine ourselves to saying that Alène died, whether in the struggle against the people who wished to arrest her, or in the hands of the bloodthirsty ministers of an angry father.

A pure blood, shed for the cause of Jesus Christ, is never sterile, and God is pleased often to show by sensible testimonies how agreeable to Him is that sacrifice of life which His faithful servants make Him: this was soon recognised at the Forêt, where the body of the young virgin had been buried. The numerous cures which were wrought there made great noise in the neighbouring regions: so the modest sanctuary was not slow to be frequented by all sorts of persons, who came to claim the help of God at the tomb of the new Martyr.

It was then, it is said, that a lord of the country, named Osmonde, an illustrious and rich man, but blind and infirm, had himself brought to Levolde, and spoke to him in these terms: “Since the sick betake themselves in crowds to the tomb of Alène and since by her merits they find healing there, I am going to go there myself and I hope to recover sight there.” “Until now,” answered Levolde, “I have regarded as fables all that has been reported to me, but if you return cured, I abandon my gods and embrace the law of the Christians.” Osmonde, satisfied with this promise, had himself conducted to the chapel where the body of Alène was buried, prayed the Lord to hear him by the merits of the young virgin and recovered sight at once.

Transported with joy, he returned to Levolde, who abjured at the same instant the worship of his idols and ran, his eyes bathed in tears, to the tomb of his daughter, confessing publicly that he was himself the author of her death. At once he had himself instructed in the truths of the Gospel, received Baptism, changed his name to that of Harold and had the consolation of seeing his wife share his faith and his happiness. Both began to lead a new life and practised with fervour the Christian virtues until the day of their death. They were buried at Dielbeek in the church of Saint Ambrose which they had had built themselves.

She is represented with an arm torn off; and sometimes having near her, or on her head, a crown.

Worship and Relics

The chapel of Saint Alène is very famous for the benefits and the miraculous cures which God granted there at all times. These multiplied prodigies have inspired in the inhabitants of the country a great devotion for their patroness. Nicolas, of the family of Chièvres, who mounted on the see of Cambrai in 1140, proposed to consecrate this church on account of the extraordinary concourse of the people; but, says a contemporary historian, having learned that it had been so by Saint Amand in very remote times, he abstained, out of respect for the holy apostle of Brabant. In 1193, Guy, also bishop of Cambrai, ordered Godescalc, abbot of Afflighem, to go to the Forêt to raise the relics of the Saint and to expose them to public veneration: numerous miracles were again wrought on this occasion. One cites specially the cure of a young person of Enghien who had lost an eye, and who suffered so from the other for seven years that she could scarcely direct her steps surely. She recovered sight perfectly and returned to her parents without the least trace of her infirmity. In 1523, on 3 January, the shrine which enclosed these relics was opened and visited by order of Robert de Croy, bishop of Cambrai, by Adrian, bishop *in partibus* and vicar-bishop of the same diocese. The body was found intact and perfectly recognised. In 1660, Mgr Mathias Hove, archbishop of Mechlin, in whose diocese this church then was, had it likewise visited by a dean of Brussels, licentiate in theology, with all the ordinary procedures. This shrine was, in 1644, replaced by another in silver, belonging to the monastery.

At the time of the revolution of 1793, at the moment when the republican troops were penetrating into Belgium, the nuns of the Forêt emigrated to Germany, with the body of their holy patroness. They brought it back after the days of the terror, and the ecclesiastical authority recognised it solemnly in 1823.

One still sees today the little chapel raised on the tomb of Saint Alène; it has been incorporated in the church built in 1482. This tomb is covered with a stone of black marble, placed on arcades of the same material.

The patronal feast is celebrated on the Sunday before Saint John’s day; one sees on that day a multitude of inhabitants of Brussels and of the neighbouring places flock to the Forêt, who come to venerate the relics of their patroness and to implore her protection with God.

Lives of the Saints of Cambrai and Arras, by M. l’Abbé Destombes; — Cf. *Act. Sanct.*, t. iv Jun..

Saint Lutgarde, Virgin, and Religious at the Abbey of Aywières

1246. — Pope: Innocent IV. — King of France: Saint Louis.

Ipse mundus dum tot amaritudinibus cruciat, dum tot calamitatibus ingeminat, quid aliud nisi ut non ametur clamat?

The world itself, by the bitternesses with which it makes us drink, by the calamities with which it overwhelms us, what does it cry to us, if not not to love it?

Saint Antoninus.

Lutgarde was of Tongres, the ancient abode of the bishops of Liège. Her father, who loved her tenderly, thought beforehand of her future, and to prepare a dowry for her (for he was not rich), he gave to a merchant,

a friend of his, twenty marks of silver, which were to yield more in trade. As for her, she did not at all depart from the intentions of her father, and although she did nothing against honesty and modesty, she nevertheless loved vanity and quite expected to be married; but God, who had chosen her from all eternity to make of her one of His most beautiful spouses, overturned all these projects; the merchant did badly in his business; instead of drawing a considerable gain from the twenty marks of silver which he had taken in partnership, he lost the very capital in divers voyages which he made in England, and, from twenty, saw himself reduced to one.

This misfortune afflicted Lutgarde, without disgusting her with the world. She continued to adorn herself, to seek the ordinary amusements of her age, to make and to receive visits, and to listen to words of marriage which divers young men brought her. Her mother, who saw well that after the loss which they had suffered, it was not possible to dower Lutgarde according to her condition, solicited her often to renounce all things and to enter a monastery, where she might have Jesus Christ for Spouse: nevertheless this wise mother used neither artifice nor violence. Lutgarde resisted for a long time these desires which were not her own. At last, she consented to be put as a boarder in the monastery of Saint Catherine, near the town of Saint-Trond, at three short leagues from Tongres, on the borders of Brabant and of the country of Liège. It was there that Our Lord had resolved to open her eyes and to change the love which she had for the creature into a very pure and very perfect love for His goodness.

Though a boarder, she still saw the young men who sought her in the world. One day when she was conversing with one of them, Jesus Christ appeared to her suddenly in the same form which He had on earth, and, uncovering to her His sacred breast, said to her: “Contemplate here, Lutgarde, what you ought to love and how you ought to love; leave there the attractions of the insensate love of creatures, and you will find in My heart the pure delights of divine love.” These words were like a burning arrow which enflamed her heart; she felt herself at that very hour so marvellously changed that the world was nothing more to her, and that all her affections were for God; so that the same young man having afterwards come back to see her, she said to him, like Saint Agnes to the one who sought her for bride: “Withdraw from me, I belong to another betrothed.” She remained nevertheless, some years more, a secular. She went out once from her monastery to go to her sister’s: a gentleman, whom she had often rebuffed, even with insult, made all his efforts to carry her off; but God saved her miraculously by the ministry of an Angel, and made it seen, by a terrible chastisement with which He punished the squire of this gentleman, that this virgin was under His protection.

Having returned to that monastery, she began a life so penitent, so retired and so given to prayer, that the other nuns said that it would not last, and that it was only a fire which would pass. These words filled Lutgarde with fear and distrust of herself, and made her shed many tears; but the Blessed Virgin appeared to her and assured her that she would never lose the grace which she had received from her Son, and that on the contrary, she would receive from it continual increases. From that time, she entered into so great a familiarity with her Spouse that she spoke to Him heart to heart, and that, when she was obliged by obedience to attend to some business, she said to Him with a simplicity full of love: “Wait for me, I pray You, my divine Spouse; when I shall have despatched this business for Your glory, I will return at once to find You.” Saint Catherine, martyr, patroness of the monastery, consoled her with a visit and told her to have good courage, because Our Lord had resolved to raise her to the merit of the most excellent among virgins. But, in order that the community should doubt no longer the excellence of her vocation, on the day of Pentecost, when the *Veni Creator* was being sung in choir, she was seen raised from the earth by two cubits through the fervour of her prayer, and, a short time after, there appeared on her head, in the middle of the night, a flame whose vivid light surpassed that of the sun.

God gave her also the grace of curing all sorts of maladies; her saliva was an efficacious remedy; but, as the great number of persons who came to implore her help interrupted her silence, she prayed her dear Spouse to change this grace for her into another more useful for her salvation: He asked her what she wished; she told

Him that it was the understanding of the whole Psalter, in order that, comprehending what she said in singing His divine praises, she might do it with more fervour and devotion. This favour was at once granted her, and she entered in an admirable manner into the hidden senses of these sacred canticles; but she knew by experience that her humble ignorance, which obliged her to unite herself to her Spouse in Himself, was no less advantageous to her than the knowledge of the sense of Scripture; so she returned to our Saviour and said to Him: “What need is there, Lord, that a poor sister such as I should penetrate the secrets of Your divine words? Change for me, I pray You, this grace also.” — “What do you wish then?” said her Beloved to her. — “What I wish and what I ask of You,” said she, “is Your heart.” — “But I,” said the Saviour, “wish rather to have yours.” This answer, far from afflicting her, filled her with an incomparable joy: “Be it so!” said she at once; “take my heart, purify it by the fire of Your love, put it in Your sacred breast, and may I never possess it except in You and for You!” So that there was made between Jesus and Lutgarde a happy exchange of hearts, not in a corporal manner, but spiritual: that is to say that there was made so close and so perfect a union of the created spirit with the uncreated Spirit that Jesus was always in Lutgarde to occupy her and to enflame her, and that Lutgarde was always out of herself to live only in Jesus and for Jesus. This brought it about that her heart was so well guarded and so perfectly fortified that no temptation of the flesh, and no other evil thought dared approach it.

A few days after, a great sweat having taken her during the night, she thought it was fitting that she should dispense herself from Matins, in order not to go there all drenched, and not to expose herself to the danger of falling ill; but she heard a voice which said to her: “Why do you remain thus in bed? Rise promptly; you ought not to have regard to this sweat, but begin to do penance for sinners.” She rose promptly and all frightened; then, when she was at the door of the choir where Matins were already being sung, Our Lord appeared to her fastened on the cross and all covered with blood; and, approaching her, He detached one of His arms to embrace her with much love, and made her put her lips on the bleeding wound of His side. This grace filled her with so much sweetness that the greatest austerities no longer seemed anything to her, and her mouth had contracted, by the touch of the sacred wound of the Son of God, a marvellous sweetness.

When she felt some pain, either of body or of mind, all her consolation was to place herself before the image of Jesus Christ crucified; and then this wound in the side opening in her favour, she poured out in her soul so great a fulness of joy and unction that all her pains were dissipated in an instant. One day when she was afflicted with an intermittent fever, she consoled herself by thinking of Saint John the Evangelist, who had the happiness of laying his head on the sacred breast of Our Lord, and of drawing there the saving waters of the Gospel. At this moment, a great eagle appeared to her in spirit; it had wings so brilliant that they were capable of lighting the whole world with their splendour; and, having put its beak in her mouth, it filled her soul with such a light that it discovered to her the greatest mysteries of our religion and of the conduct of God over souls. So the pious Thomas of Cantimpré, who wrote her life, assures us that what she said was so profound and so elevated, and that she mingled with it words so efficacious and so enflamed, that he could not hear her without an extreme astonishment, and that, if the ecstasy into which her conversation put him had lasted long, he could never have borne it without dying.

She entered also sometimes into that state which we call spiritual inebriation, which made her, being quite out of herself, go hither and thither to invite everyone to the love of her Spouse: this happened to her especially one day when she was in the hermitage of a recluse. This great fervour, with which she was filled, made her wish to receive the virginal consecration from the hands of her prelate, named Huart, bishop of Liège; for, though she was a religious, she had not yet received this blessing. Several other girls received this favour with her; but, though the bishop put on them all only the same crown made of thread, there was nevertheless a holy man who saw him put one of gold of extraordinary beauty on the head of Lutgarde. His admiration was the greater because, having asked the almoner why this difference was made, the almoner assured him that none was made. From this moment she attached herself to Jesus Christ by a union still

closer; and she was one of those chaste souls who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. Her humility was so perfect that nothing was capable of giving her a sentiment of pride; no one was poorer than she; and she was detached even from what was most necessary to life, all her joy being to suffer something for God; but she did all in her power that others should not suffer, because mercy and compassion had taken entire possession of her heart.

The prioress, who governed then the monastery of Saint Catherine, having come to die, the nuns elected her for their prioress. She acquitted herself of this duty for some time with much vigilance and perfection; but her humility giving her horror of command, and being besides warned on the part of God to quit it, she passed to the monastery of Apvières,[1] of the Order of Cîteaux, in Brabant: in order not to be elected superior, neither in that house nor in the others of the same Order which were being founded in France, she asked of Our Lord an incapacity to learn the French language; this favour was granted her to such a point that, in the space of forty years that she was with religious who spoke it, she could scarcely learn to ask for bread in French; this brought it about that she was not employed in the exterior ministries, and that all her time was given her to apply herself to contemplation.

At that time, the Albigensian heretics were making terrible ravages in many provinces of Europe, and above all in Languedoc. The Blessed Virgin, to whom is given this praise that it is she who combats, who overcomes and who conquers all heresies, wishing to render the Church victorious over this one, appeared to Lutgarde with a sad and disfigured face, and with garments of mourning and a manner altogether neglected. The Saint asked her whence it came that, being beautiful as the moon and resplendent as the sun, she was in a state so worthy of compassion? She said to her: The subject of my affliction is that the Albigensian heretics crucify my Son anew; in punishment of so great a crime, the wrath of God is near to bursting on the earth and to exercising everywhere terrible and unheard-of vengeances; to remedy these evils, you must undertake a fast of seven years, with no other nourishment than bread and water; and during this same time, strive to appease by your tears the rigour of this redoubtable justice. Lutgarde offered herself to it with very great heart, and observed in fact this long fast with an invincible courage and patience. When she had finished it, Our Lord commanded her another as long and as severe, in favour of Catholics who lived in sin, permitting her only to add to it some vegetables; and to oblige her to it with more sweetness, He appeared to her all covered with wounds and blood, and said to her: “Do you see, my daughter, in what state I present Myself to My Father to draw His mercy on sinners? I wish you also to suffer for them, and to offer Me every day at the sacrifice of the Mass, to reconcile them with Him.” She accomplished again this second period of seven years with the same fervour as the first, and she conceived, after the example of her divine Spouse, so great a tenderness for sinners, whom He calls His own, because they were given to Him to be made just, that she never ceased to pray and to weep for them. So her prayers were so efficacious that the blessed Marie d’Oigmes assured that there was no one on earth who had so much power to obtain the conversion of sinners and the deliverance of the souls of purgatory as this faithful lover of Jesus. Her holy confidence went so far as sometimes to say to Our Lord, in the ardour of her prayers: “Lord, either efface me from Your book, or have mercy on this creature for whom I pray to You.” And by this holy importunity, she obtained for several persons, both religious and seculars, a perfect contrition of heart. We have also many examples of souls of purgatory whose pains she shortened, or whom she entirely delivered by the force of her intercession and her tears; such were an abbot of the Order of Cîteaux, named Simon, who was condemned to eleven years of torments, and the prior of Oignies, called Baudoin, who, at the hour of his death, was recommended to her in a heavenly vision.

She was, all her life, the terror of demons, and these monsters of hell feared her so much that they did not dare even to approach her, nor the oratory where she ordinarily made her prayer. It was enough, to put them to flight, that she said, in spirit, this first verse of psalm lxix: “My God, come to my aid; Lord, make haste to help me!” Whatever pain and whatever temptation the persons who had recourse to her might have, she

delivered them easily from it by her conversations or by her prayers; those even whom the different agitations of their heart had carried as far as despair, she calmed by the sweetness of her words, and filled them with a firm confidence in God. She had excellently the gift of prophecy and the grace of knowing things hidden or distant, and the most secret thoughts of the heart. She predicted, by this means, that the Tartars, who had thrown themselves on Poland, Russia and Bohemia, would not pass further and would not come into the Low Countries, and she learned also the death, precious before God, of the blessed Jordan, general of the Order of the Jacobins, and of Cardinal James of Vitry. Although she did not know the French language, when persons speaking only that language had need of her consolations, she understood them and made herself also understood by them miraculously, speaking the Teutonic tongue. She often cured several sick persons who were recommended to her. Matilda, a great lady of the country of Liège, was so deaf that she did not hear even the singing of the nuns in choir: Lutgarde, touching her ears with her finger, gave her on the spot the use of hearing. A nun named Elizabeth could not rise from her bed on account of the great weakness of her limbs: she obtained for her her first strength by these words which Our Lord said to her: “Arise, arise, daughter of Jerusalem, who have drunk until now the chalice of the wrath of God.” A child being extremely tormented with the falling sickness, she put a finger in his mouth, imprinted the sign of the cross on his breast, and, from that time, he felt no more any attack of it.

The visits of the angels and of the blessed souls were ordinary to her; but nothing was capable of contenting her except the sight and possession of her Spouse. As she passed her life in groanings and continual tears for sinners, so that her eyes seemed to be two inexhaustible sources of tears, this infinitely lovable Lord appeared to her one day, and, after having thanked her for having so well pleaded the cause of His sinners, wiped her face with that same hand which He stretched out for them on the cross, and dispensed her from weeping in future, assuring her that she would obtain no less by the fervour of a tranquil prayer than by her sighs and by the continual cries which she had so long sent toward heaven.

Moreover, in spite of all these favours, she lived in such humility of heart that she feared in all things to displease God; so that she could say, like Job, that she “watched over all her works.” She had above all great pains over the recitation of her canonical hours; and, although she never stopped voluntarily at any distraction, nevertheless, when she recognised that some foreign thought had occupied her mind, she repeated once and twice what she had already said. But Our Lord delivered her from this scruple: a shepherd came to say to Lutgarde on His part to disquiet herself no more on this subject. He said also Himself to her in a vision: “Fear nothing, my daughter; I will supply for this defect.” Finally, He assured her another time, by a heavenly ambassador, who came to speak to her under the form of a very venerable man, that her life was according to His heart, and that she ought to be at rest. Following these assurances, she had a great desire to go out of this world, to go to enjoy her Beloved; she prayed Him day and night to shorten her exile, to make her enjoy His divine embraces; but He taught her, in a rapture in which she saw Him all covered with wounds, and the feet, the hands and the side all bloody, that she ought rather to wish to suffer for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls than to die for her own consolation. The desire of martyrdom also seized her in such a way that she asked her Spouse urgently to shed her blood for Him, like Saint Agnes. She was heard in some manner: for, one day when this desire was so vehement that it almost made her die, she broke a vein near the heart, which made her pour out so great an abundance of blood that all her garments were stained with it. She kept this wound until death, and Our Lord promised her that, for this blood which the desire of martyrdom had made her shed, she would have in heaven a reward like that of Saint Agnes. She had still other crosses by which her heavenly Spouse purified her entirely and led her to a very eminent degree of holiness. Her custom was to communicate every Sunday, according to the counsel of Saint Augustine, who exhorts the faithful not to approach the holy table more rarely; but, although, for a soul as inflamed as hers with the fire of divine love, these long intervals from one communion to the other might seem insupportable, nevertheless her abbess, called Agnes, carried away by the relaxation and the indevotion of that time, thought that she communicated too often, and prescribed to her at her own pleasure another rule. Lutgarde received

the orders of her superior with much gentleness and submission; she warned her only that Our Lord would punish her for it; in fact, He sent this abbess an insupportable illness which fastened her to her bed and put her in the impossibility, not only of communicating, but also of going to the church and of assisting at the sacrifice of the Mass: which lasted until she recognised her fault and permitted Lutgarde to communicate as usual.

Eleven years before her death, God visited her with a scourge which would have appeared intolerable to any other person, but which she received with a marvellous joy: that of blindness; she was therefore deprived of the sight of all sensible and exterior things, and could walk no longer except groping; but her soul was, in recompense, enlightened with an admirable light, which discovered to her the truths of the other life and the mysteries of the Divinity. She did not fail, during this time, to assist in choir and to sing there with an extraordinary ardour and gladness: which made a nun see one day a great fire come out of her mouth. In the fourth year of blindness, Our Lord commanded her to make a third period of seven fasting years, that is to say to fast again seven years, to turn aside a great evil with which the Church was menaced: she did it with the same ardour with which she had done the other two, and finished it only with her life. God, having regard to this penance, broke the designs and the snares of a secret enemy of the Christian people. Two years after, that is to say five years before her decease, she predicted to her companion that she would die on the Sunday after the feast of the Holy Trinity, on which is read the parable of a man who made a great feast: which happened in effect. The rest of the time that she lived, and above all the last two years, Our Lord appeared to her often to warn her that the hour and the moment of her reward drew near. He said to her one day “that He did not wish her to be longer separated from Him, but that, as a disposition to their consummated union, He asked of her three things: the first, that she should render infinite thanks to His eternal Father for the favours which she had received from Him; and that, as she was not capable of acknowledging His mercies, she should invite all the angels and the Saints to help her in this duty of justice; the second, that she should not cease to pray to Him for sinners, that they might be converted; the third, that she should rest on Him in all things, and that all her occupation should be to desire ardently and to await with a holy impatience to possess Him.” Her infirmities did not hinder her from making a charitable correction to her sisters, when she saw them in relaxation. Among other things, she reproved them often for the indevotion and irreverence with which they sang the divine offices, representing to them that the majesty of a God to whom they spoke well deserved that they should do it with attention and with a holy fear; but as she saw that they did not amend, she assured them that God would punish them severely. In effect, a short time after her death, the plague declared itself in this convent, and fourteen of the most considerable nuns were attacked by it and died of it. At last, the time which had so often been predicted to her having arrived, she had divers ecstasies, in which she saw things altogether supernatural; and her eyes, which had been closed for eleven years, opened miraculously to perceive an army of blessed who came to congratulate her on the glory which she was soon to possess. She received all the Sacraments with a devotion worthy of her great love; and in the midst of a gladness with which she was as if inundated, her soul flew away into the bosom of God, to reign there eternally with Him. This death happened on 16 June of the year 1246, on the Saturday evening after the Holy Trinity, the office of the Sunday being already begun, according to her prediction. Her body was opened at the instant of a whiteness so brilliant that it surpassed that of lilies, and her eyes remained very beautiful and open toward heaven, without anyone’s ever being able to close them.

So many miracles have been wrought at her tomb that, although she was not canonised with the ordinary ceremonies, she is nevertheless recognised and published as a Saint in the Roman martyrology. Surius has reported her life, composed, as we have already said, by Thomas of Cantimpré. Those who have written on the saints and holy women of the Order of Cîteaux speak of her also with much honour. Her relics rest at present at Bas-Ittre, near Nivelles; their authenticity has been recognised by the bishop of Mechlin.

Saint Lutgarde is represented before Our Lord, who appears to her and shows her His wounded heart to make her renounce every other love than His. She is represented again with Our Lord who appears to her showing His wounds to God His Father, in order to arrest His wrath ready to strike the earth on account of the crimes of the Albigensians.

Life of Saint Lutgarde, by Thomas of Cantimpré. — Cf. Godescard, Brussels ed.

Saint Jean-François Regis, of the Society of Jesus

1597–1640. — Popes: Clement VIII; Urban VIII. — Kings of France: Henry IV; Louis XIII.

Officium praedicationis Patri misericordiarum omni sacrificio est acceptius, maxime si fuerit studio charitatis impensum.

The office of preaching is more agreeable to the Father of mercies than every kind of sacrifice, above all when one accomplishes it with an ardent charity.

S. Francis of Assisi, in suis Opusc. collat. 17.

Although less filled with extraordinary events than those of many other holy Apostles, the life of Saint Jean-François Regis is none the less fitted to give us the edifying spectacle of all the marvels which grace is accustomed to work in souls. An immense desire to procure the glory of God; a courage which no obstacle and no danger ever rebuffed; an untiring application to the conversion of sinners; an unalterable gentleness which made him master of the most rebellious hearts; an inexhaustible charity for the poor; a patience proof against all contradictions and all ill-treatment; a firmness which threats and the very sight of death could never shake; the most profound humility, the most entire self-denial, the most absolute stripping of self, the most exact obedience, an angel's purity, a sovereign contempt of the world, an insatiable love of sufferings, in a word, all the virtues by which one sanctifies oneself and sanctifies others, such is the summary of this admirable life.

Jean-François Regis was born on 31 January in the year 1597, at Fontcouverte, in the diocese of Narbonne, of a family which had distinguished itself by its fidelity to the Catholic faith in a heretical country. His father, Jean de Regis, was the son of a younger son of the house of Desplas, without contradiction one of the most illustrious of the Rouergue, and his mother, Madeleine d'Arse, was the daughter of M. d'Arse, lord of Ségure, a very brave and very worthy gentleman. Our Saint was held at the baptismal font by François de Breltes de Turin, baron of Pechairic, and by Claire d'Aban. While yet a child, he was already remarkable for his piety. He was born an apostle, he was one from the college. His zeal exercised itself on his companions in study, several of whom amended themselves by his examples and by his counsels. His conversations were only on pious things; he spoke of them with so much unction and vivacity that he inspired in all the love of virtue. Several of those whom his piety edified, to be more within reach of his counsels and of his examples, came to dwell in the same house as he. Not content with being himself their living rule, he composed a written rule. The hours of study were fixed, useless conversations forbidden, during the meal a book of piety was read. There was examination of conscience in the evening; every Sunday they communicated and heard the word of God. Regis found himself head of a little community, the most regular and exemplary. He lived in this way until the age of eighteen. A very grave illness which he then had and from which God delivered him when it was least expected changed into an invincible resolution the desire which he had long nourished of consecrating his life to the salvation of souls.

On 8 December of the year 1616, in his nineteenth year, he entered as novice, at Toulouse, the Society of Jesus. From the first days, he made himself admired by the most fervent. He found nothing painful in the Rule, accustomed from long before to all that it prescribes: silence, recollection, humility, obedience, self-denial, mortification. One of the trials to which novices are subjected, in the Society of Jesus, is to send

them to the hospital to accustom them to overcome their delicacy and to exercise the most painful ministries of Christian charity. Regis was admirable in this exercise. The most repulsive sick were those to whom he attached himself by preference: he consoled them, he helped to dress their wounds, he made their beds, and that with an outpouring of heart which showed well enough that he saw only Jesus Christ in the person of the poor.

His novitiate finished, Regis resumed his studies of eloquence and of philosophy, as is the custom among the Jesuits. The ardour which he had put into making himself pious, he brought likewise to acquiring knowledge. However, a rather unusual thing, his application to study diminished his piety in nothing. The reputation of his holiness pierced outside, and, when he went out, those who saw him pass pointed him out under the name of the Angel of the College. It was while he was studying philosophy at Tournon that he made his début in the career of the missions, in which he was later to work so many marvels. He undertook the sanctification of the borough of Andance. The success of this first mission of the great servant of God was admirable. One saw the vices which reigned most in this borough, drunkenness, swearing, impurity, banished, and the frequent use of the Sacraments re-established. The odour of holiness which he left there still subsists today. It is there that he established, for the first time, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, to bring back among the faithful the worship of the divine Eucharist. He drew up himself the regulations of so holy an institution, which has since spread everywhere, but of which one must recognise as founder Regis, aged only twenty-two years.

Although Regis had gathered such abundant fruits in this first mission, his superiors nevertheless called him, at least for a time, to other occupations. In 1625, he was designated to go to teach the humanities in the town of Le Puy. There he was the model of professors: wholly given to his pupils, he occupied himself only with what could make them advance in knowledge and in virtue. He prepared himself to take his class as for an affair of the greatest importance; the preparation to which he was most faithful was to go and pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Exhortations to piety, short and lively, mingled of themselves with his teaching, and produced the happiest effects on the minds of the young people. He had for his pupils the tenderness of a mother. He was particularly eager to relieve those who were poor. One of them, Jacques Gigon, being dangerously ill, Regis approached his bed, made the sign of the cross over him, saying: “Have good courage, my son, you will be cured; God wishes you to serve Him henceforth with more fervour than you have done.” At once the child found himself better, and in a few days he was cured. In 1628, he was sent to Toulouse to study theology there. At night, he went out secretly from his room and betook himself to the chapel of the house. The superior was warned of it. “Do not disturb,” he answered, “the conversations of this angel with his God. This young man is a Saint, and I should be much deceived if his feast is not celebrated one day in the Church.” One doubted not that this superior, who was Father François-Tarbes, a very pious and very austere man, had been extraordinarily enlightened by God on the eminent holiness of the young theologian.

Regis was ordained priest in 1630. He celebrated his first Mass with a devotion so tender that he did nothing but melt into tears during the sacred mysteries: the assistants could not hinder themselves from weeping themselves. They thought they saw an angel at the altar, by his modesty and by the divine fire which shone on his face. The respect and the holy fear which the presence of Jesus Christ imprinted in his soul appeared in his whole person. The plague-stricken of Toulouse had the first-fruits of the ministry of our Saint. His superiors, who feared to expose his youth, granted him, only by dint of insistence on his part, the permission to go and serve and console the victims of the scourge. But the permission obtained, the heroic young man spared himself little. He wished to die a martyr and to win heaven by a single and violent effort.

As piety is worth still more than science, it is by exercises of piety that Saint Ignatius wished not only to begin but also to end and complete the instruction and formation of his children. An entire year, devoted solely to piety, happily crowns the admirable education of the Jesuit Fathers. It is useless to say how Regis passed this last year of novitiate; as there are no bounds to holiness, his grew still further on this occasion.

An order of the general of the Society drew him from his retreat and sent him to Fontcouverte to settle there certain family affairs. Nevertheless the things of heaven continued to occupy him much more than those of earth. In the mornings, he preached to the people and gave catechism to the children: after which he heard the confessions of all who presented themselves. In the evening, a little before night, he made a second sermon. The rest of the day was employed in visiting the poor, and even in begging for them. His brothers blushed at it and reproached him with forgetting his birth. One day, as he was crossing the square, carrying on his shoulders a straw mattress to a sick man, the Saint was hooted by soldiers to whom this spectacle appeared new. The brothers of Regis resolved then to put bounds to this zeal which exposed him to public derision. They spoke to him of propriety. He answered that all the ignominies of the world would not turn him from the exercises of charity. — "Very well," replied the brothers, "practise the works of mercy; but can you not do so without covering us with confusion, by making yourself ridiculous through the scenes you give in public?" Regis answered then that it is not by humbling themselves that the ministers of the Gospel dishonour their character; that, as for him, he was quite resolved to regulate his conduct by the virtues of the Gospel and not by the maxims of the world. But what justified him better than all the words he could have said was the change of manners which he wrought in the whole town. The numerous conversions wrought at Fontcouverte determined the superiors of Regis to destine him solely to the missions: in summer he evangelised the towns, and in winter the country districts.

He began with Montpellier; his language was simple and popular, but the fire of charity with which he was burned within himself gave to his discourses such a power that the whole town came to listen to him, and that no one could hear him without melting into tears. One came out of his instructions with contrition in the heart, they were converted in crowds. An eloquent and renowned preacher, having heard him, said: "It is quite in vain that we all labour to adorn our discourses. While the catechisms of this holy Missionary convert, our fine language does but amuse without producing any fruit."

Regis addressed all conditions; he had a preference only for the poor: "Come, my dear children," he said to them, "you are my treasure and the delight of my heart."

Often he remained in his confessional surrounded by the poor, until evening, without taking nourishment. Someone having made the observation to him: "I assure you," he answered with simplicity, "that when I am occupied with these poor people, I cannot think of anything else." He was seen again at Montpellier, as at Fontcouverte, going through the streets, laden with bundles of straw which he had begged to bed down the poor sick. Children gathered in crowds amused themselves at the strange equipage; and someone having told him that he had made himself ridiculous: "Very well," he answered, "one gains doubly when one relieves one's brothers at the price of one's own humiliation."

A great number of sinful women corrupted the youth of Montpellier; the Saint converted a good number of them, and, joining prudence to zeal, he assured their conversion by confiding them to the keeping of charitable persons. The difficulties peculiar to this work did not hinder the Saint from labouring at it all his life and from obtaining marvellous successes in it. Later, the number of conversions increasing, he created, to receive them, houses of refuge, the care of which he confided to holy religious women. He founded later a refuge of the same kind in the town of Le Puy, become the centre of his labours. He found unheard-of embarrassments and disappointments in this enterprise, twenty times put in peril by obstacles of every kind, and twenty times saved by his zeal and by his perseverance.

The apostolic career of Father Regis lasted ten years, during which he made religion flourish again at Montpellier, in Languedoc and the Vivarais, in the town of Le Puy and in all the Velay. He wrought a veritable transformation in the countries desolated by heresy and by the corruption of morals, which is its natural consequence.

Irreligion and disorder were very great at Sommières, capital of a fine country which is called the Lavonage, which is four leagues from Montpellier. One mission sufficed to change everything. The servant of God, himself astonished at the miracles of conversion which God wrought by his ministry, wrote after his mission to his general that the fruit had surpassed his expectation, and that he had no expression to explain it. One would have said that the inhabitants had become other men, so pious and orderly had the town become.

The holy man instituted the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament at Sommières and in all the boroughs and villages of the Lavonage. He put peace in all the families; he established the evening and morning prayer in each household; he regulated the manner of succouring the poor of each parish; he took, in short, all the measures necessary to maintain the good he had done in the country. The rigour of the season did not hinder him from penetrating into the most inaccessible places of the whole country. His austerities were extraordinary. All his nourishment was reduced to bread and water; sometimes he added to it a little milk and some fruits. From that time he had forbidden himself meat, fish, eggs and wine. He never left off the hair-shirt; and the little rest which he granted to nature he took on a bench or on the floor. Some Calvinist soldiers preparing to pillage a church, he advanced toward them crucifix in hand, and he spoke to them with so much force that they desisted from the sacrilegious resolution they had taken. Another time, he went to ask of an officer, also a Calvinist, the restitution of goods which had been taken from a poor man. The officer, informed of the ill-treatment which Regis had undergone at the hands of the soldiers, was so edified by the silence he kept on what concerned himself personally that he granted his request. No country of France had suffered so much from Calvinist heresy as the diocese of Viviers and all the Vivarais. Religion was almost extinct there. The churches of this country, which were not devoid of pastors, were served by ignorant and scandalous curés. The most abominable vices reigned everywhere.

The mission of Father Regis in the Vivarais lasted three years: what labours and fatigues for the holy man in those mountains which he traversed in every season and in all weathers! But also what an abundant harvest came to reward his pains! At the end of these three years, the country was no longer the same: heresy vanquished and almost stifled, religion universally known and practised, good morals re-established, the churches raised from their ruins and provided with instructed and pious pastors, divine and human authority respected: that is what had been done in the space of three years. Among the numerous conversions wrought by the Saint, there were two above all which drew many others after them. It was that of the Count de La Mothe-Brion, who, after having lived like the wise of the world, entered upon the career of penance, and devoted himself wholly to the practice of good works, and that of a very rich Calvinist lady, who dwelt in the village of Uscz. She was known for her zeal for heresy. Father Regis went to find her.

“Madam,” he said to her on accosting her, “it is a long time that God calls you; will you then be always rebellious to the grace which urges you inwardly? Have you the design of losing your soul, for which a God willed to shed His blood on the cross? Have you ever understood what it is to lose oneself for an eternity?”

This lady appeared a little surprised; but charmed by the modest air of the man of God, she answered him: “God forbid, my Father, that I should wish to lose my soul! I have nothing more at heart than to save it.”

“You must then,” resumed the Saint, “embrace the Catholic religion, which was the religion of your fathers, and which is the only one founded by Jesus Christ, the only one in which salvation is found.”

“You ask me for my conversion,” she said, “and I am astonished at having nothing to reply. I have resisted until now all who have spoken to me; but I know not what interior impulse of the Holy Spirit forces me to yield at present. I wish to be a Catholic: instruct me, I abandon myself to your direction. Something supernatural is passing in me which I do not understand and of which I cannot give myself an account.”

She abjured, in fact, in the hands of the bishop of Viviers. This last conversion gave a new lustre to the holiness of Regis, and confirmed the peoples in the opinion in which they already were that God acted visibly by his ministry.

About the same time, heaven permitted a violent storm to rise against the holy missionary. He was accused of troubling the repose of families by an indiscreet zeal, of filling his discourses with personalities and invectives contrary to decency. The bishop of Viviers at first took his part; but at last he listened to the repeated complaints that were brought to him. Believing that they were at least in part well founded, he wrote to the superior of the Jesuits, that he should recall Regis. At the same time he sent for him; then, after having made him severe reprimands, he told him that he was obliged to send him away. Regis had recourse to none of the reasons which might have justified him; he contented himself with answering that he was only too guilty before God, and that, considering his little light, many faults had doubtless escaped him. “Besides,” he added, “God, who sees the bottom of my heart, knows that I have had no other end than His glory.” The prelate, charmed by so humble and so modest an answer, suspected that he might have been deceived. The explanations which were afterwards given him made him come back entirely from his prejudices. He rendered public homage to the virtue of Father Regis, until the beginning of the year 163 i, epoch at which the latter was called to Le Puy by his superiors. The prelate, in sending the missionary away, wrote to the provincial a letter in which he made great eulogies of the virtue and prudence of the worthy workman who had laboured in his diocese, and a single reproach, that of lavishing his health too much. “It is the only thing,” he added, “in which we could never agree; I always reproached him with doing too much; and he pretended that he did not do enough. I put him back into your hands; it is for you to use your authority to oblige him to spare more than he does a health so precious, and to prevent the most charitable of all men toward others from having so much hardness for himself.”

Regis, after having taken leave of the bishop, betook himself to Le Puy, according to the order he had received from his superiors. It was then that he expressed the desire to go and carry the Gospel to the Canadians. He wished to go and seek in North America, among the savages, the palm of martyrdom, the supreme object of his ambition. But God willed to preserve him for France.

At the beginning of 1635, the Count de La Mothe, having at heart to bring back to the true faith the town of Le Cheylard, infected with the errors of Calvin, remembered him to whom he owed himself his return to the truth, and he called Father Regis. The latter found at Le Cheylard only a sad assemblage of heretics and bad Catholics. At the end of some time, the same miracle of conversion and return to God, which followed everywhere the preaching of Regis, was accomplished. He did not shut up his zeal within the enclosure of the town. He made frequent excursions into the surrounding villages and into isolated dwellings. He strayed in the unknown paths of those mountains; he was several times obliged to pass the night in the woods.

The zeal of the holy man communicated itself to the whole population. It was a touching spectacle to see, in the midst of winter, whole villages abandon their houses and their domestic affairs, make three and four leagues across the snows and ice, to have the consolation of hearing the servant of God and of confessing to him. Besides, their steps were never vain. At whatever hour of the day or night they came, Regis was theirs. One day when he was coming out of the church very tired, after having finished the functions of the morning, he found a troop of people who were arriving from very far. “Father,” said one of them to him, “for the love of God do not refuse us the help of your charity. We have walked all night, and we have made since yesterday twelve leagues by horrible roads, to profit by your instructions: give us the consolation that we have come to seek from so far and with so much inconvenience.” The holy missionary, moved by this speech to tears: “Come, my children,” he said to them, “I carry you all in my heart.” Sustained by his zeal which gave him strength, he preached quite anew, as if he had done nothing that day; he heard their confessions; and, after having given to each salutary counsels, he sent them away filled with joy and animated by the desire to live as true Christians.

After this mission, the Saint went to give one at Privas, which produced no less fruit. Never did he refuse the benefit of his ministry to those who came to seek him from afar, except when his fidelity to his word and his punctuality, which he put before everything, opposed it. One day when he was giving a mission at

Sainte-Agrève, a numerous troop of peasants presented themselves to him, asking to hear his instructions. But he had had the mission announced for the morrow at Saint-André, and nothing could hinder him from setting out. One then saw a marvellous thing which recalls well enough the journeys of Our Lord Jesus Christ across the mountains of Judaea. These good people, eager for the word of God, took the course of accompanying him: they followed him all day to confess to him without thinking of eating. The journey was a sort of mission: the Saint stopped from time to time to produce and make the troop produce acts of contrition and of love of God; all the mountains round about resounded with sacred hymns and cries of gladness, which announced the coming of the holy apostle; as he advanced, the inhabitants of the villages which lay on the road came to swell the number of those who had followed him.

Father Clement, procurator of the Jesuits of Tournon, was passing then over these mountains. Perceiving from afar so many people walking together, he asked what that could be, and what so many confused voices which he heard signified: “It is,” he was told, “the Saint who passes accompanied by the inhabitants of several villages.” Continuing his road, he saw at the entrance of a large borough much people coming out of it and running with precipitation: he had again the curiosity to inquire where these people were going: “They are going,” was the answer, “to meet the Saint who approaches.” He entered afterwards the village of Saint-André, and, having perceived before the church a prodigious crowd of people, both from the village and from the neighbouring places, he asked some of them what they were doing there: “We are waiting for the Saint who comes to give the mission,” they said.

“He set forth the Christian truths,” says the Count de La Mothe, on the occasion of this mission of which he was witness, “with a clearness and a simplicity which made them sensible to the dullest; with a solidity and a force which convinced the most obstinate; with a divine unction which forced the most insensible to love them. His holy life gave a new efficacy to his discourses: without speaking, he persuaded and touched.” Another mission took place at Marlhes. A few days after he had arrived there, a woman, seeing his cloak pierced on all sides, and going off in tatters, begged him to permit her to mend it and to put patches on it: to which he consented. The opinion which this woman had of his holiness made her keep the torn pieces and keep them preciously. She was soon repaid for her charity by a double miracle which God wrought on two of her children. One was sick of a formed dropsy, the other of a very burning continual fever; she applied to each of them one of the pieces she had kept; on the spot they recovered a perfect health. These same pieces of stuff were afterwards a fruitful source of miraculous cures. The fruits of the mission answered to this beginning: “After the mission,” says the curé of Marlhes, “I no longer recognised my parishioners, so changed and transformed into other men did I find them. In the space of a month, he heard, he alone, in my parish, more than two thousand confessions, almost all general. Not content with sacrificing himself wholly to the service of my parish, he made journeys through all the neighbourhood, with a courage which astonished all who saw him. I have seen him myself, in the most rigorous weather, obliged to stop in the midst of the forests, to satisfy the eagerness of those who wished to hear him speak of salvation. I have seen him on the top of a mountain , raised on a heap of snow hardened by the cold, distribute to the people the bread of the word of God, pass whole days in this exercise, and still occupy himself all night in hearing confessions.” He employed the last four years of his life in the sanctification of the Velay. During summer, he preached at Le Puy; in winter, he went through the villages and the mountains. The town of Le Puy soon changed its aspect by the apostolate of the holy man. Every day, he gave an instruction to the children on the catechism. The crowd there was so great that places were kept two or three hours in advance. Soon the church of the college of the Jesuits being too small, he passed to that of Saint-Pierre-le-Moustiers, which belonged to the Benedictines. The catechisms of Father Regis drew into this church as many as five thousand hearers. Here is what Father Mangeon, who became later confessor of the Duchess of Orleans, related of it.

“The catechisms of Father Regis,” he says, “were touching and eloquent, but with an eloquence rather infused than natural or acquired. Father Jean Filleau, provincial, although he was to depart the next day,

wished me to conduct him to the church where Father Regis gave them: it was about half-past noon; as I told him that there would be no more place for him and for me: ‘No matter,’ he answered, ‘I wish to have once more the consolation of seeing that infinite crowd of people which gave me so much pleasure yesterday.’ We went there and I found him a place, not without much trouble. He listened to him standing for an hour. He shed so many tears and was so touched that he said to me on going out: ‘If this Father preached forty leagues from here, I would go and hear him on foot. This man is full of God and of the love of Jesus Christ; there is not his equal.’” But nothing made so much impression as the holiness of his life, which shone nowhere so much as at Le Puy. He redoubled his austerities: he made only one meal a day, which consisted of a few fruits or a few vegetables. “During the two years that I lived with him,” says Antoine de Mangeon, “I never saw him eat meat. As for wine, everyone knows that he had forbidden it to himself long since.”

To preaching, Father Regis joined a continual and untiring application to succouring the poor. Scarcely had he finished the catechism than, quite exhausted and all covered with sweat, he went to visit them in their houses, in the prisons and in the hospitals. He assembled three times a week all those of the town, and as he never separated instruction from alms, he began by making them say the prayer, which was followed by a fervent exhortation; he then distributed bread or money. He ended this exercise of charity by the thanksgiving which was rendered to God. He founded among the ladies of the town a charitable association for the relief of poor families. Not content with that, he solicited ceaselessly the rich in favour of those who were in need. He obtained thus considerable alms. Money, wheat, clothing, beds, linen, all was good for him. He had a room where he deposited all that, and which became truly the treasure of the poor. He had a storehouse of wheat from which all the needy of the town came to draw. They were never sent away. The storehouse always contained wherewith to satisfy them. There was a famine during which the Saint miraculously fed all the poor. Marguerite Baud, a pious woman, was the keeper and the distributor of his wheat. One day when Marguerite Baud had warned him that she had neither wheat nor money to buy any, he did not fail to send her a poor woman burdened with several children, with order to give her the wheat she asked for. Marguerite, surprised at this order, went to find him on the spot, and told him that it seemed strange that he should give her such an order, knowing very well that she was in the impossibility of executing it. “Go,” he answered her, “return and fill this poor woman’s sack.” Marguerite replied that there was not a grain of wheat left. — “Go, I tell you,” resumed the Saint, “you will find wheat abundantly for her and for several others.” Marguerite obeyed; and, having gone away, she found her storehouse overflowing with wheat. This miracle of multiplication was renewed several times during the same famine: and all the poor who addressed themselves to Regis were succoured.

To assist the dying was a work to which he gave himself with a quite particular zeal and success. When he was called to confess the sick, he left everything on the spot. God had given him a particular grace to dispose them to die holily. So the sick all wished to have the consolation of dying in his arms. To be more within reach of running where need demanded, he never undressed at night.

Several miracles are related which God wrought at the prayer of Regis to manifest His own power with the virtue of His servant.

He had confessed a woman abandoned by the physicians and who was, in fact, on the point of expiring. Her relatives besought him to ask her cure. Regis, touched by their faith, put the medal of his rosary in a vessel of water, and, after having blessed the water, made the dying woman drink it, who found herself at the same moment without fever and in a health as perfect as if she had not been ill.

A young lady who had helped him in his charitable works found herself at the last extremity. Father Regis threw himself on his knees, and, in the name of the poor, he besought the good God not to take from them her whom they loved as their mother. After this prayer, he rose, and, calling the dying woman by her name: “Render thanks to God,” he said, “who has the goodness to prolong your days, that you may serve Him, and the poor, His children, with more fervour.” Come back then as from a profound sleep, and recovering her

senses at the sight of the holy man: “Ah! my Father!” she said to him, “in what state do you find me?” — “Well,” he answered, “you are cured; make a good use of the health which it has pleased God to give you back.”

There was nothing he did not do to oppose evil and sin, of whatever nature it might be. He exposed his life to it without the least hesitation. One day, he learns that a man of quality had drawn a young orphan into a house, where he sought to seduce her by his promises. The Saint goes there at once: his sight at first troubles this man; but he recovers himself and says to him haughtily: “What do you come to seek here, my Father? you meddle with many things that do not concern you.” — “I come,” answers Regis, “to seek this innocent sheep that you carry off from God like a ravening wolf.” — “Withdraw,” resumes this furious man; “otherwise your imprudence may cost you dear.” — “I shall not withdraw till I have saved this orphan; as to the threats you make me, know that they are not capable of shaking me, and that I shall glory in being exposed to your blind fury.” This man, no longer master of himself, drew his sword and advanced on the Saint to pierce him with it. — “Ah! very willingly,” cried the servant of God, “I shall shed my blood for Jesus Christ.” And, uncovering his breast: “Strike,” he said, “I shall die content, provided God is not offended.” Surprised at so much intrepidity, the libertine withdrew quite confounded. The young girl was placed in a pious house, where she lived and died holily.

He made several prophecies which were all accomplished. Marcellin du Fornel, a young gentleman of Saint-Didier, in the Velay, passing through Le Puy, paid him a visit, and told him that he was going to be received doctor of law at Valence.

“Have you no other design?” the holy man answered him. — “I think of marrying,” replied the young gentleman; “a considerable match is offered me, and the affair is to be concluded any day.” — “In a few days,” said the Saint to him, “your hopes will vanish with your ambitious projects; and before the year passes, you will be a novice of our Society.” The marriage was soon broken off; the young man, disgusted with the world, gave himself to God in the Society, as Father Regis had predicted to him. During the winters of the last four years of his life, our Saint traversed the boroughs and villages of the dioceses of Le Puy, of Valence and of Viviers, which are found in the Velay. He made his first mission in the little town of Fay and in the neighbouring places, at the beginning of the year 1636. He gave sight to a young man of fourteen years, Claude Sourdon, at whose father’s house the holy man had accepted lodging; then to a man who was in his fortieth year, and who had lost sight eight years before. These two miracles disposed minds marvellously, and the mission produced the most abundant fruits. To give a just idea of the conduct which Regis held there, we are going to insert here what Claude Sourdon deposed of it juridically in the presence of the bishops of Le Puy and of Valence.

“Everything in him inspired holiness. One could neither see him nor hear him without feeling inflamed with divine love. He celebrated the holy mysteries with a devotion so tender and so ardent that one thought one saw at the altar, not a man, but an angel. I have seen him sometimes in familiar conversations fall silent suddenly, recollect himself and be enflamed, after which he spoke of divine things with a fire and a vehemence which showed that his heart was transported by a heavenly impulse. He expressed himself, in the instructions which he gave to the people, with an unction which penetrated all his hearers. He passed the day and a considerable part of the night in hearing confessions, and a sort of violence had to be done him to oblige him to take a little nourishment. He never complained of the fatigue nor of the unbecoming manners of those who addressed themselves to him.

“After having laboured with an untiring ardour for the salvation of the inhabitants of Fay, he gave himself wholly to that of the neighbouring peoples. He set out every day very early in the morning to go and visit the peasants scattered in the woods and on the mountains. The rains, the snow and the other rigours of the season could not hold him back. During the whole day, he went from cottage to cottage, and that on foot and fasting, except that my mother forced him sometimes to take an apple, which he put in his pocket. We saw him again

only at night, when all the fatigues of the day did not hinder him from resuming his ordinary functions; he relaxed from labour only by new labours. The Calvinists followed him with as much eagerness as the Catholics."

In the month of November of the year 1637, he went to make at Marlhes a second mission. The roads by which he passed would have frightened the boldest persons. One had to climb now over rocks covered with ice, now descend into deep valleys filled with snow, now walk through brambles and thorns. As he was climbing with much trouble on one of the highest mountains of the Velay, having no other support than the brushwood to which he held, hand and foot failed him suddenly; he fell, and broke a leg. This accident did not hinder him from continuing his road with his ordinary tranquillity, and from making still two leagues leaning on his staff, and supported by the one who accompanied him. Arrived at Marlhes, it did not so much as enter his mind to send for a surgeon. He went straight to the church, where a great multitude of people awaited him, and he heard confessions there for several hours. The curé, warned by Regis' companion of the accident which had befallen him, begged him, but uselessly, to retire. After the Saint had fully satisfied his charity, he allowed his leg to be examined, and it was found perfectly cured.

To these immense labours he added astonishing macerations. The rector of the college of Le Puy having been informed of it, ordered him to obey the curé of Marlhes in all that concerned the care of his health. The Saint did what his superior required of him; he submitted with the last exactitude to all that it pleased the curé to prescribe to him, although the attentions that were had for his person were a burden to him. The curé rose sometimes at night to observe him: he saw him now on his knees, his face prostrate against the earth and bathed in tears; now standing, his eyes turned toward heaven, absorbed in a profound contemplation; at other times he heard him heave deep sighs, and cry out in the transports of his love: "What is there in the world that can attach my heart, if it be not You, O my God?" It happened to him to see him often, while he prayed, enflamed like a seraph, motionless for several hours, appearing to have neither feeling nor knowledge. That is what he afterwards attested in a juridical deposition. He added still that the Saint had cured in his presence, by a simple blessing, a man who had dislocated his shoulder, and that, by the sign of the cross, he had delivered from the demon a energumen who had suffered for more than eight years, without the repeated exorcisms of the Church having procured him any relief. Regis being at Saint-Bonnet-le-Froid, the curé of the place, who perceived that every night he went out secretly from his room, had the curiosity to examine where he went and what he did. After having sought him uselessly in the house, he advanced toward the church, which was not far off; he found him praying before the door, on his knees, his hands joined and his head bare, in spite of the cold, which was excessive. He represented to him the danger to which he exposed his health; but seeing him determined to continue his conversations with God, he gave him the key of the church, that he might be there under cover from the injuries of the air. On returning to Le Puy at the end of winter, he stopped at the house of the curé of Vourcy, who had formerly been his pupil, and who was tenderly attached to him. The latter representing to him that he did not spare his health, and that it was important, for the sanctification of souls, that he should measure his labour by his strength, the holy man told him in confidence what had happened to him some months before, when, having broken a leg, God had healed him miraculously. "After so visible a mark of the goodness of God," he added, "ought I not to put my life into His hands, and rest entirely on Him for the care of my health?"

In the winter of 1638, he resumed his country missions, beginning with the borough of Montregard. Having arrived by night at this place, he went, according to his custom, straight to the church, which he found closed. He knelt before the door; he prayed there so long, and with so profound a recollection, that he did not perceive that he was all covered with the snow which was falling abundantly. Some peasants who saw him in this state pressed him to enter a neighbouring house to take a little nourishment there.

The harvest was very abundant at Montregard. Regis drew from error there a great number of Calvinists, among others Louise de Remezin. She was a young widow of twenty-two years, who was singularly

esteemed in her sect for her knowledge and her birth. The holy missionary made himself esteemed by her in divers conversations which they had together. He cleared up the difficulties which she proposed to him on the controverted points, and principally on the Eucharist, dissipated all her prejudices, and brought her to the point of making abjuration of heresy. The news of her change raised her family and all the chiefs of the Huguenot party against her. They wished to engage her anew in the sect which she had abandoned; but her faith was too solid to yield to such a trial.

Toward the end of autumn 1639, the Saint went to resume his missions in the neighbourhood of Montregard, at Issengeaux, at Marcoux, at Le Chambon, at Monistrol, where he had, so to speak, only appeared. In the month of January 1640, he betook himself to the little town of Montfaucon, which is seven leagues from Le Puy. Success answered his zeal and his desire, when the work was interrupted by the ravages of the plague. Regis devoted himself generously to the service of those who were attacked by this scourge. When, in crossing the streets, he found an abandoned sick man, he carried him on his shoulders to the hospital. His charity revived that of the ecclesiastics. The danger to which he exposed himself gave lively disquiet to the curé of Montfaucon; he ordered him to leave the town, lest he should become the victim of his zeal, as had already happened to several ecclesiastics. He obeyed, but it was shedding a torrent of tears. “What!” said he then, “are they then jealous of my happiness? Must I be envied, by a false compassion, the merit of so precious a death, and must the crown be taken from me when I am on the point of receiving it?”

The plague having ceased a short time after at Montfaucon, Regis went to resume his mission there; but he was soon recalled by the rector of the college of Le Puy, in order to replace a professor who was lacking. This contretemps penetrated him with the liveliest grief. He obeyed nevertheless out of respect for the order of his superior; but he wrote to his general to ask permission to devote the rest of his days to the country missions, and to employ at least six months of each year in them. The general, who knew his zeal, did not hesitate to subscribe to his desires.

At the beginning of autumn 1640, Father Regis resumed his mission of Montfaucon. The happy dispositions which he found among the people redoubled his fervour and his courage. After a month of labour, he passed to Raucoules, and from there to Veirines, where he applied himself to the sanctification of souls with the same ardour and the same success; he announced then the mission of La Louvesc for the last day of Advent; but having known by a heavenly light that he was nearing his end, he went to make a retreat at Le Puy, to prepare himself for death. At the end of three days, passed in an entire solitude, he made his general confession as if he had to die that very day; then conversing with his confessor, he testified to him, with the tenderest and liveliest sentiments, the impatience in which he was to possess God. He sighed now only after eternity. He said confidentially to one of his friends that he would not come back from the mission which he was about to undertake; he declared the same thing also to other persons, but it was only in mysterious terms.

He set out from Le Puy on 22 December, in order to be at La Louvesc for Christmas Eve. Besides having much to suffer from the difficulty of the road, he chanced again to lose his way on the second day. Night having surprised him in the midst of the woods, he walked a long time without knowing where he was going. At last he found himself near the village of Veirines. Overwhelmed with fatigue, he retired into an abandoned house which was open on all sides and which was falling in ruins; he passed the night there lying on the ground and exposed to the violence of a very biting north wind. The sudden passage from cold to heat occasioned him a pleurisy, which was accompanied by a very burning fever. His pains soon became very sharp. The sight of the house where he lay recalled to him the stable of Bethlehem, and he esteemed himself happy to be able to imitate in the same season the poverty and the sufferings of his divine Master. The next morning, he reached La Louvesc with much trouble, and made the opening of the mission there by a discourse which did not at all feel the weakness of his body. He preached three times on Christmas Day and on Saint Stephen’s day, and passed the rest of the time in the confessional. After the third sermon of Saint Stephen’s day, two faintings seized him while he was hearing confessions. The physicians judged that his

malady was without remedy. He began his general confession again, then asked for the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, which he received as a man all enflamed with divine love. As a broth was then presented to him, he refused it, saying that he wished to be nourished in the same manner as the poor, and that it would please him to be given a little milk; he asked next, as a favour, that he be left alone.

He suffered violent pains; but the sight of a crucifix, which he held between his hands and kissed continually, softened his sufferings. His face was always tranquil, and nothing was heard to come from his mouth but tender and affectionate aspirations, but ardent sighs toward the heavenly country. He asked to be carried into a stable, that he might have the consolation of expiring in a state like that of Jesus newly born on the straw. He was given to understand that the extreme weakness in which he was did not permit him to be transported. He thanked God unceasingly for the happiness he had of dying at the feet of the poor.

He remained the whole last day of December in a perfect peace, his eyes tenderly fixed on Jesus crucified, who alone occupied his thoughts. Toward evening, he said to his companion with an extraordinary transport: “Oh! my brother, what happiness! how content I die! I see Jesus and Mary who deign to come to meet me to lead me into the abode of the Saints.” A moment after, he joined his hands, then lifting his eyes to heaven, he pronounced distinctly these words: “Jesus Christ, my Saviour, I commend to You my soul, and put it into Your hands.” In finishing them, he gently gave up his spirit about midnight of the last day of the year 1640. He was nearly forty-four years old, and he had passed twenty-four of them in the Society of Jesus. He was buried on 2 January in the church of La Louvesc. There was at his funeral a prodigious concourse of clergy and people. The grief which his death had caused was soon changed into veneration. People ran from all sides to visit his tomb, where numerous miracles were soon accomplished. We are going to report some of them. In 1656, a nun of Le Puy, named Madeleine Arnaud, attacked by dropsy, and paralytic in all her body, unable to stir, was so ill that the last Sacraments were administered to her. She weakened to the point that it was thought she was going to expire, and the physicians gave her no more than half an hour of life. As she was still in full consciousness, a relic of the servant of God was presented to her. Having prayed with fervour, she put it on her breast, and at that moment she found herself perfectly cured. This fact was attested, on oath, by fourteen eyewitnesses. A burgher of Le Puy obtained by the same means the cure of an absolutely incurable malady. Two blind women, several paralytics and other sick of every kind, were also cured by the intercession of the servant of God. One counted among these sick persons of distinction by birth.

In presence of so many prodigies, twenty-two archbishops and bishops of Languedoc wrote to Pope Clement XI: “We are witnesses that before the tomb of Father Jean-François Regis, the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, and the noise of these astonishing marvels is spread among all nations.” The heroism of the virtues of Father Regis having been maturely examined at Rome, and the truth of the miracles wrought by his intercession having been juridically attested there, he was beatified in 1716 by Clement XI. Clement XII canonised him in 1737, at the request of Louis XV, king of France, of Philip V, king of Spain, and of the clergy of France, assembled at Paris in 1735. His feast has been fixed on 16 June.

He is represented sometimes with the leather pilgrim’s cape, and the staff surmounted by a crucifix; sometimes with a crucifix in his hand as a missionary.

Worship and Relics. — Association of Saint François Regis

The body of Saint François Regis having been raised from the earth by the archbishop of Vienne, on 30 September 1716, was placed on an altar which was dedicated to him in the church of La Louvesc. Before the Revolution, the relics were in a wooden casket and enclosed in a silver shrine. At that disastrous epoch, four young men of the place, who were brothers and belonged to a Christian family, penetrated by night, with the consent of their curé, into the church, opened the shrine, took the relics from it, in order to preserve them from profanation, and carried them away to their father’s house, named Buisson, where they remained hidden for several years. Soon after this pious theft, the silver shrine was carried off and destroyed by the

revolutionary authorities. When the Church of France had recovered some tranquillity after the publication of the concordat, thought was given to returning the precious remains of Saint Jean-François Regis to the veneration of the faithful. On 13 July 1802, Mgr de Chabot, bishop of Mende, in whose diocese La Louvesc was then found, betook himself to this village and proceeded to the verification of the relics, which were found in the state that the process-verbal designated. The head was entire, with the exception of the lower jaw, and there was about half of the bones. They were carried in procession to the church, exposed in the middle of the choir and replaced afterwards in the place which they formerly occupied. From that moment, the pilgrimage of La Louvesc has not ceased to be frequented by a very great number of faithful, who run from all sides to claim before God the protection of the holy apostle of the Velay. Saint François Regis is the patron of a pious association, formed in our days, for the purpose of rehabilitating illegitimate unions and putting a curb on the disorders of morals which afflict civil and religious society.

A pious layman, M. Gossin, then vice-president at the tribunal of first instance of the Seine, and afterwards councillor at the royal court of Paris, founded, in 1826, this association, which has extended to a very great number of towns of France and of foreign countries.

We shall let M. Gossin relate himself the vow which he made at the tomb of Saint François Regis and the consequences that resulted from it:

“In the name of the holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

“I the undersigned, vice-president of the tribunal of first instance of the department of the Seine, residing at Paris, afflicted for several months with divers grave infirmities and fearing for the re-establishment of my health;

“Have betaken myself to the tomb of Saint Jean-François Regis, at the village of La Louvesc, diocese of Viviers, on Tuesday 29 June 1824, day of the feast of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, with the intention of asking of God, with a firm faith, my cure, by the powerful intercession of the holy Apostle of the Velay and of the Vivarais. Having, immediately on my arrival, made my prayer at the tomb of this great servant of God, having confessed in the sacristy of the church and having conferred about it with my confessor, who gave me his approbation, I have put in writing the vow below, to be placed on the altar and to be made by me, from the heart, at the moment of the consecration, during the Mass at which I shall have, if it please God, the happiness of communicating today, 30 June 1824, feast of the commemoration of Saint Paul, at six o’clock in the morning.

“Tenor of the vow. — ’If it please God to restore to me the fulness of my former strength and of my former health, I make the vow to undertake at once and to continue until my death, for the extirpation of concubinage and the celebration of religious marriages in the capital of this kingdom, the execution of the projects which God knows that I have meditated to this end for a number of years, without my having had, until this day, the courage to try to realise them. This work shall be the principal aim of my thoughts, of my labours and of my efforts, I shall consecrate myself wholly to it, under the direction of the ecclesiastical authority, in the moments of which my other and older duties permit me to dispose. All that, in the present moment, would be, in this respect, considered as inexecutable, I shall attempt anew in better times. If I cannot succeed in founding for ever the work whose conception has been, for so many years, present to my mind, I shall occupy myself ceaselessly (to console myself for this failure of success) with the isolated rehabilitation of a certain number of illicit unions by means of the holy Sacrament of marriage. If I cease to dwell at Paris, I shall carry this work and all its consequences to the place of my new residence.

“’In a word, if I return to health, I shall live no more except to procure, according to my feeble means, the glory of God and the edification of my neighbour, notably under the head of the improvement of morals and the cessation of scandals, as is explained above.

“’May the divine Goodness be pleased to grant me, in that case, the intelligence, the strength, the perseverance, the humility and the confidence of which I shall have need for the accomplishment of the present vow, and may it agree that this work (placed immediately under the protection of the holy Virgin and of Saint Joseph) receive the name of Saint-François Regis. If it enter into the designs of God to reject this vow and to leave me in my state of suffering and sickness, or even to put an end at once to my days, may it please His infinite mercy to grant me above all the spirit of patience, of repentance, of mortification and of resignation which is and will be so necessary to me to sanctify the rest of my life and the redoubtable passage from life to eternity. — So be it.

“Done at La Louvesc, 30 June 1824, before the six o’clock Mass.’”

Health was restored to the pious magistrate, and he occupied himself from that time with putting his vow into execution. On 12 February 1826, Monseigneur the Archbishop of Paris gave his approbation to the work, which bore from then on the name of Saint-François Regis. Up to this day, in the city of Paris alone, the society of Saint Regis has re-established order in more than fifteen thousand families. M. Gossin was particularly seconded in his holy enterprise by M. P.-X. Fougeroux, head of bureau at the ministry of finance, who died in the odour of sanctity in the year 1838. M. Gossin wrote the life of this servant of God, and of several other of his worthy collaborators of the society of Saint Regis (1 vol. in-18, Paris, Gaume frères, 1839). He himself, after a life full of labours and merits, gave up his soul to God on 1 April 1855, at the age of sixty-six years.

Life of Saint Jean-François Regis, by Father Daubenton, a Jesuit; *Lives of the Saints*, by Father Croisot; Godescard; local notes.

Saint Similien, Bishop of Nantes (4th century)

Saint Similien, bishop of Nantes, after having governed his church with all the vigilance and fidelity of an excellent pastor, was buried by the Christians in the place where there was afterwards built a church which bears his name, and which is, it is said, situated in the place where it is believed that he withdrew in the time of the persecution of Diocletian, and where he built an oratory. It already existed in the time of Clovis I. The Barbarians besieged Nantes toward the end of the fourth century; the siege had already lasted two months, when, according to Gregory of Tours, the peoples saw toward midnight men, clothed in white, come out of the basilica of the martyrs Donatian and Rogatian with lighted tapers, and a like troop come out of the basilica of the great confessor the bishop Similin. These two troops appeared to join, to salute each other, to pray together, and then to withdraw each to the place from which it had first set out. It might very well be that there was no veritable vision, and that they were in effect two processions which united their prayers to draw down the help of heaven. However that may be, the Barbarians took fright, and fled with so much precipitation that on the morrow morning not a single one remained at the siege. The same vision produced another effect on him who commanded this army; he was called Chilon, and was not yet regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit. Touched inwardly, he was converted and received Baptism.

The church of Saint Similien was afterwards ruined by the Normans, who several times took and sacked the town of Nantes. There was in this church a well, into which they threw the head of the holy bishop; afterwards it was given in ownership by the bishop Waltier to the Canons of Nantes, on condition that they would repair it. It is apparently to their care that one is indebted for the one which subsists today, and which was considerably enlarged and embellished in 1834.

Dom Lobineau, *Saints of Brittany*; — Cf. *Breviary of Nantes*; S. Greg. of Tours, *De la gloire des Martyrs*, ch. 40.

Saint Aurée, Bishop of Mainz, Saint Justina, His Sister, and Their Companions, Martyrs (451)

In the time when the Huns infested with their incursions the provinces of the banks of the Rhine, and when, animated by the fury of the Arian heresy, they carried everywhere into the Catholic churches trouble and desolation, Aurée, bishop of Mainz, very celebrated for his holiness as for his doctrine, was driven from his see and exiled from his episcopal city. His sister Justina, a virgin consecrated to God, followed him, as did some other persons devoted to the Catholic faith. The Barbarians overthrew the city and dispersed the faithful, and, when the prelate came back, he found nothing more than ruins to raise up. This was the occupation to which he devoted the last years of his episcopate.

The Arians could not bear the spectacle of a Catholic church which was reborn to a new life. They attacked the prelate as he was at the altar, massacred him with his sister, and cast their corpses into a neighbouring well; they remained there buried under a heap of rubbish until the reign of Charlemagne, epoch at which the archbishop of Cologne, Riculphe, had them carried to the monastery of Saint Alban, which he had just built. They were placed there with honour. In the course of time, their tombs were forgotten. But it happened that the worn pavements of the monastery were renewed; then, among other holy bodies, those of Saint Aurée and of Saint Justina were found again. They were still all covered with blood, of a perfect preservation and very beautiful. God, besides, honoured them by numerous miracles and supernatural cures of all sorts.

Proper of Mayence.

Saint Aurélien, Bishop of Arles and Confessor (551)

Aurèle or Aurélien succeeded Auxanius on the see of Arles (546). He flourished in the time of Pope Vigilius and of Childebert I, king of the Franks. What man he was, what important part he played, what zeal he displayed, what authority he enjoyed with kings and bishops, what was his vigour, his vigilance, his love of discipline and his other virtues: one can easily judge by the letters of the sovereign pontiffs Vigilius and Gregory. Vigilius, at the request of king Childebert, named him vicar of the Holy See in the Gauls and granted him the Pallium. He assisted at the holy council of Orleans, celebrated under the pontificate of Vigilius, the thirty-eighth year of the reign of king Childebert, on 28 October 549.

He gave, in a memorable circumstance, a striking proof of his attachment to sound doctrine. The emperor Justinian had condemned what were called the three Chapters, that is to say the writings of Theodoret against Saint Cyril, the letter of Ibas, bishop of Edessa, to Maris the Persian, and the writings and the person of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the coryphaeus of Nestorianism. The Eutychians had pursued with ardour this condemnation from which they hoped to draw great advantages, and the greater part of the Catholics were alarmed at it, in the fear that it might be abused to strike a blow at the general council of Chalcedon. This edict was published in 546. Pope Vigilius, who had betaken himself to Constantinople in 547, refused at first to receive the imperial edict, but, seduced afterwards by the hope of seeing peace re-established in the Church, he himself condemned the three Chapters with this reserve: “Saving the authority of the council of Chalcedon.” This decision satisfied no one, and deacons of the Church of Rome wrote to some churches of the West that the Pope had abandoned the holy council. Aurélien, having received one of their letters, wished to assure himself of the truth, and sent to Constantinople a cleric of his church, named Anastasius, with letters for Vigilius. The latter answered, on 29 April 550, to the holy bishop of Arles: “That he had admitted nothing which was contrary, either to the constitutions of his predecessors, or to the identical faith of the four councils of Nicaea, of Constantinople, of Ephesus and of Chalcedon, nor anything that could do injury either to the persons of those who had subscribed to the definition of this holy faith, or to the decrees of his predecessors Celestine, Sixtus, Leo and the others; that his respect, his veneration for the aforesaid councils could not be put in doubt; that he condemned on the contrary all those who departed from the line of faith of

these councils, all those who rejected it, either partially or totally.

“May Your Fraternity,” continued the Pope, “in quality of vicar of the Holy See, warn all the bishops that they must not let themselves be surprised by the supposititious writings which are spread abroad, or by the false rumours which are circulated…. Your envoy Anastasius will report to you what it has been in our power to do for the defence of the deposit of the faith, which has been transmitted to us by the holy councils and our predecessors. When the emperor shall have permitted us to return to Italy, we will send someone to you to instruct you more in detail of what shall have passed.” The Pope exhorts then Aurélien to beg Childebert urgently to protect the Church in the sad necessity in which it found itself; to write to the king of the Goths, Totila, who had just entered Rome, to bring no damage to the Roman Church, to do nothing that might be of a nature to trouble the Catholic faith. Totila let himself be bent by the prayers of Aurélien, and abstained from pillaging Rome.

Aurélien sustained, by his talents and by his virtues, the glory of a see illustrated by so many great and holy bishops. In 548, he founded at Arles a monastery for men and was seconded in this work by king Childebert, who had for him the highest esteem. He enriched the church of this new monastery with very precious relics and consecrated it under the title of the Apostles and martyrs. He gave to the religious a rule full of the spirit of wisdom and mortification. The same year, he founded, in his episcopal city, another monastery destined to gather the girls who should wish to consecrate themselves to God in retreat. He put it under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and gave to the nuns who lived there a rule copied almost word for word from the one he had given to the monks.

Some writers put the death of the holy bishop in 550, others push it back to 553, but an inscription discovered, in 1308, on his tomb, in the church of Saint-Nizier of Lyons, fixes the true epoch of it. It is said there expressly that Aurélien died in this city on the 16th of the calends of July, the eleventh year after the consulate of Justin, indiction XIV, which comes to Friday 16 June

The Church of Aix, of Arles and of Embrun celebrates under the double rite, on 17 June, the feast of Saint Aurélien, bishop and confessor.

Proper of Aix; — Cf. *La France pontificale*, by Fisquet.

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[1] Besides the diocese of Besançon, those of Paris, of Saint-Dié and of Strasbourg have a proper office of Saint Ferréol and of Saint Ferjeux.

[2] The dioceses of Arles, of Nevers and of Saint-Flour make a particular office of it: the cult of the holy Martyrs is above all famous at Nevers of which they are the principal patrons.

[3] He has a proper office in the diocese of Cologne. — Born in the year 1010, at Hildesheim, in Lower Saxony, he was placed on the see of Meissen by Saint Anno, bishop of Cologne. Not content with evangelising his diocese, he preached the Christian faith to the Slavs. God blessed his labours, and a great number of barbarians were converted. God honoured his tomb with several miracles. His body was raised from the earth about 1270 by the bishop Witiijon, who erected to him a superb tomb in the church of Meissen. The popes Alexander VI and Julius II occupied themselves with his canonisation, and the decree of it was published in 1523 by Adrian VI. It was on the occasion of the publication of this bull that Luther brought out an impious book entitled *Against the new idol which is to be raised at Meissen*. In 1.^76, his relics were transferred to Munich, at the request of the elector of Bavaria. In the collegiate church of Saint Mary of that town, one admires in our days a magnificent chapel which is consecrated to him. Under a splendid dome rises an altar of all beauty (Renaissance style), with this inscription:

To the glory of God almighty and to the pious memory of Saint Bennon, formerly bishop of Meissen. The goodness of God and the zeal of the most illustrious Albert V, elector of Bavaria, have won for the people of Munich the signal honour of possessing his relics. They repose in this chapel raised in 1604 by the generosity of the faithful.

The mitre, the chasuble and the crosier of the holy bishop are preserved in the treasury of the church. The Bollandists (vol. iv, June) give three magnificent plates on this subject. It is from this that we have drawn these archaeological details.

[4] See on this day a note which concerns him.

[5] See his notice on 25 July.

[6] See his life on 30 June.

[7] Alias Fargeau.

[8] Alias Fergeon or Ferrution.

[9] S. Iren., ad haeres., bk. i, ch. 10.

[10] Ibid., bk. iv, ch. 17.

[11] S. Iren., ad haeres., bk. iii, ch. 3.

[12] Saint Amator died in 418.

[13] M. l'Abbé Provost, curé of Villejuif, wrote to us on 22 March 1859: "I extract from a little book entitled: *Abridgment of the Life of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta his Mother, Patrons of the Parish of Villejuif, near Paris*, printed in 1686, the following details: 'M. Guillaume Levavasseur, born at Rouen, surgeon and ordinary valet de chambre of king Francis I, obtained from Pope Clement VII, on 3 November 1533, and from the king his master, then at Marseilles, on the 10th of the same month, that the superior of the Reverend Mathurin Fathers of Arles should give him: 1° the bone of the neck of Saint Roch, called *spondille*; 2° the bone of the thigh of Saint Cyr and a part of the jaw of Saint Julitta in which a tooth still held. These relics, recognised by Jean du Bellay, bishop of Paris, were deposited at Villejuif, on the first Sunday of May 1535. Guillaume Levavasseur asked that in perpetuity there be sung for him and his family the *O salutaris* during the elevation at high Mass, by an act passed before a notary, which we still carry out.'

"The tradition of Villejuif holds that a cross was erected at the entrance of the place at the spot where the clergy came to receive the holy relics. This cross was moved, 5 or 6 years ago, and set up again quite near by the care of the fabric and of my predecessor. Every first Sunday of May, we perform the office of the Reception of the holy relics; before high Mass, we go in procession as far as this cross, singing hymns and responsories taken from the office of Saint Cyr and of Saint Julitta during the going and the return, and at the foot of the cross the psalm *De Profundis* for the repose of Levavasseur and his family. Every year, on 16 August, we perform the office of Saint Roch: the high Mass is preceded by a procession around the place in which two members of the Confraternity of Saint Roch carry our holy relics."

[14] See Father Papebrock, *ante Maium*, t. i, p. 36, and M. Jos. Assemani, *Cal. univ.*, t. vi.

[15] Jos. Assemani, *Bibl. Orient.*, t. iii, p. 647, 652.

[16] *Ibid.*, t. iv, p. 366.

[17] See the calendar of the Abyssinians, in Ludolf, and the one that was published in the journal of Berne, in 1761, t. v, p. 146.

[18] Alias: Uélbne.

[19] This abbey (*Aquiria*, or *Aviria*) was founded in 1202, in a village named Aywiers, two leagues from Liège; but the continual wars which reigned in that country constrained the nuns to withdraw into Brabant. They chose in 1210 a village named le Loux, which they abandoned in 1217 to go and settle in a place more advantageously situated, and distant two leagues and a half from Nivelles. The nuns depended for the spiritual on the abbey of Aine. — Continuators of Godescard.

17 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Rome, the feast of two hundred and sixty-two blessed Martyrs, who were put to death for the faith of Jesus Christ, in the persecution of Diocletian, and were buried on the ancient Salarian Way, at the foot of the Cucumber hill.[1] — At Terracina, Saint Montanus, soldier, who, after many torments, received the crown of martyrdom, under the emperor Hadrian and the consular Leontius. 2nd c. — At Venafro, the holy martyrs Nicander and Marcian, beheaded during the persecution of Maximian.[2] 173. — At Chalcedon, the holy martyrs Manuel, Sabel and Ismael, who, filling the function of ambassadors of the king of Persia to Julian the Apostate, to treat of peace with him, received the order, on the part of this emperor, to venerate the idols, and on their refusal had their heads cut off. 362. — At Apollonia, a town of Macedonia, the holy martyrs Isaurus, deacon, Innocent, Felix, Jeremias and Peregrinus, natives of Athens, who had their heads cut off after divers torments, by sentence of the tribune Triponce. — At Amelia, in Umbria, Saint Himerius,[3] bishop, whose body was transferred to Cremona. About 500. — In Berry, Saint Gondon or Gondulf, bishop.[4]. — At Orleans, Saint Avit or Avy, priest and confessor. 530. — In Phrygia, Saint Hypatius, confessor. 452. — Moreover, Saint Bessarion, anchorite. 5th c. — At Pisa, in Tuscany, Saint Raynier, confessor. 1160.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Arles, Aix and Embrun, Saint Aurélien, bishop of Arles, mentioned yesterday. — In the diocese of Nantes, Saint Cyr and Saint Julitta, named on the preceding day. — In the dioceses of Paris, of Laval and of

Le Mans, Saint Avit, named on this day in the Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Saint-Flour, Saint Jean-François Regis, named yesterday in the same martyrology. — At Châtillon-sur-Seine, Saint Vérou or Vorles (*Verolus*), confessor and patron of this town, whither his body was transferred from the borough of Marcenay in the diocese of Langres, in which he had died. 591. — At Bourges, Saint Simplicius, bishop of that city and confessor, named on the 14th of this month. 477. — In the dioceses of Quimper and Léon and of Rennes, Saint Hervé, Hoiiarné or Harvian, hermit, who had his soul the more enlightened with the lights of grace and the knowledge of heavenly things as his body was deprived by blindness of the sight of the sun and of all that is on the earth. The place where our Saint was buried has since borne his name and is still called today Lan-Hoùarné: it is a parish church of the ancient diocese of Léon, between Landivisiau and Lesneven (Finistère). The precious body remained there until 878, epoch at which, to avoid the fury of the Normans, it was transferred to the chapel of the castle of Brest, where it remained until 1002. Duke Geoffrey I then having had it put in a silver shrine, gave it as a present to the bishop of Nantes, who enriched with it the treasury of his church, where the precious relics were preserved until the Revolution. The oaths ordered by justice were formerly made on this shrine. The church of Faouet, in the ancient diocese of Tréguier, has Saint Hervé for patron and possesses a small portion of his relics. There are some also in the ancient cathedral of Léon. About 568. — In the diocese of Digne, feast of Saint Ours, archdeacon of Aosta, who evangelised the valley of Barcelonnette: his feast, marked on the 1st of February, is transferred to this day, on account of the encumbrance of the snows. 6th c. — At Avignon, Saint Vérédème or Vrime, bishop, successor of Saint Agricola, and who was drawn from solitude to fill this see.[5] 720. — At the Forêt, near Brussels, Saint Alène, virgin and martyr, named yesterday.[6] About 640. — In the diocese of Quimper, Saint Herbaud, who passed his life in a profound solitude of Brittany, which he illustrated by his virtues and his miracles. 8th c. — At Utrecht, Saint Adulf, bishop and confessor, whose life was so admirable that, although he was a foreigner and an Englishman, he was nevertheless raised with a universal joy to the chair of this church. 7th c. — In the Low Countries, Saint Julian, companion of Saint Landoald. — At Rouen, Saint Romanus, bishop of that see, whose decease is marked on 23 October. The most pious of the pontiffs of Rouen, he struggled energetically against idolatry. It is to him that one owes the closing and perhaps the destruction of the altars consecrated to Venus, to Apollo and to Mercury, whose images were discovered in the soil of Rouen. His finest triumph was the demolition of the great Roman amphitheatre of that city, then pagan. The tomb of our Saint was originally in the crypt of Saint-Godard of Rouen. At present, it forms the high altar of the church dedicated to him since 1802. It is a trough of red marble which presents all the characters of Merovingian sepulchres. 639. — At Châtillon-sur-Loire, in the Nivernais, Saint Pozan, priest, recommendable for his marvellous simplicity. — At Pamiers, Saint Raymond, bishop of that see and confessor. — At Bourges, Saint David, archbishop. 9th c. — In the diocese of Reims, the venerable Foulques, archbishop of that see. Foulques, sprung from a very illustrious family, was successively canon of Notre-Dame of Saint-Omer, abbot of Saint-Bertin, abbot elect of Saint-Vaast of Arras, in 851, canon and archdeacon of Reims, in 852. He was ordained suffragan bishop of Reims in 876, and elected archbishop in 882, at the death of Hincmar. The following year, he received the Pallium from Pope Marinus. On 10 February 892, he consecrated Charles the Simple, of whom he became chancellor and minister. Foulques made gift to the Church of several domains, restored the schools, surrounded the town with walls in 896; he was assassinated by Wincmare, at the instigation of Baldwin, count of Flanders, on 17 June 901. He was buried in the church of Saint-Remi of Reims. — In the same diocese, Saint Rigobert, archbishop of that see and confessor. — At Aix, the feast of Saint Aurélien, whose decease is marked on the 16th of this month.[7] — At Sens, the feast of Saint Agricius, whose decease is marked on the 13th of this month.[8] — At Bayeux, the feast of Saint Ursinus, whose translation of relics is indicated on 9 November and the decease marked on 29 December.[9] — Again at Bayeux, the feast of Saint Regnobertus, mentioned in the martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Arras, the venerable Lambert of Guines, bishop of that see. 1115. — At Brussels, Saint Marie, surnamed the Sorrowful. 1294. — At Sarlat, in the diocese of Périgueux, Saint Avit, solitary, distinct from the abbot of Micy, feasted on this same day. He served in the armies of Alaric, when he was made prisoner at the battle of

Vouillé (Voulon) by the soldiers of Clovis. Having paid his ransom, he took the monastic habit in Poitou, then led the eremitical life at Mauroy, then at Ruffec, in Périgord, where he died about the year 518. — At Neuffontaines, in the diocese of Autun, Adelon, curé of that parish, and victim of the Revolution of 1793. He died at the hospital Saint-Louis. 1794.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Leo III, pope.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — Saint John of Saint-Facond.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — At Venice, the blessed Peter Gambacorta of Pisa, who, after having founded our Congregation under the name of Saint Jerome, and according to the Rule of Saint Augustine, led the solitary life for about fifty-five years on Mount Cessano, near Urbino, until, filled with merits, he fell asleep in the Lord, on 18 May. He was beatified by the Sovereign Pontiffs, and we have obtained permission to celebrate his feast with Mass and office.

Martyrology of the Theatines. — The blessed Paul of Arezzo. 1578.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In the diocese of Naples, the blessed Paul Bural, bishop of that see. — At Brescia, in Italy, Saint Digna-Merita and her two children, martyrs, at an uncertain epoch. — In Egypt, Saint Joseph and Saint Prior or Pior, anchorites. 4th c. — At Como, in Italy, Saint Agrippinus, bishop. About the year 586. — In England, with Saint Adulf, mentioned above, Saint Botulph, abbot, his companion. Few Saints have been honoured in England with more devotion. Four churches of London are still dedicated to him. Different places also bear his name, such as the borough of Botulph, today Boston, in the county of Lincoln, the bridge of Botulph, today Botolph-bridge, in the county of Huntingdon. The abbey of Thorney, whose abbot had the right to sit in Parliament, was founded in honour of Our Lady and of Saint Botulph, and it is there that his body was buried, together with a great number of other Anglo-Saxon Saints. 655. — In Ireland, Saint Molingus or Dayrgelle, bishop of Fearnes.. — At Regensburg, in Bavaria, Saint Ramuold, abbot of Saint-Emmeram of that city. Like all the Saints, Ramuold met with more than one trial in life. Deprived of the use of his eyes for two years, fallen into disgrace with the emperor, he bore this double misfortune with an angelic resignation. Year 1001. — In Bavaria likewise, the blessed Euphemia, abbess of the monastery of Saint-Alton, between Munich and Augsburg: she was sister of Mechtilde of Diessen. Year 1180. — In Portugal, the saints Tarasia, widow, and Sancha or Sancia, virgin, both daughters of king Sancho, and religious of the Order of Cîteaux. 1230 and 1250.

His precious relics, deposited first in the church of Saint-Agricola, were transferred, in the course of time, by Pope John XII into the cathedral church of Notre-Dame des Dons, where they were exposed on the high altar, enclosed in a silver bust. They were dispersed by the impious during the French Revolution.

Our Saint was formerly honoured at Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, at Cavaillon, at Arles, at Apt, at Carpentras, etc. — *Proper of Avignon.*

Saint Prior, Hermit of Nitria

End of the 4th century.

Melius est habitare in extrema solitudine quam inter hominum scelera commorari.

Better to dwell in the depth of a desert than to remain in the midst of the crimes of men.

S. Hier., lib. ii sup. Jerem., c. 9.

Prior, a native of Egypt, was one of the first disciples of Saint Anthony. He left, being still very young, the house of his parents, and promised God, in the movement of his fervour, never to see them again with the eyes of the body, so firm was the resolution which he had taken to renounce the world perfectly. He went and placed himself under the direction of Saint Anthony, and he made such rapid progress in perfection that in a few years he was in a state to live alone in the desert. Having communicated to his spiritual father the desire which he felt for the eremitical life, Anthony approved it and said to him: “Go, Prior, dwell where you will. You will come back to see me when a reasonable occasion presents itself.” He was then twenty-five years old.

He fixed his dwelling in the desert of Nitria, on the side of that of Scete. His virtue was founded principally on mortification, humility, detachment from the world and from himself. He ordinarily ate per day only half a pound of bread and some olives, and moreover he walked while taking this little food. Someone having asked him the reason, he answered: “I act in this way, because eating is not an action to which one ought to apply oneself, so I do it as a passing thing. I do not wish either that my soul should experience a sensual satisfaction when I eat.” Here is an example of his detachment from the things of earth. He had gone to do the harvest at a labourer’s, and in that he imitated other solitaries who by that wished to earn their living by the sweat of their brow. The harvest finished, the labourer put off to another time paying him his wages. Prior, without insisting, returned to his cell. The next year, he came back to work at the same labourer’s. The latter sent him away again without giving him anything, and did as much the year after. Prior testified no impatience and diminished nothing of his ardour for work. His conduct touched the labourer, who, at last, resolved to discharge his debt. Having sought him in several monasteries, he found him with much trouble. When he perceived him, he threw himself at his feet, asked his pardon and offered him what he owed him. Prior alleged at first divers reasons for not accepting it, then he told him to carry it to the priest.

We have observed that Prior, in leaving the world, had resolved never to see his relatives again. It was about fifty years since he had gone out of his country, when his sister, become a widow, learned that he was still living. She obtained from the bishop that he should write to the superiors of the monasteries, that they should order her brother to come and pay her a visit to console her. Thereupon Saint Anthony sent for him, then, after having instructed him of the intention of the bishop, commanded him to go and procure for his sister the consolation she asked. Prior, taking one of the brothers with him, set out without any delay. When his sister had opened the door, he spoke to her with his eyes shut and would not enter the house; he then made his prayer and returned to his solitude.

The place which he inhabited was one of the most frightful of Egypt; there was no other water than that of a well dug by his own hands: this water, moreover, was so bitter and so salt that no one could drink it; so that those who came to see him were obliged to bring some for their use.

Though hard toward himself, he was full of gentleness for others, without excepting those who fell into great faults. Finding himself at an assembly which was held at Scete, the solitaries, after the sacrifice, began to confer together. Some spoke of a fault committed by a brother who was absent. Prior kept silence; but, seeing at last that charity was being wounded, he went out of the assembly, took a sack which he filled with sand, and put it on his shoulders behind his back; he took then a little basket, which he filled also with sand, and carried it before him. The others having asked him what was his design, he made them this answer: “This sack filled with sand represents my sins, which are in great number; that is why I have put them behind my back not to see them and to spare myself a subject of confusion and of tears. This basket that I carry before me, and which contains only a little sand, represents the sins of this brother, which I dare to consider in order to judge and condemn him. It would be much better that I should put my sins before me to think of them ceaselessly and to pray God to pardon me them.” All the solitaries were touched by this discourse and agreed that it was the road by which one ought to arrive at salvation.[1] One reads in Palladius[2] that Saint Prior was favoured with the gift of miracles. He died at the end of the 4th century, aged about a hundred years. He is

honoured by the Greeks on 17 June.

Acta Sanctorum, 17 June; — Cf. *Lives of the Fathers of the Desert*, by Father Michel-Ange Marin; Godescard, etc.

Saint Avit or Avy, Third Abbot of Micy or Saint-Mesmin, near Orleans

530. — Pope: Boniface II. — King of France: Childebert I.

Vita socialis necessaria est ad exercitium perfectionis, solitudo autem perfectis competit.

Life in community is useful to form to perfection; but solitude suits only the perfect. Thomas à Kempis.

Since God has made the rich and the poor, and since the one and the other are equally the work of His hands, it is not more advantageous before His majesty to be born of a princess than to have a peasant woman or a beggar for mother. The mother of the Saint whose life we write, being still a girl, was constrained, by the extreme poverty of her parents, to quit the town of Verdun, of which she was a native, to seek elsewhere wherewith to subsist. Divine Providence led her to Orleans, where, after some time of sojourn, she married a labourer of the country of the Beauce. As this marriage was made in the fear of God, it soon after bore a fruit of its blessing. When the mother of Saint Avit brought him into the world, her room, poor as it was, was filled with a heavenly light, like another stable of Bethlehem. It was a sensible mark of the benevolence of God over this child, and of the high degree of holiness to which he would rise in the course of time.

After an education altogether holy, he became a religious in the abbey of Micy, which has since been called of Saint-Mesmin, on account of Saint Mesmin or Maximin, its principal founder and its second abbot, in the diocese of Orleans. His goodness and his simplicity were so great that he obeyed without resistance all the other religious: which made some of them treat him as an idiot and a fool; but the holy abbot Maximin, who had given him the habit, penetrating better than the others into the excellent dispositions of his soul, admired above all his great charity for the poor, which made him strip himself to clothe them, and deprive himself every day of a great part of his portion to feed them; he gave him a separate cell, and permitted him, according to the custom of that time, to live there as a solitary, to practise in secret the austerities which the Spirit of God would inspire him with, without being able to be charged with singularity or vainglory. Some time after, the religious being no longer able to doubt the solidity of his virtue, begged the abbot to give him the office of cellarer of the monastery; he did so, and our Saint accepted this employment by the sole inclination of obedience, regretting besides to be torn from his dear retreat, where he tasted, with a happy fulness, the sacred delights of contemplation. But, as those very persons who had procured him this office made him several insults, and were hardly content with the regularity with which he acquitted himself of it, he formed the design, by a particular movement of the Holy Spirit, to flee secretly and to go and live alone in a desert. So, having put all the keys of his office in the bed of his abbot while he was asleep, he retired by night into a very thick forest of the country of Sologne, distant five leagues from his monastery. There, having made himself a poor cell with branches of trees, he began to live in a detachment so perfect from all the things of the world, and in so great an elevation of spirit in God, that he was on earth only in body. Saint Maximin, a man very enlightened in the ways of the spirit, saw well that his departure came not from levity or impatience, but from the inspiration of that sovereign Wisdom which dispenses men, when it pleases, from the ordinary ways of conduct, and leads them by ways of which it is not permitted us to judge. He left him therefore in peace in the place of his retreat, the more agreeable to the Saint as it was the more destitute of all the things which are necessary to life, and as he could have there for nourishment only the leaves, the roots and the wild fruits which grow of themselves in the forests.

A short time after, the same Saint Maximin died, and there was made so great a change in the sentiments and inclinations of the religious of Micy that they elected unanimously Saint Avit for their abbot. They went therefore to seek him in his desert, and, having found him, took him away by force with them, and obliged

him to receive the blessing and the investiture from the hands of Leontius, bishop of Orleans. This new dignity was for him a source of groanings and of tears; he wept continually at no longer being in a state where the forgetfulness of creatures gave him the means of enjoying the delights of heaven and of tasting God perfectly in the bottom of his heart. Nevertheless, he did not fail to apply himself with great care to all the functions of his charge and to labour with great courage in his monastery to repress rising vices, to increase the reign of virtue, and to maintain regular observance and discipline. But as he saw that, in spite of all his remonstrances, relaxation was slipping in among his religious, he meditated a second flight, and retired into another extremely frightful desert of the county of the Perche and of the diocese of Chartres. This place was so far from all the villages that he remained there long unknown without having other food than the apples and the other fruits which are born naturally in the woods. But he passed there joyfully the days and nights with a holy religious, who had accompanied him in this voluntary exile,[1] in singing the praises of God, in contemplating the mysteries of His divinity and of His incarnation, and in thanking Him for the works of His mercy. Nevertheless divine Providence, which wished to draw more glory from it, discovered him at last by a miraculous event. As the forest where he had built his hermitage was very abundant in acorns, two swineherds, one of whom was dumb, brought their herds there, according to custom, to pasture for some time. One evening, when they had lighted their torches to guide themselves in the darkness of the night, there came so great a tempest and so furious a storm that it extinguished these torches and made the animals flee on all sides, without its being possible for them to stop them. They were obliged to separate from each other to gather them, and one of them, who was the dumb one, entered so far into the wood that he no longer knew either where he was or by what way he could come out of it. In this anxiety, casting his eyes on all sides, he perceived afar a light, at the place where was the cell of the Saint: it was for him a great subject of joy; but, having run there, he found there more help than he would have dared to hope: for the servant of God, not only relit his torch and showed him his way, but having also made the sign of the cross on his mouth, he restored to him the use of speech, which he had lost long since. This miracle, which this poor man, in spite of the prohibition of the Saint, could not hinder himself from divulging, made him known in all the country. People came to visit him in crowds, all sorts of sick were brought to him to be cured by the imposition of his hands, and the number of those who came to implore his help was so great that his desert was changed, so to speak, into a town.

As, among those who addressed themselves to him, there were several who wished to put themselves under his direction, he was obliged to build a monastery which he governed with so much prudence and holiness that one saw there long flourish, with great brilliance, the regular discipline of that wholly angelic manner of life, of which the great Saint Anthony has given the example and the rules. This monastery was afterwards called the Cell of Saint Avit. Whatever affection he had for solitude, charity nevertheless drew him sometimes from his desert to come to Orleans. It was in one of his journeys that, an infinite number of sick, cripples and wretched persons having come out to meet him to be relieved by his touch, he cured, among others, a child who was blind from birth: which the author of his life says he learned from the very mouth of the blind man who had been cured. He had also so much power over the mind of the magistrates of this town that at his prayer they opened its prisons and gave liberty to all those who were in irons. In another journey, he exhorted king Clodomir, son of the great Clovis, who had the Orléanais in his share, to treat with gentleness Sigismund, king of Burgundy, his wife and his children, whom he had made prisoners of war. As he saw him resolved to put them to death, he declared to him that, if he used them in so cruel a manner, he would himself perish unhappily, and would be killed in the first battle that he should give: which happened in effect, as we have said, in the life of the same Saint Sigismund, on the first day of May.

It was the custom of Saint Avit to make, from time to time, retreats in the thickest of the forest where his monastery was, or in some other place more remote, to apply himself there with more tranquillity to prayer. One day when he had gone far away, the religious who had followed him when he fled from the abbey of Saint-Mesmin died; and, in dying, he begged his brethren not to bury him before the holy abbot should be

back. Someone went promptly to warn him of this death; he came back on his steps, very sad at having lost so holy a religious, and found him already laid out in the middle of the church. This spectacle did not discourage him: he set himself to prayer, prostrated himself humbly with his face against the ground, watered the pavement long with his tears, and felt at last that God had granted him the life of this dear disciple; he rose, and commanded him, in the name of God, the Father almighty, to rise again. The dead man, not being able to resist the force of this name, obeyed at once, and, giving his hand to his blessed Father, he came down from his coffin and set himself with his brethren to sing the infinite mercies of Our Lord. This miracle became very famous, and Saint Lubinus, bishop of Chartres, assured his people, in one of his sermons, that he had learned it from the very religious who had been raised.

At last it pleased God to end the labours of Saint Avit by a happy death, which put him in the enjoyment of what he desired solely. It happened on 17 June of the year 530 or about. There was great discussion between the inhabitants of Orleans and those of Châteaudun, for the possession of his body; the latter said that it belonged to them, since he had died in their neighbourhood, and had dwelt there since his departure from Micy; the Orléanais, on the contrary, pretended that it was theirs, since his first house and the place of his profession was the abbey of Micy. But this contest was ended to the contentment of the one and the other, as he himself had predicted: for the Orléanais had the greatest part of this holy spoil, and those of Châteaudun obtained a considerable member. So he was transported with much solemnity to Orleans, and deposited in the church of Saint George, a hundred paces from the gates of the town. Afterwards king Childebert, having returned from Spain laden with glory and spoils, had a magnificent temple built over this tomb, acknowledging that he owed the happy success of his journeys to the merits of Saint Avit. This church was demolished in 1710 to extend the buildings of the seminary. The people of Châteaudun, on their side, also built a church to place there, with honour, the relic which they had obtained, according to the promise which they had made of it to the Saint before his death. According to the report of Saint Gregory of Tours, a vinedresser, having answered some persons who reproved him for daring to work that day: “That Avit had been a poor young man like himself, and that his father and his mother had been obliged, as well as he, to earn their life by the sweat of their brow,” his head turned on his shoulders at that very hour, and he was obliged to come in this state to the church of the Saint, where an immense crowd was assembled, to ask his pardon, and implore his assistance: which made him obtain his cure.[2]

The Roman martyrology and the other martyrologies make mention of Saint Avit. He is honoured at Orleans, at Paris and in other places. He is represented raising one of his monks who, as he was on the point of dying during the absence of the abbot, had asked not to be buried before the Saint had prayed over his body.

We have his Life in Surius, composed by an author who was almost of his time. De la Saussaye, dean of Orleans, speaks of him also very honourably in book iii of the *Antiquities* of that Church. One will find in the Notes of Baronius the other authors who have spoken of him.

Saint Ours, Archdeacon of Aosta, Founder of the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter and Saint Ours

6th century.

Ante fores gehennae stat misericordia, et neminem permittit in carcerem mitti qui misericordiam fecerit.

Mercy stands at the door of hell, and does not permit any of those who have practised it to be cast into the abyss.

S. Aug., Hom. XXXI2.

Saint Ours was born in the island of Scotland.[1] All the authors who have spoken of him are agreed on the country of his origin, but are not agreed in the same way on the precise epoch of his life; however, it appears

certain that he lived toward the end of the 5th century or at the beginning of the 6th. It is at this epoch that he quitted his country and came to settle at Aosta. The motive which thus guided his steps was zeal for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls, the desire to sustain the wavering faith, and to propagate the Christian and religious virtues which shone in his time in the island of Saints. It was the same motive which, in the same century, led Saint Gall, Saint Columban and their twelve companions to quit Ireland to come into Brittany first, then into Switzerland and finally into Italy, where they wrought a multitude of conversions and founded establishments in the shadow of which a prodigious number of saints flourished. Saint Ours, on leaving Ireland, stopped for some time at Meyronnes, in the diocese of Digne. This valley was then desolated by Arianism. He hastened to announce to the people the word of truth, and he had the consolation of bringing back to the true faith those who were in error. After having evangelised this country and left in it traces of his passage so deep that they subsist still after more than thirteen centuries, he arrived at Aosta, where he displayed such a superiority of genius, of knowledge and of virtue that not only did he find place in the ranks of the clergy, but he was soon raised to the dignity of archdeacon.[2]

He answered perfectly to his sublime vocation, for it was in the exercise of the functions and the accomplishment of the duties which were attached to this dignity that he won the admiration and confidence of the peoples, and that he merited the glorious title of Saint. In effect, he embraced in his solitude all the parts of the pastoral ministry, announcing the word of God with an apostolic zeal and with the success which ordinarily accompanies holiness, giving counsels to some, encouragements to others, now reproving vice with a severity tempered by charity, now giving to virtue the praises and the rewards which it merits, visiting the parishes of the diocese, to strengthen the faithful there and to snatch from paganism or heresy the souls which had not yet opened their eyes to the light of the Gospel, or which had been led into error; watching over the pastors and the flocks, over the young levites as over the elders of the sanctuary.

However painful, besides, the labours of his ministry might be to Saint Ours, they were bearable while he did but second the zeal and solicitude of the holy bishop who then ruled the diocese of Aosta; this was the pious Jocundus, honoured at Aosta under the name of Saint Jocundus I. This worthy pastor displayed also, in concert with his archdeacon, the most ardent, the most active and the most industrious zeal for the salvation of souls; but the times that were running were evil times. The heresy of Arius, supported by those who then disposed of force and of temporal favours, insinuated itself everywhere like a subtle poison. Already even it infected some members of the clergy. These, not being able to accommodate themselves to the measures adopted by the holy bishop to preserve or bring back the purity of faith and of morals, raised against him the most terrible persecution; they accused him of felony, of treason and of the crime of royal *lèse-majesté*. They knew so well how to give to calumny the appearance of truth that they succeeded in having Jocundus expelled from the episcopal see with privation of all the revenues attached to the bishopric. This reverse caused by counter-stroke to the so good heart of the archdeacon Saint Ours the greatest grief and procured him at the same time an increase of labour and solicitude. But, after having shared with his bishop the weight of his affliction, he had the happiness of sharing soon with him the joy which he felt when king Theodoric, after a mature examination of the accusations directed against the bishop of Aosta, recognised that they were the fruit of envy, restored this prelate to his first dignity, and reinstated him in the right of receiving the revenues belonging to the bishopric.

Saint Ours prayed a hundred times a day and a hundred times a night, after the example of Saint Patrick, apostle of Ireland, whom he venerated as his model and his master. He often made the sign of the cross on his forehead,[3] slept on the hard ground, never sat down to table without having some poor man with him. The church, when he could betake himself there, was the place he chose by preference for his prayers, because it is there that dwells specially and as on the throne of His mercy He who has passed on the earth doing good, and who holds in His hands all the graces of which we have need. His gentleness and his affability gave free access to his person to all who had need of consolation and counsel. His charity was not limited to words, his

hand was always open to pour out his benefits on the needy. He planted with his own hand a vine on which the Lord poured His blessings so abundantly that the grapes, or the wine which came from them, cured the sick when they used them with faith. He bought also a field, the produce of which was shared with the poor. In this sharing, even the birds were not forgotten.

He was assiduous with the sick, to exhort them to patience and prepare them for death. The widow and the orphan found always in him a support and a father. He had a great respect for the churches where the Blessed Sacrament and the relics of the Saints repose, and he would have wished that all should share the same sentiment.

Divine Providence often arranges for the men whom it wishes to raise to a high degree of holiness certain trials which, in purifying their virtue, furnish them the occasion of making it shine the more, and form, so to speak, the kernel of their holiness. Such was for Saint Ours the circumstance of which we are going to give the account.

While Saint Ours laboured ceaselessly at his sanctification by the practice of works of piety, of charity and of penance, while he pursued with zeal the exercise of the holy ministry, the see of Aosta came to be vacant by the death of Saint Jocundus. The faction of the Arians, then numerous and intriguing, favoured moreover by Theodoric, king of Italy, himself an Arian, bestirred itself so much that it succeeded in raising to the see of Aosta a certain Plocean, infected with the dominant heresy and who was besides of a hard, violent, even cruel character, raging against whoever dared resist him. Not content with professing himself a doctrine contrary to the teaching of the Church, he employed all means to propagate in his flock the venom of heresy.

Saint Ours, in his quality of archdeacon, was the first to oppose the enterprises of the false pastor. He forgot nothing to withdraw him from error and to preserve from it at least the flock of which he had the guard; remonstrances, prayers, exhortations, preachings, all that the most ardent and most charitable zeal can suggest of means to ward off the scourge of heresy, all was put in work. But, if his efforts succeeded in preserving or withdrawing from error a multitude of persons docile to his voice, nothing could overcome the obstinacy of Plocean.

It was then that Saint Ours, to remove all suspicion of connivance with this heretic, and to be himself freer in the exercise of his pastoral zeal, took the course of withdrawing outside the walls of the town, to the place where was an ancient church built in honour of the apostle Saint Peter. He was followed in his retreat by a third of the canons of the cathedral, with whom he began the service of this church.

This is the origin of the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter and Saint Ours, the most ancient of all the collegiate churches and of all the religious establishments of the Sardinian States.

In founding his Congregation of priests remained faithful in the midst of the hardest trials, he submitted them to a rule, because there is no common life possible without a rule of some sort. In his new position, Saint Ours continued his exercises of piety, of mortification and of charity, and his companions, or rather his disciples, strove to follow the examples of him whom they respected as their master and their model.

Saint Ours did not lose sight of the obligations which his charge of archdeacon imposed on him; for it was to attend to them more freely and with more success that he had separated from Plocean. Wherever the glory of God and the salvation of souls called him, he was found there either personally or by means of his companions, who were so many missionaries depending on his will.

All the virtues shone in the life of our Saint. But there is one which was for him a veritable need; it is beneficence. In him this noble disposition embraced not only spiritual ills, he extended it also to all the public and private calamities which afflict our humanity. We are going to reproduce some traits of it.

The torrent of the Buthier, which takes its source in the Pennine Alps and passes near the town of Aosta, swelled one day to the point that not only the riverside properties, but the town itself and its inhabitants were

going to be victims of it. The church of Saint Peter above all, served by Saint Ours and the priests of his Congregation, was so invaded by the waters that no one could any longer enter it, and those who had taken refuge there as in a place of safety could no longer come out. Then Saint Ours, seeing that all human helps were useless, addressed himself with the liveliest faith to Him who commands the elements, and, after having provided himself with the sign of the cross, he addressed to Him this prayer which tradition has preserved for us: “Lord, who, after having created the world, continue to govern it; who, at the universal deluge, saved from the waters the human race, the race of all the animals and the seed of all the productions of the earth; who opened across the Red Sea a road to withdraw the children of Israel from the captivity in which they groaned under the reign of Pharaoh; who saved the prophet Jonas from the gulf of the sea and from the belly of the whale; who, at the prayer of the prophet Elias, suspended the benefit of rain for three years and six months; who gave Your hand to Your faithful apostle Saint Peter to preserve him from shipwreck; who, by the force of Your word, appeased the fury of the winds and of the sea, cast now a favourable look on this people who invoke You, do not deceive the hope which it has placed in You. According to Your mercy, hear my prayer, order that the rain cease and that the river return to its bed.” Saint Ours had no sooner finished his prayer than the clouds dissipated, the rain ceased, the sky reappeared and the river, withdrawing its waters, resumed its ordinary course. This event appeared too striking and bore too evidently the seal of the all-powerful hand of God not to perpetuate the memory of it. This is why a special commemoration of it was made every day at Matins until the year 1608, epoch at which the Chapter of Saint-Ours left the use of Aosta to adopt the Roman.

During the summer season, Saint Ours, finding himself at the hamlet of Busseia, at a short distance from the place of his residence, heard peasants complain of the extreme heat and of the thirst which they endured. And, as he made his delight of exercising the works of mercy, he recalled the word of the Gospel: “All things are possible to him that believes”; he strikes with his staff the rock he had under his feet, and at once there gushed from it a spring of clear and limpid water which has continued to flow and flows still in our days, without ever ceasing, whatever weather it be. This fountain bears the name of the Fountain of Saint Ours in very ancient acts. There exists in the archives of the chapter a deed of 1290 by which a certain Jacquemet gives to the church of Saint-Ours twelve pieces of land of which the first was situated at the place called the Fountain of Saint Ours.

One sees a great number of persons run to this fountain to drink there or carry away the water that flows from it, in the confidence of receiving relief in their infirmities, a confidence often justified by success.

Here is a trait which proves the goodness of his heart and the respect which he professed for the house of God and the relics of the Saints:

A young man, to whom his master had confided the care of his horses, passed often before the church of Saint Peter without troubling to dismount nor even to uncover himself out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament and the relics of the Saints which reposed in the church: which Saint Ours having remarked with pain, he warned him of it and corrected him with a zeal full of gentleness; but, the young man not having taken account of his advice, to punish him for his resistance, God delivered him to a sort of illusion quite singular, but which made him find his punishment in his very fault. He believed, one day, that he had lost one of the horses confided to his guard, the one that his master loved most. His trouble was such that, mounted on the horse, he sought it everywhere with the greatest anxiety. He passed and repassed, as he was accustomed to do, before the church of Saint Peter, weeping and uttering sobs. Saint Ours, seeing him, was moved with compassion and asked him the subject of his tears. The young man, become more docile, declared to him the motive of his grief and promised him to be henceforth more submissive to his advice, if he made him find the horse he was seeking. Saint Ours accepted the condition and said to the young man: How many horses has your master confided to you? Six. To whom belongs the fine horse you are riding? The young man, lowering his eyes, recognised the horse which he sought with so much pain, and, seeing in his illusion the hand of

God, he got down from the horse, entered the church to thank the Lord, and promised to be more respectful toward His temple and the relics of the Saints.

Saint Ours, full of charity for his neighbour, never failed an occasion to render service to the unfortunate who had recourse to him. Here is a striking example of it:

A servant of the bishop Plocean had made himself guilty of a grave fault for which he feared that he had incurred the indignation of his master, whom he knew to be of a very irascible humour. To escape the chastisement which awaited him, he took refuge in the church of Saint Peter, where, according to the canonical laws, he was to enjoy the franchise. Saint Ours, having seen him at the foot of the altar in the countenance of a man troubled and disconcerted, approaches him and begs him to disclose to him confidentially the subject of his alarm. This servant, who asked nothing better than to find a compassionate heart and a protector, told him naïvely the account of his crime and begged him to intercede for him with the bishop. Saint Ours, who let escape no occasion of rendering service to the unfortunate, readily yielded to the desire and to the prayer of the servant, went at once to the bishop and said to him: “My lord and my father, one of your servants, knowing that he has gravely offended you, has come to seek an asylum in the church of Saint Peter; I beg you, for the love of Him in whose temple he has taken refuge, to pardon him.” Plocean, believing the occasion favourable to satisfy his anger and to exercise his vengeance against his servant and above all against Saint Ours, dissimulated his design adroitly, and, affecting an air of benevolence, said to the Saint: “Go, my brother, and tell my servant that he may present himself to me with perfect assurance, no harm shall be done him.” Saint Ours had nothing more eager than to go and announce to this servant the success of his embassy. “Go,” he said to him, “present yourself to your master, I promise you that no harm will befall you.” But, in measuring the heart of Plocean by his own, Saint Ours had greatly deceived himself, for scarcely had he gone out of the bishop’s house when the latter ordered his people to go at once and wait for the unhappy servant on his coming out of the church, and to conduct him to him under pain of undergoing themselves the penalties which he reserved for him. This order was punctually executed. The servant, who, on the word of Saint Ours, had counted on the indulgence of his master, was seized at the door of the church and conducted immediately to Plocean, who, in the fit of his fury, had him cruelly flogged from head to foot, to the point that he nearly expired under the blows of the whip. He had his hair shaved off then and boiling pitch poured on his head, and sent him away in the most pitiable state. This unfortunate man, imagining that Saint Ours had deceived him, his indignation lent him strength enough to betake himself to him, and, in the bitterness with which his heart was wounded, he addressed to him this reproach: “Why, my father, have you thus deceived me? Was it needful to draw me from the church where I had taken refuge, to make me fall under the hand of this cruel tyrant? Instead of excusing me, you delivered me to a traitor, to my most cruel enemy. May the sovereign Judge pronounce between you and me!” So bitter a reproach, joined to the heart-rending aspect which the servant presented and to the signal bad faith of Plocean, excited in the so generous heart of Saint Ours the most profound sentiment of compassion and indignation, and, feeling himself animated by a prophetic spirit, he said to this unhappy servant: “Go find Plocean and tell him on my part: Know that in a few days you will die suffocated by the demons and dragged by them into hell. It is just that you should be received by those whom you have served in not fearing to violate the temple of the Lord.” Then he said to the servant: “As for you, prepare yourself for death, for you will not be long in following your master to receive both of you from the sovereign Judge what you have merited; as for me, I shall follow you closely, and I shall perhaps be the witness of the judgment which will be pronounced on your altercation.”

The event justified in effect the prediction of the Saint. Plocean died the very night which followed, thrown out of his bed by an invisible hand, and he expired thus miserably. The servant, according to the word of Saint Ours, died the same day. As for the Saint, after having prepared himself for death by a redoubling of piety and fervour, and by fasting and prayer, he was not long in rendering his soul to Him whom he had

served with so much fidelity. There are several Saints who bear the same name, and who are honoured in divers countries, among others Saint Ours, martyred in the valley of Aosta, companion of Saint Alban, martyr of Mainz, honoured on 21 June, in the parish of Burano, port of the town of Altino, island in the lagoons of Venice, diocese of Torcello, where his body is preserved.

There is another Saint Ours, companion of Saint Victor, martyr of the Theban legion, whose body reposes at Solothurn. His feast is made on 30 September. The Saint whose life we have just given is honoured as confessor; he is feasted on 1 February, and his body is preserved at Aosta. Thus all confusion becomes impossible.

All the pictures, all the statues of Saint Ours, ancient and modern, represent him with the insignia of archdeacon, that is to say, holding in one hand the staff as the emblem of authority and jurisdiction, and, in the other hand, pressing on his breast a book, as the symbol of the religious science which he was to possess eminently himself and to communicate to the faithful. — He is represented also with birds on his shoulders or on his arms. — He is seen very often in religious costume, wearing his hair short and a large tonsure, which reduces his hair to a sort of crown like that of the Reverend Capuchin Fathers. He is painted sometimes with sandals, and a sort of garment of skin which is preserved in a large shrine wrapped in a linen with the inscription: *Vestimenta S. Ursi*, garments of Saint Ours. — He is depicted again striking with his staff, or with a stick, the rock from which a miraculous water gushes. It is thus that he is represented in the capital of a marble column of the 12th century, placed in the cloister of the Collegiate Church, with the inscription: *Fons S. Ursi*. — Some years ago, there was discovered, in a recess of the church of Saint-Christophe, a front of an altar in carved wood, representing Saint Ours, surrounded by poor persons and distributing shoes to them.

Worship and Relics

The name of Saint Ours has remained attached not only to the Congregation of priests which he founded, but to the place of his residence; it is the borough of Saint-Ours, thus named from time immemorial. One finds it in a deed of 1119, in another of 1174. In the 11th century there existed, and one knows not since what time, the noble family of *Porta Sancti Ursi*, which gave a bishop to Aosta. Not only has the borough, which formed itself around the place of the residence of Saint Ours, taken his name, but also the adjacent territory, and this territory had become celebrated. For, in the act passed publicly on 20 October 1026 between the bishop Burchard and Katelme, mention is made there of a property situated in the territory of Saint-Ours, in Italy. Already this land was mentioned in the act passed in 1013, by which the priest Letard gives to the Canons of Saint-Ours certain properties contiguous to the land of Saint-Ours.

All this proves that at least at the beginning of the 11th century Saint Ours was in full possession of the title of Saint, and consequently the object of a religious cult. In all the diocese of Aosta, Saint Ours is venerated, from time immemorial; but he has been so, in a special manner, by a great number of parishes.

We have before our eyes a bull of Alexander III of 20 April 1176 in which he mentions the parish of Saint Peter and Saint Ours of Donnas.

Donnas had therefore at that epoch Saint Peter and Saint Ours as titulars. Now Donnas comprised then the two present parishes of Vert and of Pont-Saint-Martin, and thus the populations of these three parishes were under the patronage of Saint Ours, in the year 1184. Lucius III counts Perloz and Issime among the parishes which belonged to the Chapter of Saint-Ours. Perloz comprised then the two present parishes of Lillianes and of Fontainemore, and Issime the two parishes of Gressoney; these five parishes could not fail to be specially attached to the cult of Saint Ours. The very ancient parish of Derby, which from 1040 was of the patronage of the Chapters of the cathedral and of Saint-Ours, had also Saint Ours for patron.

The ancient parishes of Cogne and of Jovençan have always had and still have Saint Ours for patron. The blessed Emeric of Quart, in his constitution of 1307, enumerates among the feasts of obligation of the diocese that of Saint Ours.

Saint Ours, co-patron of the diocese of Aosta, is celebrated under the rite of the first class with octave in all the diocese.

At Meyronnes, in the diocese of Digne, the cult of Saint Ours goes back to the most remote times. But there, as at Aosta, it is infinitely to be regretted that the archives of the celebrated sanctuary were dispersed by the revolutionary wind. What things they would teach us! There was, at the place called the Old Saint-Ours, a chapel which, according to the report of the ancients, was very vast. It fell into ruin at the beginning of the 17th century. For the greater convenience of the pilgrims and of the inhabitants of the place, it was rebuilt at a kilometre's distance, at the place called Plan Saint-Ours, in the midst of a charming village which has become the chief place of the parish of Saint-Ours, since the imperial decree of 4 April 1855, by which this section of Meyronnes is erected into a succursal parish. The cult of Saint Ours will have much to gain from this circumstance, for the pilgrims are now assured of finding a priest in the sanctuary which is the term, the goal of their pilgrimage, and it will be easier for them to make their devotions there, not only on the day of the principal feast, but all the year.

An oratory built on the site of the ancient chapel and a cross of cut stone are there to perpetuate its precious memory. There is also a fountain which the pilgrims regard as a souvenir of the miraculous fountain of Saint Ours. Here, on the subject of this pilgrimage, is what the historian of the diocese of Embrun says of it. After having spoken of the origin of the parish of Meyronnes, he adds:

"The place of Meyronnes is renowned on account of a chapel under the title of Saint-Ours, which is in its territory. Saint Ours, *sanctus Ursus*, had been provost (he should have said founder) of a Chapter in the Val d'Aosta. His memory is in great veneration, not only in the valley of Barcelonnette, but also in several valleys in Piedmont. There has always been, from time immemorial, a chapel dedicated in his honour in the district of Meyronnes. It was changed from place and rebuilt in 1773. It is at present in the hamlet which is called the Plan de Saint-Ours. The faithful betake themselves there in crowds, on 17 June, for the feast of this Saint. The Piedmontese run there from the Val de Maira, from the Val de Stura and from the Val de Sampeyre. The French do not yield in this point to the Piedmontese. One sees there a multitude of persons not only from Barcelonnette, but also from the Embrunais and the Gapençais. What draws there so great a concourse is the miracles which have been wrought there.

"The legend of Saint Ours teaches that, in the year 1685, inquiries were made, by the authority of the archbishop of Embrun, on the miracles wrought at the chapel of Saint-Ours, at Meyronnes, and that it was proved that the named Jean Bovis of Meyronnes, Pierre Pautriers of the Sannières, hamlet of Jausiers, and Boniface Pascal of Allos, all three attacked with paralysis and abandoned by the physicians, had been cured miraculously by the intercession of Saint Ours, after having made a vow to this chapel. In the year 1749, on 17 June, day of the feast of the same Saint, a child aged eight years, of the parish of Risoul, in Dauphiné, paralytic for four years, was carried by his parents to this solemnity; he was cured there, rose at once and walked freely. Of which the curé of the parish of Meyronnes had a process-verbal drawn up which is carefully preserved in the chapel." Such is the account of the history of the diocese of Embrun.

It results from it that at Meyronnes, as at Aosta, the cult of Saint Ours is immemorial. In France again, in the diocese of Langres, the town of Montbard, on the Brenne, left a multitude of Saints to attach itself to Saint Ours and honour him as its patron. At Guillestre (Hautes-Alpes), Saint Ours has also a chapel which, under the direction of the zealous M. the canon Garnier, will be more and more visited by the inhabitants of the place and of the neighbourhood. In Savoy, in the diocese of Annecy, province of Chablais, the parishes of Bernex and of Vacheresse have had, from time immemorial, Saint Ours as titular or patron. These two

parishes are very ancient. Bernex is, by its position, very exposed to inundations, it is probably the motive which led the population to put itself under the special protection of Saint Ours. Saint Ours is still known and honoured in the parish of La Thuile, dependent on the same diocese of Annecy.

In the diocese of Ivrea, from time immemorial, Saint Ours has been honoured, not only as an ordinary Saint, but as patron of the town. There was a church erected in his honour at a short distance from the town. There was also a benefice under the title of Saint-Ours. In the same diocese, the very ancient parish of Campiglia, from which were dismembered, at divers times, all the churches of Valsoana (*Vallis Soquanae*), honours, from time immemorial, Saint Ours as its patron and its Apostle.

In the diocese of Vercelli there existed already, before the 13th century, a convent of Saint-Ours outside the walls of the town, called sometimes the hospital of the Scots or of the Irish, sometimes the convent of Saint-Ours. This hospital was destined above all for the service of the pilgrims of Ireland and of Scotland. It is found mentioned as existing until toward the middle of the 12th century. It results from contemporary titles that it was united to the great hospital of Vercelli on 27 August 1343. The place where this hospital was is still shown.

In the diocese of Vercelli, the office of Saint Ours is not performed; but the name and the invocation of the Saint figure in the very ancient litanies used before the introduction of the Roman rite. In a necrology of the church of Vercelli of the 12th century, on the 1st of February, are mentioned Saint Brigid and Saint Ours.

There is nevertheless, in the diocese of Vercelli, a parish which has Saint Ours for patron, it is Rongio, near the large borough of Masserano. The curé of the place, questioned on the cult of Saint Ours at Rongio, answers that the cult is immemorial in this parish and that a lively confidence in his protection is nourished there.

In the celebrated collegiate church of Saint-Gaudens, at Novara, Saint Ours is likewise venerated. In the diocese of Turin, the office of Saint Ours is performed, and in the metropolitan church there is an altar where is a very ancient picture at the bottom of which one reads *sanctus Ursus*. Formerly, at Turin, Saint Ours was the patron of the curriers.

At Sion, in the Valais, Saint Ours figured already on a missal of the 13th century, on 1 February, as at Aosta.

The protection of Saint Ours is implored for all the needs, all the infirmities and the calamities which beset our poor humanity. We see in effect figure, in the account of his miracles, unfortunate persons attacked with divers infirmities of body and soul. They are paralytics, individuals crippled in their limbs, demoniacs who recover, by his power with God, health and the use of their corporal or mental faculties. However one has recourse specially to Saint Ours against the overflowing of waters, against the intemperate weather which menaces the harvests, in laborious childbirths which put in danger the life of mothers and the double life of the children. One has recourse also to the protection of Saint Ours, to ask, in favour of children dead without Baptism, a little return to life in order to receive Baptism, and we have seen reports clothed with all the characters of truth, which authorise us to think that the great faith of the inconsolable parents, joined to the credit of the good Saint Ours, obtained from the sovereign Arbiter of life and death some moments to receive the grace of Baptism.

One has recourse to Saint Ours to be cured or preserved from pains of the kidneys, from rheumatism and other maladies of this kind. In France above all, it is on children that the protection of Saint Ours is particularly called. He had indeed to love children and be loved by children, this Saint whose goodness and gentleness charmed even the birds that fluttered around him. The ancient church dedicated to Saint Peter, which Saint Ours had served, was the place of his burial. His body was deposited in an underground chapel, which still exists, and which took the name of Confession of Saint-Ours. It is situated beneath the great choir of the present church of the Collegiate Church of Saint-Ours. One descends there by two staircases each

having twelve steps of marble already well worn by the visitors. This double entrance, common to monuments of this kind, serves to avoid the meeting and the confusion of those who enter and those who go out. Nine columns of stone, each of a single block, support the vault of the chapel. These columns are all of Roman form, like several others which have been dug up at different times; but they differ almost all from one another in form and in the nature of the stone. Some are round, others square, there are two pentagonal, there are some of marble of Aymavilles, others of sandstone, one of tufa. There is an altar where Holy Mass is often celebrated. The bust of Saint Ours is exposed there under a canopy supported by six columns of marble of Aymavilles, of Doric order. The Confession of Saint-Ours is from time immemorial the title of a prebend or of a benefice which has its rector.

The archives of the Collegiate Church preserve a great number of parchments attesting the donations made at divers times to the chapel of the Confession of Saint-Ours. Which proves the great devotion of our ancestors for the place which was the depositary of the body of our holy patron. It is in this underground that the body of Saint Ours remained enclosed in a wooden shrine with his garments and his sandals, until M. the prior William of Lyddes had built, in 1358, at his expense, a rich silver shrine destined to enclose this precious treasure. This shrine was deposited first in a rather elevated niche, made on purpose in the retable of the ancient high altar, and remained there until 1738. Then was built the great marble altar which exists now, and there was reserved for the great reliquary of Saint Ours a void made in the altar itself. In all times, the faithful have professed for this sacred deposit a great veneration. They make more account of it than of a treasure of gold or silver.

It is to this disposition that the Collegiate Church of Saint-Ours is indebted for the happiness of possessing almost entire the body of its holy founder. We say almost entire, for, at divers times, the Chapter of Saint-Ours has been pleased to accede to the lively instances which were made to it to have some particle of these precious relics.

Thus, in 1273, at the prayer of His Eminence Cardinal Ancherus, passing by Aosta to betake himself to the Council of Lyons, and at that of Mgr Aymon de Challand, bishop of Aosta, the venerable Chapter of Saint-Ours, assembled in July of the same year, deliberated to grant to the Reverend John, of the monastery of Saint John, chaplain of the said cardinal and curé of the church of Saint-Ours at Montbard, diocese of Langres, relics of Saint Ours, whom this town has adopted from time immemorial for its patron. Then there was detached with the greatest respect, in presence of the whole convent, a particle of the head of Saint Ours. A certificate furnished with the seal of the Chapter was joined to it to attest its authenticity, and it was handed thus to the Reverend curé of Montbard. There is preserved, in the archives of the Collegiate Church, the authentic act which, attesting the fact, proves again the respect which was professed, five hundred years ago, for the relics of Saint Ours. On the reliquary of Saint Ours, in the church of Montbard, one reads: *Reliquiae sancti Ursi patroni hujus urbis e manibus commissariorum (93) excerptae, Pairia parochus.*

The celebrated sanctuary of Saint-Ours, of which we have spoken, which exists from time immemorial at Meyronnes (Basses-Alpes), whither a prodigious number of pilgrims flock, received a rib of the Saint; but this precious treasure was taken away and carried back to Aosta, then put back in the shrine of Saint Ours. However the Chapter of Saint-Ours, to console the inhabitants of Meyronnes for the loss they had suffered, was not slow to send them a relic of the Saint. At the Revolution, it was necessary to withdraw it from the fury of the new Vandals and to hide it under the floor of the chapel, where the damp reduced it to dust. In 1835, M. Caire, curé of Meyronnes, obtained a new relic; it is a rib, the same probably which had been granted and taken back in 1676. At Guillestre (Hautes-Alpes), one possesses a little reliquary containing relics of Saint Ours, which were brought from Aosta in 1862.

We can still put in the number of the relics of Saint Ours the chalice to which his name has remained attached, because tradition holds that it is the one which he used himself for the celebration of the holy mysteries.

This silver chalice is twenty centimetres in height, sixteen centimetres in diameter; the knop and the foot are furnished with eight precious stones. One sees on it fleurs-de-lis such as are remarked in the mosaic of the cathedral, which is of the 6th century. It is customary to present this chalice to women whose laborious childbirth exposes their life and that of the children. The Collegiate Church possesses very precious relics.

In the year 1481, on the 28th and 29th of the month of December, under the pontificate of Sixtus IV, the most illustrious George of Challand, prior of the Collegiate Church, with the assistance of the Chapter, proceeded to the recognition of the relics contained in the sacristy. The greater part were furnished with their authentication; they were enclosed in reliquaries, and a census of them was made which was also inserted there. Here are some articles of this census:

We have a tooth and some other relic of the body of Saint Peter, in whose honour this basilica was instituted. These relics are enclosed in the silver bust constructed in apostolic form.

The body of Saint Ours, patron of our Collegiate Church, reposes in the great shrine of silver partly gilt. His head is enclosed in the silver statue newly constructed. There exist relics of him in several places of the diocese and elsewhere.

Abridgment of the Life of Saint Ours, Archdeacon of Aosta, by a member of the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter and Saint Ours. Aosta, 1863.

Saint Marie, Surnamed the Sorrowful, Virgin and Martyr

1294. — Pope: Nicholas IV. — Duke of Brabant: John II.

Castitas pulchra possessio est quae a feris non vastatur et ab igne non comburitur.

Chastity is a fair possession which wild beasts do not ravage and which fire does not burn.

S. Ephrem, De Castitate.

Marie was born in the village of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, near Brussels, of very pious parents, of whom she was the only consolation. After the example of the Queen of Virgins, whose name she bore and for whom she had a tender devotion, she resolved to consecrate her virginity to God and to devote herself entirely to His service. A life of penance and retirement pleased her, and God, who had put in her this desire, gave her the means of carrying it out. Having therefore obtained the permission of her parents, who themselves applauded her generous resolution, she went to live at some distance, in a little dwelling adjoining a church dedicated to the Mother of the Saviour. There, under the protection of God and of the Blessed Virgin, and to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants of the country, who knew, in those times of lively and sincere faith, how to appreciate what prayer and penance were, she began the new kind of life to which heaven had called her. She had already inhabited this place for several years in a continual application to the things of God, and living on the alms which the pious persons of the region gave her in rivalry, when an infamous libertine conceived the horrible thought of making her fall into crime. Urged by the spirit of evil which possessed him, he was not ashamed to make to the virtuous recluse culpable proposals; but she rejected them at once with energy and indignation. “The demon,” says here the biographer of the Saint, “was jealous of her virtues, and in exciting the passion of the perverse man, he wished at once to sink him still deeper in the mire of vice and to overthrow the edifice of holiness which the pious Marie was building; but he succeeded only in giving to the Church of Jesus Christ one martyr more, and soon after a new example of the power of the intercession of the Saints with God.” In effect, the perfidious tempter, seeing that he could obtain nothing by his words, had recourse to ruse. Having learned that the pious girl went sometimes to a respectable father of a family of the neighbourhood, who received her with eagerness, on account of her piety and in order that by her prayers she might draw the blessings of heaven on his children, he entered furtively into this house, one day when she was there, and carried off a silver cup which he deposited adroitly in the little bag which Marie used. The

innocent young girl, after having edified the family which received her, returned full of joy to her dwelling, carrying away with the little provisions which the charity of her host had given her the fatal cup which was to become the cause of her death. Soon, in effect, it was remarked that a silver vessel had disappeared, and searches were made on all sides, uselessly, to find it. During this time, the infamous calumniator had gone near the dwelling of Marie, accusing her of this theft, and declaring to her that she could escape the pursuit of justice only by yielding to his passion. Stupefied on hearing such a calumny, the pious girl promptly recovers from her first emotion, and declares anew that she would rather die a thousand times than consent to what he proposes to her. And as the wretch threatened to bring her before the judges: “It would be very ill of you,” she answers with the assurance and calm of truth, “to deliver an innocent person to the danger of death, when I have the conscience that I have not committed this theft.” Then this man, adroitly seizing the little bag which was within reach of his hand, draws the cup out of it and presenting it to Marie: “There you are convinced by an eye-witness,” he cries, “obey then what I ask of you, I will withdraw you from justice and no harm will be done you.” The young girl was as if out of herself; she could not believe her eyes nor her ears. Casting herself at once in thought into the arms of the God who knows the truth and who searches the heart and the reins, she repelled with an energetic indignation the calumniator and tempter, who directed himself at once toward the house of the judge of the region. There he formulates his accusation against the Saint and presents, as evidence, the cup which he had found in the bag. “Besides,” he added, “this woman is a sorceress who bewitches men; I have been myself so fascinated by her artifices and her seductions that I can no longer either drink, or eat, or find rest.” The judge, who, like all the inhabitants of the region, knew the great virtue of the pious Marie, would not give credit to what he heard, and appeared disposed to repulse the accuser; but the wretch, who saw that his prey was going to escape him, presented anew the cup which he held in his hands and forced the magistrate to proceed against the pretended culprit with all the rigour of the laws of that epoch against thieves. While these things were passing, Marie had hastened to come to her parents to tell them all that had happened. They consoled her eagerly and exhorted her to put her confidence in God and in the most holy Virgin, her patroness and the consoler of afflicted souls. While they strove to reassure her by telling her that her innocence would soon be recognised, there was seen to arrive at the door of the modest dwelling the judge of the place, whom the calumniator had constrained to this rigorous measure. The parents at once set about justifying their daughter, and showing how improbable, even absurd, was the accusation brought against her; but the judge declares that notwithstanding all, to satisfy the law, he must proceed to her judgment. Some men-at-arms then approach the innocent victim, bind her with cords and prepare to conduct her to the public prison. The father and the mother were in an inexpressible desolation and would not let their child go away. Marie, on her side, seeing her parents repulsed, could not hinder herself from shedding tears abundantly. All those who saw her in this state could not either restrain their sobs, and convinced of the innocence of the pious girl, they gave her the name of Sorrowful.

After having passed some time in the prison, where it was hoped that fear would extract avowals from her, the innocent accused was brought before the judge, who questioned her on the cup. “It is true,” answers Marie, “that this cup was found in my bag; but it was put there by another person without my knowing it.” On hearing these words, the calumniator rises, and addressing the judge, he shows him how his victim has just avowed her crime by seeking maliciously to throw the responsibility of it on another.

At that epoch still, and above all in certain localities, theft was severely punished, and it was not rare to see those who made themselves guilty of it condemned to the capital penalty. Too weak to resist the imperious urgings of the calumniator of the young virgin, or deceived perhaps by his lies skilfully disguised, the judge pronounced against the young girl a sentence of death which was to be executed immediately. Marie heard it with calm and resignation, leaving to God the care of unveiling her innocence. The day was approaching its decline when she was led to the place of her execution. The little dwelling, where for some years she had served God with so much happiness, was on the road. When they had arrived there, she asked permission, before dying, to say a last prayer to the most holy Virgin. The judge consented, and Marie, her soul wrung

with sorrow, fell on her knees. She besought the sweet Queen of heaven, her who is the refuge of all the afflicted, to come to her aid in her anguish, and asked at the same time pardon for all those who might have contributed anything to her death. She asked further that those who should come to this place to render their homage to the most holy Virgin should be preserved from pains or wounds, from contusions and from condemnations; and that in consideration of the sorrow, pain and anxiety of her soul. Finally she prayed for herself, that after this passing life, she might merit to be introduced, by the Queen of Virgins, into glorious Paradise, with the double crown of virginity and of martyrdom. Her prayer ended, Marie rose and walked tranquilly to the place of execution. There, the executioner bound her feet and hands, and made then a hole in the earth. During all these funereal preparations, the numerous spectators who surrounded the innocent victim shed tears abundantly. The executioner himself said, addressing the young girl: “Marie, intercede for me, I pray you, with God.” — “I pray God,” she answered him, “that He pardon you what you are about to do as well as all your sins. I pardon also with all my heart those who may have offended me by their words and their actions, and I propose to ask their grace of the merciful God.”

Meanwhile the calumniator of Marie the Sorrowful was there in the midst of the crowd, considering with a dry eye all the preparations of the execution. When they were finished, the executioner seized the young girl and placed her in the hole which he had made. Having then covered her with earth, he took a four-sided stake, set the end of it, cut to a point, on the body, then three men, armed with heavy mallets, drove it in with violence. A moment after, the execution of the innocent virgin was finished and that of her calumniator was going to begin. In effect, this wretch, returned to his dwelling, sought sleep in vain; his soul, delivered to remorse, was agitated by the most frightful visions. Soon he even uttered horrible cries and became so furious that it was necessary to bind his feet and hands to hinder him from tearing out his life. During seven years, this great culprit remained in this state, which was for all a sensible proof of the vengeance of heaven. His relatives and friends had already done all that was in their power to recall him to reason and to confidence in God, when one day they conceived the project of conducting him to the church, near which Marie the Sorrowful had dwelt. When it was necessary to take the sick man down from the cart on which he had been brought, he fell into such a fury that his friends, despairing of being able to make him enter the church, rang the bell to call the inhabitants to their help. These helped them to conduct their unhappy relative before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, and all together addressed there a fervent prayer to heaven. At once the evil spirit which possessed this man abandoned him: he, feeling himself cured, fell himself on his knees and addressed his prayer to the holy Mother of God and to the blessed Marie the Sorrowful. At the same time he avowed publicly the crime of which he had made himself guilty toward the innocent recluse, and all those who were present adored the justice and the mercy of God which had been manifested on him in a manner so brilliant. The almost contemporary author who relates the life of the virgin of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre points out a great number of miraculous cures wrought in his time and the details of which were known to everyone. These prodigious facts have been reproduced again very often since that epoch, above all in the chapel near which she had dwelt. It was for this reason that, at the request of twelve prelates, Pope Urban V granted in 1363 indulgences “in favour of the faithful who should visit the chapel of Saint Mary, vulgarly called the Sorrowful, in the parish of Woluwe, in the diocese of Cambrai, on different days of the year.” This Bull was published the following year by Pierre André, bishop of Cambrai; it was so again in 1611 by Mathias Hovius, archbishop of Mechlin, a diocese to which the parish of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre has since belonged. The body of the blessed Martyr reposes in this church, under the high altar: she was honoured there above all on 17 June, which is probably the day of her death. Some authors fix it in the year 1290, others in 1294, under John II, duke of Brabant.

We have borrowed this biography from the *Lives of the Saints of Cambrai and Arras*, by the Abbé Destombes.

The Blessed Paul of Arezzo, Cardinal, Archbishop of Naples

1578. — Pope: Gregory XIII. — King of France: Henry III.

Nihil est aliud pastorale officium quam ovibus sibi commissis sanctitatis et laudabilis conservationis exemplum ostendere.

The duty of a pastor consists only in the obligation he is under to give the example of holiness and of an admirable vigilance.

S. Laur. Just., De Regim. praelat., cap. iv.

The blessed Paul of Arezzo, sprung from a noble and ancient family, was born in “15ilàltri”, a little town of the kingdom of Naples, in the diocese of Gaeta. He announced from his childhood that he would one day be a great servant of God. His first studies finished, he applied himself to law, and was received doctor in that faculty in the university of Bologna. He exercised for nearly ten years the charge of advocate at Naples, where his disinterestedness and his integrity made him universally respected. At the age of thirty-seven, he returned to his country to occupy himself there, in retirement, with his own sanctification; he was afterwards forced to return to Naples in quality of royal counsellor. He chose for confessor the blessed Marinon, superior of the Theatines of that city. Soon after, he renounced the hopes he had of advancing in the world, entered among the Theatines, and made his novitiate there with Saint Andrew Avellino; then he pronounced his vows in the hands of the blessed Marinon, on 2 February 1358. Scarcely had he been ordained priest than he gave himself with zeal to the functions of the holy ministry. His eminent virtues caused him to be chosen superior of the house of Saint Paul of Naples, and his conduct proved that he had all the qualities necessary for government. Useless efforts were made afterwards to draw him from his retreat; two bishoprics were offered him, which he constantly refused, and he refused likewise to charge himself, with the court of Spain, with an important commission which interested the city of Naples. Saint Charles Borromeo wrote to him twice on this subject, to represent to him that he ought to yield to the solicitations of the

Neapolitans. At last he addressed to him a third letter, in which he ordered him, in the name of the Pope, to set out as soon as possible. The blessed then obeyed. The object of his request met at first with great difficulties; but he was not discouraged, and he obtained by his perseverance that no injury should be done to the liberty and privileges of the city of Naples. On returning, he passed through Rome, where he had an audience of Pius IV. Returned to Naples, he was elected president of the chapter of his congregation; he was named next superior at Rome. Pius V, who then occupied the Holy See, consulted him on important affairs. This Pope, who applied himself to giving to the Church zealous pastors, named him to the bishopric of Piacenza. The blessed Paul made him humble representations, but the Pontiff paid no regard to them and ordered him to accept. Paul set out for his diocese immediately after his consecration. There he had the grief of seeing that the Sacraments were hardly approached any more, that the practices of piety were neglected, that corruption had been introduced even into the sanctuary. To remedy these abuses, he employed all the means that an enlightened zeal can suggest; but, among these means, there was none more efficacious than his example. His fervour, his modesty, his affability, his gentleness, his love of simplicity, the rigour and continuity of his penance, and the abundance of his alms, merited him the veneration and confidence of all the diocesans.

Pius V having named him cardinal, he was obliged to come to Rome, where an illness with which he was then attacked kept him some time. After the re-establishment of his health, he returned to Piacenza, where he established the regular clerics of his congregation; then the illness of Pius V recalled him to Rome. There he assisted at the conclave where Gregory XIII was elected. This Pope consulting him on the manner of governing the Church well, the Blessed answered that it was necessary above all to oblige the bishops to residence. He set out again for his diocese, when his presence was no longer necessary at Rome, and he assisted at the third provincial council of Saint Charles Borromeo, supporting with his vote the wise regulations which were made there. He formed at Piacenza divers establishments; he founded there among

others two houses, one for orphan girls, and the other for penitent girls or women; finally he held there two synods, where he published regulations which will be an eternal monument of his zeal for ecclesiastical discipline.

Gregory XIII transferred him from the see of Piacenza to that of Naples, in spite of all that he could allege to hinder this translation. The Saint was received in this last city with the greatest demonstrations of joy. He laboured, as he had done at Piacenza, to reform the abuses which might have slipped into his new diocese. The conversion of the Jews, of heretics and of Mahometan slaves became one of the principal objects of his solicitude.

Meanwhile his health weakened from day to day. He was obliged to go and take the air in the country. Unfortunately he had a fall there and broke his thigh, which obliged him to be carried back to Naples. Fever joined the pains which the fracture of his thigh and a continual cough caused him. His state soon became dangerous. He submitted to the will of God with a perfect resignation; then, after having made his will, he received the last Sacraments and prepared himself with a redoubling of fervour for the passage to eternity. He died on 17 June 1578, at the age of about sixty-seven years. He was buried, as he had asked, in the common cemetery of the Theatines of Saint Paul of Naples. One can judge of his virtues by the singular esteem which the holy pope Pius V, Saint Charles Borromeo, Saint Philip Neri, Saint Andrew Avellino, the blessed Marinon had for him. He was beatified on 13 May 1772. The Theatines make his feast on 17 June.

Acta Sanctorum; — Cf. Godescard, and Father de Tracy. Paris, 1774.

Saint Simplicius, Bishop of Bourges (477)

Simplicius was sprung from an illustrious family, which had given bishops and governors, the one and the other of great merit. He himself did not degenerate. He followed the career of arms in his youth, which did not hinder him from cultivating all the virtues. He built a church at his own expense. He married a woman of the illustrious family of the Palladii; this noble lady helped him much in the education of their children.

The care of his family did not exclude that of the city and of religion. He had difficult struggles to sustain against the Arian Goths, who had imported heresy into the south of Gaul. These heretics put him in prison to have no more to do with so courageous an adversary. But the doors of the prison opened miraculously before him. His services toward the country and toward the Church designated him for the suffrages of his fellow citizens when the episcopal see came to be vacant. But he declined the election to make it fall on his father-in-law Palladius. To Palladius succeeded Eulodius; after the death of the latter, which occurred in 472, the election of the bishop caused violent quarrels in the town of Bourges. They ended by referring to the arbitration of Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, who elected Simplicius. Our Saint was buried in the church which he had built, and which was later named Saint-Outrille-du-Château.

Proper of Bourges.

Saint Véroul or Vorles, Curé of Marcenay (591)

According to an ancient tradition, Saint Vorles received the light of day, toward the middle of the 6th century, in the village of Marcenay, near Châtillon-sur-Seine, of a family allied to the kings of Burgundy. He preferred, from his youth, the combats of the Lord to those of the princes of the earth, eternal glory to what passes, and entered the clerical state. Ordained priest, he devoted himself to the salvation of souls, and he was at once the guide and the model of it. As much as he was eager to know the will of God, manifested by the holy Scriptures, so much was he careful to nourish himself on it and to observe it in his conduct: an angelic modesty, an amiable simplicity, all the virtues which Our Lord has beatified in the sermon on the mount, shone on his brow like the diamonds of a rich crown.

He consumed his life in the functions of the holy ministry at Marcenay, taking an active part in the work of appeasement and civilisation which the Church was then accomplishing, and confirming by miracles the authority of his teaching and the efficacy of his prayer. His reputation was great, and from all sides sick persons came to ask him for healing, and afflicted ones for resignation and peace.

Aganon, scholasticus of Châtillon in the 9th century, relates, in a homily which he made on the day of his feast, the following prodigy: King Contran, drawn by the desire to see the marvels which renown published of Saint Vorles, came to Marcenay, and, while he was assisting at Mass with the people of his suite, he perceived that the Blessed One, seized with an ecstatic rapture at the moment of the Gospel, like Saint Ambrose at the hour of the passing of Saint Martin, stood motionless and silent… After an entire hour of waiting, for no one dared approach the altar, he saw him recover his senses and continue the sacrifice. As soon as the Mass was said, he hastened to ask him what he had had and why he had interrupted so long the holy Mysteries. “At the very hour,” the Blessed One answered him, “that I was offering the divine Sacrifice, the inhabitants of Plaines were hearing it at Mussy, and, in their absence, fire was catching a house where a child was sleeping; God having made me know it, I ran in all haste to stop the fire and to save the child.”

At this account, Gontran, amazed, despatches to Plaines faithful messengers who find in effect the people in commotion, and learn that the holy priest of Marcenay had carried off, from the midst of the flames, a child in his arms and had given him back full of health to his parents. Thus assured of the miracle by his own testimony and that of his officers, he honoured Saint Vorles with a still deeper veneration and took him for counsellor. It is to his influence, no doubt, that he owed his conversion and the glory of his reign.

No other details of the life of Saint Vorles are known; but the brilliant miracles which God has wrought at his tomb serve as a sufficient testimony to demonstrate how holily and religiously he walked in the way of His commandments, and how he bore his cross in this world, conforming himself in all to the will of God.

The body of Saint Vorles reposed at Marcenay from his blessed death until the 9th century. At the approach of the Normans, who ravaged the country of France, sparing nothing, burning castles, cottages, churches and monasteries, outraging without shame God and His Saints, the bishop of Langres, Isaac the Good, transferred the body of the holy Priest from Marcenay to Châtillon, as to a place of safety: “A numerous assistance accompanied it with torches and to the chant of hymns, which was not interrupted during the whole march.” He deposited it in the chapel of Our Lady of the castle, on 26 May of the year 868. “It is believed,” says Courtépée, “that the oratory of the castle was raised by Saint Didier, bishop of Langres and martyr, in the 3rd century.” Enlarged, when the faith became fruitful on the Châtillon soil, and dedicated to Saint Martin, it was framed, so to speak, at the end of the 10th century, in the Romanesque church, so beautiful and so pious, which the bishop of Langres, Bruno de Roucy, had built, and which dominates still today the town of Châtillon. During eight centuries, the relics of Saint Vorles were there the object of an admirable devotion: each year, the neighbouring parishes came in procession on the day of the feast, and the concourse was so great that, to satisfy the piety of the pilgrims, a Mass was said in the open air.

The shrine which enclosed the very holy body, placed first on two columns of marble, was afterwards suspended under the dome, above the high altar. It was lowered for religious solemnities and in times of calamity. In 1015, it was carried to the council of Airy, near Auxerre, convoked by king Robert the Pious, and, some time after, a great drought having brought in the Châtillonnais famine and plague, it was exposed under a tent, near the church of Saint-Mametz, neighbouring the ducal castle. The confidence of the numerous pilgrims who ran in all haste was at once rewarded: the scourge ceased, and the earth, watered by an abundant rain, gave a rich harvest.

In 1181, under the pontificate of Alexander IV and the reign of Philip Augustus, on the twenty-fourth day of May, Manasses, bishop of Langres, made the juridical opening of the shrine, and found in it the body with its legend. He had it placed in a shrine and raised on two pillars of marble. The head was put apart to be

sumptuously garnished.

In 1636 and 1646, the inhabitants of Marcenay felt the effects of the protection of their venerated patron, on the occasion of a great drought which desolated their country. In 1784, the parish of Châtillon went also in procession, to Plaines, to pray before the relics of the Saint, which are preserved there. It was not back at Saint-Vorles when the wishes of all were granted: the drought had given place to a beneficent rain. Finally, in 1832, when, in the space of twelve days, the village of Plaines saw fifty-two of its inhabitants carried off by cholera, Saint Vorles made known the credit which he had with God and the protection which he loved to spread on those who invoke him. After a procession in which his relics were carried, the epidemic made no more victims, and the sick were cured.

A little chapel is raised at Plaines, in honour of Saint Vorles, at the very spot where the fire of which we have spoken broke out. It recalls to the inhabitants that they have in heaven a protector as powerful as devoted. His relics, preserved in a bust and an arm of gilded wood, consist in a part of a vertebra of the holy Pastor.

The Revolution threw to the wind the holy relics preserved at Châtillon, and broke the shrine of ebony covered with silver, in which Mgr de Montmorin had enclosed them in 1751, as well as the bust and the silver reliquary, given in 1613 by the pious faithful of Marcenay; but it could not destroy the cult of the blessed Priest: it lives in souls and his name has remained popular. Saint Vorles is represented in priestly vestments, holding a child by the hand. It is thus that at Chaource, opposite the chapel called of Paradise, one remarks, fixed to a pillar, a group of sculpture which represents Saint Vorles drawing a child from a burning house.

Drawn from the *Life of the Saints of the diocese of Dijon*, by the Abbé Duplas; and from the *Life of the Saints of the diocese of Troyes*, by the Abbé Defer.

Saint Herbaud, Solitary in the Diocese of Quimper (8th century)

Two noble and pious spouses of Great Britain obtained this Saint by their prayers. They were childless, and asked the Lord humbly that He would deign to grant them one. Their wishes were heard, and God gave them this son of blessing, who received at Baptism the name of Herbaud. His contempt for the goods and honours of the world growing in him with the years, he plunged into a forest. He found there in a solitary cavern a servant of God who gave him the wisest counsels, and who exhorted him above all to detach himself from everything, to follow Jesus Christ more perfectly. Docile to these lessons, Herbaud returns to the paternal house, and announces to his parents, with all possible respect, that he is in the resolution to leave them, in order to walk more surely in the way which leads to heaven.

These made some difficulty, but at last they yielded. Our Saint plunged then into a profound solitude, in the diocese of Quimper. The sick and infirm ran from all sides to his cell, to find healing of their ills. He obtained it by his prayers; and his charity not being limited to relieving their bodies, he profited by these occasions to bring sinners to penance; he preached with an ardour which showed how he was devoured with zeal for the salvation of souls.

After having led a pure life wholly consecrated to the service of God, Herbaud knew that the time of his death approached, and that he was soon to receive the crown of justice which was prepared for him. When he thought himself at his last moments, he clothed himself in his hermit’s habit and stretched himself on the bare earth, placing his arms in the form of a cross. Jealous of his holiness, and wishing to profit by the state of languor in which the servant of God found himself, the demon attacked him by divers temptations; but Herbaud, faithful in imploring the help of heaven by prayer, triumphed over all the efforts of the enemy of salvation.

This tempest being appeased, the pious solitary was visited by a religious, who brought him the holy Viaticum. He received it with tears and with great humility, praying Jesus Christ to be favourable to a poor sinner. It was with the same sentiments that he provided himself with the last Sacraments of the Church. At last, after having pronounced these words: "Lord God, receive my spirit," he rendered his soul to his Creator. The author of his Life reports that at the instant of his blessed passing, the sky shone with a clearness such that it seemed that it was a new sun which lighted. The priests and clerics of the neighbourhood came to take the body of the servant of God, and interred it in the church which has since borne his name. "In the choir of this church," says M. de Fréminville (*Antiquities of the Finistère*), "is the tomb of the pious anchorite Saint Herbaud. It consists of a sarcophagus of a rather coarse granite; on the top is sculptured in relief the recumbent statue of the Saint, placed under a Gothic arcade. He is represented in hermit's robe with a turned-down cape; he has long hair and beard; his Breviary is suspended at his right side. With the left arm he supports his staff; his feet, which are bare, rest on a lion lying down, which is rather remarkable in the sepulchral statue of a religious. The tomb of Saint Herbaud bears neither inscription nor date, but it appears to be of the same time as the church which contains it." The wars drawing often, in the 13th and 14th centuries, the English into Brittany, soldiers of that nation, then Catholic, penetrated into the church of Saint-Herbaud, and carried off his head, which was adorned with gold and silver. They took also the Legend which contained the history of his life, and carried away the whole to their country. The rest of the body was respected, and served for the solemn oaths which people who had law-suits made.

Drawn from D. Lobineau; the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*.

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[1] The Bollandists add to these two hundred and sixty-two blessed Martyrs, Quiriacus, Blastus, Tribunus, Diogenes, Anas, Nicander, Dorostolus, Eusicius, Aquila, Cantianus, Longinus and John, priest.

[2] Maxime and Nicander had served some time in the Roman armies. The acts represent to us Daria, wife of Nicander, exhorting her husband to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and following him with her child to martyrdom. — The wife of Marcian gave a very different spectacle; but the martyr knew how to remain firm. Saints Marcian, Nicander and Daria are patrons of Venafro.

[3] Saint Himerius was a Calabrian. He led at first the anchoretic life in a desert island; the admiration which his holiness excited caused him to be called to the cenobitic life. Afterwards he was elected bishop of Amelia, in Umbria. Diligent in the observance of discipline, one of the things to which he held most was to prescribe nothing to others that he had not first commanded himself. When he visited the sick, he cared still more for the health of their souls than for that of their bodies. He died with the same piety with which he had lived. His body, buried first at Amelia, was transferred solemnly to Cremona, toward the middle of the 10th century.

[4] It is thought that Saint Gondulf had been first bishop of Milan. The *Nova Bibliotheca* of the learned Jesuit Father Labbe of Bourges (vol. ii, p. 316) counts him among the Saints of his diocese because he ended his life there under the cowl of the hermit and was buried there in a locality to which he gave his name, the borough of Saint-Gondon, three leagues from Gien (Loiret), where the Bollandists assure that his cult was formerly most celebrated.

[5] Saint Vérédème, Greek by nation, resolved from his youth to lead the eremitical life. The anger of his father obliged him to flee into Gaul. He lived there, fasting and praying, in a little retreat situated near the confluence of the Durance, or, according to others, in a cave, near the Gardon, when Saint Giles, who was animated by the same cenobitic fervour, and who from Athens had gone to Arles, came to find him, passed some years with him, both working a great number of miracles, and drawing about them a great concourse of pious persons. Giles afterwards left our Saint and sought farther a more profound solitude. As for Vérédème, his renown spread through the whole country, to the point that the blessed Agricola, dying, designated him as his successor in the bishopric of Avignon (700). Raised in spite of himself to the episcopal dignity, his holiness shone with a new lustre. During twenty years, he illustrated this see by his prudence and his piety, and continued, in this high post, his habits of anchorite. He died on 17 June 720 or 722.

[6] See 16 June.

[7] See the preceding day.

[8] See this day, t.

[9] We give his life on 9 November.

[10] Rosweide, l. 5, lib. ix, n. 9.

[11] Ap. Rosweide, l. viii, c. 88, and Ammon, Tabennas, ep. ad Bolland. ad 14 maii, in Vit. sancti Pachomii, n. 21.

[12] This religious was Laetas, whom we now call Saint Lié, drawn from the diocese of Bourges by the reputation of Avit.

[13] According to certain authors, there is another Saint Avit to whom must be attributed some of the actions related in the Life of Saint Avit of Micy. Here in two words what relates to this other Saint Avit, or else to the preceding one, if there is only he: He passed by the monastery of Menat, in Auvergne, on the river Sioule, toward the limits of the Bourbonnais, was the companion of Saint Calais (see 1

July), and built, in honour of Saint Peter, a chapel which became later a priory, at Vibraye, in the Maine.

[14] Until the 9th century, by the names of Scotia, Scotland, and Scotus, Scot, Ireland and the Irish were understood.

[15] The dignity of archdeacon is very ancient in the Church. Cecilian, bishop of Carthage, and Saint Jerome suppose it already established in their time. The attributes of the archdeacons were then and were for a long time very considerable. They exercised, by virtue of their dignity, the same rights, the same jurisdiction that the vicars-general or grand vicars now exercise in the diocese of their respective bishop. More than that, it was to the archdeacon that was reserved the clerical education of the subjects who aspired to the ecclesiastical state, the care of the widows, the orphans and the pilgrims, the surveillance of the priests and of the subaltern pastors. He had the right and the obligation to visit the parishes of the diocese, and to regulate there all that could concern the divine office. It is for this reason that the archdeacon was called the eye or the hand of the bishop: the eye, which had to see all that deserved to be regulated; the hand, which had to execute what the eye had observed. Also, according to the testimony of Saint Jerome, the archdeacon was chosen from among the most instructed, the most virtuous and the most zealous members of the clergy.

[16] Those who have made a particular study of Christian antiquities have discovered that in the century of Saint Ours the sign of the cross, which we make by carrying the hand successively to the forehead, the breast, the left shoulder and the right shoulder, was made simply on the forehead.

18 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Rome, on the Ardeatine Way, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Marcus and Marcellian, brothers, who, having been arrested in the persecution of Diocletian, by the president Fabian, were fastened to a post and had their eyes pierced with nails; and as they ceased not to praise Jesus Christ, their sides were pierced with lances, which opened to them the gate of heaven, where they went to reign with the glory of martyrdom. 286. — At Malaga, in Spain, the martyrs Saint Cyriacus and Saint Paula, virgin, who rendered their souls to heaven, under the stones with which they were overwhelmed. 300. — At Tripoli, in Phoenicia, Saint Leontius, soldier, who, by the cruel torments which he endured under the judge Hadrian, attained the crown of martyrdom, with the tribune Hypatius and Theodulus, whom he had converted to Jesus Christ. Under Vespasian. — At Nicomedia, in Bithynia, Saint Ethère, martyr, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, after the torment of fire and other torments, had his head cut off. 4th c. — At Alexandria, the passion of Saint Marina, virgin.[1] Epoch uncertain. — At Sacca, in the diocese of Agrigento, in Sicily, Saint Calogerus, hermit, whose holiness appears principally in the deliverance of the possessed. About 4SG. — In the dioceses of La Rochelle and of Bordeaux, Saint Amand, bishop of the latter see and confessor. About 431. — At Schönau, Saint Elisabeth, virgin, celebrated for her exactitude in observing all the duties of the monastic life. 1165.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Paris, Saint Marina, surnamed the Disguised, virgin and religious in Bithynia. About 150. — In the dioceses of Cologne and of Montpellier, the saints Marcus and Marcellian, brothers, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Nantes, Saint Hervé or Harvian, named yesterday in the martyrology of France. — In the diocese of Laval, the feast of Saint Innocent, bishop of Le Mans.[2] — In the village of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, near Brussels, Saint Marie, surnamed the Sorrowful, who ended her life in innocence by a glorious martyrdom.[3] — At Lyons, Saint Jubin, archbishop of that see, whose sepulchre, which is in the church of Saint-Irenaeus, is often honoured with great miracles. He is invoked particularly against the pains of gout. His decease is marked on 18 April.[4] 1082. — At Avranches, Saint Aubert, bishop, already named on 16 June, who built in Normandy the celebrated church of Saint-Michel, on a mountain in the midst of the sea. — In the ancient village of Celles, today La Grande Paroisse, in the diocese of Meaux, Saint Fortunatus or Fortuné, bishop, friend of Saint Germain of Paris, and writer of the Life of Saint Marcellus, bishop of the same see. About 569. — At Brioude, in the diocese of Le Puy, Saint Elpidius or Ilpise, martyr, and Saint Arcons or Archontius, confessor, his companion. They were two old men whose daily occupation was to

pasture flocks in the pastures of Auvergne. It is related that an Angel appeared to them in the plain and enjoined them to bury at Brioude the body of the glorious martyr Saint Julian; they lent themselves with great heart to this act of a devotion then dangerous, considering the time of persecution in which they lived, and, by a prodigy of heaven, they became suddenly as slender and as vigorous as young men in the flower of age. From that time, they were converted: Elpidius soon won the palm of martyrdom; Arcons died in a solitude, full of years and of merits. 4th c. — At Le Mans, Saint Innocent, bishop of that see.[5] 542. — At Louhans (Saône-et-Loire), Antoine Boutilier, priest, native of that town, and victim of the Revolution. 1798.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — At Schönau, Saint Elisabeth, virgin, named in the Roman martyrology of this day.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — At Mantua, the blessed Ozanne, virgin, of the Third Order of our Father Saint Dominic, who, from the age of seven years, vowed her virginity to God, and who preserved it without stain until her death, by means of fasts, hair-shirts, scourgings and other bodily macerations. 1505.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — Saint John of Saint-Facond.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In the diocese of Naples, the blessed Peter of Pisa, founder of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Jerome, already named yesterday. 1435. — In Africa, the saints Aemilius, Felix and Marcia, martyrs, indicated by the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Ravenna, in Italy, the saints Felix, Aemilius, Crispin, martyrs, mentioned by the same. — Among the Greeks, Saint Leontius, shepherd, and Saint Erasmus, who fell asleep in peace, after an edifying life. — At Steinfeld, in the diocese of Cologne, the saints Potentinus, Felix and Simplicius, confessors or martyrs, patrons of that town. 6th c. — In Egypt, Saint Moses of Ethiopia, and seven other holy anchorite martyrs. — In Sicily, the saints Gregory, bishop and primate, Demetrius, his archdeacon, and Calogerus, hegumen. 5th c. — At Pavia, Saint Specious, virgin, whose relics were transferred to Saxony. Beginning of the 7th c. — In the diocese of Syracuse, in Sicily, the blessed Gerland, knight of the Order of the Templars or of the Hospitallers. 13th c. — At Spoleto, in Umbria, the venerable Marine Vallarino, religious of Saint-Mary-of-the-Star, under the Rule of Saint Augustine, and foundress of the monastery of Saint Matthew of Spoleto. 1300.

Saint Marcus and Saint Marcellian, Martyrs

286. — Pope: Saint Caius. — Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.

Qui amat patrem aut matrem plus quam me, non est me dignus.

He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

Matth. x, 37.

These blessed martyrs were Roman knights, sons of Tranquillinus and of Marcia, whom their nobility and their great goods rendered very considerable in Rome. Although all their family was pagan, they did not fail, by a singular grace of divine Providence, to be instructed and brought up in Christianity. There is reason to believe that they happily met with some Christian preceptor or governor who procured them this happiness. However they made nothing of it appear to their parents; and when they were of an age to marry, they married girls of their condition, without declaring their religion, and had even children. But the love which they had for Jesus Christ did not permit them to remain hidden longer; they were arrested both by Agrestus Chromatius, prefect of the city; he sent them to prison under the guard of Nicostratus, who had the office of first registrar. After some interrogations, in which they testified that nothing was capable of making them quit the worship and the religion of the true God, they were variously tormented by the executioners; and, as

the tortures did not shake them more than the promises, they were condemned to have their heads cut off: nevertheless, thirty days of delay were given them, because the prefect was made to hope that the prayers and tears of their relatives would at last soften them and make them change their resolution.

During these thirty days, the other Roman knights with whom they had lived in much friendship came to find them, and employed all the artifices that their false benevolence and the malice of the demon could suggest to them to corrupt them.

“What folly is this, dear friends?” they said to them. “Is it possible that you were born at Rome and brought up among Roman knights? that neither the old age of your poor father nor the tears of your desolate mother can do anything over you, to make you quit the reveries that these cursed Christians have put in your head? Is this the recompense you owe to your parents, to a father and a mother who love you so much, and who have ceaselessly laboured for you? If you have no compassion on those who begot you, have at least pity on your poor children, who lose all their goods and their nobility if you persevere in this obstinacy, and will become all at once needy, infamous and orphans. Think of your wives and do not give them the stroke of death with your own hands.”

While these false friends held this language to them, Marcia, their mother, arrived, laden with years and sadness. She threw herself at their feet and, in a voice broken by sobs: “O my children,” she cried, “you who came out of my entrails, whom I fed with my milk and whom I took so much pain to bring up, why do you run thus to death? Do you wish to kill all at once your father, your mother, your wives and your children? O unheard-of misfortune, that I should see the children I bore in my womb run distractedly to death, without my tears, nor the regrets of all the city of Rome being able to hold them back! Wretched that I am, since my own children pray the executioner to kill them and love their life only to lose it!” Tranquillinus, their father, whom his old age and the pains of gout put out of a state to walk, had himself also carried by his servants into the prison where his children were; and deploring his misfortune of losing thus those whom he had brought up with so much care, he besought them, if they had still some remnant of the sentiments of nature, to spare his old age and not to tear his life from him by lavishing inconsiderately their own.

“Behold, children,” said this unfortunate old man, “come and weep with me these young men who deliver themselves voluntarily to death. Come, old men, and sympathise with the grief which poisons my old days, on account of those who will not live, that I may die.”

At last, to make the temptation still stronger, the wives of the blessed Confessors came, all dishevelled, to throw themselves at their feet. “O unfortunate and wretched the women who chose you for their husbands,” they sighed, “since you wish to flee them in this fashion and abandon them with these little children! Where is this faith and this indissoluble knot with which you were bound to us and which can be dissolved only by death? Where is now this love and this cordial affection which gave us so many long years of happiness? Do you call that piety, to bruise with your own hands and to cause to die all at once both those who gave you life, and your wives who breathe only for you, and these little beings who will live only by you? Children, approach your fathers, embrace them and hold them well, die with them since to live without them would be to you too cruel a death.”

However constant our generous soldiers of Jesus Christ might be, they did not fail to be softened by so touching and so lamentable a spectacle: they began to join their tears to those of their parents, of their wives and of their children; they no longer answered with the same firmness and the same detachment from all things; nature seemed to have already some advantage over grace, and there was danger that they should yield at last, and that love should do on them what the tortures had not been able to do, if they were not promptly succoured. Saint Sebastian, captain of the first company of the guards of the emperor Diocletian, was present at this spectacle: he had until then kept his religion secret, the better to assist the Christians; but he saw well that it was time to discover himself and to expose himself to death, to prevent these two brothers,

who had so generously fought against the rage of tyrants and executioners, from being vanquished by women and children. He addressed himself therefore to them in the midst of all this assembly, and spoke to them on the vanity and inconstancy of the things of earth, on the obligation they had to keep their faith to God, on the terrible chastisements which were prepared for them in the other life, if they were unfaithful to Him, and on the holy hatred they ought to have against all those who wished to hinder them from saving their souls; his discourse was so strong, so touching, that it rendered them immovable in their first resolution and made them courageously despise all those human sentiments which had already made impression on their heart.

The constancy of these two Martyrs, the force of the discourse of Saint Sebastian, and a great miracle which he wrought on the person of Zoe, wife of Nicostratus, vividly impressed the father, the mother, the wives and the children of Marcus and Marcellian; all, as also Nicostratus himself with his wife and all his family, were converted and embraced Christianity. One cannot tell what was the joy of our two Saints, on seeing those who had made all their efforts to tear them from Jesus Christ become themselves His disciples. Saint Marcus made them a discourse, in which, addressing himself particularly to his father, to his mother, to his wife and to that of his brother, he exhorted them to sustain generously the faith which they declared they wished to embrace, not to fear all that the demon might undertake to ravish it from them, and to despise, in order to obtain a felicity without end and without bounds, a life which a thousand accidents can ravish from us, and which is but a source of afflictions and miseries. The whole assembly melted into tears and mingled the regrets of its past infidelity with the thanksgivings which it rendered to God for having delivered it from it. Nicostratus then protested to the Saints that he would neither drink nor eat until he had received holy Baptism. Nicostratus, become a Christian, offered to Saint Marcus and to Saint Marcellian an entire liberty to go away where they would, to avoid the execution of the sentence pronounced against them; but they answered him with a zeal worthy of their faith and of their constancy: “That if he, who was as yet but a catechumen, and who had just quitted the idols to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ, had nevertheless the resolution to expose himself to death for the confession of His name, they, who had been so long His servants, ought not to abandon the field of battle and quit the crown which was prepared for them.” Thus they remained in the house of this new Christian, awaiting with holy impatience until the term which had been granted them should be expired. At the end of the thirty days, there happened what we have said at great length in the life of Saint Sebastian: Tranquillinus their father came to find the prefect Chromatius, and declared to him that his children were in no way resolved to give incense to the idols, and that he himself had entered into their sentiment, having become a Christian like them. Chromatius was then enlightened by a divine light, and willingly renounced his prefecture, which rendered him homicide of so many innocents, to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Fabian, a very cruel man, succeeded him. The latter, then, learning the sentence of death given by his predecessor against Saint Marcus and Saint Marcellian, ordered that it be executed; but, instead of having them beheaded according as it bore, he had them nailed to a post, where they remained twenty-four hours, giving a thousand praises to God for the grace which He did them of suffering this torment for His glory.

“Enter into yourselves again, wretched men,” the judge said to them, “and tear yourselves from these torments.” — “Never,” the blessed Martyrs answered him, “have we tasted, in any feast, delights comparable to those which we experience in bearing this for Jesus Christ, in whose love we begin to be fixed. May He permit us to suffer as long as we shall be clothed with this corruptible body!”

After a day and a night, as they were still full of life and as they still showed the joy which they had in this torment, they were pierced with blows of the lance. Thus, in losing the remainder of their blood, they lost also their life, on 18 June of the year 286.

Their sacred bodies were first buried on the Ardeatine Way, three-quarters of a league from the city, in a place called the Aretii, where there has since been seen a cemetery of their name, between the road of Appius and that of Ardea. Some time after, they were translated into Rome; in 1?82, on 29 July, under the pontificate

of Gregory XIII, they were found with that of Saint Tranquillinus, their father, under a marble tomb, in the church of Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, and there was found also, beside, the body of Saint Felix II, pope and martyr, he who condemned the emperor Constantius.

When sculpture or painting represent our holy Confessors, they unite them in a group; at their side is seen a lance, characteristic of their martyrdom.

They are particularly honoured at Badajoz (Spain), because on the day of their feast this town escaped, as by a miracle, the entire destruction with which the explosion of a powder-magazine threatened it.

Mention is made, on this day, of our holy Martyrs, not only in all the martyrologies, but also in the Antiphonary of Saint Gregory. Baronius speaks of them in his Annals, under the years 284 and 286. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, Ribadeneira, Godescard, and above all the life of Saint Sebastian, which we have inserted, on 20 January, vol. i, p. 489.

Saint Marina, Surnamed the Disguised, Virgin and Religious in Bithynia

750. — Pope: Zachary. — Kings of France: Pepin and Carloman.

Omni tempore calumniam sustineas et sis semper calumniam sustinens.

You shall bear at all times the weight of calumny, and unceasingly you shall be delivered over to opprobrium.

Deuteron. xxviii, 29.

The Blessed whom we honour under the name of Marina was at first named Mary. It is thought that she was born in Bithynia. Her father, named Eugene, having lost his wife, felt himself touched with the desire to renounce the world. Having commended his daughter to one of his relatives, he betook himself to a monastery at some distance from there. He made great progress there in the exercises of the religious life. The abbot, seeing him so pious, so humble, so obedient, had taken a particular affection for him. Nothing would have been wanting to Eugene's happiness, had he been able to have with him the dear child whom he had left in the world. Her memory, in sometimes moistening his eyes with tears, put some trouble into his soul and filled it with melancholy. The abbot having perceived it: "What is the matter, my brother," he said to him; "what is the cause of your sadness? Tell it me with all frankness, and God, who helps the afflicted, will console you." — "My father," the religious answered him, throwing himself at his feet, "I have left in the world a child still very young, and it is the memory of her that causes my pains." — "I permit you," the abbot said to him, "to go and seek her and to bring her to the convent." The father, full of joy, went to seek his daughter, cut off her hair, changed her name of Mary into that of Marinus, and having clothed her in a boy's habit, he enjoined on her secrecy until his death, and took her away to the convent. There he instructed her with all the tenderness of a father, leading her in the ways of God, less still by his lessons than by his examples.

Brother Marinus (it is thus that we shall name him henceforth) was only seventeen years old when he lost his excellent father. It was a great loss, and consequently also a great grief. Marinus, from then on, remained alone in his cell. Faithful to the lessons of virtue which he had received, he made himself loved by everyone, and he was regarded as the most humble, the most zealous, the most exemplary of the brothers of the house. As the monastery was near the sea, and as a market was held three leagues from there, the solitaries often went there to seek, with a cart, what was necessary to the house. Complaint was made that brother Marinus did not go there with the others. The abbot, who had not perceived it until then, said to him one day: "Why do you not go with the others to relieve them?" Marinus answered humbly: "I shall no longer fail in it, since you command it me, my father." From that day, he went to the market with the others, and when it was too late to return to sleep at the monastery, he remained with the other brothers in an inn, at the very place where

the market was held. The innkeeper had a daughter who, having let herself be seduced by a soldier, committed a fault. Her parents, having perceived it, ill-treated her roughly and forced her to name her accomplice. She named brother Marinus. Thereupon, the father runs to the convent, and full of anger, he relates to the abbot the outrage which the solitary Marinus has done him. The abbot, although he could not believe brother Marinus guilty of so great a crime, has him come and tells him of what he was accused. Marinus, after having cast his eyes to heaven and reflected an instant, would not reveal his secret; he contented himself with saying, sighing: “I am very guilty, but I am disposed to do penance.” The abbot, believing him then convicted by his own mouth, had him chastised according to all the rigours of the discipline, and drove him from the convent.

The humble religious remained three years at the door of the monastery, accepting the penance which was imposed on him, lying on the bare ground, fasting, weeping and conjuring the solitaries who entered and went out to implore for him the divine mercy, and asking them a little bread, when he was in extreme necessity. Soon even an addition of penance was needed. The innkeeper’s daughter, having brought into the world a son, sent him, as soon as he was weaned, to brother Marinus, saying to him: “Behold your child, nourish him as you can.” Marinus accepted him, as if he were his own, gave him all his care without ever murmuring, and nourished him for two years on the fruit of his alms.

After this time, the brothers, being touched with compassion, came to find the abbot, begging him to receive Marinus into the community and saying to him: “My father, pardon our brother and receive him; it is five years that he has lain on the ground and done penance, exposed to all the injuries of the air, to the reproaches and the contempt of passers-by. Receive him then to mercy, as Our Lord Jesus Christ commands.” The abbot, overcome by their entreaties, permitted him at last to re-enter, and when he saw him prostrate at his feet: “I pardon you,” he said, “in consideration of your father, who was a holy man. But as your fault is enormous, the penance must be proportioned. This is why I ask you to sweep alone the whole house, to bring the necessary water, to clean the shoes of the brothers, and to serve them all.”

Marinus accepted the penance with a great heart and acquitted himself of it with courage. But the burden was most certainly above his strength, already worn out by so many privations and austerities. He succumbed to it and died after some days of illness. The brothers having reported his death to the abbot, he said to them: “See what was the greatness of his crime, since God did not even leave him the time to do penance for it! Do not fail nevertheless, out of charity, to bury him, and bury him far away from the monastery.”

While they were executing this order, how great was not their surprise, on discovering that it was not a brother, but a holy sister who had lived among them. They all began to cry out, striking their breasts: “How could she suffer so many pains, so many ill-treatments, so much contempt, when with a single word she could have guarded herself from them?” They all ran in tears to the abbot to tell him this news. The abbot, having run to the mortal remains of the Saint, let himself fall down from grief, and, striking his head against the earth, he cried: “Servant of God, I conjure you by Jesus Christ, do not accuse me of the pains which I made you suffer; you know that I did it through ignorance. You had not declared your secret to me; alas! I had not light enough to distinguish the purity of your actions.” He commanded thereupon that the holy body should be buried in the oratory of the monastery. The wicked girl who had defamed Saint Marinus, having learned what was passing, fell into fits of fury, and the demon seized her. Happily she was conducted to the monastery, where, having confessed her crime with tears, she was delivered, on the seventh day, by the intercession of the Saint. The monasteries which were situated in the neighbourhood, and the inhabitants who were in the environs, having learned this miracle, came, with the cross and lighted tapers, to honour the tomb of the Blessed. They blessed God, singing hymns and canticles, and glorified Him for having thus sanctified His servant by extraordinary graces, and for having made manifest her sanctity by miracles.

Saint Marina died about the year 750. In 1230, her relics were transported from Constantinople to Venice, where they are kept in a church of her name. The Church of Venice celebrates this translation on 17 July.

This Saint was patroness of a parish of Paris, whose church still exists; but it serves profane uses. Relics were preserved there; there remains a rib of the Saint: it is now kept in the metropolitan church of Paris.

Saint Marina is represented with a little child at her side; we have given in her Life the explanation of this characteristic. Sometimes she is seen painted as a hermit, probably on account of the years of humiliation which she passed outside her monastery, victim of an infamous calumny. At her side is sometimes seen a possessed woman; this is her calumniatrix, who could find her deliverance only near her. Finally she is often painted in man's clothes, to recall the disguise under which she succeeded in entering the monastery of her father.

M. l'abbé Caillet.

Saint Ozanne, Virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic

1505. — Pope: Julius II. — King of France: Louis XII.

In carne angelicam vitam acquirere majus est meritum quam habere; esse angelum, felicitatis est; esse vero virginem virtutis.

It is more meritorious to lead an angelic life in a mortal flesh than to be an angel by nature; for to be an angel is a happiness, and to be a virgin is a virtue.

S. Jerome, ep. x, to Paula and Eustochium.

Ozanne came into the world at Mantua: her father was called Nicholas, and her mother Agnes; they were Christians, and they brought up their child in the maxims of the true faith. The little girl profited marvellously by the graces which the Lord granted her from her childhood. At the age of six years she felt her heart kindled with the love of God, and wholly given to His devotion, having asked of the Holy Spirit light to know her duties well and strength to accomplish them well, she heard, within herself, a voice which said to her intelligibly: "My daughter, the good life consists in loving God with all one's heart."

The good angel conducted one day little Ozanne, in spirit, to the abode of heaven, where he showed her the glory of the Saints; when she had returned to her senses, she offered herself to God, without any reserve, asking of Him as her only favour to be pleasing to Him during the whole course of her life. Immediately Our Lord appeared to her, under the form of a little child ravishing in beauty, his forehead covered with beautiful curls of fair hair, but girt with a crown of thorns, and a heavy cross on his shoulders; he stretched out, smiling, his little arms towards the young virgin, and opening his divine mouth, he said to her: "Dear Ozanne, I am the Son of Mary: after my example, thou must dispose thyself to suffer much; nevertheless, fear not, never will I abandon thee." He then disappeared, and the young child remained quite full of a burning love for her God, and of the desire to endure much to please Him. From that moment, the young girl gave herself more entirely and still more eagerly to the exercises of the most tender piety, to prayer, to austerity of life, to the meditation of the Saviour's passion and to the frequentation of the Sacraments. The divine Saviour became enamoured, for this virgin so humble and so pure, with an admirable affection: He often descended to her in a quite familiar manner, teaching her to understand the things of God. One day of the Purification, as she saw in spirit the offering which Mary made of her heavenly child, in the temple of Jerusalem, and the child Jesus on the arm of the old man Simeon, the Virgin-Mother took him, turned to her, gave him to her to kiss, and laid him again upon her heart: Ozanne received from it an inexpressible joy and consolation.

These signal favours of Jesus and Mary did not cease towards her during the whole extent of her life: she had the sorrowful happiness of seeing herself marked with the stigmata of the cross, of the crown of thorns and of the deicide lance; she received, more than once, in her ecstasies, when she was intimately united to her Beloved, communion from the hand of the angels; God often communicated to her the secrets of the future

and put into her hand the power of working miracles.

If the pious virgin had given herself wholly to God, it was not that she had not been turned aside from her way and urged to give herself to the world. Her parents themselves, as happens, alas! too often, had been the first to solicit her to a less perfect conduct. At the age of fifteen years, they had proposed to her the state of marriage; but she had frankly answered them that she had irrevocably given herself, and that she hoped never to take herself back: Jesus alone was to possess her whole heart. Nevertheless, seeing herself, in spite of her well-expressed resolution, exposed to new solicitations, in the hope of cutting them short, she took the habit of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and wore it publicly. Her parents asked her for how long a time she had chosen this habit: “For all my life,” she answered, “and I shall carry it with me into the earth when I die.” They had enough religion to leave her in peace. The ardour of divine love grew so great in this holy soul, that she no longer lived and no longer acted but by it; this sacred love shone forth in all her words and in all her conduct. She was accustomed to say: “Yes, I would rather, loving my God, find myself with Judas in hell, than be, without love, the first saint of paradise.” One can judge by that of the love which she had for her neighbour; for the love of neighbour is in a soul in proportion to its love for God. She assisted the poor beyond her means; she visited the sick, procuring them all the succours which were in her power; she loved to console those who groaned in the anguish of affliction; she deprived herself to relieve the unfortunate, taking, as the saying is, the morsel from her mouth to give them to eat.

Her charity rested on the base of a profound humility; she esteemed herself the last of creatures, the most ungrateful and the most unworthy, not knowing how to thank God for all the graces which He had done her and which His liberal hand poured on her daily, and unceasingly multiplying the number of her offences. She felt an extreme repugnance for every kind of praise, and fled all that could turn to her own glory, notably in regard to the sacred stigmata with which the Saviour had impressed her, and which she hid as much as she possibly could, for fear of being esteemed and honoured for them.

She had, this humble girl, what she desired, the contempt of men, the hatred of demons, persecutions and mockeries. She was basely calumniated; she was treated as a hypocrite and a sorceress; they wished to make her pass for mad, and they went so far as to confide her to physicians to cure her deranged head. These vexations filled her soul with perplexities and anxieties; she fell a prey to scruples, and was tempted for a moment to give herself up to a fatal despair. The demons, animated against her with a strange fury, ill-treated her more than once, overwhelming her with blows during the night, and leaving her almost without life. They tried to inflame her soul with the impure fires of carnal concupiscence, saying to her, in mockery, that she might well so constrain and conquer herself, since she was destined for the flames of hell. “Go, accursed ones,” she said to them; “yes, my sins deserve hell, but I trust in the merits of my Saviour; he will have pity on my soul.”

At last peace returned to her: prayer, confession, confidence in God, had triumphed over everything; nothing could shake this soul resting solely on her love for the Lord. After having thus triumphed over the world, over the demons and over herself; after having sustained so many combats from which she always came out victorious; arrived at the fifty-sixth year of her life, Ozanne felt that she was going to die. She collected herself in her God, commended her soul to the sacred Spouse whom she had loved with all the affections of her heart, then she fell asleep in the peaceful sleep of the death of the just, on 18 June loOo. Her body was buried with great pomp in the church of the Dominicans, where God honoured her with numerous miracles. Leo X permitted her office for the diocese of Mantua.

The Life of a Saint for Each Day of the Year, by the abbé Chapia.

Saint Cyriacus and Saint Paula, Martyrs at Malaga in Spain (300)

During the ten years that the bloody persecution of Diocletian and Maximian exercised its furies and its rage against all the members of Christ, there was so great a multitude of the faithful who triumphed in dying for the faith that, in a single month, seventeen thousand obtained the palm of martyrdom. Then Spain counted a crowd of valiant soldiers of Christ: Baetica shone by the brilliant confession of its Saints; the prisons and the penal servitudes were filled with legions of Martyrs, the tribunals resounded with the glory of the Lord, the idols were rejected with disdain, men worthy of God and prodigal of their life consecrated to Him their blood, which they shed for the glory of His name.

The most illustrious athletes in this persecution were Cyriacus and the virgin Paula. Brought before the tribunal of the pagan judge, at Malaga, they gave account of their faith and suffered in defending it innumerable tortures and cruel torments. Nothing being able to make them deny Jesus Christ, the impious judge ordered that they should be stoned. Immediately the holy Martyrs run full of joy to the combat, and receive intrepidly a hail of stones which crush their bodies, and under which they fall buried. The stones were still clashing on their broken limbs when they rendered their souls to God, about the year of salvation 300, on the 1S June. The noble city of Malaga was empurpled with their venerable blood. Later, this city, after having been six hundred and seventy years under the power of the perfidious Mahometans, returned under the domination of the Christians, on 19 August of the year of the Lord 1487, under the reign of the Catholic princes Ferdinand and Isabella, who, the same day, taking possession of the very noble city, entered it in triumph. The two sovereigns, after having purified the city of the Mussulman defilements, rendered to God joyful thanksgivings and informed of their victory Innocent VIII, who then occupied the Apostolic See. In the joy which this triumph caused him and the re-establishment of the faith in a place which it had formerly possessed, the Roman Pontiff addressed to Their Catholic Majesties a rescript in which he said that the city of Malaga was consecrated by the martyrdom of Saint Cyriacus and Saint Paula, stoned of old like Stephen, the first martyr. This is why the inhabitants of Malaga placed themselves under the tutelage and patronage of the two Saints, and built a church under their invocation. At their feast, which is very renowned, the clergy and the senate in a body repair solemnly to this basilica; and every year, in the presence of the Lord, they celebrate with extraordinary rejoicings the memory of the most precious death of these holy Martyrs.

Legends of the Roman Breviary.

Saint Amand, Bishop of Bordeaux (about 431)

The letters of Saint Jerome and of Saint Paulinus of Nola are altogether one long panegyric of Saint Amand of Bordeaux. No detail is known either of his birth or of his family; it is commonly believed that he was born after the middle of the 4th century, in the city of Bordeaux itself or in the diocese.

From his childhood, he was brought up in the study of the sacred Letters, where he drew a wholly holy doctrine. Never was he defiled by commerce with the world nor by the sins of the flesh. This purity of life rendered him so agreeable to God, that Saint Paulinus of Nola charges him to say to the Lord, in his favour, as formerly Moses for the people of Israel: “Either pardon him, or blot me out of your book.”

He was one of the principal instruments which God made use of to bring about the conversion of the same Saint Paulinus, and the manner in which the latter speaks of it makes one judge that it was Saint Amand who catechised him and presented him at the sacred fonts of Baptism. After Saint Paulinus had renounced the world and quitted the Gauls, Saint Amand and he formed together a regular commerce of letters, making use for this office of charity of one named Cardumas, whom Saint Amand had brought to devote himself to piety.

Saint Delphinus being dead, the priest Amand, whom he had charged, during his life, with the ministry of the word, was elected, in his place, bishop of Bordeaux.

A word of Saint Paulinus will show how fertile this century was in great and holy bishops, and in particular what was the merit of Amand. “If you wish to see,” he says, “bishops worthy of God, zealous defenders of

the faith and of religion, look at Exuperius of Toulouse, Simplicius of Vienne, Amand of Bordeaux, Diogenianus of Albi, Dynamius of Angoulême, Venerandus of Clermont, Alythius of Cahors, Pacatus of Périgueux."

When age and fatigues had put him in the impotence of taking for his flock the same cares as before, he was so grieved to see that the morals and the religion of his diocesans suffered from it, that he set himself to pray God to send a bishop whose vigour and application might remedy the evil which he could not cure for his part. God sent Saint Severinus; Amand, informed of his arrival, advanced to meet him, introduced him into the city and enthroned him in his place on the episcopal see. Amand, happy to see his wishes granted and morals improve, remained with Saint Severinus, whom he survived some years.

The Roman martyrology marks on 18 June the feast of Saint Amand, whose relics were deposited in the church of Saint-Seurin of Bordeaux. It is not known the year of his death; but, as he was of nearly the same age as Saint Paulinus of Nola, his death may also be placed at about the same time as that of this illustrious bishop, that is to say about 431. None of the writings of Saint Amand appears today anywhere, except the summary of one of his letters which Saint Jerome has preserved to us. It would nevertheless be desirable, remark the continuators of Bollandus, that if his other letters were found hidden in some library, the public should be enriched with them. One judges, by the praise which Saint Paulinus makes of the letters of Saint Amand in his own, that they would be quite proper to enlighten the souls who make profession of Christian piety. Saint Paulinus regarded them as such, when he said that they made the joy of his heart, that they were sweeter to him than honey, and that they formed the consolation and the most delicious nourishment of the soul.

It is to Saint Amand, according to an opinion rather accredited, but which meets nevertheless with contradictors, among others Dom Rivet, that we are indebted for the preservation of the writings of Saint Paulinus. The latter made as little account of his writings as of his riches and of himself; he let them be lost, in spite of the esteem in which Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome held them; and this great loss would have been consummated if Saint Amand had not put an obstacle to it. "It is by the title which you put to these letters," he says to Saint Amand, "that I learned that they were mine. This is why I have received a rare proof of your friendship for me, since I have acquired the certainty that you knew me better than I know myself. I rejoice at having received the hymns which I desired, etc." — "This letter from which this passage is taken," says Baronius, "exists in manuscript in the archives of the North; I regard as a great present the copy which Athonius Agelluis, clerk regular, a very learned man, sent me of it."

Proper of Bordeaux. Baronius, Godescard, Dom Rivet.

Saint Fortunatus or Fortuné, Bishop, Surnamed the Philosopher of the Lombards (569)

There is great division of opinion on the circumstances of the history of this prelate. The similarity of the names has made several confound him with the celebrated Venantius Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, of Italian origin like him, and his contemporary; but the detailed history of the life of the one and of the other permits one to distinguish them.

He who is the subject of this notice was born at Vercelli, a strong city of Upper Italy. From his earliest youth, he was instructed in letters and became so skilful in them that he acquired in the sequel the title of Philosopher of the Lombards: perhaps he was a bishop among those peoples. It is at least established that he was raised to the episcopate, although one is ignorant of the see which he may have filled. Certain reasons which are unknown to us, but which must have been grave, obliged him to quit his church and to withdraw into France. He was there particularly known to Saint Germain, bishop of Paris, with whom he formed a close and holy friendship, and who engaged him to write a Life of Saint Marcellus, one of his predecessors.

Nothing is known of the epoch at which he quitted Italy, nor of the time which he passed in France. It is at any rate certain that he withdrew near Celles, a village called today La Grande-Paroisse (Seine-et-Marne), in the diocese of Meaux. Having learned that Saint Germain had fallen ill, he set out to pay him a visit; but he was himself stopped on his way by an illness which made him pass from earth to heaven before Saint Germain, his friend. It is believed that his death happened in 569. It was at Celles itself that he died; his feast is there marked as that of a holy bishop, confessor, on 5 May and on 18 June. Four manuscript martyrologies of the Church of Paris make mention of this Saint, and the place where he was buried bears still today his name. His relics are kept there with much respect, and his cult has passed successively to several neighbouring places. Several churches are seen dedicated in his honour. A part of his head is religiously preserved, in our days, at Vernot (Côte-d'Or), in a church which bears his name. The Life of Saint Marcellus, bishop of Paris, and that of Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, are attributed to our Saint. It is not established, however, that these writings came from his pen, and they might well have for author Saint Fortunatus of Poitiers, as several critics have maintained, not without reasons.

Proper of Meaux; — Cf. Dom Rivet, Histoire littéraire de la France.

Saint Elisabeth, Virgin, Abbess of Schönau in the Diocese of Trier (1163)

Saint Hildegard, whose feast the Church celebrates on 17 September, was linked in friendship with another Saint of Germany who visited her sometimes and who had made similar revelations. This is Saint Elisabeth, abbess of Schönau, that is to say Beautiful-View, in the diocese of Trier, sixteen miles from the monastery of Saint Hildegard. In the year 1152, being aged twenty-three years, Elisabeth began to have ecstasies and visions, which ordinarily happened to her on Sundays and feasts, at the hours of the divine office. As several persons desired to know what God revealed to her, she disclosed it, by order of the abbot Hildelin, to a brother whom she had, named Ecbert, canon of the church of Bonn; but she had much trouble in resolving to do so, fearing that some would take her for a saint, others for a hypocrite who wished to impose, or for a madwoman. At last, for fear of resisting the will of God, she related to her brother what she saw and heard from day to day, and he wrote it in a simple style, in which he appears to add nothing of his own. He composed four books of it, of which the third, entitled *The Ways of the Lord*, contains several exhortations useful for the different states of Christians: the contemplative life, the active life, marriage, perfect continence. Elisabeth makes there terrible reproaches to the prelates of her time, who lived for the most part in ostentation and secular pomp, in riches and delights, forgetting their essential duties and no longer thinking that they were the successors of Jesus Christ and of the Apostles; but in the fourth book of this collection, there are found, on the history of Saint Ursula, historical errors which come one knows not whence: whether from the Saint, who would not have disentangled her particular opinions from supernatural revelations; whether from her brother, who would have added them to the narrative of his sister, or from a strange hand, which would have inserted them afterwards. But, from whatever quarter these errors or these difficulties come, it is at any rate certain that they greatly injure the authority of the whole collection. In general, these private revelations not having been examined nor approved in a special manner by the Church, one can hardly make use of them to establish either theological dogmas or facts of history. We have besides from Saint Elisabeth fifteen letters, of which the most considerable is addressed to Saint Hildegard. She wrote it about the year 1160, being already superior of the religious of Schönau. She complains in it of the evil talk which the religious themselves held of her, and of some false letters which were made to run under her name; she assures that she did not disclose the graces which God had done her except by the express order of an Angel, several times reiterated. After having received these supernatural graces for thirteen years, she died on the eighteenth day of June 1165, in her thirty-sixth year. Although she has not been formally canonised, her name was inserted in the Roman martyrology in the year 1584, and, since that time, she is honoured as a saint at the monastery of men of Schönau, for that of women was ruined by the Swedes. She is represented trampling a dragon under her feet, which may signify either the triumphs which she won by a

long patience in cruel illnesses, or the writings by which this Saint opposed herself to the Manichaeans of the Middle Ages in defending the Eucharist.

Acta Sanctorum; Translation of the abbé Rohrbacher.

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[1] Some hagiographers confound this Saint Marina, virgin and martyr at Alexandria, with Saint Marina the Disguised, virgin, whose life we give below. But they must absolutely be distinguished. The Saint Marina of the Roman martyrology and of the Bollandists is virgin and martyr, ours is virgin and religious, but in no way martyr.

[2] See the following day.

[3] Her life is found on the preceding day.

[4] We have given his notice on this day, vol. iv, p. 481.

[5] See his [life] on the following day.

19 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Florence, Saint Juliana Falconieri, virgin, foundress of the Sisters of the Order of Servites, who was placed in the number of the holy virgins by Pope Clement XII. 1340. — At Milan, the feast of the holy martyrs Gervasius and Protasius, brothers; the judge Astasius had the first beaten with leaded cords until he rendered the last breath; the second he had cruelly clubbed, then beheaded. Saint Ambrose, by divine revelation, found their bodies still tinged with blood and as entire as if they had been martyred the same day. In the translation of their bodies, a blind man recovered sight by touching their coffin, and several possessed were delivered. 3rd c. — At Ravenna, Saint Ursicinus,[1] martyr, who, remaining unshaken after many torments endured under the judge Paulinus for the confession of the name of the Lord, had his head cut off, and thus accomplished his martyrdom. About the year 67. — At Sozopolis, Saint Zosimus, martyr, who, in the persecution of Trajan, after many horrible tortures endured under the judge Domitian, had his head cut off and went thus victorious to heaven. About 110. — At Arezzo, in Tuscany, the holy martyrs Gaudentius, bishop, and Culmatius, deacon, massacred by the fury of the Gentiles in the time of Valentinian. About 365. — The same day, Saint Boniface or Bruno, martyr, disciple of Saint Romuald, who was sent by the Pope to preach the Gospel in Russia, where, after having passed through fire without receiving harm from it, he baptised the king and his people, and, having been killed by the brother of the king, furious at this success, won the crown of martyrdom which he had always desired.[2] About 1009. — At Ravenna, Saint Romuald, anchorite, father of the Camaldolese monks, who re-established and marvellously propagated the eremitical discipline in Italy, where it was much relaxed. He is again mentioned on 7 February.[3] 1027.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Soissons, the holy martyrs Gervasius and Protasius, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Le Mans, Saint Innocent, bishop, successor of Saint Principius, who, during his pontificate, which was of nearly forty-six years, ordained three hundred and eighteen priests and founded the church called the Holy Sepulchre, beyond the Sarthe. 543. — At Bar-sur-Aube, Saint Germaine, martyr.[4] 5th c. — At Forêt, near Brussels, Saint Alène, virgin and martyr, already named on the 16th and the 17th of this month. 640. — At Nevers, Saint Dieudonné or Dié, bishop of that see, who withdrew into the deserts of the Vosges, to live there unknown to the world and in the meditation of eternal truths; but, having been recognised on account of his miracles, he gathered many disciples and built several monasteries where, dying full of days and of merits, he left a happy seed of holiness. 679. — At Werthin or Werden, in the diocese of Cologne, the blessed Hildegrin, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, who announced the faith to the inhabitants of Selingestadt and of Halberstadt, of whom he is regarded as the first bishop. 827. — In the abbey of Anchin,

in the Low Countries, the blessed Odo, native of Orléans, first abbot of Saint-Martin of Tournai, then bishop of Cambrai, celebrated for his writings and his patience. 1113. — At Mâcon, the memory of Louis Agut, priest, native of that town and founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament. 1778.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Romuald and Saint Boniface. *Martyrology of the Franciscans.* — At Pesaro, in the March of Ancona, the blessed Micheline, widow, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, who, issued from a noble family, recommended herself by her assiduity in the works of penance and shone by miracles during her life and after her death.[5] 1356. *Martyrology of the Augustinians.* — Saint John of Saint-Facond.

Martyrology of the Servites. — At Florence, Saint Juliana Falconieri, virgin, foundress of the religious of the Order of the Servites: on the point of dying, she could not swallow the holy Eucharist on account of the weakness of her body, a consequence of her long macerations; but the host, being brought near her breast, disappeared suddenly, leaving its indelible imprint on the side of the heart, at the very instant when the Saint passed into the arms of the heavenly Spouse.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Arara, in Armenia, the apostle Saint Jude, surnamed Barsabas, one of the seventy-two disciples, martyred in that town. 1st c. — At Rome, the saints Honorius, Evodus, Peter, martyrs; elsewhere, another holy martyr of the name of Marcellus; mentioned in the martyrology of Saint Jerome and buried in the cemetery of Saint Hippolytus. — At Arezzo, in Tuscany, Saint Andrew and his fifty-three companions in martyrdom, all members of his family. They suffered with the bishop Gaudentius and the deacon Culmatius, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day. Andrew was baptised by the blessed Gelasius, and beheaded in hatred of the religion of Jesus Christ, as were his companions, by the orders of the judge Marcellian. About 365. — Near Saint-Hippolyte, in Austria, the memory of two holy confessors whose names are unknown to us, and whose bodies were discovered, in 1209, under the ruins of the ancient monastery of Saint-Hippolyte, vulgarly Saint-Pölten, which the bishop of Passau, Saint Altmann, was having restored. The invention of these precious relics was marked by numerous miracles, whence the cult with which they are honoured in that country. — In Egypt, Saint Zeno, anchorite. 4th c. — In Abyssinia, Saint Peter, prior of the monastery of Eygag and doctor, mentioned by the hagiologies of Ethiopia. — In Istria, in Austria, Saint Wazaire, bishop of Justinopolis or Capo d'Istria, near the gulf of Venice. — In Bavaria, Saint Ratlion or Basson, count of Andechs. About the year 953. — At Ferrara, in Italy, Saint Boumercato or Bonmarché, cleric and martyr. Having let his head be cut off in place of a homicide whom he would not denounce, he was proclaimed innocent by the voice of a dead man raised to life at the same instant. 1378. — In the East, Saint Bessarion, solitary of Scete.[6] End of the 4th c. — At Milan, Saint Datius, bishop and confessor, who yielded to Saint Innocent, bishop of Le Mans, feasted on this day, relics of the saints Gervasius and Protasius.[7] 352.

Inde Ravennatum placitam pete dulcius urbem: / Pulpita sanctorum per religiosa recurres: / Martyris egregii tumulum Vitalis adora, / Mitis et Ursicini, Pauli sub sorte beati, / Rursus Apollinaris pretiosi limina lambe, / Fusus humi supplex, et templa per omnia curre.

"Gain then the amiable city of Ravenna; go to visit the places consecrated to the Saints; adore the tomb of Vitalis, the illustrious martyr, that of the gentle Ursicinus, of the blessed Paul; go and kiss the threshold of the great Apollinaris, prostrate yourself with face against the earth, traverse all the temples." Saint Peter Damian wrote in praise of Ursicinus a very beautiful hymn in which he says, adroitly alluding to his profession of physician:

Sis animarum medicus, / Affer opem languentibus, / Haustu coelestis gratiae / Aegrae curentur animae.

“Be the physician of souls; give life back to the languishing members of the sick; present them, to heal them, the fortifying cup of heavenly grace.”

Saint Micheline is represented serving the sick. Besides that, in visiting the hospitals, she willingly put herself there at the service of the infirm, it is told that she cured a leprous woman by embracing her and that her veil made a violent headache cease on the spot.

Saints Vitalis, Valeria, Gervasius and Protasius, First Martyrs of Milan

1st century. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Emperor: Nero.

Sanctorum corpora et praecipue beatorum martyrum reliquiae, ac si Christi membra sincerissime honoranda.

The bodies of the Saints and above all the remains of the blessed Martyrs must be honoured respectfully, as if they were the members of Jesus Christ.

S. Aug., *De vera religione*, chap. lxv.

When Saint Ambrose, as we shall relate presently with details, began, on the faith of a vision, the excavations which ended in the invention of the bodies of our holy Martyrs, he found under their head a writing which furnishes the relation of their acts, the simplest, but also the most touching that we know. It was conceived in these terms:

“I, Philip, servant of Christ, have, assisted by my son, taken away and buried in my house the bodies of these two Saints. Their mother was named Valeria and their father Vitalis. They were two twins, of whom one was called Protasius and the other Gervasius.

“Vitalis, their father, was a consular personage who had served with distinction in the armies. He had come to Ravenna with the judge Paulinus, whom he assisted in his functions. One day, he saw before the tribunal a Christian named Ursicinus, physician by profession and Ligurian by origin, who, after having undergone frightful torments, had just been condemned to have his head cut off. The place of execution for the Christians was named at the Palm (*ad Palmam*), because it was planted with old palm-trees. When therefore the condemned man had arrived at the Palm, he was afraid and was about to take shamefully to flight, when Vitalis cried to him: ‘Stop, Ursicinus, stop! thou who didst heal others, wouldst thou plunge into thy soul the dart of eternal death? Arrived through a thousand torments as far as the Palm, go not to lose the crown which the Lord has prepared for thee.’ Ursicinus, hearing these words, knelt down and asked the executioner to strike him; thus he repaired by repentance a moment of fright and died a martyr of Christ. At once Vitalis himself took away his body, buried it at Ravenna, with all the honours due to his martyrdom, and would no longer resume his functions with the judge. This is why Paulinus had him arrested, less on account of this refusal than because he had declared himself a Christian, in preventing Ursicinus from sacrificing, thus restoring to him the crown of martyrdom, and to God a precious pearl which the demon was about to take from Him.

“Paulinus had Vitalis stretched on the rack, hoping, by tortures, to bring him to sacrifice to the idols. But the Martyr said to him: ‘It is a great folly in thee to believe that I shall cast myself into the error of thy lies, after having torn others from it.’ Paulinus said to the guards: ‘Conduct him to the Palm, and there, if he refuses to sacrifice, you shall not cut off his head; but, digging a deep pit until you find water, you shall stretch him in it all along on his back and you shall crush him under a mass of stones and sand.’ The order was executed; and such was the torment by which God gave to Vitalis the consecration of martyrdom. But the priest of Apollo, who had given this counsel to Paulinus, was seized by the demon, and for seven days, at the very place where Saint Vitalis had been buried alive, the new energumen ceased not to cry: ‘Thou burnest me. Vitalis, holy Martyr of Christ, thou tearest me in frightful torments!’ At the end of the seven days, he was carried off by

the demon. The body of the glorious Martyr was buried near the walls of Ravenna, where it is honoured by the faithful.

“Valeria, his wife, returned to Milan. On approaching the city, she met idolaters who were sacrificing to Silvanus. They made her descend from her chariot and invited her to take part in their feasts. Valeria answered: ‘I am a Christian, and it is not permitted me to eat of the victims offered to your Silvanus.’ Hearing her speak thus thus, these savage men struck her so cruelly that her servants led her back with difficulty and dying as far as Milan, where, three days after, her soul flew away to Christ. Gervasius and Protasius gathered, without a will, the succession of their father and of their mother. They hastened to sell their own house, the goods and the modest dwellings of their parents, and distributed the price of it to the poor and to the little family of their slaves whom they enfranchised. As for themselves, they shut themselves up in a little chamber, where they exercised themselves, for ten years, in prayer, in reading and in fasts. The tenth year, which was the eleventh since their conversion, they attained to the palm of martyrdom in the manner which we are about to relate.

“The Roman general Astasius was setting out against the Marcomanni, who had just declared war on the empire, when the adorers of the gods, with their priests, came to meet him and said to him: ‘If thou wishest to return from the war, to the court of our princes, in the brilliance of a joyful triumph, constrain Gervasius and Protasius to sacrifice; for our gods are so irritated at seeing themselves despised by these two wretches that they refuse to render us their oracles.’ Astasius, on this denunciation, had them arrested and conducted before his tribunal: ‘I exhort you,’ he said to them, ‘to cease your insults against our divinities and to sacrifice to them on the contrary with a religious zeal, in order that my expedition may be happy.’ Gervasius answered: ‘It is true, it is from heaven that victory comes; but it is from the almighty God that it must be asked, and not from vain images which have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, a nose and smell not, a mouth and speak not, hands and touch not, feet and walk not, and which have not in them the breath of life.’ Astasius, irritated at this answer, condemned him to be struck with scourges loaded with lead, until he should expire.

“They led him away at once, and Protasius was in his turn presented to the tribunal of Astasius, who said to him: ‘Wretch! think of living, and do not run, like thy brother, to a violent death.’ Protasius answered: ‘Who then here is wretched? Is it I, who fear thee not? or thou, who dost not dissemble the fears which I inspire in thee?’ Astasius said: ‘I, fear a wretch like thee!’ The blessed Protasius answered: ‘Yes, thou; for thou fearest to receive from me some damage, if I sacrifice not to thy gods; and if thou didst not fear it, thou wouldst not try to force me to sacrifice. I, on the contrary, fear thee not and I despise thy threats; all thy idols are to me like disgusting filth; I adore only the one God who reigns in heaven.’ Astasius, to punish this boldness, had him struck with blows of the staff; then, making him rise, he said to him: ‘Well then! wretch, why dost thou show thyself so proud and so rebellious? Wilt thou perish as thy brother perished?’ Protasius answered: ‘Astasius, I have against thee neither passion nor anger, and I do not permit myself even to condemn thee; for the eyes of thy heart are closed to the light; incredulity weighs on thy soul and does not permit thee to see the things of God. Jesus Christ, my master, did not curse those who crucified him; on the contrary, he asked pardon for them, saying that they knew not what they did. This is why I too have compassion on thy misery, because thou knowest not what thou doest. Finish then what thou hast begun, that the sweet benignity of our Saviour may deign to receive me today with my brother.’ Astasius had his head cut off.

“After his torment, I, Philip, servant of Christ, with my son, took away secretly, during the night, the holy bodies; and in my house, under the eyes of God alone, I laid them in this marble tomb, full of confidence that, by the prayer of the blessed Martyrs, I shall obtain mercy from Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.” In the engravings which represent Saint Gervasius and Saint Protasius, a tree ordinarily separates them. One might imagine at first sight that this indicates the sterility of the Church of Milan, which found its glory again only after the martyrdom of these two Saints; but this representation must have a historical foundation. It is pretended that this took its birth at

Paris, where the fief of Monceau-Saint-Gervais and the square of the parvis of the church were characterised by the seigneurial elm under which the assizes of the bailiff were held. Monuments sometimes show them to us in dalmatics, not that they were ordained deacons, but because, as preachers of the Gospel and confessors of the faith, they really fulfilled the diaconal functions. One sees sometimes in the hand of Saint Gervasius a hammer, a rather bizarre manner of symbolising the *plombeaux* or leaded cords, which were the instrument of his torment.

Saint Gervasius and Saint Protasius are the patrons of an infinity of parishes of France and abroad, among others Milan, Città della Pieve, Lectoure, Le Mans, Nevers, Paris, Soissons, Gisors, Mâcon, Vitry-sur-

Cult and Relics

In the 4th century, all memory of the burial-place of the saints Gervasius and Protasius had been lost. But, in 386, God permitted them to reveal the place of it to Saint Ambrose; he was preparing to dedicate the new church of Milan, which since has been called by his name, the Ambrosian basilica, and which is still called today Saint-Ambrose the Great. The faithful desired that he should consecrate it with as much solemnity as he had consecrated that of the Apostles, where he had put a portion of their relics. The holy bishop was ready to satisfy this desire, but he knew not where to take relics. At once he felt in himself a sudden movement and a certain heat which was to him as a presage of what was to happen to him. Having fallen asleep with his mind occupied with this thought, he learned the place where the bodies of these holy Martyrs lay, by a revelation which Saint Augustine qualifies as a vision in one place, and as a dream in another, and he knew from themselves that they were in the church of the martyrs Saint Nabor and Saint Felix. He communicated the matter to his clergy: and in spite of the apprehension or the repugnance which some of the clerics of his church showed, he had the earth dug beyond the bars which surrounded the sepulchres of these martyrs, in a place which one even trod under foot in approaching them. There were found in effect the bodies of two men, who by their length made one judge that they had been of an extraordinarily great stature. The flesh was consumed, but the bones were separated from the bodies: the bottom of the tomb was covered with blood, and there were seen there all the marks which could make one conjecture that they were martyrs. Perhaps their names were also found there engraved on the coffin, or on a plate: at least Saint Ambrose has not marked that he had learned them by the revelation.

Before raising the bones from the earth and singing hymns, divers possessed were brought to the tomb to impose hands on them: it was perhaps the custom to verify the relics of martyrs by miracles. A woman, of the number of those possessed who had been brought, was seized by the demon before the exorcisms were begun, and thrown on the sepulchre; this was regarded as a first testimony which God wished to give of the merit of His servants. The bones, having been taken from the coffin, were put in litters, and covered with some ornaments; they were carried the same day (Wednesday, 17 June), to the basilica of Faustus, which is called today of Saint Vitalis and Saint Agricola: and because it was late, they were deposited there until the next day. During the whole night, prayers were made, and hands were imposed on the possessed, who struggled extraordinarily; the populations ran thither in crowds from the city and from outside; this prodigious concourse lasted day and night, as long as the ceremony. The day after, the holy relics were carried into the Ambrosian basilica, with a religious pomp which was followed by public rejoicings of the whole city. It was during the march of the procession that the cure happened of a blind man known to everyone in the city of Milan. He was named Severus and had been a butcher by profession. But having been obliged to quit this employment by the infirmity which had come upon him, he had seen himself reduced to live on the charities which some persons made him. As soon as he had known what was the subject of the new feast, he had had himself conducted there in the hope of profiting by it, and having obtained permission to touch the border of the ornaments which covered the relics of the martyrs, he recovered sight at that very hour. His gratitude for so great a favour did not limit itself to publishing everywhere this miracle, which happened in the presence of an incredible multitude, and on a man whose malady was unknown to nobody in

the city. He promised moreover to serve God all his life in the church of these Saints, that is to say in the Ambrosian church, to contribute unceasingly to their cult: which he executed punctually. Other persons were cured also of divers maladies by the same means. Linens, scarves and garments were thrown on the relics, to which they communicated their virtue to work miracles also; and sick persons were seen cured for having only touched these linens. Others were so by the shadow alone of the bodies or of the shrine of the martyrs, as Saint Ambrose assures, who testifies that the demons themselves declared by the mouth of the possessed that these Saints were true martyrs, and that they were tormented by them. They mingled also the name of Ambrose with those of Gervasius and Protasius, although he was then far away and occupied with quite other things, and they believed that this holy prelate tormented them as well as these martyrs. Several of them were delivered before everybody.

When the holy bodies had arrived in the Ambrosian basilica, Saint Ambrose, placed between the two shrines, harangued the people on this subject, and we have still his discourse in the letter which he wrote of it to Saint Marcellina, his sister. This holy prelate had had a vault made for his sepulchre under the altar of the new church; the only modification which he made in his design was to destine the right side of this vault to the holy relics and to reserve the other for himself. The ceremony of the deposition or burial of the two Martyrs took place on Friday, 19 June. The miracles recommenced as the day before, especially in regard to the possessed, by whose mouth the demon confessed aloud the holy Trinity, adding that those who denied it would be condemned to the torments which he endured; he said that the martyrs Gervasius and Protasius increased his sufferings by the new virtue which God had just given them in favour of Catholics. This wretched spirit, who loves only lying and darkness, spoke thus especially by an Arian, in whose body he had entered quite recently. Those of his sect, who were then powerful in the city, on account of the protection which the empress Justina, widow of Valentinian I, gave them, were so mortified by this incident that, instead of profiting by it for their salvation, they seized their confrere and drowned him. If these miracles had not the force to convert the heretics, they contributed at least to slacken the fury with which the empress persecuted the Catholics in Milan. Saint Ambrose, considering this obstinacy of the Arians more inexcusable than that of the Jews and of the demons themselves, made a new discourse to his people immediately before enclosing the bodies of the Martyrs under the altar: he sent it to his sister with that which he had made the day before, in order to complete the whole history of this translation of which he gave her the account.

From that epoch, the church of Milan has always celebrated this memorable discovery by a solemn feast which soon spread into the neighbouring provinces. It passed even into Africa from the time, and perhaps by the means, of Saint Augustine, who was still at Milan when the thing happened, and who made, being bishop, a sermon to his people on 19 June, in a church dedicated under the name of the two Martyrs. In several churches of France their invention is celebrated on 27 March, and their translation, jointly with this discovery, on 11 December. The names of these holy Martyrs are found still marked in divers ancient and modern martyrologies on 20 May, on 28 July and on other days which seem to be those on which portions of their relics were received in the places where their memory is celebrated; for a great distribution of these relics has been made at divers times. Some have been carried into Africa, where more than one church has been built in their name, conformably to the spirit of the fifth council of Carthage, which forbids to build churches to martyrs, unless one has certain relics of them. Saint Augustine testifies that those of our two Saints worked divers miracles there, and he relates a considerable one which happened in one of his churches ten or twelve leagues from Hippo. Saint Severinus of Bavaria, whose life we have recounted on 8 January, also received some of them with much respect. He had them placed, by the ministry of some bishops, in the church of his monastery of Faviana, in Austria. Saint Paulinus, bishop, had also had some, a short time after the death of Saint Ambrose, and had put them in a church which he had caused to be built at Fondi. They were afterwards seen in many other places of Italy, and several churches of France were provided with them from the 6th century. A means was found to multiply these relics greatly by gathering the blood which was found at the bottom of the tomb, or which sprang miraculously from the body itself of the martyrs, mixing it,

we say, with a kind of paste or dipping in it linens, which were distributed to divers places of Europe. This is what has principally contributed to extend their cult in the West, especially in France, where they have become patrons of four or five cathedrals and of a surprising number of parish churches: none is seen more celebrated than that which was built at Paris in the time of the bishop Saint Germain, about the year 560. The Greeks, little inclined to fill their menaea and their menologies with Saints of the Latin Church, have not failed to establish also among them the cult of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius. They honour them on 14 October and make of it even the great office. It is seen also that memory of them was made on the 30th of the same month at Antioch of Syria, capital of the East: which has given occasion to some persons to believe that some relic of our Saints might have been carried on that day into that city.

M. l'abbé Conguet furnished us, in June 1866, the following information on the relics of our holy Martyrs: "Frederick Barbarossa, twenty-second emperor of Germany, in one of his six expeditions against Italy, having entirely ruined, in 1162, the city of Milan with its churches and its palaces, had the relics taken from the abandoned temples and destined them to divers churches of Germany. Among the most celebrated were found the bodies of the three Magi and those of the saints Gervasius and Protasius, which Saint Ambrose had discovered in 387. — These precious bones were embarked on the Rhine. At Brisach (grand duchy of Baden), formerly capital of the Breisgau, the bodies of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius were deposited, as Louis Vives, commentator of the *City*, chap. 8, book xxii, attests: *corpora sancti Gervasii et Protasii translata sunt Brisacum Germaniae a Frederico*. — Those of the three Magi were carried to Cologne, where their shrine is seen still in the cathedral. — The annals of Soissons record that, under the episcopate of Charles de Bourlon, eighty-fifth bishop of Soissons, the Chapter of the cathedral of Soissons, which has for patrons Saint Gervasius and Saint Protasius, obtained from the abbot of Münster a rather notable portion of the remains of the holy Martyrs, namely: an occipital bone, a temporal, a left femur and a tibia. The official reports of the magistrates of Brisach and other documents attested the authenticity, which the bishop Charles de Bourlon also recognised." The relics of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius were obtained, at Soissons, by the intendant of Alsace, who had his brother-in-law a canon of the cathedral. The abbot of Münster took charge himself of this precious deposit and came to offer it in person to the Chapter of Saint-Gervais. The canons took charge of the expenses of the shrine. They had it made in silver, enriched with figures and gilded medallions. This translation[1] is celebrated every year in the whole diocese, on 26 June, day of the octave of the feast. The ceremony of this translation was of the most magnificent. All the chapters, communities, orders and parishes of the town assisted at this procession, as also the bodies of the Présidial, of the Election, of the Maréchaussée. At the head marched the company of the arquebusiers. The shrine of the holy Martyrs was carried for a quarter of a league, from Saint-Crépin-le-Grand to the cathedral, by two canons accompanied by twelve deacons having palms in their hands. On the way five resting-altars had been raised. The bishop of Soissons made the panegyric of the saints Gervasius and Protasius. The brother of Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, was present at the ceremony in quality of intendant of the province. — We have given these details as proof of the belief of the bishop in the authenticity of the relics of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius, deposited for several centuries at Brisach. — The cathedral of Soissons preserved them with much care until 1793, the epoch when their shrines were broken and the holy bones dispersed or burned. Nothing remains of it today at Soissons.

"An unexpected event suddenly occurred in the year 1864. — A religious of the community of Sainte-Croix of Le Mans, and superior of an Institution established at the Ternes, at Paris, the Rev. Father Champeau, advantageously known by the publication of several esteemed works, announced, by the way of the newspapers, that there had just been discovered at Milan, during his sojourn in that city, in January, the body of Saint Ambrose and those of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius, of which the trace had been lost since the year 835, the epoch when Angilbert Pusterlo, archbishop of Milan, had buried them deeply in the earth to preserve them from all profanation. — It is under the high altar of the ancient church of Saint Ambrose, built by that saint, at the end of the 4th century, and in a large and magnificent tomb of Egyptian porphyry, that the

Chapter of this church thinks it has found again the body of Saint Ambrose and those of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius. — M. Fossé Darcosse, having appeared to doubt the reality of this discovery and having, in his journal *l'Argus Soissonnais*, made known to the public his sentiment, received directly from Milan an answer to the objections which he had presented. — We are inclined to believe that one might have, at a certain epoch, detached some bones of the holy Martyrs and have left the others in their tomb. — Time will clear up the fact which we have just pointed out to the investigations of the hagiographers."

M. Conguet rested on the opinion of Father Papebroch and on the traditions of the Church of Soissons; but he forgot that the learned Bollandist, after having in effect advanced that the bodies of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius had been transferred to Brisach, seeing himself refuted by Sassi, prefect of the Ambrosian library, had entirely retracted. Besides, this pretended translation of the holy relics from Italy to Germany is belied by the discovery which M. Conguet himself pointed out. In effect, the truth evident today is that for seven or eight hundred years the place of the tombs of these three holy patrons of Milan was ignored. It was doubted whether it would be possible to find them again; it was known only that ancient chronicles, of a doubtful authority, related at the date of the year 100i a sort of translation of the remains of Saint Ambrose, to which had been united, in the same porphyry tomb, the remains of the saints Gervasius and Protasius. But where was this tomb of red porphyry? In 1864, in making repairs to the church, a crypt was signalled, and it was supposed that this crypt must contain massive things under the altar. But the presence of a porphyry sarcophagus was verified only in the course of the last fortnight of July 1871.

The tomb was at last entirely discovered in the first days of August 1871. The religious world of Milan was greatly moved by this event. It was agreed that, on 9 August, the sarcophagus should be opened in presence of the archbishop, of the Chapter of the dome, of the clergy of Saint Ambrose, of the syndic, of a municipal representation, etc. This was done. The soldered lid of the tomb was removed, and, an extraordinary thing, there was perceived at first a calm and very limpid water, which was not running, which was brought by no conduit, and which one imagined at first to be produced by a singular phenomenon of filtration.

At the bottom of this crystal water, three bodies were distinguished perfectly, admirably preserved and clothed in garments of gold. The bodies were exactly in the attitude described by tradition: *Scilicet quod S. Ambrosius est in medio sanctorum Protaxi et Gervaxi.* (To wit, that the body of Saint Ambrose is between the saints Protasius and Gervasius.) The head of each of the three bodies regards the Gospel side. It has been remarked that the skull of Saint Ambrose is smaller than that of the two other Saints. It remains to be known whether the water which the chest contained was prepared chemically, in the time of Angilbert, for the preservation of the three bodies, or whether it infiltrated in any other manner. In any case, it has been resolved to close and seal again the chest, which will be opened anew before the civil and religious authorities, and with the concurrence of chemists who will submit this water to a scientific analysis.[2]

Let us be permitted, in concluding, to say a few words on the so celebrated cult of our holy Martyrs in the cathedral church of Le Mans. We borrow these interesting details from the learned Benedictine Dom Paul Piolin.

"The cathedral church of Le Mans had three altars; at the entrance of the apse was found the principal altar; it was consecrated to the saints Gervasius and Protasius, and Saint Innocent placed there relics of these holy Martyrs.

"Innocent was not content with the relics of the Milanese Martyrs, which Saint Martin had given to Saint Victorius, and which the latter had deposited in the cathedral church; he sent a message to Saint Datius, who then governed, with as much glory as holiness, the Church of Milan, and he obtained from him new relics more considerable than the first. Innocent wrote a letter of thanks to this prelate for so precious a gift, and one remarks in his letter the passage where he recalls with complacency that these holy Martyrs, being natives of Milan, had shed for the glory of God a Manceau blood.[3]

“Already it had pleased Providence to permit that the presence of the relics of Saint Gervasius and of Saint Protasius, in our city, should be signalled by numerous miracles; the devotion of our fathers towards the holy Milanese Martyrs took at once a new flight. On all sides, at that epoch, basilicas were being built in honour of these glorious brothers; but, in all Gaul, the Church of Le Mans was regarded as the principal sanctuary, on this side of the Alps, consecrated to these two Martyrs, and people ran from afar to honour them there. According to certain expressions of diplomas granted by Merovingian kings to our Church, these princes had adopted as patrons of the monarchy, and as their particular protectors, the very patrons of our Church. Hence came the munificence which they signalled towards our cathedral and the episcopal see of Le Mans.[4]”The consecration of the cathedral church, under the patronage of these holy Martyrs, was an event of which the Manceaux loved to preserve and to propagate the memory. There is known an engraved onyx in memory of this consecration, and which is one of the most curious monuments of the Merovingian epoch. This stone represents the two holy Martyrs, patrons of our Church, and it designates them by their names; they are figured in the attitude of protection, and the monument itself which they take under their patronage bears inscribed the name of the city of our ancestors, *Caemom*. The divine hand, expressive symbol of consecration, which is seen on the most ancient figured monuments of the Christians, hovers over the whole group.

“A monument of another kind, and which is also of the highest interest, serves to prove the devotion of the Manceau people towards the holy patrons of our Church; we wish to speak of a *saiga*, or silver denarius, which is preserved in the cabinet of medals, at the National Library. One of the sides of this piece presents two personages extending their hands, as if to bless and protect a monument which is placed in the midst of them, and which is surmounted by a cross, with the legend *Cexomamms*; on the reverse, one sees a cross raised on a step. The learned remark that this coin is one of the most ancient of Merovingian numismatics, and that it has nowhere an analogue. Our two monuments explain one another, and are destined to recall the memory of the consecration of our cathedral church, in honour of the holy martyrs Gervasius and Protasius. It was to the devotion of the Merovingian kings towards these Saints, much more than to any other personal consideration, that the Church of Le Mans was indebted for the privilege of coining money, a right of which it remained in possession for several centuries. Thus the names of the saints Gervasius and Protasius figured first on this money; afterwards, when the Merovingian royalty, better established, had become more jealous of its rights, perhaps also by the desire to make this money circulate in a more extended country, the name of the king was associated with that of our holy patrons, but it had not been so at the beginning.”

We composed this Biography with the interesting details which were furnished us by M. l’abbé Henri Conguet, dean of the Chapter of the cathedral of Soissons; M. l’abbé Corblet, historiographer of the diocese of Amiens; and the Rev. Father Dom Paul Piolin, Benedictine of the Congregation of France. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, ad diem xix junii.

Saint Dié, Didier, Deodatus, Adeodatus or Dieudonné, Bishop of Nevers, Founder of the Abbey of Ebersmunster, Apostle of the Vosges

679. — Pope: Agatho. — King of the Franks: Theodoric I.

One sees men inflamed with the love of God renounce everything, flee far from the world, for which they have only contempt, and find in an entire solitude infinite charms.

Saint Augustine.

Saint Dié or Didier was of an illustrious family of western France; he possessed in an eminent degree the gifts of nature and those of grace. From the tenderest age, he applied himself to putting into practice the double precept of the Gospel: the love of God and of neighbour. Virtue, for him, was preferable to all riches: thus he neglected nothing to preserve it in his heart.

After the death of Héchérius, he was elected bishop of Nevers, about the year 655; he fulfilled the functions of his ministry as a pastor who seeks only the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

He assisted, in 657, at the council of Sens, with his co-provincials and thirty other bishops under the presidency of Emmon, archbishop of that province. All the prelates the most illustrious in France by their learning and their holiness were found at this council. Besides our holy bishop, there were counted among the Fathers Saint Ouen, bishop of Rouen, Saint Faro of Meaux, Saint Eligius of Noyon, Saint Amand of

Maastricht, Saint Palladius of Auxerre, Saint Lençon of Troyes.

Saint Dié remained only three years on the see of Nevers; the attraction which he had for retreat and the desire of a greater perfection led him to renounce the honours of the episcopate, to withdraw into solitude; he engaged therefore the clergy and the faithful of his diocese to seek a successor for him, and he quitted Nevers to plunge into the mountains of the Vosges, with his companions Villigod, Domnolus and another Dieudonné. He came to Romont, then to Argentelle, a place so named on account of the purity of its waters, and which the people called by the corrupted name of Arrentelle. In this solitary place he thought to end the weariness of his journey. He thought therefore of building a monastery there. Already the walls were rising rather high, when the inhabitants of the country took umbrage at it and conceived jealousy of it: they set themselves to raise up against him every kind of persecution, as if he were to encroach every day on their territory. Saint Dié was obliged to abandon this place and the foundations of his monastery, and to continue his road towards the east of the mountains. The Lord did not wish that the holy bishop should fix his dwelling on the banks of Arrentelle; He destined him to enlighten by his virtues other places, before granting him a permanent dwelling. The servant of God traversed therefore a long succession of winding gorges, and through a savage solitude he reached Alsace. He chose there a retired place in the forest of Haguenau and formed a friendship with Saint Arbogast, who had led there for some time the eremitical life, and who afterwards became bishop of Strasbourg. Forced to quit this place by reason of the contradictions which he experienced from the inhabitants neighbouring this forest, he withdrew into the island of Novientum,[1] which afterwards took the name of Ebersheim; some solitaries had taken refuge there about 661, to live there in community. Saint Dié, to whom the neighbourhood gave some knowledge of these holy personages, embraced their discipline, delighted to have found at once holiness of life, the extreme rigour of penance and obscurity. He was received with joy by the solitaries, and he began to live in the midst of them in such a manner that he was in admiration to these terrestrial angels. As they saw him always growing in virtue, they begged him to put himself at their head. The reputation of his holiness attracted a great number of disciples who came to range themselves under his guidance, and were the imitators of his retired and penitent life. With the aid of Childeric II, king of Austrasia, he built a church in honour of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and enriched it with relics of Saint Maurice, chief of the Theban legion. The dedication of it was made by our holy bishop, in the presence of a great concourse of people who had run from the neighbouring countries. Such was the origin of the abbey of Ebersmunster, in the diocese of Strasbourg. This monastery was forming under the eyes of Attic or Adalric, duke of Alsace and father of Saint Odilia, to whom belonged the ground of the island of Ebersheim; this noble lord gave to this abbey then being born several of his domains, situated in Upper Alsace, as well as the tithes of a great number of villages of Lower Alsace and of the Breisgau.

As the government of this monastery did not permit our Saint to give himself to the exercises of contemplation, he withdrew and sought a more solitary place; it was in the environs of Angiville, in the diocese of Basle, that he went to settle. He built a hermitage there; but he was soon obliged to quit it, forced by the inhabitants of the country who, living by brigandage, feared that this newcomer would undertake to change their morals. At last, after many reverses of this kind, by which God wished to try his patience, a rich lord of the country, named Hunnon, with whom he had made acquaintance, offered him one of his lands. Didier refused this offer, saying that he had not quitted his bishopric to seek elsewhere domains and riches; that his design was to withdraw into a place entirely desert, in order no longer to excite the jealousy of

anyone.

He returned into the mountains of the Vosges, traversed the valley of Kaisersberg and stopped some time in a place since called, from his name, Diedolshofen or Diedolshausen (Good-Man); from there he descended into a valley which he named Valley of Galilee,[2] and which is called today the valley of Saint-Dié. He built there a cell and a chapel under the invocation of Saint Martin. He had at first extremely to suffer in this valley, where he found for nourishment only herbs, roots and wild fruits. He rejoiced in Our Lord that He judged him worthy, with his companions, of enduring something for His love, and he believed himself well rewarded for his abstinence and for the other rigours of his solitude, being able to live in forgetfulness of all things of the earth and in continual conversation with his God. But the divine goodness, which watches perpetually over the relief of its servants, inspired the lord Hunnon and his holy wife Hunne or Hunna to send him the foods which were necessary to him. The Saint had baptised their son and had formed, as we have said, a close friendship with them before entering the Valley of Galilee; but they did not know what had become of him since. Hunnon heard therefore, during his sleep, a voice which said to him: "Why dost thou let die of hunger in the desert the venerable Dieudonné, thy friend, who has left all for my service and has reduced himself voluntarily to an extreme poverty?" Hunnon answered that he desired with all his soul to assist him, but that he did not know the place of his retreat, nor the road to go there. "Load the horses with provisions," replied the voice, "and let them go of themselves, and my providence will conduct them." He obeyed: he loaded his horses with bread, wine and other foods, and they went of themselves to the Valley of Galilee. Some servants followed them and knew, by this means, the place where the holy Prelate resided: so that, from then on, nothing was wanting to him, nor to his confreres. It is added that an ass, which carried them food, having been eaten by a wolf, the wife of Hunnon commanded the wolf itself to do this office in future and to serve as beast of burden: which this cruel animal executed. Other persons came to the succour of our Saint. The report of his holiness spread soon not only in the neighbouring countries, but in the most distant regions. There were seen to run to his cell a crowd of peoples whom the good odour of his virtues attracted thither from all sides and who asked to live under his discipline. In 669, as the number always increased, our Saint was obliged to build on the hill a vast monastery where he established the Rule of Saint Columban, for which was substituted later that of Saint Benedict. He built there also a church which he dedicated to the Mother of God.

At the same time king Childeric II gave him the property of the whole valley. This monastery, called at first Jointures, on account of the junction of the brook of Rothbach with the Meurthe, took afterwards the name of its holy founder. In the course of this century, religion peopled the vast deserts of the Vosges; besides the monastery of Jointures, which Saint Didier had founded, Saint Gombert or Gondelbert, archbishop of Sens, who had also abandoned his see to withdraw into solitude, founded that of Senones; the bishop of Toul, Saint Badon, built Badon-Moûtier, named later Saint-Sauveur, and that of Étival; Saint Hidulphus, bishop of Trier, who had chosen the same desert for retreat, built a new one which was called Moyen-Moûtier.

It would need the pen of an angel to describe worthily in what holiness this great man lived. He nourished himself more on the bread of tears and on the food of the word of God, than on the material bread which serves to nourish the body. His vigils were frequent, his prayer assiduous, his devotion in the chanting of the psalms and in the celebration of the divine mysteries so generous and so constant that his example was capable of softening the most hardened hearts. He had besides a heavenly prudence for government, and so much goodness and sweetness towards his spiritual children that each esteemed himself happy to live under his guidance.

Meanwhile the religious flowed in from all sides under his discipline. Soon the monastery could no longer contain them. Then some of the disciples of Saint Dié, arrived at a higher degree of perfection, plunged farther into the forests, in order to lead there the eremitical and contemplative life. Saint Dié would not sadden their piety and built several cells in divers places of the valley of Galilee.[3]

Saint Hidulphus[4] and Saint Dié were united together by a very close friendship; they visited each other every year once, and, when Saint Dié went to see Saint Hidulphus, this holy Prelate went out to meet him with his disciples, to receive him; then, having taken him by the hand with much reverence, he conducted him to the oratory to pray; from there, having conducted him into the monastery, he occupied himself all the night with him in chanting the praises of God and in conversing on the truths of the other life; Saint Dié did the same when Saint Hidulphus came to visit him in his turn, rendering to this blessed archbishop all the duties of a holy hospitality.

Our Saint, whose strength was quite enfeebled, whether by fatigues or by the austerities of penance, fearing that his infirmities might harm the regularity of his community, withdrew towards the end of his days into his former cell, near the chapel of Saint Martin, and from there he governed his religious with as much zeal and vigilance as if he had been in the midst of them.

Saint Dié having fallen ill unto death, Saint Hidulphus was warned of it by a voice from heaven, and came promptly to his cell to give him the Viaticum and to render him the other assistances which one is obliged to render to the dying;

The religious carried with veneration the body of Saint Dié to the church of the blessed Mother of God. They watered it with their tears. Saint Hidulphus offered the victim of salvation, and, according to the rites of the holy Catholic Church, committed to the earth, very unworthy doubtless of such an honour, the precious body of the venerable deceased.

The year of the death of Saint Dié being completed, during which Saint Hidulphus came frequently to visit the monastery of Galilee, and to immolate for the repose of the soul of his deceased friend the victim of propitiation, the religious resumed the ordinary course of their exercises and solemnities. As the two holy bishops had been accustomed to visit mutually each year their cell, they desired to continue this holy custom. When Saint Hidulphus came to the Valley of Galilee, the religious of this abbey failed not to present him his tunic; they carried it to him even when, in his great old age, he was no longer in a state to go out from Moyen-Moûtier. Thus the holy archbishop had so much veneration for this relic that he kissed it on his knees on the earth, and applied it devoutly to his limbs, being well persuaded that the honour which he rendered to this insensible garment referred to Saint Dié, whom he believed to reign with God in heaven. After his death, the religious of Saint Dié and those of Saint Hidulphus went in procession to one another's houses, carrying there reciprocally the sacred tunics of their fathers, and when their bodies were raised from the earth and deposited in shrines, they carried them likewise in their processions. Several great miracles have been wrought at the tombs of these holy Prelates.

In some engravings, Saint Dié is seen carrying a church on his hand. The pious friendship of Saint Dié with Saint Hidulphus in their retreat would well merit that a group should be made of these two holy bishops.

Cult and Relics — Our Lady of the Valley of Galilee

In 787, the body of Saint Dié was transported by his religious in the same coffin in which Saint Hidulphus had deposited it, and placed before the altar of the Holy Cross, in the church dedicated to Saint Maurice. In 1003, Beatrice, duchess of Lorraine, had the translation of it made to place it in a more suitable place in the same church. This place became so celebrated that there was formed around the monastery a town which took and bears still today the name of the Saint. In 1049, Pope Saint Leo IX, in a journey which he made to the Valley of Galilee, consecrated some altars near the sepulchre of Saint Dié, and notably the altars of the Crossing or Transept, built since the translation of his relics.

The cult of Saint Dié soon passed the mountains of the Vosges and spread through all France. In the monastic martyrology of the abbey of Saint-Nabor, one reads on 19 June: "Memory is made of Saint Dié, bishop and confessor."

Grevenus, in the collection of Usuard, printed in 1515 and 1521, celebrates Dieudonné, bishop of Nevers and confessor. Saussaye consecrates to him a long eulogy. Trithemius, in the third book of the *Illustrious Men of the Order of Saint Benedict*, writes: "Adeodatus, abbot of the monastery of the Valley of Galilee, shone by great virtues and great merits." Wion and Dorgan, Menard and Bucelin repeat the words of Trithemius. Camerarius, in his Scottish menology, places Saint Dié on 23 March and on 19 June.

In 1279, Pope Nicholas III having granted indulgences to those who should visit the sanctuaries of Galilee, pilgrims were seen flocking there; with the offerings of the faithful, the church of Our Lady was repaired, and the transepts and the apse of the church of Saint-Dié were built. At that epoch, the relics of the holy anchorite were deposited in a shrine of silver adorned with all the decorations of the art of the 13th century.

In 1540, on the first day of October, the shrine of Saint Dié was opened capitularly and there were taken from it three joints of one of his hands, with a tooth. One of these joints, with the tooth, was sent to Lambert, bishop of Caserta, who then dwelt at Rome. As to the two other joints, they were deposited in the sacristy, then, in 1618, placed in an arm of fine silver. The abbey was secularised in 954. It became a celebrated Chapter of Canons, which was erected into a bishopric by a bull of Pope Pius VI, of 21 July 1777, and Barthélemy-Louis-Martin Chaumont de la Galainères was consecrated first bishop of Saint-Dié on 21 September 1777. He died on 30 June 1808. By the concordat of 1801, the episcopal see of Saint-Dié had been suppressed and incorporated into the diocese of Nancy; but it was re-established, in 1817, by the convention agreed between Pius VII and Louis XVIII. This bishopric comprises today the department of the Vosges, between the dioceses of Nancy and of Strasbourg.

In 1635, the Swedish army burned the shrine of Saint Dié with a part of his relics. The remainder was spared miraculously.

On 7 November 1792, the constitutional bishop, Antoine Maudru, delivered to the municipality the silver urn which enclosed the relics of Saint Dié, and deposited them in a shrine of wood. Instruments of so many virtues, sanctified by so lively a faith, all impregnated and quivering with Catholicism, they were out of place in this shrine closed by the schism. On 18 June 1808, these precious relics were deposited in an ebony coffer given by M. the canon Raulin. On 19 July 1851, Mgr Louis-Marie Cavorol transferred the precious relics of Saint Dié into a shrine of the greatest richness and of the purest style of Catholic art. This splendid and graceful shrine is a monument of the pious liberality of the prelate and of his love for the arts. Nevers did not forget its holy bishop; from the 8th century, there was, beneath the walls of the town, an oratory under the invocation of this Saint; it was there that, later, was built the hospital of Saint-Didier, at present the corn-market.

Saint Dié was the patron of the ancient parish of Saint-Dié, now united to Lys. Billy, near Clamecy, honours him also as secondary patron.

The cult of Saint Didier was very widespread; in a Council held at Rome, Pope Saint Leo IX permitted the life of this holy bishop to be read in the church.

The sanctuary which Saint Dié raised, in the Valley of Galilee, under the title of the Mother of God, soon acquired a great renown and became a celebrated place of pilgrimage, thanks to the numerous miracles which were wrought there, such as infirm persons cured, captives delivered, deaf who hear, blind who recover sight, persons crippled in their limbs who recover the use of them, paralytics cured, fires extinguished. There were seen hung on the walls of Notre-Dame of Saint-Dié a great number of chains, collars, handcuffs and iron fetters, which attested miraculous deliverances. In 1386, malefactors having undertaken during the night to scale the walls to pillage the pious sanctuary, the bells, set in motion without the help of any human hand, sounded the alarm; the citizens, awakened, ran up, and, finding the malefactors thrown down from the top of the walls, some dead, others seeking their safety in flight, they passed the rest of the night in blessing the holy Virgin and in singing to her pious canticles. Other accidents happened to this chapel; several times it

was burned, and always it was born again from its ashes more venerated and more frequented. Its secular vaults and walls still preserve the trace of fire. Escaped from the destruction of heresy, sold in ’93 and bequeathed by the last of the purchasers to the commune of Saint-Dié, on condition that it should serve only for the Catholic worship, under the direction of the diocesan bishop, it continues to be the object of the general veneration.

Taken from the Hagiologie Nivernaise of Mgr Crosnier; from the Saints of Alsace, by the abbé Hunckler; from the Saints of the Valley of Galilee, by the abbé Guinot; and from Notre-Dame de France.

The Blessed Odo, Abbot of Saint-Martin of Tournai, then Bishop of Cambrai

1113. — Pope: Paschal II. — Emperor of Germany: Henry V.

Via bona et recta est, cum ad religiosam vitam convertimur.

We follow a holy and straight way when our conversion leads us to the religious life.

S. Greg. the Great, book v, *Moral.*

The character, the writings, and the whole life of the blessed Odo reveal one of those souls pressed by the desire to find truth and peace of heart, and who, after having sought them some time in human opinions, soon recognise their weakness and vanity, and attach themselves irrevocably to God, source of all good. He appeared in that interesting epoch of the Middle Ages, when the reviving taste for studies awakened minds everywhere and carried them to fathom the most abstract and most arduous questions. It will be seen how he knew how to avoid the snares which a presumptuous mind often meets in these sorts of studies and how his upright and sincere heart found in science new motives for giving himself to God.

The blessed Odo, or Oudard, was a native of Orléans: his father was called Gerard and his mother Cecilia. His childhood and the first years of his youth are not known; it is seen only that they were consecrated to the study of the sciences, and above all of philosophy, for which Odo had a particular attraction. He was already teaching it with brilliance in the city of Toul, when the Canons of the Church of Tournai, to whose ears the reputation of the young professor had come, addressed to him a very flattering letter, begging him to come to take the direction of the school founded in that city by the care of the clergy. Odo went there, and he had scarcely taught a few days when he saw two hundred young men press around his chair to receive the public lessons of philosophy which he gave. The schools then resounded with the quarrel of the Realists and the Nominalists. “Odo,” says a chronicler, “did not teach philosophy after the new professors (*in voce*), but in the manner of Boethius and of the ancient Realist doctors (*in re*).” During this time, another philosopher, named Raimbert, professed at Lille the opposite doctrine. But of these two neighbouring and rival schools, the one was not long in eclipsing the other; Raimbert was abandoned, and Odo saw from day to day the crowd press more numerous to hear him, whether in the cloister of the Chapter he taught the subtleties of dialectic, or whether in the middle of the night, seated before the door of the cathedral church, he showed to his marvelling disciples the constellations of the firmament, and made them understand the movement of the stars. He exercised such an ascendancy over his scholars that these regarded him still less as their master, in matters of science, than as the father and the pastor of their souls. Wishing to testify their gratitude to him, they offered him a ring of gold, with a legend which presented a play on words alluding to the native city of the celebrated professor:

Annulus Odonem decet aureus Aurelianensem.

The reputation of Odo spread more and more, and there came to him pupils from the most distant countries, from Flanders, from Burgundy, from Normandy, and from the other provinces of France, from Italy even and from Saxony. The city of Tournai had become as a centre for the studious youth who were met everywhere in the train of Odo.

The master answered worthily to this eagerness of his pupils by the virtues which he already practised then. He was gentle, patient, humble, of an agreeable conversation and of a tranquil and attractive approach. Detraction and flattery were equally in horror to him, and he fled them with a continual care. He had for chastity an extreme love, which was of a great example to his numerous disciples. “Wholly given to the search for science, he gave himself no rest and laboured unceasingly. Grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, all the sciences, in a word, were familiar to him, and he fathomed them all. His mind was lively and ardent, his memory tenacious, his morals pure and sheltered from all reproach. He was sparing of words, active in the search for truth, prudent in discussions, prompt in the solution of questions.”

It was not only by the extent and the solidity of his learning that Odo made himself celebrated, he became so also by his eminent virtue. When he led to church his disciples, about two hundred in number, he walked last, the better to observe their bearing, and made them keep as exact a discipline as in the most regular monastery. None would have dared either to laugh, or to speak to his companion, however low he might have been able to do it, or to look neither to right nor to left; and when they were in the choir, they would have been taken, by their modesty, for monks of Cluny. This modesty was still remarked in their garments and their hair; Odo did not suffer them to use any adornment in them. Still less did he suffer them to frequent women: otherwise he would have driven them from his school, as pests, or would have abandoned it himself.

He gave his public lessons in the cloister of the Canons. But when he taught, he permitted no layman to enter it. And he did not fear to offend by this prohibition Evrard, castellan of Tournai. He had for maxim to fear nothing less than the unjust resentments of the great of the earth, and said, on this occasion, that it was shameful for a wise man to turn aside ever so little from the right way by consideration of them. This regularity of conduct made him loved and honoured, not only by the citizens and the Canons, but also by the bishop Radbod, who governed then in that quality Noyon and Tournai. Some said however that all this came less from a principle of religion than from the genius of a philosopher; but Odo was not long in making the contrary seen.

He had been nearly five years directing the school of Tournai when he acquired the treatise *On Free Will*, by Saint Augustine. As he had then more taste for secular philosophy than for the writings of the Fathers, he threw it into a chest and preferred to it the reading of Plato. But at the end of about two months, explaining to his disciples the work of Boethius, *On the Consolation of Philosophy*, and having come to the fourth book where there is speech of free will, he remembered the book which he had bought, and had it brought to him. After having read two or three pages of it, he tasted little by little the beauty of the style and was charmed with it. Calling then his disciples to give them part of the treasure which he had discovered, he avowed to them that until then he had been ignorant that Saint

Augustine was so eloquent and so agreeable, and began at once to read and explain this treatise to them, to which he employed all that day and the following. When he came to the third book, where Saint Augustine compares the sinful soul to a slave, Odo drew deep sighs and cried out: “Alas! how touching is this thought! It appears to me to regard us as naturally as if it were written only for us. In effect, we adorn with the little science which we have this corrupt world, and after death we shall not be worthy of the heavenly glory, because we render to God no service, and because, instead of employing our science for it, we abuse it to seek the glory of the world and run after vanity.” Having thus spoken, he rose and entered the church, melting into tears. At once all his school was troubled and the Canons filled with admiration. From then Odo began to cease little by little his public lessons, to go more often to the church, and to distribute to the poor, especially to the clerics who were in want, the money which he had amassed.

Such were the beginnings of his conversion. It became so perfect that he had thereafter only horror for what he had illegitimately loved, and love for what he had hated. Abstinence, fasting, the other macerations were for him continual exercises; and he turned to the study of true philosophy the ardour which he had had before for profane sciences. Often he fasted so rigorously that he took for all nourishment only what he could hold

of bread in his closed hand. So that in a short time this austerity of life made him lose his plumpness and rendered him so thin and so exhausted that he was scarcely recognisable.

Several of the pupils of Odo were not long in knowing the dispositions of their master and the design which he had formed of withdrawing from the world, to go and live in solitude. They resolved at once to follow him and to embrace with him the religious life. It remained only to know in what place they should retire. But while they were all deliberating among themselves on this subject, some inhabitants of Tournai, informed by chance of the project of their learned professor and of his best pupils, and fearing to lose men so precious, betook themselves to their bishop, Radbod II. They testified to the prelate the sincere regret which the departure of Odo caused them, and begged him at the same time to ask him, since he was disposed to embrace the religious life, to retire into the monastery of Saint-Martin. This ancient abbey, situated on a little mountain at a short distance from the town, had formerly been destroyed by the Normans, and since then had not been rebuilt. The Tournaisians engaged to render it habitable and to adapt it to the needs of Odo and of the disciples who accompanied him.

The bishop received with eagerness offers so generous, and communicated them to his Chapter, which felt great joy at them. The preparations for departure being finished, and the works sufficiently completed, Odo and his little colony were conducted in procession to their new dwelling by the bishop himself (1092). There they took the habit of Canons regular, and embraced the Rule of Saint Augustine. Odo directed his disciples, become now his spiritual sons, with an admirable wisdom and prudence. He lived with them as a father in the midst of his children, and although, in the beginnings, all sorts of privations had to be borne, the example of his patience and of his perfect conformity to the will of God inspired all with the same sentiments. In spite of the rather ordinary scarcity of the things most necessary to life, the blessed Odo still found the means of relieving the poor. He was penetrated for them with so great a charity that he knew not how to refuse them anything. One might even say that the goodness of his heart carried him sometimes too far, and exposed on several occasions the future of his community; it was for this reason that his disciples begged him to confide to a provost the temporal administration of the monastery.

The blessed Odo, from this moment, occupied himself no more than with the spiritual direction of his religious, whose number increased unceasingly. Many young men, in effect, attracted by the reputation of holiness of the abbot and of his disciples, broke generously with the world to come to embrace the religious life in the monastery of Saint-Martin. Among those who distinguished themselves above all by their courageous constancy, one must cite Adolphus, son of Sohier, cantor at the cathedral church of Tournai. His father, having learned that he wished to renounce all the advantages to which he might pretend in the world, and that he had even already withdrawn to the monastery of Saint-Martin, went there at once with several of his friends, seized his son by the hair, overwhelmed him with insults and blows, and forced him to return home. Some days after, the young man returned to the monastery without the knowledge of his parents, who believed him at the cathedral. The irritated father betook himself there anew, and, after having ill-treated his son, brought him back into his house, where he kept him strictly shut up. The virtuous Adolphus persevered nevertheless in his intentions, and God granted even to his prayers that his father should change suddenly his dispositions towards him. Sohier, in effect, consented not only that his son should embrace the religious life in the abbey of Saint-Martin, but even he asked to be admitted there himself, as also his brother Herman, whose heart had been equally touched by grace. This extraordinary change made great noise in the town of Tournai and produced there the most salutary impressions.

Our Blessed above all rejoiced at these brilliant testimonies of the mercy of God towards his nascent community. However he was not without disquietude on account of certain relations which his religious maintained with clerics of the town. He feared that these relations might harm their progress in perfection. One day he conferred about it with his friend Aymeric, abbot of the monastery of Anchin, in whom he had an entire confidence and who came often to visit him. The latter then advised him to adopt the Rule of Saint

Benedict, in order to put a more entire separation between his religious and persons of the world, of whatever condition they might be. This proposal was relished by the blessed Odo, who spoke of it at once to his religious. They received it also with joy, and asked to receive, as their venerable Father, the habit of Saint Benedict from the hands of the abbot Aymeric himself.

The blessed Odo was again elected abbot by his disciples according to the ordinances of the Rule of Saint Benedict, and applied himself, with a new fervour, to give them all the examples of a holy and laborious life. “Vowed to evangelical poverty, he continued to subject his community to it. He would admit for his church neither a silver cross nor any precious ornament; he refused the altars and the tithes which were offered him. All his religious were to live by the labour of their hands and the produce of their cultivation. If sums of money were given him, which happened sometimes, he employed them with a generous liberality, either in ransoming captives, or in relieving the misery of the poor. In a year of famine which desolated all the country, the compassionate abbot distributed to them all the provision there was in his house, to the point of leaving it without its own necessary. The persons of the other sex who withdrew to his monastery were found in so great a number that, not being able to lodge them conveniently all together, he divided them into two bands, each of about sixty, and distributed them in two monasteries: the one to which he gave for superior his sister Ermenburga, near the abbey of Saint-Martin, and the other within the enclosure of the town.”

Odo, after having been for Tournai a source of light and doctrine, became there also a source of renewal in Christian piety. The example of his virtues and the exhortations which he made in public inspired there contempt for passing things and desire for future goods. A great number of Tournaisians regarded their town no longer but as a prison, and the cloister but as an anticipated paradise. Hence so many holy divorces made by agreement between husband and wife, and so many salutary separations of children from fathers, and of fathers from children. The pious abbot having known how to make himself all to all, he was as the father of all, and as the soul which gave movement to all.

Relieved of every other exterior care upon the sagacity and vigilance of one of his pupils, all the time which his exercises of piety left him, he employed either in reading or in copying good books. His example in this animated his brothers to imitate him; and the abbey of Saint-Martin, under his government, became no less celebrated for the cultivation of letters than for its exact discipline. There were then several skilful writers or copyists, which was a great pleasure for the learned abbot. Ordinarily twelve of the youngest had no other work than that of transcribing the books of Holy Scripture, the works of the Fathers and other ecclesiastical writers, both ancient and modern. Odo succeeded by this in forming one of the most numerous and best conditioned libraries that were then seen.

After Odo had rendered all these services to the diocese of Tournai, Providence sent him to labour in that of Cambrai. It was ten years since Gaucher, who was bishop of it, had been deposed at the council of Clermont (1095) for cause of simony, and maintained himself there nevertheless by the protection of the emperor Henry IV. Pope Paschal II, being no longer able to bear this infraction of the rules, wrote at last to Manasses, archbishop of Reims, metropolitan of the province, ordering him to have another bishop elected there as soon as possible, and to consecrate him without delay. In consequence, Manasses assembled his council, to which all the abbots of his metropolis, and namely that of Saint-Martin, were called. It was the second day of July; the abbot Odo was elected bishop of Cambrai and consecrated on the spot by the archbishop assisted by his suffragans. Odo having refused to receive the investiture from the hands of the emperor Henry IV, the entry of his episcopal town, where the intruder Gaucher was still found, was forbidden him, in spite of the wishes of a great part of the population.

The virtuous prelate, leaving to Providence the care of smoothing the difficulties which he met on all sides, thought only of repairing as soon as possible the evils caused by long and fatal divisions. Wholly given to his duties of pastor, he traversed the different regions of his vast diocese, to preach there the word of God and fulfil the functions of his episcopal charge; then he withdrew to the monastery of Saint-Martin to take some

rest there.

When the blessed Odo was ordained bishop, it was nearly thirteen years that he had been abbot of Saint-Martin, of which he then confided the government to Segard, who was prior of it, and who soon became abbot of it. This monastery, of which the sad state has been represented at the time when Odo undertook to re-establish it, was found rich and powerful when he quitted it; there were then counted there more than seventy monks.

In 1106, at the death of the emperor Henry IV, protector of Gaucher, Henry V gave his orders that this excommunicated bishop should be driven out, and Odo, legitimate bishop, put in his place, which was executed the same year. Odo preserved in the episcopate the same simplicity and the same poverty which he had practised before, and failed not nevertheless to appear in it as a brilliant light which enlightened the house of the Lord. He did so not only by the brilliance of his virtues, but also by the brilliance of his writings. Besides, we know little of his episcopal life. He had some part in divers establishments of piety, namely in that of the collegiate church of Dendermonde. He extended also his benefits to some abbeys, as to that of Saint-Denis, near Paris, and to his former monastery of Saint-Martin of Tournai. He granted to the latter, at the prayer of Benedict, his brother, who was a monk and almoner of it, the parish of Mande, to help to sustain the alms which were made to the poor. Odo concurred also, with the castellan of Brussels, in transporting to Forest the monastery of religious women, which Fulgentius, abbot of Affligem, had established near Aalst, in order that they should be more conveniently and in greater safety. He confirmed also, in 1106, the foundation of the abbey of Jette, in Brabant; in 1107, that of the abbey of Saint-John of Valenciennes; in 1110, that of the abbey of Cortenberg; and in 1112, that of Bornhem. From 1106, he had been present at the council held at Poitiers by the legate Bruno of Segni, in favour of the crusade. At the end of two years, in 1108, he was of the assembly of the bishops, abbots and others, in which the dispute between the Canons of the cathedral and the monks of Saint-Martin of Tournai was terminated.

After what Henry V had done to favour the entry of our pious Bishop into his see, it was not to be expected that he would disquiet him there. He did so nevertheless, by requiring that he should receive from him the investiture, that is to say the crozier and the ring, which he had already received from the hand of his archbishop at his ordination. The refusal of Odo was punished by exile, which obliged him to withdraw to the abbey of Anchin, where he occupied himself with the composition of some books of piety, as he himself teaches us. This event happened in 1110, when Henry V, having quarrelled with Pope Paschal II, wished to re-enter into the right of giving investitures. He returned however to his see, where, feeling himself attacked by a dangerous illness, he abdicated the episcopate and had himself carried to Anchin.

The abbot Segard, having learned it, ran promptly to Anchin, accompanied by some of his brothers, to try to obtain that the holy Bishop should be transported to Saint-Martin of Tournai, of which he had himself been abbot. But Alvisus, abbot of Anchin, protested that he would never suffer that there should be taken from him a deposit which God Himself had confided to him.

The illness of Odo lasted eight days, which he employed in receiving the Sacraments and in preparing himself by other good works to appear before God. Those who were present attest that he awaited his last hour with the same security as if it had been another who was to die for him. He failed not, however, to ask instantly the help of the prayers of the community, “because,” he said, “I shall not be able to sustain the judgment of God if He separate from it His mercy.” Thus died this blessed Bishop, on 19 June 1113, in the eighth year of his episcopate, counting from the day of his ordination. He was buried with honour in the church of Anchin, before the crucifix, under a tomb of white marble, where his figure was caused to be represented and the following inscription engraved:

Hic tegitur Praesul Odo, / Qui perspectus omni mundo, / Fuit exul, Deo fidus: / Fulget caelo quasi sidus.

“Here rests the bishop Odo, famous in the world; he was exiled and faithful to God: he shines now in heaven as a star.”

Odo has long been honoured as blessed in several churches of the Low Countries.

Writings of the Blessed Odo

Besides a work entitled *On Being and the Thing*, Odo had composed two other philosophical works, the *Sophist* and the *Complexions*, that is to say conclusions or reasonings. These works are lost, as well as his poem on the *War of Troy*. There is still possessed of Odo of Cambrai an *Explanation of the Canon of the Mass*; a work on *Original Sin*; a dialogue on *the Incarnation*; a treatise on *Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit*; a writing on *the Canons of the Gospels*; a *Homily on the Gospel of the Wicked Husbandman*; some *Homilies*; a *Poem on the first verses of the book of Genesis, or the Work of the Six Days*; a collection of *Parables*; a collection of *Letters*; a treatise on *the Canon*; a treatise on *the Body and Blood of the Lord*; the *Tetrapla of the Psalter*; a *Letter to Lambert, bishop of Arras*; there are also attributed to him an *Introduction to Theology*, and a *Treatise or*

Exposition of the Number Three. We composed this biography with the *Life of the Saints of Cambrai and of Arras*, by the abbé Destombes, and with the *Literary History of France*, by Dom Rivet.

Saint Juliana Falconieri, Virgin

1340. — Pope: Benedict XII. — Emperor: Louis V of Bavaria.

Surge et sequere me, ut non ulterius calces terram, sed ascendas in coelum.

Arise and follow me, that you may no longer tread the earth, but may ascend to heaven.

S. Ant. of Padua, *De passion. Salvat.*

Saint Juliana, of the noble family of Falconieri, was born of parents already advanced in age and who, until then, had had no children (1270). Her mother was named Reguardata. Her father, a distinguished man, raised in the city of Florence, at his expense, the magnificent church of Our Lady of the Annunciation which, for the richness and beauty of its architecture, is still today regarded as a marvel. From the cradle, it was foreseen what Juliana would be later; for, from her lips which knew yet how to breathe forth only wailings, the names of Jesus and of Mary were heard to issue. Arrived at the age of reason, she gave herself to the practice of Christian virtues, and made such progress in them that the blessed Alexis, her uncle, feared not to say to the mother of this holy child that she had brought into the world not a woman, but an angel. Juliana had such a horror of sin, even the lightest, that never did she raise her eyes to the face of a man. The name alone of sin made her tremble; it happened to her even to feel so strong an impression at the recital of a crime that she fell down senseless. When she had accomplished her fifteenth year, she abandoned her patrimony and refused to marry in order to consecrate her virginity to God, in the hands of Saint Philip Benizi; she received from him, the first, the veil of the Mantellate, Third Order of the Servites. She meditated piously on its mysteries during the year of her probation. The black tunic represented to her the sadness of Mary on Calvary and the length of her martyrdom amid the sufferings of her Son; the girdle of skin represented to her the skin of the Saviour, torn by the scourges, the nails and the lance; the white veil, the purity of the Virgin; the crown, the praises which were given her by the Archangel; the book suggested to her meditations on the passion of Jesus Christ; the mantle recalled to her the protection of the Mother of God, to whom she rejoiced to belong; the taper, that lamp lighted which she was advised to hold ready, as a wise virgin, to go to meet the heavenly Spouse. In meditating thus her pious costume, Juliana was a continual edification to her mother, to her family and to all her sisters.

She passed whole days in prayer, ravished very often in ecstasy. The time which remained to her she employed in extinguishing the discussions which reigned among the citizens, in bringing back to God the guilty and in serving the sick. To mortify her body, she employed scourges, cords, iron girdles, vigils, and lay on the bare earth. She took a little food only four times a week; on the other days, communion held for her the place of nourishment, except Saturday, when she ate a little bread and drank a little water.

A life so exemplary, which was accompanied by several miracles which God wrought by her means, caused the Conversae or Oblates of the Servites to elect her superior in the year 1306. She prescribed to them a rule which was approved afterwards by Pope Martin V, in the year 1424; thus these Conversae or Oblates, having then a rule, could, with just title, style themselves Tertiary sisters or of the Third Order of the Servites.

The blessed Juliana suffered much from a pain of the stomach which, increasing with age, reduced her to extremity. She suffered the inconveniences of a long illness with a gay face and a soul filled with courage; she complained only of one single thing, which was that her stomach refusing all nourishment, she found herself thereby deprived of communion. In this painful situation, she begged a priest to bring her the Eucharistic bread and to bring it near, at least, to her breast. The priest yielded to her prayer, and then, O prodigy! the holy host disappeared, and Juliana expired on 19 June 1340, bearing on her face joy and serenity. When the accustomed duties were rendered to her body, there was found the proof of what, before, had appeared incredible; for, on the left side of her breast, there was perceived imprinted on her flesh the form of a host representing the image of Jesus Christ crucified. The report of this prodigy, which was followed by other miracles, attracted to Juliana the veneration of Florence and of all the Christian world; this veneration has grown for nearly four centuries, to the point that Pope Benedict XIII beatified her in 1729, and Clement XII inscribed her in the number of the holy virgins.

Most often she is represented kneeling, letting be seen on her breast, through a slit of her robe, a host; ordinarily, she is represented in her bed, at the moment when this favour of heaven was granted her. Cf. *Lives of the Saints*, by Rohrbacher.

Saint Jude, Surnamed Barsabas, One of the Seventy-Two Disciples, Martyr in Armenia (1st century)

Jude, surnamed Barsabas, is different from the apostle Saint Jude. To distinguish them, Scripture gives to the latter, that is to say the Apostle, the surname of Thaddaeus or of Lebbaeus, leaving to the first that of Barsabas. Jude Barsabas was of the number of the seventy-two disciples who accompanied Our Lord Jesus Christ in his evangelical journeys amid the tribes of Israel. After the Ascension, he carried the light of the faith into divers places, then he returned to Jerusalem, preached jointly with the Apostles in Judaea, and was with them at the celebration of the council of Jerusalem. He was regarded there as one of the first among the apostolic men, and it is for that reason that he was deputed with Silas, by the Apostles themselves, to the Christians of Antioch, to make them accept the decisions of the council. Here is what Saint Luke says on this subject: “Then it was resolved by the Apostles and the priests, with the whole Church, to choose some of them to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose therefore Jude, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, who were the chief among the brethren, and they charged them with a letter in which they said, speaking of these two disciples: We send you Jude and Silas, who will make you understand the same things. Having therefore been sent in this manner, these two disciples came to Antioch, where they assembled the faithful, and delivered to them this letter, which they read with much consolation and joy. Jude and Silas, being themselves prophets, consoled and strengthened also the brethren by several discourses. And after they had remained there some time, the brethren sent them back in peace to those who had sent them. Silas nevertheless judged it fit to remain at Antioch, and Jude returned alone to Jerusalem.” This illustrious minister of Christ, wholly filled with the Holy Spirit, skilful in evangelical preaching, remained some time in Judaea with the Apostles, visiting with them the churches; he accompanied Saint Peter to Antioch, embarked

the following year for the island of Cyprus, and, after having visited Rome with the prince of the Apostles, he departed for Spain with Epenaetus, Marcellus, Apollinaris, Barnabas and other companions. From there he returned to Palestine, by Africa and Egypt. Finally, according to the Abyssinian and Oriental hagiographers, and the synaxarion of the Greeks, Saint Jude Barsabas, having preached the Gospel in the East and having arrived at Arara, a city of Armenia, a country bounded by Mesopotamia, was hung from a tree by the infidels and pierced with arrows. It was by this torment that he won the palm of martyrdom. *M. l'abbé Maistre, History of the Seventy-Two Disciples of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Saint Innocent, Bishop of Le Mans (543)

Saint Innocent was a native of Le Mans; he was instructed in piety and letters in the bosom of the episcopal school of that city, by the care of Saint Victorius II. This great prelate had had a particular affection for him and had taken pleasure in forming in him a worthy minister of the Lord; from his entry into the Christian life by Baptism, he served him as a father, and, afterwards, he showed himself constantly faithful to this spiritual adoption. Victorius attached him early to his person and would never separate from him; he opened to him the sanctuary and conferred on him the first sacred orders. At the death of the blessed Severian, universal suffrage placed Innocent on the episcopal see of Le Mans (532). The new pastor put an extreme care into instructing his people by word and by example; he loved the ascetic life and neglected nothing to propagate it. The uncultivated and deserted places of his diocese, he gave them to be cleared to the monks and the solitaries who came from all sides to put themselves under his direction: several among them became celebrated, such as Calais, Ulphace, Rigomer, Constantian, Fraimbault, Leonard of Vandoeuvre, Bomer and many others. The very year which followed the consecration of Innocent, a council was held in the city of Orléans, the second celebrated in that city (23 June 533). There were found at this assembly thirty-one prelates, among others Saint Innocent; it has remained celebrated by the importance of the disciplinary canons which were drawn up there, and which the zeal of our pious bishop applied in his Church, one cannot doubt.

One of his first cares, once returned from the council, was to continue the work undertaken by Saint Victorius I, by labouring at the rebuilding of his cathedral church. The bishops, his predecessors, had doubtless been delayed in the completion of this great work by the disorders which thwarted their ministry. But the degree of temporal prosperity to which the Church of Le Mans attained during the episcopate of Innocent gave this prelate the means of pursuing and of finishing it. He consecrated the high altar to the holy martyrs Gervasius and Protasius and placed there some of their relics; nevertheless, he was not content with those which Saint Martin had given to Saint Victorius; he sent a message to Saint Datius who then governed with as much glory as holiness the Church of Milan, and he obtained from him new relics more considerable than the first. The sentiments of filial piety which Saint Innocent had preserved for his master Saint Victorius made him conceive the design of building in his honour a basilica. It was near the ancient cemetery of the Christians, where the precious remains of the holy bishop had at first been deposited. When it was finished, Innocent transported there the relics of Victorius as well as those of Saint Victor. He brought the greatest care to adorning these two tombs, and he chose his own in the same enclosure.

To honour Saint Julian and his first successors, whose ashes still reposed in the church of the holy Apostles, Innocent adorned it with all the brilliance of the arts of the epoch, and enlarged it considerably. He increased also the number of the monks who served it and enlarged their monastery; he confided to them the care of giving hospitality to the pilgrims who came to implore the protection of Saint Julian and of the other saints who had their sepulchre in this sanctuary. For this purpose, he built hospitals for the poor and separate inns for strangers and travellers, assuring by sufficient endowments all the succours which they would need, both for food and for lodging.

We have said that our holy bishop occupied himself actively with the formation of solitaries and the foundation of religious houses. It was in the midst of these cares that he grew old and saw the term of his days arrive. He was buried, according to the custom, in the cemetery which, from the origin, had been reserved to Christians, not in the basilica of the Apostles, like his predecessors, but in that which he had himself caused to be built in honour of Saint Victorius II. His death happened on the thirteenth of the calends of July, that is to say 19 June, day of the feast of the saints Gervasius and Protasius. The innumerable miracles which, after his death, were wrought at his tomb, signalled the glory which he enjoyed in heaven. A religious of Maine, contemporary of Innocent, celebrated the marvellous graces which were obtained near the tomb of the holy bishop. In the 12th century, the course of these prodigies was not yet interrupted, and the venerable Hildebert, who then made the glory of the Church of Le Mans, celebrated them in his verses.

Taken from the History of the Church of Le Mans, by Dom Piolin, and from the Proper of Le Mans.

Saint Hildegrin, Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, in France, and of Salingestadt in Halberstadt, in Germany (827)

Thiatgrin and Liafburga, Frisians by origin, distinguished themselves by their nobility and still more by their virtues. They had for children Saint Ludger and Saint Hildegrin, and several daughters who were mothers of some other bishops.

Saint Hildegrin, during the persecution of Witikind, chief of the Saxons, against the Christians, about the year 784, accompanied Saint Ludger in his journey to Rome, then during his sojourn at Monte Cassino, where he remained three years and a half. He practised all the austerities of that house. In the sequel, he aided Saint Ludger whether in bringing to the faith of Jesus Christ the Frisians and the Saxons, of whom he was the apostle, or in governing the monastery of Werden, which he founded in the county of the Mark, or in administering the diocese of Münster, of which he was consecrated bishop in 802, until the year 807 when he was himself raised to the episcopate of Châlons.

Only one trait of his episcopal life is related: it reveals a profound piety. Saint Anségise, first regular abbot of the abbey of Saint-Meramie, wished to rid himself of the superiorship: Hildegrin made all his efforts to retain him, but, not having been able to obtain this favour, he took the resolution to pass some time with the monks of this monastery, in order to maintain there the regularity which had just been established there. In the midst of these works of devotion, he experienced a great grief: on 26 March 809, he lost his brother Ludger and buried him himself in his monastery of Werden. How many years was Saint Hildegrin bishop of Châlons? This question is difficult to resolve. The *Gallia christiana* observes that he is called in all titles bishop of Châlons until the year 809. It is only after that epoch that he quitted this see. Charlemagne, marvelling at his virtues, wished, with the approbation of Pope Adrian, to confide to him a more important mission, infinitely more difficult; he tore him from the love of the Châlonnais, and chose him to go and establish Christianity in Saxony. He placed him first at Salingestadt; he was transferred later to Halberstadt. The word of this holy bishop had more power than the invincible armies of the great monarch; it transformed these barbarous peoples and made of them humble disciples of the Gospel. It is thus that one can fix with reason the years which Hildegrin passed on each see. Saint Ludger had been ordained first bishop of Münster in 802, and Hildegrin was bishop of Châlons only in 807. One can give him only twenty-seven years of episcopate, namely: five at Châlons, fifteen at Salingestadt and seven at Halberstadt.

He died in the course of his missions among the infidels, and was buried at Werthin or Werden, in the diocese of Cologne, abbey founded by Saint Ludger about the year 795.

Abridged from the life given of it by M. l'abbé Boitel, in the Beauties of the History of Champagne.

[1] Venantius Fortunatus, speaking of the saints of Ravenna in the life of Saint Martin, book iv, wrote these verses:

[2] See 15 October, where he is mentioned by the Roman martyrology under the name of Bruno.

[3] We have given his life under this day, vol. ii, p. 361.

[4] Relics of Saint Germaine exist at Saint-Pierre and at Saint-Maclou of Bar-sur-Aube, where they were recognised: the first on 11 January 183i, and the second on 26 June of the same year.

[5] The blessed Micheline, born at Pesaro, in the duchy of Urbino, was from the age of twelve years married to a lord of the house of Malatesta, one of the most ancient of Italy. She was but twenty years old when she lost her husband and, a short time after, her only son. This double loss, which touched her sensibly, detached her entirely from the world and determined her to enter the Third Order of Saint Francis. Her piety soon appeared a folly to her relatives, who had her loaded with chains and shut up in a tower. Having recovered her liberty, she profited by it to give herself to the practice of the works of mercy and to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She died in her native land, aged fifty-six years, on 19 June 1356. The Holy See approved her cult in 1737.

[6] We have given his notice under 20 February, vol. ii, p. 605.

[7] He is named on 14 January by the Roman martyrology. See that day.

[8] Relation of the translation of these relics, by Paul Moreau, 1685. — *Mercure Galant*, 15 June 1885. — Manuscripts of the canon Cabaret.

[9] M. l'abbé Corblet.

[10] *Debitum exsolvisti, si enim originem longius quaesiveris, tu nobis nostros Cenomanos martyres reddere debuisti.* This text contains an allusion to the incontestable fact of the occupation of a part of the Milanese by the Cenomani, about the year of Rome 364.

[11] , *Acta Sanctorum*, ad diem xix junii, de sanctis Gervasio et Protasio, § 8.

[12] This place is situated on the Ill, two leagues below Schelestadt and seven leagues from Strasbourg.

[13] He called this valley the Valley of Galilee, to signify that this place would be the last lodging of his long peregrinations and the place of his death. In the processions of paschal time, the ancient rituals, and particularly those of the Order of Saint Benedict, call Galilee the last station.

[14] Little by little the cells of the religious were approached, and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood came to till the earth, to build houses to lodge themselves and their cattle. Hamlets were formed, which became in the sequel villages. The cells were then erected into parishes: Bertrimoutier, Provenchères, Coiroy, Lusse, Vissembach, Luveline, on which depended Saint-Nicolas-de-la-Croix; Mandray, Le Valtin, Anould, Clefcy, Saint-Léonard, Saulcy, Sainte-Marguerite and Saint-Martin. All these parishes formed anciently the territory of the Valley of Saint-Dié, which was enclaved in the dioceses of Strasbourg, of Basle and of Toul. It had its east in Alsace, its north on the side of Senones and of Moyen-Moûtier, the west at the ban of Étival and the south on the mountains of Bruyères. It comprised in all eighteen churches, including Fraize and Plainfaing.

[15] See the life of Saint Hidulphus on 11 July. the holy sick man was perfectly consoled by his presence; he recommended to him his disciples, whom he was going to leave orphans, and begged him to take the conduct of them; and, in effect, Saint Hidulphus took charge of them, in order not to afflict so perfect a friend; thus this blessed bishop of Nevers, who had passed his life so holily in the service of God, rendered him his soul laden with graces and merits, to receive from His hand the crown of immortality, on the nineteenth day of June of the year 679, aged about ninety years.

20 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The birth into heaven of Saint Silverius, pope and martyr, who, not having been willing to restore Anthimus, heretical bishop, whom Agapetus, his predecessor, had deposed, was sent into exile by Belisarius, at the solicitation of the impious Theodora, empress, to the island of Pontia, where he died of misery for the Catholic faith. 538. — At Rome, the decease of Saint Novatus, son of the blessed Pudens, senator, and brother of Saint Timothy, priest, and of the pious virgins of Jesus Christ Potentiana or Pudentiana and Praxedes, who all were instructed in the faith by the Apostles. Their house, converted into a church, is called the church of the Shepherd. 2nd c. — At Tomi, in Pontus, the holy martyrs Paul and Cyriacus. — At Petra, in Palestine, Saint Macarius,[1] bishop, who, after having suffered much from the Arians, was exiled into Africa, where he died in peace. 4th c. — At Seville, in Spain, Saint Florence or Florentina, virgin, sister of the holy bishops Leander and Isidore.[2] 630.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Strasbourg, Saint Dié or Deodatus, bishop and confessor, named yesterday. — At Trier, Saint Maximinus, bishop and martyr.[3] — At Saintes, Saint Gemma, virgin and martyr, who loved better to lose her life than her chastity, and died in a dungeon of the wounds which her father had inflicted on her to constrain her to take a husband. 109. — In the dioceses of Séez, Viviers, Coutances and Bayeux, Saint Latuin, who, having come from Italy with a holy colony of apostolic preachers, laboured with great zeal at the conversion of the country of Séez, where he died in the desire and with the merit of martyrdom. About the year 110. — In the abbey of Fontenelle, Saint Bain or Bagne, first abbot of this monastery, then bishop of Thérouanne. About 706. — At Trocin or Dronghen, near Ghent, Saint Aldegonde, virgin, daughter of Saint Barin, who, having faithfully followed the Spouse of pure souls on earth, merited to accompany Him eternally in heaven. About 640. — At Trier, the venerable Elle, abbess of the monastery of Horres of that city. — At Conserans, Jean-Joseph Dincamps, better known under the name of Father Macarius, native of that city. He received the priesthood and took the religious habit at the monastery of Sept-Fons. Reform of Cîteaux, in the Bourbonnais, and died victim of revolutionary furies after the suppression of the monastic Orders. 1194.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrologies of the Benedictines and of Vallombrosa. — At Seville, in Spain, Saint Florence. *Martyrology of the Camaldolese.* — Saint Boniface, bishop of the Ruthenians and martyr, disciple of our Father Saint Romuald, whose glorious martyrdom is honoured yesterday. — At Seville, Saint Florence. *Martyrology of the Dominicans.* — At Rome, the holy martyrs Marcus and Marcellian, whose birthday is 18 June.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — Saint Anthony the Portuguese.

Martyrology of the Augustinians. — Saint Juliana Falconieri, virgin. *Martyrology of the Servites.* — At Montichiello, in Tuscany, the blessed Benincasa, confessor, of the Order of the Servites, who, after having lived in solitude, fell asleep in the Lord on 9 May.[4] 1426.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Lycia, Saint Methodius, bishop of Patara and martyr. Probably under the reign of Decius. — At Constantinople, Saint Asyncritus and his companions, martyrs. — At Belluno, in Venetia, Saint Avatia. — At Saint-Gobain, in the diocese of Laon, the holy priest Gobain, martyr, who gave his name to that town. This saint, born in Ireland, edified there from his youth by his love of virtue, and merited by his holiness to be raised to the priesthood. An ardent desire to consecrate himself more perfectly to the service of God made him pass into France a short time after Saint Fursey. He stopped first at Corbény, where there was as yet no monastery; from there he withdrew to Laon, then into the great forest which is near the Oise. He built himself a cell there two leagues from the river, and at an equal distance from La Fère and from Prémontré; then, with the help of the people, he built there a church, which was dedicated under the invocation of Saint Peter, and which has long borne the name of its founder. The site had been given by Clotaire III, who reigned over Neustria and Burgundy from the year 656 to the year 670, and who ceased not to honour the man of God as long as he lived. The Saint served God in this place in fasting, vigils and prayer. Barbarians, come from the north of Germany, ravaging the countries, cut off his head in hatred of his state. The place where he was martyred, anciently called the Mont-d'Ermitage, is called today Saint-Gobain. The head of the Saint is still kept there in the great church. The rest of his relics was lost during the confusion of the civil wars excited by the Calvinists. 7th c. — At Ghent, Saint Ida, whose relics have been found again in a church of that town. — At Tomi, in the province of Pontus, with the saints Cyriacus and Paul, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the martyrdom of the saints Paula and Feliciana, and of the saints Aemilius and Felix. — At Petra, in Arabia, Saint Asterius, bishop, companion of Saint Macarius, mentioned in the Roman martyrology. 350. — At Bergues-Saint-Winoc, in Flanders, Saint Idaberga or Edburga, virgin, of English origin, whose body was solemnly transferred to the monastery of Mont-Saint-Winoc of that town. A great part of these precious

relics was lost in the fire which consumed the abbey of Mont-Saint-Winoc in 1558. About 1308. — At Magdeburg, Saint Adelbert, monk, of the Order of Saint Benedict, who became the first archbishop of that city. 981. — On Mount Gargano, in Apulia, Saint John of Matera, founder and abbot of the Order of Pulsano, under the Rule of Saint Benedict. He died in the monastery of Saint James where he was buried, as he had expressed the desire. His head was afterwards carried to Pulsano, where it is in great veneration and where many miracles have been wrought by his intercession. 1139. — In Westphalia, the blessed Menrique and Berthold, canons, the one secular, the other of the Order of Prémontré, and founders of the Parthenon of Fronnenberg, in that country. 13th c.

Saint Silverius, Pope and Martyr

538. — Emperor of the East: Justinian I.

Sicut stellae de die latent, de nocte lucent; sic vera virtus, quae saepe in prosperis non apparet, in adversis eminet.

As the stars seem to disappear during the day only to shine during the night; so true virtue, which one does not always distinguish in prosperity, shows itself openly in adversity. S. Bernard, *in Cant.*

The news of the decease of Pope Saint Agapetus, who died at Constantinople, having been brought to Rome, the clergy assembled there to give him a successor. The empress Theodora, wife of Justinian, a haughty and imperious princess, who supported the party of the heretics opposed to the Council of Chalcedon, wished that Vigilius, archdeacon of the deceased, should be elected; she hoped that, raised to this dignity by her favour, he would enter into her sentiments and would annul what his predecessor had done against these heretics: he had promised it to her. She charged him therefore with letters addressed to Belisarius, by which she ordered him to put everything to work to make him Pope. But before he had arrived in Italy, Theodatus, king of the Goths, who was master of Rome, had had Silverius elected. Anastasius the Librarian says that Theodatus used violence and threats to oblige the clergy to make this election: he adds that he had received for this money from Silverius: the second assertion is altogether incredible, because if Silverius had given money to be raised to the sovereign pontificate, he would never have had the boldness to reproach Vigilius, as a detestable simony, with having wished to enter it by this way, as he does in the Bull of his condemnation; but it is not astonishing that a barbarian and Arian king should have imposed a Pope on the Romans: these, who knew that schism is one of the greatest evils of Christianity, subscribed to the wills of this prince; and, in order not to rend the robe of Jesus Christ, they gave their suffrages to Silverius and received him for bishop.

God made appear at this moment the infinite power of His grace and the particular care which He takes of those whom His flock recognises for pastors: for, although there were considerable vices in the promotion of Silverius, and it appeared rather an intrusion than a canonical election, nevertheless, as soon as the consent or the unanimous ratification of the clergy had made him legitimate Pope, he made appear so many virtues and so admirable a vigour to sustain the faith and the honour of the Church, that neither exile, nor loss of goods, nor the most cruel torments, nor death itself were ever capable of shaking him nor of making him give a sentence contrary to what his generous predecessors had done. Anastasius and Liberatus say that he was the son of Saint Hormisdas, who had been Pope before him. Saint Hormisdas had had him by a lawful marriage before being promoted to ecclesiastical Orders; but if he was his son according to the flesh, he was still more so according to the spirit; and if he inherited his goods by the right of birth, he was much more the heir of his faith, of his piety, of his constancy and of his firmness in combating heretics.

When the empress had learned of his election, she asked of him the re-establishment of Anthimus, patriarch of Constantinople, whom Pope Agapetus had deposed as an Eutychian heretic. He answered her generously that he could not do it, because the deposition of this heretic was not only legitimate, but also entirely necessary to prevent the propagation of his errors. The empress, who expected this answer, ordered at once

Belisarius, who had taken Rome from the Goths, to drive out this blessed Pontiff and to put the archdeacon Vigilius in his place. This captain who, in spite of his warlike humour, failed not to have the fear of God and piety, received this order with sorrow; he apprehended that, in laying hand on the anointed of the Lord, he might draw down on himself and on his armies the scourges of divine justice, and that an action so unjust and so violent as that of giving a successor to a Pope still living might oblige God to abandon the empire and to refuse him His protection.

At last he yielded, he had the weakness to say: “The empress commands, I must obey. The ruin of Silverius cannot be imputed to me. The person who is the author of it will answer for it before God on the last day.” Vigilius, on his side, pressed the execution of the project of Theodora. Besides, Belisarius was besieged by Antonina, his wife, who was the confidante of the empress, and who had not less ascendancy over the mind of her husband than Theodora had over that of Justinian.

The enemies of Silverius, to cover the odiousness of their conduct, had recourse to a new stratagem, and published that the Pope was guilty of high treason. Vitiges, having come out of Ravenna, in 537, advanced towards Rome with an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men to invest that city. During the siege, which lasted more than a year, the Romans and the Goths performed prodigies of valour. At last the latter were beaten and forced to withdraw. The Pope was accused of having maintained, during the siege, correspondence with the enemy, and a letter was produced which it was pretended had been written by him to the king of the Goths, to invite him to enter the city, with promise to open its gates to him. Belisarius easily perceived the calumny, and discovered that the letter was supposititious. It was proved that it had been forged by an advocate named Marcus, and by Julian, one of the soldiers of the guard, both suborned by the enemies of the Pope. Thus the accusation brought against him had no other consequence; but Belisarius did not abandon for that the project of Theodora; he pressed the Pope to do what the empress required of him, assuring him that he had no other means of preserving his see and of avoiding the misfortunes with which he was threatened. Silverius answered always that he would not condemn the Council of Chalcedon and that he would not receive heretics to communion.

Having gone out from the house of the general, he withdrew into the basilica of Saint Sabina, where he hoped to find a sure asylum; but some days after, he was drawn out of it by an artifice, and conducted to the palace, where the Roman general had made his residence during the siege. He was made to enter alone; his clergy, who had accompanied him, remained at the door and saw him no more. Antonina, seated on her bed, overwhelmed him with reproaches. At once a subdeacon took off his pallium; he was then led into another apartment, where he was stripped of his pontifical ornaments, and clothed in a monastic habit; after which it was published that Silverius was deposed and become a monk. The next day Belisarius had the election of his successor proceeded with. It was known beforehand that it would be Vigilius. He was installed on 22 November 537.

As for Silverius, he was sent into exile to Patara, a city of Lycia, which is a province of Asia. He had an extreme joy in suffering this persecution for the defence of the faith, and he was not less content in the miseries of his exile than in the honours of the first see of the world.

The bishop of Patara received him in a very honourable manner and took up his defence openly; he went even to Constantinople, where he asked a private audience of the emperor. Having obtained it, he spoke to the prince with a generous liberty, and threatened him with the judgments of God if he did not repair the scandal. “There are,” he said, “several kings in the world; but there is only one Pope in the Church of the whole universe.” These words, in the mouth of an Eastern bishop, show that the supremacy of the see of Rome was universally recognised. Justinian had not until then been instructed of the true state of things. Struck with what the bishop of Patara had just said to him, he gave orders for the return of Silverius to Rome, and wished that he should be re-established in his see, if it were proved that he had maintained no intelligence with the Goths; he added that he ought to be transferred to some other see in case he should be

found guilty.

The empress did all she could to prevent this order from being executed; but Justinian remained firm, and Silverius returned to Italy. The archdeacon Vigilius, who had been put in his place, being informed of this return, which made him fear to be deposed, went to find Belisarius, and told him that, if he did not put Silverius into his hands, he would not furnish the money which he had promised to be elected. The desire to have this money was stronger on the mind of this general than the fear of offending God and the apprehension of His judgments. He put the Pope into the hands of the people of Vigilius, and these relegated him to a desert island of the Tuscan sea. Anastasius the Librarian says that it was the island of Ponza or Pontia, and Liberatus, that it was the island of Palmaria; perhaps, these two islands being neighbouring, he was transferred from the one to the other.

His invincible courage appeared in this, that he did not abandon the care of the universal Church nor the functions of his charge. All the bishops sympathised with his persecution and wrote him letters of consolation. Amator also sent him, for his relief, thirty pounds of silver, which make about six hundred livres in our manner of reckoning. Baronius and De Vence believe that it was Saint Amator, bishop of Autun; but this is impossible, since Saint Amator, bishop of Autun, is placed in the tables of that Church more than two hundred years earlier, and since at the time of Saint Silverius, it was Saint Agrippinus who occupied the see of that city. Silverius, in the answer which he made to this bishop, tells him, among other things, that he is nourished with the bread of affliction and the water of anguish; but that he does not fail for that and will not fail to accomplish the duties of his charge. Four bishops, who were those of Terracina, of Fondi, of Fermo and of Minturnae, came to visit him. With them he held a little synod and pronounced a sentence of excommunication against Vigilius, accusing him of having usurped, with money, the Apostolic See, where, from the lifetime of Boniface, predecessor of Agapetus, he had wished to place himself by schism. He sent this judgment to Vigilius: the latter was so offended at it that he had him shut up more strictly and treated with more inhumanity. Thus, at the end of a year, this good Pope died of hunger and of the other inconveniences of his exile, more happy to end his life by so glorious a martyrdom than his competitor to possess a see where he had mounted by violence and with money. He was buried in the island of Palmaria, place of his exile. God testified, by many miracles, that his death was precious before His eyes: for all the sick who ran to his tomb were cured. He had held the pontificate two years and some days, and, in one ordination, he had created thirteen priests, five deacons and nineteen bishops. His decease happened on 20 June of the year 538.

It must not be forgotten to remark here that after the death of this holy Pope, a marvellous change took place in the mind of Vigilius, his persecutor: he deposed himself for a short time, knowing well that he could not be held for legitimate Pope, if he had no other title to retain the pontificate than the sacrilegious and tyrannical usurpation which he had made of it; and, when he had been elected by the unanimous consent of the clergy, who did not judge it fit to elect another with danger of making a schism, he was changed like Saul into another man: he exercised the pastoral charge with as much courage, piety, zeal and faith as he had shown of violence, avarice and cruelty during the life of his predecessor. It was not the same with the empress Theodora: as she always persevered in her obstinacy and heresy. Vigilius himself, from whom she had expected so much condescension for her sentiments, having gone to Constantinople, excommunicated her, and she died in impenitence. As for Belisarius, who had been the instrument of her malice, it is said that, having been accused of conspiracy against the emperor Justinian, that prince stripped him of all his goods and had his eyes put out: this treatment having reduced him to the last misery, he was constrained to ask alms in Constantinople. It was a terrible chastisement of the sacrilege which he had committed against the great Pope Silverius. However, he had already repented of it, and, for satisfaction of his crime, he had had a church built, with an inscription on the portal, which marked that it was a public reparation of his fault. This inscription is still seen at Rome in the church of the religious called Porte-Croix, between Mount Pincio and

the Quirinal. But it must be believed that God did not judge this satisfaction sufficient, and that desiring to show mercy to this great captain, He wished to punish him severely in this life, in order not to defer his chastisement to the other.

Saint Silverius is represented with the costume and the staff of a pilgrim, which alludes to his banishment from Rome by Theodora, the staff and the habit of pilgrims being taken sometimes for the characteristic of exile. — The little church which he carries on his hand, in some prints, may signify his constancy in sustaining the faith, in refusing, in spite of the orders of the empress, to re-establish on the see of Antioch the patriarch Anthimus, favourer of the Eutychians, and to disavow the decrees of the Pope his predecessor. — On prints of the 16th century, he is seen carrying a sort of paten or bowl from which a small loaf issues, which recalls the meagre nourishment which he received in his exile. — Finally, he has been painted more than once with the attribute of the Holy Trinity, in allusion to his struggles against Arianism.

Acta Sanctorum, vol. iv of June. — Cf. Artaud de Montor, History of the Sovereign Roman Pontiffs.

Saint Adelbert, Abbot of Wissembourg, First Archbishop of Magdeburg

981. — Pope: Benedict VII. — Emperor of Germany: Otho II.

Pietas parent est, initium finisque omnium virtutum.

Piety is the mother of all virtues, their principle and their perfection.

S. Greg. Thaumat., *in Orat. panegyr.*

Saint Adelbert, one of the most celebrated men of the reign of Otho I, entered, very young still, the abbey of Saint-Maximin, which Henry the Fowler had re-established at Trier and which was then the school where bishops were formed. Nature had endowed him with all the qualities which make great men. An easy conception, a penetrating genius, a prodigious memory, an ardent piety, a lively love of God and a great zeal for the propagation of the religion of Jesus Christ, in a word, the most precious gifts of mind and of heart, this is what was admired in the young man. Age developed more and more these happy qualities, and the superiors, who had perceived for a long time the merit and the dispositions of Adelbert, had taken particular care to form him. To avoid that swelling of heart which science often produces, Adelbert began and ended his studies with prayer; he interrupted them even from time to time by meditation and by elevations of his soul towards God. Purifying thus his understanding, he detached at the same time his heart from the things of earth and prepared himself to answer to the views which Providence had on him. About the year 960, the Rugii or Rani,[1] who inhabited a part of Pomerania, between the Oder and the Wipper, and the island of Rügen in the Baltic sea, asked for preachers of the Gospel. Under the reign of Louis the Debonair, some monks of the New Corbie[2] had undertaken to preach Jesus Christ to this pagan nation; they wrought several conversions in different provinces of the Slavs and built, in the island of Rügen, an oratory in honour of Our Lord and of Saint Vitus, whom they honoured as their patron; but these happy beginnings did not sustain themselves: the Rugians returned to their idols. By a singular bizarreness, they added Saint Vitus to their false gods and built him a temple. These peoples had always shown a very great aversion for Christians and especially for the priests of the Christian religion. They acted therefore only by hypocrisy, when they asked later to be instructed in the truths of the Gospel. The emperor Otho I, persuaded that they had a true desire to be converted, received with joy their envoys and designated for them as bishop Liburtius, monk of Saint-Alban at Mainz. Liburtius having died a short time after this nomination (961), Adeldert was chosen to replace him, and consecrated bishop of the Rugians (962). Otho furnished him with all that was necessary for the accomplishment of this holy work, and Adelbert set out with a certain number of missionaries; but he found hearts very little disposed to receive his teachings. Several of the priests who had accompanied him were massacred, and the others had much trouble in escaping with the bishop. Despairing of success, they returned to their monasteries.

Meanwhile Otho, desiring to reward the zeal and virtues of Adelbert, named him abbot of Wissembourg, in the diocese of Spire, in Lower Alsace, on the river Lauter. The holy man sustained, by his wisdom and his example, regularity in this abbey, which was from then one of the most celebrated of the empire: he was the father of his religious and the angel of peace of the abbey. Congratulating himself on having had the occasion of re-entering a monastery, he expected to have no more to occupy himself the rest of his days but with labouring to sanctify himself with his religious in silence and retreat, when divine Providence came to tear him from his repose to make him run through a vaster field. It drew him from his solitude to raise him, about the year 970, to the see of Magdeburg. The emperor Otho, finding himself at Rome, solicited Pope John XII to erect into a metropolis the see of Magdeburg and to give it for suffragans the bishops of Merseburg, of Meissen, of Zeitz,[3] of Havelberg and of Brandenburg. The Pope consented, and Adelbert set out from Wissembourg to go and take possession of his Church. He was received there with all the possible demonstrations of respect. The empress Saint Adelaide, who had learned to know the merit of the holy man, chose him for the director of her conscience and followed him to Magdeburg, in order to profit until the end of her days by the counsels of the worthy prelate. But Adelbert quitted this world before the death of this pious princess.

Animated by an apostolic zeal, Adelbert procured the knowledge of Jesus Christ to a great number of Slavs, who were still plunged in the darkness of error. He had several churches built, gave them pastors capable of instructing a people newly converted. He established an admirable order in the chapter of his cathedral, founded by the emperor Otho I, and admitted there only men recommendable by their knowledge and their piety. The Lord favoured him with the gift of prophecy, and he led always, during his episcopate, the life of an Apostle. He was occupied in making the visitation of the diocese of Merseburg, when he was attacked by the illness which led him to the tomb. After having celebrated Mass at Merseburg, he felt his strength abandon him. He had recourse to the sacraments of the Church, which he received with great piety, and died on 20 June 981. His cult subsisted at Magdeburg until the time of the Reformation, an epoch at which all the monuments relating to saints were destroyed in that city.

Notice on the Abbey of Wissembourg

The abbey of Wissembourg, of which there has just been question, owes its origin to Dagobert I, king of France, or, according to other historians, to Dagobert II, king of a part of Austrasia, comprising Alsace, who gave it considerable goods. It was raised later to the dignity of a princely abbey, with those of Murbach, of Fulda and of Kempten, and its abbot, prince of the Holy Empire, had voice and seat at the Germanic diet. An ancient charter, discovered by Bruschius, in the archives of Spire, designates as its first abbot Principius, afterwards bishop of Spire under the reign of Dagobert II, which proves that this abbey existed before this prince.[4] The abbey of Wissembourg was, from its origin, the abode of the sciences and of knowledge of every kind, and history names particularly, in the 9th century, a religious whose merit is not sufficiently known, even to the learned world. We wish to speak of the celebrated monk Otfrid, who, born on the banks of the Rhine and endowed by nature with the happiest dispositions, withdrew, very young still, to Wissembourg, to give himself to study under the famous masters who then shone in that house. From Wissembourg he betook himself to Fulda to profit by the lessons of Rabanus Maurus, who was then at the head of the school of that abbey. Returned to Wissembourg, he was promoted to the priesthood and charged with the direction of the schools of this monastery. This employment left him still the time to compose several works, which have made his name pass to posterity. He acquired the reputation of one of the most learned men of his time and the titles of philosopher, rhetorician, poet and theologian.

One of the principal objects of Otfrid's study was to perfect and enrich the language of his country, which was the Theotisc or the Teutonic. This studious monk made almost supernatural efforts to bring his language into credit, which cost him an infinite labour. He complains, in a letter to Luitbert of Mainz, of the hardness of the idiom in which he wrote and of the difficulty which he experienced in overcoming the fetters of the

Teutonic language, little proper for poetry. He reproaches in it the writers of his century for affecting to write history in Latin rather than in their mother tongue.

Otfrid's honour cannot be contested of having been the first known writer among the ancient Germans who put into rhymed verse some part of Holy Scripture. The care which he took to cultivate the Teutonic inspired his compatriots with a noble emulation to imitate him. He put into verse the most striking traits of the life of Jesus Christ. This poetry was different from that of the Greeks and Romans, in that it was rhymed and that it was not measured by feet composed of long and short syllables, but simply by the number of syllables. Charlemagne had a particular taste for the Teutonic, and Eginhard relates to us that this prince gave Teutonic names to the twelve months of the year, and that, to facilitate the study of the same language, he began to draw up a grammar of it.[5]

The most considerable work, as the best known and most esteemed, of Otfrid is his translation of the Gospel, in rhymed verse and in five books. The author paraphrases in it, following the Vulgate, the most beautiful passages of the Gospel, to which he often joins short moral and sometimes historical reflections, drawn for the most part from the works of Saint Gregory the Great and of Saint Augustine. He has so well chosen these passages that they form a connected history from the birth of Jesus Christ to his ascension: piety breathes everywhere in this poem. Detached pieces of it could be sung, which made them spread more easily among the public and contribute to make profane and obscene songs fall.

The dedicatory epistle is of a singular invention: it is a species of double acrostic, whose verses, divided into quatrains, begin and end with the same letters, and these first and last letters form, on one side and the other, this Latin inscription: *Luthovico orientalium regnorum regi sit salus st'ema*.

There was also formerly at Wissembourg another collegiate church, which had been founded, during the 11th century, by the abbot Luithard, in honour of Saint Stephen. It was destroyed in 1325, during the war of the Rustauds.

This town possessed likewise two preceptories, of which one belonged to the Teutonic order and the other to the knights of Malta.

The Augustinians established themselves at Wissembourg in 1279. Their house was sold to the town in 1526, and was converted into a civil hospice: the town having been ceded to France, Louis XIV re-established in 1684 the Augustinians in their ancient monastery.

The religious of the Order of Saint Francis were called to the same town in 1372; their convent, having been alienated when the town embraced the reform, was given in 1686, by order of the king, to the Capuchins, of whom one, since that time, has always served the parish. The Dominicans built their monastery in 1288: in 1553 it was converted into a hospice; the convent of the nuns of the same Order was likewise suppressed.[6]

We have borrowed this Life from the *History of the Saints of Alsace*, by the abbé Hunckler. — See Mabillon, *Ann. ord. S. Benedicti*, vol. iii, p. 123; *Ann. Treviren.*, vol. i; Trithem., *Chron. Hirsang.*, vol. i; *Hist. littér. de la France*, vol. iv; Laguille, *Hist. d'Alsace*, vol. i, book vi, p. 71; Hoffmann, *De Ottofrido, monacho Wissemb.*, Grandidier, *Hist. de l'Église de Strasbourg*, book v.

Saint Novatus, Confessor (2nd century)

"After the decease of her sister Potentiana, the venerable virgin Praxedes was in great affliction. A great number of noble Christians came to see her to console her, with the holy bishop Pius; among them was Novatus, your brother, who is also ours in Our Lord, who nourished many Christians with his gifts, and made frequent memory of you at the altar of the Lord with the holy bishop Pius. The same Novatus, kept by illness, had not appeared before the virgin Praxedes for a year and twenty-eight days. One day the holy bishop Pius, recalling the memory of all the Christians with the virgin Praxedes, it was asked what Novatus, the man of

God, was doing. It was answered that he was still ill. On hearing this, we were all saddened. Then the blessed Praxedes said to our Father Saint Pius: 'May your holiness order that we all go together to visit him, and our visit and your prayers will save him.' It was decided that this should be done, and in the night we went, with the bishop Pius and the virgin of the Lord, to Novatus, the man of God. And Novatus, the man of God, having learned that we were coming to visit him all together, began to render thanks to God that he had merited the favour of being visited by the bishop Saint Pius and by the virgin of the Lord. We remained in his house eight days. And it happened that Novatus, the man of God, passed to the Lord thirteen days after, to go and receive the recompense of the heavenly kingdom. It is Pastor who writes this to Timothy." *Martyrology of Ado.*

Saint Gemma, Virgin and Martyr at Saintes (109)

This Saint, so celebrated in Aquitaine and in several provinces of the Gauls, was of Portuguese origin;[1] she lived in the 1st century of the Church, and was, says her legend, of a remarkable beauty; from early she had consecrated herself to Jesus Christ. Her father Catilius, a personage of high distinction, was prefect of Galicia and of Lusitania. He put everything to work to marry her to a young lord of the country, named

Regulus; not having been able to succeed, he ordered the young girl to be shut up in a black dungeon where she was made to endure such torments that she nearly lost her life by them. Soon she was cast into the flames, which respected her virginal body; at last she had her head cut off, and thus consummated her glorious sacrifice on the 15th of the month of August of the year 109. From the highest antiquity, the provinces of Saintonge and of Aunis vowed a cult of veneration to this young Martyr, whose legend and relics were, it is said, brought into Aquitaine by her two sisters Saint Quiteria and Saint Liberata, who fled the cruel persecution of their own family.

By a charter of 1063, the duke of Aquitaine, Guy-Geoffroy, granted to the abbey of La Chaise-Dieu in Auvergne the territory of Sainte-Gemme, in Saintonge,[2] and its dependencies, to establish there an abbey of Benedictines. At that epoch, the little chapel, already dedicated to the Saint, was notably damaged. Here are the terms of this cartulary: "The duke Guy, by a sentiment of tender piety towards the blessed virgin, founded the conventual priory of Sainte-Gemme of

Saintonge, and assured it fine alms. In 1105, the duke Wilhem or William, going to Palestine, gave to this abbey the tithe of the forest of Bacône; Edward II, by a subsequent charter of 1322, made to this religious house new concessions in landed property." On the anniversary day, 22 May, a rosière was crowned and endowed with solemnity, and from time immemorial, at Sainte-Gemme.

The monks of Auvergne, who, under the conduct of the abbot of La Chaise-Dieu, came among the first to inhabit the monastery of Sainte-Gemme, brought there the cult of Saint Didier, bishop of Vienne, who had died a martyr some leagues from their country, on the banks of the Chalaronne, victim of the barbarous orders of Brunehaut. The new chapel erected then was therefore put under the invocation of Saint Didier, a precious memory of the fatherland for the exiled monks. The feast of Saint Gemma was celebrated, according to the Gallican martyrology, on 16 August, on the 15th according to the martyrology of Father Arthur du Moustier and, in Saintonge, on 20 June, epoch of the translation, from the country of Auvergne to that of Saintonge, of the relics of the young Martyr.[3] The church of Brizambourg is under the title of the Saint, who has also given her name to a commune of the department of the Gironde, near Monségur. Two parishes of the Vendée are also found under the invocation of the same Saint; another in the Deux-Sèvres; two in the Gers; another in the department of Lot-et-Garonne, in the Tarn, the Cher, the Loir-et-Cher, the Maine-et-Loire, the Marne, the Mayenne; this multiplicity of altars proves the singular devotion of our forefathers towards the young Martyr of Portugal.

Raingaet, Biographie Saintongeaise.

Saint Latuin, First Bishop of Séez (110)

According to tradition, Latuin was ordained bishop by Pope Saint Clement, and sent into Gaul with Taurinus of Évreux, Nicasius of Rouen, Denis of Paris and other illustrious heralds of the Gospel; he came to Séez, and laid there the first foundations of the faith. It is he, in effect, who first opened the eyes of the Sagians, of the Ozimians and of the neighbouring peoples to the admirable light of the religion of Christ. In him, majesty of countenance was joined to all the virtues of the soul and gave attraction to his preaching, which God authorised still further by numerous miracles. Tradition relates that, as holy Scripture says of the apostle Peter, his shadow alone healed the sick and the infirm. He was exposed to calumny as well as to snares of all kinds, on the part of the worshippers of idols and above all of a powerful woman, who is said to have been the wife of the governor. He was sometimes dragged ignominiously through the streets of the town. On account of these ill-treatments and of those still graver which he foresaw, he withdrew for a time not far from the town, to a place named Clei, to let the storm pass. The fury of the persecutors knew how to discover the place of his retreat. As he was accustomed to announce the Gospel to all who came to him, among the crowd of those who came to hear him, his enemies sent assassins who were to strike him. But the word of the holy Apostle touched these men suddenly, who fell at his feet, avowed their guilty project and implored their pardon. He gave them even Baptism some time after, when he had instructed them. He re-entered the town of Séez when the calumnies raised against him were destroyed and peace was rendered him. He saw himself yet another time obliged to go out of it; he desired martyrdom ardently, and often cried: “O good Jesus! who will grant me to die for thee?” But he felt that his work had still need of him, and that is why he fled before persecution.

The holy bishop, in consecrating his church and his cathedral under the title of Our Lady, was not content with preaching himself the love of Mary; he ordained several priests who, animated by his spirit, went through all the country to make Jesus Christ and Mary known and loved, and to teach the peoples that the cult of the one is inseparable from the cult of the other. He died exhausted by fatigues and by old age, about the year 110, on 20 June. Under the reign of Charles the Bald, when the bands of the north precipitated themselves like a torrent upon Neustria, the relics of Saint Latuin were transported to the fortress of Anet, in the diocese of Chartres, where the memory of this event is celebrated on 31 August of each year. Later, in the 9th century, the inhabitants of that place ceded to Yves of Bellême the fourth finger of the right hand of the pontiff, mystic finger on which every bishop is accustomed to wear the ring of his alliance with the Church of which he is pastor. This precious relic could not find grace before the sacrilegious furies of the Calvinists in the last years of the 16th century. Since the epoch of the invasion of the Barbarians of the north, the diocese of Séez had been deprived of the venerable remains of its first bishop; but, thanks to the benevolence of Mgr Regnauld, bishop of Chartres, a bone of the leg (the tibia) of Saint Latuin was ceded, in 1856, to Mgr Rousselet, bishop of Séez, who made the solemn translation of it into his cathedral on 22 June 1858, in the presence of Mgr Pie, bishop of Poitiers, who pronounced the eulogy of the Saint. The memory of this Apostle is honoured in the diocese of Séez on the date of 20 June, and some ecclesiastical authors think that Saint Latuin is not different from Saint Lain whose feast the diocese of Chartres celebrates on 19 January.

Proper of Séez. — See, for more details, the Lives of the Saints of the diocese of Séez, by M. l’abbé Blin.

Saint Bain or Bagne, Bishop of Thérouanne and Patron of Calais (706)

Historians have left us only very few details on the life of Saint Bain. He was sprung from an illustrious family, and was named Theodoricus Bamus. He embraced the monastic life and was one of the most fervent disciples of Saint Wandrille. He so edified the monastery of Fontenelle by his prudence, his learning and his holiness that, after the death of Saint Drancius, successor of Saint Omer on the see of Thérouanne and of Boulogne, he was elected himself and called to govern the vast diocese which the Apostle of the Morini had so powerfully organised. He was twelve years at the head of this church, and fulfilled with the greatest

perfection all the duties of his pastoral charge, from the year 685 to the year 697. He applied himself particularly to evangelising the parts of his diocese which were situated along the sea; Calais above all was the favourite place of his preaching. He wrought in this town great fruits of conversion, and it is for this reason that the Calaisians have always considered him as their Apostle, and honoured him as their patron. He was animated by so great a desire to gain souls to God that, when he saw hardened sinners, above all of those of the higher classes and less susceptible of being touched by grace, he afflicted his body and practised numerous mortifications, in order to bend the justice of the Lord, and to be himself a means of supernatural healing for his beloved flock. It was above all to tear from the terrible bonds of the concupiscence of the flesh those who were found miserably entangled in them, that he gave himself on himself to these holy rigours, and his ardent prayers, joined to these heroic acts of penance, rarely remained without attaining their end.

One day when he was praying with his accustomed fervour, an angel appeared to him under the form of a young man, and told him to make his preparations to go to Rome, adding that he would have no cause to repent of this journey. At once he sets out, after having confided to Ravenger the administration of his diocese, and soon he arrives happily in the capital of the Christian world. Pope Sergius, who then occupied the see of Saint Peter, received him with much distinction, and conceived for him a very high esteem. He returned from it laden with precious presents, among which shone above all the relics of the blessed Silas, disciple of Saint Paul. The greatest solemnities accompanied the reception of these relics in the church of Our Lady of Thérouanne, and every year since then, on 13 July, anniversary of this translation, was a day of feast celebrated by the numerous pilgrimages of the pious faithful. Saint Bain buried with great honours the bodies of the blessed Lugle and Luglien, whose life we shall have to relate later. Yielding to the prayers of the holy abbot Mauront, he transferred the body of Saint Amé from the church of Saint-Peter of Merville to the church of Our Lady, which had just been built at a short distance. This translation was accompanied by prodigies and numerous cures; it took place on 28 April 697. However Saint Bain, overwhelmed by the fatigues of the pastoral ministry, and eager to imitate so many other holy bishops, resigned that same year 697 his charge and his dignity of bishop of Thérouanne, and chose for the place of his retreat his dear abbey of Fontenelle, in which he had formerly passed days so full of recollection and peace. He had, besides, valiantly fought and nobly furnished his task; he merited in every respect to have this favour of some years passed in the presence of God alone to prepare himself to appear before Him. Three years after his retreat, he had to yield to the pressing supplications of the religious, and accept the charge of abbot of Fontenelle. In 705, he transferred, from the church of Saint-Paul into that of Saint-Peter, the bodies of Saint Wandrille and of Saint Ansbert, which were found intact and diffusing the sweetest odour. These precious relics remained in this church of Saint-Peter until the invasion of the Normans; they were then transported to Boulogne.

Saint Bain lived, it appears, only a very short time after this translation. The precise date of his death has been discussed, which is ordinarily placed in 706. There remains to us a living memorial of this holy personage in the name of the village of Bainghen, which signifies habitation of Bain, dwelling of Bain. It is held, in effect, from tradition that Saint Bain inhabited sometimes this place, where he had made acquisition of a land for the church of Thérouanne. In 846, the relics of Saint Bain were transported to Saint-Omer, with the aim of withdrawing them from the profanations of the Danes.

The abbé Van Drival, Lives of the Saints of the ancient diocese of Thérouanne.

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[1] He is named Aring in the martyrology of the Greeks, a name which was changed to that of Macarius, doubtless on account of what it had of the odious and the ill-omened since the heretic of Alexandria had borne it. Saint Athanasius speaks of him in his letter to the solitaries. His name is read among those of the bishops who subscribed at the council of Sardica. — Baronius.

[2] We have given his Life on 14 March.

[3] See his Life on 29 May.

[4] The blessed Benincasa, born at Florence, in 1376, owed his birth to pious parents. He consecrated himself to the service of God from his first youth, and chose the Order of the Servites. Having, after his profession, obtained from his superiors permission to follow his

attraction for solitude, he withdrew to a mountain of the diocese of Siena, where he led a very penitent life, nourishing himself only on bread and water. The fear which he felt of giving himself up to vain glory, on account of the high idea which the people had of his holiness, determined him to quit the abode which he inhabited and to go and hide himself in a sort of grotto which resembled a sepulchre and which is situated in the diocese of Pienza. He gave himself in this place to the contemplation of heavenly things; and, after having wrought several miracles, he died there on 9 May 1426. The grotto of the blessed Benincasa has been changed into a chapel which is dedicated to him, and the cult which was rendered to this holy Religious was confirmed by Pope Pius VIII, on 23 December 1829. His feast is celebrated on 20 June.

[5] Some authors confound the Rugii and the Rani. We find these peoples named Rugii by Tacitus. Jornandes, in his history of the Goths, says indeed that Odoacer was a Rugian; but Tacitus is a better author. We see the Rani nowhere but in Pliny the Elder, who places these peoples, not in the neighbourhood of the Baltic, but of Mount Caucasus.

[6] This famous abbey, founded during the 9th century, was situated in the diocese of Paderborn, on the Weser, in Westphalia. The abbot, who depended immediately on the Holy See, was prince of the empire and enjoyed very fine revenues. This monastery has produced a great number of distinguished men who carried the torch of faith and of the sciences into several barbarous countries.

[7] This bishopric was transferred soon after to Naumburg, where it subsisted until the reformation of Luther.

[8] The foundation of Klingenmünster, situated three leagues from Wissembourg, but outside Alsace, in the country which was called, before the Revolution, the Palatinate of the Rhine, is likewise attributed to Dagobert I.

[9] The German language was not employed in public acts until the 13th century, and that was done in Alsace. The first letters written in this language are by Bertha, wife of Henry of Wœrth, landgrave of Lower Alsace. They are dated 12&7. The authors of the *Gallia christiana* have preserved to us the names of several bishops of Spire, drawn from the abbey of Wissembourg: Principius, in 650; Trasibodon, 673; David, 742; Freydon, 310; Amauvi, 891; Bernard, 893; Eberhard, 912; Godefroi, 949; Rupert, 996; Arnold I, 1054; Arnold II, 1124. *Gall. christ.*, vol. v, p. 716. There was seen formerly in the abbey church of Wissembourg the tomb of Saint Henry, a young child massacred by the Jews. Châtelain speaks of him in his martyrology under 29 June.

[10] The city of Landau, one of the ten free cities of Alsace, had, until the French Revolution, a collegiate church dedicated to the holy Virgin and dependent on the monastery of Ubersteigen, because the first canons sent to Landau were drawn from that house. The Augustinians established themselves at Landau in 12U0, and the Capuchins in 1740.

[11] The *Universal Martyrology* of Claude Chastelain, 1709, in quarto, mentions a Saint Gemma, of Aquitaine, virgin and martyr, equally cited in the *History of the Life of the Principal Saints*, by the abbé Guillois, vol. i, p. 420; but it was not to this last, posterior to the saint of Portugal, that the pious homages of the community of Sainte-Gemme were addressed.

[12] See Besly, *Hist. des comtes de Poit. et ducs de Guyen.*, in folio.

[13] "We have not been able to discover the epoch at which the Benedictine religious of La Chaise-Dieu received the relics of Saint Gemma." — Note of Mgr the bishop. — It might well be in 1046, year of the erection of La Chaise-Dieu.

21 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Rome, Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga, of the Society of Jesus, who rendered himself recommendable by the contempt which he made of his title of prince and by the innocence of his morals. 1391. — At Rome, the feast of Saint Demetria, virgin, who was crowned with martyrdom under Julian the Apostate. 362. — At Syracuse, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Rufinus and Marcia. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Cyriacus and Apollinaris. — At Mainz, Saint Alban, martyr, who, after long labours and rude combats for the Christian faith, was found worthy to receive the crown of eternal life. 4th c. — The same day, Saint Eusebius, bishop of Samosata, who, in the time of Constantius, Arian emperor, visited secretly the churches in the habit of a soldier, to confirm them in the Catholic faith; he was afterwards relegated into Thrace, under Valens; but peace having been rendered to the Church by Theodosius, he was recalled from exile, and, as he visited the churches anew, an Arian woman threw down on him, from the top of a house, a tile which broke his head and procured him thus the honour of martyrdom. 380. — At Iconium, in Lycaonia, Saint Terentius or Tertius, bishop and martyr. 1st c. — At Pavia, Saint Ursicenus, bishop and confessor. 216. — At Tongres, Saint Martin, bishop.[1] 276. — In the diocese of Évreux, Saint Leofroi, abbot. About 738.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the village of Velzen, near Haarlem, in Holland, the decease of Saint Engelmond or Englemond, priest and abbot of a monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict. He was born in England, of a Frisian family, and betook himself, in the time of Saint Willibrord, to Holland, where he announced the word of life to those peoples then plunged in barbarism. After long labours, he died of fever and was buried at Velzen; Baudry, bishop of Utrecht, discovered, it is said, his body in 977, but these precious relics were in great part dispersed during the civil wars of the 16th century. 8th c. — At Besançon, feast of the deliverance of the town by the protection of the apostles Saint Fenéol and Saint Ferjeux.[2] — At Bourges, Saint Raoul (Radulfus, Rodulfus or Roils), who was drawn from the abbey of Saint-Médard, of Soissons, to be raised to this archiepiscopal see, where he made appear all the virtues of a true pastor: he rests in the church of Saint-Ursin. 866. — At Balbastro, beyond the Pyrenees, in Aragon, Saint Raymond, bishop, who was of the royal blood of France, and despised all the grandeurs of the world to embrace religious humility at the monastery of Saint-Antonin of Pamiers; after he had also governed that of Saint-Saturninus, or Saint-Sernin, of Toulouse, in quality of prior, he was asked for, in 1104, for bishop of Balbastro, where his humility, his patience, his charity for his people and his pastoral vigilance shone admirably. Alphonso I, king of Aragon, who had known him particularly, erected for him a magnificent tomb. 1126. — In the dioceses of Rennes and of Vannes, Saint Méen or Mévenne, confessor, first abbot of the monastery which bears his name, where the king Saint Judicael and many lords made it their glory to become his disciples. He works every day great miracles, and the pilgrimage to his tomb is still today very celebrated. About 617. — At Soissons, Saint Gobain, martyr, named on the preceding day.[3] 7th c. — In Brittany, Saint Mars, priest and hermit, patron of Bais, in the diocese of Rennes. The inhabitants of this country, witnesses of the miracles which were wrought by the intercession of Saint Mars, preserved his relics with great respect, and possessed them until the year 1427 when the fear of the arrival of the English in Brittany, where they came to carry war, determined them to confide this holy body to the chapter of the collegiate church of the Magdalen, of Vitré. About 530. — In the ancient diocese of Tréguier, the venerable Pierre Quintin, who received the habit of Saint Dominic at the convent of Morlaix, in 1602. He remained celebrated there for his charity towards the poor, his zeal for preaching and his devotion towards the holy Virgin. His life, like his death, was marked by numerous miracles. His body was buried in the church of the convent of the

Dominicans of Morlaix, before the preaching pulpit. His tomb was surrounded by a wooden grille furnished with iron points; but these precious relics perished with the church which possessed them, at the destruction of the monastic Orders. 1629. — In the diocese of Autun, anniversary feast of the new verification of the relics of Saint Lazarus.[4] 1727. — At Lille, in the diocese of Cambrai, John Heren, Jesuit, rector of the colleges of Douai and of Lille. The menology of the Society of Jesus relates that, in his last illness, the Father who assisted him asked him whether he would not like to make a general confession: “No,” he answered, “I do not feel the need of it, because each time that I made an ordinary confession, I made it as if it had to be the last of my life.”

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Balbastro, in Aragon, Saint Raymond, of the Order of Clerks Regular, and bishop of that town, named in the martyrology of France of this day.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

Among the Greeks and elsewhere, the holy disciples of Saint Paul, Jesus, surnamed the Just, bishop of Eleutheropolis, Artemas, bishop of Lystra, and Terentius or Tertius, second bishop of Iconium and martyr. 1st c. — At Syracuse, with the saints Rufinus and Marcia, cited in the Roman martyrology, Saint Hyperetes or Hierpérides, and the saints Saturnina, Stertia or Stergia, and Hieria or Hieremia, martyrs. — At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, the venerable Eusebius, bishop of that city. 370. — In Sardinia, Saint Nicholas, and his companion Saint Trano, hermits. 4th c. — In Abyssinia, Saint Thomas, with three thousand men, his

companions, and nine women, all martyrs. — In Cilicia, Saint Aphrodisius, martyr. — In Catalonia, the translation of Saint Pelades or Palladius, bishop of Embrun. About 51G. — At Merida, in Spain, Saint Innocent, bishop of that city. 7th c. — In Africa, with the saints Cyriacus and Apollinaris, mentioned above, the saints Saturninus, Bellicus, Perseus, Crisinus, Primus and Januarius, martyrs, carried with them in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Assisi, memory of the prodigy of the water of the ravine of Saint Francis. History establishes that Saint Francis went to pray with his companions near the place which has been called since the Ravine of Saint Francis. As it happened sometimes that the noise of the current troubled them in their meditations, the Saint ordered this water to disappear. He said then to his brothers that henceforth it would be seen to flow no more, unless when some grave event should threaten the world, and Italy in particular. On 21 and 26 June 1871, the ravine filled with water in an extraordinary manner, and report of it was made to Pius IX.

The lessons of the Breviary, the bas-reliefs and the inscriptions of the monument, which all had reference to the resurrection of Lazarus, the steps of the mausoleum, worn by public devotion, the concourse of peoples who had never ceased to visit this holy place, the stone of red porphyry which sealed the entrance of the vault, finally the inquiries made in 1487 and 1490, on the occasion of the process of Avallon, attested in a peremptory manner that the relics of Saint Lazarus reposed in this tomb. In spite of all these proofs, the first translation had been almost forgotten. The anniversary of the bishop Girard having been transferred into that church, Saulnier, author of *Autun chrétien*, affirmed that the body of that bishop had been buried under this magnificent mausoleum of marble. This error was increased by the custom of hanging the altar with black ornaments during Mass and the vigils. To assure itself of the truth, to combat the incredulous and to revive the confidence of the faithful, the Chapter of Autun resolved to proceed to a new discovery of these precious relics. Mgr de Montcley, having to consecrate a new stone of the high altar, was asked to visit the tomb. He yielded to the desires of the canons and proceeded to this visit with all the required formalities. The tomb was solemnly opened, and there was found there, to the great satisfaction of the assistants, the coffin of lead such as it had been deposited there in 1147.

At that instant the doors of the church were opened, and the *Te Deum* was sung in thanksgiving for so great a benefit. The next day, the bonds of the coffin were detached, and the prelate had a juridical recognition made of the bones which were enclosed in it. These holy relics were exposed for fifteen days, in a chapel, to the veneration of the peoples who came in crowds and from all sides to honour them. At last the bishop, after having had them carried in procession through all the town, enclosed them in the coffin of lead, which was religiously replaced in the same tomb. Since that epoch, the church of Autun celebrates a solemn feast on 21 June, to perpetuate the memory of so happy an event.

Saint Eusebius, Bishop of Samosata and Martyr

380. — Pope: Saint Damasus. — Roman Emperor: Theodosius I.

Persecutio non ad negationem credentium, sed ad probationem pertinet et coronam.

Persecution does not make one deny the faith, it proves it and crowns it.

S. Jerome, book v on Isaiah.

Saint Eusebius, one of the holiest prelates and one of the principal defenders of orthodox truth under the Arian princes, was born at Samosata, a city of Syria, on the Euphrates, on the side of Armenia; he was made bishop in the time of the emperor Constantius (361). He assisted the same year at a council held in the city of Antioch by order of the emperor, declared protector of the Arians. This council was principally composed of heretical prelates. The Catholic bishops, in the number of whom was Eusebius of Samosata, asked, before all things, that there should be given to the church of Antioch, widowed of its head since the death of Saint Eustathius and the banishment of Anien, a pastor with whom the faith might be regulated. The choice fell on

Meletius, formerly bishop of Sebaste, who was then retired at Beroea in Syria. The Arians thought him theirs; but the Catholics, and at their head Saint Eusebius, concurred with ardour in his election, because they knew his sincere attachment to the orthodox faith.

The Arians themselves had a high idea of the virtue of Saint Eusebius; and although they regarded him as the irreconcilable enemy of their sect, they rendered publicly justice to his probity; it was this which determined them to put into his hands the act of the election of Saint Meletius. Some days after, Meletius, in the first discourse which he made to his people before the emperor, having openly declared himself for the Catholic truth, the Arians, who expected nothing like it on his part, were very irritated at it, and resolved from then to destroy him. Meanwhile Saint Eusebius, seeing what was passing, withdrew to his church of Samosata, carrying with him the act which had been entrusted to him. The Arians, dreading, with reason, this authentic testimony of their bad faith, persuaded the emperor to ask it back. The latter sent at once an officer by post. But Eusebius answered that he could not part with the act except with the consent of all those who were interested in it and who had made him depositary of it. The emperor, very irritated at this answer, wrote to him again, pressing him to give it up, and that, in case of refusal, he had given order to the bearer to cut off his right hand. Eusebius, having read the letter without being frightened, presented his two hands to the courier, saying that he might cut them off, but that he would never give up this act, which was a manifest proof of the impiety of the Arians. Such a firmness disconcerted both the officer and the emperor; they admired both the heroic courage of the holy bishop, and could not help giving praises to a firmness which nevertheless made their projects fail. Eusebius did not hesitate at first to be present at the councils and assemblies of the Arians, with the design of sustaining the party of truth; but having learned that some persons were scandalised at such conduct, he broke off all commerce with the heretics, and would no longer assist at their deliberations, after the council which was held at Antioch by order of Saint Meletius, after the return of his second exile, in 363, under the reign of the emperor Jovian. In this council, Saint Eusebius signed, with several bishops, the creed of Nicaea, following a synodal letter addressed on behalf of the bishops to the emperor Jovian.

The episcopal see of the city of Caesarea in Cappadocia having become vacant towards the middle of the year 370, Saint Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus, father of the Theologian, fearing that the Arians might take occasion from it to spread their venom there, sent to beg our Saint to come to help him give to this vacant church a pastor capable of governing it well. Eusebius, who, in all that regarded the glory of God and the service of the Church, did not limit his zeal to his diocese, nor to his province, came from Samosata to Caesarea. His presence caused great joy to the prelates of the assembly who loved good, and to the faithful of that city. In concert with Saint Gregory of Nazianzus and several other bishops, he chose Saint Basil for bishop of Caesarea. This election was regarded as a present from heaven made to the whole Church, as much as to that of Caesarea in particular.

Saint Basil, after his election, formed with Saint Eusebius a friendship still closer than before, and took care to maintain it by an exchange of letters. He went to pay him a visit at Samosata, and nothing but his bad health and his great occupations prevented him from repeating often this long journey. Saint Eusebius, on his side, came again to Caesarea, and tried even to be present at divers places of rendezvous which Saint Basil marked out for him, who seemed to find all his consolation in seeing him, hearing him and following his advice.

The virtues of Saint Eusebius cast so great a brilliance, his zeal was so pure and so active, that the ancients have given him the most beautiful eulogies. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus says, speaking of him in one of his epistles, that he was the column of truth, the light of the world, the instrument which God made use of to communicate His favours to His people, the support and the glory of the orthodox.

The war which the Arians made on the Church, assisted by all the power of the emperor Valens, who had devoted himself to their sect, obliged Saint Eusebius to watch unceasingly, and to keep an exact sentinel in

the camp of the Lord, to prevent the surprises and the progress of these enemies. He had become redoubtable to them by his zeal and his intrepid courage; but this zeal and this courage were conducted by an admirable wisdom which was ordinarily followed by success in all that he undertook, as well in the troubles and tempests of the Church as in the calm and public tranquillity. He was not content with keeping his flock sheltered from all insult, and with maintaining the purity of the faith among the peoples of his city and of his diocese against all the efforts of the heretics who sought to corrupt it. As he knew that the greater part of the churches were destitute of pastors, on account of the persecution, he traversed Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, disguised as a soldier. In this state, he went to carry to the Catholics the succours which they needed, and to strengthen them against the solicitations of the heretics. He ordained priests, deacons and other clerics for the churches which lacked them; and when he met Catholic bishops, he joined them to ordain other bishops. He could not so well hide himself from the Arians that they did not discover at last the hand of him who dealt them such rude blows, and who made every day some new wound in their sect. They determined the emperor to avenge them, and they obtained that he should be driven from his see and from his country, and sent into exile in Thrace.

The officer who was bearer of the order of the prince arrived in the evening at Samosata; he informed the bishop at once of the commission which had been entrusted to him: “Beware,” said Eusebius to him, “of divulging the subject which brings you here; you are the most interested in it. If the people came to know what is passing, they would certainly take arms against you. I do not wish that it should cost you your life on my account.” The Saint assisted, according to his custom, at the night office; then, when everyone had withdrawn, he went out with a faithful servant, embarked on the Euphrates, which bathes the walls of the city, and had himself conducted to Zeugma, which was twenty-four leagues from Samosata.

The next morning, the news of his departure caused much rumour among the people. The Euphrates was soon covered with boats, so lively was the eagerness which the faithful had to find their pastor again. Having joined him at Zeugma, they conjured him not to abandon his flock to the fury of the wolves; but he exhorted them to put their confidence in God, after having represented to them that he must obey the orders of the emperor. Money was offered him, servants and all the things which might be necessary to him, but he would accept almost nothing. He then commended his dear flock to the Lord, and set out on the road to Thrace. He passed through Cappadocia, accompanied by the priest Antiochus, his nephew. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, not having been able to see him on his passage, on account of a great illness which kept him in bed, supplied this defect by a letter to this holy confessor, in which he attributes to his sins his having been deprived of this consolation. He testifies to him that, seeing him fight so generously for the faith of the gospel, and acquire so much credit by the greatness of his courage and by his patience in tribulations, he regarded him as an illustrious martyr of Jesus Christ, and that in this quality he commended himself to his prayers, full of confidence in his intercession.

As soon as Saint Eusebius had arrived in Thrace, he wrote to Saint Gregory of Nazianzus to give him news of himself. He wrote also to Saint Basil, and charged an officer who was going to Cappadocia to inform him of the place and of the state in which he found himself. Saint Basil had a sensible joy at receiving his letter; and knowing that one named Eupraxe, disciple of Saint Eusebius, was going to find him, he put into his hands one full of praises and congratulations on the crown which the glory of his exile was preparing for him. Saint Basil received still some letters from Saint Eusebius during this exile, and wrote him also several.

The Arians, who had engaged Valens to banish Saint Eusebius, did not let escape the occasion of putting on the see of Samosata a man of their sect. Their choice fell on one named Eunomius, whom one must not confound with the famous heresiarch of that name, against whom Saint Basil and his brother Saint Gregory of Nyssa wrote. He was an extremely gentle man and very moderate, little in a state to sustain this usurpation. This is what made Saint Basil say that God had tempered the persecution of the Church of Samosata, permitting that there should be opposed to it only weak enemies and easy to vanquish. Thus

nothing was seen more flourishing than this Church, as regards the Catholic faith and Christian piety. It was the fruit of the long labours of Saint Eusebius, its bishop: and this Church, in this tempest which separated it in spite of itself from so excellent a head, acquired a quite particular glory by the union of all its members in one body, which made one judge that it had but one heart, and that it was animated and ruled by one spirit; for, although the Arians had put a bishop in the place of our Saint, no one, of whatever condition he might be, would find himself with him to hold ecclesiastical assemblies. Seeing that everyone fled him, and that even meeting anywhere with him was avoided, he abandoned his place and went out from the city.

The faithful of Samosata, who were so well provided against the attacks of the enemies from without, saw themselves in danger of losing the peace and the union in which they lived under the conduct of the priests who governed them in the name and by the lights of Saint Eusebius. The spirit of discord sowed among them suspicions and subjects of division, which caused some troubles in this Church, especially among the clergy. Saint Eusebius learned this news with sorrow. He wrote of it at once to his people: and it was perhaps this which led him to send back to Samosata his nephew Antiochus, to remedy promptly the evil, preferring to deprive himself of his help and of his consolation, rather than fail to assist still with all his power a Church which he could not forget, nor neglect in his distance. Saint Basil, on his side, having had notice of this troublesome division from its beginning, by the report which Theodore, deacon of Samosata, made him of it, conceived an extreme displeasure at it, because the consideration of Saint Eusebius made him love this Church as his own. Fearing that this spark might produce some dangerous conflagration, he wrote of it at once to some of the clergy to conjure them to extinguish it promptly, and to bring the discontented to pardon one another, without even entering into explanations, nor putting themselves to trouble to justify themselves. This letter which he sent them with one from Saint Eusebius on the same subject was very strong and very pressing to exhort them not to tarnish the glory of their Church, and to reunite against the common enemy of their faith, who tried always to make them lose it by new efforts.

The Arians, seeing that Eunomius had abandoned the see of Samosata, put in his place one named Lucius, a violent and bold man, who rendered himself much more odious still than his predecessor. He had the principal ones of the clergy banished, among others Evolque, deacon of Saint Eusebius, who was transported into the desert of the Oasis, beyond Egypt, and the priest Antiochus, his nephew, who was relegated to the confines of Armenia.

Saint Basil, however far off he was, could not resolve to abandon this afflicted Church, and he continued his cares and his affection for it until death. He was not content with rendering all these good offices to Saint Eusebius, he tried still to serve him through all the earth, principally by the good testimonies which he gave to the purity of his faith. Saint Eusebius having been taxed with Arianism, as well as Saint Meletius, in a conference which Dorotheus had at Rome with Peter of Alexandria, in presence of Pope Damasus, Saint Basil made bitter reproaches of it to Peter of Alexandria, assuring him that there was nothing so strong for the truth that these two Saints had not said openly and with an entire liberty; to which he added that, when he would have given no other proof of their faith, what they suffered from the Arians was one public enough and brilliant enough.

The ravages which the Goths came to make in Thrace only augmented the sufferings which Saint Eusebius had to endure in this place of his exile. He ran many dangers there; but God delivered him from all the perils in which he found himself exposed, by sensible effects of His particular protection. This he made known to Saint Basil, by the deacon Libanius: and this Saint, after having rendered thanks to God for it, wrote to Eusebius by the priest Paul, to beg him to give him an exact knowledge of all that had happened to him.

Meanwhile, Gratian having become master of the empire by the death of Valens, recalled at once all those whom that prince had banished for the faith. Saint Eusebius, scarcely re-established on his see, recommenced his journeys to procure good pastors for the abandoned faithful. His exile seemed to have given to his zeal a new degree of force and activity. By his cares, the cities of Beroea, of Hierapolis, of Chalcis and of Cyrrhus

had Catholic bishops. He assisted at the council of Antioch, in 379, and is marked there the first after Saint Meletius. The same year, as he accompanied Maris, who was going to take possession of the see of Doliche, a small town of Commagene, then infected with Arianism, a heretical woman, having seen him pass in the street, broke his head with a tile which she threw at him from the top of the roof of her house. He died some days after of the wound which he had received. Seeing himself near to expiring, and foreseeing that the attempt of which he was the victim would not be left unpunished, he made those who assisted him at death promise by oath not to prosecute in justice the woman who had wounded him, in order to imitate, as far as it should be possible for him, his Lord, who prayed on the cross for those who had crucified Him, saying: "My Father, pardon them, for they know not what they do"; and Saint Stephen, servant of Jesus Christ like him, who, overwhelmed under the stones which were cast at him, cried, with his eyes to heaven: "Lord, impute not to them this sin." The officers of justice wished nevertheless to prosecute those who had taken part in his death; but the Catholics obtained that they should not be punished for it. "Such was," says Theodoret, "the end of the holy life, of so many combats and of such glorious labours of the great Eusebius. After having escaped the fury of the barbarians in Thrace, he could not avoid the cruelty of the heretics: but their inhumanity served only to acquire for him the crown of martyrdom." His death is placed about 380. Saint Eusebius is honoured by the Greeks on 22 June, and on the 21st of the same month by the Latins. Cf. Dom Ceillier;.

Saint Leufroi,[1] Abbot of La Croix in the Diocese of Évreux

738. — Pope: Gregory III. — King of France: Theodoric IV.

Vers divitis non opes sunt, sed virtutes, quas secum conscientia portat, ut in perpetuum dives fiat.

The true riches are not earthly goods, but the virtues which the conscience bears in itself in order to be rich in eternity.

S. Bernard, serm. iv *de Adventu.*

The country of Neustria, before the irruption of the Normans, had already borne excellent flowers of holiness, whose agreeable odour embalmed the Church militant, and which had merited, by their beauty, to go and serve as an ornament to the Church triumphant. One of the principal was Saint Leufroi, abbot, whose life we are about to give. He was born in the diocese of Évreux, one of the most considerable of that province, of noble parents, rich and fearing God. The historian of his life says that no sooner was he of an age to know himself than, feeling touched with the desire to embrace the ecclesiastical state, he solicited his parents instantly to have him study in order to render himself capable of it; but not having been able to obtain it, because their love for him did not permit them to resolve to lose sight of him, he withdrew secretly and without saying anything of it to them, to the steward or treasurer of the church of Saint-Taurin, in the suburb of Évreux, who instructed some children. His parents, uneasy at his absence, had him sought on all sides. He was found in the church of Saint-Taurin: he was reprimanded for having thus abandoned his family and disquieted his parents; he answered that he had followed the inspiration of God, and that, besides, the Gospel counselled to prefer Jesus Christ to everything, even to one's father and mother. His parents left him the liberty to follow his vocation. When he had exhausted the science of his master, he went first to Condé, then to Chartres where letters flourished: he found there, in effect, excellent schools. As he was very capable and very assiduous in study, he surpassed all his fellow-students and made the admiration of his masters; his modesty and his piety were not less than his learning. So many virtues made him envious persons; to take from them this occasion of sin, he went out of Chartres and returned to the place of his birth. He taught there letters and virtue to the children of the most illustrious families of the neighbourhood. He lived in retreat with his dear pupils; his house was open only to them and to the poor, whom he received as brothers. He had built beside it a chapel, the entrance of which, like that of his house, was forbidden to women. He lived therefore there as in a monastery, as regular, as austere as a religious. Nevertheless, God made him feel a lively

impression of these words of the Gospel: “If thou wilt be perfect, go; sell all that thou hast and give the price of it to the poor, and afterwards come, follow me.” He understood therefore that God called him to something more excellent than what he was, and that he must embrace the monastic life. With this thought, he invited to his house his father and mother and several of his relatives and of his friends; and after having treated them well and given presents to each, he begged them to pass the night in rest in his house, while he should do what Our Lord had inspired him. Thus, without explaining himself or making himself understood further, while everyone slept, he withdrew secretly to go and seek a solitude. On the way, he met a poor man ill clothed who asked him alms; he had compassion on him and gave him his mantle. A little farther on, he met another as miserable as the first: his heart was again touched at his misery; and he gave him a part of the garments which remained on his body. He went to ask hospitality for the night at the little monastery of La Varenne (probably Notre-Dame de la Garenne, near Gaillon). The religious women wished to retain him; but feeling well that it was not there the place to which God called him, he took leave of them and passed on. The Holy Spirit directed him next to a holy solitary named Bertrand, at Cailly.[1] They were thus some time together, occupying themselves in chanting the praises of God. But Bertrand being called elsewhere, Leufroi remained sole possessor of the hermitage. He shut himself up in a cave, where, passing the days and the nights in fasting, prayer and the tears which he shed continually, he asked God that it might please Him to conduct him and make known to him His will.

His prayer was not useless; for God, who had chosen him from all eternity for the salvation of several, gave him the thought of going to Rouen to find the blessed Saëns (Sidonius) who, having passed from Ireland into France, governed then a religious house near that city; some believe that it was the abbey of Saint-Peter, later Saint-Ouen. He received from him the monastic tonsure and the religious habit, and made then the vow of obedience in his hands, knowing that it is written: “Obedience is more agreeable to God than victims, and to follow one’s own judgment and will, as if they were divinities worthy of respect, is a species of superstition and idolatry.”

Having beforehand his heart disengaged from all earthly affection, Leufroi made great progress in the religious life. Saint Ansbert, archbishop of Rouen, conceived for him a singular esteem: he called him often to him with Saint Saëns to confer with them on the means of advancing the glory of God and of procuring the salvation of the souls with which divine Providence had charged him. One day when they were treating this great affair, the advice of Saint Ansbert and of the venerable abbot was that Saint Leufroi, to whom God had given great talents for the conversion of sinners, ought to go to his own country to combat infidelity and libertinage, and try to bring to the truth of the Gospel a great number of idolaters and impious who wallowed in the state of eternal damnation. However difficult this mission appeared, he could not help accepting it. He received therefore the order of priesthood from the hands of the holy archbishop, and, being provided with his blessing, he went out from Rouen to go towards Évreux. When he was at La Croix-Saint-Ouen, which is near Louviers, and which is called now La Croix-Saint-Leufroi, he had a strong inspiration to stop there and to have an oratory built there. Saint Ouen had blessed and consecrated this place and had planted there a cross of wood with relics, in memory of a luminous cross which had appeared to him, and, since, there was seen there a very brilliant cloud which extended like a column from the earth to heaven, and many miracles were wrought there.

It was a heavenly sign by which God made known that He had destined this field to be the dwelling of our Saint and of an angelic company of religious of whom he was to be the founder and head. In effect, when he had raised an altar and a cross, and built a chapel, so great a number of persons begged him to receive them for his disciples, and presented to him what they had of gold and silver to begin a monastery, that he saw well that God asked of him this good work. The lords of the environs also gave inheritances for the subsistence of those who should consecrate themselves in that place to the service of Jesus Christ. There was therefore soon seen there a rich house and a community destined to chant continually the praises of God. The church had for

titular the Holy Cross, and was also consecrated in honour of the holy Apostles and of the glorious Saint Ouen, who was as it were the first author of it.

However, as there is no just man on earth who is not subject to persecution, this happy success of Saint Leufroi, in the establishment of his new house, raised up envious persons against him; they decried him to Didier, bishop of Évreux, and made him pass in his mind for a rash man who undertook against his authority and did not render him the respects and deferences which he owed him. This prelate added too easily faith to these calumnies; he went even to the monastery, addressed to Saint Leufroi severe reprimands, threats even and, being irritated at his calm and his sweetness, which he took for an insult, he ordered his people to put him on a horse and to take him away with him to Évreux, where he would deliberate on what he should do with his person. His command was at once executed. But scarcely was one a league away from the monastery, when the horse on which Saint Leufroi was mounted fell to the ground and died. This accident made Didier open his eyes; he regretted the ill-treatment which he did to so great a servant of God, threw himself at his feet, asked his pardon for it, and had him reconducted with honour to his monastery, resolved to lend his ear no more to calumnies.

Saint Leufroi wrought afterwards several miracles which rendered him celebrated throughout France. He stopped a great conflagration which was about to consume all his monastery; he made fountains spring up in dry places and where the people were in great want of water; he drove the demon from the body and soul of several persons. One of his religious having let fall the iron of his axe into the river Eure, Leufroi put the end of his staff into the water, and, at that very hour, the iron came up and attached itself to this staff. He made a journey into Lorraine to Charles Martel, who governed France (under the reign of the young Dagobert). This great prince had received him with all sorts of testimonies of friendship and had even conversed a long time with him on the affairs of his salvation, after which he had given him a favourable expedition of the affairs for which he had come to find him. But scarcely had he dismissed him when the little prince Griffo, his third son, was attacked by a fever so violent that his life was despaired of. Charles had Saint Leufroi quickly run after; he was found already at Laon: he was made to return into Lorraine; and, by the virtue of a holy water with which he sprinkled the limbs of the child, and of the communion which he gave him afterwards, he restored him to perfect health.

God did not only make appear the merit of His servant by the favours and the graces which He granted to those who honoured him and rendered him the respects which they owed him; but He showed also, by examples, of what weight are the imprecations of the Saints, when they have been drawn upon one by outrageous words or by contempt of their persons. A woman seeing the Saint fish for diversion in the river Eure, which flows along his monastery, said, murmuring against him: “I think that this BALD-HEAD will exhaust all the river, and that one will no longer be able to fish after him.” She believed she had said it so secretly that neither the Saint nor any other could have heard it. But Leufroi, to whom God discovered her malice, regarding this injury as made to the author of nature rather than to him, answered her at once: “Why, woman, dost thou envy me a good which is common to me with the rest of men? And why dost thou reproach me with a defect which comes from nature and not from my will? I pray God that, in punishment of thy fault, the back of thy head and that of all thy descendants may never have more hair than I have on my forehead.” His word was at once accomplished; and the author of his life assures that, in his time, the accomplishment of it was still seen every day. A man having stolen some millstones from his monastery, he made his complaints of it before the judge of the place and pursued instantly the restitution of them; he who was guilty of the theft broke out furiously against him at the audience, and called him publicly liar and calumniator. The Saint answered him only: “May God be judge between thee and me!” and, at that very hour, this wretch was seen seized with pains and spitting out all his teeth before the assembly: which all his children also did; and, since, all his posterity has had no teeth. One Sunday, having gone out of his monastery after the celebration of the holy Mysteries, he found peasants who were ploughing their land, without any

respect for the holiness of that day, consecrated to the praises of God; he drew a deep sigh and said to them: “How, wretches, have you let yourselves go to so great a crime?” Then, raising his eyes to heaven, and shedding many tears, he said to God: “Lord, may this land be eternally sterile, and may neither grain nor fruits ever be seen there!” His malediction had infallibly its effect, and this field has since borne only brambles and thistles, and it has not even been possible to make walnut trees or other trees grow there. Another day, returning from the pleas, where he had gone to demand back some inheritances of his convent, which seculars had usurped, he entered the house of one of his friends to rest there: it was the time of the great heats, and the flies were so importunate that he could not take a moment of rest; but scarcely had he bowed his head on his hands to pray, when all these flies disappeared; and since then not one has been seen in that house.

We could not dispense ourselves from speaking of a celebrated combat which he had with the demon, in which he humbled that proud one, and made him suffer a confusion so much the greater as his effrontery had been more insupportable. As his disciples were extremely fervent, most of them rose long before Matins, and came to pass several hours in choir in mental prayer, before the community was awakened. The Saint most often anticipated them, and, when they arrived at the church, they had the consolation of finding him in his place already wholly raised up in God, and wholly absorbed in the contemplation of His perfections. One day when the affairs of his charge prevented him from going there as usual, the demon took his figure; and, in order to be saluted by his religious, he put himself in his chair with fair appearances of modesty and devotion. He had for some time the satisfaction which he pretended: for the first who entered doubted not at all that it was their abbot; they made him, according to custom, a deep inclination, not thinking to salute the wolf for the pastor. But the fraud was not long without being discovered, nor without a just punishment: one of the brothers, who had just left the Saint in his chamber, astonished at finding in the choir his resemblance, went promptly to warn him of what was passing; the Saint, to whom God made known that it was a prestige of the evil spirit, having run to the church, after having made the sign of the cross on the door and on the windows, began to strike this spectre with a holy anger, knowing well that he would feel spiritually the blows which he gave him corporally.

The demon could have disappeared at that very instant by dissipating the body which he had formed; but God did not permit it to him, to make appear the more the power of His servant; then the demon, not daring to approach any more the places where the sign of the cross had been imprinted, was obliged, in order to go out, to attach himself to the rope of the bell, and to save himself by the belfry. The religious recognised, by so extraordinary an event, on the one side, that they had a powerful and cunning enemy who sought to surprise them; and, on the other, that they had in their holy Abbot an admirable protector, who was terrible to Satan himself, and under whom they could live in a holy assurance. Here is another action of Saint Leufroi, which deserves no less to be known than the preceding. One of his religious being dead, there were found in his garments three pieces of silver, which showed that he had violated his vow of poverty. The Saint, being informed of it, was seized with extreme grief and trembled in all his body; but, not wishing that so pernicious a crime should take foot in his house, he judged fit to cut off this dead man from the company of the other brothers, and ordered that he should be buried outside the common cemetery; and that, casting his money on his body, it should be said to him, as Saint Peter to Simon Magus: “May thy money perish with thee!” This order was faithfully executed, and the wretched owner was buried in profane earth. But as the holy Abbot had some belief that he had died penitent of his fault, and that God had shown him mercy, he made for him a retreat of forty days which he passed in fasts, prayers and continual tears, asking instantly of Our Lord that He should have pity on him who had passed so many years in the exercises of religious mortification. He was heard; God made known to him that, having given to the deceased the grace of penance at death, He delivered him, at his prayer, from the flames of purgatory, to which he was condemned for the expiation of his fault. Thus the Saint had his body dug up and brought with those of his confrères, to have with them a common resurrection.

It remains for us still to say that Saint Leufroi, full of mercy towards the poor, was not content with making them great alms in his lifetime, and with distributing to them in necessity the revenues of his monastery: to extend his charity even after his death and in the following centuries, he had built, near his house, to receive them, a fine hospital to the maintenance of which he applied particular inheritances which he rendered, by this means, the property and the patrimony of the poor. This action was as the crowning of all the others; and soon after, having arrived at an extreme old age, and feeling, by the attacks of fever, that the time of his recompense was approaching, he sent eulogies, that is to say presents of devotion, to all the houses of piety of the neighbourhood, to commend himself to the prayers of the servants and handmaids of God, and in order that they should procure him, by their intercession, the grace of a happy decease. He assembled also his disciples around him, and made them an exhortation full of fervour to bring them to perseverance. At last, after having received the Viaticum and Extreme Unction with a devotion so edifying that it drew tears from the eyes of all the religious, and having passed the whole last night in continual prayer, he rendered his blessed spirit on the morning of 21 June, about the year 738: he had governed forty-eight years his monastery. He is represented with one or several children near him, because he is celebrated for the cure of sick children; making issue from the ground, by means of his staff, a spring to reward a peasant who had given him to drink, but who complained of the scarcity of water; dissipating a cloud of gnats, to relieve of this care the religious who took care of the refectory, where these animals had multiplied beyond measure.

Cult and Relics

His holy body was deposited in a church which he had built, in honour of Saint Paul, in the enclosure of his abbey, and remained there more than a century; but in the year 851, according to the chronicles of Le Breuil, it was raised from the earth and transferred, by Gombert, bishop of Évreux, into the ancient church of La Croix-Saint-Ouen, which took afterwards the name of Saint-Leufroi. Later, the Normans having established themselves in France and pillaging all the sacred places of Neustria, it was brought to Paris by the religious of his monastery who came to take refuge there, and deposited in the celebrated abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. However, in the year 1222, Guy, bishop of Carcassonne, transferred these holy relics from their ancient shrine into another richer and better worked. The abbot of La Croix-Saint-Leufroi, who was present at this translation, obtained from it three bones for his abbey; namely: two small ones of the thumb and a large one of the arm, which is that which extends from the elbow to the wrist. He carried them then to the church from which they had been brought; and the joy of the religious was so great that they established an annual solemnity of it; they called it the feast of the return or of the translation of the relics of Saint Leufroi.[2] The inhabitants of Suresnes, two leagues from Paris, vassals of the abbey of Saint-Germain, had also a rib of this holy confessor, to enrich their parish, which recognises him as patron and titular; but, as they lost it afterwards, they obtained, in 1577, two other bones more considerable; one of the thigh and the chin with three teeth. This treasure, nevertheless, did not remain with them long; for, thirteen years after, their church having been burned by the heretics, these relics were entirely consumed there; they had recourse a third time to the charity of the religious of Saint-Germain, who, after having exhorted them to amend and to begin a more Christian life, in order not to render themselves unworthy of the presence of their holy protector, gave them the middle finger of one of his hands, with another bone of one of his legs; they were carried in procession into their new church, by a great number of religious, accompanied by the curés, the priests and almost all the people, both of Suresnes and of Puteaux: which was done on 28 August of the year 1590. Since then, the feast of Saint Leufroi is celebrated there twice: the day of his decease and the day of this last translation. The relics of Saint Leufroi which were at Saint-Germain-des-Prés were profaned and destroyed in 1793. The church of Suresnes, more fortunate, still preserves some. On 2 March 1741, de Rochechouart, bishop of Évreux, suppressed the conventual mensa of La Croix-Saint-Leufroi and united it to the minor seminary of Évreux. The monastery having been demolished, there were transferred from the conventual church into the parish church (the church of Saint-Paul, built by Saint Leufroi), a considerable piece of the true Cross, the bone of an arm of Saint Leufroi, which is still seen there today, and several other

relics.

See Surius and the Bollandists, on 8 June.

Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga, of the Society of Jesus

1568–1591. — Popes: Pius V; Innocent IX. — Emperors of Germany: Maximilian II; Rudolf II.

He who neglects to help the soul of his neighbour does not know how to love God, since he does not seek to increase His glory.

Maxim of Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga.

However illustrious the house of Gonzaga may be, one of the first of all Italy, we may say nevertheless that it received more lustre in giving to heaven the Saint whose life we are about to write, than it had from having given marquises to Montferrat, dukes to Mantua and cardinals to the Church. He had for father Fernando or Ferdinand of Gonzaga, marquis of Castiglione, prince of the Holy Empire; and for mother Martha Tana Santena, daughter of Tano Santena, lord of Chieri, in Piedmont. Philip II, king of Spain, and Elisabeth of France, his wife, at whose court they both were, had married them together by a singular affection which they bore them; but, after their marriage, they withdrew into Italy, where the marchioness, who was very pious, seeing herself delivered from the noise and the cares of the court, gave herself entirely to the exercises of virtue. The desire to see herself a mother made her pray to God to obtain a son, not at all to be the support of her family, but to serve Jesus Christ. Her vows were at last heard. But this joy was soon crossed by the apprehension of losing him even before possessing him: for she suffered such great pains in her childbed and fell into such a weakness that, in the judgment of the physicians, neither the mother nor the child could live. In this state, she had recourse to the holy Virgin, and made a vow that, if she and her son escaped from this peril, she would go in pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loreto, and would carry her child there to offer him to her. She had no sooner finished this promise than the child came into the world full of life, on 9 March of the year 1568, under the pontificate of Saint Pius V. The ceremonies of his baptism took place on 20 April of the same year, and he had for godfather William, duke of Mantua.

The marchioness, his mother, took an extraordinary care to bring him up in the fear of God, and to inspire in him early the sentiments of Christian piety. He gave himself, from the cradle, marks of an extreme tenderness for the poor; for, when some presented themselves before him, he began to weep bitterly; he could never be appeased but by giving them alms. As soon as he could speak, he was taught to pronounce the holy names of Jesus and of Mary, to make the sign of the cross and to recite several prayers of devotion; which he did with much facility. He was so amiable and had so pious an air that it seemed to those who carried him in their arms that they held an angel, at the sight of whom they felt themselves interiorly animated to virtue. As soon as he could walk, he began to withdraw alone, into little corners, to pray to God there with more recollection and out of the embarrassments of the world. His virtuous mother was ravished to see these inclinations of her son for piety. But the marquis, his father, who would have liked better to see in him ardour for arms and for the exercises of war, took him with him to Casale-Maggiore, where the review of the troops which he had levied for the king of Spain was to be made, who was at war with the city of Tunis, in order that, conversing always with soldiers, he might take a warlike humour.

As he was then only four or five years old, the bad example of the men of war made some impression on him; he retained from them indecent words without knowing what he said; but having been reproved by his governor, he no longer uttered them and avoided those who said them. Later, he had much confusion at having used these coarse words: regarding this licence as one of the greatest sins which he had committed in his life, he wept bitterly over it, and never thought of it but with sentiments of perfect contrition. Fathers and mothers must therefore take care that their children converse only with well-regulated persons, since the frequentation of those who are too free is capable of corrupting them, however good a nature they have

received from God.

At the age of seven years, he was so prevented by lights from heaven that he resolved from then to renounce the love of the world, to consecrate himself wholly to divine love; afterwards, he regarded that time as that of his conversion. Being at this tender age, he found himself among the assistance at the exorcism of a possessed person, which a religious of great holiness, of the Order of Saint Francis, had undertaken. The demons having perceived him, whether they judged what he was to be one day by what they had already recognised in him, or whether God made use of them to make the merit of our Saint appear the more, began to cry, pointing at him with the finger: “Do you see this child? he is destined for heaven, and a great glory is prepared for him.” He had his devotions regulated like a man already experienced in virtue. He said each day, on his knees, the seven Psalms of penance, the hours of Our Lady and several other prayers which he had prescribed to himself; he was so faithful in acquitting himself of this practice that it could not even be made to be interrupted during a quartan fever which tormented him eight whole months; it was only gained over him that, when his weakness should be excessive, someone should recite these prayers in his presence. It could never either be decided to make him use a carpet when he knelt.

At eight years, his father took him, with Rodolph, his younger brother, to Francis de’ Medici, grand duke of Tuscany, to have them both brought up at his court; but, far from letting himself be corrupted by so contagious an air, Aloysius continued there always the same spiritual exercises; and, to triumph more easily over the snares of the demon, the baits of the world and his own concupiscence, he took the holy Virgin for his advocate, put himself under her protection and made a vow to keep his virginity inviolably; this drew upon him so many graces that, afterwards, he felt no movement, nor was attacked by any thought contrary to purity. Thus, on his side, he did all that he could to avoid the occasions of it; for he never looked at women fixedly, not even the marchioness his mother, nor the empress Maria, in whose service he remained a long time; and as long as he was at court, he did not suffer young persons to set foot in his chamber. He avoided also, as much as he could, finding himself alone with them or speaking to them. His modesty was so great that, when he dressed, he dared not show the tip of his bare feet to his valet de chambre.

At ten years he began to lead a more retired life and to confess more often, without troubling himself about his companions who called him scrupulous and melancholy, and he made a general confession to the rector of the college of the Society of Jesus at Florence, with an admirable exactness, and with so much sorrow that he wept over his sins as if he had been the greatest criminal in the world. The church was the place to which he went with most inclination. He failed not to repair there in the morning to hear Mass, and in the evening to assist at the Salut.

He was eleven or twelve years old when he quitted Florence to go to Mantua with Rodolph, his brother, because the marquis of Castiglione, his father, having been named governor of Montferrat, by the duke of that name, wished that his children should remain at the court of his benefactor. But he became so infirm there, whether by the inconveniences which befell him, or by the mortifications which he practised there, that he resolved to lead there a life retired from the commerce and the conversation of men: which gave him the means of applying himself to reading, particularly that of the Lives of the Saints, and of frequenting only the churches and the monasteries. It was then that he took the resolution to cede to his younger brother what belonged to him by right of primogeniture, although he had already been invested with it by the emperor, in order to embrace the ecclesiastical state and to be free more readily for God; for he had in view neither the benefices nor the dignities which he might hope for, as is rather ordinary with persons of quality; but he considered only the glory of Jesus Christ and his own perfection, which he believed he could find only in devoting himself to the cult of the altars and in trampling under foot all the vanities of the world. Meanwhile the pious young man was wasting away: he was considerably weakened, of an extreme leanness, and his stomach refused even the lightest food; he had fallen into a state of languor which put his days in danger. The marquis of Castiglione, being warned of it, ordered that his children should be brought back to his castle, in

the hope that the native air and the maternal cares of Martha would restore health to his son. Returned to Castiglione, he continued to labour more and more at virtue. He shut himself ordinarily in his chamber, in order not to be interrupted in his prayers. His domestics often saw him prostrate on the ground before a crucifix, his arms stretched out and raised to heaven or crossed on his breast, melting into tears and heaving sighs capable of touching the most hardened hearts. At other times, they saw him ravished in ecstasy and immovable as a statue. He attached himself particularly to the reading of the book of Father Canisius, of the Society of Jesus, where he learned to make mental prayer; he took pleasure also in reading the relations of the Indies, which attached him insensibly to the Society and made him form the design of entering it to labour at the salvation of souls and the conversion of idolaters. On Sundays and feast days, after having assisted at the catechism, he gathered some children and explained to them the instruction which he had heard; he joined to it wise counsels and pious encouragements.

At that time, Saint Charles Borromeo, archbishop of Milan, passed through Castiglione; our Blessed had the happiness of conversing with him several times, with so much spirit and edification that this great prelate could not weary of admiring the graces which Our Lord did to this young man. He exhorted him to approach often to holy communion, and having learned from him that he had not yet received it, he gave it to him with his own hands. Afterwards, our Saint was always so devout towards the most holy Sacrament that he melted into tears when he heard holy Mass. Having received from his father an order to come to him from Castiglione to Casale, he went there with diligence, always resolved not to abandon the party of virtue. In effect, by his pious exercises and by the frequent conversations which he had with the Capuchins and the Barnabites, he made such progress there that he undertook to quit the world altogether and to add to the vow of virginity which he had already made at Florence those of obedience and poverty. But as he was only thirteen years old, he kept this design secret, until he should be of an age to execute it; and, in the meantime, he practised the same austerities and the same mortifications as the religious; he fasted three days of the week, and, on one of these days, he fasted on bread and water. Besides, he ate so little that, without an extraordinary help from God, he could not have lived on the nourishment which he took; it amounted scarcely to the value of an ounce. He added to this abstinence the discipline to blood. At first, he gave it himself only three times a week; but, afterwards, he gave it himself every day, and at last three times in twenty-four hours. He slipped adroitly a plank into his bed, in order to lie on the hard; and, in place of a hair-shirt, he put his spurs between his shirt, to be pricked by them at every moment. By night, when his domestics were asleep, he rose secretly, and, although in the heart of winter, he remained in his shirt until the cold, seizing him all over the body, made him fall to the ground from weakness. In the year 1581, the marquis, his father, took him with him into Spain, in the suite of the empress Maria, daughter of Charles V; he had no sooner arrived there than Philip II gave him as page to prince James, his son. Amid the embarrassments of the court, he failed not to learn philosophy, to approach often the Sacraments and to practise the same exercises of piety which he had done before. When he saw himself at the age of sixteen years, he judged that the time had come to execute the design which he had taken of becoming a religious. But as he had not yet made choice of a Congregation in particular, he had recourse to the holy Virgin, his advocate, and, on the day of her Assumption, he made a communion at the college of the Jesuits, at Madrid, with a preparation and devotion extraordinary, in order to learn what God asked of him. His prayer was at once heard; for, while he was making his thanksgiving, a miraculous voice said to him distinctly “that he must enter the Society of Jesus; that he had only to open his heart to his confessor who was of it, and that he would learn from him what he had to do for the accomplishment of this design.” He executed at that very hour this order from heaven; and, having learned that it was necessary to have the permission of his father, he asked it of him with all the instance possible.

When the marquis knew the resolution of his son, he was vividly moved by it, and tried, by all sorts of means, to make him change it. At first, he employed caresses, then threats; and, seeing that nothing was capable of bending his heart, he put off his decision until his return to Italy, saying that he did not wish him

to become a religious in Spain. However, these were only artifices to dissipate the design of Aloysius, always deferring the time; for, when he was in Italy, he was made to make still several journeys to neighbouring princes, to negotiate with them important and extremely thorny affairs. He always terminated them happily, and with the prudence of a man consummate in politics. But however pressing they were, he never ceased, during his negotiations, to make prayers, fasts and mortifications, to obtain from God that He would bend the heart of his father, who at last gave his consent and permitted him to go to Rome, to enter the Society. Our Saint renounced first his States, in Mantua, with the approval of the emperor (because it was an imperial fief), in favour of Rodolph, his younger brother. When he said farewell to his subjects, who melted into tears at losing so good a master, he addressed to them these beautiful words: “It is very difficult that great lords be saved; as for me, I seek only my salvation, and I counsel you all to do the same.”

Passing by Loreto, he communicated in that holy chapel with a singular devotion, and begged Our Lady to continue to be his protectress. As soon as he was at Rome, he visited the churches of the city, kissed the feet of Pope Sixtus V, and at last, after having taken leave of some cardinals of his house, he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus, at Saint-Andrew, in the year 1583, not yet having completed eighteen years, on the day of Saint Catherine, martyr, whom he took, on that account, for his patroness the rest of his life. In the letter which he wrote to his father, to say farewell to him, he made use only of these words of the Psalmist: “Forget your people and the house of your father.” And in that which he wrote to Rodolph, his brother, he employed only these words of the Wise Man: “He who fears God will do good works.” Entering the cell which was assigned him for his novitiate, he said with a transport of joy, as if he had entered a paradise: “This is my rest for ever and ever; I will dwell in this place, because I have chosen it.” Never was a novice seen to undertake with more fervour the work of perfection, nor to make such great progress in so short a time. He surpassed all the others, not so much by the nobility of his family as by the brilliance of all sorts of virtues: he was the most modest, the most sober, the most mortified, the most humble, the most affable, the most gentle and the most obedient. He had his sight so restrained that after three months of novitiate he did not yet know how the tables were arranged in the refectory. One day, he was ordered to go and fetch a book from the place of the rector; he was obliged to inquire where it was. The sacristan having given him charge, on Holy Thursday, to stand in the chapel, to snuff the candles and the torches lighted before the most holy Sacrament, he stood there several hours on his knees, without ever raising his eyes to consider the ornaments and the riches of that holy place, not believing that it was permitted him to have other thoughts than those which regarded his office. One would easily have persuaded oneself that he had entirely lost the taste, on seeing him eat without relishing the dishes and without examining whether they were good or bad. He had one day a great scruple, thinking he had lightly cast his eyes aside, to see what a brother who was seated at table beside him was doing; and, rendering account of this scruple to the master of novices, he avowed to him that it was the first time that it had happened to him. His ears were never open to the news of the world, nor to useless things. He kept an almost continual silence and, when he was obliged to speak, it was so to the purpose and with so much candour and simplicity that he banished from his discourse all sorts of equivocal words and dissimulation; he was accustomed to say that duplicity, artifice or feigning in the world made lose there the security of human commerce, but that, in a community, it was a venom and a pest. He had so much horror of sensual pleasures that, in order not to feel the least attack of them, he never omitted the austerities which were permitted him; it was in vain that they granted him some, he desired always greater ones. He was ravished when he was sent to ask alms through the streets of Rome, ill clothed and the wallet on his back; and as he was asked one day whether he had no repugnance for it, he answered that he had not, because he represented himself before the eyes of Jesus Christ humbled for the sins of men, and the eternal reward which He gives to those who abase themselves for His love. He took pleasure also in going, on feast days, to catechise the poor and the peasants, and to visit the hospitals, where he attached himself particularly to serving the most infected and the most miserable, giving everywhere examples of his humility and of his charity. He was so detached from flesh and blood that, in the third month of his novitiate, when the news of

the death of his father was told him, he was no more moved than if it had been quite indifferent to him. His fellow-students manifested to him their surprise at it. “I avow to you,” he answered, “that, if I considered only the death of my father, I should be profoundly afflicted by it. But, in recognising that this death comes from the hand of God, I cannot grieve. Can one afflict oneself at a thing which one knows to be agreeable to His divine Majesty? All that God does is well. I thank Him above all for the holy death of my father. He did him there a great grace. I rejoice at the salvation of his soul. It is assured, and I render thanks to the divine Majesty for it.” He learned also, without any emotion, that Mgr of Gonzaga, his uncle, had been created cardinal; for, as he was truly dead to the world, nothing was capable of touching him.

The exercises of the active life did not hinder him from applying himself to the contemplative life; for he was so given to prayer that one would have said it made his whole occupation. In this connection, he said sometimes that “he who was not a man of prayer would never arrive at a high degree of holiness, nor ever triumph over himself; and that all the laxity and the little mortification which one sees in religious souls proceeded only from this, that meditation was neglected, which is the shortest and most efficacious means to acquire the virtues.” It is not then to be wondered at if, being convinced of these truths he put all his delight in making holy prayer, and if he had so much care to hold unceasingly his mind in the recollection and the tranquillity necessary to this pious exercise, and to banish from it all the thoughts which might have troubled him in it. “The soul which presents itself to prayer,” he said, “must be absolutely free from all affection and from all thought foreign to the subject which is to occupy it; without that, it cannot be attentive to what it wishes to meditate, it cannot receive in itself the image of God in contemplation.” He was so much master of his imagination that he avowed one day that, during the space of six months, all his distractions had not lasted the time of an Ave Maria. “I have as much difficulty,” he said, “in distracting myself from God, as others say they have in recollecting themselves; for the time which I employ to succeed in distracting myself is a time of violence and of great suffering. This interior combat is far more harmful to my health than the recollection to which I am accustomed and in which I find calm and peace.” He had also much devotion during his vocal prayers, particularly when he recited psalms; for it was with so much spiritual taste and interior sweetness that he could not even think of it nor hear the word psalm, without being quite transported with joy. He had a singular devotion to meditating on the passion of Our Lord, of which he could not think, any more than of the other mysteries of our redemption, without shedding torrents of tears and feeling tendernesses and languors which cannot be expressed. It is remarked also that he had a particular affection for the holy angels, and specially for him to whose guard divine

Providence had confided him. He composed on this subject a pious meditation, which is seen printed with others by the Rev. Father Vincent Bruno, of the Society of Jesus, in the life which he composed of our Saint. We have already said a word of his devotion towards the most holy Sacrament of the altar; but we shall add in this place that it was so cordial and so fervent that he never communicated without feeling an admirable joy and taste of the holy Eucharist. The day before communion, he spoke only of this august mystery; he said of it things so beautiful and so touching that the priests tried to hear him on this matter, to excite themselves to fervour. Finally, he failed not to visit several times a day this adorable Sacrament, as much to render there profound respects to Jesus Christ as to converse with Him there familiarly of all that concerned his perfection. He was then so inclined to bodily penances that, if the superiors had not restrained him, he would doubtless have greatly shortened his days, fervour carrying him often to mortifications which surpassed his strength. Several even blamed him for it and made him scruple of it, saying that he was killing himself; but he answered that, after having exposed his desire to his superiors, he had no more cause to fear when they granted him what he asked; and that, when they refused him what he wished, he was content to offer his good will to God. He said also very agreeably to the Fathers who counselled him to moderate his austerities that, since they themselves did not do it in regard to themselves, he liked better to imitate their example than to follow their counsel; that, being a hard and twisted iron, he had come into religion as into a furnace, to be softened and straightened with the hammer of mortification and penance; that the true time to do it was that

of youth, man being healthy and with all his strength, whereas in old age he is ordinarily so infirm and so weak that he can no longer do it. Thus, at the article of death, after having received the Viaticum, he declared, in presence of several Fathers, that, if he had scruple, it was only for the penances which he had omitted and not for those which he had practised, because he had done them by obedience, and not by the movement of his own will. When he was refused permission to do some austerity, he tried to supply it by other acts of virtues, or by procuring himself pain by painful postures and by ways of walking, of standing or of sitting, which hampered his body.

This great exterior mortification was accompanied and sustained by a perfect interior mortification of his passions and of his appetites. To come to the end of them more easily, he examined so carefully all the movements of his soul that he scarcely let pass any which were contrary to high virtue. However, when he perceived that he had fallen into some fault, he did not grieve excessively; but, humbling himself before the majesty of God, he asked pardon of Him for it with all his heart, and rose thus from his falls in a great resolution to do better than ever: “Because,” he said, “he who grieves and loses courage when he has fallen shows that he does not know himself, and that he does not think that he is kneaded of an earth which produces only thistles and thorns.” Hence it came that he was ravished when he was corrected for his faults: he wished even to be reproved for them in public, and, in order to bring the superiors to do it, he gave them to them in writing.

Although he laboured to mortify all his passions, he applied himself nevertheless particularly to conquering that of pride and the desires of honour and of esteem, which are so natural to man, and so delicate in persons of high birth: he embraced with such ardour the study of humility that he omitted nothing of what he believed might contribute to establish it solidly in his heart; thus this virtue, which is the firm support of all the others, cast there such deep roots that it seemed to be the principle which animated all his actions. There never came from his mouth a single word which was to his praise, and, by an industrious silence, he always covered what might be praised in him. One day, he had preached in the refectory to the edification of the whole community; as a Father spoke of him in his presence in advantageous terms, he remained quite confused at it and as afflicted at having heard good said of him as others are content to hear their praises published. To maintain himself in this spirit of humility and annihilation, he made a collection, which was found after his death, of the subjects which man has to despise and abase himself. In the house, as well as outside, he always yielded the first place to his brothers. He could never suffer that, under pretext of his illnesses and weaknesses, he should be dispensed from the common life, whether as to food, or as to his chamber, or as to his clothes. There was no office, however low it might be, which he did not desire with more ardour than the men of the world desire the most honourable dignities and charges. He served, on certain days of the week, in the refectory and in the kitchen, and gathered there the remnants, which he afterwards distributed with his own hands to the poor with much humility and charity.

This profound humility had produced in his heart an obedience so exact that his conscience never reproached him with having failed in the orders of his superiors, nor even with having felt repugnance and movements against what they prescribed to him. Their will was always the rule of his, and, without seeking the cause of what they ordered, nor taking heed whether they were learned or not, noble or commoners, he considered in them only the authority of God. He obeyed also with pleasure the brothers who, by their office, had some sort of authority over him, saying that he who obeyed in this manner was assured of the reward which God promises to the obedient. This so respectful submission towards his brothers, far from finding it painful, he found sweet and agreeable. “It is more consoling to me, I confess,” he said, “to obey subaltern superiors than the first superiors. If one regarded obedience humanly, one could resolve only very difficultly to obey a man, the more so one who would be inferior to us in birth and in knowledge; but to submit oneself to a man in order to obey God, that is, on the contrary, a glory and a great glory. Nothing appears to me more beautiful, because there is nothing human in it.”

Obedience was so dear to him that he never hesitated to sacrifice everything to it. One day, while he was folding linen with other novices, he remembered that he had not yet read some pages of Saint Bernard, as he was accustomed to do each day; but, at the same instant, he said to himself: “I could leave this work, as some others have already done, since the time to be employed on it is not absolutely determined; but, if I left it to go and read Saint Bernard, what would this reading teach me? That I must obey. Well! I must practise what Saint Bernard would teach me, and remain at this occupation by a spirit of obedience.” And he continued to fold linen.

His zeal for the entire observance of the rule shone out in him no less than the other virtues of which we have just spoken: it is said that he kept it to the letter, and that he never violated a single point of it, so far that his room-companion having asked him for half a sheet of paper to write a letter, he doubted whether he could give it him without permission; wherefore, going out of his cell, he went to ask that permission. One day, Cardinal Gonzaga wishing to keep him to dine with him, he answered him that he could not, because the Rule forbade it to him; the cardinal was so edified by it that afterwards, when he asked him for something, he always added: “If it is not against your Rule.” Cardinal della Rovere came one morning to speak to him in the sacristy. “Monseigneur, it is not permitted me to speak,” said our Saint to him. “God forbid that I should ever bring you to infringe the Rule,” replied the cardinal; “but, the affair being important, I am going to ask the Father General to dispense you from silence at this moment.” Aloysius bowed, without answering a syllable, and conversed with him only after having received the permission from Father Aquaviva.

As to holy poverty, he loved it with more passion than the great of the world love their gold and their silver. All his pleasure was to wish for nothing and to be stripped of all things, in order to possess God alone. He had, to adorn his cell, no painting nor figure; but only two images of paper: one of Saint Catherine, martyr, whom he had chosen, as we have said, for his patroness, because he had entered religion on the day of her feast; and the other of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Having written a little work on some matter of theology, he gave it afterwards to his superior; asked why he gave it to him when he had need to keep it, he answered that it was because he had some attachment to this treatise as to a thing which came from himself. Having entered the Society, he would no longer make use of the Breviary which he had had in the world, because it was too richly bound. During his studies, he was made a present of a Summa of Saint Thomas, which was gilt on the edges; but he had no rest until he was permitted to be rid of it in order to have an old copy. The superiors wishing that he should have a cell to himself alone, on account of his indisposition, he contrived that one should be given him narrow, dark and low, under a staircase, where he had difficulty in standing upright, and which resembled rather a tomb for a dead man than the dwelling of a living being. He never found anything to say against his clothes, nor against all that concerned him, esteeming himself happy when they gave him the worst. Being at his mother’s, during the rigour of winter, it could never be gained over him that he should take there the things which were necessary to him; but he sent to ask the rector of Brescia for some old rag to cover himself, and there was much trouble to persuade him to receive from her some under-garment which she gave him as alms, as to a poor man. At the house of Alphonsus of Gonzaga, his uncle, seeing that he was lodged in a well-furnished chamber, he cried out, speaking to his companion: “God help us this night, my dear brother! whither have our sins not reduced us? Ah! how much better we should be in our poor beds!” It was the love which he had for holy poverty which inspired him with these beautiful sentiments.

It was by all these virtues, practised in a heroic degree, that our Saint raised himself to the perfection of charity, which, being the queen of the others, attaches the soul strongly to its sovereign good. In effect, he was so intimately united to Him that he could not hear God spoken of without feeling in his heart tendernesses and transports inconceivable which appeared even on his face. Being one day in the refectory, the reading which was made of a treatise on divine love so inflamed him that he could not finish dining, having his breast and face all on fire and his eyes bathed in tears. During his studies, while he was at recreation, he contrived that conversation should always be about spiritual things; and he did so much, by his

example and by his zeal, that this custom, so laudable and so necessary to arrive at perfection, was maintained in the Society. This love for God produced in him that of the neighbour to such a degree that he would very willingly have gone to the Indies to labour there at the conversion of souls, if his superiors had been willing to permit it. He solicited to be often sent to the hospitals to serve the sick there. When he went there, he made their beds, gave them to eat, washed their feet and swept their room. In the illness of which he died, and which he had caught in assisting the plague-stricken, having heard it said that that year there was apprehension that the contagion would enter Rome, he made a vow, with the permission of the general, to serve there the poor sick of the plague, if he returned to health.

This love for the neighbour drew him from the religious solitude to go to his parents, in order to appease a great dispute which was in his family, between the marquis of Castiglione, his brother, and the duke of Mantua, for the fief of Solferino, which by right belonged to the marquis, but of which Horace of Gonzaga, his uncle, had disposed, by his will, in favour of the duke. It was thought therefore that the end of this affair would never be seen except by putting it into the hands of our Saint: and each was so persuaded of his probity that it was not doubted that he would prefer justice to all the interests which he might have in it. When he arrived in the marquisate of Castiglione, all the people went to meet him and received him with a thousand testimonies of respect; several even knelt as he passed, honouring him as a Saint, and weeping over their misfortune at not having deserved such a lord; his mother, who had been accustomed, when he was still a child, to call him her angel, considered him not only as her son, but as a person sent from heaven to bring peace into her family; in effect, he terminated happily this great dispute to the satisfaction of all parties. It was by the means of his prayers, rather than by the lights of his prudence, although it was admirable, considering his little age, that he came to the end of all that he undertook; for he avowed himself that he had never recommended anything to God of which he had not obtained a happy issue.

These affairs being terminated, and God having revealed to him, at the college of Milan, that He would soon call him to Himself, he returned to Rome in the year 1591, very joyful at so agreeable a piece of news. Having found this city afflicted with the plague, he importuned his superiors so much that they permitted him to succour the sick; but as his charity and his fervour carried him to serve particularly those who were most in danger and attacked with more violence, he was himself soon seized by the disease. He rejoiced at it extremely and thanked God for it, seeing himself by that near to being delivered from the wearisome prison of this mortal body. It is true that the remedies which were prescribed him relieved him for a time; but there remained to him a slow fever which lasted three months, as if to give him the means of seeing come with more sweetness and tranquillity the happy moment of his death. During all that time he took a singular pleasure in hearing God spoken of and the glory of the Saints. Our Lord having made known to him the day on which he would go out of this world, he sang the Te Deum in thanksgiving, then he said to the bystanders that it would be the day of the octave of the most holy Sacrament. This day arrived, the infirmarians finding that he was better, said to him: “You have no chance of dying today, since you begin to recover.” But he answered them that the day was not yet past, and that he would die in the night. Towards evening, the Father Provincial having come to visit him, asked him how he was: “We are going away,” he said to him, “my Father.” — “And whither?” replied the superior. — “To heaven,” he added, “as I hope by the mercy of my God, if my past offences do not hinder me.” A little before dying, he wished to take the discipline once more, or at least, because he was too weak, that another should give it to him, and begged the Father Provincial to let him expire on the ground. When he received the blessing and the plenary indulgence which Gregory XIV sent him, he cried out: “Alas! who am I? that the Popes deign to remember me, a wretched worm of the earth, who am going dying.” At last, invoking the holy name of Jesus, he rendered his soul to God towards the end of the day of the octave of the most holy Sacrament, which was then 20 June, at the age of twenty-two years, three months and eleven days. It was in the year 1592, and the sixth of his entrance into the Society. After his death, his knees were found all callous, by the great habit which he had had, from his childhood, of kneeling to pray to God. There was found also on his breast a crucifix of copper which he had always carried on him.

Finally, one must not omit here the advantageous testimony which Cardinal Bellarmine, who had been his confessor and had known him very particularly, gave of him. He assured then that our Saint had never sinned mortally; that, from the age of seven years, at which he said he had been converted to God, he had led a life so perfect and so mortified that he had not even felt the goads of the flesh; that he prayed without any distraction; that he was an accomplished model of all the virtues, and that there was ground to believe that, in quitting the earth, he had gone to enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. This is what made this learned and pious cardinal have scruple to pray to God for him, fearing to do injury to the divine grace of which he had recognised so many marvels in his soul.

Often a discipline is painted near him, or in his hand, on account of his almost excessive rigours against himself. He is represented sometimes fainting at the feet of his confessor, but above all making his first communion from the hand of Charles Borromeo. As he is the patron of young people who study, he has been painted more than once surrounded by schoolboys who invoke him or whom he seems to instruct in the service of God. He is represented also bearing a lily, to mark that he preserved his virginity until death.

Cult and Relics. — Writings of Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga.

The body of Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga was carried into the church of the Annunciation of the Roman College, and buried in the chapel of the Crucifix; soon the crowd betook itself to his tomb, laid there offerings and ex-votos, proclaiming him a Saint, rendering him a cult which it was impossible to arrest in its excesses. It was not only at Rome that this devotion manifested itself: at Florence, at Milan, at Turin, at Ferrara, at Castiglione above all, in all the places where he had been, he was openly honoured, invoked, and each one assured that he had experienced the effects of his protection. In 1598, as there was fear for the body of the damage which might result from the overflow of the Tiber which inundated the city of Rome, the coffin was drawn from the vault and examined with care; it was in the most satisfactory state, the water not having altered it. The Father Provincial, after having taken for himself some relics, distributed some to all the Fathers who were present. Then the precious remains were put in a box less large than the coffin; it was sealed and deposited afterwards in the vault; but placed as high as possible and fixed to the wall, in order not to be exposed to the damp, and that the water might not reach it henceforth. On 8 June 1602, the Father General, after numerous and striking miracles, believed he ought to give to the holy relics of Aloysius of Gonzaga a testimony of respect, by withdrawing them from the common burial-place; he ordered their translation into the sacristy of the church of the college, while waiting until the Roman court should permit rendering to them the honours which public devotion already claimed. On the 1st of July following, the box which contained them was enclosed in a second of lead, and this in a third of wood, and placed under the footstool of the altar of Saint Sebastian. In 1604, there was talk at Rome of nothing but the miracles wrought by Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga. All the princes and bishops of Italy supplicated the Pope to proceed to the canonisation; and all the dioceses of Lombardy, taking the lead, had just celebrated with pomp the anniversary of the death of the young thaumaturge. On 21 June of the same year, the church of the college of the Society of Jesus, at Brescia, was adorned as on its most beautiful days of festival: the portrait of Aloysius of Gonzaga was exposed there to public veneration, and the assistance was very considerable. The bishop, yielding to the general eagerness and to his personal desire, had permitted the anniversary of the holy death of Aloysius to be celebrated solemnly in the church of the college, and the students, the nobility, the clergy, the people had wished to find a place at this feast. On 28 July, a similar solemnity took place at Castiglione, in the midst of a great concourse of faithful who regarded Saint Aloysius as the tutelary angel of Castiglione. On 13 May 1605, the relics of our Saint, which had been deposited under the footstool of the altar of Saint Sebastian, were transferred, with the authorisation of the Holy See, to the chapel of the holy Virgin, and placed in the wall, on the Gospel side. In 1603, Cardinal Dietrichstein obtained from Pope Paul V that the portrait of Aloysius of Gonzaga should be exposed in the church of the college with the aureole and the title of Blessed, and that the faithful should be left the liberty of manifesting their gratitude by ex-votos deposited

in the chapel where the precious remains of the Saint were preserved. The same year, the cities of Florence, Cremona, Padua and others celebrated, with the greatest pomp, the feast of Aloysius of Gonzaga. At Castiglione, everyone fasted on the eve. On 10 October 1605, Pope Paul V gave a decree which declared Aloysius of Gonzaga Blessed, and ordered at the same time to print with this title the life of the young Saint, written by Father Cepari. A chapel was erected at Mantua in the cathedral, and inaugurated on the day of the feast of Saint Thomas. Devotion to our Blessed spread with great rapidity. From all parts of Europe, the richest presents were sent to his tomb. The village of Sasso, situated in the province of Sondrio, in Lombardy, obtained a notable relic of the Saint, and this place became a famous pilgrimage.

Pope Gregory XV beatified him on 2 October 1621. Two chapels were erected in his honour at the Roman College, one in the room where he had died, and the other in the church. The first has given place to a church dedicated to Saint Ignatius, where, in 1649, his body was placed in a chapel which had been erected there in his honour. In 1699, an altar was raised there, and his precious relics were carried there. The cause of canonisation, interrupted by the death of Clement XI, was resumed by Innocent XIII and terminated by Benedict XIII. On 26 April 1726, he gave the bull of canonisation, and the ceremony of it took place on 31 December of the same year, in the basilica of the Vatican. On 22 November 1729, Benedict XIII gave Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga as special protector to youth, and granted a plenary indulgence to those who, after having confessed and communicated, should visit his altar. Pope Clement XIII granted the same favour on 21 November 1737. In 1762, he celebrated pontifically, at the Roman College, the Mass at the altar of the Saint, and declared this altar privileged in perpetuity in favour of every priest who should celebrate there. Pope Pius VII granted several indulgences to the recitation of a prayer to Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga. In 1847, the sovereign pontiff Pius IX gave for the altar of the Saint a chasuble of silver cloth, adorned with foliage of gold, and, in 1861, a lily whose stem of gilt silver divides into five open flowers and three buds of pure silver.

M. André Cappiardi, archpriest of Castiglione, made a gift to the church of Le Forest of precious relics of the Saint, accompanying his sending with this distich:

Militis ossa tui retinet Castellio; Sylva, Ne doleas, cineres tradidit illa sacros.[1]

The translation of these relics took place on 15 May 1864 in a shrine given by Napoleon III. In 1838, Pope Pius IX made a gift to the Society of Jesus of a writing of Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga: it was a treatise of scholastic theology. The complete works of the Saint have been piously gathered and published in Latin at Ratisbon. A Jesuit Father translated them in Belgium. In France, they were translated by M. the abbé Ant. Ricard. Paris, 1858. This account is extracted from the life of our Saint, composed by the Rev. Father Virgil Cepari, of the Society of Jesus, according to the instructions which he had gathered from those who had known him, and according to the proceedings made in various places for his canonisation.

Saint Terentius or Tertius, Bishop of Iconium, and Martyr; Saint Jesus, Surnamed the Just, Bishop of Eleutheropolis; Saint Artemas, Bishop of Lystra

(1st century).

These holy personages were of the number of the seventy-two disciples: they were fully enlightened in the light of faith on divine things. Terentius, or Tertius, was appointed bishop of Iconium, after Sosipater: he put the last hand to what the latter had left unfinished; he conferred the grace of baptismal regeneration on those who had prepared themselves for it only imperfectly: he worked in that city striking prodigies, and it was he who wrote the letter to the Romans. He says, in effect, at the end of that epistle, that he wrote it at the dictation of the apostle Saint Paul: “I salute you in the name of the Lord, I Tertius, who have written this letter.” It is a great mark of his virtue that Saint Paul found him worthy to be the first depositary of his thoughts, and that he made use of him to have it written at his dictation. Saint Dorotheus, the Chronicle of

Alexandria and the Synaxaries of the churches of the East, put him in the rank of the seventy-two disciples, and add that he ended his apostolate by martyrdom, by the torture of thorns. Saint Paul speaks also of the following disciple in his epistle to the Romans: “Jesus, also called the Just,” he says to them, “salutes you, as does Mark, cousin of Barnabas. They are of the number of the circumcised faithful. They are the only ones who work now with me, to advance the kingdom of God, and who have been my consolation.” “Jesus, surnamed the Just,” add the Eastern monuments, “was created bishop of Eleutheropolis, and by the teaching of the truth brought all its inhabitants to the knowledge of God.” According to Saint Epiphanius and the Greeks, he was put by Jesus Christ in the rank of the seventy-two disciples, and laboured in the evangelical ministry with the other Apostles.

Artemas, another disciple of Jesus, was made bishop of Lystra, an important city of Isauria, on the frontiers of Lycaonia. There, this true and devoted minister of Christ overthrew the artifices of the demon, destroyed his snares and his reign, and established there that of the Son of God. He is likewise counted among the seventy-two disciples, by the Chronicle of Alexandria and by Saint Dorotheus. Saint Paul speaks thus of him in his epistle to Titus:[1] “When I shall have sent to you Artemas and Tychicus, take care to come promptly to find me at Nicopolis, because I have resolved to pass the winter there.”

These disciples fought generously for the true religion, exposed themselves for its cause to the greatest dangers, and rendered their souls to God by a tranquil death, with the exception of Saint Terentius or Tertius, who was martyred.

The abbé Maistre, History of the Seventy-two Disciples.

Saint Alban, Martyr at Mainz

(4th century).

Alban, a priest, fleeing Hunneric, king of the Arian Vandals, bitter persecutor of Catholics, left Africa, his country, with Theoneste, his bishop, and came into exile at Rome. From that city, he was sent into Gaul to announce the Gospel. Mainz finding itself then without a pastor, he seized that occasion to come there and exercise the apostolic ministry. He met there again the Arian heresy, and to its perfidies he opposed the sword of the divine word. Endowed with a lively and ardent genius and with a strong eloquence, he attacked the heretics without sparing them and enlaced them in the indissoluble knots of his argumentation. It is by this means that he excited their anger and their rage. This rage ended by bursting out, and Alban, seized in the midst of his brothers, was overwhelmed with ill-treatment. But, without being moved by these cruelties, he remained firm in the Catholic faith and immovable in the midst of insults, like a rock in the midst of irritated waves. At last, after having suffered all sorts of ill-treatment from the part of a senseless multitude, he had his head cut off outside the city. A constant tradition relates that his tongue murmured still the praises of Jesus Christ, after his head had been detached from the trunk; it adds that the Martyr took up his head, and that he carried it with a firm step to the place where he was afterwards buried with honour. In 804, there was founded in the city of Mainz a celebrated monastery which took the name of our Saint and was called *Sanctus Albanus Moguntinensis*. It was an abbey of the Order of Saint Benedict, due to the pious zeal of Riculf, archbishop of Mainz, and to the liberalities of Charlemagne. It was built outside the walls of the city, on the very place of the martyrdom of Saint Alban. Some hagiographers have confounded wrongly our holy Martyr of Mainz with the one of the same name, first Martyr in England, whose feast is kept and whose Life we give on the following day.

Proper of Mainz.

Saint Meen or Mevenne, Abbot of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist of Gael

(617).

Meen or Mevenne was born in Great Britain, in the year 540; his parents, as pious as noble, brought him up in a Christian manner. Having reached the age of adolescence, he left all, and went to his uncle, Saint Samson, bishop of York, under whose discipline he made great progress in virtue. Saint Samson having been forced to leave England, invaded by the Saxons, withdrew to Dol, in little Brittany, where he was at once chosen bishop. Meen did not separate himself from his uncle and his bishop, and he helped him with all his power to bear the burden of the episcopate.

He formed a close friendship with Caduon, count of Gael, who had offered him hospitality as he was travelling. This count founded, in the neighbourhood, the monastery of Saint John the Baptist, which became, under the guidance of Meen, a nursery of Saints. It was he who initiated into the religious life the prince Judicael, king of Domnonea, who was put in the rank of the Saints. He predicted to Hallon, brother of King Hoel, that he would die in three days, in punishment of his crimes; and in effect, three days afterwards, he assisted him at his death-bed, to exhort him to penance. He founded a second monastery near Angers, which he peopled with his disciples and which he went often to visit to maintain fervour there. He died at the monastery of Gael, about the year 617. This place and this abbey have since taken the name of Saint-Meen, on account of the miracles which have been wrought there by the intercession of the Saint. His tomb attracts many pilgrims. His name is found in the English litanies of the 7th century, and his feast is marked as solemn in the calendars of the greater part of the dioceses of Brittany, under 21 June.

Proper of Vannes.

Saint Raoul,[1] Archbishop of Bourges

(866).

Raoul was descended from the royal house of France and was a near relative of Wifroi, count of Bourges. He had for father another Raoul, count of Quercy, lord of Turenne and lay abbot of Tulle, in lower Limousin. His mother was named Algue, and her birth was hardly less illustrious. They confided the education of their son to a man of piety, named Bertrand, who was abbot of Solignac, near Limoges. In 823, the young Raoul received the clerical tonsure and was afterwards abbot of a monastery hitherto unknown. His merit caused him afterwards to be raised to the archiepiscopal see of Bourges, to which he ascended in 840. What will be said presently of his writings shows with what solicitude he governed his Church. He gave even to the peoples who were subject to him so many marks both of his prudence and of his greatness of soul that he deserved to be regarded as the common father of the country.

Few considerable events happened in the Gallican Church during the episcopate of Raoul in which he had not some part. In 845, he was at the council of Meaux, and three years afterwards at that of Mainz, according to Trithemius. He assisted also, in 859, at the celebrated assembly of Savonnières, near Toul, and was chosen there, with Remi, of Lyons, as judge in the affair of Wenilo, of Sens. He was also at the assemblies of Toucy, in 860, and of the two of Pistes, in 862 and 864. From 855, he crowned, at Limoges, king of Aquitaine the young prince Charles, son of Charles the Bald. The latter, to mark better to our prelate the friendship which he bore him, gave him the abbey of Fleury. Raoul employed his own property to found several other abbeys: Dovère or Dèvre, today Vierzon, in Berry; Beaulieu and Végennes, in Limousin, Sarrasac, in Quercy, for religious women. The last two were destroyed before the 18th century. Raoul is the first archbishop of Bourges who is known with certainty to have been decorated with the titles of patriarch and primate of the Aquitaines and of the Narbonnaises. Pope Nicholas I, in answering him on the validity of the ordinations of chorepiscopi and on other points of discipline, recognises him expressly as such. This is what causes him to be named archbishop of the Aquitaines by Odo of Vienne. This holy Prelate, according to the same author, died in 866 and, as is believed, on 21 June. He was buried in the church of Saint-Ursin. A little less than a

century after his death, Eustorgius, bishop of Limoges, qualified him a master of holy memory.

There is of Saint Raoul a sort of *Pastoral Instruction*, which was known to the public only at the beginning of the 17th century. It is in the taste and on the model of the *Capitulary* of Theodulf of Orleans, from which the author has drawn much, and of those of the other bishops of the same time (9th century). Saint Raoul addresses it to the priests of his diocese, whom he calls his brothers and his co-operators in the holy ministry, and published it only after having consulted them on what he establishes in it. The principal aim which the holy Prelate proposed in this work was to revive in some sort the spirit of the ancient canons in his clergy and to remedy certain abuses which had slipped into his diocese. Ignorance and the false Penitentials had caused there above all much confusion in the administration of penance. Our holy Archbishop believed himself therefore obliged to oppose to them this work, in which he has gathered, in forty-five articles or chapters, what appeared to him most proper to instruct his priests of their own duties and of what they ought to teach to the peoples confided to their care. What he says in it, he has drawn principally from the Capitularies of our kings and from that of Theodulf. He has also drawn sometimes from the ancient councils, the decrees of the Popes and the writings of the Fathers.

Some letters of Saint Raoul have been lost, namely that to which Pope Nicholas I replies. It was a consultation by which he asked of that Pontiff explanations on divers points of discipline.

Dom Rivet, Literary History of France.

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[1] Saint Martin is placed the seventh of the bishops of Tongres, in the tables of that Church, and is named Apostle of Hesbaye. The inhabitants of that country were for the most part pagans, and they were converted to Christianity by Saint Martin. It is related that his relics were enclosed in a shrine of silver by Saint Servatius, one of his successors, whom common tradition calls the tenth bishop of Tongres, but who, according to the least suspect monuments of history, is really the first titular bishop of that see. Saint Martin, his six predecessors and his two immediate successors must therefore be regarded as regionary bishops or as simple missionaries. — Cf. Bosschenius, in the *Act. Sanct.*, vol. iv of June.

[2] See 16 June.

[3] See 20 June.

[4] On 20 and 21 June 1727, Antoine-François de Bliterswick de Montcley, bishop of Autun, made a new verification of the relics of Saint Lazarus. Tradition held that they had been deposited, in 1147, in a rich mausoleum placed behind the high altar of the new cathedral. Several proofs came in support of this tradition.

[5] Leufredus, Leutfredus and Leotfridus.

[6] Diocese of Rouen.

[7] On 8 June.

[8] To understand these verses, one must recall that Captain Lente, born at Le Forest, was mortally wounded at the battle of Solferino and buried in the cemetery of Castiglione.

[9] Ep. ad Tit. iii, 12.

[10] Alias, Bodalplie, Jlsclulfe, Boils.

22 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Nola, a city of Campania, the birth into heaven of Saint Paulinus, bishop and confessor, who, of very noble and very opulent as he was, made himself poor and humble for Jesus Christ; then, having nothing more than himself for all his goods, willingly made himself a slave to redeem the son of a widow whom the Vandals, ravaging Campania, had carried off captive into Africa. He shone not only by his knowledge and by his eminent holiness, but also by his power against demons. Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory have celebrated his praises in their writings. His body has been carried to Rome, where it

is honourably preserved in the church of Saint Bartholomew-on-the-Island with that of this holy Apostle. 431. — On Mount Ararat, the torture of ten thousand Martyrs CRUCIFIED. 2nd century. — At Verulam, in England, Saint Alban, martyr, who, in the time of Diocletian, having delivered himself up in the place of a cleric whom he had received into his house, after having endured scourgings and other cruel torments, was beheaded. One of the soldiers who led him to execution, having been converted on the way, suffered also with him and merited to be baptised in his own blood. 303. — At Samaria, one thousand four hundred and eighty blessed Martyrs, who suffered under Chosroes, king of Persia. 6th century. — At Rome, the translation of Saint Flavius Clement, a consular personage and martyr, put to death for the faith of Jesus Christ by order of the emperor Domitian. His body, found a short time ago in the basilica of Saint Clement, pope, was put back in the same place with solemn pomp. — The same day, Saint Niceas,[1] bishop of Romaciana, illustrious by the excellence of his doctrine and the holiness of his manners. 5th century. — At Naples, in Campania, Saint John,[2] bishop, whom Saint Paulinus, bishop of Nola, called to the heavenly kingdom. 853. — At the monastery of Cluny, Saint Consorte, virgin.[3] 570.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the dioceses of Bordeaux and of Viviers, Saint Paulinus of Nola, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Gueldre, in the diocese of Ruremonde, Saint Galène and Saint Valène, martyrs, of the number of the ten thousand crucified, whose bodies have been brought to this place, and whom they honour every year as protectors of the city, by an office and a solemn procession.[4] — At Crespin, near Cambrai, Saint Domitian, confessor, companion of Saint Landelin. He accompanied his master when the latter left the abbey of Lobbes which he had founded to withdraw to Crespin, a place situated in a thick forest of Hainault where they built themselves cells of branches. Soon Crespin became a monastery (*Crispiniensis abbatia*, of the Order of Saint Benedict) of which Domitian was one of the principal ornaments. He was buried there. Perhaps this abbey has given its name to the village of Crespin, near Cambrai, the monastery depending formerly on that diocese. 7th century. — At Saint-Omer, in the abbey of Saint-Bertin, the blessed Lambert, fortieth abbot of this monastery. 1125. — At Saint-Malo, in Lower Brittany, Saint Aaron, abbot and confessor. The island where Saint Aaron had passed his life has since borne his name, and lost it only after the bishop John, surnamed de la Grille, having transferred there the see of Aleth, became the founder of the town which bears today the name of Saint-Malo, and which occupies the whole extent of the ancient island of Aaron. The relics of our Saint were carried into the cathedral church of Saint-Malo, and his head and his right arm were shown there richly enshrined, but they are now lost. Besides the island which formerly bore his name and where a chapel dedicated in his honour was seen, there is, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, a parish of the name of Saint-Aaron. About 538. — At Guines, in the diocese of Arras, Saint Rotrude or Otrude, virgin. 12th century. — Near Saint-Calais, in the diocese of Le Mans, Saint Aclythenis or Sicildis, vulgarly named Saint Serante or Cérotte, attached to the service of Saint Osmane, also a virgin. A fine church is consecrated to her in a borough of her name, at Sainte-Cérotte (Sarthe). Second half of the 7th century. — At Metz, Saint Frèce or Précie (*Aprincia, Precia*), virgin, daughter of Saint Goeric, bishop of Metz. She received the veil from the hands of her father, who built a monastery where she withdrew with several virgins of whom she was the first abbess. This monastery, situated on the Moselle, and which became afterwards a Chapter of lady canonesses, was rebuilt, in the 10th century, by Theodoric I, bishop of Metz, who transferred there the body of Saint Goeric. It is believed that Saint Prèce, after her death, was taken back to Metz, and her relics were kept in the abbey of Saint-Clement of that city. 7th century. — At Cahors, the feast of Saint Radulf, Rodulf or Raoul, bishop of Bourges, already named yesterday, the day of his decease.[5] — At Cologne, the feast of Saint Alban, martyr, named yesterday in the Roman martyrology.[6] — At Soissons, Saint Alban, first martyr of England, named today in the Roman martyrology.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The feast of all the holy relics which are preserved in the basilica of the Lateran.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Juliana Falconieri.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — On Mount Ararat, the torture of ten thousand Martyrs crucified.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — Saint Juliana Falconieri.

Martyrology of the Minors. — The feast of all the holy relics preserved in all the churches of the Order.

Martyrology of the Augustinians. — At Piacenza, the blessed Philip, confessor of our Order, illustrious for his contempt of the world, his humility and his zeal for prayer.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — Saint Juliana Falconieri.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Aloysius of Gonzaga.

Martyrology of the Calced Carmelites. — The ten thousand Martyrs crucified.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Rimini, in Emilia, Saint Julian, martyr, patron of that city. He suffered under the reign of Decius who, after having had him beaten with rods and groan a long time in a dark prison, had him shut up in a sack and thrown into the sea, near the ancient city of Flaviopolis, today Fliopoli; the sack came ashore near a neighbouring island and the Christians of that country buried with honour the precious body which it contained and which they recognised as being that of a Saint. Later, during a great tempest, the marble tomb where the relics were detached itself from the rock near which it was placed and came to be wrecked at Rimini, where it is since in great honour. 3rd century. — At Alexandria, Saint Rufinus or Rufus, martyr, mentioned in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Antioch, in Syria, the saints Gangalus or Gandalicus, Julian, Grapte and more than eight hundred of their companions, martyrs, indicated among others in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Constantinople, the saints Pompian, Galatian, Juliana and her son Saturninus, martyrs. The first two were thrown into the sea, Juliana and her son perished by fire. — At Verulam, in England, with Saint Alban, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, the saints Amphibalus, Clericus and about two thousand of their companions, martyrs. 303. — At Cologne, the translation of Saint Albinus, martyr, whose body was brought from Rome in the 14th century. — At Samosata, in Syria, Saint Eusebius, bishop of that city, named yesterday in the Roman martyrology. 379. — At Verona, in Italy, Saint Blaise, bishop. — At Como, in the same country, Saint Exuperantius, bishop. His relics are in that city. About the year 512. — At Salzburg, in Germany, Saint Ebherard or Evrard, archbishop of that city. He was born in 1085 at Nuremberg, of the illustrious family of the counts of Bibourg and was formed, from his tender age, to piety, by his mother who was a model of all virtues. He finished his education among the religious of Mont-Saint-Michel of Bamberg. In 1104, he entered the monastery of Prufening, near Ratisbon, where he soon became the model of the community by his regularity and his fervour. By order of Innocent III, he took the government of the monastery of Bibourg, near Ingolstadt, founded by his two brothers and his sister. The bishopric of Salzburg having become vacant, the people and the clergy elected him with a unanimous voice. It is in the pastoral ministry that he ended his career, applying himself with all his power to regenerate his diocese which, at that time, had lost its primitive lustre and swarmed with abuses. He died, exhausted with labours, at the age of seventy-eight years. 1164. — At Cologne, the blessed Christine, virgin.[7]

The Ten Thousand Soldiers Crucified on Mount Ararat

2nd century.

Dum christiani suppliciis afficiuntur, numerus eorum crescit.

The number of Christians increases in proportion as they are put to death by torments.

S. Justin, martyr, Epist. ad Diognetum.

The blessed flock of the predestined is at the same time great and small: it is small, according to Jesus Christ in the Gospel, by the humility which it professes, and because, if it is compared with the troop of the reprobate, it is probably less numerous; but on the other hand, it is great by the excellence of its merit and of its glory, and because it is certain, according to the testimony of Saint John in his Apocalypse, that it is an assembly composed of all sorts of peoples, tribes and tongues, which no one can count. In effect, besides an infinity of saints who will be known only in the other world, because the annals of the past teach us neither their names nor their actions, the ecclesiastical calendars offer us each day a considerable list of them: we have therefore reason to praise God, who, by the blood of His only Son, has acquired for Himself so numerous a Church to praise Him eternally in heaven.

Sometimes we find hundreds of Martyrs who gave their blood all together for the confession of the name of Jesus Christ. At other times, we find thousands of them, and at other times again villages, boroughs and whole cities, whose inhabitants were all put to the edge of the sword for having refused to adore idols and to offer incense to them. The 22nd of September presents us with more than seven thousand in the person of Saint Maurice and of all the glorious Theban legion; the 21st of October, more than eleven thousand, in the person of Saint Ursula and of the blessed troop of virgins and other persons of the one and the other sex who accompanied her. But, without going far from the day on which we are, we find here ten thousand Christian soldiers who preferred to disarm themselves and to expose themselves to all the torments which Our Lord endured on the cross, rather than abandon His service and defile themselves by the adoration of false divinities. Their history is very ancient, and has often been translated from the Greek into Latin. We shall relate it here in the manner in which it was translated by Anastasius the Librarian, a very learned personage and of great merit, and by another author of whom Surius had the manuscript.

In the time of the emperor Hadrian, who had succeeded Trajan, from the year 117, the Gadareans and some other peoples who dwelt beyond the Euphrates, towards Greater Armenia, having revolted against the Romans, made an army of more than a hundred thousand men to dispute their liberty and to draw themselves out of the servitude in which the whole world then known groaned. Those who commanded for the emperor in Armenia and in the neighbouring provinces armed at once to stop this torrent; but as the Roman troops were occupied elsewhere, they could make, in spite of all their diligence, only an army corps of sixteen thousand men. Nevertheless, trusting in the protection of their gods, whose idols they carried with them, and in the courage of these soldiers who were old troops, for the most part, and seasoned men, they failed not to march with this small number against the rebels. But when they saw before their eyes the camp of the enemy, which surpassed them by more than eighty-four thousand men, they lost courage; and, not daring to attack them, nor even to await them, they resolved to seek their safety and that of their army in flight. Six thousand of their soldiers followed them and escaped, by a shameful retreat, from the danger in which they thought themselves. But nine thousand, animated by the tribune Acacius, Garcerus, master of the camp, and other captains, preferred to expose themselves to death by fighting generously for the glory of the Roman name, rather than to preserve their life by an act unworthy of their rank and of the high reputation which they had acquired.

Before going to the combat, they wished to make the ordinary sacrifices to implore the protection of their gods and to encourage themselves the more; but this worship, instead of strengthening their courage, cast it down: before, they felt courageous as lions; now they tremble with fear and experience a failing of heart which puts them out of condition to sustain the shock of the enemy. While they were in this trouble, an angel appeared to them under the form of a young man of majestic bearing and of extraordinary beauty; he said to them: “You can recognise, by the timidity which you feel after the immolation of the victims, that the idols and the imaginary divinities of paganism cannot make you victorious; but if you wish to follow my counsel,

if you wish to have recourse to the God of heaven and to believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, according to the doctrine of the Christians, you will infallibly gain the victory and return from the combat laden with glory and booty." A promise so advantageous made them open their eyes; they conferred together about it; and, as the greater part, and above all Acacius and the other captains, were well disposed to it, they concluded that they must embrace Christianity. At the same time, they raised their eyes and their hands to heaven, and protested to God, sovereign Master of all things, that they recognised no other God than Him, and Jesus Christ His Son, and that it was from Him alone that they expected all their help. After this confession, they were filled with so much strength that, having gone at that very hour to the combat, they entirely defeated the rebels, laid a great part of them on the spot, wounded the others and put the rest to flight, of whom some were drowned in the neighbouring lakes, and the others perished miserably in the rocks and in the woods where they saved themselves. A victory so signal confirmed them still more in the faith and in the religion which they had just embraced; they rendered a thousand thanksgivings to God, and protested to Him that they would live and die in His service, without anything being capable of making them change their resolution. The angel who had appeared to them the first time showed himself again to them; and, after having praised them for having followed his counsel, he conducted them himself to a high mountain called Ararat, distant about five hundred stadia from a city of that kingdom, named Alexandria. When they had arrived there, the heavens opened above them, and seven other blessed spirits came down from them, who congratulated them also on their conversion, and, joining the first angel, instructed them in the mysteries of our religion. After they were sufficiently instructed, they warned them of the violences which the generals of the army would use to make them return to the worship of idols, and of the torments which were prepared for them: they told them that, if they had fought until then for the princes of the earth by giving death to their enemies, it was time that they should fight for the King of heaven, by suffering death themselves as He had suffered it for their salvation. These Christian soldiers answered unanimously that they were ready for everything, that, strong enough to defend themselves by arms from the cruelty of the tyrants, they were nevertheless resolved not to use them at all, but to lay them down to be the peaceful victims of the glory of their Lord Jesus Christ. They remained then some time on the same mountain, without having need of any corporal food, because the spirit of God supplied it there by the strength and the interior vigour which He communicated to them.

The Roman generals, on the news of their victory and of their retreat, sent them deputies, praying them to come down to the rest of the army to receive the reward and the felicitations which their valour deserved; they answered the envoys that a great change had been made in them since their separation; that from idolaters they had become Christians, because it was by the virtue of Jesus Christ that they had defeated their enemies, and that thus they could no longer have commerce either with the emperor or with their captains, who defiled themselves continually by the impure sacrifices which they offered to demons. This answer having been carried to the generals, they were touched by it with a great grief; and, as new troops had come to them, they resolved to force our Saints to join them and to adore the idols with the whole army. They marched therefore against them, as against enemies of their gods and of the empire. When the holy Martyrs saw them approach, they put themselves in no defence; but, knowing that Our Lord said that He "sent His disciples as lambs among wolves," after having implored His help and having received the assurance of it by a voice from heaven, they delivered themselves into the hands of their persecutors.

He who commanded for the emperor made them great reproaches for having abandoned the religion of the empire to adore an unknown God and a crucified Man, and warned them to change their resolution, if they did not wish to endure all sorts of torments and to be condemned to death as criminals of lese-majesty divine and human. Acacius, the chief, and all the other captains answered with much courage: "That, far from being criminals of lese-majesty divine and human, they rendered to the true God the honour which belonged to Him, and to the emperor the service which they owed him in praying for his conversion and for the prosperity of his State; that nevertheless they refused neither torments nor death, and that it was with joy that they would hear the sentence of their condemnation." This liberty so embittered the whole army that a great

part of the soldiers took stones to knock down these generous confessors of the name of Jesus Christ; but, by a great miracle, the stones rebounded against those who threw them; and, far from wounding the Martyrs, they wounded those who wished to make themselves their executioners.

This prodigy frightening the tyrant, he commanded to cease stoning them, and made again great efforts to gain them by gentleness; but, as he saw that his words made no impression on their minds, and that they testified more and more an incredible ardour to suffer for their divine Master, he ordered them to be stripped, to be attached to trees and to have their bodies torn with blows of the whip: “For it is thus,” he said, “that the God whom they adore was treated by the Jews.” This order was immediately executed, at least with regard to a part; but, the Saints having made their prayers, the arms and the hands of those who had armed themselves with rods or whips to strike them became withered, so that they could no longer do them harm. An assistance of God so visible made Theodore, one of the chiefs of the imperial army, open his eyes; he recognised that justice and truth were on the side of the holy Martyrs, and that the Lord whom they adored was the true God, to whom the sovereign worship was due. He spoke of it to a thousand soldiers whom he commanded, who, entering into his sentiment, cried out all with much fervour that they were Christians, and joined the nine thousand who were so cruelly ill-treated for Jesus Christ. Thus the troop of confessors was happily increased and became ten thousand men. The tyrant was prodigiously irritated at this event; and, in the rage in which he was, he had a field of the length of twenty stadia covered with points of iron, and commanded his army to constrain the Saints, with blows of stick, to pass over it barefoot. But it was not necessary for that to use constraint: the Martyrs ran there of themselves, and, regarding this road as the narrow way which leads to life, they entered it more willingly than they would have entered a place strewn with roses or covered with agreeable and precious carpets. Nevertheless they received there no wound: for angels, walking before them, gathered all these points and put them in a heap to give them an easy passage and without inconvenience. The place to which they were led was the city of Alexandria of which we have already spoken, and which must not be confounded with the celebrated Egyptian city. When they had arrived there, the tyrant, who laboured again uselessly to shake them by his discourses, wished to try against them all the kinds of torments which the Jews made the Son of God suffer: he had their head covered with long thorns made in the form of a crown, of which there was a great abundance in the neighbouring forest; he had their side pierced with little lances, which drew from their bodies streams of blood; he had them led to this state, and with their hands behind their backs, through all the city, and they were cruelly whipped before all the people; the following night, having had them brought back into the great courts and the gardens of the palace, he abandoned them to all the insults and ill-treatment of his soldiers; finally, he condemned them all to be crucified on the mountain of Ararat, where they had first withdrawn after their victory. They went there as to a place of triumph, without any one of that illustrious troop losing courage or growing weary of suffering. The youngest even said marvels to the praise of Jesus Christ and of the Christian religion; and, when Acacius, their chief, represented to them with words of fire that their torment would soon end, but that the reward which was prepared for them in heaven would never end, they answered him “that the only pain which they had was not to endure enough torments for the glory of their divine Master.” As the blood flowed abundantly from their wounds, they filled their hands with it, and, throwing it upon their heads, they prayed instantly Our Lord that this blood which they shed for His love might serve them as baptism and wash them of all their past iniquities. A voice from heaven assured them of this grace: thus it was with an incredible joy that they stretched out their feet, their hands and their whole body to thirty thousand soldiers of the army who had been commanded to crucify them. This torment, terrible as it is, did not hinder them from continuing to give praises to God and to publish His greatnesses: but, the hour of death approaching, the heavens opened, the angels came down from them visibly, and the voice of Our Lord was heard, which said to them: “Come, the beloved of My Father, receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” At the same time, a great light surrounded them and hid them from the eyes of the infidels; and, in the midst of this splendour, they rendered their holy souls, which went to receive the reward of their combats

and of their sufferings for Jesus Christ. It was on 22 June, at the same hour that Our Lord expired on the cross, at the beginning of the empire of Hadrian, that is to say about the year 120, although some authors defer their martyrdom until the end of his reign, which was in the year

After their death, there was a great earthquake, which detached their bodies from the gibbets where they had been attached or bound, and the angels buried them with their own hands, not in a common grave, but each in a particular sepulchre, making a celestial music heard, which rendered this ceremony more august than the most superb funerals of emperors and kings. The Church has, from all time, recognised and honoured these admirable soldiers of Jesus Christ; and even formerly, at Rome, the day of their martyrdom was one of the feasts on which there was no pleading at the palace.[1] *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. v of June.

Saint Alban, First Martyr of England

303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.

Gloriosa martyrum species est, qui confessioni Dei tanquam hostia electa sunt electi.

There is a glorious kind of Martyrs: they are those who, like a chosen victim, are immolated in confessing the name of God.

S. Hilary, on Matthew, can. 3.

The light of the Gospel was carried into England from the time of the Apostles. The number of Christians there increased greatly by the conversion of King Lucius, whom they place in 180. The fury of the first persecutions did not penetrate into those distant islands, which permitted the Church to cultivate in peace and to develop the seeds of faith. Besides, England being as a world separated from the Roman world, one may presume that many faithful, persecuted elsewhere, retired there to find a little rest. But Diocletian, more clear-sighted, or rather more pitiless than the other persecutors, bloodied these peaceful regions. We learn from Gildas and from Bede that several Christians there won the crown of martyrdom.

The first, and one of the most celebrated of these Christian heroes, was Saint Alban, whose death was illustrated by several miracles, and whose blood, after having rendered testimony to Jesus Christ, was a seed of Christians and a source of blessings for England. “The glory of his triumph,” says Fortunatus, “was so brilliant that it spread through the whole Church.” Alban, still young, went to Rome to perfect himself in the belles-lettres. Returned to England, he established himself at Verulam,[1] where he enjoyed a great consideration among the people, no less on account of his rank than on account of his riches and the dignities with which he was invested. He did not know Jesus Christ, but his soul, enriched with the happiest dispositions, seemed to await only the instant of grace to open itself to the lights of faith and to seek henceforth only the treasure of eternal goods. Good to everyone, charitable to the indigent, Alban opened his house to all the unfortunate. He received in his house a holy priest named Amphibalus, who was fleeing to withdraw himself from the inquisitions of the persecutors. He treated him with every sort of regard and even of respect. The man of God passed thus some time hidden from the eye of the executioners. Alban, who observed him, was singularly edified by his conduct; above all he admired with what fervour he passed the days and a part of the nights in prayer. He desired to know a religion which inspired so marvellous a piety. One day, he sent away his servants, and remaining alone with his guest, he said to him:

“How is it that thou, who art a Christian, hast been able to traverse a whole country where thy religion is held in horror, and to arrive safe and sound as far as this city?” Amphibalus answered him: “My Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, protected my steps and kept me constantly from all danger. It is He who, for the salvation of many, directed me towards this province, in order that, announcing to the nations the faith which He Himself preached, I might prepare for Him a chosen people.” — “But,” said Alban, “who then is this Son of God? Do you pretend to say that God was born? These things appear to me very new, and I hear

them spoken of today for the first time. I should be curious to know how you explain all that, you Christians." Then the blessed Amphibalus, beginning to expose to him the mysteries of the Gospel, spoke in these terms: "Our faith teaches us to recognise God the Father, and God the Son who, for our salvation, deigned to clothe Himself with a flesh like ours, and to be born miraculously of a Virgin. When the times were accomplished, an Angel of heaven descended to this Virgin, named Mary, to announce to her the mystery which was going to be accomplished in her; and Mary answered: Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word. Thus this Virgin merited to give birth to her God, to her Lord, to Him from whom she herself had received existence. She became a mother without losing her virginity. This is what the Prophets had long before predicted, to whom God had revealed this mystery in past ages. If then thou believest all these things, the promises of salvation made to Christians will be accomplished also in thee: when thou shalt be a Christian, thou wilt be able, by invoking the name of Christ, to heal the infirm and the sick; no adversity will be capable of casting thee down; finally thou wilt end thy life by martyrdom, and by a blessed death, thou wilt quit this earth to go to live with Christ. It is to announce all this to thee that I came into this city; the Lord wishes thus to reward the generous hospitality which thou hast given me."

Alban said then: "If I come to believe in Christ, what honour shall I have to render Him?" The priest answered him: "Believe that the Lord Jesus is one only God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and thou wilt be by that very fact very agreeable in His eyes." Alban replied: "What sayest thou? Thou speakest like a madman, for my mind cannot find a sense in this word, and my reason refuses to admit it. If the inhabitants of this city heard what thou hast just told me of thy Christ, they would not be slow to punish thy blasphemous discourses according to the rigour of the laws made against your sect. As for me, I am well disposed towards thee; but I fear greatly that some misfortune may befall thee." He withdrew therefore quite moved, without wishing to listen further to the words of the priest, nor to lend an ear to his teachings.

Amphibalus, remaining alone, passed the whole night in prayer, while Alban withdrew into his chamber to take his rest. But while he slept, he had a vision which God sent him to instruct him, and by which he was so touched that he rose on the hour, came to find his guest, and said to him: "If what thou preachest concerning Christ is true, deign to give me the explanation of a mysterious dream which I have just had. I saw descend from heaven a man whom an immense crowd of other men seized to make him suffer torments of every kind. They bound his hands, struck his body with rods, and put thus all his flesh as in tatters. Then they hung to a cross this body thus torn, after having stripped it of all its garments; they stretched his arms violently on this cross; they pierced with nails his feet and his hands: they opened his side with a stroke of a lance, and from this wound I thought I saw come forth blood and water. They had insulted him long, saying: Hail, King of the Jews; if thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross at this hour, and we will believe in thee. But he, without answering them, uttered this cry: My Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And immediately afterwards he expired. Then I saw his lifeless body taken down from the cross, whose blood was flowing by large wounds: they put it in a sepulchre of stone which they sealed and around which they placed guards. But, O miracle! this corpse returns to life; it comes forth from the tomb without breaking the sealed doors; I saw with my eyes how he rose from among the dead. Men clothed in garments white as snow came down from heaven: they took with them this risen man, and returned to heaven together. An innumerable multitude of men clothed likewise in white robes follows the conqueror of death, never ceasing to sing his praises and to bless the Father, saying: Blessed be God the Father and His only Son. All are in an unalterable peace to which no happiness could be compared. Such is the vision which I had this night: explain it to me, I beseech thee, and fear not to tell me entirely all that these things signify." At this recital, the blessed Amphibalus understood that God had deigned to visit the heart of Alban, and he conceived an inexpressible joy from it. At once, drawing out the image of the cross of the Lord which he always carried on him: "Behold," he said, "the sign which will make thee know what thy vision signifies and what it presages. The man whom thou sawest descend from heaven is my Lord Jesus Christ, who refused not to undergo the torment of the cross to wash us by His blood from the sin to which the prevarication of Adam, our first father, had made us subject.

Those who seized him and afflicted him by such cruel torments are the Jews, the people chosen by God, to whom He had promised to send from heaven His Son: now, when He came, they refused to receive Him. After so long and so painful an expectation, they did not wish to recognise the author of their salvation; but they contradicted Him without ceasing, rendered Him evil for good, and answered only by hatred the love which He had testified to them. At last, filled with envy against Him, they dared to seize Him, this God-Man whom the Gentiles themselves judged innocent: they seized Him, and put Him to death on a cross. Thus it is that this most merciful Lord redeemed us at the price of His blood, that He conquered death by dying Himself, and that, being raised on the cross, He drew all to Himself. He descended also into the dark dungeons of hell: He broke the bonds of the just who were captives there; and chaining the devil, He cast him back into the deepest of the abyss."

Alban was seized with admiration on hearing these words, and cried out: "Yes, the things which thou hast just said touching Christ are true, and one could not accuse them of falsehood. It is Christ whom I saw this night fight and conquer the demon. I will therefore henceforth lend a docile ear to thy teachings. Tell me, since thy knowledge is so great, what are my duties towards the Father and the Holy Spirit, now that I recognise the Son for my Lord and my master." The priest, filled with great joy, cried out: "I render thanks to my Lord Jesus Christ that thou hast learned of thyself to invoke these three sacred names. Believe then that these three persons whom thou hast just named are one and the same God, and confess generously this faith." — "Yes," answered Alban, "such is my firm belief. There is no other God than my Lord Jesus Christ who, for the salvation of men, deigned to clothe Himself with their nature, and to suffer the death of the cross: He is one only God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, outside of whom there is no other God."

Several times he repeated with fervour this profession of faith; he prostrated himself before the image of the cross of the Saviour, and as if he had seen Jesus present Himself there, he implored with tears the pardon of his sins. He kissed the place of the feet and of the hands, as if he had truly touched the sacred wounds of Christ, and as if his vision of the preceding night had been transformed into a reality. Tears flowed in abundance on his face and bathed the sign of salvation which he held embraced. "I renounce the demon," he said, "I detest all the enemies of Christ; I give myself and I confide myself to this divine Lord who, on the third day, rose from among the dead." Amphibalus, seeing his good dispositions and judging that he was already a perfect Christian in his heart, baptised him in the name of the most holy Trinity. Then he said to him: "Be without fear: the Lord is with thee, and His grace will never fail thee. It is from Himself that thou hast learned by revelation the mysteries of our faith, which other men receive ordinarily by the preaching of a man weak like themselves; wherefore I am now tranquil on thy account. I am going therefore to resume my road to go and continue elsewhere the labours of my ministry." — "No," said Alban; "I pray thee not to leave me so soon, but to pass yet a week with me, in order that thou mayest teach me in detail all that concerns the other dogmas and the practices of Christian worship." Amphibalus, seeing that the resolution which he had taken to quit this place filled Alban with so great a sadness, consented to his request. Each day therefore, towards evening, the master and the disciple, flying the tumult of men, withdrew into a house apart, and passed there together the whole night in praising God. They hid themselves thus in order not to be discovered by the infidels who sought to know the true religion, less to embrace it than to persecute it.

Nevertheless, some time afterwards, an audacious Gentile succeeded in discovering their secret, and made known to the magistrate all that had passed between them. He omitted nothing of what was proper to ruin the innocent, by kindling against them the fury of the judge. In effect, the latter was at once inflamed with anger: he ordered that Alban be brought to him and him who had instructed him in the Christian faith, in order to oblige them to offer a sacrifice to the gods of the country. If they would not consent to it, they were to be seized, chained, and slaughtered themselves by way of sacrifice on the altar of the gods. These orders, however, could not be given in a manner so secret that they did not come to the knowledge of Alban who, desiring to save from the peril the priest who had instructed him, exhorted him to go out of the city. To

facilitate his escape, he clothed him with his own chlamys which was embroidered with gold. This garment was then that of the principal men of the country, and by that very fact so honoured that it commanded respect from all towards whoever was clothed with it. Having therefore judged that Amphibalus would be under this garment more secured against insults and violences, he took himself the mantle of his dear master, knowing well that it was a means of drawing upon himself the fury of the barbarians. Then Amphibalus, yielding to the prayers of Alban, departed before dawn and directed himself towards the side of the north, conducted some time by his generous disciple. At last they said farewell to each other and separated. Who could remain insensible to the remembrance of all the tears which they shed in this cruel separation? The priest betook himself into the country of Wales, to continue there his apostolic labours: Alban, clothed in the robe of his master, returned alone to his dwelling, awaiting peacefully the execution of the orders which had been given against him.

When day had come, a numerous troop of furious soldiers rushes suddenly on the house of Alban: they penetrate everywhere, visit carefully all the chambers, search even in the darkest corners, and fill everything with disorder and tumult. At last they arrive in that solitary place where Alban was accustomed to come to pray with Amphibalus: they enter; they see him clothed in a strange garment, prostrate before the cross of the Saviour, and giving himself to prayer. Then they rush in a crowd, and demand of him with loud cries to deliver to them the priest whom he has received in his house. Alban, for all answer, says to them: “Why do you seek him? He is under the guard of God; and now, with this almighty help, he fears not your threats.” The satellites, irritated at seeing this prey escape them, felt their fury redouble; and turning against Alban himself all their resentment, they at once laid hands on him. He is torn away, dragged, loaded with heavy chains, pulled by the garments and by the hair; he is led at last, after a thousand insults, after a thousand inhuman treatments, to the temple of the idols, where the judge was found with the people of the city run together from all sides to that place. Alban, wishing to show to all that he was disciple and servant of the cross, carried unceasingly in his hands the sign of salvation. When the Gentiles saw this sacred sign which had been unknown to them until then, they were astonished and troubled; the judge, however, looked with an irritated face at the man of God and at the cross which he held between his hands. Alban, far from being frightened by his anger, despised it so much that he did not deign to answer him on his rank and his family; but to the interrogation which was made to him on that subject, he answered only by making known his name and by declaring aloud that he was a Christian.

The judge said to him: “Alban, make me know where is this priest sent from I know not where to put trouble in this city, who entered it secretly, and whom thou hast received in thy house. If his conscience were not agitated with remorse, if he did not himself doubt the goodness of his cause, he would have presented himself before us to render account of his doctrine, instead of leaving this care to his disciple. But, on the contrary, he has shown by his example how vain and deceptive his teachings are, since, instead of defending him whom he gained by his fine words, he abandons him cowardly as soon as he sees the peril. I think that this will suffice to make thee see that thou hast accorded too much confidence to a man infatuated with chimeras, who has driven thee to this excess of folly of counting for nothing all the goods of this world and of openly despising our great gods. Now, we cannot leave unpunished the injury which is done them: the despiser of the gods must be punished with death. But as there is no one who cannot fall into error, it is also always possible to come out of it. Thou canst therefore be reconciled still with the gods whom thou hast offended; thou wilt re-enter into their good graces by separating thyself from the perfidious sect into which thou hast let thyself be drawn. Listen to the counsels which I give thee in thy interest: make to the gods great sacrifices: then, not only will they pardon thee thy crimes and thy offences, but they will also augment thy fortune and thy honours, and fulfil all thy desires, as they are wont to do for their faithful servants.”

Alban, without being frightened by these threats, nor seduced by this feigned gentleness, answered: “Thou hast spoken at length, O judge; but the length of thy discourses cannot hinder me from perceiving their

falsity. The priest of whom thou speakest would certainly have come to thy audience, if it had seemed good to the one and to the other. But, for me, I could not consent that he should accompany me here, because I know too well this wicked people prompt to do ill; as for him, although he does not dread the true justice, he cannot suffer judges who know not how to discern the true from the false in their judgments. I avow that I have embraced his doctrine, but I could not repent of it; the sequel will show thee that I did not believe on the faith of an ignorant man or of an impostor. The sick and the infirm, recovering their first health, will render testimony to the truth of our faith. This faith is dearer to me than all the riches of which thou speakest to me, more precious than all the honours by the sight of which thou wishest to tempt me. For suppose a man heaped with honours and riches according to his desires, must he not at last die? can all his gold draw him from the sepulchre and bring him back among the living? But to what purpose to prolong this discourse? I sacrifice not to thy false gods; for all my ancestors served them without receiving from them any other wages than their eternal damnation. Aided by the help of my God, I fear not the torments with which thou threatenest me." When he had thus spoken, a dull murmur arose among the crowd: some were moved; others uttered cries of insult; but the blessed Alban appeared insensible to the threats of the judge and to the clamours of the irritated people.

The order to sacrifice to the gods was again intimated to him: a furious troop of Gentiles rushed towards him to constrain him to it; but his firmness remained unshaken, and nothing could bring him to commit such a crime. Then, by order of the judge, he was stretched out to be beaten with rods. But while he was struck roughly, he turned to the Lord and said with a serene face: "Lord Jesus Christ, deign to keep my soul that it be not shaken, and that it fall not from the high rank where Thy goodness has placed it. It is to Thee, Lord, that I offer the sacrifice of my life; and I desire to shed my blood for Thy love." These words could not be stifled by the frightful noise of the blows of the whip. The arms of the executioners grew weary without the constancy of the Martyr being shaken. The judge then, knowing that courage yields sometimes more easily to the duration of torments than to their violence, had him conducted into a narrow and frightful prison, where he kept him nearly six whole months. But heaven was not slow to avenge the injury done to the servant of God. From the day when he was arrested, until that on which he consummated by his death his glorious sacrifice, rain and dew came no more to refresh the earth: the winds held back their beneficent breath; each day the ardours of the sun dried the fields more and more, and even during the nights the heat was excessive; the furrows and the trees refused to render to the labourers the fruit of their labours; in a word, all nature fought against the wicked to avenge the oppressed just man. The inhabitants of Verulam were soon reduced to extremity by this scourge; but this chastisement, however rude it was, could not bring them back to better sentiments. They assembled therefore, and said: "It is by a magical art that our land is thus desolated: everything has perished in our fields; it is Christ, the God of Alban, who has burned our harvests and ruined the hopes of our crops." They had Alban therefore brought to them, who appeared before them with bare feet, the face emaciated, and all the body covered with the dust of the dungeon. When they saw him thus unrecognisable on account of the rigours which he had been made to suffer, they were touched with compassion, and, after having long discussed among themselves, they resolved to treat him more humanely. His relatives, on their side, put forward in his favour his rank and his birth, adding that, since he could not be convicted of having excited any tumult or sedition, it was unworthy to see a noble and illustrious man loaded with irons as if he had been a thief. The people listened to them willingly; great cries arose to demand his deliverance; and at once, by the judgment of the multitude, he was delivered from his chains and proclaimed free.

A favour of this kind could not be agreeable to Alban: he had prepared himself for martyrdom, and he feared to see yet this time his triumph deferred. He rose therefore in the midst of the crowd, and showing to all the cross of the Lord, he prostrated himself before it, and made this prayer: "Lord Jesus, permit not that the malice of the devil profit by the concord of all this people to ravish from me my crown. Deign to repress his audacity and to render useless all his perfidious wiles." Then, turning towards the crowd, he said: "Who can

lead you to change thus your sentiments? If you are undecided, consult the laws of your city: they will indicate to you what you have to do. Why do you delay? Know you not that I am the irreconcilable enemy of your gods? In effect, how can you believe worthy of adoration those who, far from having anything divine, are the work of the hand of men? You are yourselves witnesses that they can see nothing, hear nothing; is there anyone among you who ever wished to be like the gods to whom he renders homage? How then qualify these beings whom you adore, being constrained nevertheless to avow that they are of a condition inferior to yours? O deplorable folly! to ask life from those who never had it; to offer prayers to gods who cannot hear; to ask help from gods who could not make the least movement to save themselves! Woe to the idols, and woe to whoever is senseless enough to render them homage!"

The Gentiles, hearing these firm and courageous words, saw well that the prison had not changed the dispositions of Alban, and that it was not to be hoped that any other trial of the same kind could shake him. The sentiments of justice and of commiseration which animated them lately disappeared in face of their blind zeal for the false gods, and, after having deliberated together, they pronounced against him the penalty of death.

They chose for the execution a place called Holmhurst,[2] situated at some distance from the city; but they were a certain time before agreeing on the kind of torment which they should make him undergo. Some said: "He is a disciple of the cross: he must be crucified." Others wished him to be buried alive, because it was the ordinary torment of those who blasphemed against the gods; others finally proposed to put out his eyes and to send him in that state in search of his fugitive master. But the judge and the greater part of the people decided that his head should be cut off. Alban, loaded a second time with his chains, went out therefore from the tribunal to be led to execution; and the people, leaving the judge far behind them, rushed in a crowd on the road which led to the place of the execution. Each strove to outstrip the others to enjoy better this bloody spectacle; and as the Martyr walked in the midst of them, they loaded him with insults, saying: "Go out, enemy of the gods, from this city defiled by thy presence: go to receive the chastisement of thy impiety; thou wilt be treated as thou deservest, and thy crimes will be punished." In the midst of these insults, the holy Martyr remained in peace and kept silence, putting his confidence in God.

So great a multitude had run from all sides that the road, although broad and spacious, was encumbered by the pressed waves of the people; on the other hand, that day the heat was so strong that the earth seemed burning under the feet of the crowd. Nevertheless they advanced always; at last they came to the bank of a very rapid river,[3] which became for the march of the people a very embarrassing obstacle. Many stood stopped on the bank; for the bridge was too narrow for it to be possible for all to pass there. Then some, not being able to endure this delay, threw themselves to swim, in spite of the depth and the rapidity of the current, and succeeded thus in reaching the opposite bank. Others wished to do the same; but, carried away by the waters, they were submerged and perished miserably. The sight of this accident cast a great trouble among the people, and cries of grief were heard on all sides. Alban was also touched by this spectacle: he wept the loss of these unfortunates, and, kneeling down, he raised his eyes to heaven and his soul to Christ, saying: "Lord Jesus, from whose side I saw flow blood and water, make the waves sink and part, in order that all this people may come without danger to the place where it will be witness of my martyrdom." Admirable thing! scarcely had Alban knelt than the bed of the river, drying up at once, leaves a free passage to the impatient crowd. But there do not stop the miracles of the holy Martyr: those whom the waters had carried away and submerged are, by a new effect of the prayer of Alban, found safe and sound, as if they had experienced no accident.

Then one of the soldiers who conducted Alban to execution obtained, by the merits of the servant of God, the grace of arriving himself at salvation. For, seeing the marvels which had just been wrought at his prayer, he feels touched with repentance, throws far his sword, and prostrates himself at the feet of the Saint, confessing his error and asking pardon with tears. "O Alban," he said to him, "thy God is the true God, and there is none

other than He. This river whose course was stopped at thy prayer shows well that no other divinity could work a like prodigy." This conversion only increased the fury of the other satellites, although it seemed before already carried to its height. They seize their companion whom grace had touched, and they say to him: "It is not the prayers of Alban which opened to us suddenly a passage, but it is the god Sun whom we adore who deigned to dry up by his beneficent heat the bed of the river, in order that safe and sound we might assist with joy at the death of his enemy. As for thee, who triest to obscure by false interpretations the knowledge which we have of the benefits of the gods, thou wilt undergo the penalty which thy blasphemies deserve." They seize him then, strike with violence that mouth which had just rendered testimony to the truth, until they had broken his teeth. Then they tear the other members of this new athlete with an equal fury, and leaving him for dead on the sand of the bank, they hasten to continue their road in order to satiate their insatiable cruelty on the person of Alban himself.

Who could retrace without emotion the sufferings which the blessed Martyr then had to endure, when, dragged with violence in the midst of rocks and brushwood, his torn body left on all sides bloody traces? At last they reached the summit of the mountain, where the sacrifice of the generous servant of Christ was to be consummated. The crowd was innumerable, and the heat of the sun made them endure the torment of an ardent thirst, so that, overwhelmed by the weight of this burning temperature, several seemed near to perishing. They trembled with rage against Alban, and said: "See how this magician has reduced us, by his sorceries, to the last anguish: he overwhelms us by the force of his spells: let us rid ourselves of him therefore, and we shall find again the repose which his malice has made us lose." The charitable Alban was moved at once by their evils and by the blindness of their mind, and he made this prayer for his impious persecutors: "Lord God almighty, who hast created man from the slime of the earth, permit not that anyone suffer on my account. Let an agreeable freshness replace this excessive heat, and let, by Thy mercy, a favourable wind temper the ardour of the rays of the sun." Scarcely had he finished his prayer, when at once it is heard; further, an abundant fountain gushes at once at his feet. Admirable power of Christ! The earth burned on all sides offered only the sad aspect of desolation; and yet, at the voice of the Martyr, a spring of living water gushes from the midst of the dust and flows on all sides in abundant streams. The people see themselves thus delivered miraculously from the torment of thirst. But this signal benefit does not hinder them from being still thirsty for the blood of their benefactor. Then they seize Alban, and attach him by the hair to a post to behead him. An executioner, chosen from the crowd to accomplish in the name of all the execrable crime, lifts high the homicidal sword and cuts off at a single stroke the head of the Martyr (303). The body falls back lifeless, while the head, held by the knots of the hair, remains suspended from the post where it had been attached: as to the cross which the Saint had always been accustomed to carry between his hands, it fell on the grass, reddened with his precious blood; and a Christian, whom the pagans did not know for such, could take it up secretly and carry it away. The executioner who had just consummated the crime was still in the same place, when at once, by a just effect of divine vengeance, his eyes start from their sockets, and fall to the ground near the body of the Martyr. At the sight of this terrible chastisement, several could not hinder themselves from recognising its justice. But behold suddenly presents himself the soldier whom they had left for dead in the midst of the road. On the other side arrives the judge who had at first remained in the city, but who, hearing speak of the miracles which had accompanied the execution, wished to see for himself what was passing. The soldier is presented to him, whom his preceding wounds had quite disfigured. The judge said to him in derision: "Thou appearest to me sick: thou must go and implore the help of Alban that he may deign to heal thy broken limbs. Run, make haste, go and take his head, bring it near the trunk; give him burial, render him the honours customary in your sect; and thou wilt see that it will serve thee as a remedy against the blows which thou hast received." The soldier, filled with that zeal which a lively faith gives, answered: "I believe firmly that the blessed Alban can, by his merits, obtain for me a complete cure, and above all obtain for me the far more precious favour of finding grace before the divine Majesty. All that thou sayest in derision can, by the power of God and the intercession of Alban, be accomplished in me."

Then, approaching the post with respect, he detaches the knots of the hair, and, taking the head of the holy Martyr, he places it beside the trunk. At once he feels himself healed: and, by a miracle visible to the eyes of all, he recovers in an instant a perfect health. Then, filled with a new strength, he renders the last duties to the holy Martyr, digs a grave, deposits the body in it and covers it with earth. Then, he begins to preach with courage before all the people the power of Christ and the merits of Alban. At this sight, the pagans, seized with a new fury, said among themselves: “What shall we do? Will it then be impossible to make this man perish? We had already overwhelmed him with blows; and now we see in him no more any trace of wound. What shall we do then now?” One of them said then: “This man is a magician: the only means which we have to make him perish is to cut his limbs in pieces; otherwise his spells will blunt the edge of the sword, and it will be impossible to put him to death.” This barbarous counsel was followed; the generous soldier of Christ suffered with constancy this cruel torment, and, persevering to the last breath in the holy faith, he merited to share with Alban the honour of the crown. The following night, Our Lord Jesus Christ made known by evident signs the glory of His servant. In the midst of the darkness, an immense luminous cross appeared over the tomb of Alban: it rose from the earth to heaven, and angels were seen in it descending and ascending unceasingly, and singing during the whole night hymns and canticles of praise. Some pagans having seen this miracle called others to enjoy the same spectacle; and thus this prodigy prepared the ways for a great number of conversions among the infidels of that country.

The feast of Saint Alban is celebrated on 22 June as on the day of his martyrdom.

He is represented sometimes making a fountain gush forth by praying to Jesus Christ to show the holiness of his cause; sometimes carrying his head between his hands, to mark the kind of his martyrdom.

Cult and Relics.

Under the reign of Constantine the Great, a magnificent church was built at the place where Saint Alban had suffered martyrdom and where his tomb was. The miracles which were soon wrought in this church by the intercession of the Saint carried so far his reputation for holiness that, when Saint Lupus and Saint Germanus went to Great Britain to extirpate the Pelagian heresy, the great bishop of Auxerre gathered particles of earth soaked with the blood of the first Martyr of this country and carried them religiously into France. The Saxons having destroyed the church of Saint-Alban, Offa, king of the Mercians, had another built, with a monastery under the name of the Saint, in the year of Our Lord 793, and the thirty-third of his reign. He gave to this monastery considerable revenues, and exempted it from the tax called the Peter’s pence, to which he had subjected all the families of his kingdom. The Popes granted to this monastery the greatest privileges. It was destroyed under Henry VIII; but the inhabitants of the town gave a sum of money that they might be left the church, which still subsists today and which is parochial. A part of the relics of Saint Alban was saved, which are preserved precious by the English of Valladolid; there is also a small portion at Saint-Omer. The diocese of Troyes possesses several bones of this Saint. These precious relics, long venerated in the abbey of Nesle-la-Reposte, were transferred to the convent of the Benedictines of Villenauxe-la-Grande. They remained there until the suppression of the religious communities. On 8 May 1791, they were carried solemnly to the parish church of Villenauxe, where they were found intact, at the epoch of the opening of the churches. This respect for holy things was the result of the energetic attitude of the inhabitants of the country, who, strongly attached to their shrines, would never have permitted the revolutionaries to give effect to their sacrilegious designs. The authenticity of these relics was publicly recognised by Mgr de Boulogne, on 11 September 1819.

The ancient shrine of Saint Alban, restored and embellished, belongs today to the cathedral and contains the heads of Saint Bernard and of Saint Alalachie.

England, during several centuries, honoured Saint Alban as one of her principal patrons, and she obtained from heaven signal graces by his intercession. It was in invoking him that Saint Germanus made the English

win, without shedding of Christian blood, a complete victory over enemies as dangerous to souls as to bodies. Nothing more is seen of his shrine, which Offa, Egfrid his son, and several kings had decorated with magnificence; but the place where his ashes are enclosed has been covered with a marble stone. On the wall which is opposite, some verses have been engraved, whose sense is that the shrine of the Saint was anciently in that place.

We have made use, to remake this Life, of the Acts of the Martyrs, by the Rev. Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France; of the Lives of the Saints of the diocese of Troyes, by the abbé Defer; of Godescard, and of Notes furnished by M. the abbé Caillet.

Saint Paulinus, Bishop of Nola

353. — Popes: Saint Liberius; Saint Celestine I. — Emperors: Constantine II; Valentinian III.

Go into Campania, see Paulinus, this man so great by his birth, by his genius and by his riches; see with what generosity this servant of Jesus Christ has stripped himself of all to possess only God; see how he has renounced the pride of the world to embrace the humility of the cross; see how he employs at present in praising God these treasures of knowledge which are lost when they are not consecrated to Him who gave them.

S. Aug., Ep. xsvi ad Lioent.

There never was anyone who made more efforts to hide himself and to make himself unknown in the world than Saint Paulinus; and there never was anyone who received more praises, anyone whom the holy Fathers studied more to extol by their eulogies. Saint Ambrose, Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome and Saint Gregory the Great, whom the Latin Church recognises as her four principal doctors, wished to be his panegyrists, and they were followed in this by many other Fathers who believed that it was praising virtue itself to give praises to this excellent bishop of Nola. He was born, about the year 353, at Bordeaux or at Embrau, which is distant from it only four leagues. His parents were of Rome, and of the noblest of that city, mistress of the world; they counted in their house consuls and patricians, and several even think that his father was of the family of the Anicii, the most illustrious of all the families of Rome. They had such rich possessions, not only in Italy, but also in the Gauls and in Spain, that the poet Ausonius makes no difficulty in calling them kingdoms.[1]

Paulinus received an education conformable to his birth; and, when he was of an age to study, he had for preceptor the same Ausonius, who passed for the first orator and the most excellent poet of his time. The disciple was not long without equalling and even surpassing his master; he became so eloquent that Saint Jerome, having read an apology which he had made for the defence of the emperor Theodosius against the calumnies of the pagans, praised it as one of the most eloquent works of that epoch, and said that Theodosius was happy to have for defender such a panegyrist. He adds that Paulinus is an accomplished writer and that the Church would acquire a great treasure if he would apply himself to compose on holy Scripture and on the mysteries of our religion. Ausonius himself avows that he had become a better poet than he, and that he had won in this kind of writing a prize of honour which he himself had not won.

These excellent qualities, joined to the immense goods of which he soon saw himself the heir, rendered him celebrated throughout the world. It is said that he was some time at the court of the emperor Valentinian the elder, and pleaded also, being young, several causes at the bar. God gave him a wife worthy of him and whose nobility and great riches were enhanced by a virtue above the common. This is the celebrated Therasia, a Spaniard, who contributed so happily to make him quit the world, and who was the inseparable companion of his poor and retired life, as we shall say in the sequel. The emperor found so much judgment and solidity in his mind that he made him consul at an age at which scarcely others begin to be employed in public affairs, and gave him afterwards the government of Rome, under the name of prefect. When he had

acquitted himself very worthily of these great charges, the various negotiations with which he was charged and his domestic affairs obliged him during fifteen years to various journeys, as well in the Gauls as in Italy and in Spain. In these journeys, he went sometimes to Milan, where he had the happiness of frequenting Saint Ambrose, who conceived for him a quite singular affection, as he testifies in his epistle 45. He was also known there to Saint Augustine and to Alypius, to whom he has since written several letters. He had a son at Alcalá de Henares, which is a city of Tarraconensian Spain; but he possessed him only eight days, and, although he had wished very long this blessing of his marriage, he was deprived of it almost as soon as he had received it, in order that nothing might hinder him from renouncing the world entirely.

That which began to disengage him from it was a pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Felix, priest of Nola and martyr. The great miracles which were wrought before his eyes gave him so much affection for this glorious martyr of Jesus Christ that he resolved from then, although he was only twenty-seven years old, to withdraw to the lands which he had near that city, to pass there the rest of his life as a private man. He was nevertheless still more than fifteen years without executing this design. The conversations which he had with Saint Ambrose and the wise counsels of Therasia, his wife, aided also much to make him know the vanity of the grandeurs of the world; but he who completed his conversion was Saint Delphinus, bishop of Bordeaux. He received from him baptism at the age of thirty-eight years, as appears by an epistle which he wrote a short time after to Saint Augustine, touching his five books against the Manichæans. Afterwards he withdrew, for the second time, into Spain, and stopped at Barcelona, where he began to make profession of the solitary life; but as his conduct gave admiration to all the people, and as his chastity, his modesty, his signal charity and his continual prayer made him judged worthy of ecclesiastical employments, on a day of the Nativity of Our Lord, the clerics and the laymen asked instantly of the bishop Lampius that he should ordain him priest. Saint Paulinus opposed it with all his strength, not, as he says himself in the 6th epistle, that he disdained to be the minister of Jesus Christ in this little considerable church, but because he regarded the priesthood as a dignity above his merits, and that, besides, he had resolved to live in retreat near Nola, in Campania. He yielded nevertheless at last to their will, but on condition that he should not be at all bound to the church of Barcelona, and that he should have an entire liberty to go away when he wished.

In effect, after having sojourned four years in Spain, the desire of the perfect life inflaming his heart more and more, he sold the goods which he had in that country, and distributed the price of them to the poor; he passed again afterwards into the Gauls, to do the same thing there. He gave liberty to his slaves, he opened his granaries, which were filled with grain, to the needy, and employed the money which he drew from the sale of his lands and of his houses to ransom captives, to deliver prisoners, to raise up an infinity of families which various accidents had ruined, to pay the debts of those who were persecuted by their creditors, to furnish wherewithal to a great number of widows and orphans, to marry poor girls whom necessity might have engaged in disorder, to provide for the succour of the sick, and, to say all in a word, to enrich the poor by impoverishing himself.

Seeing himself thus discharged of the weight, difficult to bear, of riches, he betook himself to Milan, where Saint Ambrose received him with a marvellous joy and tenderness and even begged him to find it good that he should put him in the number of the priests of his church; our Saint could not refuse it to him, although he always preserved to himself the liberty of going where God should call him. It has been believed, with much reason, that this great doctor, who was already very aged, cast his eyes on him to succeed him after his death; but as it happened at a time when Saint Paulinus was very far from Milan, the old man Saint Simplicianus was put in his place.

After our Saint had made some sojourn in that city, capital of Liguria, he passed to Rome, capital of the empire. The people, who had seen him formerly in his eminent dignities of consul and prefect, and who knew his rare qualities and the excellence of his virtue, received him there with an extraordinary honour. He was visited, principally in an illness, by all that there was of magistrates and of great lords in that city. Those of

the neighbouring cities who could not render him this duty by themselves sent him deputies to testify to him the joy which they had at his return, and the part which they took in his indisposition. There were even few bishops of the environs who did not come to see him or who did not write to him, to congratulate him on having quitted the hopes of the world to embrace the ecclesiastical state. These testimonies of esteem and of respect gave jealousy to the principal ones of the clergy of Rome, and, instead of being the first to do him honour, they had for him only coldness and indifference, and even raised against him some persecution. The sovereign Pontiff did not testify to him much friendship either; and he complains himself, in his first epistle to Severus, of the rather cold reception which he made him. But as it was Pope Siricius, who has merited, by his piety and by the great services which he rendered to the Church, to be put in the number of the Saints, it must be believed, with Cardinal Baronius, that what embittered him against Saint Paulinus was nothing else than a zeal a little too ardent for the observance of ecclesiastical discipline, which he believed to have been violated in the ordination of this holy priest: for he had been promoted to the priesthood immediately after his baptism and without having passed through the lower degrees, or without having remained in them a sufficient time, before mounting higher. Nevertheless, Paulinus was not at all guilty, since, if he had suffered this ordination, it was only by force and against his will; and, besides, this manner of conferring orders without keeping the interstices, nor even the ecclesiastical degrees, was, in that time, authorised by many examples.

However it may be, this great personage seeing himself become an occasion of complaint and of murmur, went out promptly from Rome and betook himself, according to the design which he had conceived fifteen years before, to a house which belonged to him near Nola. Therasia, his wife, followed him there also; but they lodged separately: and, having taken both a habit of penance similar to that of the solitaries, they set themselves to practise each on his own side all the practices of the religious life. A change so admirable made at once great noise in the world; the pagans, still numerous in the senate and in the first magistracies of the empire, spoke of it with much indignation, and as of an extravagant action. There were even considerable persons among the faithful who could not relish it; they said openly that Paulinus, being capable of rendering such great services to the State, committed an injustice in withdrawing from it his cares, his counsels and his person, to lead an idle life in a rustic place and far from the company of other men. Ausonius, his old preceptor, was above all of this number; and he wrote often of it to this dear disciple, from the very time that he quitted Aquitaine to retire to Barcelona. But the grace of the Holy Spirit, which wished to give to the great of the world, in the person of Paulinus, an excellent model of the contempt of all the things of the earth, fortified him against these complaints and made him know, by experience, that what he had quitted was much less than what he gained in following Jesus Christ; it put in his mouth answers so holy and so evangelical that they serve still today as justification to all those who, imitating his example, renounce the greatest employments and the most advantageous fortunes to follow the standard of the cross, and to make themselves humble disciples of a God poor and suffering for the love of men. Thus, while Paulinus was blamed by the people of the world, he was, on the contrary, praised by all that there was then of doctors and of holy personages on the earth. Saint Martin, who still lived, and who had formerly healed him by touch, of a great infirmity of the eye, proposed him to his disciples as an accomplished example of evangelical perfection, and said to them often that he was almost the only one in the world who had fulfilled the precepts of the Gospel; that it was he whom one must follow, that it was he whom one must imitate, and that the greatest happiness of his century was to have borne a man so rare and so admirable. This is what Sulpicius Severus relates, in the life of this holy bishop of Tours.

Saint Ambrose spoke of him also only as of a prodigy; and, in the epistle to Saban, he cannot enough extol his generosity in having quitted what the world has most brilliant to embrace the abjection and the poverty of the religious life. Saint Jerome wrote to him from Bethlehem and dissuaded him from the journey to Jerusalem, where our Saint had a design to withdraw for a greater perfection, representing to him that his desert of Campania was much more tranquil and more proper for the exercises of the monastic life than that

city, which was then full of trouble and of confusion. He prescribed to him at the same time some rules of the solitary life which he had embraced, and testified to him that he could not enough praise his resolution, all the more commendable as what he had abandoned for God had more charms to stop him in the world. In another epistle, addressed to Julian, he calls him a priest of a very fervent faith, and says that, if he had quitted temporal riches, he had become richer by the happy possession of Jesus Christ, and that, if he had renounced the first honours of the empire, the humble and abject life to which he had consecrated himself had rendered him incomparably more glorious than he was before, since what one loses for Jesus Christ is not lost at all, but is changed into something better and more useful. Saint Augustine and Saint Alypius formed also a close friendship with our Saint, and made it their glory to have a frequent commerce of letters with him. The first, addressing to him one day one of his disciples, informs him that he sends him to his school, because he is sure that he will profit much more by his example than he could profit by all the remonstrances and all the exhortations which he made him; and, writing to Decentius, he counselled him to go and see Paulinus, because he would find in his person the modesty of a true disciple of Jesus Christ. There was even an illustrious company of bishops of Africa, who, filled with a high idea of his holiness, sent him deputies with a letter, to testify to him the esteem and the veneration which they had for his merit. Pope Saint Anastasius, who succeeded Siricius, conceived also the same sentiments for him; for, scarcely was he raised to the sovereign pontificate when he wrote in his favour to all the bishops of Campania, testifying to them the love which he had for this holy priest. And, once when our Saint came to Rome, to assist at the solemnity of the feast of Saint Peter, he received him there with great demonstrations of benevolence and of honour; afterwards, he invited him to the anniversary of his coronation: an invitation which the Popes made ordinarily only to bishops. Finally, Saint Paulinus was so celebrated throughout Europe that he was proposed continually as an example to those whom one wished to undeceive of the esteem of the goods of the earth and to attract to the service of Jesus Christ, as Saint Eucherius did in his epistle to Valerian. Thus, his conduct was of great utility for the whole Church, and it served not only for the conversion of an infinity of sinners, but also to bring into honour the monastic life and to make it embraced by a great number of persons of all sorts of conditions.

For the rest, it is a marvellous thing, the modesty and the humility with which he received all these praises. He never failed, in his answers, to testify his displeasure at it, because he saw nothing in himself but what was contemptible, and he wished also only for contempt. Sulpicius Severus having begged him to send him his portrait, he made no difficulty in treating this request as folly, and answered him that he could not grant it to him, because he no longer bore the image of God in its purity, having, he said, soiled it by the corruption of the earthly man. Nevertheless, having learned that, in spite of this refusal, this faithful friend had had him painted in a baptistery, opposite to Saint Martin, he expressed to him his grief at it, and turned this action to his own disadvantage, saying that it had been done by a particular conduct of divine Providence, in order that the newly baptised might have before their eyes, on coming out of the baptismal fonts, on one side him whom they ought to imitate in the person of Saint Martin, and on the other, him whose example they ought to flee, in the person of the sinner Paulinus.

As it is not enough to enter into the way of perfection, if one does not persevere in it with constancy, our Saint persevered all his life in the love of poverty and of mortification. He had changed his silver plate into plate of wood and of earth, and never would he have any other. His table was so frugal that the most austere religious had difficulty in supporting its rigour. Meat and fish were banished from it, and no other dishes were served there than herbs and vegetables. Having given all, he was himself in want; and this necessity drew upon him one of the roughest humiliations of which a man of his rank is capable; those who had formerly honoured him for his great goods and for the advantages which they hoped from his liberality, and the very slaves whom he had freed, abandoned him and treated him sometimes with contempt. Nevertheless he believed always that he had suffered nothing for God: “O wretched that we are!” he said, “we think we have given something to God, we deceive ourselves, we only traffic with Him, we have quitted little to have

much, we have abandoned the things of the earth which are nothing, to acquire the goods of heaven which are solid, permanent and true. Oh! how cheap we have things! God has redeemed us far dearer: He gave us His blood and His life, of which the price is infinite, to acquire wretched slaves!" Being in these sentiments, he never stopped in the way of perfection; but he advanced in it at every moment by the practice of all the virtues, as well interior as exterior.

We have already remarked that Saint Jerome calls him, in one of his epistles, "a priest of a very fervent faith"; but this faith shone principally when the Goths had taken Nola, and had taken from him himself all that he had in his house for his subsistence. Saint Augustine, in the first book of the City of God, chapter 10, relates that these barbarians having then seized his person, and wishing to torment him to oblige him to declare where his treasure was, he said to God, in the secret of his heart: "Lord, suffer me not to be tormented for gold or silver; for Thou knowest where all my goods are." This prayer, animated by a lively faith and a perfect confidence in the divine goodness, was so efficacious that no harm was done him, and that he was not carried off into captivity either. Nevertheless, his necessity became so great that he had scarcely bread to nourish himself, because, the Goths having carried off all, there had remained nothing in Nola for the subsistence of those whom they had left there. But in so great a misery, he could not eat a morsel of bread without making a part of it to those whom he saw in the same distress, because he knew that God, who feeds the birds of the heaven and the animals of the earth, would never fail to give him the things necessary for life. It is told that a poor man having come to ask alms of him, he sent him to Therasia, who, from his wife, had become his sister, telling her to give to this poor man what she could; she answered him that there remained no more in the house than a little loaf which would make all his dinner. "Give it," replied the Saint; "Jesus Christ, who asks by the mouth and by the hand of this poor man, must be preferred to us." Therasia, contrary to her custom, did nothing of it, because she judged doubtless, according to human prudence, that, in an equal need, the life of this great man was preferable to that of the beggar, and that thus it was better to keep the bread than to give it to this stranger. But she learned soon that the faith of Paulinus was more opulent and more efficacious than the timid and distrustful precaution of which she had made use; for, immediately afterwards, there arrived men who brought him a great provision of wheat and of wine, excusing themselves besides both for the little which they brought and for their delay, on the ground that a tempest had submerged one of their vessels which was laden with wheat. "Behold," said then Paulinus to Therasia, "the chastisement of your incredulity. You stole from the poor man the bread which I wished to give him, and God, in punishment, has deprived us of this vessel of wheat which His providence was sending us." This great faith was in our holy priest the source of all the other virtues. One cannot represent worthily enough his gentleness, his mercy for all sorts of afflicted, his gratitude for those who did him good, his veneration for the excellent prelates who lived in his time, his devotion towards the Saints, and above all towards Saint Felix, whose memory he rendered so celebrated throughout the world; and, finally, his great love for Jesus Christ of whom, according to the testimony of Saint Augustine, he spread everywhere a most holy and most agreeable odour.

It was fifteen years that Paulinus had lived in retreat, when he was elected to succeed Paul, bishop of Nola, who died at the end of the year 409. "In the prelacy," says Uranius, one of his priests, in the abridgment of his life, "he did not affect to make himself feared, but he studied to make himself loved by everyone. As he was not touched by the injuries which were done to his person, nothing was capable of putting him in anger; he never separated mercy from judgment; but if he was obliged to chastise, he did it in such a manner that it was easy to see that they were chastisements of a father, and not vengeances of an irritated judge. His life was the example of all sorts of good works, and his welcome was the relief of all the wretched. Who ever implored his help without receiving a most abundant consolation? and what sinner did he ever meet to whom he did not present his hand to raise him from his fall? He was humble, kindly, charitable, merciful and peaceable; he never had pride or disdain for anyone whatever. He encouraged the weak, he softened those who were of an impetuous and violent humour. He helped some by the authority and the credit which his

charge gave him, others by the profusion of his revenues, of which he reserved to himself only what was absolutely necessary to him; others, finally, by his wise counsels, of which great treasures were always found in his conversation and in his letters. No one was far from him without desiring to approach him; and no one had the happiness of speaking to him without wishing never to separate from him." In a word, as his reputation was so great that there was scarcely a single place on earth where the name of Paulinus was not celebrated; thus his benefactions were so extended that the islands and the most distant solitudes were participants in them. As the author of the books on the Vocation of the Gentiles, which are attributed to Saint Prosper, remarks, although Paulinus had abandoned his own goods for Jesus Christ, he failed not, nevertheless, to have great care of the ecclesiastical goods of his bishopric, because he was not ignorant that he was only the depositary and the guardian of them; and that, being the patrimony of the poor, he was obliged to preserve them for those in whose favour the faithful had given them to the Church. But he preserved the funds of them with care, he distributed the revenues of them with a liberality without measure; so that he was not less poor in the episcopate than he had been in the monastery; nothing remaining in his hands, he was as much in want, under the brilliance of the prelacy, as he was under the humble habit of a religious.

It must not be forgotten here that his eminent virtues drew to him even the veneration of the emperors. Honorius, son of the great Theodosius, had for him the greatest esteem; he wished that he should be almost the only arbiter of the dispute which arose in the Roman Church for the succession to the pontificate of Pope Saint Zosimus. For, having ordered the assembly of a Council to examine the pretensions of Eulalius, schismatic, against the legitimate right of Saint Boniface, and knowing that this holy bishop could not assist at it, because he had fallen ill, he had this council deferred until he should have entered convalescence. He wrote to him afterwards a letter full of a sovereign respect, testifying to him that nothing could be decided without him; he begs him to be present at the Council to teach the world the will of God, to declare to the Church who was her true pastor, and to give to himself his blessing.

It remains for us to relate of him that heroic action of charity which has scarcely any example in any of the ages of the world, but which is faithfully described by Saint Gregory the Great, in the third book of his Dialogues, and of which the Roman breviary and martyrology bear witness on 22 June. "At the time when the Vandals," says Saint Gregory, "were ravaging Campania, and when they carried off the greater part of the inhabitants into captivity, the man of God, Paulinus, gave, for the relief of the captives and of the poor, all that was at his disposal; when he had stripped himself entirely, there came yet a widow who, having represented to him that the son-in-law of the Vandal king had carried off her son into servitude, supplicated him with much instance to give her wherewithal to deliver him.

"The mind of this holy bishop was then combated by two very different movements; for, on the one side, he saw that, having nothing, it was impossible for him to give anything, and on the other, he had an extreme pain in sending away a widow full of sorrow and overwhelmed with sadness; at last, God gave him an admirable invention to satisfy the necessity of his sheep and the zeal of his charity. Although he had given all his goods, he still possessed himself, and he was inspired to offer himself and to give himself, imitating Jesus Christ who made no difficulty to give His life for men. He said therefore to the widow that he had no more money nor any goods; but that, if she would, she might feign that he was her slave and exchange him for her son. The widow, surprised at such a proposition, could scarcely believe her ears; but the Saint obliged her to accept. She led him therefore to Africa and presented him to the master of her son. This prince made at first some difficulty before taking him in exchange; but, having asked him what he knew how to do, and the Saint having answered him that he knew well how to work in the garden, he accepted him with joy and sent back free the son of the widow. Thus, Paulinus acquitted himself eminently of the duty of a true pastor, which is to give himself for his sheep, and he had part in the quality of redeemer, which Jesus Christ acquired by His blood. God made him afterwards find grace with this new master; and, as he served him with much fidelity

and prudence, he gained his affection so much that he quitted the company of the greatest lords to converse with him. One day, Paulinus said to him that he ought to think of his affairs, because the king, his father, would soon die to go and appear before the tribunal of God. The prince warned the king of it, and the king having had the Saint come, he recognised that he was one of those whom he had seen in a dream tear the whip from his hand. The merit of this great personage having thus made known who he was, he was sent back free with all the slaves of his diocese, and many vessels laden with wheat for the subsistence of the inhabitants of Nola. A short time afterwards the king of the Vandals died: which made known still more the eminent holiness and the prophetic spirit of Saint Paulinus."

There are authors who find contradictions in this history, related by Saint Gregory. But Cardinal Baronius has learnedly answered them in his Notes on the Martyrology, remarking that the king of the Vandals of whom it is spoken in this place is not Genseric, who lived so long after Saint Paulinus; but Gonthar [printed

"Gonthaire"], his brother, who reigned some time with him, and who died before our holy bishop.

One cannot express the joy with which he was received in Nola, when he entered it like a conqueror who returns laden with the spoils of the enemies; but this joy did not last long, because God wished at last to terminate the life of His servant, to give him the reward of his labours.

The priest Uranius, of whom we have already spoken, has left us in writing the principal circumstances of his happy decease. Three days before his death, being already in bed with a very violent pain of the side which made his life despaired of, he was visited by two bishops, named Symmachus and Benedict. He received them with an angelic gentleness and goodness; and, having had an altar erected near his bed, he offered with them the august sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and reconciled the penitents who had been interdicted from the happiness of communion. Then, having laid down again, he asked where his brothers were; the bystanders believed that he spoke of the bishops who were in his chamber and before him: "It is not of these that I speak," he replied, "but of Saint Januarius and of Saint Martin, who paid me a visit a short time ago, and who promised me to return as soon as possible." These two Saints, of whom one had been bishop of Benevento and martyr, and the other archbishop of Tours, had appeared to him, and had assured him that the hour of his deliverance was very near. He raised then his hands to heaven, and sang in sign of joy the psalm which begins with these words: "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me." A holy priest, named Posthumian, warned him that forty pieces of silver were due to merchants for garments which had been made for the poor. "Fear nothing, my son," he answered him smiling: "we have wherewithal to pay the debts which we have contracted for the poor." In effect, a short time afterwards there arrived a priest of Lucania, who presented to him fifty pieces of silver which the bishop Exuperantius, and his brother Ursacius, a man of quality, sent him for his needs. He thanked God for a Providence so paternal and so amiable; and, having given with his own hands two of these pieces to the priest who had brought them, he had paid with the others what was due to the merchants of whom his charity for the poor had made him debtor. He passed a part of the following night in great sufferings; but they did not hinder him from reciting in the morning his Matins and from making an exhortation to his ecclesiastics to animate them to piety towards God and to charity one towards another. He kept silence afterwards until evening; then, awaking as from a deep sleep, and seeing that night was beginning, he said gently: "I have prepared my lamp for my Christ." At last, in the middle of the night, there was made in his chamber as it were a great earthquake, without however anything of it appearing outside; and during this trembling, which obliged all those who were present to throw themselves on the ground to implore the mercy of Our Lord, he rendered peacefully his spirit into the hands of the angels, to be carried into the heavens. It was on 22 June of the year 431. "It is not to be wondered at," says Uranius, "if, at his death, a little corner of the earth trembled, since all the world was filled with sadness at it: for, what is the place on all the earth where one did not weep so great a loss? And what is the Christian who did not groan on learning that the bishop Paulinus was dead? Paradise rejoiced at having received an inhabitant of so great a merit; but the Church was pierced with grief at having

lost so excellent a pastor. The angels made a great feast at seeing themselves honoured with the company of this heavenly man, who was so like them; but the provinces, the kingdoms and all the Christian people were in mourning at seeing themselves deprived of the presence of this earthly angel whose life was the model of all sorts of perfections. The Jews themselves and the pagans rent their garments, and, joining themselves to the Christians, deplored with them the loss which they all made of their father and of their defender."

Some time after his death, he appeared to Saint John, bishop of Naples, in a marvellous glory. His face was brilliant as a star, his garments were sown with stars on a ground whiter than snow; he gave forth an odour like that of ambrosia, and had in his hand a honeycomb, of which the brilliance equalled the sweetness. In this state, he declared to him who he was; and having made him taste of this honey, he invited him to come himself to take part in the glory with which he saw him filled: which happened three days afterwards.

He is represented living in the slavery to which he had given himself to ransom the son of a widow. This act of generosity, as well as his captivity in Africa, has caused him to be honoured by the Order of the Trinitarians.

Cult and Relics. — His Writings.

As to the body of our holy Prelate, which was clothed at death with a ravishing beauty, and which filled with admiration all the spectators, it was buried in the church which he had had built in honour of Saint Felix, whence it has been transferred afterwards to Rome in the church of Saint Bartholomew beyond the Tiber, where it renders itself formidable to the demon by the deliverance of the possessed. His feast is marked in all the martyrologies.

The writings of Saint Paulinus are not works of long breath; but he had left a rather great number, which unhappily have not all been preserved to us: 1. We have a collection of his letters, to the number of fifty, which are only a part of those which he wrote and which have not come down to us. 2. Among the letters of Saint Paulinus, we have the only sermon which remains to us from him. It is entitled *De*

Gazophylacio, that is to say, On the Alms-box. 3. At the end of the collection of the same letters, is found the history of the martyrdom of Saint Genesius of Arles. 4. Finally, we have a collection of Poems which contains thirty-two Poems, counting the fragments of some for entire poems.

Besides the great quantity of letters and several poems of which we are deprived, there are counted: 1. the excellent abridgment which he made in verse of the three books of Suetonius on the Kings of the different nations. Ausonius lacks expression to extol its elegance; 2. the translation from Greek into Latin of the works of Saint Clement; 3. the Panegyric of the emperor Theodosius; 4. the work which he undertook against the pagans; 5. a great number of sermons; 6. a book of Hymns; 7. a Sacramentary; 8. his book on Penance and on the praise of the martyrs in general. Among the other writings attributed to Saint Paulinus, some are doubtful and the others absolutely supposititious.

In the first class one may put a letter entitled: *In Evagrium objurgatio quod Levitam lapsum non consolatus sit*; and two others of which one is addressed to Saint Marcella and the other to Celantia.

In the second class one may range: 1. two Poems, of which one is an exhortation of the author to his wife, to bring her to consecrate herself entirely to God; and the other which is on the name of Jesus; 2. a book on the blessings of the twelve Patriarchs. We shall indicate only one edition of the works of Saint Paulinus: it is that of M. Migne, vol. XLI of the *Patrologia Latina*; it is the reproduction of the edition of Verona (due to Muratori and to the marquis Maffei), with the prefaces and additions of Mingarelli.

Saint Paulinus shows everywhere a great devotion towards the Saints, and assures (Ep. xxiii ad Sever., p. 204) that their relics were used in the consecration of altars and of churches, the faithful not doubting that they were for them a defence and a remedy. He says that their shrines were adorned with flowers (Poem. 14);

that there was made there a great concourse of people (Poem. 13); that this concourse had for principle the miracles which were wrought there; that lost things had been found again and the sick healed by the intercession of the Saints (Poem. 18). He speaks, as an eye-witness, of a violent fire which, having been unable to be extinguished by all human helps, was so by a little piece of the true cross (Poem. 25). He sent one, enshrined in gold, to Saint Sulpicius Severus. “I make you,” he said, “a great present in a small atom: it is a preservative against the evils of this life and a pledge of eternal life (Ep. xxxii).” Each year he made a journey to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles (Ep. xlv ad Augustin., p. 210), and to assist at the feast of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul (Ep. xvii ad Sever.). All his poems on Saint Felix are filled with testimonies of the confidence which he had in the merits of the Saint. He conjures him to interest himself for him with God and to be his protector with the divine Majesty, above all on the day of judgment (Poem. 14, p. 43). He declares that, in receiving the Eucharist, we eat the flesh of Jesus Christ, that same flesh which was fixed on the cross.

In cruce fixa caro est, qua pascor; de cruce sanguis Ille fluit, vitam quo bibo, corda lavo.

Ep. xxxii, p. 204.

Often he speaks of the holy images. He gives the description of the paintings which were in the church of Saint Felix of Nola, paintings in which were seen represented the histories of which the account is found in the Pentateuch, in the books of Joshua, of Ruth, of Tobit, of Judith and of Esther (Poem. 24 and 25). He says, speaking of these paintings, that they were the books of the ignorant (Poem. 24, p. 156). He exhorts his friends to pray for the soul of his brother who was dead, in the persuasion that these prayers will procure him refreshment and consolation in case he suffers some pain in the other life (Ep. xxxv ad Delphin., and xxxvi ad Amand., p. 220). Nothing more energetic and more touching than the manner in which he expresses in several places the sentiments of humility and of compunction with which he was penetrated, and the esteem which he made of the gift of tears (Ep. xxiii, p. 146, etc.). *Acta Sanctorum*; Godescard, Baillet, etc., etc.

Saint Rotrude or Otrude, Virgin

(12th century).

Almost nothing is known of the life of Saint Rotrude. The religious of the abbey of Saint-Bertin, who possessed her relics, were ignorant of her history, says Molanus, and there is no doubt that they made much research to discover it. Here are the few lines which Malbrancq consecrates to her, in his History of the Morini.

Saint Rotrude, born probably in the country of Thérouanne, is signalled in the martyrology of Guines as having always shown herself agreeable to God by her virtues and her good works. Never did the poor go away from her without having received some help; she gave them with joy what she retrenched from herself. The thought of the passion of the Saviour was unceasingly present to her mind, and the remembrance of His humiliations and of His sufferings made her shed tears in abundance. All the things of the earth inspired her with such disgust that she seemed to be entirely detached from them and to live like the angels of heaven. The precise epoch of her death is unknown.

This Saint was canonised, says Gazet, by the bishop of Thérouanne, Milo II, in the presence of Arnold, count of Guines. Her body was first placed in the monastery of Andres, or Andernes (Pas-de-Calais, Order of Saint Benedict, ancient diocese of Boulogne and present diocese of Arras), built by Baldwin I, count of Guines and of Boulogne. Later it was transferred to the abbey of Saint-Bertin, at Saint-Omer, where the feast of Saint Rotrude was kept on 22 June.

The abbé Destombes, Lives of the Saints of the Dioceses of Cambrai and Arras.

The Blessed Lambert, Fortieth Abbot of Saint-Bertin, in the Diocese of Arras

(1125).

Lambert was brought up from his childhood in the abbey of Saint-Bertin. As he showed great dispositions for study, he was sent to assist at the various courses which the most celebrated masters were then giving in France; and, returned to the monastery, he was charged to teach his brethren what he had learned, and he did it with great success. He was soon raised to the dignity of prior, but he resigned this charge to give himself more and more to prayer and to study. However, at the death of John, first of the name, he was obliged to accept the dignity of abbot and was solemnly blessed, in the year 1095, by Gerard, bishop of Thérouanne. He assisted that same year at the Council of Clermont.

He set himself from then with activity to continue the constructions begun by his predecessors and he had the consolation to terminate them, so that the dedication of the Church was made on the 1st of June 1106 by Saint John, bishop of Thérouanne, and this church was magnificent in construction and in ornamentation. The monastery was not less remarkable besides, and all the temporal affairs were put in a perfect order.

But this was only the beginning and the least part of the Reform which the worthy abbot meditated. The spirit of poverty had disappeared from the monastery, vanity had slipped into it, obedience was no longer known; a heroic remedy was needed. Seeing that his most pressing exhortations were without effect, Lambert leaves the abbey, in agreement with Saint John of Thérouanne, and goes to shut himself up at Cluny, where he makes profession as a simple monk. Soon the religious of Saint-Bertin return to better sentiments: they ask back with instance their worthy abbot, who consents to re-enter the monastery and brings with him religious full of fervour. However, the good resolutions do not persevere: there are pullings and struggles, it is even necessary to have recourse to the secular arm and to expel the most obstinate; at last the Reform establishes itself in a serious and lasting manner, and soon all run to live this life of holiness. Where one would lately have scarcely found twelve monks, says on this subject an ancient author, there were soon counted more than a hundred and twenty.

Lambert enjoyed his work during a rather great number of years, and he had the consolation of establishing the Reform in other religious houses of the neighbourhood. He died, in 1125, after having restored and, so to speak, founded anew this powerful monastery, which henceforth, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, will continue to lead a life full of vigour and energy, until the end of the 18th century, as previously and with various periods of relaxation and of fervour, it had produced abundant results for the good of religion during five centuries under the Rule of Saint Columban.

The abbé Van Drivai, canon of Arras, Diocesan Hagiology.

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[1] Saint Niceas, named also, but more rarely, Nicetas, is mentioned by Bede, Usuard, Ado and the others. “I long sought,” says Baronius, “what this city named Romaciana Civitas could be, and if I am not mistaken, I have succeeded in finding it. I believe that it is Aquileia, and that our Saint Niceas is the bishop of that city to whom is addressed the seventy-ninth letter of Saint Leo, pope. He was the successor of Saint Chromatius, of whom Saint Jerome makes frequent mention. There is a letter of Saint Jerome, the forty-second, which is addressed to Niceas, subdeacon of the church of Aquileia; he survived the ruin of that city by the Huns, as is seen by the letter of Saint Leo of which we have just spoken, and which is dated from the consulate of Majorian or the year 458. Aquileia was a famous Roman colony; hence the name of Civitas Romaciana, which we read in the ancient martyrologies.” — Extract from Baronius.

[2] He is called also John of Aqnarolla, from the name of his native village. His body is kept in the church of Saint Restituta of Naples, under the high altar. “It is a constant thing,” says Baronius, “that this Saint went out of the world on a Holy Saturday, the 1st of April 853. I do not know why his feast has been transferred to this day. Uranius describes his death thus in the Life of Saint Paulinus of Nola: *On the Saturday before the feast of Easter, at the second hour of the day, he went joyfully to the church; and having mounted on his throne, he saluted the people in the usual way, and was saluted by it in his turn; then he pronounced the prayer, and the prayer ended, he rendered up his spirit.* The formula of the salutation addressed to the people by the bishop was: *Pax vobis.* To which the people answered then, as today: *Et cum spiritu tuo.* By the words *Orationem dedit*, of the author, one must understand the *Oremus* pronounced aloud by the bishop; and by these: *Collecta oratione*, one must understand the body of the prayer said with a common voice by the bishop and the people.” — Baronius.

[3] She was born at Lyons, and had for father a senator, named Eucherius, who became bishop of Lyons under the name of Eucherius II and whose feast the Church celebrates on 6 November. Her mother was Saint Galla and her sister Saint Tullia. A part of her relics was kept formerly at the monastery of Cluny.

[4] See their special notice on the 12th of this month.

[5] We have given his notice on the preceding day.

[6] See his notice on the preceding day.

[7] See on the following day.

[8] Radulph or Raoul, dean of Tongres, in the book on the Observance of the Canons, finds several difficulties in the history of these blessed Martyrs, and testifies that he will have trouble in believing it if he does not see it supported on an ecclesiastical authority. This "authority" existed in his time as today, since the Roman martyrology and the menology of the Greeks made mention of the ten thousand Martyrs crucified on the mountain of Ararat; and, as to the difficulties which might be remarked in it, Cardinal Baronius has answered them so perfectly that they ought no longer to embarrass. It is true that, in these Acts, reported by Surius and by the other authors of the Lives of the Saints who preceded him, their execution is attributed to the emperor Hadrian, and even to Antoninus, his adopted son and his successor, as if they had been present at it, which is out of appearance; but in Acts as ancient as those, and which have passed through so many hands and so many different copies, the error in one circumstance ought not to make one doubt the foundation of the history, which is found moreover authorised by the tradition of the Churches and by the belief of the faithful. For the rest, it must not be omitted here that these glorious athletes of Jesus Christ render great assistances to the sick, in the time of their agony, to make them victorious over the demon: a memorable example of it may be seen in the Life of Saint.

[9] There remains no trace of the ancient city of Verulam, if one excepts some foundations of walls and some pieces of. Roman coins have often been found there in digging. The Werlam flows to the east of the city; to the west is the great road built by the Romans and called Watling Street.

[10] This place, called afterwards Derswold wood, served as the site of the town of Saint-Alban.

[11] This river was the Coin, which passes between the ancient Verulam and the new town of Saint-Alban.

[12] Ponce Paulin, father of our Saint, was prefect of the praetorium in the Gauls, and first magistrate of the empire of the West.

23 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The Vigil of Saint John the Baptist. — At Rome, Saint John, priest, who, under Julian the Apostate, was beheaded on the ancient Salarian Way, before the idol of the Sun. His body was buried by Saint Concordius, priest, near the place which was called the Councils of the Martyrs.[1] 362. — Again at Rome, Saint Agrippina,[2] virgin and martyr, under the emperor Valerian. Her body, transferred to Sicily, works many miracles there. 3rd century. — At Sutri, in Tuscany, Saint Felix, priest, whom the prefect Turcius had struck on the side with a pebble, until he gave up his spirit. About 274. — At Nicomedia, the memory of several martyrs who, hidden in the mountains and in caverns, in the time of Diocletian, suffered martyrdom with joy for the name of Jesus Christ,[3] 4th century. — At Philadelphia, in Arabia, the holy martyrs Zeno, and Zenas, his slave; the latter, kissing the chains of his master, bound for the faith, and praying him to agree that he should become a participant in his torments, was arrested by the soldiers and received with him the crown of martyrdom. 304. — In Great Britain, Saint Edeltrude, queen and virgin, who was made illustrious by her holiness and by her miracles, and flew away into the bosom of God. Her body was found without any mark of corruption eleven years after her death. 679.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, in the diocese of Valence, and at Valréas, in the diocese of Avignon, Saint Martin of the Elms (*Martinus de Vlmis*), bishop of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux. He was raised, in 657, to that see, but the leprosy with which he was afflicted, after some years of a wise administration, obliged him to withdraw near Taulignan (Drôme), into a solitude where he had much to suffer. He died there of a death so precious that a chapel was built in his honour in that place. For a long time his relics were the object of public veneration; afterwards they were transferred to Alençon, then to Valréas. 7th century. — In the abbey of

Cîteaux, the memory of the blessed Felix, monk, of whom the menology of Cîteaux makes this eulogy: “Felix was truly happy by the purity of his life, the gentleness of his character and the lustre of his renown. He merited that God should choose him to be the interpreter of His designs on the nascent Order of Cîteaux.” 1113. — In the abbey of Lobbes, Saint Hidulph, husband of Saint Aye, and one of the principal lords of Hainault. After having employed his great riches to make religion flourish, he withdrew into the abbey of Lobbes which he had contributed to found, and which was then governed by Saint Ursmar. He had aided Saint Landelin, not only for the foundation of Lobbes, but also for that of the other monasteries which that holy abbot had built in the country. About 707. — At Toul and at Saint-Dié, in Lorraine, Saint Jacob, bishop, who was drawn from the abbey of Saint-Benignus of Dijon, to govern the Church of Toul. He returned afterwards to his monastery, and finished his life there full of days and of holy works. But his sacred remains, after having been long near those of Saint Benignus, were carried to Toul. 8th century. — At Oignies, near Nivelles, the blessed Mary, surnamed of Oignies, celebrated for her virtues and the extraordinary graces which she received from heaven. Cardinal James of Vitry wrote her life. 1213. — In the diocese of Langres, the blessed Peter of Juilly, of English origin, formerly monk of Molesme, then prior of Puellemoutier, friend of Saint Stephen of Cîteaux. He was still only a novice at the priory of Useldange when he raised to life a man whom death had just struck before he had had time to do penance. He died among the Benedictine nuns of Juilly of whom he had become chaplain and confessor. 1136. — In the dioceses of Cambrai and Arras, Saint Liébert, bishop. 1076. — At Belesta, in the diocese of Pamiers, in the chapel of Our Lady of Val-d’Amour, the celebration of a votive Mass of thanksgiving, because on the like day, in 1802, Mary, invoked by the inhabitants at bay, stopped suddenly a terrible inundation which was going to submerge both houses and properties. This chapel, so ancient that nowhere is found the trace of its origin, takes its name from the inscription which is read on the stone of its frontispiece: *Hoc templum dilexit Deus*: God has testified His love for this temple. Burned by the heretics in 1599, it was rebuilt in 1676, as a result of the devotion of its inhabitants for the water of its fountain. Since that epoch, the veneration of the faithful for Our Lady of Val-d’Amour has never slackened. Before the Revolution of ’93, all the surrounding parishes went in procession to Belesta on the Monday of Pentecost and thanked the holy Virgin for the graces obtained by her intercession. The Revolution, in devastating the chapel, made these pious usages cease; but the restored chapel was blessed anew on 15 August 1824, and since then it receives as formerly the visit and the homages of the faithful. — At Vannes, Saint Bilius or Bille, bishop of that see and martyr. 895.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders[4]

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Nola, a city of Campania, Saint Paulinus, bishop and confessor, of the Order of Canons Regular.

Martyrology of the Benedictines. — Vigil of Saint John the Baptist. — In Great Britain, Saint Edeltrude, queen and virgin.

Martyrology of the Franciscan Minors. — The Vigil of Saint John the Baptist. — Saint Juliana of Falconieri.

Martyrology of the Augustinians. — The Vigil, etc. — At the monastery of Saint-Nicholas du Val, the decease of the blessed Peter-James of Pesaro, hermit of the Order of Saint Augustine, celebrated for his humility, his piety and his doctrine, lover of solitude and zealous for the good of others.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Cologne, the blessed Christine, surnamed the Admirable, on account of the prodigies of which her life is only a tissue and of the extraordinary favours which God has done her.[5] 1312. — On the Meuse, near Hastère, in the diocese of Namur, Saint Valter (Valher or Vauhir), priest, curé of Onhaigne and rural dean in the same diocese, killed by a blow of an oar by one of the curés of his deanery, whom he reproved for his vices and his scandals. His body was honoured in the abbey of Vazor. — At Ancyra, in Galatia, the saints

Eustoche, priest; Gain, his relative; Probe, Lollié and Urbain, children of the latter, martyrs. Reign of Maximian. — At Constantia, in the island of Cyprus, the saints Aristocles, priest; Demetrian, deacon, and Athanasius, reader, all three martyrs, likewise under the reign of Maximian. — In Abyssinia, the saints Pallade, Cotyle, Adrame, Mose, Esa, Palicone, another Cotyle and one hundred and fifty of their companions, martyrs; and in the same country, Saint Didara and her sons Saint Bisoé and Saint Nor, likewise martyrs. — At Pavia, Saint Lanfranc, bishop of that see. There is in his episcopal city a church of his name which is served by religious women of the Order of Vallombrosa. 1194.

Saint Edeltrude or Ediltrude,[6] Queen of England, Virgin and Abbess of Ely

679. — Pope: Agatho.

Tu, homo, quem fructum expectas in mundo, cujus fructus ruina est, cujus finis mors est?

O man, what fruit dost thou expect in a world whose fruit is ruin, whose end is death?

S. Bern., lib. Med., c. 17.

We have seen, in Saint Margaret of Scotland, the model of a great queen and a perfect example of the manner in which queens and great princesses ought to behave towards God and His Church, and towards their husbands, their children, their officers and their subjects. Here is today another queen, much more ancient than the preceding, who will make us see that holiness is not incompatible with grandeur, nor innocence and virginity with an illustrious and glorious marriage. It is the blessed Edeltrude, whom God raised to the dignity of queen of England only to render her virtues more brilliant and to propose her to all this kingdom as an accomplished model of detachment from the world and from all that it has of goods, honours and pleasures.

She was daughter of a king of the East Saxons, called Anna, whose fine actions and excellent virtues the venerable Bede often describes; she had for mother Saint Hereswitha, princess of the blood of the kings of Northumberland.

She was sister of Saint Sexburga, of Saint Withburga and of Saint Ethelburga, who died a religious in France. She was born at Ermynge, in the county of Suffolk, and was brought up in the fear of God. The queen, her mother, charmed with her pious inclinations and her fine qualities, forgot nothing to cultivate them and to make of her daughter an accomplished princess. An ardent love for Jesus and a tender devotion for Mary took possession of that simple and upright heart, and early the young virgin conceived the desire to pass her life in a perfect continence. There were soon seen to appear in her the seeds of that eminent virtue to which she was seen to attain afterwards, and she gave on all occasions marks of the contempt which she made of the pleasures of life, of the grandeurs and the riches of the earth, testifying that she expected more solid ones in heaven.

When she was marriageable, her father, who had for her all the tenderness that one can have for a well-born daughter, gave her in marriage to Tonbercht, prince of the Southern Girvii. These two spouses lived in continence and separated the better to attend to the service of God. She withdrew into the island of Ely, which had been given her for dowry; there she led, during the space of five years, a truly angelic life. Full of contempt for all that enchants the worldly, she made her glory consist in the practice of voluntary poverty and of humiliations. Her greatest pleasure was to sing night and day the praises of the Lord. In vain Edeltrude sought to live hidden in solitude; the lustre of her virtues pierced the veil with which her humility tried to cover them. When her first husband was dead, Egfrid, king of Northumberland, pursued her with the most lively instances until she consented to marry him. She knew, in the second marriage as in the first, how to preserve intact the flower of her virginity.

We have for guarantors of this prodigy two great Saints who assure us of it: Saint Wilfrid, archbishop of York, and the venerable Bede, notable doctor of the Church; and God Himself wished to give a great proof of it, in preserving her body incorrupt several years after her death. Twelve years having elapsed, Edeltrude, who, like Esther, had a sovereign aversion for all the lustre of royal majesty, supplicated instantly the king her husband to permit her to quit the court and to withdraw into a religious house. The king loved her tenderly, as he was perfectly loved by her, which renders their continence still more admirable; nevertheless, he let himself at last be moved by her prayers, and consented that she should follow the attraction of God who called her to a life more perfect than that of the court. She entered therefore the monastery of Coldhingam, and received the veil of a religious from the hands of the holy archbishop of whom we have just spoken, under the direction of Ebba, aunt of the king, who was superior of it. Her life, in that place of penance, was a model of all the virtues, and although she was still a novice, she appeared there so consummate in the observance of the Rules of the Congregation that after a year she was made abbess herself, in the island of Ely, whither she had returned in 672, and where she founded two monasteries, for the one and the other sex.[1] Thus, this great princess saw herself far more happily a mother than if she had given many children to her husband; and as she had allied, in the world, virginity with marriage, she allied in her retreat spiritual fecundity with virginity. She joined also a great mortification of her body and of all her senses to the continual cares which her charge of superior gave her. She quitted from then linen and made use only of tunics of wool. It rarely happened that she ate more than once a day, and it was necessary for that either that she should be notably indisposed, or that a great solemnity, such as that of Easter, of Pentecost, of Christmas or of Epiphany, should oblige her to moderate her fast. Her prayer was continual, and she made it, above all in the morning, with so much fervour that, although she had assisted at the offices of the middle of the night, the rising of the sun found her always in prayer.

She passed thus the rest of her life, which was still seven years, in an innocence and a piety altogether exemplary; and, being still rather young, but full of good works and of merits, she died of the plague in her monastery, on 23 June 679. Her death had not been unforeseen by her. God had made known to her, beforehand, that her house would be attacked by a contagious evil; that a certain number of her daughters would die of it, and that she herself would accompany them in this passage to eternity. When she felt on her neck a burning tumour which consumed her, she testified an extreme joy at it and she suffered with a heroic patience the pain of the incisions which the surgeon made there. “I have no evil,” she said, “which I have not justly deserved; I remember that, being quite young, I wore on this neck great necklaces of pearls which made its superfluous ornament. God does me much mercy in wishing to punish in this life the vanities and the lightnesses of that age, in order not to punish them in the other life.” She is represented with a crown at her feet, to show that she knew how to despise the grandeurs of the world.

Cult and Relics.

Her body, as she had ordered, was put in a coffin and buried in the cemetery of the religious women, in order not to be separated, after her death, from those whom she had so tenderly loved in the whole course of her prelacy.

Sexburga, her sister, wife of Erconbert, king of the Cantuarians, and who, after her example, had left all to embrace the religious life, was elected abbess in her place, and continued to govern her monastery with much holiness. At the end of sixteen years, she had the thought of raising from the earth this precious treasure to place it in a more honourable place, and begged, for that, some religious to seek her a stone to make a tomb of it. Their commission was not difficult to execute; for, having betaken themselves to a place rather near, they found there at once, in the fields themselves, a tomb of white marble, very ingeniously worked, with a great slab of the same material to cover it. They saw well that it was divine Providence which had prepared this coffin to honour the purity and the humility of its spouse; thus, they brought it with joy to the holy abbess. She no longer believed she would find anything but the bones of the queen, her sister, the more so as

the place where she had been buried was extremely damp, and as her body, as we have said, besides that it had not been embalmed, had been enclosed only in wood. Nevertheless she found her in the same state as she was on the day of her decease, without either her flesh, or her garments, or the shrouds which enveloped her having contracted any corruption; and what appeared still more admirable was that the great wound which had been made in her neck to cure her of the contagious tumour of which she had died had perfectly closed again, and that there was seen in it no more than a slight scar.

Her body was put in the marble tomb, where it remained until Richard, abbot of Ely, made a solemn translation of it into the church, in the year 1106. Many miracles have been wrought by the touch of her garments, which had remained so long incorrupt in her tomb, and the demons could not bear their approach.

Her cult became public in the Church of England a short time after her death. The Roman martyrology, that of Bede, of Ado and of Usuard mark her feast on 23 June.

Bede: Ecclesiastical History, book iv, chap. 19 and 20; — Cf. Godescard, etc.

Saint Liébert,[2] Bishop of Cambrai and Arras

1016. — Pope: Gregory VII. — King of France: Philip I.

Boni pastoris est, non solum oves congregare, sed etiam a lupis defendere.

The duty of a good pastor is not only to gather his sheep, but also to defend them from wolves.

S. Bonaventure, on Luke, c. 6.

The name of Saint Liébert is one of the most beautiful which the history of the Churches of Cambrai and of Arras presents in the Middle Ages. This Pontiff, whose wisdom and virtues cast then so lively a lustre, offers us one of those characters in which is revealed above all the noble simplicity of religion. Everything in him pleases and rejoices, and no one is more proper to show how much faith raises souls by the nobility of sentiments and the purity of intentions which it inspires, and how it knows how to give that sweet firmness, and that spirit of benevolence and of moderation which charm all men.

Saint Liébert received the day in Brabant, of the noble and powerful family of Braeckel, established in the territory of Alost. His mother, named Adelaide, was the sister of Gerard I of Florines, bishop of Cambrai and of Arras. As he was a relative of this illustrious prelate, it was near him that he formed himself in the knowledge of the belles-lettres and of philosophy. The pious adolescent made rapid progress in these studies, and, thanks to the rectitude of his mind and the purity of his heart, he advanced also with great strides in the career of virtues. The difficulties which youth ordinarily meets in mastering the inclinations of nature and the vivacity of temperament did not appear at all to shake his constancy, and everything announced that God had designs on him for the future. Already the young Liébert did not hide the attraction which carried him to the priesthood, and, although his parents had the intention of making him the heir of their riches and of their dignities, it was seen that his soul aspired after the happiness of consecrating itself to God without reserve.

The venerable bishop Gerard I rejoiced greatly before the Lord in considering the rare progress which his dear nephew Liébert made and the holy dispositions which animated him. Thus, when the course of his studies was finished, although he was still at an age not far advanced, he charged him to teach himself to others the sacred and profane letters. The young Liébert showed himself worthy of the confidence which was testified to him, and he acquitted himself of this employment with a full success. He knew how to temper the dryness of certain studies by the innocent attraction and the wise variety which he gave them, so that the heart of those who listened to him was touched at the same time as their mind was enlightened and adorned with the finest knowledge. “And thus,” continues his biographer, “this most prudent doctor preserved the eloquence and the beauty of the harmonious language of the pagan authors, which he made serve to heighten the beauty of the heavenly doctrine and of the divine Scriptures: wise and most profitable science, which one

acquires in the studies of the school, and which one went afterwards to communicate to the people." It was while he was thus placed over the teaching that Saint Liébert was raised to the dignity of the priesthood, which gave still a new lustre to his virtues and to his eminent qualities.

Meanwhile his venerable uncle heard, with a quite legitimate satisfaction, the praises which everyone rendered to the piety and to the knowledge of his nephew. "Everyone talked of his astonishing learning, of the wisdom of his discourses, of his continual solicitude, of his pure and holy life." Thus, feeling that the infirmities of age no longer permitted him to follow with the same activity all the parts of the vast administration of his two dioceses, he thought of retaining Liébert near his person, and of confiding to him certain important affairs as well as the direction of his household. The holy priest was therefore recalled from the school where he instructed youth, and began to direct the officers and the familiars of the episcopal palace and to exercise yet other charges. He knew, in this difficult post, how to make himself loved and respected, thanks to the kindness which he testified without distinction to all his subordinates, and to the perfect exactness which he brought to all things. In the midst of these multiplied occupations and ceaselessly renascent, the years flowed rapidly and gave to the blessed Liébert a greater experience of men and of things. He had attained the perfect age: his mind had developed by strong studies; his soul, always faithful to the inspirations of grace, had enriched itself with the most precious gifts, and all his conduct, in temporal things as in spiritual, attested an admirable prudence. The bishop Gerard, who saw his nephew still more closely, and who could better than any other appreciate his merit, conceived the thought of naming him to an archdeaconry then vacant in his diocese of Cambrai. Wishing to act in all things only conformably to the wills of heaven, he took care to consult first the Lord in prayer and to enlighten himself by all the means which were in his power. His resolution known, a general joy and satisfaction were seen to burst forth on the part of the clergy and of the people.

The charge of archdeacon and above all that of provost, which was added for Saint Liébert, was very difficult to fill at an epoch when lords and men-at-arms abused only too often their strength to oppress the innocent and the weak, and to hinder the Church in the legitimate exercise of her rights and of her ministry. Cambrai had particularly to suffer from the châtelain Watier, who, in spite of reiterated protestations of repentance and of fidelity, ceased not to commit all sorts of rapines and of violences. He drew upon himself thus a tragic death, which was given him by several of the numerous enemies whom he had made in all the country. His wife, whom he left a widow with a child in tender age, was as violent as he, and the new husband whom she chose soon afterwards, John, advocate of Arras, was far from disapproving the injustices of his predecessors.

In the midst of the thousand embarrassments which the spiritual administration of two vast dioceses and the temporal government of the Cambrésis raised for him, the venerable bishop Gerard found his principal consolation in the wise conduct of Liébert, his nephew. The latter had withdrawn into the little town of Cateau-Cambrésis, whence he protected all the country against the incursions of the enemies and the enterprises of the turbulent lords of the neighbourhood. His name alone was a sure defence; it sufficed often to stop the boldest, so that, in all the country, the good people rejoiced to be under the guard of so vigilant an archdeacon. "He was the pledge of peace, the safety of the province, the foot of the lame, the light of the blind, the defence of the poor, the hope of widows, the protection of wards, the terror of enemies, the confidence of his own."

As modest in his conduct as he was firm and prudent, Liébert wished in all things only to execute the wills of his uncle. Often he betook himself to him, to receive his counsels, to soften for him the infirmities of age and to render him the most touching duties of filial piety. It was in the arms of his beloved nephew, in the midst of the cares and attentions which he lavished on him, that died, on 14 March of the year 1051, the venerable bishop Gerard I of Florines, one of the most illustrious bishops of this diocese and of the Church of France in the 11th century.

As soon as the honours of burial had been rendered to him with pomp and solemnity, they thought of giving him a successor. The unanimous wishes of the clergy and of the people called to it the archdeacon of Cambrai, Liébert. No one, in effect, was more worthy and more capable of filling this charge; no one had given such testimonies of wisdom and of capacity in the direction of the most difficult affairs. They still remembered how he had known how to resist the aggressions of the two châtelains Watier and John, and one could hope everything from his courageous firmness, if it happened that they tried anew to trouble the tranquillity of the city and of the country. It was very difficult to persuade the humble Liébert that he ought to accept the dignity to which the unanimous wishes of the clergy and of the people called him. The tears which he shed in abundance betrayed more than once the holy apprehensions with which his soul was filled at the sight of the frightful responsibility which would weigh on him. It was necessary to do a sort of violence to his modesty to extort a consent which everyone asked with instance. At last, he yielded to the will of God which manifested itself in a sensible manner, and, having been conducted to the episcopal palace, he received from all the oath of fidelity. Immediately afterwards he betook himself to Cologne, to the emperor Henry III, who confirmed with joy an election which all the lords and the powerful of the court applauded. This took place on the very day of Easter, the thirty-first of March of the year 1051.

The new elect hastened to return to Cambrai; but, at the moment when he was approaching the city, he learned that the châtelain, John of Arras, profiting by the vacancy of the see to commit the greatest disorders, had penetrated by force into the church of Notre-Dame, had driven out the clerics, pillaged the treasury, and that soldiers remained there by his orders to defend the entrance. Not content yet with this sacrilegious violence, he had seized the episcopal palace, which he inhabited with his wife and a great number of his own, and where they committed every day the most glaring and most scandalous disorders.

This news afflicted much the heart of Saint Liébert. It made him know beforehand the difficulties which he would meet in the accomplishment of the duties of his ministry, from that man for whom nothing appeared sacred. In order to avoid violences always regrettable, and hoping that time would give rise to a favourable occasion to enter without obstacle into his episcopal city, the Saint withdrew into the fortress of Cateau-Cambrésis. He did not remain there long: for the count of Flanders, Baldwin V, having met him there, on returning from a journey which he had made to the king of France, set about constraining John to let the prelate enter the city and the episcopal palace. This man, as cowardly as arrogant, took flight at this single injunction, and Saint Liébert arrived at Cambrai in the midst of the transports of joy which the people made burst forth everywhere on his passage. Everyone rejoiced to be at last delivered from the insupportable tyranny of the châtelain. The losses which he had caused by his violences were promptly repaired: all, without exception, clerics and laymen, rich and poor, shared the happiness of their deliverance and of this so desired return of their first pastor.

After having put order in all things and assured the tranquillity of the clergy and of the inhabitants during the new absence which he was to make, the blessed Liébert prepared to go and receive the holy unction from the hands of his metropolitan. Before that he betook himself to Châlons-sur-Marne, where he was ordained priest by Roger II, bishop of that diocese. The emotion of Liébert on this occasion was great and it betrayed itself in all ways. At the moment above all when the Pontiff addressed to him these words: “Receive the Holy Spirit, the sins will be forgiven to those to whom you shall forgive them,” an involuntary shudder seized him, and abundant tears flowed from his eyes on his priestly vestments.

From Châlons, the Saint betook himself to Reims, where already, on the invitation of the metropolitan, all the bishops of the province had assembled. An extraordinary circumstance increased still the solemnity of that day. The king of France, Henry I, who had just married the daughter of the grand duke of Russia, wished to conduct the young queen to Reims in order to assist at the ceremony of the consecration of Saint Liébert, for whom he had a very high esteem. He begged even the new Pontiff to bless his wife and to place on her head the royal crown.

The ceremony ended, Saint Liébert prepared to return into the midst of his beloved diocesans. He stopped only a moment near the bishop of Laon, who received him with all the honours due to his dignity. When his approach to Cambrai was known, it was a feast in all the city. Everyone repeated emulously the praises of the wise and vigilant pastor whom Providence placed at the head of two great dioceses, and all prepared to celebrate his entry into the city by the testimonies of the most sincere joy sincere. “Happy day, indeed,” cries the biographer of the Saint, “on which the Church of Cambrai received a pastor who presented himself to all as an example of justice and of sincerity! Happy day on which public liberty, in the person of Liébert, took possession of Cambrai, to deliver from the pomp of the proud and from the rage of tyrants the people confided to his solicitude!” After having been welcomed by the whole population assembled, in the midst of transports of joy, the pious bishop betook himself to the church of Notre-Dame to offer his homage there to God and to His holy Mother, and to draw down on the pastor and the flock all the blessings of heaven. His prayer finished, he turned towards the people and spoke to them in these terms: “I exhort you, my beloved brethren, to tend unceasingly towards the term to which God calls us. Let us not love the world: for all in it is concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes and pride of life. Those, in effect, who pour themselves out outside instead of re-entering into themselves, go greatly astray. But he who makes of all the senses of his body a good use, to know the works of God and to publish them, to entertain in himself His love by his works and his thoughts, to preserve the peace of the soul and the knowledge of God, he enters into the joy of his Lord.” The Saint added still other words to engage his sheep to fulfil with fidelity all the duties which religion imposes on them; then, returned to his dwelling, he began to settle the pressing affairs of administration. He had the foundation of the abbey of Saint-Andrew, begun by his predecessor, completed; he placed also canons regular in the church of Saint-Aubert of Cambrai and in that of Mont-Saint-Éloi, near Arras, and made to these two last establishments considerable donations.

Nothing more beautiful and more touching than the picture of the life of Saint Liébert during his episcopate. The author who traces it has only reproduced the thought and the sentiments which were found in all hearts. “This Pontiff,” he says, “lover of the divine law, was an example for his own. He fled all research in clothing, did not give himself to vain games, to prolonged sleep or to sloth, had in horror jealousy, detraction, envy and love of glory. As to cupidity, he regarded it as a true poison. He did all things without precipitation and without slowness…. He avoided carefully all enmities, bore them with great calm and strove to put an end to them as soon as he could…. He did nothing by force, but by persuasion and counsel…. All his conduct was a living rule for others. Thus, his soul was adorned with all the qualities which the apostle Saint Paul requires in bishops: he was gentle, affable, obliging, full of goodness for his people, listening with indulgence to the complaints of the oppressed, showing himself benevolent to all, giving to the poor and the indigent all that he could dispose of, acting with a holy boldness and an evangelical liberty towards the great and the powerful of the world. Often also he addressed to his sheep the most solid and most salutary instructions, visited them in their dwellings, appeased their quarrels, terminated their differences and studied to please all, to win all to Jesus Christ.”

The churches of Cambrai and of Arras had enjoyed for several years the benefits of the wise and firm direction of Saint Liébert, when God inspired him with the desire to undertake the pilgrimage of the Holy Land. This project could not be executed immediately: it was necessary, in effect, to prepare everything so that so long an absence should in nothing trouble the regular administration of the two dioceses and of the city. It is for this reason that Saint Liébert did not communicate it at first, and waited to make it known for more favourable times. He began therefore by creating châtelain of Cambrai, in place of John, advocate of Arras, of whom he had had so much to complain, the young Hugh, son of Watier. He placed this child under the tutelage of Anselm, a man of good life and a brave warrior. The prelate could hope that, under the direction of such a master, the young son of Watier would take habits of virtue and of wisdom which would dispose him to fulfil well the functions of châtelain which were one day to be confided to him. When this affair and several others equally important were terminated, Saint Liébert made the preparations of his

journey, of which he then exposed the plan to his friends. He asked to accompany him, Walcher, his archdeacon and provost of his household; Hugh, his chaplain, a man of great virtue, Erlebold, judge and procurator of the city, and another Erlebold, surnamed the Red.

The holy bishop Liébert went out therefore from the city of Cambrai, followed by his people, who accompanied him the space of three leagues, shedding tears and uttering groans. There, the pastor gave them all his blessing, and, followed by about three thousand persons who had engaged to make this pilgrimage with him, he continued his march towards Germany. After having traversed many cities and villages, provinces, forests, mountains, they arrived in the country of the Huns (Hungarians), a people barbarous in manners and in language. In order to shorten the road, they all passed the Danube and penetrated into Pannonia, the native land of the illustrious Saint Martin, apostle of the Gauls. The king of that country, having learned that a great number of strangers presented themselves at the frontiers of his States and asked to cross them, sought to know their intentions and ordered that some of them should be presented to him. When he saw the holy Pontiff Liébert, bearing the cross on his breast, he felt touched with respect for his person, invited him to sit near his throne and asked him the subject of his journey. He was much astonished when he learned the pious motive which determined this man, of so weak a complexion, to undertake so long and so painful a journey. Nevertheless, as no pilgrim until then had traversed Pannonia to go to the Holy Land, the barbarian prince would not rely blindly on the answers which had been given him: he feared a snare under the appearances of a religious journey. He ordered therefore some of his people to watch attentively over the strangers, in order to see what were their ordinary occupations and how they behaved among themselves. Having soon learned that all their time was consecrated to fasting, to prayer and to the practice of works of charity, he left them entirely free and ordered even to procure for them all the things of which they should have need.

“The little army of the Lord,” continues the contemporary biographer, “in leaving Pannonia entered into those solitudes covered with woods which were then called the deserts of Bulgaria, and which were inhabited by wandering peoples come from ancient Scythia (Tartary). These savages live like beasts: they have neither laws nor cities, remain exposed to the air, stop in the place where night surprises them, lay snares for strayed travellers, live by rapine and pillage, and transport themselves everywhere with their wives and their children: a barbarous people, in a word, and in whom one finds scarcely any trace of humanity and of religion.”

While the holy bishop Liébert was traversing these vast deserts, several pilgrims of the foremost of the troop came to him with their eyes bathed in tears. They had met a band of barbarians, who had thrown themselves on them, had killed some of them and wounded several others. The prelate, who always went on foot in order to attend more easily to prayer and to the recitation of the psalms, stopped at once, and, stretching out his right hand, made a sign of the cross towards the side by which he proposed to pass; then raising his voice, he addressed these words to those who surrounded him: “My children, let the demon your enemy, who, like a lion, goes round about you seeking to devour you, let this enemy inspire you with no fright. Resist him with strength by faith: for, if God is with us, who could be against us? Cover yourselves with the armour of God, that you may be unshakable and perfect in all things: for it is only to see whether you love Him that God sends you this trial. He will manage it Himself in such a way that you may be able to bear it. Wherefore, continue the journey which you have undertaken: for he who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God.”

During the seven days which followed, the pilgrims advanced tranquilly and without obstacle. On the eighth, they perceived in the thickness of the woods men mounted on horses and on camels. Their hair was surmounted with aigrettes and floating bands; they were half naked, wore only a mantle and large boots; a quiver full of arrows hung on their shoulders and they held a bow in the hand. At the sight of these men, all the pilgrims were seized with fright; the bishop alone rejoiced in thinking that his most ardent wish would

soon be accomplished and that these barbarians were going to kill him or to retain him prisoner. But, in the presence of this venerable Pontiff and of the pious travellers who accompanied him, the nomad horsemen felt touched with an involuntary respect. They let him pass tranquilly without disquieting them in any manner, and several even indicated the road which must be followed. A short time afterwards, the pilgrims arrived at Laodicea. There they learned with sorrow that the sultan of Babylon had ordered to close for ever to Christians the entrance of the Holy Sepulchre, and that it was very dangerous to seek to penetrate even into Palestine.

At this news, many of the bishop's companions dispersed or returned to their country. As for him, he resolved, as did the pilgrims attached to his person, to embark to try to arrive as far as the holy city. A new setback soon presented itself. Fulcher, one of the faithful companions of the bishop and who was very affectionate to him, fell suddenly so dangerously ill that his recovery was despaired of. It was already three months that they were at Laodicea, favourable winds were blowing, and all the preparations for the crossing were completed. One thing only retained Saint Liébert; it was the illness of Fulcher, whom they expected at each moment to see die. At last, the eve of the day fixed for departure, the sick man received anew the visit and the blessing of his bishop; and, recalling then above all the words by which Saint Liébert had put him under the protection of the holy Virgin and of the apostle Saint Andrew, he pronounced from the bottom of his heart this naive and touching prayer: "O Saint Andrew, to whose protection my lord the bishop Liébert has confided me, and whose memory is honoured in the monastery built at Cateau-Cambrésis, if you are truly that illustrious Andrew, notable apostle of Christ, friend of God, whom the Lord loved on account of his virtues, succour me, make haste and have pity on me. In the name of Saint Mary, Mother of God and our Mistress; sustain by your prayers my fainting soul, succour this soul which is in anguish. Come to my aid, O friend of God, by the mercy of Jesus Christ your Master. Behold I die. Ask of the Mother of mercy that she come to succour me, not on account of my merits; but for those of the Pontiff who confided me to you by his tears and his prayers." All that night, in effect, the holy bishop had done nothing but pray and recommend himself and his own to the almighty God. Above all he asked by his groans and his vows the life of his dying friend. The next day, from the first hour of the day, Fulcher, full of health, presented himself to Saint Liébert, to his travelling companions, and all together thanked the Lord for so great a benefit, which they recognised they owed only to His infinite goodness.

Immediately afterwards they put to sea to go to Jerusalem; but contrary winds forced them to stop in the island of Cyprus and soon to return to Laodicea. The sailors, through fear of the Saracens, renounced going to land at the ports of Palestine, and it was necessary to think of returning to Europe without having been able to contemplate the places sanctified by the presence of the Saviour. The bishop of Laodicea himself judged that it was the only course which there was to take. Saint Liébert, doing violence to the desires of his heart, returned therefore to his diocese of Cambrai with Helinand, bishop of Laon, who, at that epoch, had undertaken the same pilgrimage. On the return from this long journey, Saint Liébert passed at Ivoye, in Luxembourg, where was then Pope Nicholas II, the emperor of Germany, the counts Baldwin of Lille and Baldwin of Mons, his son. He assisted at the meeting in which these two last were reconciled and forgot the old grievances which they had one against the other. From there, Saint Liébert betook himself to Cateau-Cambrésis, where, in company of Fulcher, he rendered thanks to the apostle Saint Andrew for all the benefits which they had received from him. From that day Fulcher consecrated himself to the service of God in that abbey and lived there holily. As for Saint Liébert, he returned into his city of Cambrai, where he was welcomed with all the transports of the liveliest joy. The good bishop, who thought only of the happiness of his people, spared nothing of all that could contribute to it. Forced for a moment, by the injunctions of the emperor, to yield to the unworthy John of Arras the charge of châtelain of Cambrai, he found the means to withdraw the city from the tyrannical domination of that man and to hand it over to the young Hugh, then still under the direction of the wise Anselm. Until this child could exercise his functions by himself, the worthy prelate supplied for it by his active vigilance: thus the whole country enjoyed happiness and

prosperity. “The inhabitants of the city, who had long been exposed to trouble and reduced to poverty, took in some sort a new life by the sweetness of peace, and seemed to come out of the tombs. Thanks to the cares and the solicitude of the pastor, in the city of Cambrai and in all the neighbouring places, mercy and truth went to meet each other, justice and peace gave each other a mutual kiss. All the doors were open, and nowhere would one have found a thief, a ravisher, an unjust man who sought to wrong his neighbour. The clerics, provided with all things in abundance, chanted the praises of God, and the laymen exercised in peace their profession. Happy,” they said, “the people who enjoys such benefits; but more happy the pontiff who knew how to procure them!” It was not for Saint Liébert that this felicity and prosperity of his people did not continue yet for long years; but the time was not distant when the young Hugh, giving himself, like his father, to his evil inclinations, was to become a veritable scourge for all the country. Before approaching this so painful part of the life of Saint Liébert, let us make known the important foundation of the church and of the monastery of the Holy Sepulchre which he built on the return from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

There was already, at that epoch, a little church which bore the name of the Holy Sepulchre: it had been built under the bishop Gerard I, of Florines, when this prelate, during a plague which desolated Cambrai and the environs, blessed a new cemetery outside the walls of the city to bury there the poor and the strangers. Saint Liébert wished to complete the work which his venerable predecessor and uncle had been able only to begin, and, with the concurrence of the principal personages who had accompanied him to the East, above all of the archdeacon Walcher and of Erlebold, judge and minister of the city, he laid the foundations of the celebrated monastery of the Holy Sepulchre. He gave for this pious enterprise a considerable part of his goods and spared nothing to assure the future and the prosperity of this house of God. The dedication of the new monastery was made with great solemnity. On the invitation of the prelate, the bodies of the Saints which the various abbeys of his diocese possessed were brought there as so many faithful patrons whose protection he invoked in favour of this holy work. These venerable bodies, to the number of twenty-two, were carried to Cambrai by religious men and women or persons of an eminent piety. This consecration was made on the twenty-eighth day of October, feast of the apostles Saint Simon and Saint Jude, in the year 1064, the fourteenth of the episcopate of Saint Liébert and the third of the pontificate of Alexander II.

Not content with having raised this monastery, where he placed an abbot and religious of a proved virtue, he wished also to construct there, in the middle of the basilica, a sepulchre of round form, on the model of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The stone which covered its entrance had seven feet in length, like that of the tomb of the Saviour, and it was of a great beauty, as were the marble columns which supported the edifice. But, continues the pious historian who relates these details, “what was most admirable is that no one could penetrate into the interior of this sepulchre, however hard his heart might be, without feeling at once sentiments of devotion.” It was perhaps in order to develop more these happy results in souls that the prelate enlarged the city on that side, in order to enclose the monastery within its walls and to give space for a greater number of dwellings.

On the twenty-third of May of the year 1039, the venerable Liébert assisted with twenty-four other prelates, both bishops and archbishops, at the consecration of the son of Henry I, who was soon afterwards to reign under the name of Philip I. The archbishop of Reims, Gervase, who was to perform the ceremony, had invited in a quite special manner the venerable bishop of Cambrai and of Arras, for whom he felt an extraordinary affection and respect. He gave a striking testimony of it on a solemn occasion. It was a Holy Thursday: at the moment when the metropolitan, clothed in pontifical vestments, advanced to celebrate the divine mysteries, he perceived Saint Liébert. Stopping at once the procession which preceded him, he retraced his steps, stripped himself of the sacred ornaments and made so many instances to the venerable bishop that he constrained him to chant himself the solemn offices of that day, in presence of all the people, who was singularly edified by this deference of the archbishop for his suffragan.

Returned to the episcopal city, the venerable Liébert had the sorrow of seeing the châtelain Hugh give himself to all sorts of violences. This lord respected no right, no person, and seemed to take it as a task to surpass still the excesses of him to whom he succeeded. In the city as in the country, against the bishop and his officers or against simple laymen, everywhere he carried trouble, disorder and pillage, and committed the most glaring injustices. Driven in turn from Cambrai, from Porgival,[1] from Inchy[2] and from other places, he went on all sides scouring the country and seeking to harm, by all possible means, the bishop Liébert and his sheep.

The violences and the transports of the châtelain Hugh arrived at last at such a degree that the holy bishop was obliged to pronounce against him a sentence of excommunication. Many of his partisans abandoned him then, and the country enjoyed some tranquillity; but the intractable vassal soon knew how to find new bandits to continue his brigandages. For a moment he appeared to wish to correct himself and to repair the offences which he had committed. He came even to Cambrai to ask of the venerable Liébert the pardon of his crimes, the absolution of the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him, and to renew in his hands his oath of fidelity. But all these acts were on his part only a pure hypocrisy. Hugh wished to marry the niece of Richilda, countess of Flanders and of Hainault, and he knew that he would succeed in it only after having reconciled himself with his bishop.

Few days, in effect, had elapsed since that moment, and already he recommenced his accustomed violences. The following fact, related by Baldric, will give the measure of the audacity and of the perversity of this man. One day when Saint Liébert had betaken himself to the village of Boiri, to consecrate a church there and to give the sacrament of confirmation to the children of that canton, he prepared to pass the night there to take some rest. Hugh, who always scoured the country, was promptly informed of it, and, assembling in haste the most determined of his accomplices, he betook himself with them during the night to the house where the bishop was resting. At once he breaks in the doors, strikes, overthrows and kills several of those who wish to make resistance, arrives at the bed of the venerable old man, forces him to leave it and drags him in that state to his castle of Oisy, where he shuts him up in a prison. At the news of such an attempt, a general indignation burst forth in the country. The count of Flanders, Arnold, and his mother, Richilda, assembled at once their troops and marched against Oisy, whose gates were soon opened to give back liberty to the holy bishop, who was conducted back in triumph to his church. A short time afterwards, Saint Liébert drove the turbulent châtelain from the country, and the inhabitants began to breathe in peace.

Saint Liébert, all of whose thoughts tended to the glory of God and to the sanctification of souls, ceased not to work to do good. Often he was met traversing the various regions of his two vast dioceses or some of the more important churches, in which he took pleasure in exercising the functions of his ministry. He had also the custom of going, during the night, to visit the churches of Cambrai, and to pray there for the salvation of his flock. He did it barefoot, and accompanied by the clerics who were attached to his service. It happened once, in the night which precedes the feast of Easter, that the holy bishop, after having visited all the churches and oratories of his episcopal city, entered the little chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and then the contiguous cemetery. “There, he made to God his prayer for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed; then, at the moment when he was ending in silence the prayer, as is practised in the last days of Holy Week, all those who were with him heard distinctly an Amen repeated doubtless by the souls whom the prayer of the Saint had consoled and relieved.”

This devotion towards the faithful departed was very dear to Saint Liébert, and he gave testimonies of it until his death. One finds, in effect, among the gifts and the offerings which he granted to the church of Notre-Dame of Cambrai a clause according to which a Mass is to be sung every Monday, for the repose of his soul and of those of the faithful departed.

His cathedral church was not the only one which felt the effects of his pious generosity: he made also particular gifts to that of Notre-Dame at Arras, to the monasteries of Saint-Éloi, near that same city, of

Saint-Humbert, at Maroilles, of Saint-Andrew at Cateau, of Saint-Géry at Cambrai, and of Saint-Aubert where he placed regular clerics. It is also by his counsels and with his concurrence that Erlebold founded the church of the Holy Cross and restored that of Saint-Vaast. These multiplied works of the worthy bishop rendered him always more and more dear to his people, “and the city, formerly unhappy through the troubles and the wars which so often desolated it, found itself then populous and flourishing.”

This happiness would have been still troubled in the last days of Saint Liébert, if the courageous old man had not averted a new and great peril which threatened it. Robert, so well known in history under the name of Robert the Frisian, had seized the county of Flanders after the death of his nephew Arnold, killed at the battle of Cassel. Almost at once he took the field again and advanced towards Cambrai to take that city and all the Cambrésis from the domination of the emperor of Germany. His troops, spread on all sides in the villages, caused there the most frightful disorders. Already the holy bishop, broken by age and illnesses, had sent to Robert the most honourable inhabitants of Cambrai to engage the usurper not to continue an aggression which nothing could legitimate nor even explain. The count remained deaf to all these representations and declared that he would destroy the city if the bishop did not deliver it into his power.

On hearing this answer, the venerable old man felt himself filled with sorrow and with a just indignation, and the thought of the misfortunes which perhaps this man would make his people suffer overwhelmed him with a deep sadness. Suddenly, as if God Himself had inspired him with this design, he orders a litter to be prepared, and, in spite of the sufferings of illness and of the dangers to which he exposes himself, he asks that he be carried at once into the midst of the enemy’s camp. Arrived in the presence of count Robert, he reproaches him with a holy firmness for his criminal enterprises, and orders him, in virtue of the spiritual authority which he has over him, to withdraw from the lands of his Mistress and Lady, Saint Mary. The count, full of arrogance and haughtiness, answers this injunction at first only by insult. Then the intrepid old man, taking again all his strength, raises himself painfully on the litter, and, asking of the clerics who had accompanied him the priestly stole and the pastoral crosier, he excommunicates, under the eyes of the whole assembly, count Robert and his army, until they have entirely satisfied for the unjust invasion which they have just attempted in this country. On hearing these words, Robert remains as if struck with stupor. The firmness of the man of God and the justice of the cause which he defends, his age, his sacred character and doubtless the fear of heavenly chastisements, all exercises on him an impression which he seeks in vain to resist. At the same instant, and although the day was already advanced, he gives with anger and spite the signal for retreat. “Some, whose soul was more upright,” continues the biographer of the Saint, “went and threw themselves at the feet of the Pontiff, asked pardon of him for all the evil which they had done to the Church of Cambrai, and repaired it generously before returning to their dwellings.” Thus the city of Cambrai was delivered, by the courageous virtue of its holy bishop, from the imminent peril which threatened it.

This deed, which would suffice alone to illustrate a name, is one of the last of the so beautiful and so edifying life of Saint Liébert. Before ending it, let us recall some of his numerous virtues, which the authors have pointed out. “In spite of the great weakness to which illness had reduced him, he did not change the hair-shirt which he had worn since the days of his ordination and never permitted that the couch on which he took his rest should be made less hard. He nourished himself ordinarily only on barley bread, and at table he placed this bread near him, in a manner so adroit that no one perceived it. The poor shared each of his meals, and he gave them, like his other servants, their portion each day. If there was among them a leper, he had his cup presented to him and drank in it himself after the latter had used it. During his long illness he read often, shedding tears, the psalms of penance; and in order that his mind might not be turned aside from its attention to God, he liked to have unceasingly near him pious ecclesiastics.

“Our holy Pontiff, broken by old age and illness, awaited his last hour, and, as the hart sighs after the waters of the fountain, so he sighed after the eternal rest. He was heard addressing words of exhortation to all those who approached him. He invited them to gentleness, to mercy and to liberality towards the poor, and

represented to them the great confidence which those will enjoy before God who shall have practised these virtues on earth. As for him, he had accomplished the word of the Saviour, who says in the Gospel: Sell what you have, give it to the poor and you shall have a treasure in heaven. He sold, in effect, his goods, but to God: for of all the goods which he possessed, he gave a part to the churches and another to the poor of Jesus Christ whom he nourished. And because he desired that all those whose salvation was confided to him should make efforts to advance in virtue, he pressed them and exhorted them to repel all earthly desires and to love only heavenly things." The historian of the life of Saint Liébert relates afterwards a touching discourse which the venerable old man pronounced as a last farewell, at the moment when, near to dying, he saw his priests and his servants shed tears around him. After having told them that, on the point of arriving at the end of his course, he has no regret in quitting life, that it is the lot reserved to all men and that old men above all ought to be little astonished when death presents itself, he added these last words: "Therefore, my beloved sons, let us meditate on this death which threatens us every day: for as long as we are bound by the bonds of the body, we are retained invincibly here below. But God Himself, the author of immortality, has put a term to this imperious necessity, by giving also a term to the life of the body, in order that we may arrive at immortality. Wherefore one must not weep for a death which immortality is to follow, for if we believe that Jesus Christ died and that He rose again, let us believe that God will raise also those who have died in Jesus Christ." The state of the holy old man having become more alarming, the Passion of our Saviour was read near his bed, which he followed with a touching fervour. When they had come to these words: "Jesus having taken the vinegar, said: It is consummated," the adorable body and blood of Jesus Christ were presented to the Saint, and some moments afterwards he rendered peacefully his spirit to God, on the twenty-third day of June of the year 1076. Saint Liébert was then in the twenty-sixth year of his episcopate. His body, deposited first in the church of Notre-Dame, was afterwards buried in the monastery of the Holy Sepulchre. This epitaph was engraved on his tomb:

Clauderis hoc tumulo lapidum, Lietberte sacerdos, Spes et amor patriae, laus, decus Ecclesiae. Hancque domum Christi spe felix instituisti, Rursus ut aeterna luce fruaris ea. Claudilur incessu Cancri solisque recessu Orbi sexta dies; quae tibi sit requies.

"You are hidden under these stones, O priest Liébert, the hope and the love of your country, the praise and the glory of the Church. Full of the hope of Christ, you founded this house, in order that you might enjoy it anew on the day of the resurrection. The sign of Cancer has passed; the sun, being reborn, brings back the sixth day: may it be for you the day of rest." The body of Saint Liébert was raised from the earth by Albéric, archbishop of Reims, on 28 September 1211. His relics were transferred on 23 June 1273, on 22 June 1672, and on 19 March 1736 they were visited by Mazile, dean and vicar-general of Cambrai.

The Church of Cambrai never solemnised the feast of this saint; but on 23 June, the day of his death, and on 28 September, anniversary of his first translation, a votive Mass of the Holy Trinity was sung.

The abbé Destombes: Lives of the Saints of the Dioceses of Cambrai and Arras. — Cf. Godescard.

The Blessed Mary of Oignies, Recluse[3]

1213. — Pope: Innocent III. — Emperor of Germany: Frederick II.

Secura est de victoria castitas, cui est judicatura virginitas.

Chastity is sure of triumphing when it has virginity for judge.

Saint Augustine.

The love of the cross and of sufferings made the blessed Mary, surnamed of Oignies, on account of the place of her burial, do such extraordinary things that the celebrated cardinal James of Vitry, who gathered with a particular care the acts of her life, avows that he proposes her rather as a subject of admiration than as a

model which one can imitate. We shall relate here only what can serve for the edification of the faithful and bring them to embrace generously the practice of virtue.

She was born at Nivelle, in the diocese of Liège, of very rich parents. She gave, from her childhood, indications of the high holiness to which God destined her: for she despised the goods and the pleasures of this life; each of her steps advanced her in the way of perfection. She avoided the company of children of her age too much given to play; she fled all that was childish: fine clothes, adornments. She could not suffer that her hair should be curled, that she should be coiffed or adjusted like people of the world. She prayed to God with so much fervour and so devoutly that she inspired piety in the persons who looked at her. She had so much esteem for religious that, when she saw some pass, above all of the Order of Cîteaux, before the house of her father, she followed them secretly and put her feet in the footprints of theirs, to excite in herself an ardent desire to imitate them. This extraordinary devotion displeased her parents, who employed, to moderate it, all sorts of means, even raillery; but, already firm in virtue, Mary resisted everything. As soon as she was fourteen, she was obliged to marry a young lord whom his virtue rendered recommendable. This marriage only gave to our Saint more liberty for her piety. She applied herself wholly to the exercises of perfection, employing a part of the day in work, and the other in meditation and in prayer, which she continued far into the night. The rest which she took was not considerable, since she lay on boards, which she kept hidden near her bed.

So holy a life gave not only admiration to her husband, but inspired him also with the desire to follow her examples. In effect, regarding his wife no longer except as his instructress in Jesus Christ, he resolved to keep chastity with her the rest of his days, to distribute his goods to the poor and to consecrate himself entirely to works of piety. This change drew on them the contempt of those who considered them formerly on account of their riches; their relatives neglected them and mocked them, and the demon, who could not suffer their continence and their detachment from the goods of the earth, laid for them a thousand snares to oblige them to abandon their holy resolution; but neither the artifices of this enemy of men, nor the raillery and the insults of the people of the world, who served as instruments to Satan, could ever shake their constancy; and, as they preferred the opprobrium of the cross of Jesus Christ to all the honours and all the pleasures of the world, they drew on themselves the most abundant graces and blessings.

As for our Blessed, she received from her Beloved, for first favour, the gift of tears and a very tender love of compassion at the sight of the sufferings which He endured for the salvation of men. She could not speak of them, nor hear them spoken of, nor even cast her eyes on the Crucifix without weeping much or being ravished in ecstasy. Sometimes, to stop this torrent, she applied herself strongly to contemplating the majesty of God and His impassibility; but, when the thought that this God of infinite majesty had suffered so much for her came to strike her mind, the tears began again at once to flow for her with more impetuosity. One day of Lent, meditating in the church on the passion of Jesus Christ, she could not retain her tears nor hinder her sighs and her sobs; a priest begged her to moderate herself a little and to make her prayer in silence. As she knew that this did not depend on her, she went out of the church and withdrew into a particular place, to give all liberty to her heart. There she asked of God that He would make known to this ecclesiastic how it was not in the power of the creature to stop her tears, when they proceeded from a movement of the Holy Spirit. Her prayer was at once heard: for the same day, this priest, saying holy Mass, felt himself so touched and so pressed to shed tears that, whatever efforts he made to retain them, it was impossible for him to do it; he shed them in such great quantity that the ornaments with which he was clothed and the altar-cloths were all soaked with them.

Her heart was penetrated with the greatest compunction; and, according to the report of the cardinal of Vitry, her confessor, she never committed a mortal sin; she was nevertheless so touched by her faults that, after having confessed them with very great sentiments of contrition, she believed she could never do enough penances to expiate them. In effect, besides several mortifications which we shall not relate here, because

they are more admirable than imitable, her life was only a continual fast. She lived ordinarily only on vegetables, and it was very rarely that she ate fish. She lived some time on bread so black and so hard that the dogs themselves could not have eaten it. She made only one meal a day, in summer towards evening, and in winter an hour after sunset. The angels appeared to her and often kept her company. When she was at table, the sight of her guardian angel was very familiar to her, and she received from him all the instructions necessary for her conduct. She had also several times the vision of Saint John the Evangelist, to whom she bore a singular devotion, and the conversation which she had with these inhabitants of heaven gave her more pleasure than the most delicate meats and the most delicious dishes would have done. Our Lord rewarded thus by interior sweetnesses the contempt which she made for His love of all the pleasures of the body. She made a fast on bread and water, during three years, from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross until Easter. She was sometimes eight and ten days without drinking or eating; she passed even once thirty-five days without taking anything, and, what is more admirable, she found herself not at all incommoded by this prodigious abstinence; although she always continued the ordinary functions of her charity, she was as vigorous and as strong on the last day as on the first, as if she had not fasted. It is not to be wondered at, since her body was sustained by the abundance of graces with which her soul was filled.

She enjoyed so tranquilly the presence of God that nothing was capable of distracting her, and she was ordinarily so applied to thinking of Him that she passed several days without anything being drawn from her but this word: “I wish to receive the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ”; and, after having received it, she remained in the same silence, as if her spirit had been quite separated from her body. This sweet union with her God did not hinder her from working nor from making her other exercises; she made, once a year, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Oignies barefoot, during the rigours of winter, without nevertheless suffering from it any inconvenience. The angels accompanied her visibly to conduct her through the woods which she had to pass, and by their ministry, she was often preserved from the rain which might have troubled her journey. Through devotion to the holy Virgin, she passed sometimes the days and the nights in making genuflexions in her honour; at other times, she recited the Psalter, and, at each psalm, she said an Ave Maria on her knees. She had also the custom of giving herself several strokes of the discipline at each genuflexion which she made; her prayers to God were almost always heard. She had remarked, by experience, that when her mind, after prayer, found itself in a certain elevation, it was a sign that she had been heard; and that on the contrary, when it was in dejection, it was a mark that she had not been. She obtained the victory for several tempted persons, who had had recourse to the merit of her prayers. She was always so burning with divine love, particularly when she made prayer, that, in the greatest colds, she was all in sweat, although she wore only a very light habit. She loved silence so much that she passed several months in succession without saying any word: this practice was so agreeable to God that she had revelation that on that account she would not go into Purgatory.

Her angelic modesty and her exterior perfectly well composed showed the fine order which reigned in her interior. Her excessive austerities took nothing from the serenity of her face, on which the joy of her soul appeared admirably; there was only one thing which plunged her into sadness: it was to think of the peril of a soul which is in sin, and of the misfortune of a damned soul; she entered then into inconceivable anguish, she wept, she groaned and she uttered cries which touched the bystanders with compassion. Her looks, her walk and all her ways of acting breathed only simplicity: it was enough to cast the eyes on her to conceive devotion and to feel oneself carried to the practice of virtue. Her words were not less efficacious: they carried sweetness and consolation into the hearts of the persons to whom she spoke, and, to use the terms of the Spouse of the Canticles: “Her lips were like a honeycomb, and milk was hidden under her tongue.” Never was heard to come from her mouth any worldly word, and scarcely could she say five or six words without mingling in them something of Our Lord. Penetrated with the fear of God, she dared do nothing before being sure that it was what was best for His glory. This timorous conscience made her regard little venial sins with more horror than ordinary persons regard the most enormous crimes. She watched carefully over the least

thoughts and over the smallest movements of her heart, in order that the one and the other might be either so many victories or so many good works.

All these virtues were sustained by a very profound humility. Although the persons who knew her had a high esteem of her, far from glorifying herself for it, she believed herself to be the most miserable creature in the world; she thought herself useless on earth, and, if she obtained from God some grace, she always attributed it to the faith and to the piety of others, reputing herself unworthy to be heard in her prayers. People of low condition and great sinners were welcome near her; and, instead of despising them, she considered them as her superiors, not being able to persuade herself that there was anyone more worthy of rejection than she. The evil which some impious people said of her devotion made no impression on her mind, as the praises which were given her were not capable of causing in her the least movement of complacency. She did all that she could to remain hidden from the eyes of creatures, and it was only by orders from heaven, either secret or manifest, that she produced herself sometimes to assist her neighbour. She distrusted so much her own lights that, in the difficult and important questions which were submitted to her, she gave no answer until after having consulted God on what she ought to say. A virtuous ecclesiastic, having let himself be overcome by the prayers of his friends and of his relatives, had accepted a second benefice, although the first of which he was provided sufficed him to live frugally, as persons consecrated to the altars ought to do: he asked her whether there was no sin in possessing thus two benefices; the blessed Mary took some time to have recourse to heaven before rendering him answer; and, after having been divinely enlightened by revelation, she told him that, “in her prayer, she had seen a man clothed at first with a very white habit and who walked quite freely; but this man, having been loaded with a black mantle, she had seen at the same time crushed under the weight of his conscience.” As she made this recital, the ecclesiastic knew interiorly, by a heavenly light, the enormity of his sin, and, without deferring further, he resigned his second benefice. “Pardon me, my brethren,” adds the great cardinal of Vitry, historian of this life, speaking to his readers, “pardon me, you who add dignity to dignity and who make no scruple of heaping up benefices one upon another: what I have just related is not of my invention, but a revelation of Jesus Christ. Pardon also His servant: for what evil has she done you by having given a salutary counsel to her friend, and by having declared a truth which Jesus Christ had made known to her?” We could relate here several other visions and revelations, in which our Saint knew the temptations and the secrets of the hearts of the persons who consulted her. We could speak also of the conversions which she wrought, of the victories which she won over the demons by discovering their artifices, of the graces which she obtained for those who implored the help of her prayers, of her charity in assisting the souls in purgatory, of her invincible patience in suffering illnesses without wishing to seek any relief in them, of her prophecies, of the knowledge which was given her of the state of consciences, of her ecstasies, of the apparitions which she had of Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist, of her ardent zeal for crosses and sufferings, and finally of a thousand other admirable things gathered in two books by the celebrated author whom we have just cited. The crowd of visitors, attracted by her holiness, disturbing her solitude of Villembroc, near Nivelle, she resolved to withdraw elsewhere in order to give herself up only to contemplation. God, whom she consulted thereupon, ordered her to fix herself at Oignies, teaching her that she would die there and be buried there. Her husband having permitted her to go there, she arrived there the day on which was celebrated there the feast of the Translation of Saint Nicholas, who is the patron of it. This holy prelate appeared to her on the road and accompanied her to the church. She lived in this holy retreat in a manner so heavenly that it is not possible to explain it. Her visions were frequent there, the visits of Our Lord ordinary, the apparitions of the angels almost continual. She was always in raptures and ecstasies; and, as she scarcely ever left the foot of the altars, she had there often familiar colloquies with the holy Virgin. Her sighs were such, when she asked of God the dissolution of her body, that often she was believed to be at death. She thought of paradise, where she knew that she would soon go, only with marvellous transports and her soul all bathed in consolations. Finally, the more she saw the moment of her death approach, the more her fervour and her love for her Beloved increased. Before falling ill, she warned that her infirmity would be long and

painful, and begged that no one should put himself in pain about her, because it was the will of God that she should suffer thus before entering into His glory. She was a year taking nothing every Monday, because she had had revelation that she would be buried on a like day. She disposed herself for death by a fast of three months, during which she made only eleven meals, and the last fifty-three days of her life she took no other nourishment than the holy Eucharist.

The happy end of so holy a life being near, the demon presented himself to her to deliver a last assault on her virtue; but she drove him away at once, to enjoy the sight of the heavenly spirits, who, having often visited her during the fair days of her life, would not abandon her at the hour of her death. Saint Andrew, to whom she had much devotion, appeared to her during the greatest violence of her pains, and said these words to her to strengthen her: “Have confidence, my daughter, I will not abandon you and I will render to God good testimony of your love for the Cross.” Finally, after having seen the place which was destined for her in heaven, she rendered her soul amid songs of joy, into the hands of her Spouse, who honoured her with His divine presence, in order to clothe her, on leaving this world, with an eternal glory. This was in the year 1213, which was the thirty-sixth year of her age, on Sunday, 23 June, on which day, according to some, died Saint John the Evangelist, to whom she was singularly devoted. She had predicted this time six years before. There was seen on her face none of the sad marks of death; the same brightness and the same serenity remained there always, and the rays which came from it brought to piety the persons who looked at her. She loved after her decease the persons whom she had cherished during her life, appearing to them, either to console them in their troubles, or to give them counsel in their affairs, or to reveal to them the dangers to which they were exposed, or to deliver them from the doubts which troubled their mind. Several holy religious have had visions in which they have known the glory which she enjoyed in heaven. Finally, the faithful who have implored her assistance have received so many graces through the merit of her intercession that her holy relics have become the object of the greatest respect. In the year 1609, Francis de la Bussière, bishop of Namur, by order of Paul V, had this holy body raised from the earth, to put it in a silver shrine and to transport it under the altar of the church of Our Lady of Oignies, which esteems itself infinitely happy to possess so precious a treasure. There has since been composed a particular office in her honour, which John d’Avrain, successor of Francis de la Bussière, approved in the year 1619. At the end of the last century, after the suppression of the monasteries, her body was, in 1817, transported into the church of Saint Nicholas at Nivelle, not far from the house where she was born. Her name has been inserted in the calendars of several churches of Belgium; her office, approved by Pope Gregory XVI, at the request of His Eminence the cardinal archbishop Sterckx, is celebrated in the archbishopric of Mechlin.

The life of the blessed Mary of Oignies was written by James of Vitry, a native of Argenteuil, near Paris. She could not have a more excellent historian than he: for first he is a man whom his extraordinary merits raised to the bishopric of Acre, to the dignity of cardinal, in a promotion of Gregory IX, and to those of bishop of Frascati and legate in France against the Albigenses. Moreover, he knew particularly the life of our Saint; he had even been witness of the greater part of the things which he relates, when he was still canon regular at Oignies, and had conversed familiarly with her, as his narrative sufficiently indicates. When he left her to go to preach the crusade against the heretics, by an express commission of the Pope, not knowing whether he would be back for her death or not, she left him by testament a girdle which she used, a handkerchief with which she wiped her tears, and some other little article of furniture, vile in appearance, but which this learned cardinal esteemed more than gold and silver. After her death, he always preserved so great a respect for her that he wore on his neck some of her relics enshrined in a silver reliquary. In his testament, which he made at Rome, where he died in the year 1244, he ordered that his body should be carried to Oignies, to be buried in the church of Our Lady, where his tomb is still seen.

She is represented: 1° raising her eyes towards an angel who appears to her, to show that she was favoured during her life with these heavenly visions; 2° prostrate before a crucifix, to recall that she obtained the

return to grace of a hardened sinner; 3° near a little cell where she ended her days; 4° covered by the Mother of God during a heavy rain, at the moment when she was going to a pilgrimage in honour of the holy Virgin. She ought above all to be represented praying for the deliverance of the souls in purgatory, of whom Mary of Oignies thought continually, as the historians of her life teach us.

She is invoked for pregnant women and against fevers.

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. Godescard, etc.

The Blessed Christine of Stommelen, Virgin. Religious at Cologne

1312. — Pope: Clement V. — Emperor of Germany: Henry VII.

The blessed Christine was born in the second half of the thirteenth century, in a village in the environs of Cologne. At the age of thirteen years, she left her village to go to Cologne, where she hoped to be able to lead a more holy and more recollected life. In that time, there were in that city and elsewhere religious women called Béguines: they were widows and young girls who led together a pious and very retired life. Having been admitted into their community, Christine led there an extremely mortified life, nourishing herself exclusively on bread and water, wearing no garment of linen, having about her loins a girdle which was nothing else than a thick cord bristling with knots, so that this part of her body was covered with wounds. To be ready sooner when the hour of prayer sounded, she had for couch a plank of wood and for pillow a large stone; every night she bent the knee two hundred times; every day she recited the Litanies of the Saints. She always went barefoot [printed

; in general, she had a profound aversion against all that resembles well-being or softness, because she had always present to her mind the sufferings of the divine Saviour. One day, finding herself in the church, she fell into ecstasy; she was carried to her room, and she remained in this state for three days. The Béguines believed at first that it proceeded from a fit of epilepsy, or that she had fallen into madness. As for Christine, she continued to meditate day and night on the Passion of Jesus Christ: sometimes weeping bitterly, sometimes experiencing a sweet and consoling compassion, and praying unceasingly Our Lord to give her a sign and a remembrance of His Passion. This lasted thus two years; then the demon, under the figure of Saint Bartholomew, appeared to her and said to her: “My daughter, you pray much, and you have a great desire to enter into the kingdom of God. Know that this goal will surely be attained if you kill yourself: it is the most prompt and the surest means of entering heaven!” This temptation was not passing, for it lasted six months with a terrible persistence. Every time that she was alone, Christine experienced a lively propensity to suicide, so much that it was almost impossible for her to resist it. When she went to draw water, she had a strong desire to throw herself into the well; when she was in the church, the temptation became so intense that several times she went out of it to go and kill herself. One day, as she had been bled, she wished to take off the bandage in order to make herself die by the loss of blood. A thousand times over she would have yielded to the temptation if she had not feared to commit a sin and to go to hell; this salutary thought was combated by a voice which often cried to her in the middle of the night: “Rise, and kill thyself; God wills it! If thou dost not do it at once, God will have thee choked, and then He will cast thee into hell.” Christine had a particular devotion to the apostle Saint Bartholomew. Now one day, the demon, taking again the figure of this apostle, appeared to her and said to her: “My well-beloved daughter, your good works please God singularly, and He loves you quite particularly. But behold that during some time you have suffered nothing either in your body or in your soul: if then you wish soon to be united to God, you must impose on yourself again some bodily sufferings.”

On the eve of a day of communion, Christine heard during the night a sweet voice which said to her: “My dear daughter, do not go to communicate to-day; for at the moment when the priest shall present to you the holy host, it will fall to the ground, from which will result a great trouble for all those present. Besides, you

are a great sinner, unworthy to communicate." To recognise whether this voice was that of an angel or that of the demon, Christine had recourse to prayer; and Our Lord made her know that the evil spirit, by this ruse, had wished to keep her away from holy communion. Another time, as Christine wished to go to communicate, she was overthrown on the way by a runaway horse. The circumstances proved that this event was not natural, and that this furious animal was none other than the demon himself. The horse, foaming with rage, after having overthrown the unfortunate Christine, trampled her under foot, bit her and carried off with its teeth a part of the skin of her head with the hair. Christine invoked the holy name of Jesus, and at once the demon disappeared.

The last torment which God permitted the demon to inflict on her was, during eighteen months, to torment her so much day and night that each morning her bed was as if soaked with blood. On 5 June 1288, after a battle which was fought in the neighbourhood of Cologne, the temptations of Christine ceased suddenly; after which she lived still twenty-four years in a perfect tranquillity. Such was the pious Job, who was tormented by the demon only until the day fixed by God. It is these temptations, and the prodigious manner in which she knew how to resist them, which have caused her to be surnamed the Admirable and confounded by some authors with Saint Christina the Admirable. Lives of the Saints, by Alban Stolz.

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[1] The expression *Martyrum concilia* signifies, according to Molanus, "a place where rest the bodies of many Martyrs." Baronius approves this interpretation and supports it by the following considerations: The word Church, which, etymologically, signifies reunion, assembly of the faithful, is taken for the very place where the assembly is held. Saint Ambrose gives to the word *concilium* a like sense, when he names a convent of Tellienses, *concilium virginitatis*. Molanus himself had invoked in favour of his interpretation the authority of Saint Gaudentius of Brescia, who pronounced a discourse for the dedication of a council of Martyrs, *concilii Martyrum*; he cites again the book of the Roman Pontiffs, on Pope Damasus, as well as the Acts of Saint Stephen, pope and martyr. Here is, besides, a passage of Saint Jerome (epistle to Heliodorus), which appears to us peremptory on this question: *Hoc idem possumus dicere de isto (id est de Nepotiano) qui basilicas ecclesiae, et Martyrum concilia diversis floribus et arborum comis, vitiumque pampinis obumbravit, etc.* "We can say the same thing of Nepotian, who knew how to shade the porches of the church and the councils of the Martyrs with the flowers of the fields, the foliage of the trees and the vine-branches." — Baronius.

[2] The Greeks mention also Saint Agrippina on this same day, with this eulogy: Saint Agrippina, martyr, who saw the day and was brought up in the illustrious city of Rome; adorned with strength and with virginity, and betrothed to God Himself, she ran with courage and even with joy to the glory of martyrdom; and, for the love and the dignity of her Spouse, Christ, she delivered herself to all kinds of torments. She was therefore cruelly scourged, loaded with irons, cast into dungeons and tortured; it was while she was recommending her soul to God that she went out of this world with the glory of martyrdom. Bassa, Paula and Agathtynice took away her body in secret and transported it from Rome to Sicily, where they buried it. Scarcely had Sicily received this treasure when it was delivered from the dark errors of hell. The Hagarenes, who dared to pillage the city where the holy body was preserved, were annihilated by an unforeseen death. To this day still, the lepers who approach this tomb with faith are purified, diseases of every kind are healed likewise. — Baronius.

[3] The Bollandists say: "At Nicomedia, the memory of the saints Avitus, Cinzame, reader, Arion, Alice, Emérite, Capiton and seventy-eight others, martyrs." [closing mark not printed]

[4] See his life on 2 March.

[5] She must not be confounded with Saint Christine the Admirable, of Saint-Trond, virgin, as some authors have done, whose Life we shall give in the Supplement of volume 15.

[6] Otherwise, EthilJrite, Etheldrfede, Elidru, and vulgarly Audry.

[7] The monastery of Ely was destroyed by the Danes in 879. Saint Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, had it rebuilt with the help of the liberalities of King Edgar, and dedicated it under the invocation of the holy Virgin and of Saint Audry, in 970; but it was solely to place men in it. A bishopric was erected there in 1108.

[8] Otherwise, Libert, Liberd, Libertus, Lietbertus, Liberatiu.

[9] The chronicler Baldric says: *apud quemdam locum, Porrivallem*. It is a question either of Pronville, arrondissement of Arras, canton of Marquion, where the ruins of an ancient fortress are still seen, or of Neuville-Bourjonval, same arrondissement, canton of Bertincourt.

[10] Inchy-en-Artois, which must not be confounded with Inchy-Beaumont, in the Cambrésis, is situated in the canton of Marquion and at the source of the Hirondelle, a small river which joins the Sensée, between Arleas Palluel. — Note of M. Le Glay.

[11] Commonly called Dame Maroye, by corruption of *Domna Maria*.

24 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The nativity of Saint John the Baptist, precursor of Our Lord, son of Zachary and Elizabeth, who was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. — At Rome, the memory of several holy martyrs,[1] who, accused by calumny, under the emperor Nero, of having kindled the fire of Rome, were most cruelly put to death in divers manners by order of the same emperor: some, covered with the skins of beasts, were exposed to the bites of dogs; others crucified, and others burned in the manner of torches to give light during the night. They were all disciples of the Apostles, and they were the first-fruits of that numerous troop of martyrs whom the Roman Church, a field fertile in such fruits, sent to the Lord before the death of the Apostles. 64. — In the same place, the holy martyrs F;uiste and twenty-three others. — At Satales, in Armenia, the seven brother martyrs Orence, Héros, Pharnace, Firmin, Firme, Cyriaque and Longin, soldiers, whom the emperor Maximian deprived of the military belt in their quality of Christians; afterwards, they were separated from one another, led away to divers places, where, passing through all sorts of sufferings and miseries, they attained to the rest of the Lord. About 318. — At Créteil, in the diocese of Paris, the torment of the holy martyrs Agoard and Agilbert, and of an infinite number of others of the one and the other sex. About 273. — At Autun, the decease of Saint Simplice, bishop and confessor. About 420. — At Lobbes, Saint Théodulphe or Saint Thiou, bishop. 776. — At Style, in Calabria, Saint John, surnamed Théreste, celebrated for his holiness and his exactness in keeping the observances of the monastic life.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Nantes, Saint Gohard or Gunbard,[2] bishop massacred in his church with a great number of clerics, of religious and of laymen, by the infidel Normans, at the moment when he was singing the *Sursum corda*. 843. — In the diocese of

Poitiers, the saints Colombe, Materne and Pécine, virgins and martyrs. — At Auxerre, Saint Erry or Heire (Heirus), monk of Saint-Germain, personage of a great holiness. About 923. — Near Transillac, near Aigurande, on the confines of Berry and of La Marche, Saint Lupicin, recluse, of whom Saint Gregory of Tours makes mention in the book of the Life of the holy Fathers. He relates that the pious solitary carried on his neck, during all the day, while he sang in his cell the praises of God, a great stone which two men could scarcely move; and that at night, to mortify himself still more, he had fixed at the end of his staff two thorns whose points were turned in the air and which he put under his chin in order to prevent himself from sleeping. His holy body was buried at the borough of Trésel where his tomb has become illustrious by a great number of miracles. About 500. — In the diocese of Auch, Saint Frise, martyr. 8th century. — At Monchy-le-Preux, near Arras, the blessed John, shepherd, whose relics are visited on this day by a great concourse of people. He is invoked principally against ruptures. 15th century. — At Marsigny, in Burgundy, the venerable Raingarde, widow and religious of the Order of Cluny. She came from one of the most illustrious families of Auvergne; her parents made her marry Maurice, count of Montboissier, and she became mother of eight children whom she raised for heaven; the most celebrated of all was the blessed Peter of Cluny, known under the name of Peter the Venerable, who wrote her life. Her husband being dead, she became a religious in the monastery of Marsigny, in Burgundy, on the advice which the blessed Robert of Arbrisselle gave her of it. She made herself admired there by her fervour, her humility, her spirit of compunction, her attraction to austerities and her obedience. She expired on ashes. Although no solemn decree has authorised her cult, she is honoured in the Order of Cluny and the hagiographers of Auvergne give her the title of Saint. 1135. — At Saint-Maur-les-Fossés, in the diocese of Paris, the pilgrimage to the chapel of Our Lady of Miracles, with the aim of celebrating the glorious anniversary of the death of the holy martyrs of Créteil, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Saint-Thomas, in the diocese of Toulouse, the pilgrimage to the chapel of Our Lady of the Cross, to ask of the holy Virgin to be preserved from the scourge

of hail. — Near Rauville-la-Place, in the diocese of Coutances, the pilgrimage to the chapel of Our Lady of Deliverance, to thank the Mother of God for the numerous miracles which she works unceasingly in this sanctuary. — At Larmor, in the diocese of Vannes, in the chapel of Our Lady of Larmor, the annual blessing of the arm of the sea which separates the island of Groix from the mainland, with the aim of obtaining that the sardine fishery, the only resource of the inhabitants of those countries, may be abundant.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Carthage, in Africa, Saint Rogat, martyr, mentioned in an ancient martyrology of this city. — In Egypt, Saint Géran, anchorite, and Saint Martha, martyr. — In the diocese of Riez, in Calabria, Saint Gérasime, native of Saint-Laurent, city of the same diocese, whose body rests in the church of Saint-Ange of Riez. — At Tuy, in Galicia, Saint John of Porto, hermit. His body was formerly seen in the abbatial church of the Dominicans of Tuy; our pious solitary is still in great veneration among the populations of Galicia and of Lusitania who invoke him specially for the cure of fevers. 9th century. — In the diocese of Prague, in Bohemia, Saint Ivan, solitary. He was buried in a cavern from which he had repelled, by the virtue of the sign of the cross, a whole legion of demons who had come to tempt him there. 910. — In the island of Farne, in England, Saint Bartholomew, solitary. He bore first the name of Toste, then that of William; the name of Bartholomew was given him by the brethren of a monastery of England where he passed some years. Wishing afterwards to lead a more austere life, he withdrew into the island of Farne where he passed five years in the exercises of the most rigorous penance. God gratified him with the gift of prophecy and of miracles. He was buried in a little oratory which he had built, and several prodigies illustrated his tomb. 1182.

Saint John the Baptist, Precursor of the Messiah

— Tetrarch of Galilee: Herod Antipas.

Non surrexit major Joanne Baptista; praecellit caeteros, eminet universis, antecellit prophetas, supergreditur patriarchas, et quisquis de muliere natus est inferior est Joanne.

None has ever been found who was greater than Saint John the Baptist. He surpasses all the others, he shines above all; beside him the prophets and the patriarchs are but shadows, and every man born of woman will always be powerless to equal him.

S. Thom. Aquin. Part. III, quaest. 38, art. 1. The time was drawing near when, according to the word of Isaias, the heavens were to send down from on high their dew, the clouds to make the Just One descend like a beneficent rain; when the earth was to open her bosom to produce the germ of salvation, and to see at the same time the reign of justice spring up. The weeks counted by Daniel were touching their end. Already the sceptre of power had fallen from the hands of Juda, as the patriarch Jacob had foretold, and the Jews were submitting to a foreign yoke.

The Roman power had halted in its conquests; the firebrand of civil discords had given place to the imperial sceptre; Augustus alone dictated laws to the universe. The whole world was in a profound peace and in a sort of extraordinary silence; it seemed attentive and recollected as at the approach of a great event. All nature was in expectation, says Bossuet.

It was that the voice of the Lord was about to make itself heard; a great light was going to rise upon the peoples: God was at last going to send His Christ, the expectation of the nations.

But the eternal King of the ages was not to arrive without having made Himself preceded by some extraordinary ambassador. The sun of divine truth could not pour on the world the torrents of its light without having prepared the eyes of mortals to bear its vivid brightness. A twilight was needed for so fair a day. “The weakness of our sight is the cause of it,” says Bossuet again; “the great day would dazzle us, if we were not

prepared and accustomed to it by a light more proportioned to our infirmity. The world is too weakened by its sin to bear in all its force the happiness which God sends it."[1]

God, in repairing the world, says Saint Thomas, proceeded in the same manner as in creating it. At the creation, He placed the morning star before the sun to precede and announce the star of the day; so when He wished to cause Christ to be born, the Sun of justice, He took care to raise up a new morning star, which, as precursor and forerunner of the sun, would precede it and prepare the way for it by his birth, by his life and by his death.

Zachary, the father of the Precursor, was a priest and of the family of Abia, one of those which served in the temple, each in its turn. Elizabeth, his wife, was also a daughter of Aaron, the first pontiff of the law and the origin of the priesthood. Leaving aside her other ancestors, who nevertheless were connected with the royal race of David, the Gospel recalls that Elizabeth is a daughter of him whose memory is a pledge of holiness, because she herself, having gathered precious this glorious heritage, was to transmit it to her son. But what made the true glory of Zachary and of Elizabeth, and raised them in the eyes of the Lord more than this illustrious origin, was not to feel an august blood flowing in their veins, it was, on the contrary, to adorn this illustrious birth by the unborrowed lustre of their virtues. "They were both just," not only before men, who examine attentively the exterior actions, judge ordinarily with severity, and seem to take pleasure only in seeing imperfections everywhere. But this exterior and apparent justice was still interior and real before God Himself, who penetrates the hearts and the reins, and judges the most secret intentions. The virtue and holiness of these pious children of Aaron were thus the reason of their reciprocal love, and rendered them the models of spouses.

Nevertheless, God, who deprives the just at times in order to exercise their virtues and to be Himself alone the object of their affection and all their hope; God, who had been pleased to lavish His graces and His spiritual favours on Zachary and on Elizabeth, had left them until then in the midst of Israel in a sort of opprobrium. Wishing to give them to us as models of perseverance in prayer and of resignation in privation, the Lord had shown Himself until then deaf to their wishes. "They had no son" to whom they could transmit the heritage of the priesthood and of the virtues, which are its first condition. They were even for a long time deprived of all hope on this subject, "because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in the days of their life."[2]

This barrenness, far from being a malediction, was on the contrary full of mystery. Childbearing was not refused to Elizabeth; it was only deferred. Happy barrenness, which was reserved to give birth to the Precursor of the Son of God![3]

From his conception, full of marvels, John was to be the precursor of Christ. The latter, says Bossuet, was to have a virgin mother; that was his prerogative. And what was there which approached more nearly to this honour than to be born of a barren woman, like another Isaac, like a Samson, like a Samuel: these miraculous children of barren women are children of graces and of prayers. It is by this that the birth of Saint John the Baptist was consecrated to be the forerunner of that of the Son of God.[4]

The week in which the family of Abia was to do the service of the sanctuary having arrived, Zachary left his dwelling to go to the temple "to fulfil before God the function of sacrificer." As all the priests of a family could not be occupied in the same functions, the lot assigned to each of them the office which he had to fulfil.[5] God chose this means to call Zachary into the interior of the temple, in order to offer the incense. This kind of sacrifice was the most solemn of the religion, the purest and the most agreeable in the eyes of the Lord.[6]

During these august functions, this "man of desires" let escape from his heart a prayer more ardent than the fire which consumed his sacrifice, and more agreeable to the Eternal than the sweet odour which exhaled from it. "O God," he cried, "may Thy name be glorified and sanctified in this world which Thou hast created

according to Thy good pleasure; make Thy reign reign; may redemption flourish, and may the Messias come speedily."[7]

Suddenly an angel appears, standing at the right of the altar. At the sight of the heavenly messenger with dazzling garments, with radiant face, with majestic and heavenly bearing, Zachary experiences an extraordinary trouble; effect of that religious fear with which the soul is occupied, when God renders Himself present by any means whatsoever. The impression of divine things makes the soul re-enter into its nothingness; it feels, more than ever, its unworthiness: the fright which accompanies what is divine disposes it to obedience.

As the first effect of the divine presence is fright in the depth of the soul, the first effect of the word borne on the part of God is to reassure him to whom it is addressed.[8] The angel, seeing the fright of Zachary, said to him at once: "Fear not, Zachary, for thy prayer is heard; and Elizabeth, thy wife, shall bear thee a son whom thou shalt call John. Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice in his birth; for he shall be great before the Lord; he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. He shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God; he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, to prepare for the Lord a perfect people."[9] — "Whereby shall I know the truth of what thou tellest me?" answered Zachary, "for I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years."[10]

The angel then, to dispel all his doubts, replied to him by these imposing words: "I am Gabriel, one of the spirits who stand before God; and I have received a mission to come to speak to thee to announce to thee this happy news. And behold thou shalt be deaf[11] and shalt not be able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words which shall be fulfilled in their time."

At once, speech expires on the lips of Zachary, his tongue is bound and his ears sealed. The divine omnipotence has made itself felt. He has not wished to believe the word of the angel and he has opposed to it the resistance of his reason; but he will be punished for it by undergoing a rigorous silence, until the day when the voice of the Word shall be revealed to the world.

While the sacrificer was thus conversing with the angel of the Lord, the people waited at the door of the temple to receive the blessing prescribed on this occasion; but hearts were in a lively anxiety; it was already remarked with fright that Zachary remained long in the sanctuary. What an impression of astonishment and of fear must it not have produced on the crowd, when, coming out of the holy place, he appeared to all eyes bearing on his face, until then so serene and so calm, an inexplicable change, mingled with terror and hope, with confusion and rapture, result of the conversation which he had had with the envoy of the Most High! But fear penetrated hearts above all when it was perceived that, deprived of speech and struck with deafness, he was obliged to have recourse to signs to make himself understood. It was known then that Zachary had had in the temple a mysterious vision.

The report of this event, which one hesitates to name a punishment, so much does it make the wisdom and mercy of God shine; the news of this miracle spread soon in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and held minds attentive and impatient to know the issue of it; for Zachary was known to all the people by his priestly functions, by his eminent virtues and by his reputation for holiness.

Saint Luke makes us remark with care that the holy priest finished his week of service and did not interrupt his august functions in the temple. Now, according to the law of Moses, the double bodily defect with which he was afflicted ought to have removed him from the altar; but it was not so, because it was evident to all that there was here something prophetic and mysterious.

"When the days of his ministry were accomplished, Zachary returned to his house," all sad, says Saint Paulinus, and asking pardon of God in the secret of his heart.[12]

Elizabeth, instructed of what had passed in the temple, whether by revelation from on high, or by report or by what her husband could make her understand of it, was not long without experiencing the effects of the promise of the angel, for she conceived in spite of years and her barrenness.[13] The noble wife of Zachary would not expose to public derision the first signs of a pregnancy which, by reason of her age, would have appeared at least equivocal. But she no longer feared to show herself when her pregnancy, become incontestable, could excite only surprise and admiration. This is the most probable reason that can be given of the conduct which she observed on this occasion. "She hid herself therefore during the space of five months, because that is," said she, "what the Lord has done in me, when He was pleased to cast His eyes on me, to draw me from the opprobrium in which I was before men."[14]

"Elizabeth was in her sixth month,[15] when the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man of the house of David called Joseph, and the virgin's name was Mary. The angel being come in where she was, said to her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. But she, having heard him, was troubled at his words, and thought within herself what manner of salutation this should be. The angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with 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 God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done? because I know not man. And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost 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. And behold, I announce to thee that thy cousin Elizabeth hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren; because no word shall be impossible with God. Then Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word." So the angel departed from her.[16]

"In those days," continues Saint Luke, that is to say a few days after the angel had announced to Mary that she would be the mother of God, "she rose up and went into the hill country with haste."[17] Mary knew then that the first design of the eternal Word, in becoming incarnate, was to come to combat and destroy original sin. She therefore rose at once to the execution of this great design, and, holding hidden in her bosom the sovereign remedy of the world, she goes in great haste to apply it to John the Baptist, whom original sin had already sullied in the womb of his mother, Saint Elizabeth. It was therefore by the intermediary of Mary that was to be accomplished this word of Gabriel concerning Saint John: "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb."

Theophylact is therefore far removed from the truth when he gives as the aim of Mary's journey the desire to assure herself of the truth of the word of the angel. Many other authors, in assigning as the cause of this step the desire to render service to Elizabeth, have still guessed only by half the true motives which pressed the virgin of Nazareth to bear her steps towards Hebron. However, as everywhere grace only perfects nature, Mary wished also to take part in the joy of her cousin, to communicate to her her own happiness and thus to testify her gratitude to relatives whose protection had surrounded her childhood, and had long considered her as their daughter.

The place to which the young virgin directed her steps was a mountainous country, situated in the tribe of Juda, and which authors believe to be Hebron, called also Cariath-Arbe, a priestly city, south of Jerusalem, and distant only seven good hours from this city. This city was celebrated for its antiquity and by traditions dear to the Jews; for Abraham had once fixed his tent there; there David had been consecrated king; there were still shown the sepulchres of the patriarchs and the forest of Mambre, where three angels appeared under the terebinth to the father of believers.

We must say, however, that travellers who have traversed the country and consulted the local traditions think otherwise concerning the native place of the holy Precursor.

Saint Helena, mother of the great Constantine, and who gathered all the traditions on this subject a few centuries afterwards, had a church built on the very place where John the Baptist was born, in a city named Ain or Aën, or Ain-Charin, a priestly city, about two leagues south of Jerusalem. It is no longer to-day more than a village called Saint-John-of-the-Desert or Saint-John-of-the-Mountain. At a short distance, about two hundred paces, was the country house which Zachary inhabited during the fine season, and where Elizabeth had withdrawn at the time of her pregnancy; it is this house which is believed to be that of the Visitation of the holy Virgin. There remain now only ruins of the church which replaced this dwelling where took place the first interview and the first manifestation of the incarnate Word.[18]

The venerable Bede, the cardinal Hugo, Eckius, Clichtovée, think that the city where Mary went to find Elizabeth was none other than Jerusalem. "Arrived on the slope of a mountain, the little village, called by the Christians Saint-John-of-the-Mountain, appeared to us on the side of a hill. At twenty minutes' distance, one finds beside the road ruins rather considerable, which are called Mer-Sakaria; it is there that Saint Elizabeth dwelt when she was visited by the holy Virgin… Directing ourselves towards this village, we found, half-way, a great and beautiful fountain, which the Christians name fountain of the Virgin, because the holy Virgin evidently made use of its water, since there is no other in the neighbourhood; the Arabs call it ylm-Aan'm… We arrived early at the convent, where the most friendly reception awaited us. Before all, I betook myself to the church, accompanied by the father guardian and some religious. It is one of the most beautiful of the Holy Land. At the left of the high altar, one descends by a fine staircase into the chapel of the nativity of Saint John the Baptist. It is therefore here that God manifested His mercy on Saint Elizabeth, in giving her in her old age a son who was to be great before the Lord.

"The sanctuary of the nativity of Saint John is arranged like that of the nativity of Our Saviour. Five bas-reliefs in white marble, framed in a black ground, and which are about fifteen inches in height, represent the principal scenes of the life of the Precursor: his birth, his preaching in the desert, his martyrdom, the Visitation, the baptism of Jesus Christ; they are arranged in a circle around the sanctuary. All this is of very beautiful workmanship, and was sent by the king of Naples. Six lamps burn continually in this place. Above there is a marble table where Mass is said. On the altar is a beautiful picture by a Spanish master; it represents the birth of Saint John. In the upper church, there is a picture by Murillo."[19]

Arrived at the priestly city, Mary had herself conducted to the well-known dwelling of Zachary. Elizabeth, informed of the unexpected visit of her cousin, came to meet her with great demonstrations of joy. On seeing her come, the young virgin bowed, and placing her hand on her heart: "Peace be with you," she said, hastening to salute her first, and at the same time she threw herself into her arms.

As soon as Elizabeth heard herself saluted by Mary, her child leaped in her womb; she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and cried out with a loud voice: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord."[20]

The Word incarnate in the womb of Mary had made use of the tongue of His mother to speak to His voice, that is to say to Saint John, still enclosed in the womb of Elizabeth; and Saint John made use of the ears of his mother to listen to the Word.[21]

In effect, at the moment when these two holy women miraculously fruitful embraced in a close and mysterious embrace, the Saviour and the Precursor were no longer separated except by two slight walls, as Saint Bernard says; then is it astonishing that the voice should be agitated and should leap on hearing and feeling the Word? How would not a multitude of marvels have been wrought in favour of the son of

Elizabeth, in the presence of his God, at the word of his Saviour and in face of Mary?

Thus all the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are unanimous in proclaiming that from this moment the Precursor of Christ then received the first touch of grace, was purified from original sin, enjoyed from then the use of reason, was filled with the Holy Spirit in a very high degree, and enriched with all the infused virtues, as befitted his high and sublime mission.

The humble virgin of Nazareth was far from wishing to attribute to her own merits the favours and blessings with which she had been prevented by the Lord. Elizabeth had scarcely ceased to speak, when Mary hastened to cause to ascend towards their source the praises, the prerogatives and the glory which had just been offered her; she composed, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that sublime canticle which made Bossuet say: What shall I say on this divine canticle? Its simplicity, its height which passes my understanding, invites me rather to silence than to speak.

Saint Elizabeth and Saint John the Baptist found themselves doubtless the only ones who could hear the Magnificat pronounced for the first time, with so much inspiration, by the voice so sweet, so suave, so virginal, so angelic, of Mary. Who shall tell the transports which John must have felt within himself in listening anew to the voice which had already made him leap? If the sole salutation of the mother of Christ was for him a source of graces and privileges, of which we could not appreciate the richness and the extent, what did not a long succession of truly divine words, accentuated with the voice of the most sublime prophetess that ever was, produce in his soul, from then capable of meriting?

The Gospel does not tell us in a precise manner whether Mary was still at Hebron at the birth of the son of Elizabeth. Origen and Saint Ambrose affirm it positively; the venerable Bede says even that she had come above all for that.[22] It is the common sentiment of the commentators.[23] Is it credible, says one of them,[24] that Mary would have left Elizabeth at the moment when John was about to be born, and that she would have departed without waiting for the birth of this child of the miracle? Was she not rather impatient to consider with her eyes and to touch with her chaste hands the Precursor of her Son? It was on the twenty-fifth of March that the holy Virgin received the visit of the angel and conceived the Son of God. She did not go at once to find Elizabeth, but only some days afterwards, about the tenth day of the moon of April. This is what Saint Luke insinuates. She remained therefore with her cousin the rest of the month of April, all the month of May, and returned only towards the end of June. The Church, which does nothing without a motive, has placed the feast of the Visitation, and consecrated the memory of the presence of Mary at Elizabeth's, on 2 July, a day which coincides with the morrow of the circumcision of Saint John. The reason of this choice is easily guessed: it is because the mother of the Saviour on that day made her farewells to the father and to the mother of the Precursor. For the rest, the commentators authorise us rather to extend than to restrict the words of the Evangelist:[25]

"Now," says Saint Luke, "the time of Elizabeth's being delivered was fulfilled, and she brought forth a son."

The scholastic history of Peter Comestor relates, on the authority of the book of the Just, or of the Nazarenes, that the son of Zachary was received at his birth by the most holy Virgin and that he had thus the privilege of having for first cradle the womb of her who bore the Word of life in her bowels. Saint Bonaventure tells us, with his tender and naïve piety, that Mary took in her arms the son whom Elizabeth had just brought into the world; she clothed him with eagerness, as her position required. This child fixed his eyes on her, as if he had understood who she was; and when she wished to offer him to his mother, he inclined his head towards the Virgin, and seemed to find pleasure only in her; Mary caressed him with happiness, pressed him in her arms and covered him with her kisses.[26]

"The relatives and the neighbours soon knew the signal grace which God had done to Elizabeth" in taking from her the opprobrium of her barrenness, and in favouring her with a happy delivery, in spite of her old age. As Zachary and Elizabeth enjoyed the esteem and the general affection on account of the rank which

they occupied and of the irreproachable holiness of their life, everyone took part in their happiness and offered them congratulations.

God, says Bossuet, disposes with an admirable order the web of His designs. He wished to render celebrated the birth of Saint John the Baptist, in which that of His Son was also to be celebrated by the prophecy of Zachary; and it mattered to the designs of God that he whom He sent to show His Son to the world should be illustrated from his birth: and behold that, under the pretext of an ordinary civility, God assembles those who were to be witnesses of the glory of John the Baptist, to spread it and to remember it. For "all the world was in admiration"; and the marvels which were seen to appear at the birth of John the Baptist "were noised abroad over all the neighbouring country: and all they that had heard them laid them up in their heart, saying: What an one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him."[27] Now, the eighth day which followed the birth of a new-born child was for the Jews a day of feast and of rejoicing: for the child then received the sign of the covenant which God had given to Abraham in prescribing to him circumcision. The priests and the relatives of Zachary, who were to circumcise the child, or to honour with their presence this solemn circumstance, were therefore assembled according to custom. It was judged that a child born under such happy auspices must be worthy to bear the name of his father, as he was to inherit his goods and his dignity. They wished to give John a name according to the custom of the world; but John was a citizen of heaven: wherefore a name had been brought him from on high. It was not a family name, but a prophet's name, says Saint Ambrose. The godfather and the godmother had agreed to call him Zachary. The latter, handing the child to Elizabeth, announced to her that he had been given the name of his father. But the mother, to whom doubtless a revelation had been made from on high, took the word and said: "No, but he shall be called John." They replied to her: "There is none of thy kindred that is named by this name." They were already surprised at the answer of Elizabeth.

Meanwhile Zachary had remained until now the silent witness of all that passed under his eyes. While joy expanded all faces, while hope shone on all the brows of his friends and of his relatives, and while all mouths burst forth in thanksgivings or in words of admiration, Zachary was still struck with dumbness. He followed with his eyes, with anxiety, all that was done; not being able to gather the words which came from the lips of the bystanders, he sought to penetrate their thoughts by reading in their eyes. He was not ignorant that he had a part to fulfil on this occasion; seeing all that the angel had predicted and announced to him accomplished to the letter, he was astonished to feel his tongue still bound. His anxiety was doubtless perceived, and the idea occurred of interrogating him by signs and of taking him for arbiter of the name which must be given to his son. Then "he asked for a writing-table, and wrote thereon these words: John is his name. And all wondered." But it was soon at its height.

Scarcely had Zachary manifested his faith by writing the name which must be given to his son by order of God, when at once his mouth is opened and his tongue loosed. Obedience makes him recover the speech of which he had been deprived in punishment of his resistance. But when the voice is restored to him, he no longer makes heard only the sound of a human voice; for, filled with the Holy Ghost, happy to be able at last to give free course to the transports of his soul, he abandons himself to the prophetic inspiration. Happy dwelling of Zachary and of Elizabeth, where were sung for the first time, in presence of the Voice of the Lord and under the inspiration of the Word of God, both that incomparable canticle of Mary, the happiest of mothers, and the enthusiastic hymn of Zachary, the most fortunate of fathers! In order that these two songs of gratitude and of love intoned at Hebron, the one at the first manifestation of Christ and the other at the birth of His Precursor, may be constantly repeated until the end of the ages, the Church wishes that "day to day may utter this word, and night to night show knowledge of it; there is no mouth nor tongue that does not make its accents resound. The sound of it has gone out into all the earth; the words of it are repeated to the ends of the world."[28] At the decline of day, the Church sings the canticle of the Virgin; and the echo of the sanctuary has not yet ceased to repeat the last accents of it, when already she begins again the hymn of

Zachary to invite the soul to revive its confidence and to redouble its fervour, in order to finish worthily "the office of praises" of which she pays the tribute to the Most High, at the moment when the dawn, forerunner of the sun, as John was of Christ, the true light, dissipates and drives before it the darkness of the night. "Blessed be the Lord," cries Zachary, "blessed be the God of Israel, because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation to us in the house of David His servant, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy Prophets, who are from the beginning of the ages; that one day He would save us from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us, doing mercy to our fathers and remembering His holy covenant. The oath which He swore to Abraham our father; He swore that He would give Himself to us, that being delivered from the hand of our enemies, we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him all our days." "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people, unto the remission of their sins, through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us, to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to direct our feet into the way of peace."

The miracles of grace were added one to another with a marvellous chain. Thus the Gospel observes that all "who dwelt in the neighbouring places were seized with fear. The report of it was spread over all the hill country of Judea. And all they that had heard them laid them up in their heart, saying among themselves: What an one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him." Zachary was the only one who had the answer to this question; the archangel had taught him that his son "would be great before God." This greatness he was about to inaugurate.

Moses had ordered the Jews to consecrate to the Lord their first-born sons, leaving them the faculty of redeeming them by a ransom of five shekels of silver which they offered to the priests.[29] But the children of Levi were to remain attached to the service of the altar; they could not therefore be redeemed by their parents.

The days having elapsed in which the mother of John had to occupy herself with presenting a sacrifice to have herself declared purified of the legal defilement which mothers contracted in childbearing, Elizabeth set out for Jerusalem, accompanied by her husband, and carrying in her arms the holy Precursor whom she was going to consecrate irrevocably to the Lord. The relatives and the friends who had rejoiced at the birth of this child, who had been witnesses of the miracles already accomplished and observed that "the hand of the Lord was with him," could not fail to assemble to form a cortege for Zachary and for Elizabeth on this occasion.

John was therefore carried by his parents into that same temple of Jerusalem, lately still the theatre of the apparition of the angel Gabriel and of the miracle which had announced his birth. Elizabeth, stopping in the part of the temple reserved for persons of her sex, offered to the priests a lamb to be immolated as a holocaust, and the young of a dove as a sacrifice for sin, in order to satisfy thus the law of purification. As for Zachary, taking in his arms the son whom God had given him in His mercy, he advanced as far as the interior of the temple reserved for priests, renewed the offering which he had already made of him in the secret of his heart, and presented him to his brethren in the priesthood to have his name inscribed in the register destined to establish the descent of the children of Aaron, and to establish his rights to the service of the altar.

The son of Zachary received, on this occasion, a triple character of holiness; for he was presented as first-born of his mother, as Moses had prescribed;[30] as son of a pontiff, he was offered for the service of the temple and of the altar, and destined to fulfil one day the functions of sacrificer, according to the prescriptions of the law and the intentions of his parents. Finally, he was consecrated as a Nazarite, according to the order of the angel who had announced "that he should drink no wine nor strong drink." Now, the law said on this subject: "He shall be holy, suffering the hair of his head to grow. All the time of his separation, he shall be holy and consecrated to the Lord."[31] The Nazarites were among the Israelites what religious are among Christians. Their institution, which could be embraced without distinction of sex, for a time or for

ever, had God Himself for author.

Elizabeth and Zachary had seen with regret depart from their hospitable dwelling the humble Virgin who bore in her womb the blessed fruit, hope and salvation of the world; but their hearts had not been separated from her. Their wishes and their blessings had followed Mary to Nazareth. Zachary had watched over the youth of Mary, with a paternal solicitude, during all the years that she passed in the temple before being given as spouse to the chaste Joseph. Could he not follow her with his attention and his love even into the workshop of the artisan, above all since he knew the secret of her mysterious pregnancy? The duties of his charge called him frequently to Jerusalem, whither flowed every day the children of Israel coming from all points of the country. He could not therefore fail to maintain intimate and frequent relations with the mother of his Saviour and with Joseph whom He had given her as guardian of her virtue. Could the holy spouses of Nazareth have had secrets for a relative, a protector, a priest, to whom God had revealed all the mystery and whom He had endowed with the gift of prophecy?

It is therefore impossible to suppose that Zachary and Elizabeth were not instructed of the time when Mary was to bring into the world the Expectation of the nations; they could not therefore be ignorant any more of the journey which she was obliged to make to Bethlehem to obey the edict of Caesar. When the shepherds had related the marvels which had been announced to them by the angels, and of which they had been witnesses at the grotto, Zachary and Elizabeth were doubtless in admiration like all those who heard the recital of them; for their dwelling was not half a day's march from Bethlehem; but we cannot believe that they confined themselves to a sterile admiration, as the Jews seem to have done.

Doubtless, and we repeat it again, we can put forth here only conjectures; history fails us in this as in many other points. But what was to be done according to the customs and the holy prescriptions of a nation which had God Himself for legislator, was the rule of conduct of Zachary and of Elizabeth. Had they need, moreover, to consult the ordinary usages in such a circumstance, when charity, affection, piety and admiration drew them by a transport of gratitude towards the Lord who had already prevented them with His visit? Bethlehem was on the road which led from Hebron to Jerusalem, whither Zachary was called frequently by his piety no less than by his functions.

It is therefore not strange to believe and to advance that from the crib which served Him as throne, in the midst of the swaddling-clothes which held for Him the place of purple, in the stable which He made His palace, Jesus Christ counted, among His first adorers, Zachary and Elizabeth, eager to present to Him the holy Precursor to do homage to Him of what they had dearest and most precious in the world, and to draw down upon him new blessings. We could not say how long Zachary and Elizabeth remained at Bethlehem near the holy family, whose needs they hastened, without any doubt, to provide for. But the ceremony of the circumcision of the divine Child must have been for them a new motive to be found there. It is known in effect that, on this occasion, there was a concourse of relatives and friends. Now, what relatives and what friends could have lent their assistance to Joseph and to Mary in the city of Bethlehem, where they had been able to find no other asylum than a stable? Zachary and Elizabeth must therefore have been there when the Son of God was subjected to circumcision, proclaiming thus that He made Himself a slave of the law.

It was five days after the circumcision, and the thirteenth after the birth of the Son of God, according to the sentiment most commonly received by the doctors, that the Magi came to deposit their offerings at the feet of the son of Mary. We shall hazard no assertion relative to the presence of Zachary and of Elizabeth at this touching and mysterious adoration of the sons of the East, prostrating themselves humbly before the crib of Bethlehem. However there is no ground to doubt that Zachary was informed of the arrival of the Magi; for he was counted among the princes of the priests. Now, Herod had ordered that the Sanhedrin should be assembled in full to consult it on the place where the Messias was to be born; he had taken care that there should not be wanting a single one of the princes of the priests, a single one of the scribes or of the doctors who interpreted the law and explained it to the people. *Et congregans omnes principes sacerdotum et scribas*

populi. Thus everything leads us to believe that when Joseph and Mary presented themselves at the entrance of the temple, forty days after the birth of Jesus, in order to satisfy the prescriptions of the law, the priest Zachary was there to receive them, to introduce them, and to serve them as intermediary; and that Elizabeth accompanied them, carrying the holy Precursor.

Besides the inductions which we should have to furnish on the subject of this affirmation, we can invoke here the authority of history. Those who have written the life of the mother of God relate, in effect, that presenting herself to satisfy the precept of the purification, she placed herself in the temple on the side assigned to virgins. The priests wished to remove her from it; but Zachary opposed it, maintaining that her childbirth had not impaired her virginity, and by that he drew upon himself their hatred, and later their vengeance.[32] The father of the Precursor was therefore witness of the happiness of Simeon, that holy old man whom a close friendship, as well as the functions of the same priesthood, rendered dear to Zachary.[33] He heard him prophesy his canticle of thanksgiving to the Lord, and predict to Mary that her child would be for the ruin and the resurrection of many in Israel; a prediction which was soon to begin to be accomplished with regard to himself.

Meanwhile Herod sent his most devoted satellites to Bethlehem, designated by the doctors of Israel as the place of the birth, and, consequently, of the residence of the Messias; and he ordered them to put to death, in this city and in the neighbouring places, without delay, without pity and without distinction, all the male children from the age of two years and under, according to the time which had been indicated to him by the Magi.[34] In immolating all the children from the age of two years, he thought to be sure of averting the peril which he dreaded. This massacre of the children of Bethlehem, according to the opinion of the authors,[35] took place only about two years after the birth of the Saviour; it is mentioned by Macrobius,[36] who adds that one of the very sons of Herod fell under the blows of the emissaries, too faithful executors of his orders. Fourteen thousand children, some say, were thus victims of the fury of this tyrant.

But this general massacre did not give the despot the certainty of having put to death him whom he regarded as a rival and competitor for his throne; become suspicious to excess, he wished to cause to perish also the son of Zachary. The marvels which he had heard related on the subject of the conception and of the birth of John were quite capable, in effect, of making him pass in his shadowy mind for the Messias, since the Jews themselves shared later this persuasion. He gave therefore express orders to have the holy Precursor also slaughtered; but, this time again, God did not permit the execution of it.

This tyrant sent therefore soldiers to find his father Zachary, saying to him: “Where hast thou hidden thy son?” He answered in these terms: “By the God whose priest I am and whom I serve in His temple, I know not where my son is.” And the satellites went to give account of it to Herod. “What,” said this prince in anger, “is his son to reign over Israel?” And he sent his servants to Zachary, with order to repeat to him: “Tell the truth: where is thy child? Knowest thou not that thy blood is under my hand?” And the sicarii departed and reported these words to Zachary. “God is my witness,” he answered, “that I know not where my son is. As for you, shed my blood, you can; God will receive my soul, for you will shed innocent blood.”

Herod had had until then respect for Zachary; but was this respect capable of imposing always silence on the anger and the vengeance of a tyrant who made two of his sons be strangled in cold blood, and the dearest of his wives be massacred? He counted, moreover, on the silence or the connivance of the Jews, to whom the holy old man had become odious for having spoken of the virginity of the mother of Christ.[37] Herod pushed therefore impiety and fury to the point of having him pursued into the sacred enclosure where this holy pontiff exercised functions[38] which ought to have protected him: Zachary was massacred between the temple and the altar. Tertullian reports that there were still seen, in his time, stains of the blood of Zachary imprinted in indelible characters on the pavement where this sacrilegious homicide had been accomplished.[39]

Thus died this illustrious sacrificer; his virtues had rendered him worthy of martyrdom, and he merited to be praised by the Holy Ghost Himself. Father of the greatest of simple mortals and of the most glorious of the Prophets, he was himself the last echo of the prophetic spirit which had animated until then the aged priesthood of Aaron, and enlightened the expiring synagogue. The Christian Church counts him among her Saints, and honours his memory on 5 November. The Greeks regard Saint Zachary as a priest, a prophet and a martyr. Usuard, Ado and other Latins venerate him also as a prophet, on 5 November; and the Roman martyrology joins with him Elizabeth, his wife.[40]

The priests went to the temple at the hour of prayer; but Zachary did not present himself to meet them to offer them his blessing, according to custom. They abstained from saluting him and from praising the Most High. Remarking also that they delayed to open to them, they feared to enter. However, one of them, bolder, advanced; but he returned to announce to the others that Zachary had been killed. At these words, they determined to enter; they saw what had happened, and remarked that the panelling of the temple groaned and was rent from top to bottom. The body of the victim was not found; but his blood shed in the vestibule had become like stone. The priests, seized with fear, went out of the enclosure and announced to the people that Zachary had been put to death. At this news, all classes of the people put on mourning, and they wept for three days and three nights. After these three days, the priests held counsel to give him a successor. The lot fell on Simeon.

While the fury of Herod sought to glut itself on Zachary, Elizabeth, deprived of support and of stay, and not daring to implore any human help, in the fear of seeing her precious deposit taken from her, fled, carrying in her arms and pressing against her heart the child of the promise; she asked of the mountains and of the rocks an unknown retreat and a protecting shelter for her son. It is said that, in her grief and her abandonment, this desolate mother, but confident nevertheless and resigned, did not fear to implore of the rocks of the desert a grace which would have been refused her by the satellites of the tyrant, and that, at her prayer, God offered her an asylum by opening the flanks of a rock which closed again upon her. The Lord confided the mother and the child to the care and to the guard of an angel. It is added that Elizabeth died forty days after.

John, persecuted, pursued and devoted to death from his childhood, had miraculously avoided the murderous sword which won for the children of Bethlehem the happiness of shedding first their blood for Jesus Christ. Nevertheless he was not on that account to be deprived of the glory of martyrdom.

Deprived of a father whom God seemed to have given him to prepare him worthily for his high destiny; forsaken, not having yet three years, by a mother worthy to have a son proclaimed without equal by the Truth itself, the holy Precursor could not long enjoy the delicious embraces of the one, nor receive from the other the teachings of virtues, of science and of holiness which made her the glory of Israel.

But “the hand of the Lord was with him,” adds Saint Luke; and His Providence watched over his days. God, who feeds every day the birds of the air, had formerly provided miraculously for the needs of the son of Agar, who was not the child of the promise; He had fed, during forty years, a whole people in an arid desert; and, later, He confided to a raven the care of bearing to the first Elias the bread of his day. He willed also to protect the days of the son of Zachary, and He charged His angels to feed him and to raise him.[41] According to the thought of Saint John Chrysostom and of Saint Augustine, God seems to have acted towards the Precursor as towards the first man; when He had created Adam in the plain of Damascus, He transported him at once into paradise to perfect him and to protect him. He placed John also in the desert as in a paradise; it is there, in effect, that God perfects His Saints by giving them an idea of His glory, which can be considered only in retreat. He did not wish to have raised in the midst of the world the preacher of the truth; for it is not known in the world, and above all in palaces. Thus He drew Moses from the court of Pharaoh, where he was raised too delicately, and sent him into the desert of Madian.[42]

"What God does in this child is unheard of," says Bossuet.[43] "He who, from his mother's womb, had begun to enlighten Saint John the Baptist and to fill him with His spirit, seized upon him from his childhood. What must we not think of a young child whom one sees all at once, after the great splendour made by his miraculous birth, disappear to be alone with God, and God with him? Far from the commerce of men, he had none but with heaven. Who would not admire this profound retreat? What did not this God say to him who was in him? We must not therefore be astonished if the Gospel says of him these words quite worthy of remark:"And the child grew, and was strengthened in spirit; and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel."[44]

The Gospel does not make known to us the deserts where Saint John the Baptist passed his life, until it pleased the Lord to send him to preach. But tradition has gathered up with care all that could put one on the traces and make one follow the steps of him who prepared the ways for the Messias. Anthony Aranda, religious of the Order of Saint Francis, who had explored with great care the Holy Land, relates that the Precursor dwelt in three different places. At five miles from Jerusalem, says this author, is found a borough which possesses a temple built on the very place where was the house of Zachary and of Elizabeth. There is visited a chapel celebrated for the birth of Saint John the Baptist. Not far from there is found another church which is said also to have been a house of Zachary; it is believed to be the place where the holy Virgin went to visit Elizabeth. At the distance of a mile is found a narrow and deep valley. This valley is backed against a rock in which is seen a cavern hewn in the rock. It is in this cavern, it is said, that John passed his childhood. This is the first desert inhabited by the Precursor; it is found at six miles from Jerusalem. Not far from this grotto, situated in the valley of the Terebinth, is found a little eminence dominated by a rock. The local traditions, according to the report of modern travellers, say that the holy solitary addressed the people from the top of this rock, which bears still to-day the name of Chair of Saint John the Baptist.

Having arrived at a more advanced age, says tradition again, he withdrew into another place, and buried himself in a solitude near Hebron, at eight miles south of Jerusalem. It was there he dwelt when the voice of God ordered him to go and begin his mission.

At the order of the Lord, he came into a vast desert on this side of the Jordan, not far from Jericho; this is the third desert which served him as retreat. John Moschus reports, on the faith of a revelation, that Jesus Christ came several times to visit Saint John in a desert named Samsas, situated about a mile beyond the Jordan.[45] Saint Bonaventure says that John dwelt in a desert not far from the place where the Hebrews, under the conduct of Josue, crossed the Jordan miraculously on their return from Egypt. If we believe this pious doctor, the child Jesus, returning from exile with Mary and Joseph, would have gone to see His Precursor, already given to the solitary and penitent life. "With what eagerness," he says, "and what joy the son of Zachary received this august visit! What must not his happiness have been! The holy family would have remained some time with Saint John, would have shared his frugal meal, and after having loaded him with ineffable blessings, would have bidden him farewell leaving him to his holy contemplations."[46] "Saint John," says Peter of Blois,[47] "preferred the solitude of the desert to the solicitudes of the world, peace to noise, tranquillity to tumult; he knew that flight and distance from men were his strongest safeguard against the contagion of vices." However, we cannot doubt that he left his desert at times to come to Jerusalem to satisfy the precept of the law. Moses had prescribed to the Jews to present themselves every year before the Eternal to offer Him the tribute of their adorations;[48] Jesus Christ Himself conformed to this order, as Saint Luke teaches us.[49] No reason authorises us to believe that John the Baptist was dispensed from it. For, as Nazarite, as priest, as prophet and above all as precursor of the Messias, he was bound to observe the holy prescriptions of the law. It is therefore permitted us to advance that at the solemnity of Pentecost or of Weeks, at the feast of Tabernacles and on the occasion of the pasch, the son of Zachary left his solitude, was doubtless lost in the crowd of the people and went to present to the Lord adorations in spirit and in truth. His Nazarite's hair, his austere countenance, his strange garments, failed not to fix upon him looks and attention.

Pious souls will love, in these circumstances, to see him meet at times in the temple, and eat the pasch with Jesus, Mary and Joseph; they will imagine the sweet conversations, the holy talks which must have taken place between Christ and His Precursor; for nothing opposes this idea, which is more than a fiction; it is not only verisimilar, but all sorts of probabilities would be found for it.

He who was "the true light" come down from heaven to "enlighten every man coming into this world" and to manifest Himself to all flesh, remained until then in the most profound oblivion. Despite the marvels of His birth, revealed first by the angels, related afterwards by the shepherds and soon divulged in all places by the Magi and by the very furies of Herod; despite the short but nevertheless luminous manifestation which He had made of Himself in the temple to the doctors themselves, Jesus Christ, the son and heir of David, the Messias, the Saviour, who had for so long been the object of the expectation of the nations, remained always in the most profound oblivion. He shone nevertheless, but in the midst of darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend Him; He was in the world, and this world, work of His hands, knew Him not; He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

Thus the sceptre fallen from the hands of Juda, the principality taken from the nation, the weeks of Daniel elapsed, the country in ruin, the epoch come when everyone awaited the deliverer, the accomplishment of the prophecies, nothing had been capable of fixing the attention of the children of Abraham on Him in whom this privileged race was to be blessed. Already more than thirty years had elapsed without the world deigning to occupy itself with Jesus, reputed son of an unknown artisan, Himself devoted to a laborious and dishonoured trade, shut up in a narrow workshop, dwelling in an unknown borough; the Son of God, equal and consubstantial to the Father, the Word made flesh and clothed with the form of a slave, awaited the moment fixed for His manifestation in Israel. Coming to save the human race which pride had lost, He wished thus to heal it and to redeem it by His own abasement. It is for this that He consecrated all His life of Nazareth to an oblivion as instructive and as meritorious, perhaps, as the glorious humiliations of Calvary.

But there were profound and mysterious motives for this conduct of divine Providence. The word of each of us has need of a clear and sonorous voice to be better heard; so the Word of God made flesh had need of the testimony of John, in order that men might be less scandalised at it. Thus the authority of John served Jesus Christ to justify Himself not only before the simple, but still in face of the envious and of those who were scandalised voluntarily.

John the Baptist, adds Saint Augustine, filled mysteriously the role of the voice; but he was not alone the voice; for every man who announces the Word is also voice of the Word. In effect, what the sound of our mouth is with regard to the word which we have in the mind, that also is every pious soul towards the Word of whom it is said: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God." What august words, and even what solemn voices, the thought conceived in the heart produces! What illustrious preachers the Word who dwells in God causes to arise! It is He who sent the patriarchs, the Prophets and the numerous cortege of all those who have spoken of Him with so much brilliance. The Word, dwelling always in the bosom of the Father, sent voices; and, in the train of these numerous voices which came before Him, He arrived Himself alone as on His chariot, with His voice, in His flesh. Unite therefore, as in one, all these voices which have preceded the Word, and put them all in the person of John the Baptist. He was by himself alone the complete recapitulation, the august and mysterious personification of all these voices. It is for this that he is called properly the Voice, for he was as the figure, the mysterious emblem of all these voices.[50] Saint John "was not himself the light by essence; but he came to give testimony of the light;"[51] and such was the sublime character of his mission that the doctors have not feared to say that it was necessary that he should render testimony to the light, and that in the order, or at least in the execution of the divine decrees, the Saviour of the world, God as He was, had need of the testimony of Saint John, and that this testimony was necessary for the establishment of our faith. Now, the Saviour recognised it Himself when He said to the Jews: "If I bear witness of myself, you would say,"

although unjustly, “that my testimony is not true; but there is another that beareth witness of me.”[52] For, according to the thought of Saint John Chrysostom, explaining this passage to the letter, this other, of whom Jesus Christ spoke, was Saint John, His Precursor. Moreover, in the order of the divine decrees, the testimony of Saint John was necessary for the establishment of our faith; for the same evangelist, who teaches us that John came to render testimony to the light, brings at once the reason: “That all men might believe through him.” Whence it follows that our faith in Jesus Christ is originally founded on the testimony of this great Saint, since in effect it is by him that we have believed; by him that the way of salvation was first revealed to us; in a word, by him that we are Christians.[53]

He did not speak of himself, says Saint John Chrysostom, but he revealed the mysteries of Him in whose name he came. It is for this that he is called angel. This name under which the Precursor designated himself according to the Prophet, signifies nothing else than messenger, ambassador; it does not necessarily indicate the nature of the heavenly spirits, ordinarily called angels; but it makes known an august function, which God deigns at times to confide to mortals. Thus the prophets Aggeus and Malachias are designated under this name, and all priests, in general, are called “angels of the God of hosts.”

John the Baptist had not the heavenly nature of the angels, as some of the Jews have believed, and even Christians illustrious nevertheless for their learning, like Origen; for they pretended that the son of Zachary was none other than an angel, incarnate, like the Son of God, to be His precursor and to serve Him under the same form of a slave which He had deigned also to put on. It is to refute this error that the evangelist Saint John says expressly, from the beginning of his book, that the Precursor sent of God was a man.

However, by a privilege of grace, John was an angel; for God had sent him as a herald to bring men to Jesus Christ. — Like the heavenly spirits, he had had no childhood, since, from his mother’s womb, he was sanctified, endowed with the spirit of prophecy and with the use of reason; in effect, he knew then, saluted and adored his God by a transport of joy. — By his life, which was but a continual fast, says Saint Basil,[54] he seemed to belong to the nature of the angels. — If, according to Saint Bernard,[55] the chaste man is comparable to the angels by his happiness, and surpasses them by his virtue, the son of Zachary must occupy one of the most glorious and most elevated places in the heavenly hierarchy;[56] for he drew, so to speak, chastity in God, who willed to cause him to be born in exceptional and wholly miraculous conditions. — It is the property of the angels to see unceasingly the face of God;[57] now, since he had received in the womb of his mother the visit of the Son of God, did John the Baptist cease a single instant to live in His presence, to stand before Him and to serve Him as the angels stand before God and serve Him? — He was, according to the opinion of the greater part of the doctors, confirmed in grace like the angels, for he never let himself fall into any fault. The austerity of his life, the severity of his penance, his privations in matter of food, of clothing, of rest, of sleep, which made of his existence a continual martyrdom, obtained for him this privilege which we envy in the angels. Wherefore Saint John Chrysostom says that his life was wholly angelic; he lived on earth as if he had been in heaven. Triumphing over the necessities of life, he followed a career which one cannot admire enough; for, unceasingly occupied in prayer, in supplication and in the praises of the Lord, he avoided all human society, and God alone was the object and the term of his conversations. — The angels of a superior order teach those who are beneath them; they purify, enlighten and perfect men; this also John the Baptist did, according to what the angel Gabriel had announced to Zachary: “He shall convert many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God; he shall go before Him in the virtue and spirit of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, to bring back the incredulous to the wisdom of the just, and to prepare for the Lord a perfect people.” — Finally, a last character which rendered Saint John like the angels is that he had, like them, no other master than the Holy Ghost. It was by his care that he knew the most profound mysteries, not according to the bounds of a human intelligence, but with all the penetration of a heavenly spirit. This is what Saint Ambrose and Saint John Chrysostom teach. It was in the school of the Holy Ghost that John received the understanding of the Scriptures and even the power of speaking and of writing with the

authority of the sacred authors. It was there that he drew the science and the zeal which were necessary to him as doctor and as preacher, to win to Christ the faith of the whole world.

After these general considerations proper to throw more light on the life of the holy Precursor, let us resume the thread of his history.

We know, in a general manner, that the Saviour began first by practising, and then only by teaching. But in this also John the Baptist was to be His precursor. Before raising his voice to call men to penance, he had practised it himself in the highest degree; before teaching virtue, he had followed its most arduous paths. In effect, he was clothed with camel's hair and, according to the custom of the Nazarites, he had about his loins a girdle of leather, sign and emblem of mortification and of penance. This exterior, enhanced by long waving hair such as the Nazarites wore, and which recalled the costume of the ancient Prophets, was by itself alone already a preaching. For, as Saint Gregory remarks, the coarseness of the garments of Saint John was a proof of his mortification and above all of his rare humility. For precious garments are put on only from a motive of vain glory and with the design of appearing more honourable than others; the proof of it results from this: that no one attaches importance to being richly clothed when he is not to be seen, and when he does not seek to appear. Thus, among the causes of the reprobation incurred by the wicked rich man, Jesus Christ takes care to bring out the splendour of his garments; and in enumerating the reproaches with which He overwhelms the Pharisees, He mentions the luxury of their flowing robes, adorned with magnificent fringes.

On the contrary, in making the eulogy of His Precursor, He asks whether he was seen to clothe himself with softness. Scripture shows us everywhere that opulence of garments irritates the Lord, while abject clothes appease His anger.

By his manner of clothing himself, Saint John resembled Elias, whose memory had not ceased to be living among the Jews. There was even seen in this new prophet a virtue much more admirable than in him of Thesbe; for if the latter was formerly clothed as the son of Zachary is to-day, he still inhabited the cities and lived ordinarily like other men; whereas John dwelt in solitude from the cradle, and took his nourishment in so small a quantity that the Son of God could say of him, as a thing known to all, that he neither ate nor drank.

Was it moreover a nourishment, the wild honey and the acrides[58] with which he sustained his body? For not only did he not nourish himself with bread and wine, nor with the flesh of animals, of birds or of fishes which he might have had the faculty of finding in the desert or in the Jordan; but, according to Clement of Alexandria, he made use neither of the berries of trees, nor of the seeds of plants, nor of vegetables.

It is commonly admitted that Saint John ate locusts, a vulgar nourishment and ordinary enough for the law of Moses to contain dispositions on this subject, ranging them in the number of pure animals. However this opinion, although generally accredited, is far from uniting the unanimous assent of authors; and those who seem to have best understood and explained the word of the Gospel say formally that the nourishment of Saint John was composed of buds of plants and of young shoots of trees. This is the sense of the Ethiopian version; what Saint

Athanasius and Clement of Alexandria say formally; it is also the sentiment of Saint Isidore of Pelusium, of Nicephorus, of Cajetan, of Bochard, etc.

This last author, in the description which he makes of Palestine, says that there are on the banks of the Jordan herbs known under the name of acrides, and of which the monks made their nourishment. — Thus we read in the life of Saint Hilarion that his nourishment consisted of some figs and in the juice of herbs.[59]

The inhabitants of the country, founded on local traditions, always so vivacious in the East, take pleasure in showing to the pilgrims of the Holy Land a shrub of which the holy Precursor formerly made his nourishment: it is the carob-tree.

“The poor people nourish themselves on it, they chew the pulp or mix it with water. Among the trees which are remarked on the hill where is the grotto of Saint John, there are still to-day several carob-trees. This tree is called in German Tree of the bread of Saint John, precisely because it is believed that Saint John nourished himself on its fruits. It is also the nourishment of which mention is made in the history of the Prodigal Son, who would have been very glad to satisfy himself with the husks.

“Successor of the prophets Elias and Eliseus, who lived on herbs and roots in the grottoes of Mount Carmel, Saint John was therefore the first anchorite of Christianity, and his example was soon followed by thousands of others. From the first centuries, these deserts have been peopled by his pious imitators.”[60]

This rude and rigorous life, says Bossuet, was not unknown in the ancient law. There are seen in it, in its prophets, the Nazarites, who drank no wine. There are seen in it, in Jeremias, the Rechabites who, not content with depriving themselves of this liquor, neither ploughed, nor sowed, nor cultivated the vine, nor built houses, but dwelt in tents. The Lord praises them by His prophet Jeremias for having been faithful to the commandment of their father Jonadab, and promises them, in recompense, that their institute shall never cease. The Essenes, in the very time of the Saviour, kept many of these observances. The prophetic life which appears in Elias, in Eliseus, in all the Prophets, was full of austerities similar to those of John the Baptist, and was passed in the desert, where they lived nevertheless in society with their families.

But that ever one had sequestered himself from the world, and devoted himself to a rigorous solitude, as much and as early as John the Baptist, with a nourishment so frightful, exposed to the injuries of the air, and having no retreats but the rocks, for we are not told of tents or pavilions, without help, without servants and without any support, this is what there was as yet no example of.[61]

At first sight, it seems strange and extraordinary that the herald of the Gospel, the messenger sent by God Himself to prepare the good news, should begin his career by preaching penance. Why did he not announce rather joy? It is that in the state of servitude in which they groaned, the children of Jacob awaited a deliverer who should occupy himself solely, or at least principally, with restoring them to their political liberty and to their national independence. They had forgotten, or else they did not understand, under what features the Prophets had depicted the Saviour, the Emmanuel who was to come to work their salvation, to occupy Himself above all with their souls and to propose to them the goods of another life. They would have saluted with acclamation a Messias restorer of their country, that land so solemnly promised to their fathers, and of which they were nevertheless dispossessed by Gentiles. They would have imposed on themselves all sacrifices, would have braved all dangers, undergone fatigues and faced death itself, to second the views of this deliverer and to give him the means of restoring them to liberty. This is why the Jews were held, for some time, in a continual alert, ready to salute the first who should show himself as the Messias, and to give him the concurrence of their goods and of their persons.

But as much as they deceived themselves on the mission which they supposed to this deliverer, so much did they delude themselves on the means to be put in operation to assure and facilitate the success of his coming. Like the conquering Messias awaited by the Jews, the pacific King, who was their true deliverer, was to exact from them a co-operation and sacrifices, but of a quite different kind. As the kingdom which He came to assure them and the deliverance which He was going to offer them were wholly supernatural and divine, so the co-operation which was to be brought to it was also to have a character exclusively spiritual and heavenly; for what He wished to conquer, to subject to His laws and to submit to His empire, was the heart of the Jews; and He was to employ for this no other arms than those of penance. His Precursor, who was charged to go before Him to prepare the way for Him, could not therefore preach anything else.

It is also for this that Saint John the Baptist, recalling the words formerly pronounced by Isaias, declares that he himself is charged to put them into execution, and calls to this war, to this conquest of a new kind, crying to all: “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.” This metaphorical language, ordinarily used

by the Prophets, was to be understood by the people.

The Gospel does not make known to us what was the precise subject of the first discourse which Saint John the Baptist addressed to the people after having announced his mission in a general manner. According to Saint Matthew, he exhorted the Jews to penance, and gave as motive the approach of the kingdom of heaven. According to Saint Mark, he came baptising and preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins. Thus it would result from their narratives that the Precursor spoke, from the beginning of his preaching, of three different subjects: of penance, of baptism and of the kingdom of heaven. It does not seem to us nevertheless that he could develop and make understood these different matters in a single discourse; for they required explanations on his part. We may therefore suppose that he made of them three special instructions.

The Pharisees believed they expiated all their faults by practising frequent ablutions; and, in their pride, they did not see that without repentance and the tears of the heart, penance and the purifications of the body are incapable of justifying before God. Now, they had infected all the people with the leaven of their doctrine.

To undeceive the Jews of this pernicious belief, Saint John the Baptist set himself to preach penance; no longer only that penance which consisted in afflicting momentarily and washing the body, and which did not address itself to the soul to humble its pride and repress carnal concupiscence; but that interior penance which consists in breaking, in rending the heart to cause to come out of it the mortal venom which sin has left in it. He announced, at the same time, that this penance of the heart operated the remission of sins with the help of a new baptism, wholly different from the legal and traditional ablutions.

It cannot be denied, doubtless, that the dogma of the remission of sins was at least insinuated under the régime of the law; but the expiatory sacrifices, the satisfactory penances had rather for aim to dissemble sins before God than to operate the remission of them.[62] This is what made Saint Gregory the Great say: Before the coming of Christ, it was uncertain whether those who had fallen into grave sins could be pardoned; and the remission of sins was unknown to a great number.[63]

Thus therefore it was reserved to the holy Precursor to be the first messenger of mercy and to announce in a formal, positive and general manner the consoling dogma of the pardon and of the redemption of sins by means of penance.

It would be difficult for us, who have lived only under the law of grace and of love, to form an idea of the effect which this solemn announcement must have produced on a people bowed, so to speak, under the weight of a law of justice and of rigour. The news of an unexpected amnesty, which restores a prisoner to liberty, an exile to his country, or which breaks the fetters of a condemned man, causes no more joy, excites no more transports. Thus the crowd of the people soon pressed around the new prophet with so extraordinary a concourse that Elias, that prophet so venerated for the power of his word and of his works, never saw run up so numerous a multitude, so eager and so well disposed to obey. At the voice of John the Baptist, everything yields, each one gives himself up; he makes as many penitents as he has hearers. However, those who are converted are not struck nor attracted by the brilliance of his miracles; for he wrought none. It is his virtues and his austerities which make such powerful impressions on the mind and on the heart of those who listen to him. The holiness of his life engages those who hear him to reform theirs; the most voluptuous cease to be so on seeing a man so mortified.

According to the prediction of the angel, the son of Zachary was to precede the Son of God in all His ways; his annunciation, his birth, his penance, his preaching were already preparations for those of Christ; he was therefore to precede Him also by his baptism. The baptism of Saint John was, in effect, for those who found themselves animated by the spirit of faith, what the teaching of doctrine is for catechumens before their admission to the sacrament of regeneration. In conferring it, Saint John had moreover the occasion of making felt the necessity of interior purification and of penance of the heart, contrary to what the hypocritical Pharisees practised, who contented themselves with cleansing the outside of the cup without troubling

themselves to purify their hearts full of rapine and of impurities. By this means, the Precursor could, besides, render testimony to Jesus Christ. He says in effect himself that he came to baptise in water to manifest to Israel Him who was to baptise in the Holy Ghost. None of the ancient Prophets having announced and administered baptism, the novelty of the role of Saint John, which won him the surname of Baptiser or Baptist, attracted to him an immense crowd. He could thus announce to all the people the coming of the Messias, whose precursor he called himself.

Finally, the baptism of Saint John had still for aim to dispose men to receive that of Jesus Christ. As it was given in the name of Him who had for so long been the expectation of the nations and above all of the Jewish people, it was as a declaration and a profession of faith in the Redeemer, and an engagement to bring forth worthy fruits of penance. The knowledge and the faith of the mystery of the redemption and the practice of penance were the end of the baptism given by Saint John.

And because penance is not obligatory for children, and because women were to be instructed by their husbands, the Precursor admitted to his baptism, according to some authors, neither children nor women.

The baptism of the Precursor was a sacrament, since it was the sign of a holy thing, namely: the sign of the baptism of Jesus Christ. It did not confer grace by itself; nevertheless it was as the preamble of the sacraments of grace and of the new law. Wherefore it is called properly the intermediary between the sacraments of the Old Testament and those of the New. It had this in common with the sacraments of the old law, that it was only a sign; with those of the new law and of grace, that it disposed proximately to grace, and that, by its form and its matter, it had similitudes with Christian baptism; for it was given in water and in the name of Christ.

It cannot be doubted that John made use of a formula in giving his baptism. Saint Paul insinuates it in a manner clear enough by these words: “John baptised the people with the baptism of penance, saying that they should believe in Him who was to come after him;”[64] the Greek text has “in Jesus Christ.” The holy Fathers and the Doctors of the Church infer from this that the form of the baptism of Saint John was: “I baptise thee and I initiate thee into the faith of Christ who is to come.” John, says Saint Ambrose, baptised for the remission of sins, not in his own name, but in the name of Jesus Christ. According to Saint Jerome, those who had received the baptism of John were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus who was to come after him. The Master of the Sentences, and with him Saint Thomas and Saint Bonaventure, Hugh of Saint-Victor, Tostat and other more modern authors have shared this persuasion. The Precursor had received from God Himself the mission of baptising; his baptism was therefore divine, and all the Jews were persuaded of it. If one judges by the eagerness which the people and the Pharisees themselves showed in receiving it, it will appear evident that its necessity was believed in. It was, without contradiction, a means more efficacious than all the ancient purifications, and even than the sacrifices of the law, to obtain the pardon of sins. Thus, according to Eusebius, it was to detach little by little the Jews from the Mosaic rites that God had intimated to Saint John the order to baptise. If this baptism was not indispensable to salvation, like that of Jesus Christ, it entered nevertheless into the divine plan of the work of redemption; for it was destined to serve as term to the law and as beginning to the Gospel; it was to prepare men for penance of the heart, to make them feel the necessity of purity of soul, to accustom them to the baptism of Jesus Christ; finally, it was by this means that the Son of God wished to be manifested in Israel.

What distinguished above all the baptism of Saint John, and gave it a particular efficacy, is that it was accompanied by the confession of sins. “All Judea,” says Saint Mark, “and all they of Jerusalem went out to him, and were baptised by him in the river of the Jordan, confessing their sins.” This is the place to inquire what was the nature of this confession required by the Precursor to be admitted to his baptism. The public or secret avowal of one’s faults was not an unheard-of thing among the ancients, and above all among the Jews. It was to be so; for is not confession a need of the human heart?

To grant his pardon to the guilty, God has always exacted from him a humble and sincere confession. Under the law of nature as well as under the law of Moses and under the Gospel, this confession was to be made not only with the heart and with the mouth, but also confided to the minister chosen by God; it was to be not only general, but particular and special. This is what we see by Genesis, where God interrogates separately first Adam, then Eve, and, later, the fratricide Cain, to receive from their mouth a sincere and complete avowal of their fault in presence of His minister, that is to say of that angel who appeared to them under a human figure, since he walked in paradise.

The doctors believe that if Adam, instead of throwing the fault on the woman, as the woman on the cunning of the serpent, had sincerely confessed his sin, God would have restored our first parents to their primitive state, or at least would have mitigated their condemnation, and perhaps would not have made the chastisement weigh upon their posterity.[65]

Such was the high esteem and the admiration which was held for the son of Zachary that people ran from all sides to hear his doctrine and to receive his baptism. It was an honour and a glory which the Pharisees themselves did not disdain, forced in this to follow the torrent of the multitude to spare their popularity and not to compromise the good opinion of perfection and of holiness which they affected. These proud sectaries presented themselves therefore also to the Precursor to be baptised by him. But without letting himself be seduced by this forced testimony of respect which the Pharisees rendered to his holiness and to his mission, Saint John penetrated into the very secret of their hearts, and, under this apparent humility, discovering the pride and the spite which animated them, he made them undergo the trial of confession. He admitted to his baptism only those who gave him thereby a mark of repentance, a testimony of the humility and of the compunction of their heart, and a pledge of the docility of their mind to receive the ulterior teachings of a new doctrine. As for those who refused to cast the venom out of their soul by a sincere avowal of their faults, he treated them harshly, reproached them with their hypocrisy and their blindness, and he refused to purify them in the water of the Jordan and to give them thus the initiating baptism, destined to prepare, for the day of the coming of the Lord, those who did not render themselves unworthy of this favour. The greater part of the great ones of the Jewish nation refused to submit to this trial, and were not admitted to the baptism of John. Wherefore Saint Luke tells us that “the Pharisees and the lawyers despised the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised.”

The so elevated language of the holy Precursor, the subject of his discourses, so remote from that of the ancient Prophets, but above all what he said of the kingdom of heaven, must have appeared strange to the Jews: they had never heard its name pronounced. This language was certainly obscure for them, and they were incapable of understanding it; for it does not appear that Saint John explained to them the mystery of it. Jesus Christ had doubtless reserved to Himself to give the understanding of it Himself by the comparisons, the parables and the diverse explanations of which we find so many examples in the Gospel. However it was hardly possible, even for the grossest minds, to take in a material and earthly sense the promise of the exclusively spiritual kingdom announced by the Precursor.

One can, in effect, judge ordinarily of the richness, the opulence and the glory of a kingdom by the pomp and brilliance with which the monarch who presides over its destinies is pleased to surround his ambassador. Now, John the Baptist was certainly, in the eyes of the Jews themselves, the ambassador whom God had loaded with most glory, favour and credit; none of the ancient Prophets could be compared with him with advantage. But was it possible to expect and to hope to find material riches, earthly pleasures, a sensual happiness or carnal delights in a kingdom whose representative practised the most absolute poverty, the most rigorous fasts, the most complete mortification, and the most cruel war on himself? The son of Zachary was the worthy forerunner of Him who had not where to lay His head, who had seen the light in a stable, lived by His labour or by the offerings which were made Him, and who was finally to end His life on a cross. It is for this that Jesus Christ says: “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth

violence, and the violent bear it away; for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John,"[66] that is to say contented themselves with announcing things to come, while the Precursor showed them present and indicated that it is by penance that they can be conquered. At the noise of the first preachings of Saint John, the peoples ran up in crowds; "and from all Judea, from the city of Jerusalem and from all the country about the Jordan, they came to find him, and confessing their sins, they received from him baptism in the river of the Jordan."[67] The Pharisees themselves and the Sadducees had not been able to resist the general impulse which drew all the cities towards the desert banks of the Jordan; they mingled with the crowd to go and listen to Saint John the Baptist, and even to receive his baptism. But knowing that they came to him to spare themselves public opinion, or perhaps to surprise him in his discourses, rather than to do penance, he feared not to address to them hard and humiliating words, and to discover publicly the mask of hypocrisy under which they dissembled their secret vices. These proud Jews boasted unceasingly of being children of the patriarchs and of the Prophets. "We are," they said proudly, "we are of the race of Abraham." They wished thereby to appropriate in some fashion the glory of these holy personages; in their pride, they believed that being recognised as heirs of their blood, they had also an incontestable right to the merits of their virtues and of their holiness.

To make them lay aside this illusion, the Precursor names them on the contrary: generations of vipers. This locution, according to the style of the Hebrew tongue, signifies nothing else than this: detestable children of corrupt fathers, you have in yourselves all the venom which you have inherited from them and you poison all the others by your scandals. He compared them thus to noxious reptiles, because they set themselves to bite and to tear the saints themselves, poisoning with the venom of their calumnies the words and the actions of the latter.

The Precursor struck and frightened them from the beginning of his discourse by speaking to them of hell. He was in effect far from holding to them an ordinary language; he did not say to them, for example: Who has taught you to avoid wars, to flee invasion or captivity, famine or maladies? But he threatens them with another torment of which perhaps they had never heard speak. "Who hath shewed you," says he to them, "to flee from the wrath to come?"[68] However the Precursor does not content himself with addressing reproaches and making threats, he adds salutary counsels: "Bring forth therefore," says he to them, "fruits worthy of penance." It does not suffice, in effect, to flee evil, one must, moreover, give oneself to the practice of virtue. With what wisdom he respects the memory of the patriarchs, while striving to correct their children! In addressing to them these words: "Think not to say: We have Abraham for our father;" he does not add: This patriarch can be of no use to you; he continues, on the contrary, with more gentleness and moderation in saying: "God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." The greater part of the interpreters think that the Precursor wished to designate, by these words, the vocation of the Gentiles, whom, by metaphor, and to indicate their first insensibility, he names stones. Some authors say that in pronouncing these words, Saint John pointed with his finger to the twelve stones brought by the chiefs of the twelve tribes of Israel, from the midst of the river, and heaped up on the bank; and those, in like number, which they had taken from the bank to deposit in the Jordan, to serve as a monument of testimony.[69]

Let us remark how Saint John the Baptist, this admirable model of preachers, strikes the Pharisees with terror, without however taking from them all hope; for he does not say: God has already raised up; but he contents himself with these words: "God is able to raise up." He does not add: God can make stones be born men; but, what was much stronger, relatives and sons of Abraham. With what art he takes from them every pretext of pride arising from their birth according to the flesh, and pursues them even into this refuge of their kinship with the patriarchs, to leave them no other means than a sincere conversion, no other hope than in the holiness of their life!

After having shown them that the carnal alliance can be of no use to them before God, he makes them feel the necessity of the kinship which faith gives, and continues then to increase this salutary terror, this disquiet

of the soul which he has already inspired in them. For, after having said: “God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham,” he adds, to frighten them still more: “Now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire.” By this comparison, Saint John excites his hearers to bring forth fruits of penance, by putting before their eyes the horror of the eternal fire. It is as if he said to them: Bring forth worthy fruits of penance, produce good works, and flatter not yourselves with the holiness and the nobility of Abraham; count not on the fecundity of the faith of your fathers to remain yourselves barren; for if you bear not fruits, although descended from Abraham who bore so many, you shall be cut off like barren trees and you shall be cast into the fire. The axe of divine justice is already near the root of the trees, that is to say it threatens the life of men who produce nothing. Every tree, or rather every man who produces not the fruits that one has the right to expect from him, shall be cut down to the root by the axe of the justice of God, and shall become the prey of the eternal fire. It is by such words that the son of Zachary terrified the Pharisees and put trouble into the soul of the soldiers themselves; he did not cast them into despair; but he drew them from the abyss of indifference in which they were asleep. His language, proper to cause to his audience such lively alarms, was nevertheless mingled with many motives of consolation; for, in threatening only the tree which bears not good fruit, he showed that he who produces good ones would certainly be spared and treated with care. The discourse of the holy Precursor was addressed to all the people who had run to hear him; but it was pronounced above all for the great ones, the Pharisees and the Sadducees whom he had perceived in the crowd, as Saint Matthew teaches us. It cannot be doubted that some of them were converted at his voice; nevertheless it is certain that the greater part resisted the call of grace which spoke by his mouth. It is for this that Jesus Christ made them later this reproach: “The publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you, for they believed John.”

The crowd, shaken by the threats of the holy Precursor, troubled at the thought of the chastisements which he had just announced to it, but nevertheless confident in the mercy of God, who was willing to defer still the action of justice, the simple people, above all, hastened to ask what must be done to produce good fruits and thus prevent the blows of the threatening axe. For it seemed to them that the vengeance would no longer be deferred, and they wished to hasten to ward off the storm whose announcement had frightened them. “What then shall we do?” was cried from all sides. The manner of appeasing God is given us by God Himself. His divine oracles teach sinners that it is by good works and by the merits of alms that sins can be expiated. The Old Testament spoke of beneficence and of alms only in a vague manner, and specified in no way up to what limit this duty was obligatory. It was the régime of strict and rigorous justice; and the highest degree of perfection, admitted and recognised then, was contained in these words of the Wise Man: “If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat, and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.”

Saint John the Baptist, who was the intermediary of the two Testaments, prescribes not only to give to him who is in need, but he commands to share with him. It was, so to speak, the preface of the new precept brought by Jesus Christ. “He that hath two coats,” says he, “let him give to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” He does not therefore order only beneficence, that human virtue which is practised easily enough by a natural bent of the heart; he does not stop at a sentimental but sterile compassion; he goes at once to true charity, which is not content to give with an indifferent, cold or narrow hand, but which adds a new value, a new degree of excellence to alms by making them out of love and at the price of real and personal sacrifices.

One of the most remarkable triumphs of the apostolic eloquence of Saint John the Baptist, the most proper to give us an idea of the efficacy of his preachings, of the resounding which they had in all the country, and of the empire which they exercised over minds and hearts, is that he brought the Publicans themselves to come to hear him, to let themselves be convinced and persuaded to the point that they asked him, with as much docility, submission and simplicity as the common people, what they had to do to work out their salvation.

The Publicans were the farmers or receivers of the public moneys, the persons in charge of the receipts of the customs and of certain duties odious to the people. These employees, always rather ill regarded everywhere, on account of the nature of their functions, were, for the Jews above all, an object of execration. This nation prided itself particularly on liberty, and could see only with extreme repugnance the Publicans exact tributes imposed by the Romans for their profit. Many Jews did not even believe that it was permitted to pay tribute to a foreign power. Those of their nation who entered into the ranks of the Publicans were regarded as pagans. It is even said that they did not permit them to enter into the temple nor into the synagogues; they did not admit them to the participation in their prayers, nor to judicial charges, nor to bear witness in justice; their offerings were not even received.

A considerable part of these functionaries were Jews by nation; but taking no account of religion, which they were supposed to have abjured by the fact, they united themselves to the Romans by so close a society that they put themselves even at the service of these strangers to make a more tyrannical oppression weigh upon their brethren.

These publicans, united, came therefore to find Saint John the Baptist to be baptised by him. While the scribes and the doctors of the law despised the counsel of God against themselves, believing themselves wise and remaining full of themselves, they let themselves be preceded into the kingdom of God by the most discredited sinners, such as the Publicans and the harlots. The Gospel relates to us only one word of the conversation of the Publicans with the Precursor, and of the answer which he addressed to them to exhort them. “Master,” they said to him, “what shall we do?” In the mind of the Jews, and above all of those of the sect of the Pharisees, the son of Zachary ought to have repulsed and removed from his person these defamed and odious men. But the precursor of Him who came to seek and to save sinners ought not to conduct himself according to the opinion of the world. It is for this that, far from despising them publicly, he welcomes these men soiled with rapine and injustices; instead of addressing reproaches to them, as to the Pharisees, he does not disdain to regard them as his disciples, in permitting them to give him the name of master. What is he going to prescribe to them, this man so detached, so austere, so hard on himself; this inflexible censor of all disorders? Is he going to order these public sinners to renounce at once their debased and dishonouring functions? Will he command them to give themselves to a rigorous penance in proportion to the blame and the contempt which render them the object of the general execration? The saints, always skilful and experienced in the difficult art of the conduct of souls, are not accustomed to frighten and discourage sinners at the very beginning of their conversion; they take care to show them first the easiest way, and, to encourage and stimulate them, they themselves take arduous and difficult paths, which they traverse as if in play. So did Saint John the Baptist towards the Publicans. To render them worthy to correspond to grace, he asks of them only to conform to the duties and the strict and rigorous obligations of their employment. “Do nothing more,” says he to them, “than that which is appointed you.”

God was pleased to bless this conduct of the Precursor. For the Publicans corresponded to the design of the Lord and to the advances of grace. Not only did they render themselves worthy of being admitted to the baptism of John, while the Pharisees were repulsed from it; but there were found among them some who merited to be counted among the disciples, and even to take rank in the midst of the Apostles of Christ. Such were Zacchaeus, prince of the Publicans, and Matthew who was still at his counter when he heard an august voice give him this order: “Follow me.”

After the example of the Publicans, the soldiers came also, in their turn, to listen to the voice which resounded with so much echo and so much success on the banks of the Jordan. There were then in Judea three different categories of soldiers. Some, under the orders of Herod, were occupied in making war on Aretas, king of Arabia; the others, under the command of the prefect of the temple, were charged to watch over the guard of this edifice, which was a veritable fortress; the last, finally, obeyed the Romans in the person of Pilate, governor of the province. With the exception of these, who were strangers, the others

belonged to the Jewish nation and religion. These men, whom their state rendered naturally insensible and indifferent, and in whom the licence of camps had still increased audacity, insolence and cruelty, were soon moved to the bottom of the heart on hearing the voice of Saint John the Baptist. Touched with compunction, repentance in the heart, they claimed also the privilege of being admitted to the baptism of penance. Like the Publicans, they humbled themselves in their own eyes, feared not to degrade their valour and the glory of their arms in asking with loud cries, with as much simplicity as the crowd, and frankness as the Publicans: "And what shall we do also in our turn?"

The answer of the Precursor to the Publicans gives a foretaste of what he is going to require of the soldiers. He wished, says Saint John Chrysostom, to engage them to a greater perfection; but as they were not yet capable of it, he contented himself with proposing to them common and ordinary things, for fear that in counselling them to higher works and virtues, they could not attain to them, and would thus be deprived of the one and the other. He had learned, according to the counsel of the Wise Man, not to be too just, and not to carry prudence further than is necessary. He does not therefore say to the soldiers: Lay down your arms, leave the trade, flee the dangers of war, give yourselves henceforth to prayer, and taking no more account of the orders of your general, beware above all of shedding blood. He lays on them on the contrary no other prescriptions than these: "Do violence to no man; neither calumniate any man; and be content with your pay." It was an ordinary vice among soldiers to make false accusations against citizens, under pretext of treasons, of relations with the enemy, etc.; by these shameful delations, they constrained innocent citizens to come to terms with them. The Precursor forbids them therefore to seek the least occasion of enriching themselves by calumny at the expense of the citizens, whom they have on the contrary the mission to protect.

John the Baptist, the greatest of the Prophets, could not fail to have disciples: his preachings won him them every day. In effect, the Gospel speaks to us of them on several occasions, but without saying anything precise on this subject, neither on their number, nor on their names, except that of Andrew. We read, in a legend authorised by the Church, since it is found in the Roman Breviary,[70] that a great number of these men who walked in the footsteps of the prophets Elias and Eliseus were prepared, by the instructions of John the Baptist, for the coming of Jesus Christ; and that after having convinced themselves of the truth of what had been announced to them by the Precursor, they embraced the faith of the Gospel. They had the honour of building, later, the first sanctuary dedicated to the worship of the holy Virgin, on Mount Carmel. It is believed that they were Essenes.

Had he counted, moreover, in his school, no other disciples than those who merited to be chosen by the Saviour to go and carry His Gospel to the whole world, what a glory for him to have begotten, according to the Spirit, as many sons destined to propagate the spiritual race, as Jacob had children according to the flesh to give birth to a carnal people!

And in fact, one cannot doubt, says Tillemont, that the Apostles received the baptism of Saint John. They were even among the first admitted to this grace, according to Saint John Chrysostom, and that is not surprising; for, continues this illustrious doctor, if the harlots and the Publicans presented themselves for this baptism, with greater reason must those who were later to be baptised by the Holy Ghost have run to it. The Gospel, moreover, tells us so sufficiently. It is certain, on the one side, that Jesus Christ did not baptise Himself;[71] for why would He have baptised, says Tertullian? For penance? Then what need had He of a Precursor? For the remission of sins? He remitted them by a single word. Would He have baptised in His own name? But, by humility, He wished to be unknown. In the name of the Holy Ghost? He had not yet been sent by the Father. In the name of the Church? The Apostles had not yet established it. On the other side, the Gospel teaches us further that Saint Peter had been baptised, since, on the request which he addressed to Our Lord to wash not only his feet, but also his hands and his head, Jesus answered him: "He that is washed (or baptised) needeth not but to wash his feet." It was the same, doubtless, with the other Apostles; for, continues Tertullian, is it credible that they were not baptised by John, they who were soon to go and baptise all

nations? The Lord, who was bound to no penance, had received this baptism, and it would not have been necessary to sinners? We read, in the Acts of the Apostles, that Jesus Christ recalls Himself to His disciples "that they have received from John the baptism of water."[72] After the resurrection, Saint Peter, proposing to the faithful to designate a successor to Judas in the apostolate, declares to them that it is necessary that this new apostle should be one of those who have lived with Jesus since the baptism of John.[73] Does he not seem to wish to say by that that the candidate must not only have followed Jesus Christ from the beginning of His preaching, but also have been prepared for it by the baptism and the teaching of Saint John the Baptist? We know in a positive manner that the first of the Apostles chosen by Jesus Christ was Saint Andrew, disciple of the Precursor;[74] another of the disciples of the latter was also with Andrew on this occasion; Saint John Chrysostom reports that it was John the evangelist; Theophylact affirms it positively. This appears still more certain by the very silence of the evangelist who relates this fact to us; for this evangelist is Saint John himself, who often avoided naming himself, as may be remarked. If Andrew was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist, we cannot doubt that it was the same with Peter, the brother and inseparable companion of Andrew. We may draw the same consequence with regard to James, son of Zebedee and brother of John the evangelist, all four associated for the fishing. They united together to follow Jesus Christ, because already they were attached to one another by the identity of faith and of the holy dispositions which the Precursor had sown and cultivated in their hearts.

We find again, in the Acts of the Apostles, the traces of another disciple of the Precursor, who exercised even in the city of Ephesus the function of apostle without having been initiated into the Gospel by others than by our glorious Saint. Apollo, of whom Saint Luke speaks to us as of "an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, who was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, spoke and taught diligently the things that are of Jesus," knew nevertheless, touching the Saviour, only what he had learned in the school of the Precursor; for "he knew only the baptism of the son of Zachary."[75]

We know nothing more positive and more certain on the disciples of the holy Precursor. Some authors have thought that they did not follow their Master assiduously. It was the same with those of Jesus Christ, at least in the beginning of His preaching. The disciples of Saint John came therefore often to find him and converse with him; they returned afterwards to their affairs, or else to the ministry which he confided to them. However, the disciples of John had yet other cares than that of instructing others and of bringing them to listen to the teachings of their master: they had to work above all at their own perfection. After the example of their master, they united the active life to the contemplative life. It is for this that Saint John had prescribed to them a rule of life, whether to continue to dwell in their ordinary dwellings, or to give themselves to evangelical preaching, or to live in solitude like the Essenes. This is what made some Fathers of the Church say[76] that Saint John was the prince of the monastic life. We cannot specify in what consisted the kind of life of the disciples of the Precursor. We know, however, that they observed frequent and austere fasts, after the example of their master, and that they had a special formula of prayers, different from all those which were in use among the Jews. Tradition teaches us no more than the Gospel on this subject.

We may, however, conjecture that the manner of praying, taught by the Precursor to his disciples, had something quite remarkable, and, doubtless, was more excellent and more perfect than all the prayers and canticles of the Old Testament; for this holy personage, who was more than a prophet, had not thought that he ought to content himself with what he had found before him. Thus one of the disciples of the Saviour, excited by what he already knew of the teachings of Saint John the Baptist on the subject of prayer, and in the hope of receiving a still more perfect formula from Jesus Christ, addressed to Him one day this request: "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." It was to answer this desire that the Saviour dictated the Lord's Prayer, the most complete and the most perfect of all the formulas by which man can expose to the Almighty his needs, address to Him his supplications and express to Him his hopes.

Saint John the Baptist did not make himself accompanied ordinarily by his disciples, because he had no aim of attaching them to his person, and of aggrandising himself by making of them a cortege.

He did not wish, on the other side, to give any pretext of incrimination against him for cause of gatherings or political plots. Which did not prevent, however, this accusation from being imputed to him afterwards, as we shall see farther on.

Not only did the son of Zachary not seek to attach to himself those whom the force of his eloquence drew, whom the odour of his holiness attracted, or whom the spectacle of his virtues persuaded; but he strove further to direct their hope and their heart towards Christ, whom he announced to them as the term and the object of his mission; and when the time of the manifestation was come, he showed them Him whom they were to follow, and exhorted them to attach themselves to Him.

But such was the opinion and the esteem which the disciples of John had conceived of him that, in spite of his exhortations and the authority of his word, some would not detach themselves from him, saw with an eye of envy grow from day to day the glory and the renown of Christ, and as long as their master lived, they wished to preserve for him an exclusive fidelity and devotion. There exist still to-day, in the East, the remains of a religious sect known under the name of Christians of Saint John the Baptist. Although their doctrine is an incoherent mixture of Judaism, of Christianity and of Gnosticism, it appears nevertheless certain that their origin goes back to the disciples of the Precursor. Every year they celebrate a feast which lasts five days, during which they come in troops to their bishops, who rebaptise them all, great and small, with the baptism of John. It is perhaps the place to ask why, instead of attaching himself to Jesus Christ and following Him in quality of apostle or of disciple, Saint John not only never followed Him, but appeared even sometimes to avoid His presence, continued to have disciples jealous of His glory and devoured by envy against the Son of God, and ceased not to preach and to baptise, even when Christ had begun His public career. Saint Augustine[77] teaches us that it was so, in order that the testimony of John the Baptist might exercise more authority on the mind of the Jews.

He could in effect pass for the emulator, the rival or the adversary of Christ. He preached like Him, baptised like Him, and had disciples like Him. It is for this that the Pharisees, the secret enemies of the one as well as of the other, believed they could draw great advantage from the role which they saw them fill simultaneously, to put them in contradiction with one another, and thereby diminish the authority and the influence which they exercised over the people. When they undertook to excite jealousy in the heart of Saint John against Jesus, they obtained only an answer capable of covering them with confusion and of increasing still the value of his testimony. In effect, those who had confidence in the word of the Precursor were penetrated with admiration for the Saviour, and the enemies of John the Baptist had the confusion of seeing that, instead of uttering words of envy against Christ, he rendered Him solemn testimony. The servant was thus put under the necessity of confessing the Lord; the creature was brought to render testimony to the Creator. But Saint John fulfilled this role without constraint and with joy; for he was the friend, and not the rival of the bridegroom; he sought not his own glory, but that of Him who had sent him.

Thus his testimony had by that very fact much more authority than that of Saint Peter and of the other Apostles. One might, in effect, object to the latter that they gave praises to Jesus Christ because they were His disciples, and had an interest in preaching Him as having attached their fortune to His. These testimonies appeared therefore interested. But that of the son of Zachary had quite another value in the eyes of the Jews. For, as he seemed to have an interest in depreciating Christ, as a rival, he took away every pretext from the incredulity of his enemies, by saying to them: “I have already declared it to you, I am not the Christ. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. He that cometh from heaven is above all.” The admiration, the respect and the extraordinary love of which he became the object was universal, says Origen. But sinners above all, who were admitted to his baptism and who found themselves initiated by penance into a wholly new life, put no bound to their enthusiasm. Wherefore Saint Luke tells us that “all the people were in expectation, and all

were thinking in their hearts of John, that perhaps he might be the Christ."

Whether the Precursor had been instructed of it by the Holy Ghost, as some doctors think,[78] or whether his disciples had reported to him what they could not fail to learn of it, he was soon aware of the opinion which was already being divulged about him. Far from glorifying himself for it, and from appropriating even by his sole silence an honour which was not due to him, this faithful friend of the Bridegroom profited by these favourable dispositions to announce, more clearly than he had done until then, the principal object of his mission.

"He came for a witness," says the Evangelist, "to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him."

Let us listen therefore to what the solemn voice of this august witness is about to proclaim in presence of all. "As for me," says he, "I baptise you in water unto penance; but He that shall come after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, nor to loose the latchet of them prostrating myself before Him. He it is that shall baptise you in water and in fire, whereas I have baptised you only in water."

The Precursor was, in the eyes of the Jews, the ideal of human perfections. All the virtues united shone on his brow; in him was found the most complete assemblage of the most excellent and most varied graces; nothing was imagined above his holiness. Nevertheless, without depreciating himself in any thing, without misunderstanding any of the gifts which have been bestowed on him, and which he appreciates better than anyone, he protests that there is another who surpasses himself.

In his symbolical language full of mystery, he declares that, far from wishing to compare himself with Christ, he is not worthy to render Him the smallest and the most humble of services: such as to bear His shoes or to untie the latchets of them, even prostrating himself at His feet.

Now, these words must not be understood in a purely literal and material sense; and, to understand them, one must, like the Jews, accustomed to this symbolical and figurative language, seek in them a spiritual signification.[79]

By the shoes, which are made of the spoil of animals put to death, is to be understood, according to the abbot Rupert, the humanity of the Son of man, by means of which the Son of God had subjected Himself to suffering and to death. The Psalmist had also made use of this term to predict the propagation of the Gospel: "Over Edom I will stretch out my shoe,"[80] that is to say, I will make known my incarnation even among the idolatrous nations. This is, in effect, what was realised by the ministry of the Apostles. As for Saint John the Baptist, he was not to live until the time when the Apostles bore thus the shoes of the Lord, preaching publicly the Gospel. He was not even to have the favour "of untying the latchets of them," that is to say of making known the mysterious bonds which united the divinity with the humanity in the person of Christ. For the latchet of the shoe, says Saint Gregory, is nothing else than the knot of the mystery. John does not find himself capable of untying the latchets of the shoes of Jesus Christ, because he cannot comprehend the mystery of the Incarnation, although he knew it by the help of the spirit of prophecy.[81]

If John the Baptist does not untie, in the eyes of the Jews, the mysterious knots of the incarnation and of the redemption, it is, says the venerable Bede, because, too carnal and too gross, their minds were not yet capable of believing that the eternal Son of God, after having taken human nature, had received a new birth of a virgin. Impenetrable mystery, for which they had to be prepared little by little by making known to them the sublime prerogatives of the glorious humanity of the God made flesh, to lead them insensibly to faith.

For the same motive, and in order to dissuade the children of Israel from expecting in the person of the Messias a purely temporal power and greatness, the holy Precursor is going to insinuate to them what they ought to hope to find in Him, what they will have to ask of Him when He shall have appeared. He speaks to them not at all of conquest nor of victory; he puts not before their eyes the prodigies and the miracles which

Christ is to work; he promises them no temporal good; he does not even announce to them the deliverance from the slavery in which they groan in the political and civil respect: but, directing their hearts towards an order of ideas exclusively spiritual, he shows them the abundance of graces and the multitude of spiritual goods which they shall receive through His mediation. The Messias, in effect, is not only to give the Holy Ghost; for, according to the force of the metaphorical expression of Saint John the Baptist, and to show the abundance of graces which He will come to bring to men, “He shall baptise in the Holy Ghost;” and, to bring out still the efficacy of these graces, he adds even that He will baptise in fire. Now as, by water, Jesus Christ designates the grace of the Holy Ghost,[82] to show by this expression the brightness and the whiteness which it procures, and the ineffable consolations which it gives to well-disposed souls, so John the Baptist, by fire, expresses the justice and the fervour of the grace which destroys and annihilates sin.

He taught therefore his hearers that nothing was to be hoped from the coming of Christ other than the goods of grace, other gifts than those which suit the soul. He thus battered in breach, in a skilful and indirect manner, the gross prejudices and the ridiculous hopes which the Jews had formed on the subject of the Messias; for they awaited Him as a monarch destined to conquer the world at the point of the sword.

To make it felt that he was not the Christ, Saint John the Baptist had put in opposition his baptism of water and of penance, with that of the Son of God, which was to be given in the Holy Ghost and in fire. However, he knew that the gross minds to which he addressed himself could form a notion of Christ only by leaning on a term of comparison. He has just announced that the Messias is to come to bring to the world the gifts of the Holy Ghost; this is the object of His first advent, of which he reveals the benefits to the Jews. He discovers to them at the same time, and little by little, all the mysteries of the Gospel. Wherefore he is now going to speak of the second advent of Christ, of the last judgment and of the fire of hell, points of doctrine which were scarcely less unknown to the Jews than the mystery of the kingdom of heaven.

Saint John had announced the rewards reserved for the just, to encourage them thus to the practice of virtue. To make it now understood that the Messias is not to content Himself with bearing His attention and His benevolence on His elect, and to show at the same time that He is not the indifferent spectator of crime, the Precursor attributes to Him the judgment and the vengeance of it, adding: “His fan is in His hand.”

Let us remark, with Rupert, how he is intent on bringing out the power and the force of Christ. He does not say: His fan is in the hands of God. The expression which he uses may be compared with this of Isaias: “He shall bear His power on His shoulder.” John does not say that the fan of the Messias is in the hands of God; the Prophet also takes care not to announce that the power of Christ will be supported on the shoulders of the Almighty. It is that they wished, the one and the other, to make us understand that His own power suffices Him, that He is capable alone of exercising His judgment. The Precursor does not say that the Saviour will cleanse the floor of the Lord, nor that He will gather the wheat into the barn of God; but he declares positively that He will purge His floor, that He will gather His own grain.

In putting a fan into the hands of Christ, the son of Zachary announces clearly enough that the supreme judgment is reserved to Him; for the fan, instrument destined to cleanse the wheat by expelling the chaff, signifies, says Denis the Carthusian, that the judicial power belongs to Jesus Christ, that the executive power is placed in His hands; that, by His own authority, and as God, He pronounces Himself the sentence. This is what we see confirmed by these words: “The Father judgeth no man; but hath given all judgment to the Son.” This judgment belongs essentially to Christ as He is God; but as man, it is devolved on Him, because He is established judge, and constituted executor of the sentence, according to this doctrine of Saint Peter: “It is He who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead.”

The Messias will purge and “thoroughly cleanse His floor;” He sees therefore into the depth of hearts; for how could He, without that, make an equitable discernment? then He will take the fan in His hand; He will judge with impartiality, with justice and severity, drawing definitively the good grain from the chaff,

separating the elect from the reprobate. “He will gather His wheat into the barn,” that is to say He will unite in heaven, abode of perfect rest and of beatitude, all those whom humility shall have rendered little in their own eyes; those who shall be resplendent with justice and adorned with virtues; those whom piety, courage and perseverance shall have made firm against the breath of temptations; for these are they who form the wheat of Christ, and the aliment on which He feeds. The great martyr Saint Ignatius, condemned to be devoured under the teeth of lions, alluded to this idea when he cried: “I am the wheat of Jesus Christ; I desire ardently to be ground under the teeth of lions, that I may become a spotless bread.” But the duty of a judge is not only to discern the good in order to reward them according to their merits; he must also chastise the wicked. This also Christ will do, and what Saint John indicates in a striking manner by adding that “He will burn the chaff,” thus separated from the good grain, “with unquenchable fire.”

These words were a confirmation of what he had already said on another occasion, in engaging the Pharisees to penance, in order to be able thus to avoid the wrath to come; but here, he goes farther in the development of his thought; for he makes known two truths touching the doctrine of hell: the torment of fire, and the eternity of the chastisement.

At last the moment is come when the expectation of the nations is going to reveal itself to men. The Saviour for whom the patriarchs had sighed during four thousand years was in the world; but He still led an obscure and hidden life, in the retreat of Nazareth. While the son of Zachary stirred Judea by promising it to see soon the Christ, by speaking to it of His greatness, by making known to it His divine nature, and by announcing Him as the sovereign Judge, rewarder of virtue and avenger of crime, what was the Son of God doing? O wisdom of the earth, be confounded! Pride of man, humble thyself! The creator of heaven and of earth, He whose providence nourishes even the sparrow destitute of provisions, He whom the angels adore trembling, He whom the heavens envy to the earth, the Son of man was occupied with a coarse and obscure labour.

“What a marvel,” cries Bossuet, “an artisan still in the shop and earning his living, is the subject of the preachings of a Prophet more than a prophet, and so revered that he was taken for the Christ. It was of this man in the shop that Saint John said: ‘There is one in the midst of you whom you know not, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose.’ He is greater than Moses; He gives grace, while Moses gives only the law; He is, before all ages, the only Son of God, and in the bosom of His Father; we have no grace but by Him: nevertheless you know Him not, although He is in the midst of you. In what expectation of such high discourses must they have held the world, and what a preparation of the ways of the Lord! One was accustomed to hear named the only Son of God, who came to announce the secrets of it; but what! it was of this carpenter that one spoke thus?”[83]

Although He was innocence itself and holiness by essence, Christ would not undertake His evangelical mission without preparing for it by penance. It was by penance that He had reserved to Himself to manifest Himself. In sending before Him Saint John the Baptist to prepare the ways for Him, He had given him above all the character of a herald of penance; all the ministry of the son of Zachary had penance for its object; it is for this that he said: “I am come baptising in water, that He may be made manifest to Israel.” So that the voice which uttered, in the solitudes of the Jordan, this cry: “Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” the preaching of Saint John announced the very vocation of the Son of God. The true motive of the preaching and of the baptism of the Precursor was therefore solely that the Holy of holies, who alone was capable of doing penance for all the predestinate, called by this public and solemn voice, should approach openly the heavenly sanctuary in presence of God His Father, and of the holy angels, and receive in an authentic manner the investiture of His sovereign priesthood, in face of the whole world. Now, it is by having Himself baptised by His precursor that Christ was to begin His manifestation, to inaugurate His ministry, and to receive the glorious testimony of His Father.

No one can doubt that the Son of God, in becoming incarnate, wished to take away the sin of the world by taking it upon Himself, according to what the Prophet had said: “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us

all; it is for us that He groans; the chastisement which was to give us death has weighed upon His person."[84] Now, that this true and perfect penance was borne because of us, is clear: reason feels it, faith professes it. But before following Jesus on the banks of the Jordan, let us seek the motives which must have led Him to this mysterious step. We shall find for it legal reasons and mystical reasons.

The apostle Saint Paul teaches us that God, in sending His Son into the world, willed to subject Him to the law. Jesus Christ declares to us Himself that He is not come to break this law, but to fulfil it. Now, under the régime of the Mosaic law, one was reputed defiled and impure in a multitude of circumstances, and it was impossible to remain in this state of legal impurity without breaking the ordinances of the Lord. However, let us hasten to say it, these legal defilements did not affect the interior, and did not harm the purity of the soul, even in ordinary men; with greater reason did they not prevent the Son of man from being and from remaining holiness by essence.

The Saviour was therefore obliged to submit to the usage of baptism, of lotions or of legal purifications, according to the custom of the time. Thus, the Saviour celebrated every year the Mosaic pasch. Now, it was permitted to no one, and for no reason, to eat the paschal lamb without being purified and baptised. If therefore He could hurl to His enemies this challenge: "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" that is to say accuse Me of having violated the law even in its lightest prescriptions, it must be recognised that Jesus Christ often made use of the baths and purifications in force among the Jews; that He conformed to the ordinances of Moses and to the customs of the nation and of the epoch.

According to the law, one had to address oneself to a man to be purified; what other than the son of Zachary was equally worthy to fulfil this ministry towards the Son of God? Was it not to prepare himself for this august function, for this signal honour that, from his childhood, Saint John had withdrawn his virtue and his innocence from the deleterious influence of the world by retiring into solitude?

Besides, never, says a holy pontiff, would the waters of baptism have been capable of purifying the sins of men, if they had not been sanctified by touching the body of the Lord. Jesus Christ had Himself baptised, not to purify Himself, says Saint Ambrose, but to purify the water by contact with His sacred flesh, and to endow it with the virtue of baptising souls. The time being at last arrived when the Son of man was to prepare for His public ministry, He addressed His mother thus, says Saint Bonaventure: "It is time that I go away, and that I glorify My Father by making Him known; the hour is come when I must show Myself and work for the salvation of the world, for which My Father sent Me hither below. Remain strong therefore, O good mother, for I shall return soon to you." And the Master of humility, kneeling down, asked her blessing. But kneeling herself, and embracing Him with tears, she said to Him, full of tenderness: "O My blessed son, go with the blessing of thy Father and mine; remember me, and take care to return as soon as possible." He took therefore respectfully His leave of her, and set out from Nazareth towards Jerusalem, to betake Himself to the Jordan, where John baptised, in a place distant eighteen miles from this city. Thus the Master of the world advances alone, for He had not yet disciples. The Lord Jesus walks therefore humbly for several days, until He reaches the banks of the Jordan. It is the resplendent light which advances towards the torch, says Saint Gregory of Nazianzus; the Word who follows the voice; the Bridegroom who goes to find the paranymph; the Lord who betakes Himself to the servant.[85] For a long time already, Saint John had entertained in his heart a lively desire and a firm hope of seeing at last the arrival of his Lord. He raised unceasingly the eyes of his mind to God, and uttering towards heaven powerful cries, he asked unceasingly that it might be given him to see soon the Consolation of Israel and the Expectation of the nations, whom he knew to be near and whose presence he had already saluted from his mother's womb. The ardour of his desires certainly surpassed by far that of the holy old man Simeon, whose sighs and cries of the heart had touched the ears of the Most High, and had obtained the promise that he should not see death before having contemplated the Christ of the Lord. The Precursor had merited, by his incessant prayers, an analogous answer on the part of Him who had sent him; for a heavenly voice had said to him: "He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and

remaining, he it is that baptiseth with the Holy Ghost." Some authors think that John the Baptist had not yet seen Jesus Christ, and that he did not know Him by sight until the moment when he baptised Him. Pious traditions tell us, on the contrary, that they had had conversations together in the desert, where the son of Zachary was retired. Whatever be of this question, on which we shall still have occasion to return, it was not possible that the Precursor should not remark, in the crowd of sinners, Him whom he had seen in spirit from his mother's womb; his inspired look, his prophetic penetration, his heart so pure, could not fail to distinguish, among all, Him whom he was charged to make known to the world, and who was the object of his divine mission. Thus, at the sight of this God whose justice, holiness and supreme power he had preached, he is struck with astonishment and fear, says Saint Bernard, and an extraordinary fright seizes upon him.[86] Wherefore he addresses Him thus: "I ought to be baptised by Thee, and comest Thou to me?" Jesus answered him: "Suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice."

One of the most striking characters of the holy Precursor is doubtless humility; this virtue appears in all his words and actions; but Jesus was to surpass him in this as in all the rest, and one cannot see without astonishment that His first going forth is to have Himself baptised by His servant.

It was therefore the order from on high, cries Bossuet, that Jesus, the victim of sin, and who was to take it away by bearing it, should place Himself voluntarily in the rank of sinners: this is that justice which He had to fulfil. And as John, in that, owed Him obedience, the Son of God owed it to the orders of His Father. Then John resisted Him no more, and thus all justice was fulfilled in an entire submission to the orders of God.[87]

It is very probable that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of baptism and gave it the virtue of justifying, at the very moment of His baptism, although He proclaimed the necessity of it only after His resurrection. Jesus was therefore baptised by John in the Jordan; but as soon as He was baptised, He came out of the water at once. Behold that suddenly the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending in a bodily shape, and resting upon Him. And a voice was heard from heaven, saying: Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Yea! this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

These heavenly words were a striking confirmation of the testimony rendered by the Precursor to Jesus at the very moment when he baptised Him. It is believed, in effect, that in giving baptism to the Saviour, John showed Him solemnly to the people; for, as to the others, he made use of this formula: I baptise thee in the name of Him who is to come, it seems that at the coming of Jesus, and at the moment when he baptised Him, he must have said: This is the Messias whom I predicted. Could he, in effect, miss so opportune an occasion of rendering Him testimony, and of fulfilling thus justice in all its extent?

The prodigies which were accomplished at the baptism of Jesus Christ had for aim to render testimony to this humbled God; it is in His favour that they were produced. The sacred text declares it expressly. However, if the glory with which God willed to reward the humility of His Son was the principal and direct object of it, Christ was not the only spectator of it. For Saint John the Baptist says formally that he saw the Holy Ghost. It is not less indubitable that he heard the voice of the Father. Was it the same with all those who assisted at this scene? Some doctors have believed it. We must say, however, that the Gospel contains no word from which it can be concluded, with certainty, that all the witnesses of the baptism of Jesus Christ were admitted to see and to hear this testimony. And, if one examines with care the texts of the sacred authors, it will be seen that they favour rather the negative. In effect, John the Baptist, wishing to render testimony to Jesus: "I saw," says he, "the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him." Now, if all those who were present at the baptism of Christ had been able to see and hear as Saint John, the latter would not have needed to recall this apparition to those who had been witnesses of it; or else, if he spoke to others, he would not have said: "I saw;" for he would rather have made use of these words: "We have seen, the people as well as I…" And his testimony, being supported on a public testimony, would have been much more irrefutable. This also is what Saint John Chrysostom has remarked. — Christ said one day to the Jews by way of reproach: "The Father Himself who sent Me hath given testimony of Me; neither have you ever heard His

voice."[88] Could He have spoken thus, if the numerous witnesses of His baptism had heard the heavenly voice which resounded on this occasion? For the rest, admitting that the heavenly vision took place only in favour of Christ, and that the Precursor was the sole witness of it, we restrict in no way the bearing and the value of it; for it served none the less as testimony to those to whom this mystery was revealed later. It is for this that Saint John the Baptist said one day to the Jews these solemn words: "I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God." Thus therefore before Saint Paul, and doubtless much better than he yet, the divine Precursor, the most clear-sighted of the Prophets, the most privileged and the greatest of all those who are born of women, in baptising his divine Master, was admitted to contemplate things which the eye had not yet seen, to hear secrets which the ear had never listened to, and to taste beforehand the delights which the heart of man had never conceived, and which are reserved by God to those who love Him. For he was the first to whom the adorable Trinity deigned to reveal Itself in a clear and manifest manner. We ought not therefore to be surprised that it has been said of the Precursor that he was established, in some fashion, the witness of the revelation of the mystery of the august Trinity, and as the depositary of the faith of all the human race in this ineffable dogma. Thus Saint Bernard says that Saint John was altogether in the midst of the Trinity. Not only are the names of the three divine persons, hidden from the world for four thousand years, discovered to him and entirely unveiled; but the adorable persons themselves are manifested to him. He touches the Son with his own hands; he sees with his eyes the Holy Ghost descend from heaven; he hears with his ears the voice of the Father recognising and proclaiming Jesus for His Son. Is not this the place to cry out with the Psalmist: "Lord, what is man that Thou hast deigned to reveal Thyself to him?[89] — Who is he, that we may give him praises?"[90] Never was a similar favour granted to any mortal. In effect, the heavenly Father, says Bossuet, appeared on the mountain where Jesus Christ was transfigured; but the Holy Ghost did not show Himself there; the Holy Ghost appeared in that where He descended in the form of a tongue; but the Father was not seen there: everywhere else the Son appears, but alone. At the baptism of Jesus Christ, which gives birth to ours, where the Trinity is to be invoked, the Father appears in the voice, the Son in His flesh, the Holy Ghost as a dove.[91] Saint John the Baptist was not only the witness of all the marvels by which God willed to glorify His Son on the Jordan; but he was further admitted to the role of actor in this scene so capable of astonishing heaven and of ravishing earth. For it was the Precursor who initiated, so to speak, the God Saviour into His divine priesthood. There were there, says an ancient liturgy,[92] three witnesses: John, who imposed hands on Christ, the Spirit of holiness, who descended upon Him, and the Father, who made His voice heard from the height of the heavens. The son of Zachary, the most illustrious of the children of Aaron, the most worthy representative of the ancient priesthood, he whom a divine mouth proclaimed the greatest of mortals, was therefore the blessed and predestined priest of God, the minister charged by the Most High to give the consecration to the Pontiff of the new law.

Saint John expressed to Jesus Christ the desire of receiving His baptism. Did he receive this favour?

"There are some," says Tillemont, "who believe that Saint John, after having baptised Jesus Christ, was also baptised by Him. They cite, for this, the word of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, that Jesus Christ said to him: 'Suffer it to be so now,' because He knew well that he would baptise in a short time Him by whom he wished to be baptised. But Elias of Crete says that Saint Gregory understands, by this baptism, the new purity which Saint John received in touching the sacred head of the Saviour, when he baptised Him; and, by the descent of the Holy Ghost on Jesus Christ, Saint Gregory himself gives us occasion to explain it of the martyrdom of Saint John, of which he had spoken a little before, and in giving it the name of baptism."

"They cite again, to prove that Jesus Christ baptised Saint John, Saint Jerome and Saint Chrysostom, who say that He baptised him with His Spirit, *in Spiritu*.[93] But this expression can serve only to make believe that He did not give him the baptism of water. Saint Jerome adds that in saying to him: 'Suffer it to be so now,' *sine modo*, He promised him the baptism of martyrdom, and that he would receive also His baptism on the day of judgment: *Scito in die judicii meo te esse baptismate baptizandum*; which he does not explain. The author of

the imperfect work on Saint Matthew cites apocrypha which said clearly that Saint John had been baptised by Jesus Christ, which he seems to understand simply of the baptism of water. He adds nevertheless at once that John gave Jesus the baptism of water, and that Jesus gave John that of the Spirit. But he may understand by that that of Jesus Christ, who by water gives the Holy Ghost."

"They cite again Theophylact and Euthymius. The first says indeed that Saint John had need to be purified by Jesus Christ, because, being descended from Adam, he had drawn from him, like the others, the stain of disobedience, which produced in him some sins, though light. But he does not say that it was by the baptism of water that he was to be purified from them. And, explaining *sine modo*, he makes Jesus Christ say: 'Let Me now humble Myself; there will come a time when I shall enjoy the glory which is due to Me, and when you will see Me,' says Saint Chrysostom, 'in the state in which you would wish to see Me from this present.'"

"Saint Augustine appears more formal; for after having shown, against the Pelagians, that it could not be said that Saint John was without sin, since he was born by the ordinary way, and not of a virgin, like Jesus Christ, he proves it further like Theophylact, because he says to Jesus Christ: *Ego a te debeo baptizari*; after which he adds: 'This favour was granted him in that very place; for the Lord having had Himself baptised in the water, could John be dispensed from it?' *Et hoc ibi praestitum est; quando enim Dominus in aquam, non ille praeter aquam.* — However, in the books to René, where he maintains most the necessity of the baptism of Jesus Christ, he does not say that John received it. Thus he may well have wished to mark simply in the other place some particular sanctification which Jesus Christ had then given him, and which, having been done in the water, held for him, in some sort, the place of baptism. When he says in a sermon: *Plus hic de baptismo dico, a Joanne baptizatus est Christus, etc.*, it is visible, as it seems to me, that he did not believe that Saint John had also been baptised by Jesus Christ." "It is remarked, with some reason, that the disciples of Saint John would not have testified to him their surprise at Jesus Christ's baptising, if Saint John himself had been baptised by Him; or else it would have to be said that Saint John asked to be baptised by Jesus only after the conversation which he had on this subject with his disciples, in order to engage them to attach themselves to the Son of God and to follow Him."

However Saint Evodius, successor of Saint Peter in the chair of Antioch, attests that John the Baptist was baptised by Jesus as well as the holy Virgin, and the apostles Peter, James and John, whom He seemed always to honour with more favour and affection. The authority of this author is certainly of very great weight and ought to suffice, it seems, to give certainty on the point which occupies us; for could he have put forth this affirmation without having acquired the certainty of it from the very mouth of Saint Peter, whose disciple he had been?

It pleased the Holy Ghost to veil from our knowledge the conversation which Jesus did not fail to have with Saint John, after his baptism. It is not given to our curiosity to penetrate the secrets which the Bridegroom was pleased to discover to his friend of predilection in this divine colloquy.

Meanwhile the disciples of Saint John the Baptist, and perhaps also all the crowd of the people, had been witnesses of what had passed without understanding all the mystery. They had listened with an attentive ear; they had heard if not the heavenly voice, at least the words of John to Jesus. When the Saviour had gone away, the disciples approached the Precursor, and questioned him on the marvels which they had witnessed seized with astonishment. Then John rendered testimony to Jesus, and pronounced with a solemn voice: "This was he of whom I said: He that shall come after me is preferred before me, because He was before me. And of His fulness we all have received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." We have no need to bring out the importance of this new testimony in favour of the Messias, and the character of solemnity which it had in the mouth of the Precursor, at this moment above all when one was still under the impression of the mysterious vision.

The deputies sent from Jerusalem, having arrived near the Precursor, began therefore to interrogate him touching his person, his quality and his function. They had no intention of informing themselves of his name and of his origin, for they were not ignorant of them. This is what the terms of John's answer show. They do not ask him directly whether he is the Christ; they put to him only this question: "Who art thou?"

The Evangelist, in order to bring out more the answer of the Precursor, makes use of a circumlocution and of a pleonasm quite worthy of remark: "He confessed," says he, "and he did not deny; and he confessed that he was not the Christ." This declaration, which brings so well to light the veracity and the humility of the son of Zachary, is related in a manner to strike the mind, in order to render the reader attentive, to excite his admiration and to carry him on to the imitation of this virtue dazzling with clearness.

The first question addressed to the Precursor had not obtained the result which the envoys expected from it; it was soon followed by a second: "What then," said they to him, "art thou Elias?" John the Baptist answered: "I am not." However the angel Gabriel had announced to Zachary that his son would precede "the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias," and Jesus Christ declared that "Elias was already come, and that John was himself Elias."

Can he then who called himself the voice of the Lord be in disagreement with the Lord Himself? Is the herald of the Truth not contradicted here by the Truth itself? The Jews took John the Baptist for Elias himself in person; such was the foundation of their thought and the sense of their question. In declaring that he was not Elias, John the Baptist remained in the truth, and said nothing which was not worthy of the approbation of Christ. He was truly Elias, but in a mystical and figurative sense, according to the thought of the angel and the word of the Saviour; and he was not Elias in the proper and gross sense which the Jews had in mind.

The Pharisees continued still to interrogate him: "Art thou a prophet?" they went on; and he answered: "No." The Greek doctors observe that, in the Greek, the word prophet is preceded by the article. Wherefore they think that the priests and Levites asked John the Baptist, not whether he was some ordinary prophet, but whether he was that celebrated prophet whom Moses had announced in these terms: "The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a prophet of thy nation and of thy brethren like unto me."[94]

Nevertheless, Denis the Carthusian does not wish this interrogation of the Jews to be understood in a sense different from that which ordinary usage attributes to it. Consequently it would not be a question of this extraordinary prophet foretold by Moses, but rather of some prophet inferior to Elias; for the questions went according to a descending gradation. It is not, moreover, the custom either of the Old or of the New Testament, to understand the word prophet otherwise than in the common and ordinary sense, unless it is accompanied by an epithet which authorises a special interpretation. It is better therefore to admit, says this commentator, that the deputies of the great council wished to speak only of an ordinary prophet, and according to the acceptation commonly used in the Old Testament. And John can answer that he is not a prophet, because he does not come to announce things to come, but to show the Christ and to indicate His presence by saying: "Behold the Lamb of God."

The deputies addressed themselves at last to the Precursor, saying to him: "Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?" John answered them by these solemn and mysterious words: "I am the voice of one crying in the desert: Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias."

In the account which he gives us of this celebrated embassy, Saint John the Evangelist interrupts the dialogue all at once to observe that "the deputies were Pharisees:" then he continues his narrative by adding: "And they asked him and said to him: Why then dost thou baptise, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet?"

The malice of the Pharisees, says Saint Gregory, is not capable of altering the sweetness and the charity of Saint John; he gives an answer of life to a word of envy. Whether he is praised or blamed, in chains as in

liberty, he has but one thing in view, which is to fulfil his mission, to render testimony to the Messias, to glorify Him and to abase himself. He does not therefore put himself in pain to justify his mission and his baptism in the eyes of his enemies; he does not occupy himself with saying by what authority and for what reason he baptises; but he seizes promptly the occasion of rendering to Christ a striking and solemn testimony. A commentator observes further that this testimony is reported by Saint John the Evangelist as the most celebrated, because it was public; and, moreover, it was addressed to pontiffs and to magistrates: it had been asked juridically and accepted as such by the envoys.

Saint John, abasing himself and teaching his hearers to make little account of his baptism, strives to raise that of Christ. “As for me,” says he, “I baptise with water; but there is one in the midst of you whom you know not, it is He who is to baptise in the Holy Ghost and in fire.”

The Evangelist Saint John, all of whose words deserve to be noted, took care to mark the place where these things took place; and a learned chronologist, Tornielli, fixes the day of it to 16 February, while Jesus Christ was still retired in the desert. “These things were done in Bethania, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptising.”

After having fasted forty days and forty nights and submitted Himself to the trials of the roughest penance, Jesus Christ had permitted the tempter to come and set snares for Him and seek to excite in His humanity the desires and the appetites of the triple concupiscence. But a word of the Word of God had sufficed to confound the enemy of all good. He had willed, by humility, to be tempted like us, “in all things, but without sin.” Having thus prepared Himself for His divine mission, He came down from the mountain where the demon had left Him, quitted the desert and the solitude, went to pass some weeks at Nazareth and returned to Saint John the Baptist to see him and hear him, but above all to furnish him the occasion of repeating and confirming, in His presence and in face of all the Jews, the testimony which he had just rendered Him in His absence.

“The next day,” says the evangelical text, “John saw Jesus coming to him, and he saith: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said: After me there cometh a man who is preferred before me, because He was before me.”

This so short word of the herald of the Truth: “Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world,” expresses admirably well that there is in Jesus Christ one single person and two substances or natures, that of God and that of man; it shows that the human nature is passible, and that the divine nature is not subject to suffering. In effect, because He is man, He could be led “as a lamb full of meekness to be sacrificed. He gave,” says Isaias, “His body to the strikers, He presented His cheeks to them that plucked them;” He wished to feed us with His flesh, and to clothe us with His wool; He was fastened to the cross and pierced with a lance, so that we might mark our foreheads with His blood, as the Israelites their doors with the blood of the lamb. — But because He is God, He could take away the sin of the world by rising to ravish His prey and by roaring among the dead, like a young lion, after having struck down the ravisher, vanquished the tyrant of death, and triumphed over decease. Seated at the right hand of the Father, He remits sins to those who believe firmly in Him. After having reported this striking testimony which we have tried to bring out, the Gospel of the beloved disciple teaches us that on the very morrow of this memorable circumstance, John the Baptist, like an attentive and vigilant sentinel, stood with two of his disciples. He had the happiness of seeing and contemplating again “Jesus walking.” In the transport of his joy, he cried out anew, showing Him to his disciples: “Behold the Lamb of God.” On the word of their master, the disciples set out at once to rejoin Jesus. The Saviour having turned towards them, and seeing that they came in His train, perhaps without daring to address Him the word, spoke to them Himself first, and asked them what they sought. The disciples of John answered, giving Jesus a name of excellence which was ordinarily attributed only to those who had been judged worthy of it by the Sanhedrin: “Rabbi,” said they to Him, “we desire to know the place where Thou dwellest.” And the Saviour, welcoming them with great goodness, conducted them Himself.

Now one of them was Andrew; he became afterwards disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ. It is not known in an absolutely certain manner who was the other disciple. Saint John Chrysostom teaches us that, according to some authors, it was Saint John the Evangelist. Theophylact affirms it positively. According to Saint Epiphanius, it could be only he or else James, his brother, that is to say one of the sons of Zebedee. But the silence of the Gospel on this subject sufficiently authorises the belief that this disciple was none other than he who has given us the narrative. It is, in effect, in the school of Saint John the Baptist that Saint John the Evangelist seems to have learned to name Jesus the Lamb of God. It is in the train of this worthy master that he penetrated himself so well with the purity, the virginity and the holiness which rendered him so dear to Jesus Christ. This great abstinence, the virginity and the purity of life which shone in the holy evangelist passed, it seems, from John the Baptist into him, according to the expression of a modern interpreter.[95] We see, by this circumstance, with what care and eagerness the Precursor seized all occasions of attaching to Jesus Christ the disciples whom he had made. He laboured thus to decrease himself in order to make his Lord increase. He sent therefore to Jesus, already sketched out and prepared, the stones which were to serve Him to lay the foundations of His Church.

The Evangelist teaches us that it was on the word of Andrew that Simon, his elder brother, went also to find Jesus Christ. We cannot doubt that he was himself counted among the disciples of John the Baptist. The sacred text does not tell us so formally, but it insinuates it sufficiently. These disciples did not yet attach themselves definitively to Jesus; for we know that it was only later that they left their nets to follow Him. They wished first to know Him personally, to form with Him some familiarity in order to make themselves, later, definitively His disciples if they found that His society was advantageous to them. They returned to their first master. Saint John could then speak to them in a clearer and more precise manner touching the principal object of his mission. The son of Zachary continued always to administer his baptism and to render testimony to the Saviour, even after Jesus had begun His evangelical preachings. However we are going to begin to see him diminish, as he had predicted. The events which we have related up to here seem to have passed for the most part on the Jordan, opposite Jericho; for tradition relates that Christ was baptised at the very place where Israel crossed the river dry-shod, and where the pious pilgrims of the Holy Land still go to ask of its sacred waters a new communication of the purifying and sanctifying virtue with which they were impregnated, and by them all the waters of the earth, at the moment when the Saviour of the world plunged into them to institute the sacrament of regeneration.

The Gospel, which furnishes us so few geographical details, makes us remark that the place where the scene took place which we are going to relate was Ennon, near Salira or Salem, formerly the residence of Melchisedech, of which the palace was still seen in ruins in the time of Saint Jerome. This city, situated on a little river which goes to throw itself into the Jordan not far from there, belonged to the province of Samaria. It is there that John baptised, because there was much water there, says the Gospel. However, we must not imagine that it was the need of going to seek water which engaged the Precursor to quit the Jordan: for we know further, by the Gospel, that Jesus gave His baptism there, but in the province of Judea. We have thus the occasion to observe that in order to impart to a greater extent of country the happy news of which he was the herald, and to accomplish better thus his mission, the Precursor went preferably into the places which Jesus Christ had not yet illustrated by His presence, in order to announce Him, to make Him known beforehand, and to prepare the way for Him. For he had begun to preach in the desert of Judea; he had set himself to baptise in the Jordan, not far from its mouth in the Dead Sea; it was there that all Jerusalem went to him. Now we see him go up this river as far as Ennon, to make his voice resound from there even on the shores of the sea of Tiberias and awaken the province of Samaria at the noise of his powerful cries, as he had already done for Judea. He continued therefore to baptise; for his baptism was not abolished as soon as that of Jesus Christ appeared. But the disciples of John the Baptist, observing that their master was no longer the object of so numerous and so eager a concourse as formerly, conceived spite and jealousy from it against him whom they knew to be the occasion or the cause of it. The ill-intentioned Jews, and above all the Pharisees,

sworn enemies of Jesus as well as of Saint John, knew how to find the means of goading still the disciples of the Precursor, and of exciting their envy, in order to lead them to have infirmed or revoked the testimonies which their master had rendered to Christ. They joined even sometimes the Pharisees whom they knew as declared enemies of the Saviour. This is what Saint Matthew teaches us in these terms: “The disciples of John came to Jesus and said to Him: Why do we and the Pharisees fast frequently, but Thy disciples do not fast?” Their intention was to make their master revoke the testimony which he had rendered touching Christ: their words insinuate it with sufficient evidence: “Master,” say they, “He that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou gavest testimony, behold He baptiseth, and all men come to Him.” These words, which are doubtless only the summary abridgment of what they said to Saint John, betray, in their brevity, a rare skill, the most subtle cunning and the most capable of seducing anyone other than him of whom the Truth itself said that he was not a reed shaken by the wind. The Precursor needed all his firmness and prudence not to deviate from the truth on this occasion.

The malice and the jealousy of the Pharisees against the Saviour and against the Precursor furnished the latter anew with the occasion of rendering to Jesus a public and solemn homage, the most beautiful and the most striking of all the testimonies; it is the last that is reported to us in the Gospel, but it is also the most striking; it is the supreme song of the Swan who so many times had rejoiced all Israel with the accents of his more than prophetic voice. Let us listen to what he is going to say to his disciples and to the Jews, eager to hear his answer.

“A man cannot receive any thing, unless it be given him from heaven.” That is to say: Why do you call me Rabbi with so much emphasis, O insidious and importunate men? Why do you attribute to me a name which I do not merit? This name, I declare to you, suits only Him alone who lacks nothing, who alone possesses science and teaches it to men.

“Is it only from to-day, moreover, that I declare to you that far from being a God, I am only a man? But you yourselves bear me witness that I said: I am not the Christ, but I am sent before Him. When priests and Levites were sent to me from Jerusalem to ask me: ‘Who art thou?’ I confessed, and I did not conceal it, and I ‘declared that I am not the Christ,’ and I added: ‘He that shall come after me, is preferred before me, and I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes.’ You are yourselves witnesses that I held this language, since you say to me: Master, He who beyond the Jordan was with thee, and to whom thou gavest testimony.” It is not therefore for the first time that I declare myself to be only a man; for you know, and you bear me now witness that I said: “I am not the Christ.” If I had arrogated to myself this quality, I should certainly have pretended to be more than a man; for the Christ is not only man.

If you wish to know what I am, I am going to teach you by a well-known comparison: “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy because of the bridegroom’s voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled.” Now you know, you who have celebrated weddings, or who have only taken part in them, what distance there is between the bridegroom and his friend. But, someone might ask, how does Saint John hesitate not to declare himself here the paranymph of Christ, His most intimate friend? Why does he attribute to himself, to the exclusion of every other, the singular and unique favour of being admitted even into the nuptial chamber, while, on other occasions, he scarcely allowed himself to pass for the servant of the Son of God, and repeated that he was not worthy to render Him the humblest of services, such as to bear His shoes and to untie the latchets of them?

He wished to show that he did not resemble slaves who have, towards their master, rather envy than affection. Friends, on the contrary, co-operate in the happiness of their friends, labour to procure it, rejoice in it themselves and congratulate themselves on it. John the Baptist said formerly that he was unworthy to untie the latchets of the Son of God, because he himself was taken for the Christ; he showed his humility, because a temptation of pride was prepared for him. Now he announces himself as the intimate friend of the Son of God, because it is wished to make him pose as a rival; he shows his love and his charity, because it is wished

to excite in him the gall of envy. The disciples of Saint John had complained that Christ baptised and that all the world came to Him. John made them understand that it could not be otherwise, because it is He who is the Bridegroom of the Church; but he had besides to show them the necessity in which he was of diminishing himself in proportion as Jesus Christ should grow.

John the Baptist, says Saint Ambrose, was the figure of the law and of the prophecies, which were to be diminished by their abolition; Christ figured the new law and the Gospel, which are to grow until the consummation of the ages; it was necessary that the law should cease, that the Jewish nation should disappear in proportion as the Gospel spread its brightness and as the Christian people developed. Meanwhile the career of Saint John was touching its term. The hour was arriving when the Son of God was at last going to begin publicly the course of His preachings: for until then they had had but a restricted resounding and had been accompanied only by miracles wrought, so to speak, in the shade. The glory of having been persecuted by the Jews, as well as all the ancient Prophets, was not to be wanting to the Precursor; for Jesus Christ Himself said on this subject: “They have done to him whatsoever they would; and the Son of man shall also suffer from them.” The greater part of the authors agree, in effect, in attributing to the Pharisees the project and the execution of the arrest of Saint John, and even of his death; these sectaries had the knavery to suggest to Herod the fear of a revolution which the credit of the Precursor over the mind of the people, the concourse of the multitudes eager in his train, and above all distrust and jealousy, rendered easily verisimilar to a cowardly and effeminate tyrant. There reigned then over the province of Galilee, and over the country beyond the Jordan, a prince to whom the Romans had preserved a simulacrum of royalty under the name of Tetrarch. This was Herod, the son of the murderer of the Innocents, a vicious and corrupt man, whom Saint Luke characterises in these terms: “Being reproved by John for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evils which he had done, Herod added this also to all, that he shut up John in prison.” The holy Precursor had therefore already made reprimands to him, and had warned him to send away the woman whom he had ravished from his brother Philip, and whom he had not feared to marry publicly, to the great scandal of all the world. He had not feared to reproach the soldiers with their exactions, the avaricious Publicans with their harshness, the proud Pharisees with their hypocrisy, all the Jews with their hardening and their depravity. It remained for him to give a severe lesson to the monarch. He did it with a generous freedom, and with as little fear as if he had spoken to a child, says Saint Chrysostom. He was not ignorant of what was reserved for him on the part of a queen in anger; he knew to what his zeal was going to expose him in trying to cause to descend from the throne and to drive from her palace a proud and all-powerful woman. But the zeal of the house of God consumed him; and, in presence of a duty to be fulfilled, he counted for nothing the reproaches and persecutions of which he might be

“However the daughter of the king of the Arabs, the legitimate wife offended, had fled to her father. From there war had arisen; and Herod Antipas, marching against the king of the Arabs, was then with his army on the southern point of Perea. Urged on by his wife and furious at the just reproaches of John the Baptist, uneasy moreover at the discontent of the people, whom both this adulterous union and the unjust war which had followed from it had irritated, this unhappy prince could not contain himself longer. Attributing to the Precursor the troubles and the murmurs of the people, instead of blaming himself, he had attempted a violent stroke; and having the courageous preacher delivered to him by Pilate, he had shut him up in the fortress of Machaerus, situated on the extreme limit of his States. The rabbis named it Black Fort or else Furnace, on account of the black earth of asphalt and the hot springs which were found in that region. It was situated beyond the Dead Sea, in the neighbourhood of Mount Nebo. It was the best fortified place after Jerusalem. King Herod had had it built to make of it a place of arms against the Arabs. These had seized it later, but it had probably been reconquered in the present war. Nature had provided it with ditches a hundred cubits deep; at its feet was built the lower town, but above it displayed its rocks projecting over the abyss, and surrounded with walls. At the angles were placed towers sixty cubits high; and it is in one of these towers that John the Baptist was shut up. On the square, in the middle of the citadel, rose a magnificent castle: it is there that the

tetrarch kept himself with his staff, while the war forced him to remain in those countries. In this palace was an old stalk of rue of such height that Josephus thought he ought to make mention of it. At the bottom of the valley grew a magic root named Baaras, of which marvellous effects were told. Such was this fortress of Machaerus, which rose itself like a donjon of hell in this valley, sixty stadia long, and whence the Dead Sea was perceived at a distance of three leagues and a half."

It must have entered into the plans of the deceitful and crafty monarch to make the Prophet who had stirred and attracted to himself all Israel be forgotten little by little. For this, two means presented themselves naturally: a close and prolonged detention, and discredit cast on his person by means of calumnies skilfully contrived.

It is in execution of the first means that John was taken away far from the places where he had played so great a part, and that he was transported and detained in a fortress sheltered from every attempt of carrying off on the part of his disciples, and in the impossibility of undertaking an escape. It is again for this that Herod did not hasten to try him; for the irreproachable justice and the holiness of the Precursor, recognised by his enemies themselves, could not have made a judgment turn to the glory of his accusers. It was therefore surer and more adroit to shut him up as secretly as possible, and to avoid giving this measure any kind of resounding.

To discredit the person and the virtue of the Precursor, accusations without consistency were formulated against him, which were skilfully divulged among the people. He was made to pass for a factious man who sought to stir up the multitude; it was represented that he had merited and rendered necessary his imprisonment by exposing the Jews to make the Romans believe that they wished to revolt against their authority. Above all, they failed not to accuse him of having insulted royal majesty, in the person of Herod, by the reproaches which he had addressed to him and by the blame with which he had covered him in the very presence of the people. They could not forget to revive all the grievances which the Pharisees had against him from the beginning of his preachings, for having humbled them publicly by reproaching them with their vices and by calling them race of vipers. We know, in effect, from the very mouth of Christ, that it was wished to make His Precursor pass for one possessed by the demon.

The disciples of the holy Precursor always preserved their affection for this worthy master; their fidelity belied itself not even in persecution; they wished to continue to be exclusively attached to him, although Saint John had often strived to make them understand that they ought henceforth to follow Him of whom he had called himself the humble forerunner. The spirit of jealousy and of rivalry which animated them since Jesus had begun to give baptism, awoke anew in their hearts when they saw His reputation growing every day, while no more was spoken of their master. Every day, in effect, they heard related the miracles which Christ sowed on His steps; perhaps they had themselves been witnesses of some of these marvels. They conceived spite and envy from it; some of them let themselves even be drawn by the Pharisees to the point of joining their party to set snares for Him. After the resurrection of the son of the widow of Naim, as they had still the faculty of seeing their master in his prison, they came to relate to him this marvel and some other earlier miracles; they let doubtless be glimpsed the spite which they felt from it. Then Saint John chose two of them, and charges them with a mission which could not be subject to any suspicion, and of which the result would be to teach them, by the very force of things, what difference there is between the Christ and His Precursor. Consequently, instead of addressing to his disciples an instruction, as he had already done on an analogous occasion, he sends preferably, doubtless, those who made most difficulty in believing, and charges them to go in his name to put this question to the Saviour: "Art Thou He that is to come, or look we for another?" The words which the disciples of the Precursor addressed on his part to Jesus Christ amounted to these: "I know that Thou art the Messias: this I have proved by my testimony; but the people is still ignorant of it. Why then dost Thou delay to make Thyself known, and dost Thou not declare what Thou art? Render at last a clear and evident testimony in the eyes of all the world; show, by Thy works, that Thou art the Christ,

and that none other is to be awaited."

The envoys of the holy Precursor having therefore arrived near Jesus, addressed to Him, on the part of their master, the questions with which they were charged. "The Saviour," says Saint Cyril, "did not hasten to answer that He was He who was to come; but He showed it by the number and the greatness of the miracles, for He was pleased to work, in presence of the disciples of John, many more prodigies than He had done until then." Saint Luke relates, in effect, that "in that same hour, Jesus cured many of their diseases and hurts, and of evil spirits, and to many that were blind He gave sight." He accomplished thus on purpose what the Prophets had predicted that the Christ would one day do.

After having accomplished many miracles in presence of the disciples of Saint John, Jesus at last took the word: "Go," said He to the disciples of the holy Precursor, "and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he that shall not be scandalised in Me." The Saviour, in making remark that the Gospel was announced to the poor, wished, according to the interpreters, to notify the accomplishment of the Prophecy of Isaias on this subject.[96] It was, consequently, to answer the thought of Saint John. If Jesus Christ had answered in a formal and evident manner, instead of giving the word to works, would not the disciples of Saint John have been offended at it and would they not have replied to Him, like the Jews: "Thou givest testimony of Thyself?"

However Christ took care to say enough that the disciples of John might return perfectly instructed, and even convinced and persuaded; for immediately after the death of their worthy master, they betook themselves eagerly to Jesus. The miracles of which they had been witnesses were, in effect, quite capable of enlightening them and of taking away every pretext for doubt.

The multitude which had assisted at the reception of the disciples of Saint John and heard the questions proposed to the Saviour, knew not the true motive which had inspired them to the Precursor. Wherefore the numerous witnesses of this scene imagined on this subject a thousand absurd things. But Jesus Christ hastens to go before these suspicions and to prevent minds from thinking ill of His friend of predilection. To give more force to His reasoning, and not to say first what He thinks of His Precursor, He invokes the testimony of His hearers themselves. He does not content Himself with leaning on their words, He shows that their very actions testify to the firmness and the constancy of Saint John. It is for this that He says to the Jews: "What went you out into the desert to see? — Went you to see a reed shaken by the wind?" — "But what went you out to see?" continues He, "a man clothed in soft garments? They that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings."

After having made known the manners of Saint John by his habitation, his garments and the veneration of which he was the object on the part of the people, Christ goes on asking the Jews whether they did not go to see a Prophet. "What went you out to see? a Prophet? Yea, I tell you, and more than a Prophet; for this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee." Eternal Wisdom has prescribed to man to praise no one before his death. However this same Wisdom incarnate, to whom belongs by divine right the judgment of men, willed not only to derogate once from this maxim in favour of His Precursor, but even to dwell with a sort of complacency in making the eulogy of him who feared not to give himself out as His friend, even before this adorable Saviour had let fall from His divine mouth this so sweet word, addressing His disciples: "I have called you friends." Christ, in effect, continuing His discourse in a more solemn tone, declares with a sort of oath that "among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist," and that far from any of the Prophets surpassing him, he is himself greater than they, since he is more than a Prophet. While Jesus was transfigured on Thabor, John died in his prison after three months of captivity. After having prepared the ways for the Messias, he ended his career gloriously by martyrdom, and received himself the baptism of blood. Herodias had sought for a long time the occasion of putting him to death: she found it at last. Herod celebrated the

anniversary day of his birth, and had invited to his table all the great ones of his court, the chiefs of his army and the principal personages of Galilee. Salome, daughter of Herodias, appeared therefore before Herod, playing the lute and dancing to embellish the feast. In the time of Augustus, the custom, for long in use among the Greeks, of terminating banquets of state by mimic dances and by scenes drawn from dramatic poets, had been introduced at the court of the great throughout the Roman empire.

Salome appeared therefore before all the court of Herod as queen of the feast and as dancer at once. The education of girls at that epoch, throughout the Roman empire, had for aim, as Horace teaches us, to form them from an early age to dancing and coquetry. But on this occasion, this play had a very tragic end; for it pleased Herod so much that he swore by his head, according to the custom of the Jews, excited probably by the fumes of wine, to grant to Salome the favour which she should ask of him, were it the half of his kingdom. “To give half a kingdom” was a formula which was very often used in antiquity to affirm something.

But she went out, and said to her mother: “What shall I ask?” The latter answered her: “The head of John the Baptist.” She entered at once to go to find the king. Saint Matthew and Saint Mark give Herod in this place the title of king, although he was only tetrarch, indicating to us thereby how the great ones of his court flattered him then with the hope of arriving at royalty. It was, moreover, the sole desire of the ambitious Herodias, and this desire was the cause of her ruin and of that of Herod. The evangelist seems to insinuate to us that he had nourished for a long time the thought of taking the title of Basileus, like his brother Archelaus, although he attempted only twelve years later to execute this design. And this is what Josephus confirms to us, when in his work on the war of the Jews, at the beginning of the second book, he relates to us that Antipas, immediately after the death of his father, separated from his brother Archelaus and disputed with him the royal dignity. Herod let therefore escape the fatal promise. It is probable that his brother, the tetrarch Philip, assisted at this feast, and that Salome had already seduced him. He was there at least represented by envoys charged to ask her hand; for we find him already married a short time after with her. The promise which Herod made her seemed therefore to have relation to the dowry of Salome. She had received her name in memory and in honour of the sister of Herod the elder, who, in the testament of this king, had received a considerable domain. The nobility of Galilee, the chiefs of the army and the officers had heard the fatal oath. “The king was struck sad; yet because of his oath and of his guests, he would not refuse her, but he sent one of his guards with order to bring the head of John.” It was the custom in antiquity that kings should have always with them an archer or an executioner, as sign of their judicial and sovereign power. “He, being gone, beheaded John in the prison, brought the head on a dish, and gave it to the damsel; but she carried it to her mother.” The new Jezabel had at last obtained what she had so long asked of her husband. We read in history that Mark Antony also had brought to him, during the meal, the heads of the proscribed, and that Fulvia, his wife, took on her knees the head of Cicero, and pierced its tongue with needles; Dion Cassius relates the same thing of Agrippina, after she had caused Paulina Lollia to perish. This kind of cruelty was, moreover, wholly in the manners of the epoch, and by having presented to oneself the head of those whom one wished to strike, one assured oneself thereby of the execution of the orders one had given. We ought not therefore to be astonished if historical tradition, after Saint Jerome and Nicephorus, relates that Herodias pierced the tongue of the Precursor with needles, as if she still feared his reproaches; that she buried in a secret place his head wrapped in rags, and had the trunk thrown away without giving herself the trouble of burying it.

But John, at the moment when he was ending his course, said still: “I am not he whom you think, I am only the Precursor of him whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.” Thus the generous Precursor, at the very threshold of the other life, confessed once more in a striking manner the Messias and the kingdom which He came to found.

“It was on the 10th of the month called among the Jews Ab, or Lous, that John was put to death. It was a day of misfortune for this people. It was on this day in effect that God, irritated against the children of Israel, had

announced to them that none of those who had come out of Egypt should enter into the promised land. It was on this day that the first temple had been destroyed by Nabuchodonosor; and it is on this day again that, later, the second temple was destroyed by Titus. It was on this day that the city of Betharea, focus of the revolt under BarcocLebas, was annihilated; and it is on this day that the conqueror drove the plough over the place where Jerusalem had been."

Adopting the data of D. Sepp, John the Baptist would have begun his evangelical career at the age of thirty-one years and three months, in the year of Rome 778, and he would have been put in prison in the year 780, in the month of May. He would therefore have preached the last four months of the year 778, the whole year 779, and the first five months of 780. After a detention of about three months, he would have fallen under the homicidal sword on the 10th of the month called Ab among the Jews, and corresponding to our months of July and August. Thus Saint John the Baptist would have died at the age of thirty-three years and three months about. According to these calculations, Jesus Christ would have lived thirty-four years, three months and twenty-one days.

It is judged, says Baillet, that his death happened towards the end of the second year of the ministry of Jesus Christ, or at the latest in the beginnings of the third, towards the month of February. It is always certain that it was some time before Easter.

As soon as the disciples of Saint John the Baptist had rendered to the mortal remains of their worthy master the duties of sepulture, they hastened to go to find Jesus to impart to Him this sad event, and doubtless also to draw some alleviation to their grief by placing themselves henceforth in His train. The mission which the Precursor had lately confided to two of them had not failed to dissipate the sentiments of jealousy which they had had at first against him whom they regarded as the emulator and rival of their master. What proves it is their eagerness to betake themselves to the Saviour immediately after the death of Saint John.

Jesus Christ certainly knew that John the Baptist was to die and what kind of death he would have to undergo. This event was not for an instant unknown to Him; but He willed, on this occasion, to conceive and to let appear His grief only after the manner of men, that is to say when He had been informed of the death of him whom He cherished justly more than all other men.

At this announcement, says Nicephorus, Jesus was affected with a profound grief. Metaphrastes reports that, in the affliction which He felt from it, He could not remain longer in the country; but, as if to console Himself of His sadness, He went up into a boat with His Apostles, and crossed the sea of Tiberias to withdraw into the desert.

God would not leave unpunished, even in this world, the unjust death of the holy Precursor; for Herod, then at war with Aretas, king of Arabia, had the grief and shame of seeing his army defeated and annihilated by his enemy. According to the report of Josephus, and according to the opinion accredited among the Jews, it was a punishment which God inflicted on him to avenge the murder of Saint John. But this first misfortune was only the prelude of those which the justice of God reserved for him. He died miserably, deprived of all his States; Herodias and her daughter Salome had no better fate.

The characteristic attribute of Saint John the Baptist in the arts is the lamb, because it is under this title that the Precursor designated the Saviour to the crowd. — The middle ages placed this lamb in one of the hands of Saint John the Baptist. To-day, a banderole is preferred, on which is written this sentence: *Ecce Agnus Dei*, behold the lamb of God; we avow that the manner of the middle ages is much more energetic, that it speaks much more eloquently to the eyes; now, it is at this latter result that one must aim above all in painting and sculpture. We might add as an accessory detail, that the Precursor is clothed in a simple skin of beast, which lets his bare legs be seen, which skin is tied at the waist by a girdle of leather. — This, we repeat, is the principal attribute of Saint John, in popular art. If one wishes to represent the

Precursor exercising the function which won him his popular name of Baptist, one must always show him giving baptism by immersion, and beware of putting in his hand a shell, which can only designate baptism by effusion. — His captivity is easily recognised by a grated door, and his beheading by a head in a dish. — Finally, in the scenes of the last judgment, the holy Virgin is on her knees at the right of the Saviour, and the Precursor at his left; beneath are the Apostles, etc. The painter Andrea del Sarto has given in eleven esteemed plates the sequence of the life of Saint John the Baptist. Saint John the Baptist is the patron of a great number of cities and countries which it would be too long to name. He is particularly invoked by cutlers and furbishers, on account of the cutlass which served to cut off his head; — by belt-makers, on account of the girdle of leather which the evangelist Saint Mark makes him wear; — by bird-sellers at Liège, because doubtless John had lived free and far from cities, like the bird of the fields, before his imprisonment; — by skinners and tailors; — for lambs, this is understood; — against epilepsy, convulsions, spasms and hail. We could not explain these last patronages, except by this general reason, that the credit of Saint John was doubtless reputed universal.

Worship and Relics

The disciples of the holy Precursor, having succeeded in putting themselves in possession of the body of their master, wished to withdraw it from the insults of his enemies, by carrying it as far as Sebaste, the ancient Samaria, which was no longer under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas. God did not delay to make known the glory of Saint John the Baptist. After the tomb of the Saviour, none, without contradiction, was more glorious and attracted more the eager and thronging crowds than the tomb of the son of Zachary; a multitude of miracles was wrought there. But paganism, at bay, wished to avenge itself even on the remains of the dead for the isolation and the ignominy in which its antiquated gods, its decrepit altars and its silent oracles found themselves. Hadrian, to prevent the Christians from running from all sides to the tomb of the Saviour, had it profaned by erecting there a temple and a statue to the most impure of the pagan divinities. Julian the Apostate wished to follow his example with regard to the tomb of Saint John the Baptist. By his orders, his sacred bones were discovered, they were profaned, and efforts were made to disperse them. But the sacrilegious profaners perceived soon the uselessness of their shameful attempt, and the miracles ceasing not to be wrought, no longer in a single place, as before, continued to bring out more and more the impotence of the idols and the uselessness of the worship that was lavished on them. Excited by a redoubling of fury, the infidels collected the bones of the Saint, and wished to annihilate them by burning them and casting the ashes to the wind. But pious monks had disguised themselves to mingle with these impious ones; they succeeded in withdrawing from them a considerable part; they gathered even the ashes of the pyre. This profanation of the remains of Saint John the Baptist has caused him to be surnamed twice martyr by some authors. There are some who have attributed to the vengeance which heaven willed to draw from this outrage the tragic death of Julian, which happened a short time after.

It is said that the vindictive Herodias had carried with her, as far as Jerusalem, the head of the holy Precursor, and that she would confide the deposit of it to no one. Alone and far from every human look, she confided this head to the earth, in an unknown place of the palace which Herod possessed in the city of David.

It is there at least that, later, the august head of the most illustrious of the Prophets was found in a marvellous manner in the ruins of the palace formerly inhabited by Herod. A whole book would be needed to give the account of the various inventions of the head of Saint John the Baptist: we shall write only a few words on this subject.

Under Valens, Arian emperor, the head of Saint John the Baptist was found by religious at Jerusalem. Mardonius, chief of the eunuchs of the imperial palace, having had news of this happy discovery, warned the emperor, his master, who gave order that this rich treasure should be transported to his imperial city. But, as his heresy rendered him unworthy to possess it, when they were at a borough called Pontichion, distant from

Chalcedon fifteen miles, it was impossible to make the mules which drew the chariot walk, and the relic had to be unloaded at the village of Cosilaon, near there, of which the same Mardonius was lord. It remained there until the time of the great Theodosius; it was then brought to Constantinople. This pious emperor, having gone to meet it, took himself this sacred deposit, and having wrapped it in his imperial purple, he carried it in his arms into the city. This translation, which took place on 29 August, was so solemn that the Roman Church makes the memory of it in one same feast with that of the Beheading. Afterwards, Theodosius had built a magnificent church in the quarter Hebdomon, where he had it deposited. This place was seven miles from Constantinople, and it was enclosed in its precinct only under the empire of Heraclius, in the year of Our Lord 626. For the rest, the piety of Theodosius was abundantly rewarded: for Sozomen reports that this prince, having withdrawn into the church which he had built in honour of Saint John, to make his prayer there and take him for his protector, before undertaking the war against the tyrant Eugenius, obtained there so many blessings from heaven that on the day of the battle, which he won entirely, an infernal spirit came out of this church, who, uttering frightful cries and howlings against the Saint, insulted him by these words: “Is it thus that thou triumphest over me… over me who had thy head cut off?” Those who heard them remarked the hour of it, and it was verified that it was at the moment when Theodosius was putting the troops of Eugenius to rout. Devotion to Saint John the Baptist has been at all times so great that several churches have sought eagerly the means and the occasions of possessing some part of his body. That of Saint Sylvester, at Rome, pretends to have the best part of his head. The cathedral of Amiens glories in having a considerable portion of it, which comprises the upper lip, the nose, the eyes and a part of the forehead. This relic was taken from the church of Saint George, of the arsenal of Constantinople, when the French took it, and brought to Amiens, in the year 1206, by a priest named Walo of Sarton, son of Miles, knight, lord of Sarton, a village near Doullens, six leagues from Amiens. This treasure was received there with all imaginable solemnity, by Richard of Gerberoy, bishop of this city, on 17 December. This precious relic was saved during the French Revolution; it is still possessed to-day.

Baldwin II, emperor of Constantinople, among several relics specified in his golden bull of the year 1247, made a present to Saint Louis, king of France, of the upper part of the same head, which was enclosed in a beautiful reliquary of gilt silver, and deposited in the Sainte-Chapelle, at Paris. The abbey of Tiron, in the county of Perche, possessed the brain; and, as a great number of miracles took place there, Robert of Joigny, bishop of Chartres, who lived in the year 1515, had it taken from the wall where it was, to put it in a precious head supported by two angels. The chapel of the castle of Saint-Chaumont, in Lyonnais, preserves a notable part of his jaws, which was brought there from the East in a reliquary of gold. The cities of Turin, of Aosta, of Venice, in Italy; of Lyons and of Nemours, in France, possess also some parts of these precious relics. Saint Paulinus, bishop of Nola, put some of them in his church. Saint Gaudentius, bishop of Brescia, did the same in his. The finger with which he showed Jesus Christ, to make Him known to the Jews, is kept in the island of Malta, where resided the grand master of the Order of Knights who fought under the name and under the auspices of this great Saint. There is a little of his ashes in the city of Genoa, in a chapel of the cathedral church, where they are much honoured; when they are presented to the agitated sea, they have the virtue of calming it and of stopping its tempests.[1] Saint Gregory of Tours, in the book of the Glory of Martyrs, reports several miracles which were wrought by the sacred bones of this holy Precursor. A so great quantity of them has been wrought in the city of Amiens that the truth of that which it possesses cannot be doubted. One may see Baronius, on this matter, in the year 660, in the ninth volume of his Annals, and the celebrated Du Cange, treasurer of France and general of finances in the province of Picardy, who has given to the public a historical treatise on the head of Saint John the Baptist. It is a work very curious and sought for its exactness, as are all those which have come from the hands of this learned man.

The basilica of Saint John Lateran, the first church of Rome and of the Catholic world, that where the bishop of Rome goes to take solemn possession of the universal primacy, and which is regarded as the metropolis of Catholicity, was dedicated to the Saviour and placed under the invocation of Saint John the Baptist.

The worship of Saint John the Baptist has always been exceptional in the Church, as much for its antiquity and its universality as by the solemnity which has been put into it and by the number of feasts established in his honour.

Saint Augustine observes that the feast of the Nativity of Saint John was already very ancient in his time, and that the faithful had received it, by tradition, from the ancients, to transmit it to posterity.

Thus the usage of celebrating the birth of the Precursor, by a solemn feast, is as ancient as the solemnity of the Nativity of the Saviour Himself, while the day on which the holy Virgin appeared to the world was honoured with a particular worship only from the 8th or the 9th century. The very existence of this feast, according to M. Pascal, provoked the institution of that of which we have just spoken.

The Church, following the remark of Saint Bernard, celebrates the death of other Saints, because their life and their death have been holy. This day is ordinarily called birth-day, *natalis dies*. It is that their death is nothing else than the birth to true life. One cannot admire too much this language so eminently Christian, and above all so diametrically contrary to that of paganism, which deified life. This name alone places the Christian religion in a sphere infinitely elevated above the beliefs which limit the destiny of man to the feast of life, and misunderstand the sublime virtue of hope, one of the characters of the true religion. But, by an exception quite remarkable, the Church reveres the temporal birth of Saint John the Baptist, because this birth itself was holy and the source of a holy joy. It is a privilege which distinguishes him from all the others, because their birth had not the same grace as his. Those who are in pain to know why we celebrate this birth rather than that of any other apostle, martyr, prophet or patriarch, must remember, says Saint Augustine, that the birth of these had nothing but what was natural, that they received the grace of the Holy Ghost only in the course of their age; in a word, that they were not born prophets, nor martyrs, or witnesses of Jesus Christ, like Saint John.

The Nativity of the holy Precursor has always been celebrated uniformly on 24 June, as well in the East as in the West. No church is seen which has not conformed to this usage, unless perhaps that of Ethiopia, where it seems that it is made on the second day of September, which is also the second day of the year for that country.

There was none more solemn, after that of the principal mysteries of our redemption. The Council of Agde, held in the year 506, counts it for the first after that of Easter, Christmas, Epiphany, the Ascension and Pentecost.

Although less remarked than formerly, above all in France, where it has ceased to be obligatory since the concordat of 1802, the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist is nevertheless still very solemn among religious populations. The city of Chaumont-en-Bassigny, which honours Saint John with a wholly exceptional worship, enjoys the privilege of a jubilee, called great pardon, whenever this feast falls on a Sunday.

Among diverse singularities which served to distinguish this great feast from all the others, we shall remark that, in certain provinces, the priests were bound to come to celebrate it in the cathedral with the bishop. Elsewhere, the custom was to offer there three times the holy sacrifice of the Mass, as to-day still at the feast of Christmas. “One wished thereby,” says Alcuin, “to bring out three signal privileges of the glory of Saint John the Baptist. He came into the world to prepare the way of the Lord by the example of his life; this was the object of the mystery of the vigil. His Baptism raised him above all; this is what the second Mass recalls. Finally he remained a Nazarite and preserved his virginity; this grace is celebrated in the feast of the day.” The usage of thus celebrating three times the holy Mass at the Saint John’s was in force until the 11th century. Here is another explanation, which is of William Durand. In certain churches, a Mass was celebrated from the morning, because this nativity was a dawn; at the hour of Terce, there was another Mass, and it was the most solemn: this other Mass was that of a martyr. The day of the vigil was observed in memory of the penitent life of Saint John in the desert. On this feast, Alleluia was not sung frequently, as on that of the

Apostles. The reason of it is that this birth took place before the resurrection of Jesus Christ and before the time of joy. The institution of the vigil of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist is hardly less ancient than that of the feast itself; it is nearly the same with the fast. The Council of Salgunstadt (year 1022) had even established that it should be preceded by a sort of Lent which lasted fourteen days. The archangel Gabriel, in announcing a son to Zachary, had predicted to him that his birth would be a subject of joy to many.

In effect, as high as one can go back in consulting the monuments of Christian antiquity, it is found that the feast of the Nativity of Saint John has always been a subject of joy not only among Christians, but also among the infidels themselves, and above all among the Arabs who, for the rest, have preserved a religious respect for the ancient patriarchs. Extraordinary demonstrations were made everywhere on this occasion.

It is known that it was the custom to anticipate the feast of Saint John by lighting, from the eve, great fires of rejoicing. This custom goes back to the highest antiquity, and Saint Augustine speaks of it as of a thing universal and immemorial. A multitude of different reasons have been given for it. That which appears to us the most plausible is that, this solemnity coinciding with the summer solstice, epoch of the year when the pagans celebrated, by bonfires, the entry of the sun into the sign of the lion, the Church wished to christianise this antique custom, which doubtless she could not succeed in abolishing. It was made the expression of the joy which, according to the oracle of Scripture, the birth of John the Baptist was to cause to the world, in announcing the near birth of the Word made flesh.

However this practice did not fail to become again, in some countries, exclusively profane. Elsewhere it degenerated into a superstition wholly strange and ridiculous. “In certain places,” says William Durand, “bones of animals are burned; it is in memory of the fact that the bones of Saint John the Baptist were burned by the Gentiles in the city of Sebaste… Brands are carried into the fields, and fires are made, to signify that Saint John was the light, the lamp lit, the Precursor of the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world… A wheel is rolled in other places, to designate that as the sun, when it has arrived at the highest point of its course, cannot rise higher, but descends again in its circle, so also the renown of Saint John, who was regarded as the Christ, diminished when the latter appeared, according to what he says himself: ‘He must increase, and I must decrease…’”

The custom of lighting bonfires on the eve of Saint John has not yet everywhere disappeared; for in certain cities, even very considerable, the first magistrates do not disdain to proceed to it with display and solemnity.

Besides the feast of the birth of the Precursor, there has been celebrated also, in divers places, that of his conception; not that it was judged holy, like that of Jesus Christ or of the holy Virgin, but because it had been announced by order of God, and because it made the beginning of the mysteries. It is marked on 24 September in the ancient martyrologies which bear the name of Saint Jerome: in those of Vandalbert, of Rabanus, of Ado, of Usuard and of Notker. The Greeks, in agreement with the Latins, to celebrate this feast also, have not gone far from this same time, since it is found marked now on the 23rd, now on the 22nd of the same month in their calendars and their menologies, as if they had wished to celebrate rather the announcement made to Zachary in the temple than the conception itself of Saint John. This choice shows in a way sufficiently clear that the whole Church believed that this conception had taken place immediately after the autumn equinox. She persists still in the same opinion, in spite of the pains which some learned men have taken to show us that the time of the service of the priest Zachary in the temple was from 16 July to the 18th of the same month. Some Greeks have maintained that this conception could have taken place only in the month of October or of November; but they had not the credit to cause the feast to be changed in favour of their sentiment. It is not seen that any office of it is made now in their Church, unless perhaps in Syria and the neighbouring countries, where this conception, qualified by the name of Annunciation of Zachary, is celebrated on the third of the eight Sundays which precede the feast of Christmas, that is to say after the middle of the month of November.

If the Church has made an exception in favour of Saint John the Baptist by celebrating with a special and exceptional worship the day when this brilliant torch appeared in the world; if she has believed herself able to recall to the memory and the veneration of the universe the very conception of this child of miracle, she could not forget to solemnise the day of his death; for she has decreed him the honours of martyrdom as well as to Saint Stephen and to the Apostles of the Saviour, although Saint Augustine seems to say that the consolation of dying for the name of Jesus Christ, whom he had announced, was taken from him. In effect, was he not, as well as they, the martyr or witness of Jesus Christ, since he died for justice, which is inseparable from truth? Saint John Chrysostom is not afraid to qualify him the first of the martyrs.

Before the 6th century of the Church, this feast was named the Passion of Saint John, as is seen in the ancient sacramentaries of Rome under Pope Gelasius, and of France, under the first race of our kings. It is qualified as the birth-day or heavenly birth of Saint John in the ancient martyrologies of the name of Saint Jerome. But, since the time of Saint Gregory the Great, it has retained in the Latin Church the name of Beheading, which was also introduced among the Greeks in equivalent terms. These have put it in the rank of the feasts on which it is ordered to interrupt the exercises of the bar and the labours of the hands. This was also introduced in several churches of the West; and in the sacramentary of Saint Gregory is seen, for its office, a beautiful preface, and blessings like those of the principal solemnities of the Roman Church.

The feast of the Beheading has however always been less solemn than that of the Nativity, because it seems that it does not regard Jesus Christ so closely on the side of His incarnation. But it appears that it was nowhere more solemn than in Russia, where it is preceded by a vigil and a fast, which is not practised for any other saint in that country. One may judge of the celebrity of the worship which the Greeks had for the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist by the multitude of churches consecrated under this title; as many as fifteen have been counted in the city of Constantinople alone.

However, there has not been agreement everywhere to celebrate it on the same day. There has been much divergence on this point, above all among the Orientals. Thus in Syria it was kept on 7 January, the day after the Epiphany, following the custom of joining to the feast of the mysteries those of the persons who have been the ministers of them, or who have taken part in them. It is believed, in effect, that it is on the very day of the Epiphany that Jesus Christ was baptised by Saint John.

Elsewhere, and above all in Africa, the Beheading was celebrated on 27 December, after that of Saint Stephen, to bring near to Jesus Christ those who had suffered nearest to Him. This feast is found still marked on 10 April in some martyrologies, and on 25 March in others. It has been believed that this last day is that on which Saint John suffered martyrdom, and that the feast of which we speak was fixed on 29 August because on that day would have been made the finding or the translation of the venerable head of the holy Precursor.

We have drawn this biography from the work of M. the Abbé Barret, priest of the diocese of Langres, entitled: *The Precursor, a reasoned history of the life, the mission and the preachings of Saint John the Baptist*.

Principal relics honoured in the city of Le Puy.

1° At the cathedral, two notable particles of the true cross.

2° A particle of the holy thorn, given by King Saint Louis to the chapter of Notre-Dame du Puy. The holy thorn itself was carried, during the great Revolution, to Saint-Chamand (Loire), where it still is. We have claimed it… We have obtained only a particle of it.

3° The skull of Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers.

4° A part of that of Saint John the Baptist.

5° Several notable particles of the bones of the saints George (part of the head), Marcellinus, Paulianus, Vosy, Scrutarius, Suacre, Hennemtaire, Aurolus and Agrevius (part of the head), bishops of Le Puy. Saint George was our first pontiff, and Saint Agrevius shed his blood for the faith.

6° Bones of Saint Consorce, martyr, *sanctæ Consortiæ*; of Saint Domninus, martyr, and of Saint John Francis Regis, priest, of the Society of Jesus.

7° Two holy bodies, *proprio nomine*; Saint Paschasius, martyr, and Saint Septimia, martyr.

8° The body of Saint Valfere, in the chapel of the congregations.

9° That of Saint Amantia, in the convent of the religious of Notre-Dame. We have no longer, alas! the arm of Saint Lawrence; but there remain to us particles of his bones. (Note of M. Alirol, canon, secretary of the bishopric, 1863.)

Our Lady of Miracles, Our Lady of la Délivrande, Etc.

Our Lady of Miracles, Our Lady of la Délivrande — Our Lady of the Cross — Our Lady of Larmor.

Ut omnium advocatus est ad Deum Christus, ita mediatrix ad Christum est Maria.

Just as Jesus Christ is our advocate with God, so also Mary is our mediatrix with Jesus Christ.

B. Alanus de Rupe, Part. 1, in Apolog.

In the peninsula which the Marne forms before throwing itself into the Seine, at Saint-Maur-les-Fossés, is found the sanctuary of Our Lady of Miracles. Towards the middle of the 7th century, in 645, under the reign of Clovis II, a dignitary of the Church of Paris, the archdeacon Blidegisilus, founded in this place a monastery with a church dedicated to the holy Virgin and to the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

The marvellous traditions which were attached to this Church were not slow to draw to it a great number of pilgrims. In effect, an ancient tradition held that the Saviour had come in person to make the dedication of it. Moreover, it was a general belief that in 1061, William, count of Corbeil, heir of the piety of his ancestors and of their zeal for the abbey of Saint-Maur, having wished to make it a gift of an image which should represent the Virgin standing at the foot of the cross, this statue was found all made without the hand of man, at the moment when the sculptor Rumnol was making ready to rough-hew the wood from which he wished to draw it; which the historian of Saint-Maur expressed by the following title given to his narrative: *Iconia beatæ Mariæ virginis quam effigiavit virtus Altissimi.*

Whatever may be the origin of this statue, it is certain that by praying at its feet innumerable cures were obtained there, which caused the chapel where it was placed to be called by the name of Our Lady of Miracles and which rendered it so venerable that the religious of Saint-Maur never entered it except barefoot.

In the fourteenth century the church which possessed so precious a sanctuary was rebuilt almost entirely; the chapel of Our Lady of Miracles was reconstructed outside the basilica, on the site of the preceding church, and preserved the miraculous statue. This renewal of the building seemed to renew the piety of the faithful, and the concourse became greater than ever. They came there above all in crowds on 24 June.

For more than eight hundred years the holy Virgin had thus been honoured in this chapel, when Mgr de Gondy, first archbishop of Paris and dean by right of the chapter of Saint-Maur, authorised the establishment of a confraternity under the name of Our Lady of Miracles, by ordinance of 3 August 1624; and, on 13 May 1627, Pope Urban VIII granted several indulgences to the faithful of both sexes who should enrol in this confraternity. A few years afterwards, touched with a special devotion for Our Lady of Miracles, Father de Condren, that man eminent in holiness, the oracle and the model of the clergy of his time, gathered into a community, at Saint-Maur, a certain number of select ecclesiastics to exercise them there, under the eye of

Mary, in the priestly virtues and prepare them for the labours of the apostolate. M. Olier, eager to join himself to this pious company, left his mother's house, and entered the new community founded at Saint-Maur. There he loved to go and spend long hours in the chapel of Our Lady of Miracles, to pour out his heart into the heart of Mary his mother, and he testified afterwards that he had received many graces in this holy place.

Unhappily, in 1791, the holy chapel was destroyed; but the miraculous image was, before the arrival of the demolishers, transferred in great pomp into a chapel of the church of Saint-Maur where it is still to-day. There were re-established, after the evil days of the revolution, the practices and solemnities in use in the ancient chapel; in the month of May 1806, the ancient confraternity was reorganised, and Pius VII granted it numerous indulgences. Each year, on the second Sunday of July, the feast of the dedication of this chapel is celebrated with an octave, followed by the solemn service for the deceased confreres; and each month a procession with a station at the chapel recalls to the faithful the devotion to Our Lady of Miracles so dear to their forefathers. The pilgrimage continues to be frequented, and the parishes of the environs go there eagerly.

Our Lady of la Délivrande, a chapel of recent foundation, at a short distance from Rauville-la-Place, in the diocese of Coutances, was built towards the beginning of the 16th century, on the very site of an ancient chapel of Saint James. The pilgrims running from all parts to this sanctuary, it was necessary to lengthen and widen the nave, to multiply the altars; and these enlargements provoked, with new pilgrims, not only a concourse of strange priests who had at heart to offer the holy sacrifice there, but also the establishment of a chaplain charged to serve the devout chapel regularly. From that time until the evil days of '93, the devotion of the peoples for this sanctuary never slackened. If danger hindered for some time the manifestation of it, it was made to burst forth as soon as it could be done without peril; and in 1800 there were seen there as many as fourteen parishes come in procession with cross and banners, to solicit the cessation of a drought which was about to make the harvests perish. An abundant rain, reward of their faith, came, in the same week, to give life back to the crops and hope to the inhabitants. Then the priests were still in exile; but the faithful came none the less, on the feasts of the Virgin, to sing her praises, to recite prayers at her feet, to ask her above all for the return of their priests. This return was not long: in 1803 there came back from exile M. Marie, priest of Rauville, who was chaplain of the sanctuary until his death, which happened in 1812. During the following years, the chapel was served scarcely except by the curates of Rauville, who came there each week, on fixed days, to offer the holy sacrifice. But in 1845 it recovered a chaplain in title, who, since then, has not ceased to serve it. This devout chapel, sixteen metres long by seven wide, lighted by six beautiful windows, and always kept in perfect cleanliness, possesses a great arch which separates the choir from the nave, a beautiful retable adorned with the pictures of Saint Joachim and of Saint Anne, and a beautiful statue of the Virgin which seems to be of the end of the sixteenth century. It is surmounted by an elegant bell-tower of square form with openings artistically made. Against its outer walls is backed a stone pulpit, to make the word of God heard on the days of great gathering, when its enclosure is too narrow to contain the crowd of hearers; and, above the portal, there is offered to public veneration a Virgin engraved on a stone cross, of the most ancient form.

Such is the devotion for this chapel that in 1821 a single man, a simple contractor for buildings, took upon himself all the works of consolidation, enlargement and even embellishment which it required, without demanding any other indemnity than the offerings of the faithful during fourteen years, while, on another side, the Reverend Father du Mesnildot and his family bore the cost of the panelling and of the pavement of the nave and of the sacristy. Every day, if the months of December and January are excepted, as well as the Sundays, pilgrims come there, of whom the greater part communicate; and on Whit Monday, on 24 June and on 8 September, there are found there as many as four or five hundred persons, of whom two hundred at least approach the holy Table. Also the bishop of Coutances has authorised there the reservation of the Blessed

Sacrament, and the Holy See has granted there the favour of a privileged altar with relics of several Saints.

The favours which the holy Virgin dispenses in this sanctuary cannot be told. One may judge of them by the truly extraordinary number of Masses of thanksgiving which are had celebrated there, or of candles which gratitude sends there. The curé of Rauville cites among others several cures of which he attests that he was a witness. These are, in 1845, a sailor of Granville saved from the tempest by invoking Our Lady of Rauville, and shortly after, his child, attacked with a cerebral fever, despaired of by the physicians, cured suddenly as soon as his grandmother had commended him to Our Lady of Rauville; it is, in 1846, a woman of Fresville who walked only with difficulty with crutches, and who is delivered all at once from her infirmity; it is, in 1848, the schoolmaster of Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte, saved at Paris, by the invocation of Our Lady of Rauville, from an imminent peril of death with which the bullets of the fratricidal war of that epoch threatened him. It is, in 4830, another inhabitant of Saint-Sauveur, attacked by a frightful tempest in returning from Chile, and saved by a prayer to the Virgin of Rauville. It is, at all epochs, serenity obtained in bad weather, rain in droughts, preservation or cessation of the evil in epidemics or public calamities. Thus in 1832, the parish of Quettehou, invaded by cholera, made a vow to go on pilgrimage to Our Lady of Rauville, and at once the cholera ceased its ravages. In 1840, the parish of Doville came in procession to ask the end of a drought which was about to make the harvests perish, and the inhabitants returned home drenched with rain. Near Saint-Thomas, in the diocese of Toulouse, is seen a celebrated sanctuary of the holy Virgin, called Our Lady of the Cross, where, in execution of a very ancient vow,[1] the parish of Saint-Thomas formerly went in procession every Sunday and feast of the month of May, as well as on the four principal feasts of the Virgin; and, on the morrow of the four principal feasts of the year, the solemn Mass was celebrated there. This chapel, demolished in ’93, has been rebuilt since the revolution. On 24 June, or, if there is an impediment, on the following Sunday, the parishes of Saint-Thomas and of Bragayrac go there simultaneously to obtain to be preserved from hail; and there is then exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. A plenary indulgence may be gained there, first on 14 March, when the feast of the Compassion is celebrated, then every Sunday and feast of obligation of the month of May; finally on the day of the month of June when the procession is made for the fruits of the earth.

The canton of Plœmeur, at the extremity of the roadstead of Lorient, possesses a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Larmor, at the village of that name; this chapel was in so great veneration in the last century that every vessel which entered the roadstead of Lorient or went out of it saluted it with a cannon-shot in passing before it: it was like a common prayer addressed to the Star of the Sea for all those who were about to run the dangers of navigation, or an act of thanksgiving for those who were returning from their long voyage. For half a century, this ancient usage was interrupted; but, for ten years, it has been resumed to the great satisfaction of the sailors. This chapel has been celebrated for many centuries by the annual blessing of the arm of the sea which separates the island of Groix from the mainland and which is called the Coureau de Groix. This ceremony takes place, on 24 June, with the aim of obtaining that the fishing of the sardine, sole resource of the inhabitants of this coast, may be abundant. On the morning of the day of Saint John, there arrive at the village of Larmor a multitude of peasants, of fishermen, of inhabitants of Lorient and of Port-Louis. Soon the clergy of Plœmeur, cross and banner at their head, goes out of the chapel, repairs processionally to the shore and takes place in a boat prepared beforehand to receive it. Launches in great number, manned by fishermen and by the curious, surround the boat, and accompany it to the middle of the Coureau, which is three marine leagues wide. Arrived at this point, after a crossing more or less long, according as the sea is calm or tormented, the wind favourable or contrary, the cortege stops to await the procession of the island of Groix, if it is not already arrived at the rendezvous. As soon as it has arrived, the clergy of the island passes into the boat of that of Plœmeur, and the two parochial crosses bow one toward the other until they touch. At this signal, the chants start at once from all the boats, assembled to the number of several hundred, and continue until the curé of Plœmeur, standing on one of the benches of his boat, imposing silence with the hand, warns that the blessing is about to begin. Then he addresses a prayer to God

and to the patroness of mariners; then he sprinkles the sea to the four cardinal points, and during this solemn ceremony, all heads are uncovered and bowed, all hands joined; masters and sailors have abandoned the helm and the oars. All mouths are silent, save a soft and confused murmur of prayers and pious orisons, which escape from all breasts religiously moved in presence of an act to which all attach the success of their future fishing and the existence of their families.

Monsieur the Curé of Saint-Sulpice: *Notre-Dame de France.*

Saint Simplicius, Bishop of Autun (about 420).[2]

Simplicius was sprung from one of those great and respectable Gallo-Roman families on which faith and virtue drew the general esteem and consideration. Two virtues principally distinguished him from his tenderest years: an amiable simplicity and a charity eminently tender, active and generous. To conform to the desire of his father, who saw in him the hope of the family, Simplicius consented to engage in the bonds of marriage: the noble companion of his life brought him, besides the splendour of her birth, fortune and grace, a treasure a thousand times more precious, virtue, piety, all the qualities of mind and heart. By common accord they took the resolution to live as a brother and a sister, to provide, by the union of their fortunes, for the needs of a greater number of the unfortunate, and to pass together a part of the nights in prayer.

Meanwhile a certain number of years elapsed, and the holy bishop of Autun, Egemon, came to die. All eyes then turned spontaneously towards Simplicius; none was judged more worthy than he to gather the inheritance of a Saint, more capable of repairing the loss which the Church of Autun had just sustained. He became in effect one of the first of those eminent bishops who began then to play, not only in the religious order, but also in the social and civil order, a so great, so useful, so salutary a part. However, as he had judged fit to keep with him, after his ordination, her whom he regarded less as a wife than as a sister, not believing that he ought to make in her heart a useless, unjust and cruel wound by removing her from his house, he could not escape the darts of calumny. The inhabitants of the pagan city made against him a tumultuous demonstration on the day of Christmas; but God Himself took in hand the cause of His servant. His virtuous wife, frightened, tried first to undeceive the people, then suddenly, urged as by a heavenly inspiration, she stretched out her mantle, received in it and equally caused to be placed in a fold of that of Simplicius coals before the eyes of all this assembled and mobbed crowd. The fire respected the garments which covered these chaste bodies; at once everyone cried miracle, and more than a thousand persons converted at the sight of this prodigy asked and received baptism. Another miracle wrought by the holy bishop opened the eyes of a great number of pagans and led them to quit for ever the worship of Cybele, which was among them in great veneration.

Simplicius had relations of friendship with Saint Amator, bishop of Auxerre; he signalised, by the consecration of a chapel in honour of Saint Symphorian, his piety towards this first martyr of Autun. It is commonly believed that he assisted at the council of Cologne held against the Arian Euphratas; Saint Athanasius counts him among those who, for the defence of his innocence and that of his faith, subscribed to the council of Sardica; he took part also in the synod of Valence, held in 374, for the maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline.

The last years of his episcopate were troubled by the frightful disasters which struck his diocese, when a cloud of Vandals, come out of the North, filled the territory of Autun with ruins and carnage. At last, after a long episcopate marked by innumerable conversions which completed the making of the country Christian, he died full of days and of merits and came to take place beside his predecessors. His body was laid in a tomb which was still preserved in the last century in the church of Saint-Pierre-l'Etrier.

A part of his relics was preserved for a long time in the abbey of Andoche and at the Val-de-Glace, at Paris.

Proper of Autun; — Cf. Dinet, Saint Symphorian and his worship.

The Blessed John, Shepherd at Monchy-le-Preux, in the Diocese of Arras (15th century).

On the road from Cambrai to Arras, at about two short leagues from this latter city, is met the village of Monchy-le-Preux. There is preciously preserved the memory of a shepherd who, in that humble condition, raised himself to the most sublime virtues, and merited that his conduct should be proposed as a model to Christians. Thus the Lord is pleased to make the marvels of His grace shine forth in all times and in all conditions. The short but touching eulogy which a bishop publicly rendered to the memory of the pious John of Monchy-le-Preux contains the few details known of his life. This bishop is Peter of Ranchicourt, who governed the diocese of Arras from 1463 to 1499. The functions of his ministry had called him to Monchy-le-Preux at the very moment when the humble shepherd was about to render his soul to God. “Let all the faithful of Jesus Christ, present and to come,” says the prelate in a public act drawn up at the same time, “know that in this village of Monchy-le-Preux, of the diocese of Arras, there lived a man called John, a simple layman, very faithful to Jesus Christ, and who, during all his life, led a most holy conduct. By the gift of God, he raised himself to the highest contemplation, was ignorant of the stains of concupiscence and avoided until death all that could tarnish the purity of his soul.”

Already before dying, the blessed John had wrought by his prayers several miraculous cures, and given other marks of the power which he enjoyed with God. He restored sight to an inhabitant of Arras and to a woman who was still living at the time when a monk of the abbey of Hasnon reported these details. This author adds that the holy shepherd restored hearing to a young man, cured several persons of the stone or of rupture, and stopped a fire in the very village of Monchy-le-Preux.

Neither the year nor the day of the death of the blessed John is known. His feast has been fixed on 24 June, perhaps because of the similarity of his name with that of Saint John the Baptist. Moreover this latter feast, being formerly a holiday, gave more facility to the faithful to come to render to the holy patron their duties and their respects. On that day, in effect, reports Ferry of Locres, so great a multitude of pilgrims betook itself to the tomb of the blessed John of Monchy that the village was quite filled with it. This tomb, of stone artistically sculpted, had been given by a noble count, called Oudard, who had been cured by the intercession of the servant of God. These cures, which were renewed very often, have maintained at all times the piety of the inhabitants of Monchy-le-Preux and of the neighbouring villages towards their venerable fellow-countryman and patron.

The Abbé Destombes: *Lives of the Saints of the dioceses of Cambrai and Arras.*

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[1] This is the fact related by the historian Tacitus: “Nero wished to give an aliment to the public hatred, to silence the unpleasant rumours which were running about him on this occasion. He made those suffer the most frightful torments whom the people call Christians, and who, for their abominable crimes, are in horror to all the world. Some of them were arrested who avowed themselves Christians (behold all their crimes in a single word), and by means of these first ones a great number of others were discovered, who were condemned, not so much as authors of the conflagration, as convicted of being odious to all mankind or of hating all men. Their death served as an amusement. Some were clothed in skins of beasts to have them torn by dogs; others were crucified; there were some whom he made perish by flames, covering them with pitch and wax, and making them thus serve as torches, to give light during the darkness of the night. Nero wished that his own gardens should be the theatre of this spectacle. He was seen to appear there himself in the dress of a charioteer, and driving chariots by the light of these funereal torches. One could not refrain from pitying the fate of the Christians, because, all worthy as they were of the last punishments, it was well understood, nevertheless, that they were immolated to the cruelty of a single man, and not to the public utility.” (*Ann.*, book xv.) Suetonius, Dion and others make the same avowal in favour of the Christians. Subrius Flavius did not fear to reproach Nero with this action. There exists also a letter of Seneca, which treats of the fire of Rome and of the persecution which the Christians endured. (Seneca, *Epit.* H; Juvenal, *Satir.* i, v, 156; *Satir.* viii, v, 235.)

[2] See his notice on the following day.

[3] Elev., 6th week, 1st elev.

[4] Luke, i, 7.

[5] Petr. Chrys., serm. lxxxix; S. Aug., serm. cxcix.

[6] 11th week, 2nd elev.

[7] There were, however, only a limited number of priests thus left to the choice of the lot. Those who were ordained for this sacrifice were not more than twelve. (Dom Calmet, Dictionary of the Bible, art. Expiation.

[8] Sacr. Elœ-Chrismat. myroth. ii, p. 532. Amsterdam. Edit.

[9] Orsini, The Virgin, p. 81.

[10] Boss., ibid., Elev. 4.

[11] Luke, i.

[12] Ibid.

[13] S. Ambrose, Theophylact and Titus translate as we have done. Which appears better and avoids the redundancy of the Vulgate: *Eris tacens et non poteris loqui*. The Greek word admits this version, which is preferable, for Zachary became in effect deaf.

[14] Carm. 5, 2.

[15] It is known that the chronologies of the different authors rarely agree among themselves, we shall therefore not undertake to determine the year of the conception of Saint John according to the ancient eras, fixed with more or less certitude. It suffices us to know that the Precursor was conceived and was born six months before Jesus Christ. But the conception of Saint John can be assigned to 23 September, according to the testimony of authors. This day was formerly consecrated in some churches to honour by a feast this miraculous conception. (Tillemont, note on Saint John the Baptist.) This date gives a new degree of probability to what the authors say, that it was on the day of Expiation that the angel appeared to Zachary. It was celebrated on the 10th of Tizri. Supposing that Zachary began his ministry on that day, he could not leave the temple until the 18th; he needed at least a day to betake himself to his house at Hebron; provided the month of Tizri encroached that year on October, it is found that the return of Zachary coincides perfectly with the epoch assigned to the conception of Saint John.

[16] Luke, i.

[17] Or rather her sixth month was ending; for she had conceived on 23 or 24 September, and this took place, according to the belief of the Church, on 25 March.

[18] Luke, i, 26-38; De Ligny, Life of Jesus Christ.

[19] Luke, i.

[20] Travels of Jesus Christ.

[21] Mgr Mislin, The Holy Places.

[22] Luke, i.

[23] Euthym.

[24] Orig. and Ambr. *ubi supra*; Bed. *in Luc.*, lib. i.

[25] Euthym.; S. Anton.; Card. Hugo; Gloss.; Cassia; Pet. Comest.; S. Bonav.; S. Pet. Dam.; Lyran; C. à Lapide; Ualdon; L. Burg.; Toynard; Hauman; D. Calm.; D'Argentan; D'AlUoIi, etc.

[26] Bairad.

[27] *Quasi tres menses.* (Vid. C. à Lapide.)

[28] Medit., c. 6. *Ita* S. Anton. 2 p. Sum. titul. 18, c. 5, § 6.

[29] Boss., 15th week, Elev. 1.

[30] Ps. xviii, 3.

[31] Exod., xiii.

[32] Exod., xiii.

[33] Num. vi.

[34] S. Basil. *De humana Christi generatione*; Collin de Plancy, Life of the Holy Virgin.

[35] Many authors of grave authority, founding themselves on the fact that Simeon blessed Joseph and Mary, have and said that this holy old man was a priest.

[36] Matth., ii, 16.

[37] C. à Lapide in Matth.

[38] Book ii, Saturnal., c. 4.

[39] S. Basil., *de hum. Christi generatione.*

[40] Dyonis. Carth. in Luc.

[41] Scorpiac. c. 8.

[42] Tillem., Mem. eccl.

[43] Petr. Alex.

[44] Lanuz. Conclon.

[45] Boss., 15th week, 7th elev.

[46] Luke, i, 80.

[47] *Prat. spirit.*, c. 1.

[48] Med. vii. Chr., c. 13.

[49] Serm. i, *de Adv.*

[50] Deuter., xvi, 16.

[51] Luke, ii, 41.

[52] S. Aug., serm. cclxxxviii.

[53] Joan., i.

[54] Ibid., v.

[55] Bourdaloue, sermon for the feast of Saint John the Baptist.

[56] Homil. 4e *jejun.*

[57] Epist. xiii.

[58] S. Basil. *de Virginib.* c. 79.

[59] Matth., xviii, 10.

[60] The Greek word which is ordinarily translated here by locusts signifies also the young shoots of trees.

[61] Roman Breviary.

[62] Mgr Mislin, The Holy Places.

[63] Boss., 15th week, 7th elev.

[64] *Dissimulas peccata hominum propter pœnitentiam.* (Sap., 11, 14.)

[65] *Et quidem ante adventum Christi incertum fuit, si graviter lapsi possent habere veniam, et peccatorum remissio complures latuit.* (In psalm. pœnit., iv, 8.)

[66] Acts xxx.

[67] S. Aug., serm. iii *de Annunt.*; Chrys., homil. vii *ad pop.*; Greg., 22 moral., c. 13; Abulens., Genes. iii; Cajet., Genes. iii; *Insuper*: S. Ambr., *de Paradis.*, c. 14; *De Cain et Abel*, c. 9; Chrys., homil. xviii *in Genes.*; S. Bern., lib. *de Praecept. et dispens.*; Bellarm., *de Poenit.*, c. 3.

[68] Matth., xi, 12.

[69] Matth., iii; Mark, i; Luke, iii.

[70] Matth., iii, 7.

[71] P. Comestor; Dionys. Carthus.

[72] *Die 16 Julii.*

[73] John, iv, 2.

[74] Translation by Bossuet, 21st week, 6th elev.

[75] Acts, i, 21.

[76] C. à Lapide.

[77] Acts, xviii, 24.

[78] Hieron., Epist. xxii *ad Eustoch.*; Chrysost., homil. i *in Marc.*; S. Bernard.; Cassian.; Cons/z., lib. i *de Verbi Dei corrept.*, c. 2.

[79] Serm. ccxciii; Migne, t. v, col. 1333.

[80] Ambros.; Euthym.; Cajetan.

[81] What would prove still more that the word shoe must not be understood in a purely literal sense is that Jesus Christ made no use of them and went barefoot, according to the opinion of some interpreters. (S. Hieron. *ad Eustoch.*; S. Bonavent., *in vita Chr.*, c. 28; Dionys. Carth. *in Matth.* 3; Lyran; Abulens, etc. Ibid.)

[82] Ps. cvii, 10.

[83] Homil. xi, *in Matth.*

[84] Jesus Christ says in effect in Saint John (iv, 14): “The water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting.” — (vii, 38): “He that believeth in Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;” and the evangelist himself makes the remark that “this He said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in Him.” (S. Thom. *in Luc.*)

[85] Elev.

[86] Isaias, liii, 6.

[87] Orat. xlv.

[88] Serm. *de Privil. S. Joan.*

[89] Boss., Elev., 22nd week.

[90] John, v.

[91] Ps. cxliii, 3.

[92] Ecclus., xxxi, 9.

[93] Elev., 6th, 22nd week.

[94] Sever. *De Rit. Baptis.*; La Bigne, t. iv, p. 66.

[95] C. à Lapide; Maldon., *in Matth.*

[96] Deut., xviii.

[97] D'Allioli.

[98] Isaias, ch. lxi, puts in the mouth of Christ these words, according to the Vulgate: "God hath sent me to announce His word to those who are meek"; and according to the Septuagint: "God hath sent me to announce the Gospel to the poor". The Hebrew admits these two versions.

[99] The city of Le Puy possesses also a relic of Saint John the Baptist.

[100] One reads in an old register of the year 1666, preserved in the vestry board of the church of Saint-Thomas: "It is a country chapel, to which procession is made every Sunday and feast of the month of May, and the high Mass is said in it on the morrow of the four principal feasts of the year, by reason of a perpetual vow of which there is no memory of man."

[101] Ordinance of Mgr d'^stros of 23 June 1850.

25 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

In the territory of Golet, near Nusco, Saint William, confessor, founder of the Hermits of Monte-Vergine. 1142. — At Berea, the birth into heaven of Saint Sosipater, disciple of the apostle Saint Paul.[1] 1st century. — At Rome, Saint Lucy, virgin and martyr, with twenty-two others. — At Alexandria, Saint Gallican, martyr, consular personage, triumphator, dear to the emperor Constantine, who was converted to the faith of Jesus Christ by Saint John and Saint Paul: having become a Christian, he withdrew with Saint Hilarinus to Ostia, and gave himself wholly to hospitality and to the service of the sick: the report of it having spread through all the earth, people came from all sides to see a man who had been patrician and consul, and who now washed the feet of the poor, set their tables, gave them to eat, tended the sick, and exercised all the other works of mercy. Driven out of Ostia under the reign of Julian the Apostate, he went to Alexandria, where the judge Rancien having wished to compel him to sacrifice to the idols, he despised his orders, and, struck with the sword, became a martyr of Jesus Christ. 362. — At Sibaple, in Syria, Saint Febronia, virgin and martyr, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, under the judge Lysimachus, was, for the preservation of her faith and of her chastity, first scourged and tormented on the rack, then torn with iron combs and cast into the fire; finally, having had her teeth torn out, her breasts cut off and her head cut off, she went to find her Spouse, adorned with the jewels of all these sufferings. About 304. — At Besançon, in the Gauls, Saint Antidus, called also Antel, Tude, Antible, bishop and martyr, who was killed by the Vandals for the faith of Jesus Christ. 5th century. — At Riez, in Provence,[2] Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, doctor of the Church, celebrated for his learning and his piety, who fought courageously against the Pelagians for the Catholic faith. 5th century. — At Turin, the feast of Saint Maximus, bishop of that see and confessor, very celebrated for his doctrine and his holiness. 466. — In Holland, Saint Adalbert, confessor, disciple of Saint Willibrord, bishop. About 740.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Nantes, Saint Gohard, Gdichard or Gunhar, bishop of that see, massacred in his church with a great number of clerics, religious and laymen, by the infidel Normans. 843. — In the dioceses of Coutances, of Cambrai, of Cologne, of Montpellier, of Perpignan and of Strasbourg, Saint William, abbot, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. 1142. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint Gallican, martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. 4th century. — At Saint-Jean de Maurienne, in Savoy, Saint Thecla or

Tygre, who brought into that country relics of Saint John the Baptist, and lived there in solitude. 6th century. — At Nantes, Saint Emilian, bishop of that city and martyr.[3] — At Poitiers, Saint Perseveranda.[4] — In the diocese of Paris, the saints Agoard, Aglibert and their companions, cited yesterday in the Roman martyrology. — At Ardes, in the diocese of Clermont, Saint Dizant, bishop of Saintes. It is believed that he succeeded Saint Leger; his episcopate was not of long duration. His virtues have been preserved by tradition in the diocese of Saintes. Two parishes of that diocese are under his invocation: Saint-Dizant du Gua, in the canton of Saint-Genis, and Saint-Dizant du Bois, in that of Mirambeau. End of the 7th century. — At Dijon, the decease of the priest Lefebvre, of the diocese of Angers, died in the irons in which he had been put for refusal of the oath. 1793. — In the diocese of Poitiers, Saint Maixent, abbot.[5] 515. — In Savoy, the blessed John of Spain, prior of the Carthusians. There was seen formerly, in a monastery on the shores of the lake of Geneva, a chapel where his relics were honoured. 1160. — In Brittany, Saint Solomon, king, who, having imitated David in his sin, imitated him in his penance, and, having withdrawn into solitude, was massacred by his own subjects. His relics are preserved at the cathedral of Vannes. 874. — Near Meldart, on the frontiers of Brabant, Saint Odvin, priest, killed by robbers. His body is honoured at Hugarden, in the church of Saint-Gorgon. 11th century. — At Bourges, Saint Ethère or Ithier, bishop of Nevers, who reposes in the church of Sainte-Croix.[6] — At Liège, Saint Lambert, priest. — At Liège again, the venerable Eve, recluse, who contributed to the establishment, by Pope Urban IV, of the feast of the Blessed Sacrament, with the particular aim of confounding the heretics, its sacrilegious despisers. 1265. — At the monastery of Médeloc, near Trier, Saint Albert, monk. — In the diocese of Liège, the memory of the saints Amand and Domnolena, confessors. 6th century. — At Noyon, the translation of Saint Eloy. — At Toulouse, the translation of Saint Saturninus. — At Soissons, Saint Alban, martyr of Great Britain, named in the Roman martyrology on the 22nd of this month, the day under which we have given his life.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Basilians. — At Style, in Calabria, Saint John, surnamed Thereste, abbot. *Martyrologies of the Benedictines, of the Camaldolese, of Vallombrosa and of the Cistercians.* — In the territory of Golet, near Nusco, Saint William, abbot.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

Among the Carmelites, Saint William, abbot, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — Among the Franciscans, Saint Gallican, likewise named in the same martyrology. — At Otricoli, in the diocese of Narni, in Umbria, Saint Medicus or Medean, martyr. Arrested as a Christian, he generously confessed the faith. After long days passed in prison, as he persevered always in the same sentiments, he was fastened to a tree, nails were driven into his feet and his hands, then he was stretched on the rack where his limbs were broken. As he praised God in the midst of these tortures, he was cast into a burning brazier, but the flames spared him; finally his head was cut off. His body was found, in 1612, in the church of Saint-Victor of Otricoli, by the bishop of that see, and the Pope authorised his worship. — At Rome, with Saint Lucy, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the saints Ancéias, Antony, Héxénée, Theodore, Denis, Apollonius, Apamius, Pronique, Cotée, Orion, Papique, Satyrus, Victor, martyrs. 301. — At Sibaple, in Mesopotamia, with Saint Febronia, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the saints Lybe, Leonida and Eutropia, virgins and martyrs. About 304. — At Thessalonica, in Macedonia, the saints Salonite, Bigate, Lamtan, Lunitan, martyrs. — In Egypt, the saints Benjamin and Béjoc, anchorites, mentioned in a martyrology of Abyssinia. A serpent having carried off the holy Eucharist which they kept in their solitude for communion, they received from an Angel the order to eat this serpent, which they did, animated by the intense desire which they had to receive the body of Our Lord. — At Jacca, in Spain, Saint Eurosia, virgin and martyr. The Moors asked her to be the wife of their chief; as she refused, she was assassinated in a cavern where she had taken refuge. Her relics have been transferred to Jacca, where the Spaniards invoke her against the inclemencies of the air. 8th century. — Among the Greeks, Saint Simon, anchorite. — At Olmütz, in

Moravia, the blessed Henry Zdick, bishop of that city, of the Order of the Premonstratensians. Year 1151. — At Naples, the blessed Guy Maramaldi, Dominican and inquisitor general of the kingdom. He founded at Piaguse a monastery of his Order. Towards the end of his days he resigned his charge of inquisitor to live in retreat, disposing himself for the journey of eternity by the practice of works of penance and the exercise of contemplation. The miracles wrought at his tomb caused him to be honoured as blessed, and his remains were placed in a chapel which took his name. Naples having been besieged by the French in 1598, the Neapolitans hid his body, and since that epoch it has no longer been possible to find this treasure. 1331.

Saint Febronia, Virgin and Martyr in Syria (4th century).

Ignis, crux, bestiæ, confractio ossium, membrorum divisio, et totius corporis contritio, et tota tormenta diaboli in me veniant, tantum ut Christo fruar.

Let fire, the cross, the beasts come, may I see my bones broken, my members dispersed, my body ground, may I undergo all the torments of hell, provided that I enjoy Jesus Christ.

S. Jerome, de script. Eccl. in Ignatio loquente.

There was in the city of Sibaple or Nisibis,[1] a community of about fifty religious, which the deaconess Platonia had formed, and to which she had given rules. Their life was austere. They ate only once a day, and on Friday they did not stir from the interior oratory, where after the psalmody Platonia read aloud the holy Scripture until the hour of Terce; after which she handed the book to another religious named Brienne, who held the second rank in her community, and who succeeded her in her double charge of deaconess and superior. The latter continued the reading until the hour of Vespers, and accompanied it with an edifying explanation for the instruction of the sisters. It was in this house of virtues that Saint Febronia was brought up from her childhood, and that she prepared herself by innocence and the practice of religious virtues for the martyrdom which she endured for the glory of Jesus Christ. She was the niece of Brienne, and was only two years old when her education was entrusted to her. But she was adorned with a beauty so perfect that her pious aunt feared that it might become a snare to her, and believed that she ought to take precautions to guard her from it. So, when she was of an age to fast like the other sisters, she prescribed to her to eat only every second day, and the docile Febronia, entering into her views, took only very little bread and drank water only in small quantity, which made all her food, taking care never to be satisfied. She added to this austere abstinence, to lie only on a very short and very narrow bench, and sometimes she lay on the bare earth. If it happened that the demon came to trouble her in the night by some temptation, she rose at once, set herself to prayer, or else she read the holy Scripture, and thus dissipated his illusions by prayer and by the force of the word of God. It was by these holy practices that she preserved herself in a perfect purity, and that she edified admirably all the sisters, above all by her humility and her obedience. Platonia being dead, Brienne, who found herself charged with the conduct of the monastery, ordered Febronia to make the reading on Friday in the assembly: but as there came there ladies of the city to profit by the word of God, she recommended to her, because of her beauty, to cover her face with her veil, in order not to be seen by them, having always taken great care to hide her from the eyes of persons from without, without excepting even those of her sex. Nevertheless she explained the holy Scripture with so much light and solidity in the reading which she made of it, that it was spoken of in all the city; which, joined to the advantageous reports which the religious made of her virtues and of her beauty, piqued the more the curiosity of the ladies who wished to hear her.

The widow of a senator, named Hieria, who, having lived only seven months with her husband, had returned after his death to her native city, and led a tranquil life at her parents', touched by what was said of Febronia, and still more inwardly by the movement of grace, desired to form acquaintance with her, whether to be instructed in the mysteries of religion, or also to enjoy the conversation of a person of whom so much praise had been made to her. One day therefore she came to the monastery, and had herself announced by the portress to the venerable Brienne. As soon as the latter appeared at the door of the monastery to receive her

with the honours due to her rank, she threw herself at her feet, embraced them and said to her: “In the name of Him who made heaven and earth, do not repulse a miserable pagan, who has been until now the plaything of idols; do not deprive me of the instructions of my sister Febronia; let me learn from her the way of salvation, that it may be given to me to attain to the happiness reserved to Christians. Tear me from the vanity of the world and from the infamies of the worship of false gods; for my parents wish to compel me to a second marriage. I am unhappy enough to have done evil, through the ignorance in which I was of a better doctrine.”

Brienne represented to her the law which she had imposed on her niece, not to let herself be seen by anyone. “I received her,” she said to her, “from the hands of her parents when she was only two years old; she is now eighteen, and as she is too beautiful to show herself to the eyes of the world, I have not even granted her to her nurse, who has asked her of me often with great instance.” But Hieria continuing to testify to her with tears the uprightness of her intentions, she yielded at last to her desires, on condition that she should lay aside her finery and should present herself before Febronia only in the dress of a religious, because the Saint had never seen these worldly ornaments. Hieria consented without difficulty, and the superior led her to the oratory of Febronia. The latter, thinking that it was a strange religious, threw herself at her feet and embraced her as her sister in Jesus Christ. Brienne made them both sit down, and after these first testimonies of fraternal charity, she ordered Febronia to make the reading. Hieria was so touched by it, grace acting in her heart, that she ceased not to shed tears, and they passed insensibly the whole night in this holy exercise; Febronia never wearying of making the reading, and Hieria receiving her instructions with a holy avidity.

The superior had much trouble, the next morning, to determine Hieria to separate herself from the Saint: it was only after having embraced her anew with much tenderness and tears; and, having returned to her parents’, she made them share the wholly heavenly instructions which the Saint had given her and persuaded them to abandon the superstitious worship of idols to embrace the Christian faith. Meanwhile Febronia inquired of Thomais, who occupied the second place in the monastery, who this religious was: “For,” she said, “she wept so much when I explained the holy Scripture to her, that one would have said she had never heard it read.” Thomais confessed to her that it was the senator’s widow Hieria; at which the Saint, much astonished, said to her: “And why was I not warned of it? I spoke to her with the same confidence as if she had been of the number of the sisters, believing her a religious.” But Thomais answered her that Brienne had wished it so. Hieria, after this first conversation, had permission to come to see her, and the Saint having fallen dangerously ill, she wished to serve her, and did not leave her until her health was restored.

Such was the state of this community when the emperor Diocletian sent into this province Lysimachus, son of Anthimus, who is believed to have been prefect of Nicomedia, with Selenus, brother of this prefect, to persecute the faithful there. Selenus was a man extremely violent, and an enemy of Christianity as much as the emperor was; but the sentiments of Lysimachus were quite opposite, and his mother, who was a Christian, had recommended to him when dying to protect the Christians with all his power. Diocletian, who esteemed Anthimus much, would not give his place to Lysimachus unless he had some assurance of his attachment to the idols and of his hatred against the Christian religion, suspecting the good instructions which he had received from his mother; but Selenus, who was given to him to guide him rather than as an adjunct, answered for his submission to the orders of the prince, and set out with him and with the count Primus, also a relative of Lysimachus. They were not slow to announce the persecution at Nisibis by the cruelties which Selenus exercised in Mesopotamia and Palmerian Syria; for he made perish there, either by the sword or by fire, as many Christians as he could arrest, and he afterwards had thrown to the wild beasts what the flames had spared of their bodies. But Lysimachus, being unable to suffer this excess, took the count Primus aside and held this discourse to him: “You are not ignorant that, although my father died a pagan, my mother was nevertheless a Christian and had laboured to engage me to be one after her example; but the fear of the emperor and of my father has always prevented me. Being unable therefore to obtain it

from me, she recommended to me most earnestly never to put any Christian to death, but rather to treat them as friends. So I cannot see, without being touched with compassion, the cruelties which my uncle Selenus exercises against them, for he delivers to the harshest torments all those who fall into his hands. I beg you therefore to receive secretly all those who shall be presented to you and to favour their flight." The count Primus entered willingly into his good sentiments, and from that time he no longer ordered that they should be arrested; he even had secret warnings given to the monasteries, in order to prevent the religious from being seized and led to Selenus.

After they had passed some time in Mesopotamia and the neighbouring cities, they took the road to Nisibis, and at the report of their approaching arrival the ecclesiastics and the monks, as well as the bishop, disappeared and hid in divers places. The religious of the monastery of Brienne wished also to imitate them, and begged the superior to permit them to put themselves in safety. "Alas!" she said to them, "you have not yet seen the enemy and you wish to flee! The combat has not begun and you declare yourselves vanquished! Have, I pray you, my daughters, sentiments more worthy of you: let us remain, and expose ourselves generously to the combat and to death for the love of Him who deigned to die for us, that we may live eternally with Him."

These words made at first some impression on them, but fright seized them afterwards more than before; and in the fear in which they were that the soldiers might offer them insult, or that they might not be able to resist the torments, they insisted anew with their superior, who was constrained to permit them to withdraw. Their intention was to take Febronia with them and they exhorted her much to follow them. But the holy girl said to them: "I protest to you in the presence of the Lord, to whom I have devoted myself, that I shall not stir from here, and that I prefer to die here and to be buried here, rather than to go out of it."

They separated thus, but it was with loud cries and shedding torrents of tears. At this moment Procla, brought up from her childhood with Febronia, threw herself on her neck, and, clasping her in her arms, cried out: "My well-beloved sister, pray for me." Febronia, who had seized her hand, held her back, saying: "Thou, at least, dear Procla, fear God, and do not abandon us. Seest thou not how ill I am? If I come to die, our mother will not have strength enough to give me burial; remain then with us, to render me the last duties." Procla answered: "Dear sister, since thou desirest it, I will not abandon thee." Febronia answered: "I conjure thee before the Lord, witness of thy promise, do not abandon me." Nevertheless, towards evening, Procla had disappeared. Then the superior seeing herself alone with Thomais and Febronia, and fearing the entire ruin of her monastery, sought her consolation and her strength in prayer; having entered her oratory, she prostrated herself with her face against the ground, weeping bitterly and imploring the help of the Lord with groanings which Thomais heard and which obliged her to run to console her. "Alas, my mother and my mistress," she said to her, "why do you abandon yourself thus to your grief? Calm yourself, I conjure you; is not God powerful enough to succour us, and to make the temptation turn to the advantage of our soul? Who has put his confidence in Him and has been confounded? Who has persevered in His fear and has been rejected by Him?" — "You are right," answered the afflicted superior, "but what will become of Febronia? where shall I be able to put her in safety? and if I cannot, how shall I be able to see her chained and led away by barbarians?" — "Be reassured," replied Thomais; "would you have forgotten what she said to you, that He who can raise the dead is not less powerful to deliver her from all danger? Rise, cease to weep, and let us go together to inspire courage in Febronia who is ill." She followed her, but her affliction burst out anew when she approached the bed of boards on which the young virgin was stretched: she sat down and, bowing her head on her knees, she began again to lament and to shed a torrent of tears. Febronia asked the reason of it of Thomais, who replied that it was on her account: "For," she said, "seeing that you are young and endowed with a great beauty, and knowing what is the cruelty of the persecutors, she is excessively alarmed." — "I conjure you," said Febronia, "to pray, both of you, for your handmaid. God may well cast favourable looks on me, while I humble myself before Him, and I hope that He will grant me the strength and the patience

which He has not refused to His servants who have loved Him with all their heart." Then Thomais and Brienne exhorted her by the tenderest and liveliest expressions to fight with great courage for the glory of Jesus Christ, and Thomais said to her among other things: "Behold, my daughter Febronia, the hour of the combat. As for us, if we fall into the hands of the tyrants, our old age will lead them to make us soon perish. But it will not be the same with you: they will lay snares for you because of your beauty and your youth. Take care then, if we are arrested, not to let yourself be seduced by their flattering words, nor by the offers which they will make you of money, of rich garments and of the pleasures of the world. Do not lose the merit of your past labours by becoming the plaything of the idols and the prey of the demon. There is nothing more glorious than virginity, for which God reserves brilliant crowns and so great a reward in heaven; for the sacred Spouse of virgins is immortal, and He has promised the same immortality to those who love Him. So, dear Febronia, consider who is He to whom you are consecrated. Take care, my dear daughter, not to retract the engagement which you have contracted with Him, and not to lose the pledges which He has given you as a token of His holy alliance. Fear that terrible day when He shall judge the universe to render to each according to his works." The pious Brienne spoke to her in her turn and said to her: "My daughter Febronia, remember that you have always been so docile to my instructions, that you have been even in a state to give them to others. You know that I took you from the hands of your nurse when you were only two years old, and that I have kept you with so much care that I did not even permit the women of the world to see you, to preserve you the better in virtue. Do honour to my old age and do not render vain the care which I have taken of you, as your spiritual mother. Represent to yourself the combats which so many martyrs sustained before us; not only men, but also women and young girls. Recall to your memory the martyrdom of the two illustrious sisters Lybis and Leonida, of whom the first had her head cut off and the other died in the midst of the flames. Recall also the generosity of Eutropia, who, being yet only twelve years old, was martyred with her mother. You admired her constancy when, being condemned to be pierced with arrows, she would not flee, although she had the means, and preferred to expose herself to the darts which were shot at her, and which took away her life. You have so often praised her virtue and her courage: yet she was only a young girl, and had not so much knowledge of the virtues as you, who have been in a state to instruct others."

These words were of great help to Febronia. "You inspire me," she said to her, "with much courage, and I feel my heart strengthened by your discourses. If I had wished to avoid the persecution, I should have taken flight with the others; but as I desire ardently to go and unite myself to Him to whom I have consecrated myself, I shall endeavour to attain it, hoping that He will deign to render me worthy to fight and to die for Him."

The night passed in these conversations, and the next day, at sunrise, all the city was in uproar on the occasion of the arrival of Selenus and of Lysimachus. A great number of Christians were at once seized and led to prison; and some pagans having denounced the monastery of the Saint to the cruel Selenus, he sent there forthwith soldiers, who broke down its doors and seized Brienne. They had already the sword raised to kill her; but Febronia, springing from her couch, threw herself at their feet and conjured them to put her to death first, to spare her the pain of seeing her superior killed.

The count Primus arrived at this moment, and after having reprimanded the soldiers, drove them out of the monastery. Then he asked Brienne where her religious were; she answered him that they had withdrawn. "Would to God," said Primus, "that you had done the same with the two who remain here! I give you permission to withdraw and to seek a retreat also;" and having rallied his troop, he led it back with him. When he was returned to the praetorium, he approached Lysimachus and said to him in private: "The notice which was given you of the monastery of girls has been found true; but they have taken flight with the exception of two old women and one young girl. But I believe I ought to tell you that the young one is of a beauty so ravishing that I have never seen the like, and I take the gods to witness that at the moment when I perceived her I was so dazzled by it that, if she were not as poor as she appears, I should find her worthy for

her beauty to be given you for wife."

"I cannot depart," said Lysimachus, "from the order which my mother gave me to spare the blood of the Christians and to favour them with all my power: how should I dare to lay snares for the servants of Jesus Christ? I take good care not to do it. But I beg you to go to the monastery and to have those who remain there withdraw: make yourself their deliverer, lest they fall into the hands of my uncle Selenus, whose severity you know." This precaution of Lysimachus was useless; a soldier, the most inhuman of his troop, who heard what the count Primus had said to him, hastened to go and declare it to Selenus, who, transported with anger and indignation, sent forthwith a cohort to surround the monastery and prevent those who still inhabited it from taking flight. At the same time he caused it to be published in all the city that on the morrow he would cause Febronia to appear before his tribunal, which failed not to draw there a crowd of spectators, not only from the city, but also from the environs. The soldiers having arrived at the monastery from the morning, tore Febronia from her couch, loaded her with chains, put even an iron collar on her neck, and dragged her thus out of the monastery. Brienne and Thomais, embracing her closely and uttering heart-rending cries, begged the soldiers to permit them to speak to her yet a few moments and to lead them also themselves, that Febronia might not be alone at the combat; but they answered them that they had order only to carry off Febronia, and yet they permitted them to speak to her as they desired. The time was not long, but they put it to good profit. "You go to the combat, my daughter," said Brienne to her: "consider that your heavenly Spouse will be the spectator of it, and that the angels hold in their hands the crown which is destined for you. Fear not the torments, and by your fidelity make it so that we may insult the demon. Have no compassion on your body, when you should see it torn with strokes of the whip; since even though we should not wish it, this body will one day be buried in the tomb and reduced to dust. I remain in the monastery given up to my grief and to my tears, awaiting from you news of affliction or of joy. I conjure you, O my dear daughter, to act so that I may receive only good. Ah! who shall be able to tell me that Febronia has fought to the end, and has merited to be put in the number of the martyrs?" "I trust in Our Lord, my mother," answered Febronia; "I hope that, as He has done me the grace until now to be faithful to your holy counsels, I shall profit yet by these. The witnesses of my combats will call you blessed in your old age, considering that I am like a plant which you have cultivated with so much care, and I hope to show, in the weak body of a girl, a manly spirit and courage. Pray for me and permit me to go." Thomais promised her to take a secular dress to be present at her combats; and Febronia, taking leave at last of the one and the other, besought them to give her their blessing; which Brienne did thus, raising her hands to heaven: "My Lord Jesus Christ, who didst assist Thy servant Thecla in her martyrdom under the figure of Saint Paul, assist likewise Thy humble servant in that which she is about to suffer." After which, having given her the last kiss, she let her be carried off by the soldiers, and went to prostrate herself on the ground in the oratory, where she prayed the Lord with many tears that He would deign to sustain her to the end.

The detention of Febronia afflicted extremely all the ladies of the city who were accustomed to go on Friday to the monastery to listen to the reading of the holy Books and the instructions with which she accompanied it. They wept and beat their breasts, seeing themselves on the point of being deprived of a religious who was of so great help for the good of their souls. Hieria, of whom we have spoken, filled all her house with her cries, and betook herself to the praetorium with a great suite, where she found the other ladies and Thomais disguised, whom she recognised very well. Their tears on seeing one another began to flow again. At last the concourse was extraordinary, and all the hall was full.

Selenus and Lysimachus having sat on the tribunal, ordered that Febronia should be brought. At the moment when the young virgin appeared, her hands bound and the iron collar on her neck, everyone uttered cries and lamentations; and when she had been placed before the two magistrates, Selenus caused silence to be made and told Lysimachus to interrogate her. "Tell me, young girl," asked the latter, "your condition: are you of a free condition, or not?" — "I am a slave," answered Febronia. "Whose slave are you?" replied Lysimachus.

“Of Jesus Christ,” she answered. “What is your name?” asked Lysimachus. “I have already declared to you,” she answered, “that I am a humble Christian, and if you wish to know the name which I bear, I am called Febronia.”

Selenus, who knew the dispositions of his nephew in favour of the Christians, would not have him pursue the interrogation. He took the word and said to the Saint: “I take the gods to witness, Febronia, that being irritated against you, I should not even have deigned to interrogate you if I had followed my just anger; but your modesty and your beauty have appeased me, and I am willing to suspend for a moment my quality of judge and to speak to you as a father the better to persuade you. Listen to me then, my daughter, with attention. The gods are my witnesses that my brother Anthimus and I had destined for Lysimachus a young Roman virgin, whose alliance should procure him vast possessions and great riches: but I wish to break off every engagement with the daughter of Phosphorus who is destined for him; it is yourself who shall be the wife of the noble Lysimachus, whom you see seated at my right, and whose beauty is not unworthy of your charms. Follow then the counsel which I give you as if I were your father, and I shall load you with honours. Let not your poverty be a subject of pain to you; I have neither wife nor children, my goods shall serve you as a dowry which you shall bring to Lysimachus, and there shall be no woman who will not regard you as very happy and envy your happiness. You shall have also the good graces of our invincible emperor, who has promised Lysimachus to raise him to a very high rank and to make him praetor. You have heard me, give then to him who is willing to serve you as a father an answer which may be agreeable to the gods and advantageous to you. But if I cannot persuade you to follow my counsel, I take the gods to witness that you shall not have three hours of life: you have only to decide.”

“I have,” answered Febronia, “a nuptial bed in heaven which has not been made by the hand of men. The Spouse whom I have chosen is immortal: His kingdom is my dowry. I can neither prefer nor wish to prefer to Him a mortal and corruptible spouse. Lose not then the time, O judge, in vain discourses; neither your flatteries nor your threats can make me change my resolution.” Selenus, irritated at so generous an answer, ordered the soldiers to take off her garments and to cover her with old rags, which left her body almost uncovered; which having been executed, he asked her if she had no shame to see herself in this state before everyone. But she answered him: “Even though you should add to this pretended ignominy iron and fire, I am prepared for it. Would to God that I may be found worthy to suffer for the love of Him who has suffered so much for me!”

“Impudent girl and without honour,” said Selenus to her, “I see well that the beauty of which thou flatterest thyself prevents thee from blushing at the state in which I have had thee put, and that on the contrary thou makest glory of it.” — “No,” replied Febronia; “Jesus Christ knows that until now, far from lacking modesty, I have never permitted any man to see my face; but, having determined to suffer the whips and all the torments with which you threaten me, I must enter into the combat against the demon who is your father, as athletes enter the arena to fight.”

“Very well,” said Selenus in his fury, “since she asks for torments, we shall make her feel them.” He ordered therefore that she should be tied to four stakes, that fire should be put beneath, and that, while she should be burned by it, a hail of blows should be discharged on her back: which was executed with so much cruelty that her body was all covered with blood and her flesh fell in shreds. This lasted so long that the spectators could no longer see it without horror. They asked with loud cries of this tyrant to have compassion on the youth of Febronia; but he would hear nothing until, believing her dead, he ordered that she should be unbound. Thomais, who was present, seeing the Saint tormented with so much cruelty, fell in a swoon at the feet of Hieria; and the latter, transported with grief, cried out: “Alas, my sister Febronia, my dear and venerated mistress! not only do I find myself deprived of you, but behold I am yet to lose Thomais who is dying.” The Saint, hearing her voice, desired to speak to her; but the judge would not permit it, and said to her: “Well, Febronia, has this first combat succeeded well with you? how does it seem to you?” — “You can judge

yourself," answered the Saint, "whether I am easy to conquer and whether I make great account of your torments." "Let her be hung on the rack," said the tyrant; "let her sides be opened with the iron nails, and let fire be applied to burn her to the bones." The executioners carried out this barbarous order; and soon new shreds of flesh fell to the ground with streams of blood; the flames of the brazier devoured already the entrails of the Christian virgin. The Saint, to whom the flame caused terrible pains, raising her eyes to heaven, cried out: "Come, Lord, to my help; abandon me not at this hour." And she was silent at once, for the fire burned her cruelly. A great number of those who were present withdrew, being unable to sustain the sight of so horrible a torment. The others cried to the judge to spare the Saint at least the torment of fire. Selenus acquiesced in it; but he continued to interrogate her, she being still on the rack; and seeing that the Saint answered him not, pain having taken speech from her, instead of being touched by it, he held himself offended at her silence, had her unbound from the rack and tied to a post, and commanded that her tongue should be cut out since she refused to speak to him. She presented it at once, as if she had wished to say to the executioner: "Here it is, cut." But while he was already holding it to cut it, the people hindered him from it, and Selenus ordered that her teeth should be torn out. Seventeen were drawn from her: after which the judge ordered to cease. But the Saint lost so much blood by this cruel operation that she fell in a swoon. They staunched it however and brought her to, but it was only to make her suffer other torments. Selenus interrogated her anew and said to her: "Will you yield at last to what I wish, and will you acknowledge the gods?" — "Be anathema, cruel and execrable old man," answered the Saint, "who wish to stop me in my way and to hinder me from going to my heavenly Spouse. Hasten to deliver me from this body of mud, for He who loves me awaits me in heaven." — "I see well," said Selenus, "that your youth renders you still more insolent; but you shall perish soon by iron and fire." The virgin could answer nothing, so keen were her sufferings. Then, transported with anger, the judge ordered that her breasts should be cut off. The barbarous executioner, arming himself with a cutting iron, struck off the right breast of the martyr. The Saint uttered a great cry, and, her eyes raised to heaven, she cried out: "My Lord and my God, see my sufferings, and receive my soul into Thy hands." These were her last words.

When the two breasts had been cut off, Selenus ordered fire to be applied to the wounds, and the pain was felt even in the bosom of the Christian virgin. At this spectacle the crowd was seized with indignation, and, being unable to bear any longer the sight of these frightful tortures, a great number of spectators went away crying: "Accursed be Diocletian and his gods!" Meanwhile Thomais and Hieria remained constantly on the spot in spite of the grief with which they were overwhelmed, and sent word to Brienne by a young girl not to cease to lift her hands to heaven for Febronia, who was being tormented excessively. Which this superior having heard, she cried out: "My Lord Jesus Christ, come to the help of Thy servant Febronia. Ah! Febronia, where art thou? My God, have pity on Thy servant Febronia. Grant her the grace to end her combat gloriously, and that I may have the consolation of counting her in the number of the holy martyrs."

Meanwhile Selenus ordered that she should be unbound from the post to which she had been tied; but hardly was she untied when she fell to the ground; for her body, enfeebled by the tortures, could no longer stand upright. The count Primus then said to Lysimachus: "She is dead." — "Believe it not," answered the latter; "she will still fight for the salvation of several, and perhaps for mine. I heard my mother give similar accounts of several Christians who suffered as she. It was not in my power to deliver her: let us leave her to fight to the end; several will profit by it for the salvation of their souls." But Hieria, being unable any longer to bear that the Saint should be so cruelly tormented, cried out in the transport of her zeal and of her indignation: "O barbarian! O monster of inhumanity! all the evils which thou hast made this unhappy virgin suffer are they not then enough for thee? Hast thou then forgotten thy own mother, whose body was like hers? Dost thou not then remember that, born under fatal auspices, thou receivedst from her breasts thy first nourishment, and that this was, in the career of life, the first step which led thee to this elevated situation of which thou abusest to-day for the misfortune of others? I am astonished that none of these memories has been able to soften thy ferocious heart. Ah! may the King of heaven spare thee no more than thou hast spared

this tender victim!" At these words, at these imprecations, the tyrant, all boiling with anger, ordered Hieria to be dragged to his tribunal. Hieria forestalled him; serenity on her brow, joy in her heart, she advanced saying: "God of Febronia, although I am but a poor pagan, accept my sacrifice with that of my mistress." The tyrant was about to interrogate her, but his friends who were near him hindered him from it, telling him that if he came to that, all the people would declare themselves Christian with her, and that he would be forced to put the whole city to death. This advice restrained him, but, shuddering with rage, he said to her in a tone of fury: "Hieria, I pray the gods that they avenge themselves on you. What you have said in favour of Febronia will serve only to procure her new torments;" and he ordered at once that the Saint's two hands and right foot should be cut off. The lictors placed a block under the right hand, and a stroke of the axe separated it from the arm; the left was cut off in the same manner. Then the executioner put on the block the right foot of the young virgin, seized his axe, and, gathering all his strength, discharged a terrible blow, but which served for nothing; he struck a second blow, but equally in vain. Meanwhile the crowd uttered cries ever more furious. The lictor, striking at last a third blow, succeeded in executing the order of the tyrant. Febronia experienced in all her body violent convulsions; nevertheless, on the point of expiring, she strove still to put the left foot on the block, asking by this sign that it should be cut off as the other. At this spectacle the cruel judge cried out: "See the obstinacy of this impudent girl!" And he cried out in fury: "Cut off that foot also, and make it disappear." Then Lysimachus, rising, said to Selenus: "What more would you do to this unhappy girl? Let us go; it is time to dine." — "No," said Selenus, "I would that the gods punish me if I go out of here before she has expired." And seeing that she still palpitated, he said to the executioners: "What! she is not yet dead! and where is your strength? Let her head be cut off." Then a soldier draws his sword, twines his left hand in the hair of Febronia; then, having marked the place where he was to strike, he deals her the mortal blow. The head of the victim fell like that of the lamb which is slain at the foot of the altar.

At once the judges rose to go to dine; but Lysimachus could not help shedding tears. The people rushed to carry off the body of the Saint, but Lysimachus hindered them from it, and left soldiers to guard it. He himself was a prey to such an emotion and to so deep a grief that he would neither drink nor eat; he shut himself in his chamber, and there he wept the cruel death of Febronia. Selenus, learning this affliction, would not eat either. He left the table to go and walk in the court of the praetorium. Suddenly he fell into a black melancholy, and walking with great strides hither and thither, he raised his eyes at moments to heaven, when, seized suddenly by a furious delirium, he began to roar like a lion, to bellow like a wounded bull; finally, in a fit of rage, he struck his head against a column and fell without motion and without life.

The people of the house hastened to run up uttering loud cries. Lysimachus, having come in and having learned what had passed, said, shaking his head: "Great is the God of the Christians! Blessed be the God of Febronia! He has avenged the shedding of innocent blood." He ordered that the corpse should be carried away, after which he spoke thus to the count Primus: "I conjure you by the God of the Christians to execute what I am about to tell you. Order at the earliest a coffin of incorruptible wood for Febronia, and command the public criers to go through all the city and warn the people that all those who wish to assist at her funeral may do so in all safety, since my uncle is no more. My sentiments are known to you. Take with you soldiers, have the body carried to the monastery to be rendered to Brienne; permit no one to carry off any member of it; have it rendered entire, and even have the earth which was empurpled with her blood scraped up, and carry it with the body to the monastery." The count Primus executed faithfully the order of Lysimachus. He had the body of the Saint carried by his soldiers; for himself, he took the head, the hands and the feet, the teeth and all that had been separated from the body, and having wrapped them in his mantle, he directed himself toward the monastery. But all the people assembled round him; each wished to carry off some member, some shred of flesh. Primus, surrounded, pressed, besieged by this multitude, ran a great peril. The soldiers, whom he had warned, then drew the sword from the scabbard, and succeeded, not without difficulty, in disengaging him and making him enter the monastery, where he was followed only by Thomais and the noble Hieria. Sentinels were placed at the gates to stop the people.

When the pious Brienne received the holy body and saw it thus mutilated, she fell fainting, and having at last recovered her senses, she uttered these heart-rending plaints: “Ah! Febronia! ah! my daughter! your mother Brienne will then see you no more? Who will read to us henceforth the holy Scriptures, and what hands will dare to use your books?” The other religious, who had withdrawn through fear of the tyrant, arrived at this moment, and prostrated themselves before the holy body to render it their respect; but Hieria, unable to contain the grief which she felt at having lost in Febronia her catechist and her mistress, cried out weeping: “Let me embrace these feet which have crushed the head of the serpent; let me kiss the wounds which will serve for the salvation of my soul; let me adorn her head with a crown of praises, since she has been the glory of our sex by the victory which she has gained in the combat.” The other sisters applauded her triumph no less.

But the hour of None having come, which was that of prayer, Brienne said to Febronia, as if she had been still alive: “Come, you also, my daughter Febronia, come pray with us. Alas! where are you, my daughter Febronia? rise and come.” “For,” interrupted Thomais also on her side, “you have always been so docile to the voice of our Mother, why should you not obey her still now?” If the miracle which Brienne desired did not take place then, there came to pass one nearly similar in the sequel, which we shall relate below.

At last, towards evening, the holy body was washed and covered with its garments; after which Brienne wished that the doors should be opened so that everyone might satisfy his pious curiosity. The concourse was of the greatest. The ladies of the city who came on Fridays to hear the reading and the instructions of the Saint, hastened thither with eagerness. There came also bishops and many monks; and Lysimachus with the count Primus, having renounced the worship of idols, came to join the crowd to render to the relics of the Saint the honour which was due to them.

The next day the coffin which Primus had ordered to be made was brought. After having recited prayers and shed many tears, the body of the Saint was laid in it, each cut member being arranged in its place. As to the teeth, which could not be put back in their sockets, they were put on her breast. Then the crowd filled the coffin with incense, perfumes and aromatics, so that the holy body was all covered with them. They wished to close it; but the people asking that it should be left open, the bishops had to interpose their authority to make them understand that it was fitting to lay it in the place of the monastery which had been prepared for it. It was not without shedding many tears that it was accompanied there, and the glory which was rendered to God on this occasion was the fairest eulogy that could be consecrated in honour of Febronia.

There were a quantity of pagans who asked for holy baptism. Lysimachus and Primus were among the first, and they renounced entirely the hopes of the world to embrace the religious life in a monastery where they ended their life with great piety. Several soldiers also were converted to the faith. Hieria, already prepared for regeneration, had the happiness to be baptised with all her family; then she came to throw herself at the feet of Brienne, and begged her to receive her into her community to occupy the place of Febronia, promising to serve her as faithfully as she had done. She wished that her jewels should be employed to adorn the coffin of the holy martyr, and gave her goods to the community. She is represented with a crown at her feet to mark that she knew how to despise the grandeurs of the world. She is painted also having beside her shears, to recall that she had her feet, hands and breasts cut off.

Worship and Relics

God glorified the Saint after her death by a great number of miracles. Her acts teach us that she appeared every night in her place in the oratory, from midnight until the third prayer, when the sisters were assembled there to sing the office. At first they were afraid of it, and Brienne, seeing her, ran to her to embrace her, crying: “Behold my daughter Febronia!” but she disappeared at once. After this first apparition their fright ceased. They dared not however approach her; but her presence inspired them with great fervour and made them shed tears of joy.

The bishop of the place had a very beautiful church built in her honour, which was finished in six years; and wishing to deposit her relics in it, he assembled for that the bishops of the environs, and did, as well for the dedication as for the translation, all that was in his power to render the feast more celebrated. The concourse was so great that neither the church nor the monastery could suffice for the crowd, and from all sides resounded the chant of the sacred psalms. The bishops asked for the body; but the religious, wishing to keep their precious treasure, besought with tears the assembled prelates not to deprive them of it. God decided the pious contest in their favour; for as they wished to take it away, a noise was heard like a clap of thunder; and as they persisted in wishing to carry it off, the earth trembled and the shock was felt throughout the city. The bishops, being no longer able to doubt by these signs that the Saint wished her body to remain in the monastery, desisted from their design, and asked at least of Brienne that she should give them some one of her cut members. She opened the coffin with this intention, and there came out a brightness which dazzled her and struck her with a respectful fright. She wished nevertheless to take out a hand; but her own lost its strength and fell back without motion. Then the pious Brienne said weeping: “My daughter Febronia, I conjure you not to be angry with me, and grant me, in recompense for the care which I have taken of you, something in favour of the bishops.” Her prayer was heard; her hand, touching the holy relics, recovered its motion, and she took one of the torn-out teeth which had been placed on the breast and gave it to the bishops, after which she closed the coffin. They received with great respect this present, which they enclosed in a box of gold to place it in the new church.

The Acts of the Martyrs, by the Reverend Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France; Acta Sanctorum; Lives of the Fathers of the deserts of the East, by the Reverend Father Michel-Ange Marin, of the Order of the Minims.

Saint Antidus, Bishop of Besançon and Martyr (5th century).

Nihil aliud est pastorale officium, quam pro ovibus sibi commissis animam ponere, et sanctitatis ac laudabilis conservationis exemplum ostendere.

The duty of a pastor consists only in the obligation in which he is to expose his life for the sheep which are entrusted to him, and to give the example of holiness and of an admirable vigilance.

S. Laur. Just. De Regim. prælat., c. 4.

Antidus was sprung from one of those Sequanian families which had left to Roman civilisation what it gave of corruption and softness, in order to embrace Christianity with the noble and austere virtues which it inspires. Enlightened by the pure lights of faith, his parents caused to be born betimes in his soul the love of virtue and the taste for work. From his youth, he made himself remarked among the companions of his age by an air of candour and of piety, and, in the days when Saint Fronime instructed and blessed the Christian youth of the city, Antidus profited particularly by his instructions and his counsels. Disdaining the honours and the riches of the world, he went betimes to mingle with the clerics whom the holy pontiff had gathered around the cathedral of Saint Stephen. There, pious and learned beyond all, he gave himself to prayer and to study, having no other recreation than the service of the altars and the participation in the pompous ceremonies which began to embellish the worship of our holy religion.

The grace which God had deposited in the heart of Antidus ceased not to produce admirable fruits there. Penitent without having been a sinner, he macerated his body with great austerity, visited the poor often, and gave them at the same time the bread which nourishes the body and the sweet word which carries consolation into the soul. Seeming to foresee his destiny, he aspired only to the incorruptible goods of heaven. Thus, at the death of Saint Fronime, all the suffrages of the clergy and of the people were cast on Antidus, who could not, in spite of his efforts, resist the general wish, and who had to unite obedience with humility. Understanding then all the weight of the burden which he had just accepted, he lived henceforth only for his

people.

Filled with love for the truth, he sought to spread it everywhere, uniting with the force of his word the ever efficacious attraction of example. Of a profound humility, of an admirable patience and modesty, of an angelic purity, he showed everywhere his faith and his love for religion, fulfilled with a holy joy all the duties which his charge of first pastor imposed on him, and knew how to keep, in the midst of the difficult times in which he lived, the deepest peace and serenity. Finally, in spite of his labours, he regarded himself still as an useless servant, and, putting all his hopes in God, he often repeated these words of Scripture: *Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem, frustra vigilat qui custodit eam;* "if God guard not the city, it is in vain that one will watch around it." His people venerated him as a saint; the poor above all loved him as a father, and all the chronicles agree in saying how great were his detachment from the things of this world and his confidence in Providence. A constant tradition, which revolutions have not caused to disappear, grants to Saint Antidus the gift of miracles while he was still in the midst of his own. Crossing one day the city of Besançon, he met a priest who was carrying the holy Viaticum to a sick man, approached him and invited him to return to the church, because the sacred vessel which he held in his hands contained no host. The priest, astonished, opened the ciborium, recognised the truth of the fact, and, filled with admiration, asked, as did those present, the blessing of him who from then on was regarded as a saint. A short time afterwards, in a similar circumstance, the bishop said to another priest who was carrying an unconsecrated host: "Withdraw, for God is not in the precious vessel which you hold in your hands." Struck and abashed, the priest bowed his head, avowed his crime and returned doubtless to weep for it in the exercises of penance. This double miracle, wrought by our holy pontiff, was to have for effect to preserve his province from the heresy of Arius, which troubled then the whole East. Arius, denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, attacked thereby rather openly the dogma of the Eucharist, while the marvels wrought on the occasion of this divine Sacrament proved the divinity of Him who deigned to be incarnate in it. All the traditions agree in giving to our Saint a great power over evil spirits. Hence the legends which represent him taming the demon and obliging him to carry him as far as the capital of the Christian world. Let us content ourselves with seeing in this marvellous narrative, preserved by some authors, the embellished memory of a journey which our Saint would have made to Rome to tighten thereby the bonds which have never ceased to exist between the Church of Besançon and the mother of all the Churches. In this interview, Saint Antidus drew a new courage and resumed new strength. The times were unhappy, and the storm which had burst on the province in the middle of the 4th century was only the prelude of the universal upheaval which, at the beginning of the following age, was to annihilate in a common ruin both the noble remnants of the Sequani and the last debris of Roman civilisation. For some time, the peoples of the north had been drawing on themselves the looks of the whole world. Some attacked the empire with fury, others defended it with fidelity. In spite of the valour of the Franks placed in charge of the Rhine, the Barbarians, who were stationed on the limits of Germany, crossed the river and spread over western Europe. Furious bands furrowed successively the north, the centre and the south of Gaul.[1] Their ravages were horrible. "If the Ocean," says a poet, "had inundated the fields of Gaul, its waters would have carried less desolation. Neither the high mountains, nor the rivers, nor the inaccessible rocks can defend the cities and the castles. Impious pillage and profanation are in the temple of God; one sees the flame shine which devours it. Death, everywhere death!"[2] Luxeuil, Port-Abucin and other cities underwent the horrors of devastation; a part of the inhabitants perished by the iron, another was reduced to slavery; Besançon alone resisted the torrent. During the siege of this city, while hunger already pressed the inhabitants, Saint Antidus, having met in the middle of the square four mules laden with wheat, caused them to be stopped, addressed a fervent prayer to God, and blessed the corn, which multiplied so much that all the people could take their share of it. Meanwhile the storm passed, the enemies withdrew, and hope began to be born again. But this tranquillity was to be of short duration: God reserved for us yet other misfortunes.

The Vandals, Goths by origin, had crossed the Rhine with the other Barbarians. Although inferior in power and in courage to all the other peoples of the north, they made themselves nevertheless masters of the fairest

provinces of the empire, as if Providence had wished to convince the world that their conquests were due only to the God of armies, who made use of an enemy so weak, so contemptible, to chastise the Romans.[3]

At the head of one of these barbarous hordes was Crocus, more barbarous still than the soldiers whom he led to pillage.[4] He left on his passage only fire and ruins. His mother had counselled him, as an infallible means to attain glory, to fight ardently the religion of Jesus Christ, to overthrow the churches and to persecute the faithful. Adding to the domestic examples his own impiety, he followed exactly the counsels of maternal hatred. Arianism, which he had embraced, inspired him yet with a new fury.[5] Having taken part in the sack of Mainz, he separated from the other tribes, traversed Austrasia, took possession of Metz and arrived at Reims, where he put to death Saint Nicaise, bishop of that city. Soon he advanced to the gates of Langres. The rage of his troops increased still more at the sight of the preparations which the city had made to defend itself. At the top of the ramparts was the bishop Saint Désiré, who encouraged the combatants; but neither his prayers, nor the valour of the inhabitants of Langres, could save the city: it was carried by assault, and the holy pontiff fell under the axe of the executioner, near the walls. One of the priests who accompanied him, named Vincent, received also the crown of martyrdom. Their bodies were buried in a basilica which was situated near the walls. The Vandals continued their route, and, having arrived at Port-Abucin, they overtook Saint Valère, archdeacon of Langres, who was fleeing toward the Jura, and put him to death.

The devastating torrent approached Besançon, and Saint Antidus, in his intimate communications with heaven, foresaw the new misfortunes which were about to fall on his flock. While placing his confidence in God, he neglected none of the means which human prudence counselled. The chronicle depicts to us this holy pontiff, like an intrepid chief, betaking himself everywhere where any works of defence were necessary, imposing by his authority on those even who had grown old under arms, and asking afterwards of his clergy, with a holy resignation, whether it were not better to suffer death for the love of God than to shed, in fighting, the blood of the Barbarians. Already a thousand alarming rumours circulate in the city; they were spread by some soldiers who fled before the enemy army, and by labourers who arrived in the great city of Sequania, hoping to find there succours which their harvests, consumed by fire, could no longer give. Then Saint Antidus disposes his people to accept the will of heaven; he exhorts it to penance, revives the courage of the warriors, distributes to them the bread of the strong and assures them of the protection of the God of armies.

Crocus, after having made his troops follow the Roman way which led from Langres to Port-Abucin, descended the valley of the Saône as far as Scey, where his scouts had discovered one of the fairest roads of Sequania.[6] Arrived in the valley of the Ognon, so smiling and so fertile still in spite of the recent ruin of its villas, he directs himself toward the castle of Ruffey, situated on the point of a rock, near the river, for he has learned that in this place are gathered together the populations of the whole valley. But Saint Antidus had forestalled him; the zeal of this good father had been swifter than the fury of the tyrant. After having provided for the safety of the faithful of Besançon, the holy pontiff had turned his looks toward another part of his flock, which he saw exposed to the tooth of a furious wolf. Listening only to his devotedness, he had stolen away from the tears and prayers of the inhabitants of the city and was directing himself alone and on foot toward the castle of Ruffey.[7] Very different from the mercenary keeper who abandons his sheep and flees at the sight of danger, he came, like the good Shepherd, to offer generously his life for his flock. The holy bishop arrives in the midst of his tearful children, who welcome him with cries of joy. Alas! this happiness was to be of short duration. The acclamations were still lasting at the castle of Ruffey, when suddenly the howlings of the Barbarians were heard. Then the grief became general. On their knees at the feet of their father, the weeping inhabitants lift their hands toward heaven and implore the help of God. Saint Antidus takes the word in the midst of the lamentations of the women and children, now he seeks to make hope enter into these dejected hearts, now he exhorts his flock to die well. The aureole of martyrdom seemed already to shine on his brow; his voice had something of the accents of heaven. A voluntary victim, he had

already offered himself to God, asking that one alone should die for all, and the Lord, who loves innocent victims, had accepted his sacrifice. “My children,” said the holy bishop, “let the love of truth be stronger in you than the fear of torments! Remember that the pain lasts but an instant and that the reward is eternal. You chose me for your chief, be to-day my imitators, and let no one recoil before the peril… Follow me then, you who desire to unite your soul to that of Jesus.” Saint Antidus, having said these words, marches to meet the Barbarians. Arrived at the first lines of the cohorts, he lifts his hands in sign of supplication and asks grace for the people who follow him. But impious and cruel hearts let themselves not be impressed by devotedness. One of the soldiers, more furious than the others, lifts his hand on the anointed of the Lord, strikes him with violence, asking him by what right he dares to speak to ask peace and to stop troops ever marching and ever victorious. The torment had begun; the holy bishop answered like all the martyrs: “I am a Christian, I glory in bearing the cross of Jesus Christ, true and powerful God, who directs all the universe by His will.” Far from being touched by this answer, the soldiers rush on Saint Antidus, bind his hands behind his back and lead him to their chief.

Crocus, astonished at the nobility which shone on the face of the Saint, believes that he has before him one of the chiefs of Sequania, and, rejoicing in his pride, interrogates him haughtily: “What is thy dignity? Answer, I command thee.” Saint Antidus, the smile on his lips, raises his voice and says: “I am a Christian, that is the title of which I am proud and which I esteem above all others, for nothing is nobler than the service of God, only Master who offers eternal rewards.” The chief of the Barbarians, admiring this noble and bold answer, remarked the divine fire which shone in the looks of his prisoner. But where has the demon not his agents? Some inhabitants of Ruffey, hoping that the treason of which they were going to make themselves guilty would render them agreeable to Crocus, approached the group which surrounded Saint Antidus, and cried out: “This man is the pontiff of the religion of the Christians.” At this word, Crocus lets himself go to his natural fury; he orders that the bishop be stripped of his garments, and threatens him with a cruel flagellation if he does not at once abandon his religion. The holy confessor kept silence; at once several executioners, armed with thick thongs of leather, struck with brutality the face and the shoulders of their victim, who, while his blood streamed over all his members, while his wounds widened and laid bare all his bones, raised his eyes to heaven, praying God to accept his sufferings and to protect his people. At the sight of the serenity which shone on the face of the holy Martyr, Crocus redoubles his fury, and orders the executioner to cut off the head of the servant of God. On his knees on the earth watered with his blood, the holy pontiff lifts his voice once more: “O God Creator,” he says, “O Christ equal to the Father, O Holy Ghost, visit the wounds of my body, take with Thee the soul which Thou hast created, in order to unite it to the heavenly spirits. Lord, strengthen my people, protect our city, be ever its God.” Then, turning to the executioner: “Finish,” he adds, “God sustains me, death cannot frighten me.” The soldier, seizing his sword, cut off the head of the servant of God, and the savage hordes uttered a frightful cry. The legend adds that the tongue of the Saint murmured still some words after his martyrdom, and that this prodigy frightened the Barbarians so much that several, in their precipitate flight, pierced themselves with their own arms. Crocus, accursed of God, felt then in his heart an infernal joy. Having gathered his soldiers, he penetrated into the castle, massacred the garrison and chained the inhabitants to drag them in his train, for he wished to unite their torment to the near triumph which he promised himself before Besançon. Meanwhile God watched over the preservation of the relics of Saint Antidus. Pious Christians, by favour of the night, penetrated, in spite of the enemy sentinels, as far as the place of the torment, gathered the venerable remains of Saint Antidus and buried them outside the walls of the castle, watering with their tears this corner of earth which was becoming so precious to Sequania. A little hope mingled with their tears, and they prayed him whom they regarded as a saint to put an end to so many misfortunes. Having fulfilled their filial duty, they directed themselves toward Besançon, sole asylum which remained to the Sequanian population.

At the approach of the Vandals, the inhabitants of the city had made ready for a heroic defence. They related to one another weeping the death of their holy pastor, and told one another that, doubtless, he watched over

them from the height of heaven. These conversations revived confidence in their heart. The Barbarians gave several assaults, and were repulsed with loss. Crocus, who had placed his camp on mount Délie,[8] seeing all his efforts useless, raised the siege, penetrated into Lyonnese Gaul and carried his ravages into the noble country of the Arverni. After having destroyed the old temples of the pagans as well as the new altars of Christianity, he put to death Saint Priscet, bishop of the Gevaudans. Then the hand of God struck him. Marins, prefect of Arles, arrested him in his triumphs. Having surprised him in an ambush, he had him loaded with chains, gave him as a spectacle to the cities which he had ravaged, and had him die in the midst of tortures. His troops were dispersed and annihilated by the Gauls, and the executioners of Saint Antidus were punished even in their descendants. God showed by this example to what chastisements one exposes oneself in persecuting those whom He has chosen for ministers of His worship.

Saint Antidus is cited in the martyrologies of Usuard, of Ferrarius and of Canisius, etc.

Worship and Relics

The place where Saint Antidus had been buried was soon known and venerated by all the populations of Sequania. The sick and the afflicted ran to this holy ground, and returned cured and consoled. From the middle of the 5th century, a church was raised there, which it is believed occupied the site of the present church, situated at some distance from the castle. This place, become celebrated by pilgrimages, resounded almost continually with the praises of our Saint. However Besançon did not yet possess the ashes of the pontiff who had protected it against the Barbarians. In the 11th century, Hugh I, archbishop of Besançon, whose genius raised all the ruins and preserved preciously all the glorious memories of the province, having ordered the rebuilding of the church of Saint Paul, wished that, on the day of the solemn consecration of this sanctuary, the relics of Saint Antidus should be brought there. It was on 24 February 1044, or, according to others, on 24 January 1042, that this translation took place. The Christians, who had run from all parts, joined with the inhabitants of the city to swell the cortege of the holy Martyr. The pontiff, at the head of his clergy and accompanied by the chief men of the city, went in procession as far as Ruffey. The precious relics, placed on a car magnificently decorated, traversed, in the midst of populations touched and prostrate, this road which Saint Antidus had traversed, six centuries before, alone and in evil days. Such is the glory of the servants of God. The place where the persecutor of our bishop set his foot is no longer known, while one prostrates oneself on the road sanctified by the presence of the holy victim. The city of Besançon received with as much joy as magnificence this new guest who came to bless it from the depths of his tomb. The precious remains of the illustrious Martyr were laid near the high altar, on the side of the gospel, in a great stone sepulchre on which had been engraved the effigy of Saint Antidus with this inscription: *Corpus beati Antidii, egregii martyris, fuit a Ruffeo translatum et ibi positum; qui pro nobis or et. Amen.*

In 1147, Raymond, count of Burgundy, going to succour Alphonsus VIII, king of Castile and Leon, advanced against the Moors with the nobles of the province, having at the head of his troops a miraculous image of Saint Antidus. Victory having crowned his efforts and his piety, Alphonsus had erected in the monastery of Saint Vincent, near Lisbon, a chapel where the protecting image was placed, and to-day still there is for it a great veneration, justified besides by a multitude of miracles.

On 25 June of the year 1360, John of Vienne, archbishop of Besançon, had the holy relics taken from the tomb where they had been placed and put them in a silver shrine, after having however taken from it the skull, which was sent to Dijon, one of the bones of the arm, which was transferred to Flmnet, in the Faucigny, and another particle, which was deposited behind the high altar of our metropolitan church. A hospital, known under the name of the hospital of Saint Antidus, was founded at Besançon. The sick and the poor flocked there so much that, in 1425, Simon of Clerval, abbot of Saint Paul and of Goaille, had collections made in the dioceses of Besançon and of Langres, in order to provide for the needs of this house of charity. This collection was made with the shrine of Saint Antidus. In 1432, the abbot of Saint Paul farmed

out the produce of this collection for a hundred pounds and twelve good linens. In the midst of the dangers of the French Revolution, the sacristan of Saint Paul, in concert with M. Gilley, curé of this church, secretly carried off the relics of Saint Antidus and hid them in a cemetery. When calm returned, in 1803, these precious remains were piously gathered and placed in the church of Saint Maurice, where they were solemnly recognised, in 1807, by M. Durand, vicar general of the diocese of Besançon.

In 1836, at the solicitation of the curé of Ruffey and of the inhabitants of this parish, a part of the holy relics was carried with pomp to this village, where they repose to-day. An antique bust representing Saint Antidus in the costume of a bishop was given by the parish of Saint Maurice to M. Vauchot, curé of Ruffey, who had it placed in a chapel raised by his care, in a very agreeable position, on the road from Marnay to Besançon. On the same occasion, a particle of the forearm was also extracted from the great shrine to be placed in the reliquary with which the blessing is given to the faithful during the feast and the octave of Saint Antidus. All the other relics are enclosed in a casket of precious wood, surrounded with red velvet and placed in a shrine which is exposed each year to the veneration of the faithful. There are preserved at Palleau, parish of Ecuelles (diocese of Anton), relics of Saint Antidus. Enclosed in a shrine of gilt copper, they were verified, in 1450, by John Germain, in 1630, by James of Neuchèze, both bishops of Châlons, and recently again by the vicars general of the lord bishop of Autun.

The feast of Saint Antidus is celebrated on 17 June in the diocese of Besançon, and on the 25th of the same month at Rome, doubtless because it is on that day that the precious relics were taken out of the tomb and placed in a silver reliquary.

Here are the names of the parishes whose churches are under the title of Saint Antidus: Malbrans (canton of Ornans), Passavant (canton of Baume-les-Dames), Naisey (Roulans), Chaux-les-Passavant (Vercel), Aubonne and Chaux-de-Gilley (Montbenoît), Filain (Montbozon), Pontcey (Scey-sur-Saône). There are also relics of Saint Antidus in the church of Guyans, in the chapel of Our Lady of Consolation. The reliquary in which they are enclosed contains also bones of Saint Prothadius and of Saint Germanus. A notable part of the relics was brought into the church of the priory of Paluelle, of the diocese of Chalon-sur-Saône, and has been piously preserved there to this day.

We have composed this biography with the aid of the *Life of the Saints of Franche-Comté*, by the professors of the college of Saint Francis Xavier of Besançon.

Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, Doctor of the Church, and Saint Prosper, Bishop of Reggio (5th century).

Doctrina in tribus consistit: in suggillatione vitiorum, in plantatione fidei, in ædificatione morum.

Doctrine consists in three things: to brand vices, to implant faith, to edify morals.

Hugo card., sup. Eccl.

This learned man appears to us almost only, in Ecclesiastical History, with arms in hand against the heretics. Gennadius says that he was of Aquitaine; and, in effect, he is ordinarily called Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, to distinguish him from the others of the same name. The principal knowledge which we have of the history of our Saint is drawn from his own works. They are to us an unequivocal proof that he had applied himself to the study of polite letters, and that he had received an education wholly Christian, which had inspired him with a piety as solid as it was enlightened. The knowledge of religion which he drew from the holy Books went on always perfecting itself in him, by the care which he took to read the writings of the Fathers who had preceded him. Having left Aquitaine, his country, he withdrew into Provence, where he received the books *On Correction* and *On Grace*, of Saint Augustine. Some priests of this country began to murmur against the doctrine of Saint Augustine, who combated with great vigour the heresy of the Pelagians. The reading of this

book did not make them come back from their prejudices. A pious layman, named Hilary, took the part of the holy doctor, and charged himself with the care of avenging the faith of the Church. As he was known to Saint Augustine, he wished to procure the same advantage for Saint Prosper. He engaged him therefore to write to this holy bishop, judging him very capable of explaining to him in what the error of those whom they had to combat consisted, and of proposing to him the difficulties on which it was necessary that he should give explanations. Saint Prosper therefore informed this holy Doctor of it, and wrote him a beautiful letter which has remained to us: he explains to him all the complaints which they made against his dogmas, and marks to him the means which they used to establish a middle course between what he taught on the necessity of grace for good works, and what Pelagius had taught on the force and the sufficiency of nature.[1]

Saint Augustine, to refute and enlighten these semi-Pelagians, composed the books *On the Predestination of the Saints* and *On the Gift of Perseverance*. He establishes there solidly the necessity in which we are of the grace of Jesus Christ, not only to achieve the good, but also to begin it, to will it, to desire it, to think of it holily, and for the first steps of faith and of conversion. However, these divine books, far from closing the mouth of the semi-Pelagians, gave them, on the contrary, a new matter to complain of the doctrine of the same Saint Augustine: they could not, they pretended, reconcile this doctrine with the other Catholic truths on the will which God has to save all men, on the death of Jesus Christ for all the world, and on the inexcusable malice of sinners, who are damned only because they wish to be damned. The semi-Pelagians, not daring to combat openly the doctrine contained in the two books of Saint Augustine, had recourse to calumny; they accused the holy Doctor and his disciples of introducing a fatality and of admitting two natures in man. Rufinus, friend of Saint Prosper, knowing that he was accused of being in evil sentiments, wrote to him of it to assure himself of the truth. Saint Prosper received his letter as a pledge of his friendship, and satisfied him fully by a rather long letter, where he explains to him what were the rumours which the enemies of Saint Augustine spread, what motive they had for it, in what errors they were themselves, and what was the true doctrine of Saint Augustine on grace and on free will.

Saint Prosper having reproached, in the same letter, the calumniators of Saint Augustine with not daring to disclose their sentiments, they did so by divers writings, where, however, they applied themselves less to mark what they themselves thought on the matters of grace than to draw false consequences from the doctrine established by Saint Augustine. But our Saint refuted them with as much force as modesty in two epigrams; and, in order to raise and make better known truths so important, which they strove to decry with so much malignity, he composed his poem *Against the Ungrateful*. This poem, however, no more than the two epigrams, was able to arrest the enemies of grace. For, as Cardinal Baronius remarks on this same subject, heretics may be confounded, because they are weak and in no wise firm; but they cannot yield to the truth, because they are obstinate.

Some priests continued to trouble the Church. They accused Saint Prosper and Hilary of maintaining falsehoods, and decried anew the doctrine of Saint Augustine, pretending that he maintained that God predestines the reprobate to sin, as well as to the condemnation in which they are engaged by original sin. All this furnished them matter for a list of fifteen pretended errors, which they spread in the public. Saint Prosper composed a writing, where, answering each article of this list, he shows by Saint Augustine himself what is his true doctrine, and what is to be thought of it.

An enterprise so worthy of praise served only to irritate the more the enemies of Saint Augustine, and led them to turn their arms against his disciple and his defender. Persons who had forgotten what they owed to Christian and fraternal charity, and who did not take heed that they were ruining their reputation in wishing to blacken those of others, drew up another list of sixteen untenable propositions which they threw again into the public, as containing only the true sentiments of Saint Prosper. This Saint could have covered them with confusion, by saying anathema to the propositions which these people spread only to draw on him the public hatred. But, for fear that they should cavil at an answer so short, although so decisive, he was willing to

answer them with more extent. He showed therefore on each article the purity of his sentiments, so that if he could not close the mouth of his calumniators, at least those who should read his writing might see how punishable their calumnies were.

The same difficulties, which served as pretext to the priests of the Gauls to trouble the Church, caused also some embarrassment to those of Genoa. But these showed in their conduct as much wisdom and moderation as the others had shown impudence and bitterness. Two of them, Camillus and Theodore, having drawn up a list of their difficulties, sent it to Saint Prosper, to know what he judged of them, and how they were to be understood. The Saint satisfied them by a writing which he addressed to them, and where he explains to them what he and the most enlightened faithful who were united to him believed on this subject. He accompanied this answer with traits of modesty which give it a great relief. “I do what you order me,” he says to the Genoese, “not that I presume on my knowledge, but to obey the command which you make me; trusting in the assistance of the Lord, who gives wisdom to the little ones.”

The semi-Pelagians, continuing to accuse of error Saint Prosper and Hilary as well as Saint

Augustine, declared besides that they wished to follow, on the matters of grace, only what the Roman Church had decided on it by the mouth of her Pontiffs. This new subterfuge engaged Saint Prosper and Hilary to go to Rome to carry their complaints to Pope Saint Celestine. This Pontiff approved the zeal which they had for God, and was touched by the persecutions which they were made to suffer. In these dispositions, he wrote in their favour a celebrated letter to the bishops of the Gauls. He reproaches them with their negligence in repairing the scandal which the enemies of grace had given. Speaking of Saint Augustine, he says: “This man, of holy memory, has always been in our communion for his merit and has never been tarnished by the least rumour of any evil suspicion. His knowledge was such that my predecessors counted him among the principal doctors. He was loved and honoured by all the world. Wherefore you ought to resist those who dare to attack his memory, and impose silence on them.” To this letter were joined nine articles touching grace, to serve as answers to these new heretics, who declared that they wished to hold only to what had been decided by the Holy See.

The letter of Saint Celestine did not appease the troubles. As it said nothing of the last works of Saint Augustine, which had in part occasioned the disputes, his enemies pretended that they had not been approved at Rome. They continued therefore to calumniate him and to say that, instead of having well defended the cause of grace, he had troubled the peace of the Church. These rumours, spread by persons of wit and learning, and who even made profession of piety, made an impression on those who were either little instructed or had not discernment enough to judge soundly of things. This it is which obliged Saint Prosper, scarcely returned to the Gauls, to take anew the defence of the doctrine of Saint Augustine. He did it with so much light and erudition that one may acknowledge him the glory of having achieved what Saint Augustine had begun, and of having disarmed these remains of the Pelagian heresy.

His principal effort was against Cassian, who, in the thirteenth of his conferences, had taught, under the name of the abbot Chæremon, that God awaited the beginnings of our wills and of our free will to give us the grace to accomplish the good; that the difference which was between the just and the impious, the elect and the reprobate, came from this, that the ones began the good by themselves, whereas the others, being able to begin it, abused their free will, and rendered themselves, by this abuse, unworthy of the grace of Jesus Christ. But our Saint, who had learned from Saint Paul and from his master, Saint Augustine, that we can do nothing of ourselves; that we have no salutary movement which does not come from the mercy of God, refuted powerfully these errors by the book entitled *Contra Collatorem*, that is to say against the author of the Conferences. This great erudition and the happy concert of all the virtues which accompanied it rendering him very celebrated in the Church, Pope Saint Leo, who ascended the chair of Saint Peter in the year 440, wished to have him near him; he made him his secretary, and made advantageous use of his hand to write several ecclesiastical letters, as Pope Saint Damasus had made use of that of Jerome to answer the questions

which were addressed to him from all the Christian world. Several even, such as Cardinal Noris and Tillemont, affirm that the letter to Flavian, in which this blessed Pope explains so admirably the mystery of the

Incarnation of the Word, and the unity of person with two natures in Jesus Christ, is of the composition of Saint Prosper, and that Saint Leo, in revising it, gave it his style. There are also authors who say that our Saint carried this letter to Constantinople, and that he was afterwards at the Council of Chalcedon to maintain there the orthodox faith against the heresies of Nestorius and of Eutyches, which made very great ravage in all the East; but we have not, in antiquity, authentic testimonies of these journeys; and they may well have been attributed to Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, by confounding him with others of the same name.

Saint Prosper crushed Pelagianism, which began again to lift up its head in the capital of the Christian world. It was, says Photius, to his zeal, to his knowledge and to his indefatigable labours that was due the entire extirpation of this heresy. In 444 took place the famous contest which arose between the Westerns and those of Alexandria, and which was renewed again eleven years after, touching the precise day on which Easter should be celebrated. It was principally on these two occasions that he made known his skill in the human sciences, above all in mathematics, astronomy and chronology. He composed then in favour of the Latin Church a paschal cycle which has not been taken care to preserve to us.

Everything leads one to believe that Saint Prosper was neither bishop nor even priest. But he employed all his life in combating heresy, in maintaining the truths of Christianity and in elucidating, by his pen, the mystery of the grace of Jesus Christ: also the Church gives him rank among her Fathers and her Doctors. The year in which he died is not certain, but it is constant that it was only after the middle of the 5th century, since he continued his chronicle, which is called commonly the Chronicle of Saint Prosper, down to the year 455. Saint Prosper of Aquitaine must not be confounded with Saint Prosper, bishop of Riez, predecessor of Saint Maximus, nor with another Saint Prosper, bishop of Reggio; this last succeeded Helpidius. John Anthony Flaminius of Imola, who composed the life of this holy bishop, says that having read in the Gospel these words of Our Lord: “If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all thy goods, give the money of them to the poor and come follow me,” he gave liberty to his slaves, sold his inheritances, distributed the price of them to the unfortunate and withdrew to Rome, where Pope Leo I, who recognised his talents and his virtues, gave him divers employments and named him at last bishop of this city of Reggio, which the Latins call Rhegium Lepidi, in the duchy of Modena.

He administered this diocese with so much zeal for the salvation of souls, and so much charity towards the poor, that he made himself the model of a perfect and accomplished prelate. In effect, he preached very often to his people, and his sermons, which were filled with a divine eloquence, made so much impression on the mind of his hearers that several renounced the foolish maxims of the world, with which they had let themselves be occupied, to enter into the way of virtue, and walk by the narrow road which Our Lord taught in the Gospel. The example of his life had still more efficacy than his remonstrances; for he knew so well how to mingle severity with gentleness, and gentleness with severity, that those whom he chastised could not complain that he was too rigorous: likewise those whom he pardoned could not abuse his indulgence. He was always the same in prosperity as in adversity; and if the one did not swell his heart, the other did not shake his constancy and never made him lose the peace and tranquillity of his mind. His faith was lively, his hope firm, his charity ardent and always full of a new fervour. There were no miserable in his diocese whom he did not know, and he had always before his eyes the wards, the orphans, the widows, the ruined families, to find the means of succouring them. He made himself a victim for all his people; and, if he chastised his body to subject it to the spirit, he chastised it also to punish in his person the faults of his flock and to turn away from their heads the vengeances of God.

A conduct so admirable so conciliated to him the friendship of all the world, that nothing was feared so much as to lose him. However, after having governed his Church twenty-two years, he died in the midst of his

priests and of his levites, who were all melting in tears, on 25 June 466. Before dying, he made a marvellous discourse to all those who were present; he assured them that he would be much more useful to them in heaven than he would have been to them on earth. So, having been buried in the church of Saint Apollinaris, which he had himself consecrated, outside the walls of the city, he wrought there so many miracles that one cannot express the esteem and veneration which he acquired in all the country.

Several centuries afterwards, that is to say in the time of Luitprand, king of the Lombards, he appeared in a dream to Thomas, bishop of Reggio, one of his successors, and ordered him to have built for him a more magnificent church with a more honourable tomb, to transfer his bones there. The bishop, who was a very holy person, obeyed his order, and, when he opened his sepulchre, there came out of it an odour so marvellous that there is no balm nor perfume on earth which can produce the like. The translation was made with an extraordinary joy and solemnity, and the miracles which were wrought at this new tomb were no less there than those which had been wrought at the death of the Saint.

This is what the learned Flaminius, and after him Surius, say of Saint Prosper, bishop of Reggio. Those who have written on the bishop of Riez apply to him also the same things: which comes from this, that Riez and Reggio having but one same name in Latin, one has easily confounded the one with the other. They insert there also a part of what we have said of Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, and above all his function of secretary of Pope Leo I, for want of distinguishing this holy ecclesiastic from the bishops of the same name. We shall add further that there has been a Saint Prosper, bishop of Orleans, and confessor, whose life we shall give on the twenty-ninth day of July, and that he must not be confounded with those of whom mention has been made. For the rest, if it is a question of the bishop of Riez, one may place him in the 4th century

Writings of Saint Prosper of Aquitaine

We have of this doctor of the Church:

1° The *Letters* to Saint Augustine and to Saint Hilary against the Pelagians. 2° A very beautiful *Letter to Rufinus*.

3° The *Poem against the Ungrateful*, of which mention was made in the life of the Saint. After this work are some other poems, such as the *Epitaph of Nestorianism and of Pelagianism*, two *Epigrams against the enemies of Saint Augustine*. The Poem against the Ungrateful was translated into French verse by Le Maistre de Sacy.

4° A hundred and six *Epigrams* with the preface. They are so many truths and sentences drawn from Saint Augustine.

5° *Answers to the objections of the Gauls.* It is a defence of the doctrine of Saint Augustine on grace.

6° *Answers to Vincent.* Saint Prosper shows in this work that he does not maintain, and that he never maintained, the sixteen erroneous propositions which had been calumniously attributed to him. The Vincent against whom he writes might be the Gallic priest of this name, of whom Gennadius speaks, and who assisted at the Council of Riez in 439.

7° The *Answer to the priests of Genoa* is an explanation of some propositions of Saint Augustine.

8° The book *On the Grace of God and free will against the Collator.* This collator is the famous Cassian, of whom we have a book of the *Conferences of the Fathers*. He had advanced, in the thirteenth of these conferences, that the beginning of faith is of us. Saint Prosper would not name him, because, in other respects, he was a great man; he contented himself with designating him by the denomination of Collator. He proves to him that the principles spread in his thirteenth conference had already been condemned by the Church, in her decrees against the Pelagians. He ends his work with an exhortation to bear with patience the enemies of the truth, to avenge himself on them only by a sincere charity, to avoid all dispute with those who

are not capable of understanding the language of reason, and to pray unceasingly Him who is the principle and the source of all, that He may deign to be the beginning of our thoughts, of our desires, of our words, of our actions.

9° A *Commentary on the Psalms*, from the hundredth to the hundred and fiftieth, which is, properly speaking, only an abridgment of that of Saint Augustine. We have no more than a part of it.

10° The book of *Sentences.* It is a collection of three hundred and ninety-two sentences drawn from the works of Saint Augustine, which contain an excellent abridgment of the doctrine of this Father on grace.

11° A *Chronicle*, which begins at the creation of the world, and ends in the year 455. The chronicle of Tiro Prosper is the same as that of our Saint, except that it has been falsified by some Pelagian, and that it is filled with calumnies against Saint Augustine. Among the works which have not come down to us, are cited: 1° his first *Letter to Saint Augustine*; 2° some works on the *Errors of the Semi-Pelagians*; 3° a *paschal cycle*. Among the doubtful works, are cited: 1° the beautiful *Poem of a husband to his wife*; 2° the book of *Providence*; 3° the *Confession of Prosper of Aquitaine*; 4° the two books of the *Calling of the Gentiles*; 5° the *Letter to the virgin Demetrias*; 6° the *Collection of the authorities of the Popes on the grace of God and the free will of man*.

The supposititious works which bear his name are: 1° The book of the *Promises and Predictions of God.* It is an explanation of several prophecies relating to the Saviour, to Antichrist, etc. 2° the three books of the *Contemplative Life*; 3° a *Collection of letters addressed to divers persons*; 4° a book of *Illustrious Men*; 5° a work on the *Capture of Rome.* There are found, in the poems of Saint Prosper, much facility, elegance, sweetness, unction and fire. The style of his works in prose is natural, concise and nervous; everywhere he shows himself less occupied with the ornaments of discourse than with the utility of his readers. His reasonings are connected and conclusive, his expressions noble and his thoughts full of elevation. He joins to all these advantages a sure judgment and a great penetration of mind. Mangeant gave a good edition of the works of Saint Prosper, which appeared at Paris in 17H, folio. There is found in it the life of the Saint, translated from the memoirs of Tillemont by the learned editor. It was reprinted at Venice in 1782, quarto. It is reproduced in volume li of the *Latin Patrology.* John Salinas, regular canon of the Congregation of Saint John Lateran, had reprinted at Rome, in 1732, octavo, the works of Saint Prosper which treat of the matters of grace, with those of Saint Honoratus of Marseilles.

Peter Francis Foggini, having published at Rome, in 1754, the treatises of Saint Augustine on grace, in two small volumes (reprinted at Paris in 1737), has since given a third volume, to complete the collection, under the following title: *S. Prosperi Aquitani, S. Leoni M. Notarii, de gratia Dei, opera omnia, editionem variis lectionibus, præcipue e Cod. MSS. Vaticanis adornatam curavit P. F. F. Romæ, 1758, in-8°.*

The authentic works of Saint Prosper were translated into French, by Lequeux, at Paris, in 1762, duodecimo.

Acta sanctorum; — Cf. Godescard; Tillemont; Cellier; Rivet.

Saint Thecla or Tygre of Maurienne, and the Evangelisation of that Valley (6th century).

Maxime inter lilia virginitatis saturatur et delectatur Christus, et aspectu pulchritudinis, et odore suavitatis, et tactu lenitatis.

Jesus Christ is extremely pleased in the midst of the lilies of virginity; He loves the beauty, the sweetness, the gentleness of a virginal soul.

Hugo card., sup. Cant.

It is claimed that the first seeds of faith in Maurienne were cast by Saint Barnabas in the year 50 of Jesus Christ. This Apostle betook himself to Rome, when Saint Peter had fixed his see there. He passed afterwards into Lombardy, founded the church of Milan and sojourned there seven years, visiting the surrounding cities and producing everywhere marvellous fruits of salvation. The fact is that the name of Barnabas is still given very frequently at baptism in the parishes of Upper Maurienne above all, and on the Italian slope, which touches Savoy, from Susa to Milan. However his sojourn in Maurienne must have been of too short duration for him to have been able to do anything else than take possession of it in the name of the divine Master. To others was reserved the care of clearing this new field of the Father of the family. Under the reign of Nero, there lived at Rome a holy widow named Priscilla. She was a relative of the emperor; but, nowise dazzled by what this quality had of brilliance in the eyes of men, she had hastened to contract a more glorious and more profitable alliance. She had become one of the first disciples of Saint Peter and one of the most distinguished by her faith and her piety, thus humbling at the feet of the Galilean, as it was said at Rome, both the nobility of her blood and the great goods which God had given her. As she knew the ferocious character of Nero, she foresaw that this monster would not be long in unchaining himself against the Christians. Wherefore she resolved to leave Rome, under some pretext, and to withdraw to a place where she might serve God in peace.

Nero had just united to the empire the States of king Cottius, which comprised the two slopes of the Alps (Susa and Maurienne). At the head of the province of Susa, on which Maurienne depended, he had placed a near relative of

Priscilla, named Burrhus. He was a man of a mild character and very favourable to the Christians; it is even believed that he had secretly embraced their faith. It was to him that the pious widow went to seek a refuge against the persecution. She was accompanied there by a great number of Christians, among whom were two holy priests. They were called Elle and Milet and were born in Palestine; but, having attached themselves to Saint Peter, they had followed him to Rome, when this prince of the fishers of souls had gone there to establish the throne of his spiritual royalty. Priscilla and her companions received from Burrhus and from the inhabitants of Susa the most benevolent welcome. Nevertheless they preferred to withdraw into a little valley situated a little above the city, at the foot of Mont-Cenis. The inhabitants of this place, called Nemalones, were simple people, charitable and exempt from the vices which are an obstacle to the lights of heaven. They hastened to furnish the needs of their guests and to cede to them all the land which was necessary for the accomplishment of their pious design. Elle and Milet set to preaching the Gospel to them, and, as charity is a magnet by which grace lets itself always be drawn, the divine word fructified so much among this people that in a short time it was found sufficiently prepared to receive baptism. It changed then the name of the country to that of Novalicium, Novalaise, which signifies new law or new light, in witness of the grace which God had done it of passing from the darkness of paganism to the light of faith.

When Elle and Milet saw religion well established in this valley, they crossed Mont-Cenis to carry the same benefit to the Garocelles and the Bramovices, tribes of Maurienne. The Lord made them find among these peoples dispositions as favourable as among the inhabitants of Novalaise. The conversions were numerous, oratories were built in the principal centres of habitation, and the faith so solidly planted that heresy has never been able to wither it with its poisoned breath. The priory of Saint Peter of Extravache[1] is, according to tradition, the most ancient church of Maurienne. It is built at a rather great distance from Bramans, in a forest, beside the road called that of Petit-Mont-Cenis, which is that which was followed after the road of Valloires and of the Galibier had been abandoned, and by which one went from Savoy into Piedmont. This priory was a cure with charge of souls. It counted, in 1700, eighty-six parishioners in summer, who, as well as the curé, came to dwell at Bramans in winter. It existed still in 1741. The church to-day is more than half in ruins. It is the work of the troops of the Republic, who had formed their camp there in 1793. The general who commanded them was mortally wounded there by the Sardinian troops. The belfry is still entire with its spire of square form and in tufa. The enclosure of the cemetery is very apparent, the sacristy is not destroyed;

one sees, behind the altar, paintings in fresco representing the Apostles, and one reads on the interior walls the names of the priors buried in the church. The dwelling of the prior, or the cure, is no more than a ruin; but the cellar is still found there.

Tradition and history assure us that this church, the most ancient of Savoy, was consecrated by the apostle Saint Peter, who dedicated it to the Saviour, which was very natural on his part. Later, and it is not known when, it was dedicated to Saint Peter himself and doubtless in commemoration of the memory of the great consecrator, who, informed of the conversions which were taking place on the two slopes of Mont-Cenis, came from Rome to encourage and sustain these tribes in the faith and religion of Christ, and it is then that he would have made this consecration, while Nero persecuted the Christians. In spite of these eighteen centuries, all is not destroyed. The belfry, to be complete, awaits only a cross at the summit and bells, and the church preserves still its sanctuary with its mural paintings representing the twelve Apostles. It awaits therefore only a restoration.

The Lord is admirable in His works. To evangelise Maurienne, He disdains not to depute His two apostles Peter and Barnabas, and we see Him bring from Rome two disciples of the prince of the Apostles. In the midst of the mountains of this country is a little town until then completely unknown in history. God wills that its name should resound in the neighbouring regions, that great cities should envy it, that bishops and faithful should run to it, that prodigies should multiply there and that a holy king should employ his treasures to strengthen the work of the saints Elle and Milet. For that, He has need only of a pious girl and of a few bones of one of His saints. Tygre or Thecla, as she is commonly called, was born at Valloires, a parish of the diocese of Maurienne, at the end of the 5th century or at the beginning of the 6th. She was sprung from a family illustrious by its nobility and by the great goods which it possessed; but she distinguished herself still more herself by the brightness of her holiness. One virtue shone in her above all the others: it was charity towards the poor; it extended to all the needy who addressed themselves to her; nevertheless the foreign pilgrims who passed by Valloires were the object of her most eager cares. The pass of the Galibier, which connects Valloires with the Briançonnais, was, at that epoch, one of the principal ways of communication between France and Italy. The pious travellers of the western countries of Europe arrived by the Roman road of Mont-du-Chat and directed themselves, by Mont-Genèvre, on Rome or one of the ports of Italy. Thecla welcomed them to her house, furnished their needs and lavished on them the most delicate attentions. For her, they were not strangers, but brothers, according to the word of the Saviour; and she thanked Providence for having given her the means of exercising towards them the duties of Christian hospitality. When to the quality of pilgrims they joined the dignity of priests, her ingenious charity knew no more bounds; there was nothing she did not put in work to honour and serve Jesus Christ in the person of His ministers. The greatest joy which they could do her was to choose her dwelling to rest for some days from the fatigues of the journey.

Thecla had a sister named Pigmenia. The latter had been first engaged in the bonds of marriage; but she was restored to liberty by the death of her husband and withdrew near her sister, to put herself under her direction and to help her in her good works.

One day, Scottish monks asked hospitality of the two sisters: they were returning from the Holy Land and were going back to their country by traversing Italy and France. Thecla and Pigmenia received them with their accustomed eagerness. They passed three days with them, and, as they related the principal particulars of their journey, God permitted that the conversation should fall on the miracles which were wrought every day near the relics of Saint John the Baptist and on the diverse translations which had been made of them.

These discourses made on Thecla a profound impression: she felt pressed by an ardent desire to go to visit Alexandria and to procure for her country some part of the relics of which so many marvels were told her. It was God who inspired her with this thought; our Saint doubted it not. So, as soon as the monks were gone, she made her preparations for the journey, entrusted the care of her affairs to her sister, recommended to her

earnestly the poor and the pilgrims, and, accompanied by a servant, took the road of Italy. She stopped some days at Rome to visit the tombs of the holy Apostles; then, having met travellers who were preparing to pass into the East, she joined them and they sailed toward Egypt.

A happy navigation brought Thecla to Alexandria. Scarcely landed, her first care was to go to the church of Saint John the Baptist to prostrate herself at the foot of the tomb in which were enclosed the relics of the holy Precursor. But how to determine the inhabitants of the city to part, in favour of an unknown stranger without support, with a part of the treasure which so many manifestations of the divine power rendered still dearer to them? Thecla foresaw well obstacles on the part of men. Nevertheless, strong in that sovereign confidence which disposes of the heart of God, she made a vow not to return to Maurienne before having seen her pious design realised. She addressed herself first to those who had the guard of the relics; but they mocked her. This reverse, which would have discouraged a less strongly tempered soul, only increased the ardour of her desires and the vivacity of her confidence: having nothing to expect from men, she turned all her hopes toward Him who has said: “All that you shall ask with faith, you shall obtain.” Each day, she betook herself to the church and prayed the Lord not to permit that she should have made so painful a journey without having been heard; she showed Him the purity of her intentions and recalled to Him with tears His promises repeated on every page of the holy Scriptures.

Two years passed thus. The extraordinary macerations which she had imposed on herself had exhausted her strength and nothing announced that her wishes would be granted: God and men seemed equally deaf to her prayers. Thecla hoped always against all hope. At the beginning of the third year, she resolved to do violence to heaven. One day she goes to the church, prostrates herself with her face against the ground before the tomb, and, all in tears, protests to God that she will take no nourishment and will not rise until He has granted her the grace which for so long she has asked. Six days pass; the Saint feels that her strength abandons her and she rejoices at it; for she likes better that God should call her to Him than to return to her country, deprived of the only good which she covets and which she has come to seek so far.

But, O power of prayer! on the seventh day, Thecla sees three fingers on the tomb; God has drawn from it the middle finger, the ring finger and a part of the thumb of the right hand of Saint John the Baptist, blessed fingers which touched the Saviour of the world, when He willed to receive in the Jordan the baptism of penance. At the same instant, the Lord makes known to the Saint that she is heard; her strength returns to her, she rises, lays the gift which God makes her, in the midst of some other relics, in a reliquary prepared to that effect, and, having rendered thanks to God and to Saint John the Baptist, she returns to her lodging. Her preparations for departure were soon finished; she went out of the city and directed herself toward the port to cross back into Europe. Meanwhile God willed to put her faith to a new trial. The inhabitants of Alexandria were not long to perceive the disappearance of the three fingers of Saint John the Baptist. Doubtless, learning the departure of Thecla and knowing the vow which she had made, they had hastened to open the tomb and had been able to convince themselves that, in spite of their raillery, she had really accomplished her vow. Then, instead of recognising the work of God in an event so extraordinary, they set to reproaching one another with what they called their negligence. And they ran in pursuit of her. Thecla had already gone several miles when she saw those who pursued her arrive. To flee was impossible; she did not even think of it. The thought of losing the object of all her ambition, the fruit of so many fatigues and of such fervent prayers, filled her first with a profound grief. But at once she felt her confidence in God reborn, more lively than ever. “Lord,” she cried in the bitterness of her soul, “wilt Thou then change my joy into sadness, and must I lose the gift which Thou hast made me and which I was so happy to carry to my country?” She drew the holy relics from the box and hid them on her bosom. At the same instant, they disappeared: God, who had drawn them from a tomb of stone by His merciful power, enclosed them in the bosom of His servant as in a tomb of flesh.

Thecla was soon overtaken by the inhabitants of Alexandria, who ordered her with threats to render the relics which she had taken from them. “Alas!” she answered, uttering a deep sigh, “I have lost the object of my hope; my happiness has dissipated in my tears. God had given them to me, but my sins have rendered me unworthy of them.” They opened her reliquary, stripped her of her garments which they examined, and searched even in her hair. Confounded by the uselessness of their researches, they left at last our Saint and returned. When they had gone away, Thecla found again with joy and gratitude the holy relics in the place where she had put them. God preserved the rest of her journey from every accident, and she arrived happily in Maurienne.

The origin of the city of Saint-Jean is lost in the highest antiquity. Nothing is known either of the epoch of its foundation, or of the vicissitudes of its history until the 6th century of our era, the epoch at which it bore the name of Maurienne.

It was in this city that Thecla deposited the fruit of her laborious pilgrimage. She thought that, in these times of troubles and wars, the holy relics would be safer in a city which was probably already fortified than in her native village, isolated on the summit of the mountains. Moreover, placed in the centre of the province, the pilgrimages would be easier there and more numerous, the marvels which should be wrought there would have a greater renown, and Saint John the Baptist would become the patron and protector of the whole of Maurienne.

Thecla had resolved to have built a church worthy of him whom the Saviour proclaimed the greatest of the children of men, and already the works were advancing rapidly, when God sent to her zeal a providential help. The report of the arrival of the relics of Saint John the Baptist and of the numerous miracles by which the Lord ceased not to manifest the power of the glorious Precursor, had not been slow to spread in all the neighbouring countries; it reached the holy king Contran, who wished to charge himself with the construction of the church, and soon after, made the city of Maurienne the seat of a new bishopric.

Meanwhile Thecla, disgusted with the world and desirous of enjoying the sweetness of the eremitical life of which she had doubtless heard much during her sojourn in the East, had withdrawn, above the city, to a place called Rocheray. The devotion of the people has since given it the name of the Saint. Her sister Pigmenia had rejoined her with twelve widows, who desired to put themselves under her direction. Thecla had lent herself willingly to their request. Having found a deep grotto, hollowed by nature in the flanks of the mountain, she had a building added to it of which traces are still seen to-day. Her ordinary dwelling was a little chamber, situated above the habitation of her companions and where she could satisfy more at ease her love of prayer and of silence.

Thecla had a singular enemy to combat. The oaks which surround the hermitage, now hidden in the folds of the mountain, now raising proudly on the rocks their branching tops, were peopled with sparrows whose piercing cries came to distract her in her meditations. One day, she prayed God to deliver her from her noisy neighbours. Her prayer was scarcely finished when the sparrows arrived, fluttering around her in greater number and chirping louder still than usual. One would have said it was a defiance. Thecla ordered them, in the name of Jesus Christ, to go away. Forthwith, the poor little birds fled, and from that time none was ever seen there again. And, in fact, to-day still, the sparrows do not go to Sainte-Thècle, although the environs of the seminary and all the valley swarm with them. It is not known how long Thecla lived still from the moment when she withdrew into the hermitage of Rocheray.

God at last made her know that her last hour was not far off. At this news, her heart leaped with joy, because she was about to enter into the house of her Lord. Nevertheless, she testified to Him the desire to see yet on earth the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist and of the dedication of the church which she had begun and which Saint Contran had finished. She wished, before dying, to say farewell to all that she had loved in this world.

On 24 June, Thecla could, for the last time, assist at holy Mass, after which she distributed all that she had to the poor, to the widows and to the orphans. She then disposed of the goods which she possessed. The poor, it may well be thought, were her first heirs. She founded a house, where twelve widows were to be lodged and maintained for their lives. The church of the city, which we may from then on call Saint-Jean de Maurienne, could not be forgotten in her liberalities; she gave it her property of Valloires and submitted to its jurisdiction the cure of this parish, as well as all that was under her power in that locality.

On the morrow, the Saint received the visit of her friends: they came to ask her pardon for the offences of which they might have been guilty towards her and to recommend themselves to her prayers. She bade them farewell with the joy of the prisoner who, after a long captivity, sees the doors of his prison open and presses for the last time the hand of his companions in chains. Then, having received the sacraments of the dying, she fell asleep gently in the Lord.

Worship and Relics

When one arrives at Saint-Jean by the road from Italy, the first thing one perceives is the chapel of Notre-Dame de Bonne-Nouvelle, which dominates the city like a citadel. Follow, to the right of the sanctuary, the path which climbs through the last vines. Do you see this high wall sunk in a ravine whose edges it unites, and this great white cross which a pious hand has just planted on the rock as a blessed sign? It is the hermitage of Saint Thecla and of her companions.

It is divided into two storeys. The lower part is a space now without entrance, which receives the light by four openings. This storey formed, according to the Bollandists, the common habitation of Saint Thecla, of her sister Pigmenia and of the twelve widows. The upper storey has been long without a roof; one enters it by a little elevated portal in tufa. At the back, in the rock which serves as enclosure on that side by sinking into the mountain, opens a grotto wider than long. In the court or on the rock itself, for the passage of the Bollandists, which gives us these details, is not very clear, was situated the cell where Saint Thecla loved to withdraw to give herself with more liberty to prayer. It seems however, according to the same authors, that the grotto formed part of this cell and served as oratory to the Saint; for they say at once that she was buried in her cell and in the subterranean chapel, beside the high altar.

The chapel of Saint Thecla possessed, in the 13th century, considerable revenues, fruits of the pious generosity of the faithful. All has disappeared in the revolutionary gulf, and the chapel possesses no more to-day than a strip, without value, of rocks and forest. It was itself fallen into the most deplorable state. Some painted boards, by way of vault; a little altar of wood, poor and degraded; a grating likewise of wood in front: such were still, in the month of May 1858, the only ornaments of this grotto which recalls to Maurienne such precious memories. Since then the vault laid by the hand of God has been cleared of its wainscoting: an iron grating closes the grotto, of which an altar of white marble, simple as the virtue of the virgin of Valloires, decorates the back. The supporting wall of the court awaits still that a pious and intelligent hand should raise it from its ruins and finish the work of restoration begun by M. the knight Anselme, former councillor at the Court of Appeal of Chambéry, who made the gift of the altar and of the grating.

What has become of the body of the Saint in the course of the centuries? Has it remained in the subterranean chapel, or else, carried to the cathedral, has it disappeared in the disasters of the century? All that is certain is that the cathedral preserved until the French Revolution one of the arms of the Saint, enclosed in a magnificent reliquary. This signal relic shared the honours rendered by the devotion of the faithful to the venerated fingers of Saint John the Baptist. Twelve centuries had elapsed since this hand had brought to Maurienne the blessed fingers which showed to the Jews the Saviour promised to their fathers. God had withdrawn it from the profanations of the Saracens; He did not permit it to escape the philosophical barbarity of the end of the 18th century.

In the month of December 1793, the Directory of the department of Mont-Blanc sent into Maurienne the citizen Chevrillon, with the mission to carry off the sacred vessels and the other precious objects serving for the divine worship. On the 21st (1st Nivôse, year II), the representative of the Convention, accompanied by the mayor of the city, Dominique Favier, and followed by some madmen, enters the cathedral; crosses, reliquaries, monstrances, chalices of gold and of silver, all the riches accumulated by the piety of the centuries and preserved in the sacristy and the treasury hall, above the chapel of Sainte-Thècle, are carried off and dispatched to Chambéry. The holy oil is poured on the ground, the relics trodden under foot and thrown into the street. Only the fingers of Saint John the Baptist were saved by the mayor of the city, who hid them in his house and rendered them in 1804 to the cathedral. Saint Thecla had a chapel in the cathedral. It is to-day what is called the old sacristy. At the disasters of the inundation of 1439, which submerged the city and did so much harm to the cathedral, it appears that the chapel of Sainte-Thècle alone escaped the ravages of the devastating torrent. What remains of it to-day, with the exception of the ogives which decorate the vault, appears to belong, according to M. de Caumont (*History of religious architecture of the middle ages*), to the epoch which runs from the 5th to the 11th century. This chapel having been transformed into a sacristy at the end of the 15th century, an altar was then raised to our Saint in one of the most conspicuous places of the church, between the principal nave and the choir. This altar subsisted until the Revolution. At Valloires, a little chapel is dedicated to Saint Thecla. The nobles of Rapiu had it built in their fief of la Choudane, before the beginning of the 17th century. It was razed under the Terror; but in 1817, M. J.-B. Grange made a legacy to the commune for its reconstruction and founded there a procession and a Mass annually on the day of the feast of the Saint. Divers obstacles retarded the complete execution of his wishes, and the blessing of the new chapel could take place only on 28 July 1846.

At another extremity of the diocese, the parish of Le Bourget-en-l'Huile has, from time immemorial, chosen Saint Thecla for its titular patroness: the minutes of the pastoral visitation of 1571, the oldest which we have, give already to this parish the name of Sainte-Thècle du Bourget.

We do not know at what epoch the feast of Saint Thecla was instituted and fixed on 25 June, the anniversary day of her birth into heaven, as the Church admirably says. The great manuscript Breviary, drawn up, as it appears, between the 13th and the 14th century, for the use of the Chapter, contains the legend of Saint Thecla and all her office. Cardinal Louis de Gorrevod, having printed in 1312 a Breviary specially destined for his diocese of Maurienne, placed there on 25 June the office of this Saint with eight proper lessons. However, until the Revolution, the feast of Saint Thecla, under the double rite, was peculiar to the city of Saint-Jean and to the parish of Valloires. This is, at least, what we see in several calendars of the 18th century. Since the restoration of worship, it was contented to make commemoration of the Saint, until 1849, when Mgr Yibert re-established her feast and extended it to all the diocese. The office, with the proper lessons, has been approved by His Holiness Pope Pius IX. Moreover, at the solicitation of the pious restorer of the chapel of Sainte-Thècle, the same Pontiff, by his brief of 7 September 1858, has granted to those who visit the grotto a plenary indulgence, on the day of the feast of the Saint, and an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines, on the other days of the year.

Taken from the *Hagiological History of the diocese of Maurienne*, by M. the Abbé Truchet, curé of Saint-Jean d'Arves.

Saint William of Monte-Vergine, Founder of the Religious Congregation of that Name

1142. — Pope: Innocent II. — King of Naples: Roger I.

Solitudo civitatibus dignior est, quæ virtute justi ornatur, et orbe toto fit fulgidior.

Solitude embellished by the virtues of the just man is more beautiful than the most magnificent city, more beautiful than the whole universe.

S. J. Chrys., hom. xxxiii sup. Gen.

Vercelli, ancient and famous city of Lombardy, in serving as cradle to Saint William, gave at the same time to the Church a new religious order in the West. His father and his mother were not only illustrious by the nobility of their blood, but also recommendable by the holiness of their life. Having lost both in his childhood, he remained under the conduct of one of his relatives, who took much care of his education. Scarcely was he fifteen years old when he resolved to lead a penitent life and to renounce the delights which he might taste in his condition. To this end, he undertook to make the journey of Saint James, in Galicia, barefoot and clothed in a simple pilgrim's habit. Although he suffered hunger, thirst, and all sorts of inconveniences during this long journey, nevertheless his zeal not being yet satisfied, he had made on the way two circles of iron which he applied on his bare flesh. After this pilgrimage, he proposed to make another much longer and more difficult, which was to go to visit the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem; but God took this thought from him and made him know that He called him to a solitary life where he could practise virtue with more perfection. The Saint, whose desires were all to render himself agreeable to the divine Majesty, obeyed this inspiration and, quitting his country in order to find less obstacle to his design, withdrew to a desert mountain, in the kingdom of Naples, where he made abstinences and austerities almost incredible. It is reported that he restored there also sight to a blind man who had had recourse to him, to ask him the assistance of his prayers in his affliction. The report of the miracle, joined to the brightness of his virtues, having caused him to be discovered in his solitude, he believed that he ought to go away to a very distant country, to remain there entirely hidden from men; but, as God had other designs on him, He stopped him in Italy to be there the founder of a new Congregation of holy religious. Not daring therefore to resist the orders of heaven, he sought another solitude in the country, and withdrew at last to Mount Virgilian, situated between Nola and Benevento. This mountain was so named because of the sojourn which the famous poet Virgil had formerly made there; but, since the retreat of our Blessed, who had built there a very beautiful church in honour of Our Lady, it was called Monte-Vergine, that is to say the Virgin Mount.[1]

He was not long in this place without being visited by a crowd of persons attracted by the report of his miracles and the desire to receive his instructions and to recommend themselves to his prayers. Several secular priests, charmed with his pious conversations, threw themselves at his feet to beseech him to admit them to the number of his disciples and to lead them in the way of perfection; it was by that that he began the establishment of the Congregation called until now of the Virgin Mount, in the year 1119, under the pontificate of Calixtus II. It is not possible to explain with what fervour these new religious embraced the practice of virtue, being animated by the powerful exhortations and by the beautiful actions of their holy founder. Abstinence was the most delicious dish of their meals; interior and exterior mortification made their principal exercise; prayer and union with God were their continual occupation; and the work of the hands, outside the time of their offices, served them as recreation. They lived thus in peace and in a beautiful concord, and advanced with great strides toward perfection, when the demon sowed among them division and excited in them a spirit of murmuring against the blessed William, because of the austerity of the rules which he prescribed to them and which they began to find excessive and insupportable, and of the great alms which they saw him make every day and which they believed to be extremely prejudicial to the monastery. This bitterness of the religious made him take the resolution to withdraw, because it is hardly possible to reduce embittered spirits except by removing from before their eyes the object of their pain; he judged therefore that his presence, far from being useful to them, would be rather very disadvantageous. However God, who permits evil only to draw from it a greater good, had permitted this persecution against His servant only to give him the means of extending further the new Order which he had instituted: so, abandoning the Virgin Mount, he founded several other monasteries both of men and of girls, in divers places of the kingdom

of Naples; which he could not easily have done by remaining always in his first solitude. The spirit of his institute was to lead a penitent life; wherefore he forbade his children wine, meat and all sorts of milk-foods, and ordained that three days of the week they should eat only raw herbs with a little bread.

The reputation of his holiness spreading from all sides, it came to Roger I, king of Naples, who soon had him come to his court to have the consolation of conversing with him. He was so edified by his wholly angelic conversation that he had built a house of his Order at Salerno, opposite his palace, in order to have him more often near him. He conversed often with this holy man; William knew how to profit by it to speak to the king of his duty and to lead him to virtue. He represented to him that he ought not to forget himself amid the splendour of his grandeur, nor let himself be dazzled by the brilliance of his crown; that this worldly felicity would pass one day; that he had a sovereign Judge to whom he should render account of all his actions; that he should think of meriting His grace by loving Him with all his heart, and of appeasing His anger by a filial fear of offending Him; that, to draw the blessings of heaven on his kingdom, he ought to be entirely submissive to the holy Church, cause justice to be rendered in all his States and repress injustice there; declare himself the father and protector of the poor, combat vice and banish the vicious, take always the side of virtue and of the good, forbid pomps and luxury which are the ruin of families; finally live himself in such a manner that he should serve as an example to all the world. He made like exhortations to the great lords, endeavouring to imprint on them horror of sin and love of piety. Nevertheless, as devotion finds enemies everywhere, and particularly in the court of princes, some courtiers put it into the mind of the king that our Saint was not what was thought, and that, if His Majesty wished that he should be tried, it would soon be seen that his virtue was only hypocrisy. Roger, too credulous, listened to this proposal: a courtesan was charged to solicit him to evil and to make him fall into sin. This wretched woman came therefore to find the Blessed with all the charms which she believed capable of inspiring him with love, and, by lascivious discourses, she pressed him to consent to the pleasure which she offered him. He feigned at first to acquiesce in it and begged her to return. The courtesan imagined that she had gained the victory and ran to carry the news of it to the king. But she was much surprised when, towards evening, being returned to the Saint, she saw him lie down on a bed of burning coals and invite her to do the same. This prodigy astonished her so much (for the fire did no harm to the servant of God) that, melting into tears, she prostrated herself on the ground, asking him pardon for her crime; and, from an infamous sinner, she became a penitent Magdalene. Afterwards, she published everywhere this miracle to confirm the good opinion which was had of our Saint. Selling all that she had, she helped William to found a convent of women at Venosa, shut herself in it under the conduct of the Saint and became abbess of it; she is known under the name of the blessed Agnes of Venosa. Saint William, having learned by revelation that he would soon go to receive in heaven the reward of his labours, warned the king of it, recommended to him for the last time the practice of the instructions which he had given him, and withdrew to the monastery of Guglieto, near the city of Nusco, to prepare himself for death. This happy day having come, as he had predicted some time before, he had himself carried to the church; there, lying on the bare earth, without willing to permit that anything should be put under him to relieve him, he exhorted his religious to perseverance, begged them to bury him with the same habit in which he was clothed, and rendered to God his blessed soul, which went to enjoy His presence in the year of Our Lord 4142. Some authors say that it was on 7 June; but the Reverend Father Renda, prior of the Virgin Mount, who wrote his life, places his decease on this day: in which he was followed by Cardinal Baronius, in his Remarks on the Roman martyrology. His body was buried in the same church, which changed its name of Saint Saviour, to whom it was dedicated, to that of Saint William, founder of the Virgin Mount.

Our Saint gave no Rule in writing to his religious, but governed them always by word of mouth and by his examples. Albert, whom he put in his place on quitting the Virgin Mount, continued to conduct them in the same manner; but Robert, who succeeded him, foreseeing that the order would not maintain itself by simple traditions and customary usages, which it is easy to alter and to change altogether, had recourse to the sovereign pontiff Alexander III, to put it under the Rule of Saint Benedict, under which it has remained with

great reputation. So this Robert is counted for the first abbot of the Congregation.

There is, on this pious mountain of the Virgin Mount, a celebrated image of Our Lady, which was, it is believed, given by the emperor Frederick II. It is said that one cannot cast the eyes on this amiable portrait without being seized with compunction and touched with regret for one's past sins, and that even those who go there only from curiosity fail not to feel the same effect. The devotion there is so great that pilgrims are seen kissing the ground from the door of the monastery to the foot of the altar where reposes the holy image. The kings of Naples have always borne much veneration to this church. Louis of Taranto, who had married queen Joan, chose his sepulture there, and his tomb is still seen there, of which the magnificence is worthy of royal majesty. It possessed formerly the body of Saint Januarius; but the religious deprived themselves of it to enrich the city of Naples, capital of all the kingdom. It preserves nevertheless an infinity of other very precious relics, among which are counted the three children called of the Furnace, and some drops of the blood of John the Baptist. There is reported yet a thing very remarkable touching this holy mountain: since Saint William, no one has ever been able to eat there other than Lenten meats; which has been confirmed by several miracles; for those who have wished to attempt to carry other meats there, either found them all corrupted and full of worms, or the rains, the thunders and the lightnings which came on suddenly, in a frightful manner, obliged them to take flight. This shows us that this holy place is consecrated by heaven to penance. Our Saint is rather ordinarily painted kneeling before an image of Mary, to recall doubtless the name of the mountain which became the cradle of the Benedictine Congregation established by him. At his side is sometimes seen a wolf: it is that which made up for the loss of the ass which he had strangled at the moment when it was dragging the materials destined for the construction of the church of the monastery of Saint William.

We have used particularly, to make this abridgment, Sylvester Marulli, of the Order of Cîteaux, who wrote the life of Saint William in his book entitled: *Sacred History of all the religions (religious Orders) of the Catholic world.*

Saint Maximus, Bishop and Patron of Turin (466)

Saint Maximus, bishop of Turin, praised in Gennadius for the particular gift which he had of speaking on the spur of the moment, taught the peoples the truths which he had learned from Scripture, which he made his ordinary study. There is reason to believe that he was of Vercelli. He assisted, in 430, at the council of Milan, assembled by the bishop Saint Eusebius, and at that which Pope Hilary held at Rome, in 463; he is named first after the Pope in this council, an honour which was apparently deferred to him, either for his great age, or for his personal merit. He protested, in this assembly, that he could not better mark his sentiment on the observance of the canons, touching the ordination of the ministers of the Church, than by declaring that he always observed them inviolably. This is all that we know of the life and actions of this holy bishop. He died probably in 465. Saint Maximus is ordinarily represented with a hind which he shows to a spy. It is an allusion to the following fact: Saint Maximus had the habit of going to pray often in a retired chapel; it was imagined that some evil design led him to this place. A man spied upon him and was seized with a thirst so ardent that he was forced to have recourse to the Saint. The bishop pointed out to him a hind which let itself be milked to quench his thirst.

Saint Maximus is above all celebrated by the writings which he has left. We have of him *Homilies* on the birth of Jesus Christ, for the Sundays of Lent, on the Passion, on the feast of Easter, on the feast of Pentecost, in praise of the Saints, on divers moral points. Father Muratori published a great number of them. — We have also of Saint Maximus an *Exposition of the Chapters of the Gospels*; *Expositions of the Gospels*; a treatise on the *Names of the twelve Apostles*; three treatises on *Baptism*; two others against the Jews and the Pagans. In 1784, the press of the Propaganda of Rome published, by order of Pope Pius VI, a folio edition of the complete works of Saint Maximus. It was reproduced in volume lvii of the *Latin Patrology*.

Saint Maximus has always been in great consideration in the Church, and the compilers of the Roman Breviary have drawn several lessons from him. He is remarkable by the abundance of his doctrine and his natural eloquence; he pleases his readers by the purity of his language; he holds them enchained by the finesse of his sentences and by the gravity of his discourse; leaning unceasingly on the holy Letters, he brings continually in proof the words of Scripture which he comments with a marvellous facility. He imitates frequently Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose, the two most celebrated doctors and orators of the Latin Church.

Dom Ceillier, General History of the sacred and ecclesiastical authors; — Cf. Baillet.

Saint Gohard, Bishop of Nantes (843)[1]

In the year of the incarnation of the Saviour 843, Raynaud, count of Nantes, gave battle, on the banks of the Vilaine, in a place named Meciac, to the Bretons, who made him undergo a grave defeat, thanks to the help which the traitor Lambert lent them, who coveted the county of Nantes. But this same Lambert was soon driven from the city of Nantes and from all the country. Now, a month after these events, in the month of June, the Normans, a ferocious nation, penetrated into the waters of the Loire with a numerous fleet. Soon, favoured by the wind, and led by the perfidious Lambert, who had taken care to have the place reconnoitred beforehand by spies, they ascend, by dint of sails and oars, as far as the city of Nantes. The enemies disembark and surround the place, and, meeting no resistance, they take possession of it, pillage it and devastate it. Gohard, a man of an innocent and pure life, was bishop of Nantes; all the clergy, as well as the religious of a neighbouring monastery named Antrum, carrying with them the treasure of their church, had taken refuge in the city; the walls of Nantes contained moreover a great multitude of people whom fear of the enemy had drawn, as well as the feast of the nativity of Saint John the Baptist, not only from the surrounding regions, but even from distant cities. Seeing the enemy within the enclosure of the walls, all this crowd betook itself in a mass to the church of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, to implore the help of heaven, which alone could deliver them. But the pagans, breaking the doors and the windows of the sacred edifice, throw themselves like wolves thirsting for blood on this defenceless flock. The sword strikes all that it meets, discerning neither sex nor age. Gohard himself, the bishop of Christ, is struck and massacred during the holy sacrifice which he was offering, at the moment when he was saying *Sursum corda.*

Many religious were killed, some outside the church, others inside, and the greater part around the altar. When the Barbarians were sated with carnage, they thought of making prisoners, whom they carried to their vessels and whom the survivors ransomed by a heavy ransom. Then they pillaged and sacked the city, and burned the church before withdrawing. The body of Saint Gohard, transferred to Angers, was kept with great veneration in the collegiate church of Saint Peter. It was solemnly recognised in 1523; beside the body were found two plates of lead bearing this inscription: *Humilis Gohardus Nannetensium Pater et martyr.* All the bones of the blessed Martyr, as well as several signal relics which the Church of Nantes possessed, disappeared during the revolutionary storm of the last century.

Proper of Nantes.

Saint Solomon, King and Martyr in Brittany (874)

Saint Solomon was of the race of the ancient Breton princes. He was very young when Rivallon, his father, died, and his uncle Nominoé had for him cares and kindnesses of which Solomon remained always grateful.

After the death of Nominoé, in 851, he had not the same regard nor the same attachment for Erispoé, his successor. Under pretext that he descended from the elder brother of Nominoé, and that he had more rights over Brittany than his cousin, he set to cabal against him, and obtained from king Charles the Bald, in 853, the third of Brittany, under the suzerainty of Erispoé.

This first satisfaction rendered him peaceful for some years, but, in 857, fearing to see the crown pass on another head, by the marriage of the daughter of his rival, he hatched a black conspiracy, and did not fear to pursue Erispoé even into a church and to assassinate him on the very altar.

The Bretons, ignorant of this crime, accepted Solomon for king and aided him to repulse the Franks who sought to invade Brittany. Apart from his crime, Solomon had all the qualities which one can wish in a prince: a majestic stature, the science of war, an intrepid courage; he showed also afterwards much justice and piety. But God, who never leaves crime unpunished, raised up for Solomon a crowd of affairs and trials which served to expiate his sin and to sanctify his soul. Without speaking of the wars which he had to sustain against the Franks and against the Normans, he had to occupy himself with the bishops unjustly deposed, in 847, by Nominoé, and this thorny affair occasioned him many correspondences and many embarrassments, whether with the bishops or with the Pope himself. Without counting the penances which he accomplished, Solomon, to purify himself more and more, multiplied good works, built the monastery of Plélan or of Saint-Maizent, and loaded it with magnificent gifts.

Meanwhile a conspiracy was being plotted also against Solomon: the penalty of retaliation was reserved for him. Surprised by the conspirators and incapable of resisting, he took flight and took refuge in a little monastery on the confines of Poher and Léon, in a parish called formerly Mezzer-Salaün (Martyrdom of Solomon), and to-day La Martyre (Finistère).

The rebels invested his retreat on 23 June 874. A remnant of religion prevented them from undertaking anything against him on the following day, the feast of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist. They sent him only a bishop to engage him to quit his asylum and to give himself up voluntarily to avoid the possible profanation of the holy place. Solomon, resigned to everything, provided himself with the sacrament of the Eucharist and presented himself before his enemies with a magnanimous courage. The Bretons, struck with respect, dared not draw the sword against him, and delivered him to Fulcoald and some other Franks who had his eyes put out by his own godson. The old king could not survive this cruel torment, and was found dead the next day, 25 June 874.

It is also the day on which the Church of Vannes honours his memory.

The body of king Solomon was buried in the monastery of Plélan or of Saint-Maixent, in conformity with the desire which he had expressed to repose near the queen Wembrit. Later, this body was carried off, probably during the ravages of the Normans, and transported, it appears, as far as Pilhivers, in the diocese of Orleans, where a church was erected in his honour. However a part of his relics remained or returned to Brittany, for the church of Saint Solomon, at Vannes, possessed some bones of this holy king until the Revolution; since the destruction of the church of Saint Solomon, in 1793, the relics have been transferred to the cathedral, where they are still the object of the veneration of the faithful.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. the Abbé J.-M. Le Mené, honorary canon, secretary general of the bishopric of Vannes.

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[1] According to Origen, he became bishop of Thessalonica, and, according to others, bishop of dicontnm.

[2] The Roman martyrology carries quite simply *Apud Rhegium*. Which is this Rhegium? for there are three towns of this name. The first, Rhegium Lepidi, whose distinctive Latin name comes from the fact that Æmilius Lepidus colonised it, is in the Modenese, on the Tassone, twenty-three kilometres N. W. of Modena; it is the present episcopal city of Reggio. — The second, Rhegium Julii, is found in the former kingdom of Naples, and is the chief town of Calabria Ulterior Prima: it is on the Strait of Messina, at the S. W. point of Italy: it is the present archiepiscopal city of Santa Agata délie Galline. — The third is the ancient capital of the Reii, where two provincial Councils were held, in 439 and in 1223; it is the present borough of Riez, chief town of a canton of the department of the Lower Alps, thirty-two kilometres S. W. of Digne. — Everything leads us to believe that Saint Prosper of Aquitaine belongs to the borough of Riez in Provence; but he was never bishop of it, although Riez was formerly a bishopric and the Roman martyrology places him on this see, in which we thought we ought to correct it. The error comes perhaps from his having been confounded with Saint Prosper, bishop of Reggio (Rhegium Lepidi), of whom we say a word in the life of Saint Prosper of Aquitaine; or again with Saint Prosper, bishop of Riez, of whom only one thing is known, that he was the first bishop of that see. — It remains therefore established

that Prosper of Aquitaine, Prosper of Riez, and Prosper of Reggio are three different persons.

[3] See on 27 June.

[4] See on 26 June.

[5] See on the following day.

[6] See on S July.

[7] To-day Nazib. This ancient city is no more than a borough of a thousand inhabitants.

[8] Gregory of Tours, *History of France*, book ii, ch. 9; Oroi., ch. 40.

[9] Anonym. Apud Prosperum, carmen de Provid.

[10] Salvian, book vii. Salvian, priest of Marseilles, retired to the abbey of Lérins in the year 420. He depicted with so much force the misfortunes of the time that he was called the new Jeremias.

[11] Dom Ferron, crowned by the academy of Besançon in 1779, has shown, on the authority of Idatius and of a great number of other annalists, that the epoch of the invasion of Crocus must be fixed at the beginning of the 5th century. (*Unpublished documents.*)

[12] The Vandals were Arians. (Idatius, 17.)

[13] Road from Besançon to Lorraine. (M. Clerc, 123.)

[14] This fortress belonged to Saint Antidus; it had been given to him by Theodosius.

[15] Called since mount of the Vandals, to-day mount of Bregille.

[16] These priests pretended that the beginning or the desire of supernatural virtues was the fruit of free will, without any supernatural help, that is to say without grace: a contradiction and a heresy, named semi-Pelagianism.

[17] The name Extravachu appears to come from the Latin words *extra viam*, outside the way, and this is the case. The ancient Latin titles carry also this denomination. The Italian concurs to confirm it, for *extra varco* means outside the passage.

[18] One may see in the Bollandists, volume vii of June, p. 116 (Palmé edition, 1867), a magnificent plate representing the Virgin Mount and the monastery founded by Saint William.

[19] Alias, Guichard, Gunbar.

26 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Rome, on the Caelian mount, the holy martyrs John and Paul, brothers, of whom the first was steward and the second primicerius of the virgin Constantia, daughter of the emperor Constantine; beheaded under the reign of Julian the Apostate, they carried off the palm of martyrdom. About 302. — At Trent, Saint Vigilius, bishop, who, striving to extirpate entirely the remains of idolatry, was overwhelmed with a hail of stones by impious men, and thus accomplished his martyrdom for the defence of the name of Jesus Christ. 400. — At Cordova, in Spain, the birth into heaven of Saint Pelagius, a young child, who, for the confession of the faith, was, by order of Abderrahman, king of the Saracens, cut in pieces with iron pincers,[1] and thus gloriously consummated his martyrdom. 925. — Near Valenciennes, the torment of Saint Saulve, bishop of Angoulême, and of Saint Super, martyrs. 768. — Moreover, the memory of Saint Anthelm, bishop of Belley. 1178. — In Poitou, Saint Maixent or Maxence, called also Saint Adjutor, priest and confessor, celebrated for his miracles. 515. — At Thessalonica, Saint David, hermit. About 540. — The same day, Saint Perseveranda or Péchinne, virgin. 6th century.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Saulve and his disciple Saint Super, martyred at the village of Beuvrage, near Valenciennes, and named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Chambéry, Saint Anthelm, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Paris, Saint Habolein or Babolenus, first abbot of Saint-Maur des Fossés, where his sacred body is seen in a shrine above the high altar. He had been disciple of Saint Columban and of Saint Remaclus, and abbot of Stavelot, in Belgium. About 671. — At Sens, Saint Teudechild, daughter of Clovis I and of Saint Clotilda, who, having

consecrated to God her virginity, founded a monastery of girls at the gates of this city. — At Saint-Pierre-sur-Dive, in the diocese of Bayeux, Saint Vambert, curé, killed by the Normans. 9th century. — In the Low Countries, Saint Corbican, Irishman. 8th century. — At Poitiers, the translation of Saint Hilary.[2] — At Poitiers again, Saint Maxence or Maixent (different from him whom the Roman martyrology names to-day), bishop of that see and confessor. He was, it is said, elder brother of Saint Maximin, bishop of Trier; he governed holily the Church of Poitiers, preparing the ground which was soon to be made fruitful by his eloquence and his virtues by the great doctor of the Church, Saint Hilary, his successor. His remains were laid in the church of the little monastery of Silly, *Monasterium Sigiliacense*, to-day Mouterre-Silly (Vienne). 353. — At Autun, Saint Désiré, of Chalon-sur-Saône, whom Saint Gregory of Tours praises in his book of the Glory of the Confessors.[3] 579. — At Clermont, in Auvergne, Saint Ajudou. — At Tournai, at the novitiate of the Jesuits, the reception of the body of Saint Deppe, virgin and martyr, which was drawn from the cemetery of Priscilla, at Rome. 1612. — At Tulle, the decease of Catherine-Marcelline Pauper, virgin, a person of eminent piety. She was born in 1666, at Saint-Saulge, in the diocese of Nevers. From the age of nineteen years, God favoured her with apparitions, intimate communications and ecstasies which recall the details of the life of Saint Catherine of Siena, her patroness. At twenty-two years, she entered the nascent Congregation of the sisters of Christian Charity and Instruction of Nevers, which she edified by the example of her virtues, sanctified by the austerity of her mortifications and developed by her talent and her skill. She founded houses of her Order at Murat, at Vic-Fezensac, at Bourg-Saint-Andéol, at Saint-Étienne and at Tulle where she died. Her body was buried in the church of Saint-Julien of this city. Her head is preserved with respect in the boarding-school of the sisters of the Congregation of Nevers, at Tulle. 1708.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Africa, the saints Gaudentius, Felix, Agapitus, Emeritus, martyrs, carried in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Alexandria of Egypt, the saints Agathon, Lucia, virgin, and Diogenes, martyrs, mentioned by the same. — In Abyssinia, Saint Thadée, martyr, who was made to suffer the torment of strangulation for having converted to the faith of Jesus Christ a rich idolater and a public sinner. — The holy martyrs Therapoule, Macarius, Mark and Marcia, carried in the manuscript synaxaries of Paris and of Milan, but of whom the country is unknown. — Among the Greeks, Saint Anthion, anchorite, named in a manuscript synaxary of Dijon. He was, like the holy man Job, afflicted with a horrible leprosy, and, like him, he endured this infirmity giving thanks to God that He humbled his body to render it more glorious on the day of the resurrection. — Among the Greeks again, Saint John, bishop of Heraclea, in Thrace. His father was called Leo and his mother Photina; they raised him in the fear of God. From his childhood, he exercised himself in the ministry of preaching, and died while distributing to the people the bread of the divine word. About the year 800. — Among the Bulgarians, Saint Denis, their archbishop, buried near Kiev, in Russia. Year 1180. — In Belgium, Saint Papolein, bishop and abbot of Stavelot and of Malmedy-en-Ardennes, who must not be confounded with Saint Babolein, kept the same day. The title of bishop is given to him in a diploma of king Clovis III. Stavelot (*Stabulum, Stabulaus, Stabuletum*) was an abbey of the Order of Saint Benedict, in the diocese of Liège, in the forest of Ardennes, founded about the year 651, by Sigebert II, king of Austrasia, and Saint Bernard, bishop of Maestricht. It was under the invocation of Saint Peter and Saint Remaclus, and was the origin of the town of Stavelot, situated 36 kilometres S. E. of Liège. Malmedy (*Molmundarium*) was likewise a monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict, in the diocese of Cologne (Rhine province), founded also in the forest of Ardennes, under the invocation of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, by the same Sigebert II. These two abbeys, which were called the two twin sisters, were distant a league from one another and had only one and the same head. The latter gave birth to the little town of Malmedy (Rhine province), 37 kilometres S. of Aix-la-Chapelle. About the year 700.

Saint John and Saint Paul, Brothers, Martyrs

362. — Pope: Saint Liberius. — Emperor: Julian the Apostate.

Hos idem sanguis germanos fecit et ortus, et mors eadem melius fecit et una fides.

They were brothers already both by blood and by birth; one same faith, one same death, behold what has put the last seal on this fraternity.

The Abbé C. Martin.

This life is wholly exemplary, and courtiers will find in it a fine lesson of the manner in which they ought to conduct themselves when the court abandons itself to impiety, and God ceases to be served there. These two brothers were Romans, and there is much appearance, although their history does not say so, that they had been brought up, from their childhood, in Christianity. When the emperor Constantine regulated the household of his daughter Constantia, who was a princess of great piety, and who had even made a vow of virginity, to have never any other spouse than Jesus Christ, he gave her these two illustrious brothers for officers: John was her superintendent, and Paul was her first steward. Their virtue shone marvellously in these employments, and rendered them so dear to Constantia, their mistress, and to all the court, that they were regarded there only with much esteem and with a wholly singular veneration.

One thing made known still more how great was their merit, and the credit which they had with God. The Scythians having thrown themselves into Thrace, with a formidable army, which made it feared that they would push their conquests as far as Constantinople, which was then being built with an extraordinary magnificence, the emperor raised troops at once to oppose this invasion; and as he had just recognised, by the defeat of the Persians, that an officer of the name of Gallican had all the qualities that can be desired in a great captain, he made him general of his army. This lord wished to profit by this occasion, and, seeing himself necessary, he put two conditions on the service which was asked of him: first that, if he returned victorious, he should be made consul for the second time, for he had already been so once; then that the princess Constantia should be given him in marriage, that he might have the honour of being the son-in-law of the emperor. Constantine acquiesced easily in the first condition; but, for the second, it gave him much disquiet, because he knew that his daughter had made a vow of virginity, and that she would let herself rather be put to death than transgress it. This holy girl, knowing the pain of her father, and that, in the state in which affairs were, it was very difficult for him to refuse anything to Gallican, came herself to find him, and told him that he should make no difficulty to promise her in marriage to Gallican, if he returned victorious from the war against the Scythians, because she hoped that God would be the protector and the guardian of her chastity; that she asked only that this captain, as a mutual pledge of their affection, should take with him to the war John and Paul, her two faithful officers, and that he should leave near her two daughters whom he had by a first marriage, of whom one was called Attique and the other Artémie.

Things having been arranged as Constantia wished, these two virgins remained near her, and the two holy brothers John and Paul set out with Gallican to go to fight the Barbarians. Then the blessed princess, prostrating herself before the majesty of God, who has all the hearts of men in His hands, prayed Him with great fervour and many sighs to open the eyes of the soul to this general and to his two daughters, who were still enveloped in the errors of paganism, and to give them the grace to recognise Him for the only true God with His only Son Jesus Christ; she addressed herself also to Our Lord, and, representing to Him one after another all the actions of His earthly life, she conjured Him to give to the father and to the daughters, with the light of faith, contempt of the world, love of purity, the desire to please Him only, and constancy in His service.

Her prayer was heard: for, on one side, the conversation which she had with Attique and Artémie was so salutary that they renounced the worship of idols and embraced the profession of chastity with Christianity; and, on the other, Gallican was also converted in the midst of his army, by means of John and Paul, and by a miracle which God wrought to render him victorious. Here is this miracle: As he was on the point of being

entirely destroyed by the Scythians, a part of his troops having already been cut to pieces, and several of his officers having then given themselves up to these Barbarians, John and Paul, who saw him offer in vain victims to the idols to obtain a change of fortune, addressed themselves to him and said to him: “Although all appears desperate, and there is, it seems, no more other means of saving one’s life than by a shameful flight which will draw great evils on the State, we are sure, nevertheless, that if you would promise the God of heaven to make yourself a Christian, and to adore Him as the only Lord of all things, you would gain the victory and make yourself master of your enemies.” Reduced to the last extremity, Gallican listened willingly to this proposal, and made a vow, on the spot, to embrace Christianity, if he returned victorious to the emperor. At that very hour, he saw near him a young man of beautiful stature, who had a cross on his shoulder, who, having ordered him to take his sword and to follow him, led him against the enemies; he saw also around him an army of heavenly soldiers, who, spreading terror on all sides, obliged the Barbarians to lay down their arms, to throw themselves at his feet, to surrender at discretion, to abandon all their spoils, and to offer to withdraw to their country, and to pay perpetually a tribute to the emperor.

A success so happy was followed by the perfect conversion of this general: he returned to Constantine, no longer with the design of taking the consular robe, nor of marrying Constantia, but with the resolution, after his baptism, of withdrawing entirely from the world, and of following the counsels of the Gospel. In effect, it was only against his will that he received the honour of the triumph, and that he was declared consul; and, in his very consulate, he freed five thousand slaves whom he had, and gave them goods to live honourably in the world; he sold also a part of his inheritances, of which he gave the price to the poor. After his consulate, he withdrew to Ostia, where he had a great hospital built, and consecrated himself with Saint Hilarinus to receiving the poor and pilgrims: which caused so great admiration in the world that people came from all sides to have the happiness of seeing this man, so illustrious by his offices and by his triumphs, wash humbly the feet of the poor, make their beds, dress their wounds, serve them at table, and render them all the duties which Christian humility and charity can inspire.

Meanwhile Saint John and Saint Paul, having returned to the court near the holy princess Constantia, continued to exercise there the works of piety and mercy of which they had always made profession; and as they received great emoluments from the liberality of their mistress, they distributed them also with a holy profusion for the subsistence and relief of the poor. After the death of Constantine, they remained in the service of his children, and were always in the number of their principal officers, although Constantia was also deceased; but when Julian the Apostate had mounted the throne, seeing that this prince had quitted Christianity to return to the infamous worship of idols, and that he laboured even to re-establish it in all the empire, they renounced all their offices and the rank which they held in the State, and withdrew into private life, not willing to have any commerce with this emperor, who had abandoned his God to offer sacrifices to the demon.

Julian was no less thirsty for the treasures than for the blood of the Christians; he had them despoiled on all sides of their goods, saying in raillery that, “since the Gospel taught them that one must make oneself poor to become perfect, it was rendering them a signal service to take from them this impediment to their perfection.” Proposing to enrich some of his favourites with the spoils of our two holy brothers, he ordered Térentien, captain of one of the companies of his guards, to go to see them and tell them on his part that, his design being to honour the old officers of his predecessors, he wished that they should come to him to hold at court the same rank which they had held there under Constantine and under his children. John and Paul answered that there was much difference between these emperors and Julian; that these great princes made profession of being servants of Jesus Christ, and that, coming to church, they adored Him with knees on the ground, after having laid aside their crown and their diadem; but that as for Julian, he was an apostate and an impious man, who, having been baptised in the Catholic Church, had since abandoned the true religion; that thus they could not render him the honour and respect which they had rendered their first masters; but, on the

contrary, they detested him, and had resolved to have no communication with him. Térentien made known this answer to Julian, who, inflamed with anger, had them told “that he had expected that they would honour him as their emperor, but that, since they had the hardiness to despise him, he would know well how to take vengeance; that he gave them however yet ten days to deliberate on what they had to do, and that if, this term passed, they did not return to their duty, he would punish them according to their desert.” The blessed brothers replied to this second message that “Julian would have reason to complain of them if they had preferred to him any other mortal person; but that it was wrongly that he complained that they had preferred to him the immortal King and Creator of heaven and earth; that for the rest they had no need of ten days to deliberate on this subject, that their deliberation was already made and their resolution taken, and that one might already regard these ten days as expired, because nothing in the world would be capable of making them renounce the religion of the true God, in which they hoped to gain eternal life.”

They were left nevertheless ten days in repose, and these Saints made advantageous use of this delay, not to hide nor to take flight, but to prepare themselves for martyrdom by all sorts of works of charity and of religion. They sold what they could of their goods, and distributed to the poor not only the money which they received for them, but also all that they had of garments and precious furniture; they passed a great part of this time either in prayer, or in strengthening the faithful and encouraging them to suffer generously martyrdom for Jesus Christ. At last, the term being expired, Térentien came to find them again in their house, bringing with him a little idol of Jupiter, to oblige them to adore it. He found them in prayer, and awaiting only the hour to give their life for the truth. He told them nevertheless that he came a last time to solicit them to obey the emperor; that he did not ask them to come publicly into the temples to offer sacrifices there to the ancient divinities of the empire; but all that he wished from them, to save their goods, their honour and their life, was that they should prostrate themselves before this image and adore before it the great Jupiter. “God forbid,” answered the holy Martyrs, “that we should adore a demon! Julian may command us things purely temporal for the good of the State and of his person; but when he commands us to adore simulacra or men who have been vicious and impious, or demons, we no longer recognise him for lord and for master, and we have reason to refuse him obedience; in a word, we have no other God than the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, who are one only God in three persons.” Térentien, seeing that he could not shake the invincible courage of these blessed brothers, had a pit made in their garden, and, at the third hour of the night, had them beheaded in his presence and buried secretly in the pit which had been dug for them.

Afterwards, fearing that this execution might excite a sedition in Rome, he caused the rumour to run that John and Paul had been sent into exile; but whatever diligence he made, he could not hide their martyrdom; for the demons who were in the bodies of the possessed, published it on all sides and confessed even that they were tormented by their merits. But what rendered it more celebrated was that the son of Térentien, this cruel executor of the unjust sentence of Julian, was also possessed by a horrible demon, and could be delivered from it only after his father had long prayed and wept at the tomb of the holy Martyrs. The favour which he obtained by their intercession was the cause that he was converted with all his family, and wrote the his tory which we have just reported.

Saint Gallican, of whom we have spoken, was not treated with less inhumanity than Saint John and Saint Paul. Julian, not being able to suffer the acts of charity and mercy which he exercised towards the poor, the pilgrims and the sick, and which were at the same time the proof of the holiness and truth of our religion, and the condemnation of idolatry, commanded his officers to seize four fair estates which he had assigned to the subsistence of his hospital. They sent at once men to seize them; but God showed, by a great miracle, that the inheritances given to the poor are under His special protection: for all those who went there with this design were struck with leprosy and cruelly tormented by the demon. Julian being informed of it, and having learned from the demon himself that these lands could never be pillaged unless Gallican had sacrificed to the gods, sent him an order, either to adore the idols, or to quit Italy. The Saint chose this latter course and withdrew to

Alexandria, where he continued to aid with all his power the faithful, as well for the spiritual as for the temporal. At last, this admirable man, who had refused the alliance of Constantine, which could have given him an opening to the empire, in order to serve Jesus Christ in His members, and who, afterwards, had again refused the bishopric of Ostia which he was begged very earnestly to accept, was put to death for the faith, by the judge Raucien, in a solitude to which he had withdrawn. His memory is marked in the martyrology on 25 June, as that of Saint John and Saint Paul on the 26th, in the year 362.

Saint John and Saint Paul are represented: 1° as men of war, because they had served at court; for who said noble then, said man of the sword; 2° with a sword at their side, to indicate the beheading. They are invoked against thunderbolts and storms: prints of the 18th century bear witness to it; but we have not been able to discover anywhere the motive of this patronage.

Worship and Relics

The memory of these two illustrious Martyrs was so celebrated at Rome that a church was built there in their honour near that of Saint Peter; a monastery was also founded there under their name. There is still one to-day, which is built on the site of the house of the two Saints and served by the Passionist Fathers. In the nave of this church one sees a little space surrounded by a grating; it is there that Saint John and Saint Paul were beheaded. In England, their feast was formerly of the number of those which were called of the third class, that is to say of those on which there was obligation to hear Mass before work; which is proved by a constitution of the council held at Oxford in 1222.

The names of Saint John and of Saint Paul have always been very celebrated in the Church since the 5th century. The brightness of their miracles spread far, and Saint Gregory of Tours, who wrote in the second half of the 6th century, spoke of them already as being renowned in France by their relics which were sought from all parts. Saint Hilary had a church built at Poitiers under the invocation of Saint John and Saint Paul, where he wished to be buried. This sanctuary having been ruined by the Barbarians, covered with its debris the crypt where Saint Hilary reposed. When these ruins had been raised up again by Saint Fridolin, and the name of Saint Hilary had consecrated the new basilica, the Church of Poitiers would not leave without honour the glorious names of the holy Martyrs whom she had adopted before any other, and it was from then on established that on the day when the feast of the Translation of Saint Hilary was made each year, there should be added to his office a prayer in memory of Saint John and Saint Paul. We have completed this biography with the *Lives of the Saints of the Church of Poitiers*, by M. the Abbé Auber; Godescard, etc.

Saint Maxentius or Maixent, Abbot of the Monastery of that Name, in the Diocese of Poitiers

515. — Pope: Hormisdas. — King of France: Childebert I.

Studet verus abbas ut sicut major est auctoritate, ita quoque excellentior fiat virtute.

He who is truly abbot applies himself to become the first by virtue as he is the first by authority.

Joan. Trith., in Regul. S. Bened.

Adjutor, named also Maxentius and vulgarly Maixent, was born at Agde[1] in Narbonese Gaul, of a noble family, about the year 448. His parents, who had piety, put him under the conduct of the holy abbot Severus. His progress made him remarked and excited the admiration of some and the jealousy of others. But the applause, more than the contempt of the world, made him take the path of retreat. He sheltered his humility there for two years, after which, obliged to return among his own, he seemed to bring back the abundance of which they were deprived for lack of rain. This was a new motive to honour him as an angel descended from heaven, and as the renown of his holiness grew ever, he went out a second time from his country, and went to Poitou, with the intention of hiding his life from the world. After having prayed at the tomb of Saint Hilary,

he went to find the venerable priest Agapitus who, on the banks of the Sèvre Niortaise, twelve leagues from Poitiers, in a great valley known under the name of Vauclair, directed in the ways of holiness some servants of God.

Agapitus received him with kindness and admitted him to the number of his disciples. To forget as much as possible his country, his family and even himself, he changed his name of Adjutor to that of Maxentius. His holiness shone soon in the eyes of his brethren, so much that these, with Agapitus, elected him for their abbot, by common consent (about 500). He ate only barley bread, and drank only water; he was so assiduous in prayer that his body remained bent by it, and that his knees became callous. The miracles which he wrought during his life and after his death show well enough how agreeable his conduct was to God.

During the war which Clovis, king of the Franks, was making on Alaric, king of the Visigoths, a troop of soldiers advanced as far as near the monastery. The frightened religious begged their abbot to snatch them from the sword of the barbarians. Maxentius advanced boldly toward the soldiers, and as one of them was already raising his sword to strike off the head of this monk whom he saw before him, suddenly his arm became stiff and remained motionless, drawn back behind the ear. Then the soldier threw himself at the feet of the Saint, and implored his pardon. Maixent blessed some oil with which he anointed the afflicted arm, and cured it perfectly. He received numerous benefits from king Clovis. He died a septuagenarian in the monastery which has since borne his name and which his miracles have rendered illustrious, in the year 515. It was an abbey of the Order of Saint Benedict. He was buried in the church of Saint Saturninus, under the title of which his monastery was built. This, then of little consideration, took afterwards enough development to become one of the first of the diocese of Poitiers. It is around these venerated walls and the church into which were carried, about 940, the sacred remains of the holy Confessor, that was formed the present town of Saint-Maixent (Deux-Sèvres).

In 1562, the Protestants dispersed the precious relics of the man of God; what could be found of them after their departure did not escape the revolutionaries of ’93, and the tomb of the Saint, remained under the high altar of the church become parochial, contains no more than a very slight portion of himself.

The Roman martyrology indicates the feast of Saint Maixent on 26 June, but the church of Poitiers anticipates it on the preceding day, the 26th being consecrated to celebrating the translation of the relics of Saint Hilary.

He is represented having a dove above his head, which may signify a divine intervention in the words of the Saint. He is also painted in prayer in his cell, and surrounded by birds which come to visit him.

Proper of Poitiers. — Cf. Lives of the Saints of the Church of Poitiers, by the Abbé Auber.

Saints Saulve and Super, his Companion, Martyred at Beuvrage, near Valenciennes

168. — Pope: Stephen III. — Kings of France: Charlemagne and Carloman.

Martyr morte vitam condemnat, ut vitam morte custodiat.

The martyr condemns life by death, in order that death may preserve life to him.

S. Cyprian., de Laude martyr.

Saulve, born at Abbie, in Aquitaine, of an illustrious family, gave, from his tender age, unequivocal marks of his future holiness, made solid studies and instructed himself in the divine and human letters. He entered into sacred Orders, and, by favour of his knowledge and his virtues, mounted rapidly the degrees of the holy hierarchy, and was at last created bishop of Angoulême. He governed this Church, during several years, with as much fruit as wisdom, for he brought a great number of men to the knowledge of the truth. But his zeal

feeling itself cramped within the limits of his diocese, he set out with Super, his companion, to go to evangelise the different parts of Gaul. He arrived at Valenciennes, in Flanders, converted a great number of infidels, and strengthened in the faith and love of Christ numerous neophytes.

It is to these fruits of salvation that must be attributed above all the particular devotion which at all times the inhabitants of this city have preserved for this holy Bishop, whom they regard as their apostle and their patron. One day when he was going, with his companion, from Valenciennes to Condé, the two travellers crossed a village, named at that epoch Braine or Brena, and which has since taken the name of Saint-Saulve.[1] Saulve spoke with effusion to his disciple of the miracles wrought near the tomb of Saint Martin, who had in this place a church dedicated under his invocation: “Let us go also, my brother,” he said to him, “to pray on his tomb and to invoke his help.” They went there, in effect, and passed all the night there in chanting psalms and canticles.

When the day had appeared, the people having learned that the holy and celebrated Bishop was in these countries, ran in crowds to hear him preach. The missionary then put on his pontifical vestments, mounted into the pulpit and announced to the assembled crowd the word of God; then he offered the holy sacrifice of the Mass and gave the people his blessing.

The office finished, Génard, the steward of the province, came to beg the servant of God to accept some nourishment in his house. Saulve having accepted the invitation, betook himself with his companion to the house of the steward, where he found also Winegard, the son of this functionary, a young man given to the most criminal passions. The bishop had with him sacred vessels and ornaments of the church, made of precious materials, not through love of luxury, but for the glory of God and for the honour of divine service. Winegard, having seen these objects, conceived a violent desire to seize them, and to execute his criminal project, he informed himself of the road which the bishop was to follow.

The latter, having set out again with his disciple, arrived in a mountainous and wild country, watered by a river. He had the intention to go to a monastery which was as if lost in these mountains, and near which there was a church dedicated to the holy Virgin. There, Winegard awaited him with his accomplices; and Saulve having come, he advanced toward him, and asked him with a feigned respect where he was going. The bishop answered: “I go to the convent of Sainte-Marie, if God wills it.” Winegard resumed: “I have just had a church built on my lands; please have the goodness to come to consecrate it.” Saulve, enlightened from on high and suspecting a snare, refused to follow Winegard, and began to walk faster with his companion. Then the bandit gave order to his people to arrest the two travellers, and to take from them their baggage. Winegard was a perverse and impious man: he proved it well on this occasion. The chalice and the paten, taken from Saulve, were converted into gilding with which he adorned the saddle of his horse; the pontifical vestments, of cloth of gold, were carried off to his house. As for the bishop, he had him cast into a gloomy prison, as well as his companion. This dungeon was in the fortress of Beuvrage (*Brevithum*), one of the properties of his father, situated four kilometres from Valenciennes.

After this odious act, the scoundrel went to find his father, and related to him all that had passed. The latter cried: “What have you done? How could you ill-treat in this manner a servant of God, who had come to teach us the way of truth and of salvation? Who could counsel you such a crime? We are ourselves sinners; our fathers were so also; must you have added to their sins yet this great iniquity? Must it be that, by your fault, the blood of a just man should weigh on our descendants, to the third and the fourth generation?” Winegard answered: “What would you have me do now, my father? Would you have me set him at liberty, or keep him in prison?” His father replied: “Above all he must not be killed: this project displeases me sovereignly. All that I can tell you is that if you set him at liberty, you will be unhappy all your life; if on the contrary you kill him, you will charge your conscience with a great crime.”

Winegard, going out from his father's, went to find his accomplices, to deliberate with them on what was to be done; and after having heard their advice, he went in again to his house. At once he has all the issues closed, calls his gaoler Winegaire and orders him to go immediately to cut off the head of Saulve and of his companion. Winegaire, although with regret, makes ready to execute this barbarous order. He finds the bishop on his knees on the damp and foul floor of the dungeon, praying God with fervour. Moved at this sight, he makes known to the Saint, trembling, the cruel order which he has just received from his master. The bishop, hearing this fatal news, answers calmly that he is ready and that the order received may be executed. Then Winegaire, throwing himself at the feet of the Saint, says to him in a voice choked with sobs: "O holy man! I am in a great pain and in a cruel embarrassment! I see in you an angel of God. How unhappy I am to have to execute on you such a crime! To save you, to save your friend, and at the same time to dispense myself from this horrible crime which I must commit on you, I see only one means: it is that you and your companion should take flight with me during this night." Saint Saulve answered him: "O my son, I cannot believe what you say: doubtless you wish to deceive me. How should your master be wicked enough to order such a crime?" The gaoler answered: "O man of God, I take to witness the Master of heaven and earth of the truth of all that I have just told you. I beseech you, believe me and do what I counsel you, that you may be saved, with the help of God. Let us flee together, and I shall serve you faithfully all the rest of my life." The holy Bishop replied: "My son, it is not permitted us to withdraw ourselves from martyrdom, and to renounce thus the rewards which Jesus Christ has promised to those who suffer and die for Him." — "My venerable father," resumed the gaoler, "I know that Jesus Christ reserves a crown for you; but I cannot execute the tyrannical order of my master. My heart is in sadness and in terror, and it seems to me that these walls are going to crumble to crush me under their ruins." Saint Saulve said to him: "My son, be without fear. If your master gives you an order, you must execute it, according to these words of the Apostle: Servants, obey your masters, in the fear of the Lord, not only those who are good, but also the wicked!"

The gaoler was making ready to answer, when Winegard, thinking that all was finished, summoned him to his presence, and said to him: "Hast thou done what I ordered thee?" Winegaire answered: "May Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and our Saviour, grant that you may see and understand the great holiness of this man of God! You had ordered me to go to kill your two prisoners, Saulve and his companion. But I had scarcely opened the door of the dungeon when I was seized with a great fright; and when I found myself in presence of the man of God, I was troubled and overthrown in my mind, to the point that I fell at his feet as if fainting, and that I thought the earth was going to open to devour me." Winegard repressed a movement of violent anger; then he went to find his friends and said to them in a low voice: "This wretch has no courage. Let one of you go with him to this magician whose honeyed words have fascinated him. Perhaps then he will have the boldness to do what I will." Then, turning toward Winegaire, he said to him: "Go now; and return not until thou hast executed my orders!"

Winegaire, accompanied by a friend of his master, returned therefore to the dungeon. When they arrived there, and found Saulve awaiting death resolutely, they both hesitated. As for the companion of the bishop, he had left him for a moment. Saint Saulve was seated on a wooden seat; then the gaoler's companion said to him: "What are you waiting for still? Why do you not execute the order of your master?" The gaoler seized the axe to strike; but as he trembled in all his limbs, it was impossible for him to deliver the blow. Then the Saint said to him: "Hesitate no more, my son: do what has been ordered you." In saying this, Saulve had uncovered the nape of his neck, and he bent his head on his breast. Then at last Winegaire gave him the death blow. During this time, the disciple of Saint Saulve was in another part of the prison. Having heard the stroke of the axe, and the noise which the head made in rolling on the ground, he cried: "Lord Jesus, have pity on me!" Immediately after, the gaoler-executioner went to behead him also. Thus died together, by the death of martyrs, Saint Saulve and his companion, on 26 June of the year 768, by the orders of Winegard.

Winegard having had a hole made in a stable, had the two bloodstained corpses carried there. That of Saint Saulve was thrown first into the earth and that of his disciple was placed above it. It is this circumstance which has caused this personage, whose name the historians have not known, to be called Super. A strange fact then came to awaken the curiosity of the inhabitants of the country: a bull of the said stable constantly drove back the other animals from the place where the two holy bodies were and did not permit it to be soiled. After researches made by the ministers of Charles Martel, a punishment was inflicted on the murderers, and the two holy bodies were carried to Valenciennes, and transferred since to Brena, now Saint-Saulve, where Charlemagne had built, in memory of this martyrdom, a church dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul, to give burial there to the body of the holy Prelate.

Our holy Martyrs are represented in a hole made in a stable; oxen turn their eyes toward the pit, and a prince has it opened.

Worship and Relics

The worship of Saint Saulve has always been celebrated in the country of Valenciennes. There was seen formerly at the monastery of Liessies (Nord, diocese of Cambrai), a vertebra and a bone of Saint Super. It appears also that the cathedral of Arras possessed a relic of Saint Saulve. There is, in the duchy of Jülich (Rhine province), in the fortress of Limburg, a church dedicated to this holy bishop, and where he is venerated as patron. In 1282, Raoul, prior of Saint-Saulve, enshrined the holy bodies in a case of gilt silver.

Formerly, in the church of the ancient monastery of Saint-Saulve, a great concourse of people was made, to ask of God the preservation or the cure of cattle by the intercession of the two Martyrs. Each year still, in our days, a great number of pilgrims visit the church of this parish. Some particles of the relics of Saint Saulve are preserved there, escaped from the revolutionary fury.

Proper of Cambrai. — Cf. the Lives of the Saints, by Alban Stolz, doctor in theology; and the Lives of the Saints of the dioceses of Cambrai and Arras, by M. the Abbé Destombes, honorary canon of Cambrai.

Saint Anthelm, 7th General of the Carthusians and 46th Bishop of Belley

1106–1178. — Popes: Paschal II; Alexander III. — Kings of France: Philip I; Louis VII.

Felices illi qui familiaritatem mundi recusant, perfunctoria gaudia spernunt, societatem abjiciunt, ne cum pereunte deceptore et ipsi perire cogantur.

Happy those who reject the familiarity of the world, despise its so passing joys and flee its society, lest this deceitful world, in perishing, should drag them irresistibly into its ruin.

S. Aug., in Medit., cap. xxi

This Saint offers himself to us with a threefold glory: he renounced all temporal advantages; he strengthened a nascent Order, which was to multiply; he contributed powerfully to prevent a schism in the Church. Anthelm was born at the castle of Chignin, of which one still admires the ruins at two leagues from Chambéry. He had for father Hardouin, gentleman of Savoy, of the ancient house of Migain, and for mother a lady of a birth no less illustrious. He received in his youth all the instructions suitable to his age and his rank; so he made great progress in virtue as well as in the sciences; he was soon judged capable of possessing some dignities in the Church; two bishops disputed him, so to speak, and strove to attach him to their church: he was named sacristan of the cathedral of Belley, the principal dignity of this church, and provost of the chapter of Geneva.

Anthelm fixed his residence at Belley, where he employed the revenues of his rich patrimony and of his benefices in treating liberally his numerous friends, in receiving strangers, in succouring the poor.

Although our Saint led a regular life, edifying even, he reflected that he did not do enough for God nor for his soul. The priesthood which he received in 1135, the examples of the neighbouring religious whom he visited often since 1132, inspired him more and more with the desire of perfection. Having one day gone to visit, with one of his friends, the Carthusians of the monastery of Portes, the Prior, named Bernard of Varin, a religious of great virtue, received them with much benevolence, and spoke to them so opportunely and with so much zeal of the advantages of the solitary life and of the rewards which God grants to those who have lived holily, that Anthelm, whose heart was already disposed to receive the good seed, found himself very lively touched. Inspired of God, he formed the design to quit the world, and all that he possessed, and to become a religious in the house where he saw such fair examples of virtue: he asked its habit, embraced the Rule of Saint Bruno, made profession, with a zeal which edified everyone, and was soon regarded as a model of great perfection.

The extraordinary virtues which appeared in Anthelm caused him to be desired by the religious of the Grande-Chartreuse, where there were then very few subjects. Six monks and novices had just been killed by an avalanche, which had almost entirely destroyed the Grande-Chartreuse; this it is which led Hugh, bishop of Grenoble, and afterwards archbishop of Vienne, who had laboured with Saint Bruno at the institution of this Order, to pray the superior of Portes to send there our young professed, a short time after having pronounced his vows. He did what obedience required of him: he passed several years in this house, showing himself there a living example of all the monastic virtues. As he had a great extent of mind and much penetration in affairs, he was established procurator of the house; he fulfilled the duties of this office with a vigilance and an edification which made him admired by everyone, working at temporal affairs in such a manner that his cares prejudiced in nothing the spiritual affairs of his salvation and of his perfection.

Hugh I, who had succeeded the blessed Dom Guigue, in the charge of prior, in 1139, resigned voluntarily the same year and desired to be replaced by Anthelm, who was in effect elected seventh prior of the Grande-Chartreuse.

This obedient solitary, not having been able to find the means of withdrawing from a charge so heavy, began to acquit himself of his office with all the vigilance that could be expected from him.

He restored first the ruins of the monastery, surrounded it with an enclosing wall, had aqueducts made to bring water to it from very far, had woods cleared and took great care of the farms, the sheepfolds and all that depended on this community. Then, turning to the spiritual side, he showed so great a firmness in the government of the monastery that all the other houses of the Order, having knowledge of it, responded beforehand to his just intentions, reforming all that there might be of disorder, without awaiting the time of the visits of this worthy superior; so that he had soon the consolation of seeing everywhere the establishment of a very exact regularity. One submitted the more willingly to the laws of his government that one was persuaded that he was besides filled with a very great kindness for all his subjects, whom he regarded as his children; in effect, he provided with a truly paternal care for all their corporal needs and for all that could give them pleasure, without prejudice to the interests of their perfection: which drew to him the confidence and the love of all his religious.

It was under him that the Order of the Carthusians spread in France and abroad with so much rapidity. He founded new houses; he made all adopt the statutes drawn up by the blessed Dom Guigue. Until then the Charterhouses had been independent of one another, and subject to the diocesan bishops. Anthelm assembled a general chapter which was the first of the Order and where all the priors met: that of the Grande-Chartreuse was recognised for head of the other houses. One may therefore regard our Saint as the first general of the Carthusians, although he is the seventh prior of the Charterhouse of Grenoble.

Solicited by holy women, who wished to live in community under the Rule of Saint Bruno, Anthelm charged the blessed John the Spaniard to draw up statutes for them. Such was the origin of the Carthusian nuns,

whose fervour was sustained until the revolution of 1792.

The reputation of the high wisdom of this great man spread everywhere, and people came from all sides to consult him. He made thereby many conquests for Jesus Christ: he had the consolation of counting in this number his father, one of his brothers, who had made a name in the Holy Land among the Crusaders, and the illustrious William, count of Nivernais. All three quitted the secular habit, trampling under foot the interests of earth, to follow him into the desert; his other brother had preceded him himself to the Charterhouse. The abbots and the bishops, as well as persons of less distinction, took pleasure in receiving and following his counsels; he gave them in full liberty, and, making acceptance of no person, he reproached boldly to each the vices of which he knew that he was accused. This manner of acting and speaking with firmness, which made the principal character of his mind, raised up great enemies against him: some of his religious were of this number and accused him before Pope Eugene III; but the great Saint Bernard took his defence, and his innocence was recognised. But these troubles made our Saint regret more than ever the sweetness and the spiritual security of a simple religious. He resigned the generalship in 1152, after twelve years of a painful and glorious administration.

Anthelm having retired, believed that he would long enjoy the happiness of private life; but God, who destined him as a torch to enlighten others, soon made him come out of his retreat, by inspiring his superiors to give him the government of the monastery of Portes, in the place of Dom Bernard, who was leaving it; obedience alone made him accept this new burden. He took therefore knowledge of the state of affairs; and, having found rather large sums of money, and abundance of grain and provisions, he began by making distributions of them to the poor and to the religious houses which were in need, and re-established this house in the first spirit of poverty which was fitting to his Order. In the famine which desolated Bugey at this epoch, this new Joseph saved the country by distributions of corn which God multiplied in his hands. He lived two years in this monastery, in the exercise of all the religious virtues, showing in his person a perfect model of perfection, exercising himself in the severest practices of the mortification of cloisters: he joined to it a continual prayer, in which he drew those sublime knowledges and those rich counsels which he distributed to those who came to ask him means to save themselves. At the end of two years, Anthelm obtained to be discharged of his dignity, and returned to his ancient cell of the Grande-Chartreuse (1155). He enjoyed there the sweetness of contemplation, when he found himself constrained to give his cares and his counsels for the interests of the Church, in the great affair of the schism which arose, in the year 1159, when Alexander III, having been elected pope by legitimate ways, the antipope Octavian established himself by violence on the see of Saint Peter, under the name of Victor III, and wished to submit the Roman Church to the tyranny of the emperor Frederick Barbarossa. This schism having divided almost all the West, Anthelm, whose knowledge and merit were known, being solicited to intervene in this great affair, and to maintain the good right of the true Pope, employed himself in it with all his strength. He associated with himself therefore a religious named Geoffrey, abbot of Hautecombe, of the Order of Cîteaux, who was very learned and very eloquent; they laboured together to maintain Alexander in his rights, and, by their cares, all the Order of the Carthusians, the religious of Cîteaux, and, after their example, an infinity of others, recognised Alexander for sovereign Pontiff. The threats of the emperor Frederick against Anthelm, whom he knew to be contrary to him, made not at all change this intrepid defender of the good party; so that there were seen in a short time France, Spain and England declare openly for the legitimate Pope: which caused a general joy and a peace which had been desired for long in the Church.

The happy success of the negotiation of Anthelm, in the destruction of the schism of which we have just spoken, only increased the esteem which everyone had already conceived for his wisdom and his great capacity; so that the episcopal see of the city of Belley having become vacant, and being disputed by two competitors whom it was believed equally unworthy of it, Pope Alexander, at the solicitation of the wisest of the clergy of this diocese, named Anthelm. Our holy Carthusian, who then tasted, in the retreat of his cell, all

the delights which a true solitary has for portion, having been warned of what was passing and of his nomination to the episcopate, believed, to avoid this high dignity, that the surest for him was to flee and to go to hide: this he did, rather than await the deputies who were to come to announce to him the news of his elevation.

He was sought everywhere: he was found at last, and the necessity was shown him in which he was to obey his superiors, and above all the sovereign Pontiff, who had named him to fill the episcopal see of the church of Belley; but this humble religious, believing in no wise that he had the qualities necessary to sustain the weight of this dignity, could not acquiesce in the reasons which were set before him; they obtained only from him that he would go to set forth his motives to the sovereign Pontiff: which he did, but without success, since the Pope, having listened to and weighed all the difficulties, ordered him to submit and to accept the episcopate, and wished to consecrate him himself on the day of the Nativity of the holy Virgin, in the year 1163.

Anthelm, having recognised the order of God in the express will of the vicar of Jesus Christ, betook himself to his church of Belley, where he was received with general applause. He applied himself to the functions of a true pastor with all the vigilance and all the vigour of which he was capable. Before working to reform the disorders of his people, he judged that it was necessary to begin by examining the morals of all those who composed his clergy; he used first ways of gentleness, to bring back to their duty those who had strayed from it; but, having remarked that some of these priests, abusing his too great kindness, neglected to profit by his charitable warnings, he deprived five or six of all the sacerdotal functions, and thus brought them back to their duty, as well as many others, who profited by the just severity of this worthy pastor.

Having thus put order in the house of God, he felt more strength to judge his people; he recognised first its disorders, he preached against public vices and made wise secret corrections to those whose disorders were not known to all the world. He had a particular care of the poor, of the widows and of the or phans: he sustained their interests with ardour against those who abused their authority to oppress them. Although he was a friend of peace, and willingly yielded what he could abandon without wounding his conscience, he knew nevertheless how to preserve the rights of the Church and of his dignity, when he judged it necessary. He had just received two great marks of consideration. Pope Alexander III had entrusted to him, in 1169, the mission to go to England to put an end to the long debates which divided king Henry II and the archbishop Thomas of Canterbury; on another side, the emperor of Germany, Frederick Barbarossa, rendering justice to the merit of Anthelm, who had firmly resisted him in favour of the legitimate Pope, gave him by golden bulls,[1] dated 24 March 1175, with the title of prince of the Holy Empire, very extensive privileges;[2] he invested him with the sovereignty of the city of Belley and of its dependencies. Humbert III, prince of Savoy, on whom Bugey depended, did not see these privileges without jealousy: he violated them by causing a priest of the diocese of Belley to be imprisoned. Anthelm having claimed him in vain, had him set at liberty by William, bishop of Saint-Jean de Maurienne; but this unhappy priest was soon after assassinated by the people of the provost of prince Humbert. Anthelm had then recourse to the sword of anathema. Humbert, excommunicated, appealed to Rome, and, by dint of instances and false reports, obtained absolution from the Holy See. Then triumphant, he continued his vexations; to escape them, this holy bishop withdrew to the Grande-Chartreuse: but his people, inconsolable at this departure, obtained from the Pope letters which obliged Anthelm to return. Humbert having since threatened to bring him before a secular tribunal, our Saint contented himself with citing him to the tribunal of Jesus Christ; the count dared not expose himself to the issue of such a judgment. Seized with fear, bathed in tears, he comes to throw himself at the feet of the holy prelate who was ill, promises by oath to repair his wrongs, to be henceforth the protector of his Church, and ends by obtaining a pardon which was accompanied by a particular blessing for him and his family. The Saint, at this moment, wished him and announced to him a son; and, in effect, prince Humbert, afflicted at having only a daughter, was not long in rejoicing at the birth of a future successor, who reigned after him

under the name of Thomas I.

If this vigilant pastor watched with so much exactness over his flock, he failed not to have also always a great care of his own salvation, and as soon as he had a few days of leisure, he returned to the Grande-Chartreuse where he led with pleasure the life of a simple religious; he gave also excellent advice to maintain effectively the observance of the Rules of his Order, for which he preserved all his life a particular esteem and inclination. His historians remark on this subject that, when he made the visitation of his diocese, he visited also with great joy the houses of the Carthusians, to encourage those who inhabited them to persevere in the practice of silence, of prayer, of mortification and of the other virtues suitable to the life of solitaries.

But he acquitted himself above all of the essential duties which attached him to the Church entrusted to his care; he renewed therefore his zeal for his flock towards the end of his life. The poor, and above all those who appeared to him the most destitute of help, were the first objects of his vigilance and of his charity; he had nothing which was not theirs, and, reserving for himself only the pure necessary, he had distributed to them all that remained to him. There were in his diocese two houses among others which were very dear to him: the one where were found a great number of widows and virgins, who, having withdrawn from the world, led the solitary life in a place called Bons, near Belley, and the other was a house of lepers, which the blessed Guigue had established.[3] Our Saint forgot nothing to sustain these two houses and to provide for the things necessary to the subsistence of those who dwelt there.

The zeal with which Anthelm, at a very advanced age, sustained so many fatigues in the midst of so many other solicitudes, was admired as a prodigy with which heaven favoured his sheep, rather than the Saint himself, since so long a life was all employed in the cares of the tenderest charity.

However God willed to grant him the crown promised to “the faithful and prudent steward whom he has set over his family to distribute to each his measure of wheat in due season.”

The year 1178 was for Bugey a year of dearth and misery. Anthelm was occupied in distributing provisions to the unhappy inhabitants of all the neighbouring countries, when the sovereign Judge came to visit him in an illness from which he was not to recover. “Blessed the servant whom his master, at his coming, finds acting thus!”

A burning fever seized our Saint in his episcopal city, and the violence of the disease led him promptly to the gates of death; he saw it approach like a deliverer who was going to render him to his true country. He alone, at this moment, kept calm. His chapter, his friends, the notables of the city, his domestics melted in tears around his bed, while he blessed them. They wept not only his death, since it was to lead him to a better life, but it cost them to separate from this virtuous prelate, from this good master. He refused to make his testament, because, he said, a religious possesses nothing of his own, a bishop is only the dispenser of the goods of his Church. He could not therefore dispose of them at the moment when death comes to take from him the administration of them. Like the beloved disciple, he exhorted the persons who surrounded him to live in great charity, and to remain always united by the bonds of peace; finally, he rendered his soul to God in the midst of the litanies and the prayers which were recited near his bed, and went, on 26 June 1178, to receive the crown of immortality which he had so justly merited. He was aged seventy-two years, of which he had passed more than thirty in the cloister and fifteen in the episcopate. The mourning was general in the diocese of Belley; everyone wept as if he had lost his father.

While the city of Belley is plunged in this deep grief, the body of the Saint is clothed with the habit of Carthusian which he always wore; and adorned with the mitre, the pastoral cross, the ring, the pastoral staff, it remains several days exposed to the looks of the public; then it is placed in a tomb prepared at the entrance of the choir of the cathedral, under the crucifix. At this moment all arms envelop this bier where reposes the object of the tender veneration of the great of the earth, of the rich, of the poor, of the old, of the young. One rushes upon this sacred deposit; one applies to it objects of devotion, linens which are preserved preciously.

Mothers bend their children over this wood which one fears to see disappear, and each withdraws in the shuddering and the sobs which extreme calamities excite.

To calm so many regrets, God warns miraculously the city of Belley that it has a protector in heaven.

At the moment when they were preparing to lower the body of Saint Anthelm into the monument, one of the three lamps placed in front of the crucifix as symbol of the adorable Trinity, and which was lighted only on great feasts, shone spontaneously with a lively brightness. All the spectators, astonished, considered it with attention. At the same instant, the other two were also lighted miraculously, and threw a dazzling and supernatural light. This fact is attested by contemporary authors, who all agree in the manner of relating it.

The inhabitants of Belley had this inscription placed near the tomb of their so regretted bishop and of their protector:

Deo optimo, maximo, B. Anthelmo thaumaturgo, libertatis ecclesiasticæ strenuo vindici, Cartusiæ majoris VII priori, totiusque ordinis item VII generali præposito, sacri imperii principi, civitatis Bellicii XLVI præsuli, primo dynastæ et tutelari pientissimo, cives Bellicenses, illius devotissimi clientuli D. D.

Hactenus illæsum per bella, incendia, pestes, Bellicium hoc, Anthelme, tibi debere fatetur; Et ne nulla tibi referatur gratia posthac, Urbs tua perpetuos voto tibi sacrat honores.

To God most good, most great, to the B. Anthelm the Thaumaturge, zealous defender of the liberties of the Church, seventh prior and seventh general of the Carthusians, prince of the Holy Empire, forty-sixth bishop, first lord and zealous protector of Belley; the citizens of this city, his devoted clients, have raised this monument to him.

"If Belley exists after wars, fires and pestilences, it avows, Anthelm, that it owes it to your protection; but in order that posterity may never lose the remembrance of so great a benefit, your city proclaims for ever your worship by a solemn vow." At that epoch the voice of the people and the consent of the bishops sufficed to canonise a Saint. The ceremony consisted in adorning his tomb, in raising it a little from the earth to expose the relics better to the veneration of the faithful, as was done then for the holy bishop of Belley. The rules established by Pope Alexander III on the canonisation of Saints were regularly observed in France only some time after. Saint Anthelm is represented: 1° having above his head a lamp lighted by a heavenly hand; 2° carrying in his hand the book of the office of the holy Virgin, and receiving through the intermediary of Saint Peter the indication of the order to be followed in the recitation of this office; 3° having at his feet the count Humbert of Belley, excommunicated by our Saint for having attempted against the immunities of the Church.

Worship and Relics

As soon as the body of Saint Anthelm had been placed in the cathedral church of Belley, the faithful ceased not to come to his tomb to solicit favours, and returned always publishing some miracle obtained by his mediation.

More than four hundred years after his death, one of his successors, John of Passelaigue, yielding to the desire of the Carthusians and of all the diocese of Belley, at the same time as to his own devotion, resolved to declare protector of the city and of the diocese of Belley the holy bishop, already placed in the martyrology of this diocese. On 26 June 1630, they proceeded to the recognition of the holy relics, in presence of the crowd come running to contemplate this worthy object of its tender veneration. A cry of joy, followed by the silence of a wholly religious admiration, was heard when, at the opening of the sepulchre, a sweet odour spread in the church; the astonishment increased when it was seen that "God who watches over the preservation of the bones of His Saints" had preserved the body of His faithful servant from the corruption of the tomb, and that his vestments had scarcely been damaged. These glorious remains, enclosed in a richly adorned shrine, were carried with pomp around the city, in the midst of a procession composed of the bishop

in pontifical vestments, of the chapter, of the religious Orders, of the notables of Belley and of the environs, and of a prodigious number of the faithful come running from all the neighbouring provinces to implore the protection of the holy bishop. The confraternity of Saint Anthelm surrounded the shrine. The contemporary authors, witnesses of this triumph, assure that the crowd turned its eyes from the object of its veneration only to contemplate this modest and pious society, formed on this great day in honour of Saint Anthelm, whose virtues it long imitated. When the shrine, carried by four canons, had arrived at the chapel prepared to receive it, Mgr de Passelaigue placed it on a marble altar which had been prepared to receive it.

What there was most admirable on this solemn day were the miracles which were wrought there: lame were straightened, blind recovered sight, and a great number of other sick cured of different infirmities, ran hither and thither, drunk with joy, publishing the praises of God and the power of the great thaumaturge.

From this epoch, the devotion to the holy bishop of Belley extended far. His chapel was so frequented, and the miracles multiplied there to such a point after this translation, that a volume would not suffice to make them all known. The city of Belley, which possesses the sacred deposit of the body of its powerful protector, and which had just rendered him such religious honours, had to experience first the effect of his tutelary power. At this epoch, the most terrible scourge of God, the plague, depopulated the neighbouring provinces. Belley saw itself menaced by it closely: already the ravages had begun in the suburbs. They then expose the shrine of Saint Anthelm, they cover themselves with it as with a powerful shield to put themselves under shelter from the blows of the wrath of God. It is surrounded by the pious inhabitants of this city, and they are preserved miraculously from this pressing danger.

All the bishops of Belley took successively the liveliest part in the worship and the feast of Saint Anthelm. Mgr Gabriel Cortois de Quincey, one of the most worthy successors of so many illustrious pontiffs, was the zealot of his worship and the faithful imitator of this great model during the forty years that he sat on the pontifical throne of Belley. This venerable prelate acknowledged that he owed him his life. It is to fulfil the vow which he had made to him, being on the point of perishing in crossing the river Ain, that he repaired his chapel in 1759, and decorated it with pictures whose merit and value could not however preserve them from the fury of the iconoclasts of the eighteenth century. He had an altar of white marble constructed, clothed the holy body with a magnificent shroud and with an ornament embroidered in gold. From this moment, the concourse of the faithful continued with a new affluence. But an impious revolution soon stopped this pious and national worship. On 6 December 1793, sacrilegious hands, after having profaned the sacred asylum where Anthelm was honoured, took from the altar the shrine which enclosed the body of the Saint, and were preparing to carry it to the public square to deliver it to the flames. The news of the removal of the shrine which contained the holy body put the city of Belley in a state of stupor; some run up, urged by the rage of impiety; others drawn by curiosity and by the desire to contemplate the body of the holy prelate. These last succeed in stealing away various shreds of the linens which envelop it, and some bones which they preserve with veneration. It was during these happenings that an impious man separated the head of the Saint to show it with derision, then broke it on the pavement, uttering these words: “If thou art a Saint, make it seen!” A few days after this imprecation, frightful tumours came upon him around the neck. He kept this disgusting infirmity until the end of his life, which lasted twenty-three years more. All the city thought it perceived in this event a chastisement of heaven, where mercy was united to justice, since this man, touched with a sincere repentance, returned to Christian sentiments, gave proofs of the most touching devotion to Saint Anthelm, and died in dispositions which make one hope that he found grace at the tribunal of the justice of God.

Such were the horrors of this disastrous day. These robbers carried off the shrine and the riches with which it was adorned; but the sacred deposit which it enclosed, protected by sentinels, sent a moment after to stop the profanations which we have just deplored, escaped their sacrilegious fury. Devoted Christians gathered the scattered bones and preserved to the city of Belley the venerated relic of its holy bishop, hiding it in the

sacristy, under the floor, near the great pillar which supports the vault.

As soon as peace was restored to the Church of France by the concordat of 1801, the church of Belley was again consecrated to Catholic worship. The diocese, according to the arrangements made between the sovereign Pontiff and the head of the French nation, was united in 1802 to that of Lyons. Then M. Tenand, former curé of Belley, was given back to the wishes of his beloved people. His first care was to discover the body of the holy bishop; the religious eagerness of the faithful was not long in making him know the place which concealed this precious deposit. He was preparing to expose it to the veneration of the Christian people, when he died on 27 July 1806. His successor expressed the same wish in the name of the city of Belley. A commission was named. With a council of physicians and surgeons it established the identity of the bones of Saint Anthelm; on 2 August of the same year, this information was publicly ratified. Then, these precious remains were enclosed and sealed in a coffer of wood, which was deposited in the chapel of the Saint. Finally, on 8 June 1813, Cardinal Fesch, archbishop of Lyons, recognised the holy relics and sealed them with his arms. The shrine was carried back in procession into the chapel called of Saint Anthelm, and enclosed in a cupboard to the left of the altar; the archbishop kept a bone of the holy confessor, with which he enriched the treasury of the primatial church of Lyons.

It is a pious belief in the country that Saint Anthelm was not a stranger to the re-establishment of the diocese of Belley, in 1811. The first bishop, Mgr Devie, who took possession of this see in 1823, verified the relics of Saint Anthelm, in presence of a great number of witnesses, among whom was M. Rey, vicar general of Chambéry, afterwards bishop of Annecy: Mgr Devie gave him a rib of the Saint, for the parish of Chignin, in Savoy; later, he re-established the confraternity of Saint Anthelm, whose dispositions Pope Leo XII approved with rich indulgences. In 1829, on Tuesday 30 June, took place a solemn translation of the relics of the Saint into his restored chapel: four hundred priests and more than ten thousand persons assisted at this fair ceremony. Mgr Devie instituted an annual novena in honour of Saint Anthelm, which began on the evening of 17 June. He regulated further that on the third Sunday of each month, the first parish mass, at which a homily is made, should be in future celebrated in the chapel of Saint Anthelm, and that on 27 June of each year, all the children up to the age of reason should be brought to the cathedral, and that the bishop, surrounded with a great apparatus, should bless them and vow them to Saint Anthelm.

The shrine in which the relics of the Saint repose to-day is the one which Mgr Devie had made; it is of wood, of mahogany colour, in the form of a tomb and with gilt ornaments. Through two large panes, one sees the body of the Saint clothed with a cope of cloth of gold richly embroidered. It is a tribute of veneration and gratitude offered to Saint Anthelm, in 1835, by M. Gauchy, secretary-archivist of the Chamber of Peers. We have made use, to complete this life, of the Hagiological History of the diocese of Belley, by Mgr Depéry.

The Feast of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (368)

After the death of Saint Hilary, the city of Poitiers was undecided as to the place where his body should repose. Some wished it to be in an oratory which he had himself built near his dwelling: others preferred the basilica of Saint John and Saint Paul, outside the walls, built by the holy Doctor over the burial-place of his family. This latter opinion prevailed as more conformable to his last wishes. The venerable remains were therefore carried into the suburban church, and enclosed in a marble tomb. Numerous miracles burst forth on this occasion. This took place about the middle of January 368.

The respect which the populations had had for the holy Bishop during his life only increased by the prodigies with which it pleased God to surround his tomb. So one may say that his worship began from the day of his death, and it soon made famous afar the little church which owed to him its existence and its glory.

But the misfortunes of the times came to trouble this filial devotion. The fifth century saw Gaul inundated by the military expeditions of the Vandals and the Goths who reduced to ashes the most flourishing cities and condemned the country to a long and ruinous sterility. Poitiers fell also into their hands; three times in this same century the city saw its walls overthrown, its monuments pulled down, and the church which protected the remains of Saint Hilary, reduced among the first to a state of complete ruin, buried under its debris, with a crowd of precious objects, the holy deposit which public piety had honoured there for more than a hundred years. The impossibility of approaching this lost treasure made the pilgrimages cease; they were forgotten even to such a point, that after a century almost entire during which the city was several times retaken and invaded, people grew accustomed to see without interest these ruins which were not rising again, and which continual alarms did not even permit to be examined. God arranged however an event which, in strengthening the French monarchy in the hands of a powerful king, was to raise up the sacred walls and revive the memory of the holy Confessor. Clovis, resolved to drive Alaric out of Aquitaine and with him the Visigoths over whom the conqueror reigned, came to camp some leagues from Poitiers and prepared, while observing the enemy army, to give a decisive battle. In this circumstance, the vigilant Doctor seemed to live again to combat still the Arianism which the Visigoths professed, for in the middle of the night a globe of fire rose from the ruins of his church, and went to be extinguished seven leagues from there above the tent of Clovis. This prodigy, which manifested itself on the eve of a battle which was regarded as the last, seemed an omen of victory; and, in effect, one would have said that Saint Hilary, the most illustrious enemy of the Arians of his time, continued to pursue them on a territory which he had forbidden to them. However that may be, the event confirmed these hopes. The next day, Alaric was conquered and killed by the husband of Saint Clotilda, and the plains of Vouillé, or Voulon, buried the fortune of the Visigoths.

The monastery of Saint Hilary, which had risen near his tomb, had not been dragged down in the loss of the church, or else it had risen again from its very ruins and had not ceased to exist, although frequent vicissitudes had come to trouble its peace. At the time of the great event which we have just recalled, Saint Fridolin was abbot of it and had singularly contributed by his cares to the re-establishment of the monastic dwelling. But one happiness was still wanting to him: his ardent wishes, which aspired to discover the sacred remains which he venerated in his heart, were not granted. The events of which he had just been witness, and also doubtless that sort of intuition which God gives to the Saints of the great things which He prepares for His glory, began to revive his hopes, and he was conversing of them one night before the Lord when he received from Saint Hilary himself, in a vision, the precise indication of the place where his relics were buried, and of that where he wished them to be kept in the future. After this formal manifestation and the order to raise up the ruins of the holy place, Fridolin had gone away, with the bishop of Poitiers Adelphius, to solicit from Clovis a help which the prince granted them. By consequence of these royal generosities which thus repaid the singular protection lent by the illustrious doctor to the first protector of the Church in France, the new edifice was seen to rise rapidly and soon to be beautified. However, this wholly princely undertaking was not only the work of royal munificence: this could not have sufficed for such considerable expenses. Adelphius supplied the rest from his own resources; and, when the temple was finished, they proceeded to a solemn Translation, which was made on the day indicated beforehand with an immense concourse of the clergy and of the people. The bishop having accomplished the holy Sacrifice, entered with Saint Fridolin into the crypt at last found again where so long had been hidden from all eyes the venerated body of the holy Pontiff. This crypt had been closed again before the ceremony: at the moment when it was opened, a brilliant light was seen to burst forth from it, and a sweet odour escaped from it. It is in the midst of these consoling marks of the divine assistance that the precious bones were drawn from the crypt and deposited in the more worthy place which had been prepared for them. This Translation was therefore, properly speaking, only an elevation of the body which was changed from place without being transported from one edifice into another; for they had not wished to touch the holy deposit immediately after having found it again under the debris. It had then been only covered over with care; the new church, vaster and more magnificent, had been

constructed on the same site; the ceremony which we relate was to consist no more, as we have just seen, than in a sort of inauguration of these venerated remains. The authors of the life of our Saint report a great number of miracles wrought in this religious passage. From this day, the concourse of the faithful turned from all sides toward the church, and each year the memory of this memorable fact was renewed there by a solemn feast.

One knows not how long the holy body remained without injury from the barbarians in the peace of its new and more worthy sepulchre; what is certain is that Poitiers possessed it still in 878. But already the Normans had made themselves masters of the city as many as three times after the reign of Charlemagne, and, in one of these expeditions, the church of Saint Hilary having been burnt, the relics suffered from these violences: they were snatched only with great pain from a complete destruction. It was doubtless to withdraw them from new dangers with which they were menaced every day, that they were transported, toward the beginning of the tenth century, into the city of Le Puy in Velay, where they were found again in 1653. It was after an oblivion of six or seven hundred years, which must be attributed, like so many others of this kind, to the events of the intermediate epochs. At the request of the chapter of Saint Hilary of Poitiers, Mgr Henry de Maupas du Tour, bishop of Poitiers, having recognised the authenticity of these relics, was pleased to cede a portion of them to our celebrated collegiate church: these are in part those which it still possesses to-day. Of this other Translation the Chapter made a feast on 25 November of each year. Finally, in 1823, Mgr de Bouille, bishop of Poitiers, obtained from Mgr de Donald, bishop of Le Puy, who was afterwards cardinal bishop of Lyons, a new portion of the head of our glorious Doctor, which is preserved in the treasury of the cathedral, and which remains exposed each year in the sanctuary during the whole octave of his feast.

Extract from the Lives of the Saints of the Church of Poitiers, by M. the Abbé Auber, canon of the cathedral of Poitiers and historiographer of the diocese.

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[1] There were two sorts of pincers in use in the torments of the martyrs. Some were cutting like those of which there is question here; the others were made to compress and put to the question. Bishop Synesius speaks of these latter in his forty-eighth letter, where there is question of the cruelty of the president Andronicus; he says: The pincers were all ready to seize the ears and to crush the lips, etc. There were also the toothed pincers; they were armed with three iron prongs, which sank into the flesh of the sufferer and pierced him. An instrument of this kind is still kept in the Vatican basilica, among the relics of the Saints. Some pretend that it was the instrument named scorpion, but they are mistaken. The scorpion, according to Saint Isidore (book v of the *Origins*), was a rod furnished with knots or points. Such were the rods of palm, full of darts, which remained attached to the flesh of the sufferers. The Arians of Alexandria used them to torment the Catholics, as Saint Athanasius writes, in the book of his Exile. Victor speaks of an instrument of torture in use in the persecution of the Vandals, which appears to be of the same kind: “He has strong clubs prepared, furnished with teeth of wood, in the manner of a saw or of a palm, in order not only to be able to break the bones, but also to make darts penetrate into the flesh which should remain adherent there. This instrument bore also among the Greeks the name of scorpios. It is mentioned in holy Scripture, in the third book of Kings: *Pater meus cecidit vos flagellis, ego autem cædam vos scorpionibus.* A dart which served in war, and which had been invented by the Cretans, bore also this name. (Pliny, *Natural History*, book vii, ch. 25.)

[2] We have given the biography of Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, and patron of all the diocese, under 13 January, volume i, page 232.

[3] See on the following day.

[4] To-day chief town of a canton of the department of Hérault, 51 kilometres S. W. of Montpellier, held a Council in 506.

[5] It is situated on the right bank of the Scheldt, two kilometres from Valenciennes.

[6] These bulls, called Golden Bulls, were carefully kept by the Chapter of Belley until the time of the Revolution; they were burnt at this fatal epoch with all the papers of the archives. The golden seal did not perish; it was given back to Mgr Alexander-Raymond Devie, in 1825, by M. Dumoulin, receiver of the arrondissement of Belley; it bears on one side: *Fredericus Rom. Imper.*; on the other: *Roma caput mundi regit orbis frena rotundi.* Guichenon has preserved the text of these bulls.

[7] These privileges were to coin money, of standard weight and measure, of toll, of shore, of river, of pasture, of fishing, of hunting, of fuel, of stumps and dead wood. The money which the bishops of Belley had coined bore on one side a right hand and this legend: *Ecclesia Bellicensis*, and on the reverse a man’s head with these words: *S. Johannes-Baptista*. A hand had been put on these pieces in memory of the right hand of the holy Precursor, long venerated in the cathedral. The privilege of coining money was suppressed by Francis I, who made the conquest of Bresse, of Bugey and of Savoy, from Charles III, his uncle, in 1536.

[8] This leper-house was situated on the left bank of the Rhône, in the place known to-day under the name of Maladière, between the Balme of Pierre-Châtel and the little town of Yenne, in Savoy. One still sees there the remains of a chapel, under the invocation of Saint Hugon, and the little hospice beside it, transformed into a private dwelling. Saint Anthelm passed whole days in tending these

plague-stricken, without fear of contracting their horrible disease.

27 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

In Galatia, Saint Crescent, disciple of the apostle Saint Paul, who, in traversing the Gauls, converted by his preaching a great number of men to the Christian faith; having then returned to the people for whom he had been specially destined as bishop, he strengthened the Galatians in the work of the Lord until the end of his life, which he completed by martyrdom under Trajan. 1st century. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Zoilus and nineteen others. 4th century. — At Caesarea, in Palestine, Saint Anectus, martyr, who, in the persecution of Diocletian, and under the president Urban, having exhorted others to martyrdom and overthrown idols by the virtue of his prayer, was scourged by ten soldiers, had his hands and feet cut off, and finally his head cut off, and carried off the crown of martyrdom. 4th century. — At Constantinople, Saint Sampson, priest, who received the poor into his house. 5th century. — In Touraine, Saint John,[1] priest and confessor, 6th century. — At Varadin, in Hungary, Saint Ladislas, king, whose holiness has always shone until this day by brilliant miracles. 1093.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Viviers, Saint Crescent, disciple of Saint Paul, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Prosper, bishop and confessor, named in the Roman martyrology of the 25th of this month. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint William, abbot, cited in the same martyrology on 25 June. — In the diocese of Ajaccio, Saint Gallican, mentioned on the same day by the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint Simplicius, named in the Roman martyrology of 24 June. — In the ancient abbey of Crespin, in Belgium, not far from Condé, on the river Hon, Saint Adelin, disciple of Saint Landelin, with whom he reposed in this monastery. He took the religious habit at the abbey of Lobbes, then he withdrew with Saint Landelin, his abbot, into a thick forest of Hainault, where they inhabited cells built with branches of trees, which gave birth to the abbey of Crespin (*Crispiniensis abbatia*, Order of Saint Benedict, under the title of Saint Peter), of which Saint Adelin was one of the first religious. About 700. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint Poma, sister of Saint Memmius, first bishop of this see.[2] — At Beauvais, the memory of Saint Angadrisma, virgin, abbess of Oroër.[3] About 698. — At Autun, the memory of Saint Emilian, bishop of Nantes and martyr. He devoted himself generously to save the Aeduan city, assailed, in 725, by the Saracens, and perished under their blows after having assured the safety of his fellow-citizens. His name is in great veneration among the people of Autun who saw him die under their walls, and among the people of Nantes who saw him born and grow up in their city. 725. — At Gourdon, in the diocese of Autun, Saint Desiderius or Didier, priest, of whom Saint Gregory of Tours, in his book of the Glory of the Confessors, makes this eulogy: “I have seen in the monastery of Gourdon (*monasterium gurihonense*, near Mont-Saint-Vincent, Saône-et-Loire), this man of an admirable holiness. Often he cured, by his prayers, toothaches and other maladies. He was a recluse, and never went out of his cell, but one could see him there at will. He died after having made himself illustrious by the most eminent holiness. On the news of his death, the blessed Agricola, bishop of Châlon, sent his archdeacon to Gourdon, charging him to bring back the body of the Saint to the cemetery of the city; but the monks opposed this translation. Some time after, the same bishop having built, near the city, a hospital of lepers (Leper-house of Saint-John-of-the-Vines), transferred to it the body of Saint Didier, in presence of several abbots and of all the clergy, and buried it with the greatest honours in the basilica of this hospital. The great miracles which he wrought attest that he lives now with Jesus Christ.” Saint Didier was raised from the earth and canonised by Pope John VIII, in 879, under the episcopate of Gerbold. The Breviary of Châlon indicates his feast on this day. 579. — At Douai, Father

Philip Powell, priest of the college of the English Benedictines of that city, a personage of eminent piety who died a victim of the religious persecution in England under the successors of Elizabeth. 1646. — In Belgium, Father John de Hecque, religious of Dormartin, victim of the fury of the iconoclasts of the sixteenth century. 1568.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint John and Saint Paul, brothers, martyrs.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Corneto, in Apulia, the blessed Benvenuto, confessor, of the Order of Minors, who, being of noble extraction, and after having distinguished himself in bearing arms, practised with so much zeal humility, charity, patience and obedience, to which he joined poverty, prayer and silence, that the glory of miracles came to crown the perfection of his virtue. 1232.

Martyrology of the Servites. — Saint John and Saint Paul, brothers, martyrs.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Rome, the five brothers Crispus, Felix, Crispin, Crispian, Crispinian, and the two sisters Felix and Spinella, martyrs, cited among others by the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Cordova, the saints Crescens, Julian, Nemesius, Primitivus, Justin, Clement, Marcellinus, and fourteen others, martyrs. Only their names are known, which the Bollandists read in an old manuscript of the library of Queen Christina of Sweden and in the four apographs of the martyrology of Saint Jerome. Their acts are lost. — At Rome again, the saints Crispus or Crispin, priest, Crispinian, cleric, and Benedicta, virgin, martyrs, mentioned by the martyrology of Saint Jerome and in the Acts of Saints John and Paul. 362. — At Nola, in Campania, Saint Deodatus, bishop of this city. Disciple of Saint Paulinus of Nola, he strove to walk in the footsteps of so illustrious a master. His virtues caused him to be raised to the dignity of archpriest. He showed himself from then on a veritable gift of heaven, as his name indicated. Never was the Church of Nola so well administered, never did the poor, the widows and the orphans find so powerful a support. The demon, jealous of so many virtues, permitted a calumniator to denounce the servant of God to the emperor Valentinian: he was accused of diverting to his profit great sums of money. The emperor, too credulous, had Deodatus thrown into a black dungeon, then, on the remonstrances of Saint Paulinus, he commuted the penalty of imprisonment into that of exile. But a terrible dream in which he saw himself menaced with a frightful death if he did not repair his injustice, and also the spectacle of his daughter who became suddenly possessed by the demon, opened the eyes of Valentinian; he recalled Deodatus from exile. The Saint cured the daughter of his persecutor, then he was raised to the see of Nola, which he held for thirty years. He died there at the age of eighty years. His body was buried there and remained there until a prince of Benevento had built in his honour, at the gates of his capital, a chapel where he had this precious treasure deposited. 473. — At Acqui, in the Sardinian States, Saint Majorinus, called also Meliorinus or Malerus

Malère”], bishop. About the sixth century. — Among the Greeks, Saint Luke, solitary. Doubtless that to the gift of piety he joined the gift of erudition and eloquence, for an ancient biographer makes his eulogy thus: “Luke is dead, but his sermons will live always in my memory and in the remembrance of those who shall read them.” — At Milan, Saint Ariald, deacon, and Saint Herlembald, knight, both martyrs. Ariald was born in the ancient village of Cutiacum, between Milan and Como. He made there his first studies which he came to perfect in the schools of Laon and of Paris. Returned to his country, he was made deacon and obtained a canonry. One day that, in a sermon, he had risen strongly against the disorders of the clerics, Guy, bishop of Milan, had him excommunicated; but Pope Stephen IX raised the excommunication and exhorted Ariald to make all his efforts to reform the clergy of his city. The preacher then attacked publicly the simony which stained the archbishop and the greater part of the Milanese priests. He sent even to the Pope his friend Herlembald to point out to him the frequent falls of Guy into this sin. Herlembald brought back a sentence of

excommunication against the archbishop, who stirred up the people in the church, and Ariald was wounded near the balustrade where he was praying. Later, as he was going to Rome, he was arrested by the emissaries of Guy, who mutilated him horribly before taking his life from him. Ten months after, his body was found at the bottom of Lake Maggiore and brought back in great pomp to Milan. It remained exposed in the church of Saint Ambrose from the Ascension until Pentecost: far from corrupting by the heat, it exhaled a sweet odour. It was then buried in the church of Saint Celsus, and the year following, Alexander II declared him a martyr. 1069 and 1113. — At Cajazzo, in Campania, Saint Ferdinand of Aragon, bishop of that city. Little is known of his life, but the epitaph of his tomb, which is found in the basilica of Saint Mary in Cornello, in the diocese of Cajazzo, makes his eulogy sufficiently. One reads there these words: “Rejoice, city of Cajazzo, make songs of gladness heard, for thou possessest a distinguished treasure. Not far from thy walls thou canst contemplate the precious tomb of Ferdinand. The sick come to bring there their infirmities, and they return to their country full of health, full of gratitude.” Thirteenth century probably.

Saint Crescens, Disciple of Saint Paul, Founder of the Church of Vienne, in Dauphiné

5th century.

Ad annuntiandum mansuetis misit me Dominus, ut mederer contritis corde, prædicarem captivis indulgentiam et clausis apertionem.

The Lord has sent me to preach His Gospel to the humble, to heal the contrite of heart, to announce to the captives liberty, to the blind light.

Isaias, lxi, 1.

As we have given, in the month of May, the life of Saint Zacharias, second bishop of Vienne, in Dauphiné, it is reasonable that we should now go back to the source, and that we should speak of Saint Crescens, founder of this illustrious Church, which enjoyed formerly the right of primacy and of vicariate of the Pope over seven great provinces of France. Those who do this injury to the country of the Gauls, of saying that neither the Apostles, nor the first successors of Saint Peter thought of its conversion; that Saint Paul did not pass there and did not send there any of his disciples, and that, while these divine missionaries spread so happily through all Asia and all Africa, a kingdom so flourishing and so near Italy and Rome was abandoned, without having any part in the happiness of the preaching of the Gospel; these, we say, take care not to recognise this glorious bishop of Vienne as disciple of the Apostles, nor to avow that he is that Saint Crescens of whom Saint Paul speaks in his second Epistle to Timothy. We have nevertheless powerful testimonies in antiquity, which assure us that Saint Paul came into the Gauls on going to preach in Spain, and that he sent there Saint Crescens, his disciple, to spread there the seed of the Gospel.

From the journey of Saint Paul into Spain, it is easy to conclude that he passed through France. All the Fathers of the first centuries who had occasion to speak of this journey agree on it: such are, among the Greeks, Saint Athanasius, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem and Saint Chrysostom, and, among the Latins, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory the Great and Saint Isidore of Seville, whose words may be seen reported by the interpreters on chapter xv of the Epistle to the Romans; and, as for the mission of Saint Crescens in the Gauls, we have the testimony of Saint Dorotheus, of Saint Jerome, of Eusebius of Caesarea, one of the most ancient and most celebrated historians of the Church, in book iv of his History, chap. 4, according to the true Greek text and the version of Valois. Saint Epiphanius, who, in Heresy 51, speaking of Saint Luke, says that he preached in Dalmatia, in Italy, in Macedonia, but above all in the Gauls, assures also that Saint Paul sent there some of his disciples, among others Saint Crescens. Theodoret adds that, when this Apostle says that he sent Saint Crescens into Galatia, by this word Galatia he understands the Gauls, which were formerly called by this name. Finally, without speaking of Sophronius in the book of the Ecclesiastical Historians and of the

Chronicle of Alexandria, who teach the same thing, Ado, archbishop of Vienne, who must have been perfectly informed of the ancient tradition of his Church, says in express terms, in his martyrology, that Saint Crescens, disciple of Saint Paul, having come into the Gauls, converted there several infidels to the faith of Jesus Christ, that he held some years his episcopal see at Vienne, and that having ordained in his place Saint Zacharias, he returned to the country of the Galatians (the oriental Gauls, as the Gauls were the occidental Galatians), and employed the rest of his life in strengthening them in the faith and the Christian religion.

This apostolic man was one of the assistants of the apostle Saint Paul; he laboured long with him at the conversion of the infidels and suffered like him the fatigue of journeys, poverty, nakedness, cold, heat, contradictions, persecutions and all the evils which were inseparable from the preaching of the Gospel; after having been his disciple, he was judged worthy to be master and to labour of himself at this great work. The Apostle made him therefore bishop of Galatia, a province of Asia Minor, of which the capital is Ancyra and which is also called Gallo-Greece, because it was inhabited by colonies of Gauls and of Greeks; but, as the small number of evangelical workers that there was at that time obliged the bishops of the principal sees, after having put a good regulation in their churches, to carry the light of faith into more distant countries, Saint Paul made no difficulty of drawing Saint Crescens out of Galatia to make him preach in other places, and above all he sent him into our Gauls, which were without contradiction the most beautiful government of the empire. This holy Missionary made there in a short time great progress, and, having stopped principally at Vienne, in Dauphiné, a very considerable city, which gave senators to Rome and had itself an illustrious senate, he converted there enough infidels to establish there his episcopal see, which the Roman Church has always extremely respected. Pope Paul II, writing to Charlemagne, says to him that this Church had for founder and for master Saint Crescens, colleague of the Apostles. After having acquitted himself of his mission with much success, he named Saint Zacharias for bishop in his place, as we have already reported from Ado, one of his successors, and, if one must believe the tradition of the diocese of Mainz, came to preach in the environs of this city. Serrarius, in his History, presents as authentic the foundation of the Church of Mainz and of Cologne: he rests on the testimony of Saint Rupert, who assures that Saint Crescens preached in these two cities. He produces very ancient manuscript catalogues, which confirm this tradition; he cites the authority of Ado, of Bede, of Usuard, and of several other writers. In the Life of Saint Maximus, bishop of Mainz, it is said that “the body of this holy Pontiff was buried in the church of Saint Hilary, near the tomb of Saint Crescens, first bishop of this city, and that it remained there five hundred and fifty-seven years, until the time of Hildebert, in the year 935 of Jesus Christ, at which epoch the translation of it was made” solemnly into the church of Saint Alban, martyr. Whence one must conclude that in the year 400 of Jesus Christ, the inhabitants of Mainz were generally persuaded of the truth of this tradition, since they possessed his body and his tomb.

Saint Crescens, in his evangelical journeys, wrought extraordinary miracles. The martyrologies attest that he was martyred under the empire of Trajan; but they do not say in what place he suffered for the faith. The Church of Mainz, which says it is in possession of his relics, affirms at the same time that this holy Martyr was put to death by the pagans in this city. A church remarkable for its beauty was erected there in his honour. However, that does not prevent believing that this zealous Apostle, as certain traditions report, returned, at least during some time, from the places of his western mission, into Gallo-Greece or Galatia, situated in Asia Minor, and that he governed still as bishop this oriental Church, which he had founded in part with Saint Paul. This is why the Greeks say that he was, during a time, bishop of Chalcedon or of Chalcis, or Chalcide.

He is marked twice in the Roman martyrology, but each time as disciple of Saint Paul and as first bishop of Vienne; namely: on this day, 27 June, and on 29 December. The other martyrologies speak of him also and give him all this quality of disciple of the Apostle, which confirms still what we have said of his mission. Du Saussay speaks of him amply, not only in his martyrology, but also in his treatise on the Seventy-two

Disciples, and in the first book of the Mystical Writers of the Gauls.

The people of Mainz have sometimes represented him carrying a church on his hand, to mark that he was the founder of their episcopal see.

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. History of the seventy-two disciples, by the Abbé Maistre.

Saint Emilian or Emiland, Bishop of Nantes, Hero and Martyr

725. — Pope: Saint Gregory II. — King of France: Charles Martel.

Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis. The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep.

John, x, 11.

In 725, under the orders of the Saracen Ambisa, divided into several bands, the fierce sectaries of the Koran carried into Provence devastation and death, immolated the religious of Lérins on the smoking ruins of the monastery, took and sacked Marseilles; then, going up the great valley of the Rhône, ruined Nîmes, Avignon, Valence, Vienne, Lyons, and penetrated, following the Saône, as far as Burgundy. Mâcon and Châlon soon fell under the blows of the brutal scimitar of Islam. Nothing resisted the frightful shock of these Barbarians on horseback, with whom a ferocious impetuosity took the place of courage and who fell suddenly like thunder on the terrified cities, surprised and defenceless. Autun, the illustrious and opulent city, the holy city, with numerous abbeys, with superb basilicas, could be neither forgotten nor spared. It had doubtless even been designated beforehand as one of the important points on which the greatest blows were to be struck. After the ruin of Châlon, the Barbarians divided their army into two corps. The one marched on Dijon and on Langres, which it sacked; the other, on Autun and Sens to besiege them. Then, probably, the two corps were to unite under the walls of Lutetia and seize it, while Charles Martel, detained in Bavaria by an important war, could not come to its help. It was all over with the Catholic kingdom of the Franks, if a hero had not been there to stop the impetuosity of the torrent and drive it back toward its source. But behold the populations have armed themselves, and Christian France prelude by heroic acts to so many high deeds which have illustrated it since in its memorable wars against the Mussulmans. Generous Brittany was moved first at the news of the invasions and at the sympathetic voice of one of her children. The soul of the enterprise is an illustrious scion of a Gallo-Roman family of Nantes; it is the bishop of this city. The noblest blood of noble Armorica flows in his veins. In his soul, God has put, with the bravery and the lively sentiment of honour and of patriotism which make the hero, with the magnanimity, the breadth of views, the rapidity of glance, the elevation of character, the loftiness of ideas and the genius which make the great man, the courageous faith which makes martyrs and a vast and burning zeal for the interests of the Church. In his heart, a tender piety towards God is joined to a compassionate charity for all the miseries, for all the sorrows of the neighbour. At the news of the rapid march, ever progressive, of these Barbarians toward the centre of France, seized with grief and indignation, the heroic bishop thought he ought to join to the peaceful crook of the pastor the sword of the warrior. Emilian, with his genius inspired by faith, judged the situation and understood the necessity of the times; he saw that one must be a warrior or perish and see perish with oneself what is dearest and most sacred, France and Christianity, the fatherland and the religion of the fatherland. At once a great idea suggests to him a great resolution, a generous enterprise. He convokes his people in his cathedral, and, making to all the brave a warm appeal, he says to them: “O all you, men strong in war and stronger still in faith, arm your hands with the shield of this divine faith, your foreheads with the sign of the cross, your head with the helmet of salvation, and cover your breast with the breastplate of the Lord. Then, when you shall be clothed with this religious armour, soldiers of Jesus Christ, do more still, take your best weapons of war, your arms of steel the best forged, the best tempered, and let us go together to fight, let us go to crush these miserable enemies who, like furious dogs, devour the Christians our brothers. We may succumb in the struggle; but it is the case to say with Judas Machabeus: ‘Better to die with arms in hand for

one's country than to see its disaster without trying to put an end to it, than to bear the profanation of the most sacred things, the opprobrium of the people of God and of the holy law which the Lord almighty has given us.'" At once, impelled by a movement of the Holy Spirit and transported out of themselves by this laconic discourse, true model of military and sacerdotal harangue, all make heard this unanimous acclamation: "Venerable lord and good pastor, order, command, and wherever you go we will follow you." It is thus that Emilian had the honour of preaching the first crusade and of drawing into it the elite of the Nantais warriors.

Profiting then by the ardour with which his audience is animated, he fixes without further delay the day of departure and the place of rendezvous. It is again in the cathedral of Nantes that they are to assemble. "Here itself," he says, "we shall meet again; from here, from the foot of this altar, we shall all set out; and I shall have the honour of marching at the head of the soldiers of Jesus Christ." At these words, the assembly thrilled a second time, and each runs to make his preparations for departure.

None fails at the word of command. Armed at all points, they run to the church with a warlike transport, supernaturalised by the great thoughts and the sublime devotedness which religion inspires. Mounting then to the altar clothed with the sacred ornaments, the holy pontiff offers the divine sacrifice for his dear companions in arms whose compatriot he is by blood, father by grace, chief by devotedness, calls down upon them, during the celebration of the august mysteries, the blessings of heaven and distributes to them the body and blood of Jesus Christ, heavenly food which inebriates, exalts and fortifies souls; which gives, when needed, even to the weak and timid sheep, the courage and the strength of the lion against the enemies of God. It was beautiful to see all these brave men, covered with steel, set themselves in motion and come to bend the knee before the holy table, to receive the bread of the strong, and from there fly, without fear as without reproach, to the defence of the faith and of the fatherland. After communion, in this solemn moment when God, having bowed the heavens to descend upon earth in the midst of the Breton warriors, reposed on their heart, in those manly breasts cuirassed with faith and with iron, the pontiff, standing on the steps of the altar, in the midst of all the pomps of worship, surrounded by a numerous clergy, makes heard these words, in which his soul, which overflowed with a heavenly joy, pours itself out entirely:

"My children, your bishop is happy not to have spoken in vain, for here you are gathered in great number: it is well. But let us render thanks to God; for it is He who has inspired you with this magnanimous, this pious resolution, and you have been docile to His call. It is He again who has just strengthened your courage and purified your souls. Let us pray Him to be pleased to complete His work in accomplishing by us His holy will for our salvation and that of our brothers. Yes, His holy will! for, instructed by His salutary precepts and formed in His divine school, you and I we dare say to Him every day: 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Children! these great words which Christ has taught us, the occasion has come to translate them by our acts. Let us supplicate Him with fervour to make of us soldiers worthy of Him and to accept the help of our armed arms for the glorification of His name, the advent of His kingdom, the accomplishment of His will, the observance of His holy law and the support of His cause." Nothing stops the intrepid soldiers of the cross: neither the present with its griefs and its heart-rending scenes, nor the future with its fatigues, its dangers, its uncertain and frightful prospects, its menaces of death. They have hope for torch, the Sacraments for nourishment, their bishop for chief, and set out carrying in their heart with their God a superhuman courage. So they march day and night, in order to equal, if it is possible, the rapidity of the progress of the enemy and to prevent new disasters. On the way, Emilian, who is directing himself toward Paris, learns that the infidels have divided, that already a part of their army has gone to attack Sens. At once, to be able to arrive in time still and to combat them thus separately, he directs himself toward the besieged city. There, while the holy bishop Ebbo, become like himself by necessity a warrior, sustains the assault within the circuit of the ramparts, he manoeuvres so well outside that the enemy is surprised and put completely to rout. Ebbo contented himself

with driving the enemy from his diocese. But Emilian has more extended views: it is the invasion itself that he wishes to annihilate. As the first army corps of which he has just begun the defeat has concentrated on Autun besieged, it is at Autun that one must again go to combat it, before the other corps has been able to fall back toward it to support it. The Bretons, full of the new ardour which a first success adds to their bravery, bear themselves therefore rapidly on the Aeduan city, so that the help may forestall the attack of an enemy as prompt as the vulture to swoop on its prey.

Meanwhile the Saracens, having learned that an auxiliary army was coming to save the city and trembling at the thought that so rich a prey was perhaps going to escape them, hastened to send against it a strong detachment to prevent its junction with the people of Autun: which gave occasion to a first and brilliant combat at Saint-Forgeot. The Bretons were able to see from afar the enemy coming to them, and prepared to receive him vigorously. Soon in effect they fall upon him, throw him back into the plain by this energetic attack, pursue him into his camp, aided by the besiegers who had sallied opportunely from their walls, and "enter triumphant into the city, where they are received with unanimous cries of joy."

They doubtless devoted the night to giving the Breton troops the rest they needed, and to disposing everything for the sortie which the chiefs had resolved to make. This attack could not be deferred. No doubt that in this circumstance Emilian, skilful in counsel as much as intrepid in action, made admired the wisdom which directed his courage, for they did not separate, says the legend, without having remitted to him the direction of the enterprise, the general command of the united Aeduan and Breton troops. Before leading his warriors to the enemy, he assembled them in the cathedral of Autun, as he had done in that of Nantes, rendered thanks to God and exhorted them anew to do their duty bravely, promising the palm of victory or that of martyrdom. Now there he is going out with them from the church full of a heavenly ardour, puts himself at their head and flies to the attack of the camp of the Barbarians. The Aeduans, familiarised with the country, go by by-ways to precipitate themselves unexpectedly, when it shall be time, on the two wings of the enemy. Emilian directs himself against the centre with the Bretons. Arrived near the gate of Saint-André, he shows them the rampart from the height of which Augusta exhorted to martyrdom Symphorian her son, and himself throws them in passing a burning word. This place, this example, this remembrance and this inflamed word issued from the heart of the holy pontiff redouble their ardour. Suddenly, at the signal of their chief who indicates to them the plateau of Saint-Pierre l'Etrier, the valiant phalanx, taking a rapid flight, crosses the valley as at a single bound, overturns the advanced posts, approaches the camp, penetrates it, carries into it disorder and death. At the same time the Aeduans have attacked to right and to left the two wings. The enemy, pressed thus on all sides, flees in full rout and precipitates himself pell-mell toward the Creuse-d'Auxy, a long, narrow and deep gorge in which the slopes of the road of Châlon engage themselves.

Autun is saved: one hopes it, one believes it. Already in the city resound cries of joy and songs of victory; already the praises of Emilian and of his heroic warriors burst forth in hymns of triumph and of gratitude. However the Barbarians rallied at the borough of Saint-Jean de Luze, about three leagues from the Creuse-d'Auxy theatre of their defeat, and prepared there a vigorous resistance. On his side, as soon as the holy bishop saw himself surrounded by sufficient forces, he commanded the march and the attack: victory was still faithful to him. The Saracens put anew in full rout fled, vigorously pursued in the plain. A few hours more, and their army will no longer exist, and the Aeduan city will be able in all security to intone songs of victory.

But here the scene changes: behold that suddenly it is said that from Châlon, sacked and destroyed, there arrives, under the orders of the cruel Nymphaeus, a whole army corps to sustain that which was occupied with the siege of Autun. At this news, the little troop of Christian soldiers neither trembles nor recoils. The new Machabeus, whose great soul exalts itself at the sight of danger, has the trumpet sounded to gather round him his soldiers still all palpitating from their new victory and bent on the pursuit of the fugitives; then he animates them in these terms by his inspired word: "Dear and brave companions, I congratulate you on the

valour which your faith has inspired in you. You know it already: victory is independent of the number of the combatants; it comes from heaven." As the Saint was still speaking, a scout runs up at full speed and says to him: "Lord, make haste; the infidels are there. Already they fall upon our advance posts and attack them with fury; already their numerous battalions begin to surround us." At once Emilian makes upon himself the sign of the cross and says: "Lord, I commend my soul into Thy hands." Then he springs to the combat crying to his generous companions: "Here, soldiers: courage! commend yourselves to God, and follow me." Now, it happened by the divine permission, says the legend, that Nymphaeus, a man of extraordinary strength and stature, offered himself among the first to meet him. The heroic and holy bishop, seeing him massacre the Christians, overwhelm them with cruelties and outrages, deals him terrible blows, covers him with wounds.

But overwhelmed at this moment under a mass of infidels who precipitate themselves like madmen to raise up their general, the conqueror falls himself, riddled with blows. At once his companions spring forward, press, and fight around him, like lions. His hand can no longer hold the lance, but his mouth still speaks to them: "Generous soldiers of Jesus Christ," he cries, finding again a remnant of strength and voice, "be constant in your faith of Christians and in your courage of warriors, redouble valour and audacity against these cruel pagans. He who has inspired you with your magnanimous resolution is ready to recompense it. Already I see heaven open; already the angels bless the Lord for your triumphant arrival in the midst of them; they rejoice at it with Him and the saints; they call you, they await you." Then he adds, citing the words of the mother of Saint Symphorian which the gate of Saint-André had recalled to him that very morning: "Fear not therefore a death which leads to life." The last accents which have just expired on his lips are also his last sigh; and one hears the concerts of the angels who descend to receive his holy soul, accompany it to heaven and introduce it into the eternal joys. Emilian left the earth on a Wednesday, 22 August of the year 725. By order of the impious Nymphaeus, who was not dead of the blow he had just received, the body of the Blessed is beheaded. The Christians gathered it carefully, for themselves and for grateful posterity.

Saint Emilian may very well be represented with a banner in his hand, animating his soldiers to the combat.

Worship and Relics

The relics of Saint Emilian are preserved with pious care in the village of Saint-Jean de Luze, from time immemorial, and his worship has always been in great honour there. At an unknown epoch, there was raised in the middle of the cemetery, over the venerated tomb, a little oratory which soon became a place of pilgrimage much frequented and famous for the miracles which were wrought there. In the eleventh century, the holy body was raised from the earth, by virtue of episcopal authorisation, transferred solemnly into the parish church and exalted behind the high altar. Everything leads one to believe that it was from this epoch that the village where the Nantais legion perished changed its name of Saint-Jean de Luze for that of Saint-Emilien (by corruption, Saint-Emiland), which it bears to-day. This translation took place on the Saturday about the octave of Saint John; and his feast, which is still celebrated each year on the Sunday after the Nativity of the holy Precursor of Jesus Christ, is a commemorative anniversary of the primitive solemnity.

The worship of Saint Emilian is still in the country, as it has been from time immemorial, a quite popular worship, and his church, a place of pilgrimage: so profound were the impressions which his charity and his courageous devotedness had left in the mind of the Aeduans; so great was the gratitude of the populations for the heroic bishop who had come from so far to sacrifice himself to defend them. His name has always been given to an infinity of children of one and the other sex, by the parents who love to place them under a powerful and dear patronage. The pilgrimage of Saint Emiland becoming more and more famous, there was formed in the church of this parish a confraternity which was regularly approved and constituted in the first half of the sixteenth century by James Hurault, bishop of Autun. Finally, submitted to the approbation of the court of Rome with the Proper of Autun, in 1856, the worship of the holy pontiff was confirmed by decree of

His Holiness Pius IX and, at the request of Monseigneur the bishop of Autun, extended to all the diocese. The feast of the Saint, celebrated from all time on the Sunday within the octave of Saint John, never ceases to attract a great number of pilgrims, desirous of venerating his precious relics; for the inhabitants of the parish have been happy enough, in spite of Protestantism and the Terror, to preserve them to this day almost intact. The head of the Saint attracts attention particularly, on account of the traces of a violent blow which one remarks on it and which was probably the mortal blow. The precious relics were drawn from their first tomb in the eleventh century, and which was long used to carry the holy relics in procession. Finally, this form of reliquary fell into disuse and the present shrine was adopted, which is now, no longer as formerly behind the high altar, but in the chapel on the left side honoured with the name of Saint Emilian. A sort of grotto, hollowed in the wall at about two metres above the ground and closed by a double door, the one of wood, the other of iron, guards this shrine which contains the sacred deposit. The authentic titles which attest it are three official records of canonical inquiries made on this subject: the first, in 1730, on the occasion of the translation of the precious bones from the bust into the present reliquary; the second, in 1855, to establish their identity after the evil days of the Revolution; and the third, in 1858, when it was a question of detaching a part of them conceded to the diocese of Nantes. The feast of Saint Emilian is still to-day, it is true, surrounded with pomp and attracts a rather large concourse of faithful; however, it has lost a little of its ancient splendour. Nevertheless the pilgrimage, although having lost of its importance, is still much frequented. There is no week when the pastor of the parish is not called to the church to bless the water of the fountain or linens destined for the sick, and to recite over the pilgrims the usual prayers. The procession of the feast and the Vespers in the open air on the platform of the cemetery always take place with a great concourse of faithful.

Saint Emiland was honoured even afar; there was still seen in the last century, near the hamlet of Vaumely, parish of Poussignol-Blimes (diocese of Nevers), a chapel dedicated under his invocation and known under the name of Chapel-of-the-Lake. There exists, at a kilometre from Tanlay, not far from Tonnerre, a chapel dedicated to Saint Emilian. Founded in 1528 by M. de Corcelles, lord of Tanlay, destroyed in 1793, rebuilt afterwards by the purchaser, under the pressure of public opinion which demanded this venerated sanctuary and the worship of the Saint to whom it was consecrated, it has been reconstructed anew by M. the marquis of Tanlay, who is its present proprietor and who has obtained permission to annex to it a vault for the burial of his family. This chapel figures on the map of Cassini under the name of Saint-Uniilian, derived evidently from Aemilianus. There exists no writing concerning the origin of the devotion to Saint Emilian in this place; but oral tradition makes it go back very high. According to it, the Saint, coming from Sens and going to Autun, would have arrived at Molosme, where one shows a fountain which bears his name and would have sprung from the earth to quench the thirst of him and his soldiers. There would have been a combat between Molosme, Saint-Martin and Tanlay; and, arrived in this last locality, Emilian would have camped there and rested there. It is for this reason, say the old people, that an antique statue, preserved in the chapel and representing the holy bishop with crosier and mitre, has the eyes almost closed and as if weighed down by sleep. Molosme bears the surname of Lafosse, which would agree perfectly with the remembrance of a battle and of an inhumation of the dead in this place.

We have abridged this life from that given of it by M. the Abbé Dluct, canon of the cathedral of Autun, in his work entitled: *Saint Symphorian and his Worship.*

Saint Ladislas I,[1] King of Hungary

1031–1095. — Popes: John XIX; Urban II. — Emperors of Germany: Conrad II; Henry IV.

Bonus princeps non alio animo debet esse in suos cives quam bonus paterfamilias in suos domesticos.

A good prince ought to be for his subjects what a good father of a family is for those of his house.

Erasmus, in Moral. This great king, God has rendered still more illustrious by distinguished miracles. Although we know little of the Christian virtues which he practised during his life, we know enough of them to say that he was no less exalted before God by his holiness than he was before men by the wise government of his States. He did not descend in direct line from Saint Stephen I, king and apostle of Hungary, whose life we shall give on 20 August, but from Ladislas, called the Bald, his first cousin, whose grandson he was. Bela, his father, was for some time a fugitive in Poland, to avoid the cruelty of Peter the German, son-in-law of the same Saint Stephen, whom the Hungarians had made their king. But Andrew, his elder brother and uncle of our Saint, having mounted the throne, the latter returned to his country, where he had the quality of duke, which was the second of all the kingdom. He had married, in Poland, during his exile, the daughter of Mieszko, duke of that kingdom, and had had by her two sons: Geisa, the elder, and Ladislas, our illustrious confessor; he brought them both with him. The education of these children, as well in Poland as in Hungary, was so advantageous, that they gave, from their infancy, great presages of the virtue which they have shown all their life. Our Saint was so chaste, so modest, so devout and so full of tenderness and of charity for the poor, that he was admired by everyone.

It was only with sorrow that he saw his father mount the throne, because he mounted it only by making war on the king, his brother, and by gaining a signal victory over him: for this holy young man was so far from the love of the grandeurs of earth, that he would have preferred to live banished from his country and in want of all things, than to possess a kingdom by ways so little legitimate. It is true that Andrew had attempted the life of Bela, to assure the crown the better to Solomon, his son, aged only twelve years; but Ladislas did not think that this was a sufficient subject for his father to take up arms against his sovereign, and he believed that in this encounter he ought to do only as David, who, pursued by Saul, contented himself with fleeing and hiding, without ever attempting his crown or his life. So, after his death, he did not at all let himself go to the ambition of reigning in his place; on the contrary, he yielded very willingly this honour, firstly to Solomon, son of Andrew, his first cousin, and in the second place to Geisa II, his elder brother, although, the kingdom being in some manner elective, he might have pretended to it by the favour of all the good people who had a singular affection for him.

But Geisa having driven out Solomon, a cruel and bloodthirsty prince, who put everything to fire and blood in his States, and he himself being dead afterwards, in the third year of his reign, all the prelates, the lords and the magistrates of the principal cities of Hungary, who assembled to give him a successor, supplicated Ladislas unanimously to accept the crown and to take the government of the kingdom. He had in effect all the qualities of body and of mind that one can wish in a great prince. There was no one in all Hungary, either taller, or of a more majestic bearing than he; he was capable of all affairs, as well of peace as of war, and he bore easily all the fatigues of them. He received everyone with so much affability that the least of his vassals had the liberty to approach him and to represent to him his right. He showed so much moderation in his judgments, that he was regarded rather as a father who settled some difference of his children, than as a prince who judged sovereignly the causes of his subjects: which had caused him to be given the surname of Pious. The quality of son and brother of kings, nor that of duke of the first duchy of the kingdom, did not prevent him from making himself familiar with the least considerable of his subjects, and from giving on every occasion marks of a truly Christian humility. In all the needs of the State, which was often attacked by the barbarians, he was always seen the first on horseback to defend it, and, going himself at the head of the armies without fearing anything, he fulfilled there the duty of the bravest soldier and of the most intrepid captain; he had not even made difficulty, to spare human blood, of calling the generals of the enemy armies to single combats from which he had always come out victorious.

He remained always very chaste, in spite of the dangers to which his virtue was exposed in courts. Sobriety was in him the inseparable companion of continence, and, if his quality of prince obliged him ordinarily to have a well-served table, he took there only what was absolutely necessary for him to live. He fasted even

often, lay on the hard ground and did other mortifications to tame his body and prevent it from revolting against the spirit. If he was so severe with regard to himself, no one was gentler and more charitable than he toward the needy. His house passed for the common asylum of all the wretched, and, in effect, not one went out of it without having received there some relief for his misery. The poor showed on all sides the garments with which he had clothed them and the money which he had given them. He took care of the subsistence of the widows, the wards and the orphans, and had great alms distributed to them; he married the poor girls whom he saw in danger of losing their honour; he raised up the families ruined by vexatious accidents; and, to say all in a word, one found near him a sure help for every sort of need. The magnificent churches which he had had built after the defeat of Solomon were an evident mark of his piety toward God; but he had shown it still more by sustaining constantly throughout Hungary the Christian religion, for which the greatest part of the people, and above all the peasants accustomed to their idols, had no great inclination.

It was doubtless these rare qualities which obliged the Hungarian lords to present him the crown with so much insistence. However he resisted them as much as it was possible for him. He considered, on one side, that kings are exposed to an infinity of dangers of losing themselves, because their obligations are very great and they have before their eyes a thousand attractions which prevent them from fulfilling them; and, on the other hand, he had pain in taking the quality of king while Solomon, his cousin, to whom this crown seemed to belong legitimately, was alive; and, in effect, Geisa, his brother, before dying, had attempted an accommodation with this prince, and had died only in the resolution of making it if it were possible. But the Hungarians maintained to him that, this kingdom being rather elective than hereditary, they had had the right to give it to Geisa rather than to Solomon, and that they had still the right to prefer himself to that cruel prince, who could not mount the throne without putting all Hungary in combustion; besides, they protested to him that they would have no other king than him; he was therefore at last constrained to yield and to accept the government which they offered him. But he kept still in that a moderation worthy of a great prince; for, as long as he knew that his cousin was alive, he would not be crowned nor wear the diadem: showing by this that, if he was charged with the administration of the State, he had not done so from an ambitious desire to reign, but only from necessity and for the great love which he bore to his country.

So, as soon as he had established peace and piety in the kingdom, he spared no means, either divine or human, to win the mind of Solomon, and to make him quit this savage and cruel humour which made him dreaded by everyone; he gave him pensions sufficient to maintain a royal train; he sent him often prelates and men of State who were to have credit over his mind, to try to soften him and to make him take the inclinations of a father for the peoples, and he was ready to cede him the crown, if he had seen a change in his morals. But this prince, far from corresponding to the holy inclinations of Ladislas, did what he could to destroy him and laid for him even snares where, under pretext of a parley, he was to kill him. This obliged our Saint, warned of his perfidy, to secure his person, and to put him in prison in Visegrad, a fortress of Hungary; but it was not for long; for, having learned from a holy nun that this conduct was not agreeable to God, and that it was for this that the stone of the tomb of Saint Stephen, which he had wished to have raised to transfer his sacred body, had remained immovable, he set him at liberty and treated him with every sort of humanity. Afterwards, this despoiled king entered into various wars against the neighbouring princes, rather as chief of bandits than as great captain; but, having one day been entirely defeated, he was constrained to flee quite alone into a thick forest, from which he did not return. The historians say that he was so powerfully touched there by the spirit of penance, that he passed several years there in solitude in tears and continual groans, and without having other bed than the leaves of trees, other garment than a hair-shirt and some skins of wild beasts, nor other food than herbs which he found in the woods, or some wild apples with the stagnant water of marshes; and that at last he died there very holily and was buried at Pola, a city of Istria. This gives us subject to admire the infinite goodness of Our Lord, who lowers men to raise them, who wounds them to heal them, and who reduces them to the extremity of misery to make them enter into the way of true happiness. Solomon having disappeared in this manner, Ladislas had nothing more in his States which could

oppose the good regulations that he wished to establish there. So he had a synod assembled, where in his presence several fine ordinances were made to contain his subjects in justice and in the observance of the divine law; and they were afterwards reduced into three books which we have at the end of the History of Hungary, by Bonfinius. His example was still more efficacious to maintain the Hungarians in their duty, than all his laws; for he ordered nothing that he did not do first, and he was so faithful an observer of all the commandments of God and of the Church, that one might call him himself a living law, which represented to each what he was obliged to do. His palace was so well regulated, that one heard neither oath, nor blasphemy, nor dishonest words: the ecclesiastical fasts were exactly kept there, and one lived there with so much restraint, that it resembled rather a religious house than the court of a king. He had been very zealous in building churches, where the praises of God might be sung continually; he founded still others since his accession to the crown, above all the celebrated basilica of Our Lady of Varadin, which was erected into a bishopric; he assisted very assiduously at the divine offices, and passed often several hours in prayer in these places of devotion. His mercy toward the needy, far from diminishing by his exaltation, increased on the contrary notably, and not only did he study to make no new ones by the multiplication of imposts and subsidies, but he applied himself also with all his power to relieve those who were so or who became so by the misfortune of their affairs.

He had great wars during his reign: he was attacked by the Huns, the Russians, the Poles, the Bohemians, and other neighbouring peoples. But he repulsed them always, and gained even over them signal victories, principally over the Huns whom he defeated twice entirely, and over the Poles, from whom he took Cracow, which was the capital of the kingdom. Before setting out for war, he always had public prayers made and a fast of three days; and, although he took care to assemble good troops, that he marched always at the head and that he threw himself courageously on the enemy, he put not nevertheless his confidence in his forces, but only in the help of God, which he implored with great instance. After so many generous exploits, his greatest desire was to lead an army against the infidels, to retake from them the Holy Land, and to deliver from their hands the tomb of Jesus Christ. The hope which he had of shedding his blood for the glory of his Master, and of becoming a martyr, animated him principally to this expedition. A very favourable occasion presented itself: for the celebrated Peter the Hermit had preached on all sides the crusade by the order of Pope Urban II. The princes of France, of Spain and of England, who had taken the cross, sent a celebrated embassy to our holy king, to pray him to be the chief of the army which they were preparing, and which was to be not less than three hundred thousand men. Ladislas received this offer with an incredible joy, and, having also engaged the duke of Bohemia, his nephew, in so noble an enterprise, he prepared for it with all possible diligence; but God had disposed otherwise: for, when he awaited only the time to go and make him reign in Palestine, by exterminating the Saracens, who had made themselves masters of it, he was himself called into heaven to reign there eternally with Jesus Christ. Bonfinius says that it was on 30 July 1093, and the eighteenth year of his reign; but the Roman martyrology has put his memory on 27 June, which is the day on which the translation of his relics took place.

One cannot express the grief with which all Hungary was filled when the news of his death was spread there: each regretted him as the father of the poor, as the support of the State, as the restorer of piety and of justice, as the defender of virginity, as the support of the Church and as the model of all holiness. They wore mourning for him for three years, and, during all this time, there was made no rejoicing either public or private in all the kingdom. His body was borne solemnly to Varadin, to be buried in the church of Our Lady, which he had founded. Two miracles rendered the convoy very celebrated. Those who conducted it fell asleep so profoundly at the last lodging, by the great weariness in which they were, that they rose only at three o'clock of the day; the car in which was the holy body went by itself toward Varadin, without being drawn by any horse, and reached so quickly the place which the blessed king had marked for his sepulture, that it arrived there before the conductors could overtake it. One of the troop having said that the same body smelt ill, against the testimony of all the others, who assured that it exhaled a very agreeable odour, his

mouth was turned at once, and his chin attached itself so to his shoulder that it was impossible for him to rise until he had recognised his fault and asked pardon of the Saint. Afterwards there were made so many miracles at his tomb, that, no one being able to doubt his holiness, Pope Celestine III, or Innocent III, his successor, canonised him in the year 1199; and, the same year, he gave feet and hands to a little child who had come into the world without having any of these members.

Our Saint is ordinarily represented with two angels at his sides: these are the two guardian angels whom Solomon, relative of the young prince, saw near Ladislas when he made war on him. It is reported besides that Ladislas being dead, his coffin was carried by two angels as far as the church which this Saint had had built in honour of the most holy Virgin. — He is seen sometimes holding in the same hand his rosary and his sabre; this was his ordinary manner of charging the enemy; happy and salutary inspiration which would find to-day many critics, but of which he never had to repent. — Rather ordinarily he is painted with the Hungarian standard, to show that his charity, his prayers and his pious foundations did not prevent him from being a redoubtable and valiant prince. — Nothing prevents putting a church in his hands, since he is the founder of numerous basilicas and notably of the cathedral dedicated to Our Lady in the city of Varadin. — The Hungarian prints present him to us frequently making spring from a steep rock, with his lance, a fountain of living water with which he quenches the thirst of his soldiers whom he leads to war. — Artists do not disdain to paint him sometimes with the imperial globe surmounted by the cross, because he refused the empire which the German princes offered him. — Finally, the battle-axe or the lance which is put rather often in his hand is an allusion either to his duel with an enemy chief, or to the blow of the lance which made spring forth the miraculous fountain of which we have spoken, or, in general, to his warlike virtues.

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. Godescard and all the hagiographers.

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[1] John was a Breton; he was a holy priest by whose hands the Lord deigned to work many miraculous cures. He lived far from the sight of men, in a solitude some distance from the church of Chinon. His cell was surrounded by a little garden which he cultivated, and in which he had planted laurels in the shade of which he sat to read or to write. Saint Radegund, fearing that Clotaire, her husband, would drag her by force from her solitude, sent to the venerable John, solitary near the castle of Chinon, a royal ornament of the greatest price, asking him in return for his hair-shirt, and commending herself to his prayers. The holy man, after a night passed in prayer, had word sent to the queen that she had nothing to fear from the king. He died, laden with merits, and was buried in his oratory near the church of Saint Maxim. — Proper of Tours.

[2] See 8 August.

[3] See 14 October.

[4] He is called by the Hungarians Saint Lalo. He was anciently called in France Saint Lancelot.

28 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The Vigil of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul. — At Rome, Saint Leo II, pope. 683. — At Lyons, Saint Irenaeus, bishop and martyr, who, on the testimony of Saint Jerome, was disciple of Saint Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and almost contemporary with the Apostles. This Saint, after having strongly combated the heretics, both by his discourses and by his writings, obtained the crown of a glorious martyrdom, with almost all his people, during the persecution of Severus. About 202. — At Alexandria, during the same persecution of Severus, the holy martyrs Plutarch, Serenus, Heraclitus, a catechumen; Heron, a neophyte; another Serenus, with the holy women Rhais, a catechumen, Potamiaena, virgin, and Marcella, her mother. Among these Martyrs shone above all the virgin Potamiaena, who sustained first frequent and rude combats for her virginity, then endured unheard-of torments for the faith, and was at last consumed in the flames with her mother. 202. — The same day, Saint Papias, martyr, who under the persecution of Diocletian, having been

scourged, thrown into a cauldron full of boiling oil and fat, and tormented by other horrible torments, had at last his head cut off, and thus carried off the crown. 4th century. — At Utrecht, Saint Benignus, bishop and martyr. — At Cordova, Saint Argimirus, monk and martyr, who was killed for the faith of Jesus Christ during the persecution of the Arabs. 856. — At Rome, Saint Paul I, pope and confessor. 767.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Lyons, Saint Zacharias, successor of Saint Irenaeus on the archiepiscopal see of this city. It seems that he escaped the great carnage which was made of the Christians at the time of the martyrdom of this holy doctor, only to strengthen what remained of Christians in the city, and to draw from this little seed, by the assiduity of his preaching, a rich and abundant harvest. The ancient chronicles of Lyons report that before the massacre an angel appeared to Saint Irenaeus while he was praying and said to him: “Go, seek the priest Zacharias, for he is to succeed thee after thy martyrdom and confirm his brethren in the faith.” Zacharias escaped, in effect, the sword of the persecutors and buried the body of his blessed master in the crypt of Saint John, on the mountain, between the tombs of Saint Epipodius and Saint Alexander. Then he had a large pit dug where were deposited the bodies of the martyrs lying in the public square, which he was able to remove with the help of some of the faithful. He filled with these bloody remains the well or baptistery which is found at the entrance of the catacomb. 3rd century. — At Auch, Saint Lupercus or Luperc, martyr. He suffered at Eauze, under the Emperor Decius. The Church of Eauze (Gers), ancient metropolis of all the province of Aquitaine, honoured him as its patron, and it is agreed to regard him as one of the first bishops of this same Church. Nevertheless some learned men think that he must not 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 eleventh century an abbey which bore the name of Saint-Lupercule of Eauze. The Church of Tarbes keeps the feast of this holy martyr on 5 March, the day on which he is mentioned in the martyrology of France. 3rd century. — At Sens, Saint Theodechild or Thechild, virgin. Daughter of Thierry I, king of Austrasia, or even, according to the Bollandists, of Clovis I, she became queen of the Varni or Arverni. Her husband reigned over a part of Burgundy, of Champagne and of Auvergne. Theodechild founded at Sens the monastery of Saint-Pierre le Vif (*S. Petrus Vivus Senonensis*, Order of Saint Benedict, under the patronage of the saints Peter, Paul and Savinian), took the veil there and died there. Venantius Fortunatus praises in his poems the charity and the other virtues of this pious queen. About the year 600. — In the diocese of Quimper, Saint Leo II, pope, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the ancient abbey of Flavigny (*Flaviniacum*, in the Côte-d’Or, Order of Saint Benedict, under the patronage of Saint Prix, bishop of Clermont and martyr), Saint Eigil or Egilon, sixteenth abbot of this monastery. First abbot of Prüm, five miles from Trèves, he was called about 860 by Charles the Bald to restore the abbey of Flavigny, in the diocese of Dijon. He transferred there the relics of Saint Reine, virgin and martyr. He founded the abbey of Corbigny (*Cerbiniacum*, in the Yonne) which depended long on Flavigny and ended by freeing itself. Eigil was afterwards archbishop of Sens (865–870). He died after a life consecrated entirely to charitable and pious works, and was buried in the chapel of Saint Stephen, to the left of the high altar, in the abbey of Saint-Pierre le Vif. 871. — In Brittany, Saint Austolus, priest, religious under Saint Mevennus, of whom we have spoken on 21 June. He loved his abbot with so tender a love that he succumbed to grief seven days after the death of Saint Mevennus. His worship was formerly established in the abbey of which he was a religious, and the church of this ancient monastery (Saint-Méen) still possesses a small portion of his relics. 617. — Again in Brittany, Saint Maelmon, former bishop of Saint-Malo. He had relations of friendship with Saint Judicael, king of a part of Brittany, and made himself remarkable all his life by his inexhaustible charity toward the poor. 638.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Basilians. — Saint George Limniotes, monk of the order of Saint Basil, who, for having reproved the impious Leo, emperor, because he broke the holy images and burnt the relics of the saints, had

his hands cut off and his head burnt by order of this prince, and flew to the Lord with the glory of martyrdom. His memory is kept on 24 August. About 736.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The Vigil of the holy apostles Peter and Paul. — At Rome, Saint Leo II, pope, who was a canon regular before being sovereign Pontiff.

Martyrology of the Benedictines. — The same as with the Canons Regular.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Leo II, pope and confessor, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In Africa, the saints Fabian, Felix, Arion, Capitolinus, Nisius, Elaphus, Venustus, Crescens, Alexander, Theon, Pleosus, Astesius, Apollonius, Amphamon, Phisocus, Melas, Denis, Ilinus, Panne, Plebrus, Panubrus, Dioscorus, Turbon, Capitolinus, Micas, Gurdin, all martyrs, mentioned among others by the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Alexandria, before Saint Plutarch and his seven companions, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day, the saints Theodore, Pastaphus, Tytirus, Denise, Passimus, Phesicus, Distus, Ambenus, Ariosus, Dioscorus, Orion, Simerus, Turbon, Capitulinus, and eighteen others, martyrs, cited by the four apographs of the martyrology of Saint Jerome, and by Eusebius who describes their martyrdom summarily. 202. — Among the Greeks, Saint Macedonius and two holy children, martyrs; Saint Lucian and Saint Paul, physician, confessors, cited by an old manuscript synaxarion of Dijon. Macedonius had his feet and hands cut off; the two children were attached to a cross; Lucian and Paul died in prison before the day fixed for their torment. — The holy martyrs Pontarius, Nemesius, Secundinus and Maximus, whose names are found in a martyrology of Monte Cassino, but whose country is totally unknown. — At

Scythopolis, in Palestine, the feast of seventy Martyrs, indicated by a synaxarion of Dijon, but whose names are unknown to us. — In Galatia, the feast of three martyrs who died by the sword. — In the landgraviate of Hesse, Saint Heimerad, priest. His virtues, which shone in the eyes of all the world, made him hated in his country still idolatrous. He came then to Rome and visited the tomb of the Apostles; he traversed afterwards all the holy places of Jerusalem. On these occasions, he was accompanied by a faithful friend who performed the office of Martha and provided for the needs of the journey while our Saint gave himself to contemplation after the example of Mary. The greater part of the alms which he received, he distributed on the spot to the poor whom he met on his way. His companion complained of it and said to him sometimes: “Master, what shall we eat to-day? There is so little provision that I fear we shall have to fast to-morrow.” And the Saint answered: “Well! let us fast to-day,” and every day he made the same answer. He entered several monasteries, but, as he did not find the life there edifying enough to his liking, he went out of them. Everywhere he had to suffer from men who, not being able to comprehend so much virtue, took our Saint for a visionary. He had even to undergo rather harsh treatment from Saint Meinwerk and Saint Cunegund who, under the coarse husk of the traveller, did not yet distinguish the soul so fair which was the delight of God. He died in Westphalia, foretold the day of his death, and announced that a monastery would rise at the place where he should render his soul to God. His predictions were realised. A number of miracles illustrated his tomb. 1019. — At Nicomedia, Saint Sergius, master of the militia, founder of the monastery of Nicetiate, at the bottom of the ancient gulf of Nicomedia (present gulf of Isaikmid). 9th century.

Saint Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Doctor of the Church and Martyr

120–202. — Popes: Saint Sixtus I; Saint Zephyrinus. — Emperors: Hadrian; Septimius Severus.

Beatissimus Irenæus, Photini successor martyris, qui a beato Polycarpo Lugdunensem ad urbem directus est, admirabili virtute enituit.

Irenaeus, successor of the martyr Saint Pothinus, given for bishop to the city of Lyons by the blessed Polycarp, appears to me with a brilliant aureole of virtues.

Saint Irenaeus was born about the year 120 of Jesus Christ; he was a Greek and, by all appearances, of Asia Minor, where he passed his first years. His parents, who were Christians, put him under the guidance of Saint Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who brought him up with a paternal tenderness in the love of the Lord and the practice of His law. The young Irenaeus, cultivated by hands so skilful, grew in innocence, in the midst of the examples of virtue which the flourishing Christian community of Smyrna also gave him. Saint Irenaeus had conceived for Saint Polycarp a veneration so profound that, little content to penetrate himself with his doctrine and his spirit, he studied all his actions, observing carefully even his step and his gait. He divided all his young age between the practice of virtue, the meditation of the holy Scriptures and the study of the apostolic traditions. At the school of Saint Polycarp, he grew in grace and in wisdom; his happy dispositions and his piety excited a general admiration in the midst of a Church whose virtues were nevertheless so admirable. The law of the Lord had for him such powerful attractions that he could not tire of hearing it or of speaking of it. When he was not attending the lessons of the holy bishop of Smyrna, or could not converse with him, he went to find the most respectable men of this Christian community, but above all the old men who had had the happiness of seeing and hearing the Apostles; he begged them to relate to him what they had learned from them; and these narratives were engraved no less deeply in his heart than the instructions of Saint Polycarp.

In the works which he has left us, he speaks often, without naming him, of a holy old man who had given him the explanation of some difficult passages of Scripture. He cites Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, whom he had been able to see and hear at Smyrna, when the latter came to confer with Saint Polycarp on the affairs of religion. (It is doubtless this which has made Saint Jerome say that Saint Irenaeus had been disciple of Papias.) He makes mention also of several other disciples of the Apostles who had spoken to him of Jesus Christ and of the glory of His elect after the resurrection.

Irenaeus, in the designs of Providence, was destined, in a sort, to bind the times of the Apostles to the age which was to follow them; and the Lord reserved to him the glory of transmitting to the later ages the apostolic traditions, and of marching at the head of that imposing succession of defenders of which the Church was never to be wanting. So God, whose wisdom always proportions the means to the ends which He proposes, had inspired in our Saint, for the doctrine and the glory of Jesus Christ, a love which, from his childhood, absorbed his whole soul.

Polycarp, faithful interpreter of the divine will, beheld with extreme pleasure the progress which his young disciple was making in the knowledge proper to his vocation: he loved him tenderly; his joy was to see him worthy of the complacency of the Lord, and loved by all the Christian community. The holy bishop of Smyrna did not wait until Irenaeus, in whom wisdom and piety outstripped the years, had reached the ordinary age to admit him into the ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He conferred on him successively all the orders as far as the diaconate. The dignity of deacon imposed then numerous and difficult obligations. Irenaeus understood them and fulfilled them all with that spirit of faith and piety which ought always to preside over the evangelical ministry. He assisted, at the holy sacrifice, the ministers of the altars, watched over the order of the ceremonies, exhorted the people to prayer, preached to them the word of salvation, distributed to them the body and blood of Jesus Christ, called down upon them the peace and the blessings of the Lord and sent them away edified and consoled; he gathered the alms of the faithful and went then to distribute them, in the name of Jesus Christ, to the indigent, the widows, the orphans, the infirm and above all to the holy confessors detained in chains for the cause of the faith; with bodily relief, he gave them always the consolations of religion, revived their courage, raised their hopes, preached to them and inspired them with the love of the divine Master. He informed himself of the needs of the Church, warned the bishop of them, from whom he received with joy the mission to supply them. Then, travelling through the Christian community, he carried everywhere the advices or the exhortations of Polycarp, put all the children in touch with the father; maintained among all the spirit of peace, of union and of charity; he raised some from their

fall, prevented others from falling, and revived or maintained everywhere fervour. His zeal responded to the solicitude of Polycarp; this respectable prelate rested upon the young and holy levite for his paternal cares, admitted him to the thorniest affairs of his Church, and entrusted to him very important ones.

In all these circumstances, Irenaeus displayed virtues and talents which promised an apostle to religion. Obliged to instruct the faithful and to forearm them against the snares of error, he had to make shine then the profound knowledge which he had acquired of the holy Scriptures and of the profane sciences. He had studied the first by taste and with love; the others, by necessity. Saint Ignatius and Saint Polycarp exhorted the Christians to close their ears to the perfidious insinuations of the heretics and the impious, who sought to ravish from them the treasure of the faith. These doctors of lying multiplied then in a frightful manner, spread through all Asia and strove to sow error in the most flourishing Christian communities. A colony of these heretics, observing the course of the conquests of religion, pursued it as far as the Gauls, where it had just introduced itself. The frequent commerce between the maritime cities of the West and those of Asia Minor, the Greek letters taught in the numerous schools of southern Gaul, whole tribes of Asiatic merchants established in these same countries, were so many circumstances which favoured the pernicious projects of these seducers; they understood it only too well; they set out therefore in great number from Asia, landed in the Phocaean ports of the Mediterranean, and going up the Rhône as far as Lyons, the Garonne as far as its mouth, the Saône as far as the Vosges, spread the plague of their errors in the countries which these rivers water and in the neighbouring cities.

While waiting for it to be given to Irenaeus to come and combat heresy in the West, he repulsed it in the East and preserved from it the Church of Smyrna. The meditation of holy Scripture, the assiduous reading of the epistles of the Apostles, of Saint Ignatius and of the other apostolic men of the same time, the lessons and the example of Saint Polycarp, had inspired in him an ardent love for the faith and the glory of Jesus Christ, and a sovereign horror for heresy, which wished to corrupt and alter the doctrine of the Gospel. In the desire and the intention of defending the one and of combating the other, Saint Irenaeus had made a particular study of the numerous systems of Gnosticism: he had penetrated with disgust, but with devotedness, into the chaos of the fables of paganism and into the maze of the errors of heresy. The study of paganism and of heresies appeared to him necessary; from then on, he did not hesitate to make to the Gospel the sacrifice of his repugnances and of his disgusts in order to make it more surely that of error. Like a general who examines the strong and the weak of a place of which he meditates the siege, he explored attentively the enemy camps which he was to attack; he acquired so extended and so exact a knowledge of the systems of the heretics, of the theogonies of the pagans, of the works of their poets, of their orators, of their philosophers and of their pretended sacred books, that he could indicate to the sectaries the shameful sources whence they had drawn their lies and their reveries; he proved, in effect, to the Valentinians that they had borrowed their maxims and their principles from Antiphanes, from Thales, from Anaximander, from Anaxagoras, from Democritus, from Empedocles, from Epicurus, from Hesiod, from the Stoics, the Cynics, the Peripatetics, the Pythagoreans; he showed them the passages of these authors which they had truncated or forced to accommodate them to their imaginations, that such a part of their system was modelled on such a place of an ancient author whom he cited to them. So the vast knowledge which Irenaeus had acquired for the glory of Jesus Christ has not excited less the admiration of the holy Fathers than his virtues, his talents and his genius: Tertullian, who drew from the works of our Saint the foundation of his book against the Valentinians, calls him a man versed in all the sciences. Saint Epiphanius represents him to us advancing nobly to the combat, surrounded by the lights of faith and by all the aids of science. Saint Ephrem finds magnificence in his doctrine; it appears as a luminous torch to Theodoret, who often leans on the authority of this admirable doctor; in a word, all sacred antiquity has spoken of Irenaeus as of a saint equally versed in the divine and the human sciences, and has praised the noble use that he made of his talents, in all the circumstances of his life. He was scarcely admitted into the hierarchy of the Church, when already he promised to religion a glorious defender, and to heresy an indomitable adversary. While waiting for the time to come to oppose him to the enemies of the Church,

Providence had put him in the school of zeal and of virtue, and Irenaeus, always faithful to the will of his God, laboured for the glory of Jesus Christ in the circle of his attributions. The zeal of Irenaeus was inflamed with a new ardour when he saw set out from Smyrna the missionaries whom Polycarp sent into the Gauls; but the moment marked by Providence not having yet arrived, Irenaeus continued to make the edification of the Christian community of Smyrna, to fulfil the functions which Saint Polycarp entrusted to him, to prepare himself for the designs of the Lord and to desire in the practice of all the virtues the day when He would be pleased to dispose of him.

The Church of Lyons, which had at its head Saint Pothinus, whose forces, weakened by age, labours and infirmities, served ill the ardour of his zeal, soon claimed new help. Saint Pothinus made known to Saint Polycarp the state of his people and begged him to interest himself in the preservation of a Church which owed to him such happy beginnings.

Saint Irenaeus, whom Providence had destined for this mission, had received from heaven signs of vocation to which his holy master remained no stranger. He was then in the strength of age, nourished on the divine Scriptures, skilful in human letters, perfect in the practice of all the virtues, and united in himself all the qualities which the needs of the Lyonnese Christian community required.

The Gnostics, who set out from Asia almost at the same time as Pothinus, raised for the holy missionary the most serious obstacles; already they infected with their errors the countries which the Rhône waters; their prestiges and the corruption of their morals made them a great number of adepts, above all among persons of the female sex. The pagans, incapable of distinguishing the true Church from a sect which gave itself also the title of Christian, might confound, as they did in effect confound, the one with the other, and accuse the Catholics of the turpitudes and the errors of the Gnostics. The advantages of heresy were so many losses for truth, and if the former succeeded in establishing its reign at Lyons, the latter was going to be excluded from it perhaps for ever. It was important therefore for the preachers of the Gospel to triumph, from the first times, over an enemy who laboured to supplant them in their new conquest.

Saint Polycarp measured the greatness of the need of his cherished mission and was frightened at the danger which it ran. He understood that he needed a man capable of arresting error and of propagating truth; a man who, by his knowledge, could reduce the sectaries to silence, win new disciples to Jesus Christ and edify the faithful by his virtues. The mission was great and difficult, but it was not above Irenaeus; it was upon him that the choice of Saint Polycarp fixed itself. This venerable old man preferred to separate from a disciple so dear and to deprive his Church of so firm a support, than to let the torch of faith be extinguished in the Gauls, at the breath of error. He would have feared, besides, to oppose a vocation which God had manifested to him by so many brilliant signs. He sent him therefore where the Spirit of God called him, and joined to him collaborators capable of seconding his zeal and sharing his labours. The love of Saint Irenaeus for Jesus Christ and for religion will give us the measure of the joy and the happiness which he must have felt when Saint Polycarp imposed on him this important mission. He received it with as much respect as if the Lord in person had given it to him, and he thought no more than of fulfilling it.

The arrival of Saint Irenaeus and of his companions at Lyons was, for the Christian community of this city, the dawn of a happy future. Saint Pothinus welcomed with transports of joy, and blessed in the name of the Lord, the apostles whom heaven sent to his aid. His happiness surpassed his hopes, when he had come to know all the merit of Irenaeus; for, scarcely arrived in the field where the father of the family had sent him, this new workman set himself to cultivate it with an ardour which gave it a new fruitfulness; his zeal, his knowledge, his love of peace and the gift which he had of maintaining it everywhere, made the edification of his brethren and the happiness of this nascent Church. It was then that Saint Pothinus raised the young apostle to the priesthood. Irenaeus honoured his august character by a more ardent piety, a more active zeal; the more confounded by this dignity as he knew better its greatness and its obligations, he redoubled efforts to fulfil the views and correspond to the kindnesses of the Lord. His virtues then shone with so lively a

brightness that they drew upon him the public veneration, and that he was commonly given the title of zealot of the New Testament: and when the Christian community of Lyons deputed him to Rome for the affairs of the Church, it alleged no other title for him to the protection of the sovereign Pontiff than his zeal and his holiness, without making valid the right which the sacerdotal dignity gave him. The instructions and the examples of Irenaeus produced happy and abundant fruits; by his cares, a people of Saints grew under the satisfied looks of Pothinus; this venerable old man, already bent under twenty years of apostolate, could no longer suffice for the ardours of his zeal; he was however still the soul of his Church: he directed everything by his wisdom; his people was his family, all the Christians were his children; all cherished and venerated him as their father. One would have said the Christian community of Smyrna transported into the Gauls. Our Saint, whose modesty equalled his merits, regarded moreover his bishop as his oracle, he spoke and acted only by his orders and according to his counsels; heaven smiled upon this angelic peace and blessed a society so worthy of it. Saint Irenaeus has left us a touching picture of the virtues of which the Church of his time offered to the world the ravishing spectacle, and of the miracles which God then wrought in its bosom. He names no Church in particular, but because he speaks of them as of things which he had seen with his own eyes, we doubt not that all he says may be applied to the Christian community which he edified and of which his humility will have kept the name silent. “To some,” says this great Saint, “the Lord unveils the future and charges them to announce events which human perspicacity cannot foresee; he gives to others the power to drive out demons, to heal the most inveterate diseases, and to recall to life inanimate bodies; the dead raised have lived long in the midst of us. To these he grants the gift of tongues; he discovers to those the secrets of hearts; nothing appears impossible to the liveliness of their faith, to the ardour of their prayers; Jesus Christ never refuses anything to wishes that are formed for his glory.”

At the same time, the Church of Asia, which that of Lyons recognised for its mother, was attacked by the errors of the Montanists. The faithful, in this double affliction, thought that they ought to inform the Pope of what was passing among them, as well to receive from him some consolation, as to consult him on the new heresies of Montanus, for fear that they should glide into their Church as they were beginning to do in that of Asia. They judged also that it was their duty to write to their brethren of Asia, to exhort them to persevere generously in the Catholic faith against the detestable inventions of the heretics, who tried to corrupt them. The priest Irenaeus was chosen to be the bearer of these two important epistles: Pothinus, to whom had joined themselves some other prelates of the Gauls, and the holy confessors prisoners being persuaded that no one was more capable than he of this legation. He betook himself therefore to Rome, to the sovereign pontiff Eleutherus, who had just taken the government of the Church, after the death of Saint Soter, carried off in the persecution of Marcus Aurelius; he proposed to him his doubts on the new doctrine of the Montanists, and, after having had an answer which confirmed the judgment which the bishops of the Gauls had passed on these errors, he took the road of Asia. It is easy to judge with what joy he was received by the faithful of this Church, where he had already made himself so illustrious by his erudition. He reassured their minds against the false dogmas of Montanus, showed them the sentiment of the Westerns, confirmed by the authority of the Holy See, touching his errors, and exhorted them to remain firm and unshaken in the faith of Jesus Christ. Nauclerus, Vincent of Beauvais and Hugh, monk of Fleury, say that he found himself at a council assembled in the city of Caesarea, in Palestine, where ecclesiastical discipline was strongly established against the maxims of this heretic; nevertheless, Cardinal Baronius believes that he did not make this great journey and that he did not pass through Rome. Whatever it may be, it is constant that being in this last city, he saw the heresiarch Valentinus broken with old age, and two of his disciples, Florinus and Blastus, deposed from the priesthood by Eleutherus; he confounded them in the discussions which he had with them and drew a great number of persons from their impieties.

The demon, jealous of the ever-growing prosperity of the Christian community of Lyons, raised against it a violent persecution. All those who were interested in maintaining the reign of superstition awakened the attention of the magistrates, began to breathe into all hearts the hatred with which they were animated, and

stirred up the pagan populace against the Christians; their religion was more than ever turned into ridicule; their morals accused of infamy, their conduct treated as insubordination or disobedience to the laws of the empire, and contempt for the gods and the national religion. To render their persons odious, new calumnies were invented and retailed every day against them. The chiefs and the principal persons of the Christian community were those whom the most envenomed shafts of hatred sought. But Saint Pothinus attracted above all the looks and the attention of the ministers of the false gods. The Christians saw themselves insulted everywhere: they were driven back from assemblies; they were expelled ignominiously from the public places; they were hooted in the streets; often even, men of the dregs of the people, preluding the ferocity of the executioners and of the beasts, struck them, pursued them with stones; threatening murmurs rose from all sides; terrible anathemas burst out in the city; cries of death came to resound in the ears of the Christians as soon as they ventured to go out of their dwellings. These signs presaged to Saint Pothinus and to Saint Irenaeus sinister events: they understood that the time of trials had come. Pothinus saw with happiness approach the desired moment when, after the example of the Apostles and of his master Saint Polycarp, he was to give his life to Jesus Christ, and to cement by his blood the foundations of his Church. He reproached himself in some sort with the infirmities and the weakness of his age, which prevented him from going to show himself to his people and sustain their constancy in the midst of the evils which menaced them. But he knew the zeal and the courage of Irenaeus; he rested on him for his pastoral solicitude. Irenaeus, whose soul seemed to grow in proportion as the dangers increased, exposed a hundred times his life to revive the constancy of the faithful and prepare them for the last sacrifice which the Lord imposed on their faith and on their love. In effect, the pagan populace, impelled, directed by chiefs thirsting for the blood of the innocent, tore from their retreats the principal persons among the Christians, massacred some, dragged others to the prisons, whence they came out only to perish with more éclat, and to amuse, by their sufferings, the barbarous leisure of the idolatrous people.

The pagan magistrates having no more need of human victims to amuse the people, put a term to the massacre of the Christians of Lyons. They believed they had annihilated Christianity, or at least had spread among the rest of the faithful such a terror that henceforth they would no longer dare to practise their religion externally.

In effect, the pillars of the Christian community of Lyons were broken: the pastors had been struck and their sheep dispersed or slaughtered with them. The faithful who survived them, wandering hither and thither, hid themselves as they could from the eyes of the ravening wolves. The Lord protected them; as He had permitted that religion should be cemented in the world by the blood of martyrs, so also He had willed that martyrs should be at Lyons the foundations of a Church which was to give in the course of the centuries so much glory to His name.

The pagans had believed they had drowned this nascent Church in the blood of its children; but Irenaeus remained still to it: it was he whom the Lord had charged to cultivate a soil fertilised by the blood of martyrs. This great man understood all the importance and the difficulties of his mission; but nothing frightened his magnanimous heart. His courage, always superior to obstacles, grew with them; however, before putting his hand to the work, he thought he ought religiously to comply with the last wishes of the martyrs who had charged him to go to Rome, to lay at the feet of the sovereign Pontiff the pains which the ravages of the new heresies had caused to His most faithful children, and the wishes which they had formed for the peace of the Church and the union of all its members.

When the Martyrs entrusted this mission to Irenaeus, the circumstances seemed to have to force them to retain him near them; “but the charity of Jesus Christ pressed them”. Besides, the persecution had just immolated their father, and the Church of Lyons was without a pastor; it was urgent to give it one, and no one could occupy more worthily than Irenaeus the chair of Saint Pothinus. They had therefore deputed him to Rome with a particular letter of recommendation, in which they made to the holy pope Eleutherus the finest

eulogy of the virtues and qualities of him whom they had chosen for first pastor. “We have charged,” they said, “Irenaeus, our brother and our colleague, to bear you these letters. It is an ardent zealot of the Testament of Jesus Christ that we recommend to your paternity. He is also raised to the sacerdotal dignity, and we would still make this title valid, if rank gave merit.” There remains to us of this letter only a fragment preserved by Eusebius; the rest contained doubtless the prayer which the holy Martyrs made to the vicar of Jesus Christ to honour so many virtues with his approbation, and to confirm their choice by conferring on Saint Irenaeus the unction and the episcopal dignity.

A prayer which martyrs made to a holy Pope, in favour of a holy priest, could not be rejected. Eleutherus was happy to have to set over the guard of a part of the flock entrusted to his care a pastor so zealous, so vigilant and so skilful. Irenaeus, whose modesty equalled his merit, alone had to complain of a rank which was going to give him as a spectacle to all the Church; but it was an honour which imposed on him frightful sacrifices, and, to undergo them, he resigned himself to the episcopal dignity.

The occupation of our Saint, as soon as he saw himself on the episcopal chair, was to gather, so to say, the sad debris of this shipwreck, to collect his dispersed sheep and to fortify those whom the rage of the tyrants had terrified, in order to make faith and piety flourish again with still more éclat than before. He spared nothing to bring to an end so holy an enterprise: his words, his examples, his counsels, his knowledge, were the means which he used to make it succeed. In effect, he did so much by his prayers, by his preachings, by his exhortations, by his remonstrances and by his reprimands, employing first gentleness and persuasion, as the Apostle says, that he encouraged the timid, brought back the strayed, strengthened the weak, and finally rendered the faithful of the Church of Lyons models of virtue; so that we may say that their candour, their restraint in their words, their gentleness, the severity and the innocence of their life, their charity for their enemies and their greatest persecutors, their patience in injuries, their fidelity in trade, their remoteness from all ambition, their poverty, their chastity, their temperance, and, in a word, the visible, constant and uniform holiness of their life, contributed not a little to confound the adversaries of the Christian religion and to establish the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The same forerunning signs which had preceded the first tempest presaged soon a second. The Christians of Lyons were anew subjected to a vexatious surveillance, exposed to the calumnies, to the denunciations of their enemies, and finally hunted down in their peaceful retreats. The fire of the last persecution, which had never been entirely extinguished, was lighted again, and the violences recommenced. Irenaeus had foreseen it; he knew that his work was not that of man, and that God wished still victims who should be like the pledge of the future greatness of His Church.

The blood of the Martyrs flowed again in floods; but God, who laughs at the projects and the efforts of the princes and peoples conspired against Him and against His Christ, caused the tempest to cease, which He had permitted only for His glory and that of His Church. Besides, He destined Irenaeus to labours which required calm and peace: he was to oppose him to troops of adversaries who were not to be triumphed over by dying. The persecution ended therefore with the reign and the life of Marcus Aurelius. This prince, guilty of all the excesses which his officers exercised against the Christians, although he had not commanded them all, had seen himself again forced to take arms against the indomitable Marcomanni: he had already reached their country when, feeling himself attacked by a grave malady, he refused himself all nourishment and made himself die of hunger. Marcus Aurelius has left after him the reputation of a Stoic vain to the point of the ridiculous and the base, selfish to the point of cruelty, austere and fatalist in his maxims, inconsequent in his conduct. A bad husband, a negligent father, an odd monarch, he reigned only for himself, and all his ambition was to obtain the esteem or the flatteries of philosophism. Commodus, having succeeded Marcus Aurelius, deceased on 17 March of the year 181, the Church began to enjoy the sweetness of peace. This prince, whom Rome regarded as a second Nero, had, it is true, neither piety for his gods, nor respect for the most inviolable laws of nature, nor fidelity for his friends, nor regard for the innocence and merit of men; he spared nevertheless the blood of the Christians. God willing to use his tyranny to chastise those who, under

the reign of his father, had treated them so cruelly. Irenaeus understood the duties and the advantages which this calm gave to his zeal; to turn it to profit, he spared neither watchings nor sacrifices: his life was a devotedness of every day: no rest appeared to him legitimate. Full of admiration for the illustrious Polycarp, his master, he had the remembrance or rather the heart filled with his virtues, and he reproduced in his conduct the admirable examples of them. When the episcopal character had given him one more resemblance with his venerated master, he strove also to imitate, in the administration of his Church, a model formed himself at the school of the disciple who had reposed on the heart of Jesus Christ. So one remarks in the character and the conduct of Saint Irenaeus the great qualities which the apostle Saint John and Saint Polycarp his disciple had displayed; all those of his actions of which history has preserved the remembrance reveal an unalterable gentleness, an ardent charity for God and for the neighbour, the same love of peace, an unshaken firmness, a heroic courage. He knew that his new dignity put him in some sort at the disposal of all, and gave to each rights over his zeal; he chained himself therefore to the good and to the needs of all. Heaven poured abundant blessings on labours undertaken for its glory and pursued with so much devotedness. Irenaeus saw every day come and range themselves around him, in the shadow of the cross, a great number of infidels who, being unable to resist the ascendancy of his virtues nor the force of his instructions, deserted the altars of the false gods and swelled the ranks of the Christians. The conversions were so numerous, that when, a little later, the emperor Severus wished to destroy in Lyons the Christian religion, he was obliged to cause to perish almost all the population of this great city.

The zeal of Irenaeus was not confined to his Church. Paganism reigned still in the empire, and Gnosticism attempted everywhere to snatch from the Gospel its new conquests. However Providence and the love of his people kept our Saint fixed at this post, and he could not abandon it to fly everywhere where there were enemies to combat. He strove therefore to multiply himself in his disciples, and raised up against paganism and heresy redoubtable adversaries, who were going in his name to attack them and combat them on all points.

This is why, without ceasing to devote himself to his people, Irenaeus gave a particular attention to the clergy of his Church, in imitation of the great bishop of Smyrna, whose clergy had always been a seminary of apostles. The example of his virtues, the éclat of his lights, the lessons of his experience, formed for the sanctuary ministers worthy of their high functions and conformable to the idea which he had made himself of the holiness of their state. Under the inspiration of the illustrious doctor, Lyons became in the West what Smyrna had been in the East, the hearth of tradition, the gymnasium where orthodoxy strengthened itself by the discussion of doctrines, by the struggle against heresy. People came there from all points of the Christian world, and there were formed there doctors famous in their turn, who, leaning on the teachings of Irenaeus, surrounded this name with the lively and pious remembrance with which Irenaeus himself had surrounded the name of his masters.

The city of Valence, situated on the banks of the Rhône, below Lyons, fixed first the attention of Irenaeus; commerce had attracted there several families of Asiatic merchants. The voice of the first preachers of the Gospel had resounded there only faintly until then, as in the other parts of the Gauls. Paganism reigned there without a rival, and Gnosticism, run up from the East, far from giving it uneasiness, helped it on the contrary to destroy in this country the traces which the passage of religion might have left. But their empire could neither establish itself, nor subsist beside, so to say, Irenaeus. This holy bishop raised up against them three adversaries who were to destroy their work. Sent to Valence by Irenaeus, the saints Felix, priest, Fortunatus and Achilleus, deacons, came therefore to raise in this city the altar of Jesus Christ against the altars of the false gods. The preaching of these three disciples of Irenaeus, joined to the holiness of their life, and sustained by the authority of miracles, won in a short time a great number of souls to Jesus Christ.

The saints Ferreolus and Ferjeux, intimate friends of the first three apostles of Valence, and, like them, formed at the school of the great Irenaeus, obtained the same successes by the same means, in the country of

the Sequani which their holy master had assigned to their zeal.[1] The one and the other received, some years after, under Caracalla, a reward worthy of their labours, the palm of martyrdom.

It was little to Irenaeus to establish in the Gauls the religion of Jesus Christ. He formed still other disciples who, with the title of bishops of the nations, should go to preach and defend the Gospel in all parts of the universe. These admirable men, says Eusebius of Caesarea, imitating the zeal of their masters, raised the edifice of religion where the Apostles had laid the foundations of it: they laboured with an indefatigable application at the preaching of the faith, spread through all the earth the seed of the divine word, made Jesus Christ known to those who still ignored His name, and explained to them His holy law. When these apostolic men had solidly established religion in an infidel country, they entrusted to stable pastors the care of the souls which they had acquired to Jesus Christ; then they pursued in other countries the course of their spiritual conquests. God accompanied them everywhere, His grace strengthened them, and the Holy Spirit wrought, by His servants, and in favour of their ministry, prodigies as brilliant as numerous; so it was not rare to see whole peoples stirred at their voice, and enter in crowds into the Church of Jesus Christ.

While Saint Irenaeus was forming for religion Apostles and Doctors, he strove to bring back to the Church the unfaithful ministers who had deserted it for schism and heresy. As he had not had time enough at Rome to combat the errors of Valentinus and of the other heretics, whose party increased from day to day, he took the pen to refute them: which he did with as much solidity as erudition and good faith. He convinced them principally by the apostolic traditions kept inviolably by the Roman Church, from Saint Peter to the Pope under whom he wrote.

Our Saint showed no less zeal for the establishment of peace and the concord of the Church, than he had shown in his writings and in his discussions for the purity of the faith. The difference touching the celebration of Easter having awakened in almost all the Churches, Pope Saint Victor I had a synod assembled at Rome, where it was ordained that this feast should be on the Sunday after the fourteenth of the moon of March, conformably to apostolic tradition. Polycarp, bishop of Ephesus, made it resolved, on the contrary, in an assembly of the bishops of Asia, that, following their ancient custom, they should celebrate it on the fourteenth of the moon, as it had been celebrated by Jesus Christ Himself, and as it was in the old law, on which he wrote a synodal Epistle to the Pope. This decree of the Asiatics was very ill received by Saint Victor; he declared it contrary to apostolic tradition and to the general custom of the Church, made them a very rude answer and threatened to excommunicate them. Our Saint foresaw that this rigour would have unfortunate consequences; having caused to be assembled a Synod of bishops where the decree of Saint Victor was received, he wrote him a letter in the name of all, in which he represented to him that he ought to moderate his zeal and use gentleness rather than rigour; that it was not just to cut off so great a number of Churches from the universal Church, for an observance which their fathers had kept; that it was much more fitting to preserve union with his brethren, after the example of his predecessors, Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus and Sixtus, who failed not to send the Eucharist (mark at that time of ecclesiastical union) to those who did not celebrate Easter on the same day as the Roman Church. He added other rather pressing things and a little strong to oblige him to have more indulgence for the bishops of Asia. He wrote also several other letters to Churches and to bishops, to exhort them to remain submissive to the Holy See and to conform to the decree of Saint Victor. It is thus that he procured a great tranquillity to the Church, even when it was menaced by a furious tempest, which would have been capable of making it lose an infinity of faithful. All the bishops applauded so happy an issue and blessed Irenaeus who, great according to his name, had appeared among his brethren as an angel of peace, and re-established between them those relations of charity so recommended by the divine Master.

On his side, this venerable old man rendered thanks to God for a success so ardently desired; he had lived enough, since he saw with his eyes peace reign anew among the children of God; he could end in joy a life which he had consecrated entirely to the glory of Jesus Christ and to the salvation of his brethren; he had

fought the battles of the Lord; he had arrived triumphant at the end of his course, nothing remained to him therefore but to receive the crown which the God of all justice prepared for him. But martyrdom alone could worthily crown so many labours and virtues; and the Lord, who had destined His servant to avenge the truth, to glorify His name among men, required still of him this last testimony of love, the most beautiful that a Christian can give to his God, in order that His providence might unite on him the rewards which it prepares for confessors, for virgins, for pontiffs, for doctors and for martyrs.

While Saint Irenaeus edified his Church by the éclat of his virtues and by the purity of his doctrine, Septimius Severus, after having left the faithful some time in repose, and even having defended them on several occasions against the popular fury, in recognition of what he had received his health from a Christian named Proculus, whom he kept near his person until his death, soon ceased to show them the same benevolence. Then there was everywhere a frightful explosion of threats: cries of death rose anew from all parts of the empire and devoted the Christians to the lions.

But nowhere did idolatry unchain itself against the Christians with more fury than in the city of Lyons. The vengeance which Severus had made weigh upon it (some time before, had revealed their innocence: the pagans had not forgotten it. Scarcely had they come out of the stupor into which the wrath of the conqueror had thrown them, than, measuring the whole greatness of the disasters the sight of which seemed still to accuse them, they drew even from their misfortunes a new rage against innocent Christians who wept, over the ruins, the crime of their fellow-citizens, and the common calamities.

Saint Irenaeus observed these dispositions of minds; he foresaw that hell was preparing for his Church a frightful war; so he did not wait until it burst out to dispose his people for it. As for himself, he saw with joy approach the happy day which was to light his martyrdom. His ardent love for Jesus Christ wished no less a sacrifice, and he conjured his God to grant him this last favour. Disciple of a martyr, successor of a martyr, companion of martyrs, he had maintained in his heart the desire and the hope of sacrificing his life to the glory of Jesus Christ, and his soul must have been inflamed with a new ardour at the approach of the day when God was at last to put the crown to his wishes. It was easy for him to inspire the same sentiments in Christians whom he had formed. Doubtless, martyrdom was then the ordinary subject of his conversations and of his lessons: he explained to his disciples its excellence and showed them that it was one of the most beautiful privileges of the Church of which they were members; he promised them the help and the strength of the Holy Spirit, revived their courage by raising their hopes, and made shine before their eyes the crown of glory which Jesus Christ prepares for those who shall have loved Him even to dying for Him. “The Church alone,” said the great Irenaeus, “has the privilege of forming martyrs and of peopling the heavens with them: it is a favour which God grants to the love she bears Him. Far from participating in her glory, the cold and sterile sects comprehend not the nobility of martyrdom, despise those who suffer it for the Word of God, and blaspheme the Holy Spirit who gives them the courage for it. For the martyrs, strong with the very strength of the Holy Spirit, are above human weakness, and sufferings appear light to them; they brave death and torments which would frighten nature, if the Spirit of God were not with them.[2]

“Jesus Christ first gave His life for us; He has therefore a right that, for love of Him, we should participate in His sacrifice. This is why He had already said to His disciples: You shall appear, because of my name, before princes and magistrates: you shall be pursued from city to city; you shall be delivered to torments and to death. But fear not those who, being able to tear the body, have no power over the soul; fear rather Him who can condemn to eternal flames both soul and body. Yes,” adds Saint Irenaeus, “fear Him who crowns the martyrs and chastises the unfaithful. Heretics dare nevertheless to despise the martyrs, to deliver to ridicule those who give their life for the name of Jesus Christ. But one day the sovereign Judge will avenge the honour of the saints and confound their despisers. As for us, let us imitate here below Him who on the cross asked grace for His executioners, who commanded us to love our enemies; let us abandon ourselves to His justice and His goodness.”[3]

It is thus that, unrolling before the eyes of his disciples the picture of the persecutions borne by the Church in all times, as in all countries, Saint Irenaeus, to excite their faith and their courage, recalled to them the sublime struggle which Christians of every rank, of every sex and of every age, their eyes fixed on Calvary, their heart strengthened by the Holy Spirit, had sustained against the powers of hell. Besides, the Christians of Lyons were the children of martyrs: each day they trod the glorious theatre where their fathers had fought for Jesus Christ and triumphed over the torments: the places witnesses of the courage and of the victory of these generous athletes, seemed to exhort them not to degenerate from their forefathers. The venerated names of the Pothinuses, the Sanctuses, the Blandinas, the Epipodiuses, the Alexanders, and of so many other martyrs, lived still in their memory. So fair examples, sown, so to say, in their hearts, bore there those fruits of salvation which the father of the family was soon to gather; and the hope of the happiness, of which martyrdom had assured the possession to their fathers, inflamed still their courage and their desires. It was toward this glorious term that Irenaeus raised their thoughts. The disasters and the bloody executions which, a short time before, had desolated the city of Lyons, attested still the vanity of the things of this world, confirmed his lessons and led the Christians to suffer for Jesus Christ evils which so many unfortunates underwent by force for a man.

But nothing seconded better the lessons of Irenaeus than the example of his virtues: so he had the consolation of seeing grow around his old age a people of Christian heroes, whose whole ambition was to live and to die with him.

It was in these dispositions that the persecution found the Lyonnese Christian community. A popular riot had given at Rome the first signal of this persecution, which, during several years, inundated the empire with the blood of Christians. From Rome it passed to Alexandria which changed itself into a vast theatre of carnage, where shone the magnanimous courage of the Christians; then into the West, where Irenaeus, like a sun which had majestically run its course, was going to be extinguished in floods of blood.

This great Saint had passed eighty years in the service of the Lord. For a quarter of a century he had occupied the see of Saint Pothinus; he had confounded heresy, pacified the entire Church, removed from its bosom the evils and the scandals of a schism; his lights had enlightened all Christendom, his virtues had edified it; all his great qualities had honoured religion and glorified the name of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles: nothing remained for Irenaeus but to give to the Saviour the most brilliant of all testimonies, that of his blood, and nothing was wanting to his merits but the palm of martyrdom.

The imperial decrees reached Lyons at the end of the year 202, and coincided precisely with the decennial feasts which were to be celebrated on the occasion of the tenth year of the reign of Severus. It was for the pagans of this city a favourable occasion to make their past revolt forgotten and to exercise their vengeance against the Christians: under pretext of testifying their love for their sovereign, they hastened emulously to execute his orders, celebrated feasts in his honour, with an extraordinary apparatus, and multiplied the sacrifices for the prosperity of his reign. The Christians never taking part in sacrilegious feasts which were celebrated in debauchery, their enemies took advantage of this circumstance to accuse them of rebellion against the prince, or of contempt for his person and for the gods, and so to draw upon their heads the wrath of Severus. The Christians knew well to what dangers the refusal to participate in these abominations exposed them; but they feared only God: they persevered therefore in the practice of their duties, and abandoning themselves to the will of the Lord, they preserved the calm and the patience which they had shown in less threatening times, or rather they asked of Jesus Christ the favour of uniting the sacrifice of their life to the sacrifice of the cross. Their wishes were soon satisfied. Surrounded by the veneration of the faithful, Irenaeus, as we have said, prepared them for martyrdom, revived their faith, raised their thoughts toward the heaven which was going to open before them, and taught them to despise an earth where the disciples of the Gospel are obliged to live mingled with the partisans of hell. He distributed to them often the bread of the strong, conferred baptism on children and catechumens, so that they should not go out of this life

before having been regenerated by this sacrament. He inspired in all the strength and the courage which the approaching trials demanded.

Meanwhile the pagans, free to do to the Christians all the evil they wished, exercised their power with a fury of which man seems scarcely capable. Doubtless, the priests of the false gods made it fall first on Irenaeus, whose zeal depopulated their temples and sustained the constancy of the Christians; this venerable old man rendered thanks to his God that He put the crown to His favours by that of martyrdom.

His eyes raised toward heaven, his brow calm and majestic, he received, blessing him, the stroke of death, and his triumphant soul went at last to receive in the heavens the crown which so many combats on earth had merited for him. His generous children, instructed by his lessons, animated by his example, shared his happiness and his glory. Vile assassins, drunk with their blood, inundated the city with it; armed with daggers, stones or cutting weapons, they immolated them everywhere that their blind fury met them. It was satiated only when it found no more victims and thousands of Christians had fallen under its blows.

The martyrdom of Saint Irenaeus took place in the year 202, according to the most common opinion; some authors put it in 208. The Greeks honour Saint Irenaeus on 23 August, and the Latins on 28 June.

Mention is made of this holy Doctor in Tertullian, Eusebius, Saint Epiphanius, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory of Tours, Oecumenius, Ado of Vienne and in all the martyrologies.

Saint Irenaeus is found represented with a torch in his hand, whether as doctor, or in his quality of apostle of Lyons: the Gospel is in effect a light which dispels the night of error.

Worship and Relics — Writings of Saint Irenaeus

The body of Saint Irenaeus was carried off under cover of darkness by the holy priest Zacharias and deposited in the catacombs of Lyons, with those of the other martyrs of the persecution. There was raised later, at the extremity of the city, a basilica over the crypt where Saint Irenaeus had so many times gathered his children, and where his mortal remains had been afterwards religiously deposited. The faithful preserved this rich treasure with much veneration until the year 1562: the Huguenots, who exercised then a thousand impieties against the holy relics, having pillaged the shrine of our Saint, threw a great part of his bones into the Rhône and another part into the mud; as for the skull of his sacred head, they rolled it hither and thither through the streets, and left it at last in a sewer; but it was drawn from it almost at the same time by the piety of a surgeon, who kept it in his house until, the troubles of the civil wars being appeased, the archbishop with his clergy, accompanied by the magistrates of the city, transported it solemnly in a general procession, as a precious relic, from the place where it was to a church dedicated under the name of Saint-Irenaeus.

As for the basilica, it was thrown down in part by the sectaries, then raised again and anew destroyed, at the memorable and cruel siege of Lyons. The present basilica of Saint-Irenaeus is almost entirely new: it has of the ancient only the substructions of the apse and its subterranean church; it adjoins the magnificent palace forming the refuge Saint-Michel, which possesses a charming church. Near it also is a fountain whose ornamentation and character do honour to the taste of the architect.

The principal work of Saint Irenaeus, in five books, is known under this title: *Adversus hæreses*, Against Heresies.

In his first book, Saint Irenaeus exposes the reveries of Valentinus on the genealogy of thirty Aeons. These imaginary beings were kinds of inferior divinities whom they made to be produced by the eternal, invisible, incomprehensible God, named Bythos or Depth, to whom they gave for wife Ennoia or Thought, otherwise called Sige or Silence. This absurd system was formed on the theogony of Hesiod and on some ideas of Plato, in which Valentinus mingled certain truths which he had borrowed from the gospel according to Saint John. Saint Irenaeus refutes it by the authority of Scripture, by that of the creed of which he reports almost all

the articles, and by the unanimity of the different churches in the same faith, unanimity to which he opposes the difficulty the heretics have in agreeing among themselves. After having spoken of several of their variations, he describes at length the superstitions and the impostures of Mark, chief of the Marcosians; then he exposes the errors of the other heretics who appeared at the birth of Christianity. He shows in his second book, that God created the universe, and refutes the system of the Aeons. He asserts, bk. ii, c. lvh, ed. Ben. Olim. 32, that Christians wrought miracles in the name of the Son of God, and he puts this gift among the characteristic marks of the true Church. In his third book, Saint Irenaeus complains that the heretics, being pressed by Scripture, eluded its authority, pretending that tradition was for them, and that, when they were attacked by tradition, they abandoned it and appealed to Scripture alone, whereas Scripture and tradition furnished invincible arms against their errors. He makes observe that the Apostles transmitted the truth and all the mysteries of the faith to the pastors who succeeded them, and that it is to them consequently that we must address ourselves to have the knowledge of it.

The holy doctor, in his fourth book, proves the unity of God, and shows, c. xvii, xviii, that Jesus Christ, in abolishing the ancient sacrifices, substituted for them that of His Body and His Blood, which is to be offered in all the world, according to the prediction of Malachias. He gives the multitude of martyrs as a mark of the true Church, and maintains that the heretics cannot boast of the same advantage, although some of them have been mixed in the crowd of our martyrs, c. xxxiii.

He speaks, in his fifth book, of our redemption by Jesus Christ, and reports there the proofs of the resurrection of bodies; he returns, c. vi, to the prophetic gifts and to the miracles which, in his time, subsisted in the Church. There follows a recapitulation of the heresies refuted in the work. “Their novelty,” says Saint Irenaeus, “would suffice alone to confound them.” He adds some remarks on the coming of Antichrist. He concludes, from a passage of the Apocalypse, which he interpreted ill after Papias, his master, that, before the last judgment, Jesus Christ would reign a thousand years on earth with his elect in the enjoyment of spiritual pleasures. (Cerinthus and other heretics pretended that these pleasures would be carnal.) By consulting tradition, as the holy doctor himself orders, the opinion of the Millenarians was soon condemned. It has been renewed in Germany by several Lutherans, and by some Protestants of England, namely by Doctor Wells, in his notes on the Apocalypse.

Besides the five books against heresies, Saint Irenaeus composed several others of which there remain to us only the titles or very small fragments. They are: 1° A treatise on the Monarchy, against Florinus; 2° a treatise on the Ogdoad, or number of eight, against the same; 3° a treatise on Schism, against Blastus; 4° a Letter to Pope Victor concerning Easter; 5° a book on Knowledge; 6° a Collection of various disputes; 7° Discourses on the faith; 8° the Letter of the Churches of Lyons and of Vienne.

The works of Saint Irenaeus have been published by Erasmus and by Feu-Ardent. Grabe had them reprinted at Oxford in 1702; but he has often altered there the text of his author; he joined to it also notes which disfigure them by their heterodoxy, and which, for the most part, have for object to establish the particular ideas of the editor, with regard to the new religion which he had embraced. The best of all the editions that we have of the works of the holy doctor is that which Dom Massuet, Benedictine of the congregation of Saint-Maur, gave at Paris in 1710, in folio. Pfaff, a Lutheran, published, in 1715, four new fragments of Saint Irenaeus, after a manuscript of the library of Turin. The second of these fragments presents in abridgment the doctrine of the Church on the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. In 1734, the edition of Dom Massuet was reprinted at Vienna with the fragments of Pfaff. This work has been translated by M. de Genoude. The R. P. Feu-Ardent, of the Order of Minors, doctor of the Faculty of Paris, has given us his life at the beginning of the learned Remarks which he made on his works; it is from this and from the Annals of Cardinal Baronius, as well as from the History of Saint Irenaeus, by M. the Abbé Prat, that we have drawn the better part of this narrative.

Saint Leo II, Pope

683. — Emperor of the East: Constantine III Pogonatus.

Studeas moribus implere pontificatum, et ut sancti sanctorum devotæ servitutis impendas officium, induas sanctitatem.

Apply yourself to honour your pontificate by irreproachable morals; fulfil with devotedness your role of servant of the Holy of Holies and clothe yourself with holiness.

Petr. Blesens. Epist. xv ad Episc. Carnotens.

After the death of Pope Agatho, the Apostolic See remained vacant one year, seven months and five days. History does not teach us why they were so long in electing another pope in his place. Baronius believes that Theodore, patriarch of Constantinople, led the emperor to detain the legates during that time, in order to have leisure to falsify the Acts of the sixth General Council, which was then being held, and to have himself re-established on the chair from which he had been deposed. One may say that a horrible plague, which was preceded by two eclipses, the one of the sun and the other of the moon, had caused such a terror throughout Italy, and put Rome in particular in so great a consternation, that they dared not assemble there. Whatever it may be, after this long vacancy, Leo II, canon regular, son of Paul Menco, physician, was elected in his place. He was born at Piano-di-San-Martino, near Reggio, in Magna Graecia (State of Naples). He was a very holy personage, perfectly well versed in the holy Scriptures, equally learned and eloquent, and whose good examples led everyone to virtue. He had a quite particular care of the poor, the orphans and the widows, and relieved their miseries with a wholly apostolic charity. He confirmed the sixth ecumenical Council, which Agatho had assembled at Constantinople against the heretics who were called Monothelites, because they recognised only one will and one operation in Jesus Christ. And as he knew the Greek language as well as the Latin, he translated the Acts of it from Greek into Latin, to give the understanding of them to the Westerns. He ordained that at mass peace should be given to all the assistants; that is to say, he made obligatory a ceremony which was already practised by devotion: for this pious custom has been observed since the first centuries of the Church, as it is easy to see in Saint Denis and in Saint Justin. He ordained also that the Pallium, which the sovereign Pontiffs sent to the patriarchs and archbishops, the dispensations, the privileges and all the ecclesiastical offices should be granted gratis and without any interest. He had built at Rome three churches, near that of Saint Bibiana; one which he dedicated under the name of the apostle Saint Paul and in which he had deposited the bodies of the saints Simplicius, Faustus and Beatrix, with several other relics; another in honour of Saint Sebastian; finally the last in honour of Saint George.

When he was raised to the sovereign pontificate, the plain-chant, which Saint Gregory the Great had composed and established in the Church, was in an extreme confusion: this is why, as he had a perfect knowledge of music, he reformed it and put it in better order; he composed also some new hymns, which the Church has preserved until the present; he held an ordination, in which he created twenty-three bishops, nine priests and three deacons. He made his zeal and his firmness appear marvellously against the vain pretensions of the archbishops of Ravenna, who, supported by the Exarchs, that is to say the imperial governors whose ordinary residence the city was, would not recognise the authority of the Holy See nor submit to its commands: for, to repress this insupportable insolence, he made a decree by which he ordained that in future no bishop of Ravenna could perform the functions of his charge before having been confirmed by the Roman Pontiff. He had also forbidden the celebration of the anniversary of Maurus, archbishop of the same see, deceased under excommunication.

He was loved and respected by all the world, as much on account of his virtue as for his gentle, affable and beneficent nature. In a word, nothing was wanting to him of the qualities required to make of him one of the most excellent Popes who have governed the Church, although he held the see only ten months and seventeen days. His death, which happened on 4 July, in the year of Jesus Christ 683, was regretted by all the

faithful to whom, in a pontificate of so short a duration, he had given great proofs of his zeal and of his piety. His body was buried in the church of Saint Peter, ordinary tomb of the sovereign Pontiffs, on 28 June, the day on which he is named in the Roman martyrology. A very pious Epistle is attributed to him which he wrote to the emperor Constantine IV, surnamed Pogonatus, in which he praises him for the zeal which he had shown and the cares which he had brought to the celebration of the General Council of which we have spoken. Cardinal Baronius believes that this Epistle is not his, any more than some others which are under his name.

Saint Leo is represented: 1° embracing a beggar, in allusion to his charity toward the unfortunate; 2° sometimes holding a book in which musical notes are read, because he passes for having reformed ecclesiastical chant.

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. History of the sovereign Roman Pontiffs, by Artaud de Montor.

Saints Plutarch and Potamiaena (Potamienne), Martyrs at Alexandria

Origen, having opened a school at Alexandria, was not content to teach the sciences there: he applied himself above all to penetrating his disciples with the maxims of Christian perfection; so he had the consolation of seeing several of them shed their blood for Jesus Christ during the ravages of the persecution which the emperor Severus had stirred up, and which lasted from the year 202 to the year 211. Among the Christian heroes who distinguished themselves on this occasion are counted Saint Plutarch, brother of Saint Heraclas, who was afterwards bishop of Alexandria. These two great men had been converted at the same time, and Origen had been the instrument God used to bring them to the knowledge of the truth. Plutarch prepared himself by a holy life to confess his faith. As he was a man very well known in the city, he was one of the first to be arrested. During his stay in prison, Origen visited him to exhort him to perseverance; he even accompanied him to the place of execution.

Potamiaena was a slave by condition. Her mother, who was called Marcella, brought her up in the principles of the faith; but afterwards she put her under the guidance of the great master of whom we have just spoken, that he might finish the edifice which she had begun.

Potamiaena was young and of rare beauty. He whom she served, having conceived a violent passion for her, pressed her to consent to his infamous desires; but the Saint behaved in such a way as to leave him no hope. He employed a thousand artifices, which succeeded no better than promises and threats. Resolved to take vengeance, he delivered her to the prefect named Aquila, begging him however not to do her any harm if he could determine her to satisfy his passion, and promising him a considerable sum of money in case things turned out as he wished. The prefect’s repeated efforts had no success. Seeing Potamiaena therefore unshaken, he condemned her to various tortures; he then had a cauldron full of boiling pitch prepared, and threatened to throw her into it if she refused any longer to obey her master. The Saint answered the judge in the following manner: “I conjure you, by the life of the emperor whom you respect, not to allow me to appear naked; rather order that I be let down little by little into the cauldron with my clothes on, and you will see what patience Jesus Christ, whom you do not know, gives to those who hope in Him.” The prefect gave the order that was asked of him, and charged one of the guards to carry it out.

This guard was named Basilides. He treated Potamiaena with every kind of consideration, and protected her all along the way from the insolence of the mob, who insulted her modesty with obscene words. He soon received the reward of his humanity. The Saint told him to take courage, assuring him that after her death she would obtain for him from God the grace of salvation. Hardly had she finished speaking when her feet were put into the boiling pitch, and she was sunk into it little by little up to the top of her head. It was thus that she consummated her sacrifice. Marcella, her mother, was burned at the same time. Among those who were converted after this double martyrdom was Basilides, to whom Potamiaena had promised to show her

gratitude when she should have been united to Jesus Christ. Soon after the Saint's martyrdom, the soldiers, his comrades, required him to swear by the false gods; which he refused to do, saying that he was a Christian.

They thought at first that he was joking; but, seeing that he persisted in his resolution, they led him to the prefect, who had him imprisoned. The Christians who visited him wished to know the cause of so sudden a change. "Potamiaena," he answered them, "appeared to me in the night, three days after her martyrdom; she placed a crown on my head, saying that she had obtained for me from the Lord the grace of salvation, and that soon I should be united to her in glory." The brethren, filled with joy, regenerated him by baptism. The next day Basilides confessed the faith again before the prefect's tribunal, and was condemned to be beheaded. He is named in the Roman Martyrology, under 28 June, with Saint Potamiaena, Saint Plutarch and his companions. *Acta Sanctorum.* — Cf. Godescard, Baillet.

Saint Paul I, Pope (767)

Paul I, Roman by origin and son of Constantine, succeeded on the see of Saint Peter Stephen II, his brother, dead in the year 757. He was consecrated on 12 May of the same year. Such a succession was without precedent, but the rare merit of the elect was the only and sole cause of it. Brought up by Gregory, with his brother Stephen, in the palace of the Lateran, formed to Christian morals and instructed in ecclesiastical sciences, Paul was the man most capable of taking, after his brother, the helm of the affairs of the Church. He solicited as much as twice, by his legates, the emperor Constantine Copronymus to return to the sound doctrine, which he had abandoned for heresy; but the hardened prince refused to hear his apostolic voice: he continued to persecute the Catholics, raging above all against the monks, several of whom took refuge in Italy, far from the persecuting tyrant. Paul received them with kindness, assigned them monasteries and churches provided with sufficient revenues, in which they could celebrate the holy mysteries in the rite of their country. What time the cares of the administration of the affairs of the Church left him, he employed in feeding the poor of Jesus Christ, in consoling the sick, in visiting prisoners and in drawing out of embarrassment those who were overwhelmed with debts. He built several churches, one in his paternal house in honour of Saint Stephen, pope and martyr; another in the Sacred Way, near the temple of Romulus; and an oratory of the holy Virgin, within the enclosure of the church of Saint Peter at the Vatican, where he put a statue of Mary in gilt silver of the weight of a hundred pounds. In 761, he granted to the monastery of Saint Hilary a privilege providing that in future it should be of the jurisdiction of the Church of Ravenna, with prohibition to any one whatever to draw it from it. He gave another the same year to the church and monastery which he had founded in his paternal house in honour of the popes Saint Stephen, martyr, and Saint Sylvester, confessor. He transferred into the church a part of the relics which he had drawn from the cemeteries which were outside Rome, and which had been dishonoured by the insults of the Lombards. To the monastery he gave great goods with prohibition to the abbot to alienate any of them and ordained that the monks should sing seven times a day the praises of God. Finally, being ripe for heaven, he died in the eleventh year of his pontificate, and was buried at the Vatican, in the chapel which he had had built in honour of the holy Virgin. He left the earth to ascend to heaven on 21 June 767. Nevertheless the Roman martyrology mentions him under the 28th of the same month, we know not why.

Several letters of his are preserved, addressed to Pepin, king of the Franks. He gives thanks to this so good king, who had so well deserved of the Roman Church by taking its defence against the Lombards; he exhorts him at the same time to preserve always this patronage.

Proper of Rome; History of the sacred and ecclesiastical authors, by Dom Ceillier.

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[1] Bollandists, 16 June, p. 5. — Dunod, History of the Church of Besançon, vol. i, p. 24. This author thinks that Saint Fendol was sent by Saint Irenaeus to Besançon, with the quality of bishop; his opinion is not destitute of foundation.

[2] Iren., adv. hær., bk. iv, c. 33, no. 9, and bk. v, c. 9, no. 2, 3.

[3] Ibid., bk. iii, c. 18, no. 4, 5.

29 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

At Rome, the birth into heaven of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, who suffered martyrdom the same year and the same day, under the emperor Nero: the first, crucified in the city, head downward, and buried at the Vatican, near the Triumphal Way, is the object of the veneration of the whole earth; the other, beheaded and buried on the Ostian Way, is honoured with a worship as universal. 1st century. — At Argenton, in Berry, Saint Marcellus or Marceau, martyr, who was beheaded for the Christian faith, with Anastasius, a soldier. About 274. — At Genoa, the feast of Saint Syrus,[1] bishop. 6th century. — At Narni, Saint Cassius,[2] bishop of this city, of whom Saint Gregory reports that he let pass scarcely any day of his life without offering to the Almighty the host of pacification; so he lived in a manner conformable to so holy a practice, for he gave all that he had to the poor and melted into tears at the hour of the sacrifice. As one day, according to what he had been accustomed to do every year, he had come to Rome for the feast of the Apostles, after having celebrated mass, and given the Body of Our Lord and the peace to the assistants, he passed from this life to eternal rest. 558. — In the island of Cyprus, Saint Mary, mother of John, surnamed Mark. 1st century. — In the diocese of Sens, Saint Benedicta, called also Benedicta or Beata, virgin. About 294.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

Memory of all the holy Apostles. — The first Sunday not impeded after the octave of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, commemoration of all the holy Roman Pontiffs. — In the diocese of Sens, Saint Mastiola, virgin. — At Saint-Mihiel, in the diocese of Verdun, Saint Humberga, virgin, sister of Saint Theobald, priest and hermit. 12th century. — At Paris, the venerable Aliz or Alice de Bourgotte (Adelaïs), recluse. 1466. — At Nevers, the feast of the translation of the relics of Saint Flavia, virgin and martyr.[3] Her body was discovered, on 19 November 1838, in the catacombs of Saint Priscilla. M. the Abbé Joseph Gaume, then vicar general of Nevers, obtained from the sovereign pontiff Gregory XVI, on 8 March 1842, this precious deposit for the catechism of perseverance of the parish of Saint-Cyr of Nevers. The following year, on 21 June 1843, before the ceremony of the translation of the relics of the saint, M. the Abbé Gaume remitted to Mgr Dominic-Augustine Dufêtre, bishop of Nevers, the apostolic letters which he had obtained and which established the authenticity of the relics which he presented; Monseigneur recognised the relics and venerated them. The principal parts of the body had been enclosed in the head, the breast, the hands and the feet of the wax image of the saint. On the 29th of the same month of June 1843, took place the solemn translation of the shrine. The precious treasure was deposited in the chapel of Saint Julitta, on a provisional altar. Monseigneur celebrated holy mass there, and made there an instruction suited to the circumstance. It was only in the evening that these holy relics were transported to the chapel of the catechism of perseverance where they remained exposed for nine days to the veneration of the faithful.[4] — At Frasnes-lez-Buissenal, in Hainault (Belgium), Peter Famelart, curé of Tourcoing, in the diocese of Tournai. He was put to death in hatred of religion by the Protestants of the Low Countries. His body was deposited before the high altar of the parish church of Tourcoing where twenty years later it was found without any mark of corruption. A Belgian historian says even that, after an entire century, Mgr de Choiseul, bishop of Tournai, found the body in the same state of integrity. About the middle of the sixteenth century. — At Redon, in the diocese of Rennes, Vincenta-Eugenia Levesque de Saint-James, young person of an eminent piety. One reads on her subject, in the registers of the parish of Notre-Dame of Redon: “In the year 1784, on 30 June, was buried Vincenta-Eugenia Levesque, demoiselle of Saint-James, dead in the odour of sanctity at the age of twenty-eight years. Mother of the poor, she consecrated to their service the fairest years of her life. The care

of their edification, of their education, of their subsistence and of their relief in their sicknesses constantly occupied her. Her memory ought to be in benediction." 1784. — At Saint-Palais, near Saintes, the venerable Mary-Eustella Harpain, virgin, famous for the spiritual writings in the form of letters which she has left us.[5] 1842.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Padua, in Italy, Saint Leolinus and Saint Hilary, who were both bishops of this see, in the 3rd and 4th centuries. — Near Oberaltaich, in Bavaria, the blessed Salome and the blessed Judith, recluses. Salome was sprung, it is said, from a royal family of England, perhaps that of Egbert, king of the Anglo-Saxons. After the death of her parents, she was brought up at the court of king Ethelwulf. She sanctified her youth by the practice of all the Christian virtues; never did vainglory seduce her heart, and she strengthened herself little by little in the resolution to quit the world. She undertook, with some servants, the pilgrimage of the Holy Land, and, at her return, she stopped in the neighbourhood of Ratisbon, and afterwards near Passau. After that, Gauthier, abbot of Oberaltaich, received her and assigned to her a hermitage where she spread around her the splendour of her virtue. It is said in her Acts that one of her relatives, named Judith, quitted England to go and seek her and that Salome determined her to embrace the same kind of life. They died both in the odour of sanctity and were buried at Oberaltaich. About 880. — At Gurk, in Carinthia, the blessed Hemma, widow, foundress of the monastery of that place. Relative of the holy king Henry, of an illustrious blood and of an irreproachable beauty, this pious countess shone still more by her virtues than by her birth. She married the landgrave William by whom she had several children. Heaven having deprived her suddenly both of her husband and of her young family, she chose from then on Jesus for her sole inheritance. She employed her great goods in founding a double monastery in the valley of Gurk; she took herself the veil in that of the religious women who were to be to the number of seventy-two, in honour of the seventy-two disciples; twenty priests celebrated there every day the holy mysteries. This double monastery, which was placed under the Rule of Saint Benedict, underwent changes at the erection of Gurk into a bishopric, in the year 1073. That of the religious women was destroyed, and the monks gave place to Canons Regular. Our Saint endowed also a number of churches and monasteries and died full of good works. Her venerable body was deposited with respect in her monastery of Gurk which became from then on celebrated by the numerous prodigies which burst forth there. 1045. — At Spoleto, in Umbria, the blessed Angelina, virgin, of the Order of Saint Clare. Almost nothing is known of her life: however, the paintings which adorn the altar which is dedicated to her at Spoleto, retrace to us its principal features. The Blessed appears there to us with a resplendent face, a simple and modest bearing. Her exterior breathes purity, virginity, the tenderest piety. One sees around her a group of infirm, of blind, of lepers and of paralytics who implore her help and obtain from her their cure. At the right is an angel of heaven who presents to the virgin, on behalf of the divine Spouse, the nuptial ring. She died at the monastery of the Clarisses of Spoleto, called at that epoch the ladies of the palace, after having edified her sisters, during the space of ten years, by the splendour of the most sublime virtues. 1450.

Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Pope and Martyr

66. — Emperor: Nero.

Beatus Petrus est primus apostolorum et magna columna veri tabernaculi. Ipse est custos fidei, petra Ecclesiæ, janitor cœlorum.

Saint Peter is the head of the apostolic college and the unshaken column of the tabernacle of the new law. He watches over the deposit of our faith, upholds the edifice of the Church, and opens to us the gate of heaven.

S. Greg., in Homil.; S. Chrysol., in Serm.

How could we refuse a eulogy to him whom the Son of God, who is the eternal Truth, has Himself declared blessed, and whom He left in His place when He returned to His Father, that he might be the support and the

foundation stone of His Church? It is of him that He had said by the prophet Isaias, according to the explanation of the learned and pious Cardinal Bellarmine, that, to establish more solidly the edifice of Sion, He would put in its foundations a tried stone, angular and precious, which would itself be founded on the first and principal foundation, that is to say on His adorable person. It is to him that He commanded to confirm his brethren, gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, with so great an authority to bind or to loose that the sentence of Peter must precede the sentence of God, and that all that Peter binds or looses on earth is at the same time bound or loosed in heaven; to whom finally He ordered to feed all His sheep and all His lambs, without there being a single one which is not under his guidance. It is true that all we can say of him is infinitely below his merits; but it is not permitted us, for that, to be silent, and not to instruct the faithful of his glorious actions and of the signal favours which he received from his divine Master.

He was a Jew, or, to say better, a Hebrew by birth, and native of Bethsaida, a borough of the tribe of Nephthali, in Upper Galilee, on the western shore of the sea of Genesareth. His father was called Jonas or John, whence it comes that he is named in the Gospel Bar-Jona, and Simon Joannis, son of Jonas or of John. He exercised the profession of fisherman, which appears to have been that of their father. They left afterwards the abode of Bethsaida, to go and fix their domicile at Capharnaum, a city of Galilee. This city was very convenient for fishing, being situated on the shore of the sea, near the mouth of a great river, on the confines of the tribes of Zabulon and Nephthali. He had with him his elder brother called Andrew, who did not marry; but, as for him, he married, at Capharnaum, a woman whom they call Perpetua, and whom Metaphrastes says to have been daughter of Aristobulus, brother of Barnabas. His life was poor, but just and innocent. He kept faithfully the commandments of God and the ordinances of the law, and maintained in peace his family with his mother-in-law, by the continual labour of his fishing. As his brother Andrew had not the same engagements as he, he had liberty to go and hear Saint John who preached penance in the desert. He made himself even his disciple, and had the happiness to be present when this holy Precursor showed Our Lord with the finger, and declared that He was the Lamb of God who came to efface the sins of the world. This word entered deep into his mind; so that, preferring the sun to the dawn and Jesus Christ to His precursor, he followed Him, asked Him where He dwelt, and having had, on this occasion, a conference with Him, he was so charmed by the unction of His discourses and the eminence of His doctrine, that he attached himself to Him for ever.

This treasure was too precious to be possessed by himself alone: he made his brother share it, and brought him the next day to his new Master. Our Lord, seeing him, said to him: “Thou art Simon, son of Jonas; henceforth thou shalt be called Peter.” Thus He changed his name, and, instead of that of Simon, which he had borne since his circumcision, He gave him that of Peter, that is to say, in Hebrew, Cephas. This change was not made without a great mystery; for it was, according to the doctrine of Saint Athanasius, of Saint Basil, of Saint Chrysostom, of Saint Augustine, of Saint Jerome, of Saint Leo, and of the other Fathers, to teach us that this Apostle would be, by himself and by his successors, the base, the foundation, the firm stone and the immovable rock on which the Church, which is the pillar of truth, would be supported. This is what makes also Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, say, on chap. xvi of Saint Matthew, that, in the imposition of this new name, he recognises first the blessed foundation of the Church, and the stone worthy to bear so admirable an edifice; and Saint Cyril of Alexandria, in book ii on Saint John, that from the first step of Saint Peter, it appears by the name which the Son of God gives him, that the Church is to be established on him as on a very solid rock, which can never be shaken.

We doubt not that, in this happy interview, Saint Peter was changed into another man, that his mind was enlightened with an extraordinary light to know the excellence of Him who spoke to him and the divine mystery of His mission, and that his heart felt itself inflamed with a great love for Him and with an impatient zeal to procure His glory. Nevertheless, as he was obliged to earn his living and that of his family by the labour of his hands, he returned to his house and to his employment, awaiting the blessed moment when his

Master would disengage him from all secular occupations to attach him to Himself. There were nearly fifteen months between this first vocation, which was at the beginning of the thirty-first year of salvation, and the second, which was only about the month of March of the thirty-second. We believe however that, in this interval, in which the Gospel always represents Our Lord with disciples, Saint Peter often withdrew from his domestic functions to go with Him, and that thus he found himself at the marriage at Cana, in Galilee, where Jesus changed water into wine; at the temple of Jerusalem, where He drove out the merchants with a whip; at the conversation with Nicodemus, one of the first among the Pharisees; at the passage through the city of Sichar, where the Samaritan woman was converted, and finally at the healing of the son of a great lord in the city of Capharnaum; for all these actions took place between these two vocations. The time having come when the Son of God wished to form His apostolic college and prepare workmen for the preaching of the Gospel, He came on the shore of the sea of Galilee, which the Gospel calls also the sea of Tiberias and the lake of Genesareth, and, having perceived the two brothers Peter and Andrew who were casting their nets into the sea, He said to them: “Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.” Saint Peter was too well warned by his name of Simon, which signifies obedient, of the obligation he had to submit to the will of so great a Master, to resist it. He left therefore his nets at that very hour, and followed Him who called him, abandoning entirely to His providence the care of his person and of all his house, which had subsisted until then only by means of his fishing. But he risked nothing by this abandonment; for Our Lord, for the government of a bark, gave him that of His Church, and for half-broken nets, gave him the plenitude of the gratuitous graces which are sovereign means to take souls and draw them to God. He took also into affection all that touched him, and honoured even his house with several visits, in one of which He healed his mother-in-law of a violent fever which tormented her; and, after having eaten with His disciples, He wrought there towards evening a crowd of miracles.

The skiff of the holy Apostle had been until that time the instrument of his trade; but it was afterwards an excellent figure of the Christian Church of which he was to be the pilot. It is with this view that Our Lord permitted him sometimes to return to it, to conduct it on the sea and to use it for fishing. One day, being Himself extremely pressed by a numerous crowd come to hear Him, He entered into it, and having had it pushed back from the shore, He used it as a chair to instruct this innumerable multitude. Then He commanded Peter to go into the deep sea and to cast his nets there to take fish: Saint Peter answered Him that they had laboured there uselessly all the night, but that, since He commanded it, he would make no difficulty of casting the net once more. The command of the Master and the obedience of the disciple had so happy a success, that the net was at once filled with a great number of fine fishes, and it appeared even so heavy that they had to call Saint James and Saint John, who were in another bark, to draw it from the water. Saint Peter was then touched with a sentiment of profound humility, and, throwing himself at the feet of the Saviour, he said to Him: “Lord, depart from me, because I am a sinful man.” But the Son of God reassured him and told him to fear nothing, and that, in the sequel, he should no more catch fishes, but he should take men by the spiritual net and hook of preaching. This whole action is full of great mysteries. One sees there, as in a picture, that it is in the Church alone, figured by the skiff of Saint Peter, that one must seek Jesus Christ and His doctrine; that before His coming, the preachers, who were the Prophets and the doctors of the law, were extremely powerless to effect the conversion of souls; but that His presence has given a marvellous force to His missionaries for this great work; that after He should have preached, the Apostles were to go into the deep sea, that is to say into all the infidel nations, to cast there the nets of the Gospel; that Saint Peter would be the head of this mission and of all the Church, and that the other evangelical workmen, that is to say the bishops, the doctors and the preachers, would be called only *in partem sollicitudinis*, to be his co-operators and to have part in his solicitude; finally, that the more one succeeds in the ministry of preaching and of the salvation of souls, the more one ought to humble oneself before God, in recognising that one is of oneself incapable of all success, and that a work of so great a merit depends entirely on His grace and His mercy.

All the Gospel is full of the other favours which Our Lord did to Saint Peter. When He went to raise the daughter of Jairus, one of the principal chiefs of the synagogue, wishing to have with Him only three disciples, He named Saint Peter the first to accompany Him. When He chose twelve Apostles from the great number of His disciples, to be the foundations, the pillars, the torches, the precious stones and the architects of His Church, He gave also the first rank to Saint Peter; and this is why the Evangelists, who often change the order of the other Apostles, never change that of Peter, but put him always at the head of all the others, and why often even they name only him, contenting themselves with speaking of the others in common, as of those of whom he was the chief. Moreover, when the Apostles, who were at sea, were surprised by so furious a tempest that they believed themselves absolutely lost, the Saviour having come to their help walking with dry foot on the waters, our Apostle was again the first who recognised Him, and he was the only one who had the courage to ask Him to walk on the water like Him, and to go to find Him by a way so new and so little trodden by men. The execution astonished him no more than the request: for, scarcely had Our Lord answered him: “Come,” when he threw himself down from the vessel, and began to walk on the sea as if it had been firm land: in which his faith is the more admirable, as the sea was then agitated by a great wind: it raised on all sides mountains of water; scarcely could a very strong and well-equipped vessel be in safety. It is true that a gust of wind which increased the storm made him tremble a little; which was the cause that he began to sink in the water and to be wetted; but Saint Maximus, in the first sermon on the feast of the Apostles, after having said that Our Lord permitted this weakness only to show the difference which was between the Master and the disciple, adds that, in this very fear, the faith of Peter appears altogether marvellous, since in crying without being troubled: “Lord, save me,” he showed that he distrusted himself indeed, but that he had an entire confidence in the help of Him who had called him. In effect, scarcely had the Son of God given him the hand, when he recovered his first firmness, and, walking on the waves with an intrepid assurance, returned to the vessel in His company, by the same way as he had come.

A little time after, the holy Apostle gave another proof of his love and of his zeal for Our Lord. One day, this divine Master, preaching to the Jews of Capharnaum, discovered to them the adorable mystery of the Sacrament of the altar, which He wished to institute; He told them that His flesh was truly meat, and His blood truly a drink , without the use of which it would be impossible to have life. Not only the coarse people, but also several of His disciples were scandalised at it and withdrew from His company. Then He addressed the word to His Apostles, and said to them: “And will you also go away?” but our Saint, taking the word for all his fellows, said to Him with much tenderness: “Lord, what is this that Thou sayest to us? To whom then shall we go? Thy words are words of eternal life, and we believe firmly, and we are entirely persuaded that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Thus, he was the first who confessed the truth of the Eucharist, and he engaged also his companions to confess this great mystery and to remain firm in the service of Jesus Christ.

He made, a few days after, an almost similar confession, which merited for him great praises and a very advantageous promise on the part of his divine Master. Our Lord, having passed into the quarter of Caesarea Philippi, asked His disciples what sentiments men had of the Son of Man, that is to say of Himself. They answered that some took Him for Elias, others for John the Baptist, others for Jeremias, others finally for some one of the ancient Prophets, without determining any in particular. “Up to that point,” says Saint Leo, pope, “the answer was common, because it was only a question of the various opinions of the people; but when the Son of God added: And you, who do you say that I am, and what sentiments have you of my person?” Then he who was the first in the dignity of Apostle was also the first in the confession of His divinity: “Thou art,” said Peter, in the name of all, “the Christ, Son of the living God.” Our Lord, who never lets Himself be conquered by His servants in the testimonies of love and benevolence which they show Him, answered him at once: “Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas: for it is not flesh and blood that have revealed to thee this great mystery, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee that, as thou hast recognised and confessed me for the Christ and the true Messias, who is come to found the Church of the children of God on

earth, I declare also that thou art the rock and the foundation of this Church, and that it shall be on this rock that I will build it; which I will do so solidly, that all the powers of hell shall never prevail against it. I will give thee also the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that what thou shalt have bound on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what thou shalt have loosed on earth shall be at the same time loosed in heaven." Thus, as Saint Leo says again, He gave by participation to Peter what belonged to Him by power, and He associated him to that sovereign authority which suits only Himself by the infinite merit of His person.

One day, our Saint, wishing to dissuade his divine Master from enduring the death which He desired with so much ardour, Jesus Christ repulsed him with indignation and called him Satan; not that He disapproved entirely his affection and his zeal, which Saint Jerome extols extremely as a mark of his faith and of the high esteem he had of the dignity of his Master: the Saviour of men acted so to teach us that we must regard as tempters those who turn us away from suffering something for His service. A few days after, He chose him again first to be present at His Transfiguration, so that the great mystery which was to make appear the glory of His divinity might receive testimony not only from Moses, who represented the law, and from Elias, who represented the Prophets, but also from Peter, whom He had designated for head of His Church. The Evangelists teach us that this Apostle was so charmed by the marvellous splendour which appeared on the face and on the garments of the Son of God, that he cried: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: let us make here, if it please Thee, three tents, one for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias." But he was then in ecstasy; and it was no longer his reason, says Saint Chrysostom, but his love which spoke: which Scripture signifies to us when it says that "he knew not what he said."

Jesus Christ made see again by another action the pre-eminence that He wished to give him above his fellows. The tax-gatherers having asked this apostle if his Master did not pay the annual tax of the temple, He wished him to go and carry them a piece of silver which He made him find miraculously in the mouth of a fish, indivisibly for him and for Himself. He taught him afterwards, as to him to whom He had given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that he ought not to limit to seven times the pardon of sins, but that he ought to grant it without limits, and as many times as he should find in the penitents the dispositions necessary to receive it. Afterwards, our Saint having asked Him what reward they were to expect from His goodness, he and the other Apostles who had left all to follow Him, He did not answer him that, having left only a bark and their nets, they had no right to expect a great reward, but, considering, says Saint Jerome, that they had left much since they had reserved nothing for themselves, and that they had even renounced the desire and the hope of acquiring the goods of this world, He answered that their wages would be very great, and that, since they had followed Him with so much promptness and courage, on the great day of His judgment they should be seated on twelve thrones, and should judge the twelve tribes of Israel. It was also the question of Saint Peter and of three other Apostles which made Him declare, a little before His passion, the terrible signs of the ruin of Jerusalem and those of the consummation of the ages; which made Him relate the fine parables of the ten virgins and of the five talents, and which made Him finally explain the form of the last judgment and the separation which would be made there of the good and the wicked, to receive a definitive sentence very different.

But if this great Apostle has appeared so often in the course of the life of Our Lord, he appeared much more in the time of His passion and since His resurrection. He was one of the two whom He sent to prepare the things necessary for the last supper, so that, being to be the first priest of the New Testament, he should himself dispose what was to serve for the institution of the august Sacrament of our altars. When Our Lord wished to wash his feet, he gave marks of a great love and of a profound reverence for his master: still more fervent in wishing to let himself be washed in order not to be separated from Him, than he had been in refusing this office of humility, he showed that it was the ardour of his faith and of his charity which made him act in all things. Impelled by this same fervour, he wished to know who was the traitor who was to deliver Jesus Christ into the hands of the Jews, and he made a sign to Saint John to ask it. It must be avowed

that he showed too much presumption when, the Son of God having said to His Apostles that that very night they would all be scandalised because of Him and would abandon Him, Peter answered that, when all the others should let themselves go to cowardice and should abandon Him, he alone would do nothing of the kind, but would remain inseparably attached to His person, and that he was ready to endure for Him both prison and death. So, this excess of boldness drew upon him the terrible prediction of his three denials. Nevertheless, one must not omit here what Saint Jerome says on this subject: *Non est temeritas neque mendacium, sed fides et ardens affectus Apostoli Petri*; "that was not a rashness nor a lie, but an effect of the faith and of the ardent love of the apostle Saint Peter."

To this same ardour must be attributed what he did in the garden of Olives, when, seeing the Saviour in the hands of His persecutors, he drew his sword, and, giving a blow to one of the servants of the high priest, cut off his right ear. The heretics tax this action with violence and impiety; but Saint Ambrose, on chapter xxii of Saint Luke, speaks of it quite otherwise, and makes no difficulty of comparing it to that which Phinees did, when he pierced with his sword a prince of the people of Israel who was going to join to idolatry a shameful impudicity with a Madianite woman: which was so agreeable to God that, for that alone, He stopped the scourges which He was going to discharge on His people and promised this high priest that the supreme priesthood should never go out of his house. In effect, far from Our Lord having forbidden Peter to use a sword, He had, on the contrary, testified that one must have them at the time of His arrest; and, when our Apostle answered Him that they had two, He had said only that it was enough. Saint John Chrysostom extols also marvellously the obedience of Saint Peter, in that he was not less prompt, at the first command of his Master, to put his sword back into its scabbard, than he had been to draw it. It is easy to see that, as the character of heretics is to envenom everything and to decry the most heroic actions of the servants of God, it is on the contrary the character and the spirit of the holy Doctors of the Church to judge favourably of those which Scripture does not condemn, and which may have been done in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

As for the drowsiness of our Apostle in the garden of Olives, and his flight when Our Lord had been taken, one cannot attribute them but to the weakness of his nature, of which he felt the misery, so that he should recognise better afterwards what he had of himself and what he had by the help of grace. His denials, one of which was accompanied with perjury and blasphemy, are still more inexcusable, and we must consider him as a terrible example of the falls of which we are capable when we lean on ourselves alone. But if we regard, on the other hand, the penance of Peter and the tears which he shed for this crime, not only the three days of the death of the Son of God, but also all the rest of his life, we shall be obliged to avow that they served advantageously for his sanctification, and that they are of the number of those faults which, according to Saint Augustine, are occasions of a greater good in those who are called to holiness by the divine decrees. So, however great this sin was, it did not prevent Our Lord, who has an infinite goodness for penitent sinners, from having for him, after His resurrection, the same considerations that He had had before. When He appeared to Magdalen, He recommended to her above all to go and warn Peter that He was risen; a little time after He showed Himself to him in particular, before visiting His apostolic college; and, far from making him reproaches on his infidelity and his ingratitude, He wiped gently his tears, and restored the heart to him which was as if drowned in a torrent of grief and bitterness. Finally, He did not withdraw from him the promise He had made him to give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven; on the contrary, as Saint Gregory the Great remarks very well in homily xxi on the Gospels, He had permitted his fall only in order that, being to be the sovereign Shepherd of the faithful, he should learn, by his own weakness, the compassion which he ought to have for sinners, and the mercy which he ought to exercise toward penitents.

Peter and John had run together to the sepulchre of the Son of God; John, as the younger and the more agile, arrived there first; but Peter entered there nevertheless first; according to the same Saint Gregory, this was not without great mystery; likewise it was not without a singular prerogative of benevolence and of love, that Peter was honoured first of all the Apostles with this lovable presence of his divine Master. Who sees not in

this his pre-eminence above them, and that Our Lord, regarding him as their chief, wished him to begin to exercise toward them what He had recommended to him before His passion by these words: “When thou art converted, fail not to confirm and strengthen thy brethren”? We doubt not also that, in the forty days of interval between His Resurrection and His Ascension, He consoled him many other times by secret and particular visits, in order to instruct him in all that he had to do afterwards for the good government of His Church. But the Evangelists have reported only the apparitions that He made to him in public and in presence of the other Apostles. In one of those, the Saviour asked him three times if he loved Him, and if he had more affection for Him than the other disciples. It was, says Saint Augustine, in order that Peter, rendering three times testimony of the great love he had for Jesus Christ, he should efface thereby the shame of the three denials which he had committed by his cowardice, and that his tongue should be not less the instrument of his love than of his fear. It was also to dispose him to the great employment of pa stor of souls, which Saint Augustine calls *amoris officium*, “the office or employment of love”; Saint Chrysostom, *amoris argumentum*, “the proof of love”; and Saint Gregory, *amoris testimonium*, “the testimony of love.” In effect, as Peter assured Him with humility of his true affection, He said to him twice: “Feed my lambs,” and once: “Feed my sheep”; by these words, He made him not only the Pastor of the Christian people, signified by the lambs, but also the Pastor of the other pastors, signified by the sheep; and, to speak with Saint Ambrose, He gave him to His Church, *ut sui amoris Vicarium*, “as the vicar of His love.” He predicted to him then the manner in which he was to die, which was the torment of the cross; He commanded him to follow Him: Peter obeyed at once; and, seeing Saint John who followed also, he asked the Saviour what would become of this dear disciple. The heretics have seen in this question a condemnable curiosity; but Saint John Chrysostom has remarked in it, on the contrary, a great charity of Saint Peter toward Saint John; and, in effect, when Our Lord said to him to follow Him, without putting himself in pain about John, He did not do so to tax Peter with any vice, but to teach him that the grace He did him of discovering to him the kind of his death, was a particular privilege which He did not grant to all the others.

Behold what we find in the four Evangelists on the person of Saint Peter. He appears there on all sides with a lively faith, a profound humility, a blind obedience and an ardent and generous charity. The favours of Our Lord toward him are there continual and abundant, and there is no encounter which does not give us marks of his primacy above the other disciples. But it must be avowed that it was a time when, not having yet received the Holy Spirit, he was far from possessing all the qualities which were necessary for him to destroy idolatry, to convert men obstinate in their crimes and to establish through all the world the faith of a crucified God: the abundance of lights and of strength, of which he had need for so great an enterprise, was reserved to the infusion of this divine gift which was to enlighten his soul and inflame it with the fire of His holy love. To render himself worthy of so great a favour, he withdrew, after the Ascension of Our Lord, with the other Apostles, into the cenacle,[1] where this company of divine men were accustomed to withdraw when they were at Jerusalem. Meanwhile, after the deplorable fall of Judas and his desperate death, there was wanting an Apostle to the mysterious number of twelve that the Saviour had established. Peter rose in the midst of his brethren, and, beginning more openly his functions of universal Pastor, said to them that it was necessary to fill the place of this wretch, according to this word of the Psalmist: *Episcopatum ejus accipiat alter*: “Let his episcopal dignity be given to another!” They proceeded to this election, and the lot fell happily on Saint Matthias, who was the twelfth Apostle.

For ten days the Apostles had been in expectation, living in recollection and prayer, when the first day of the feast of Pentecost or of the oblation of the first-fruits of the wheat, one of the three principal feasts of the people of God, about nine o’clock in the morning, at the moment when they were offering at the temple the loaves made with the new wheat, there was heard suddenly a violent noise, like that of a tempest. The house where the disciples were assembled was shaken by it. At the same instant tongues of fire descended from heaven and rested on each of them. These sparkling flames were the symbol of the divine ardours which inflamed their soul, and the emblem of the supernatural charity destined to warm the world, long since

chilled by egoism, superstition and depravity of morals.

Saint Peter, in particular, received on this occasion an effusion of the Holy Spirit more abundant than that which was poured upon the ancient Prophets and on Moses himself. It was then that he entered into that holy intoxication which the prophet Joel had foretold, and that, being filled with the virtue from on high, he opened his mouth to preach the unknown mystery of the Redemption of the world; he spoke but one tongue, but he was heard in all sorts of tongues, and his preaching made so great a fruit that there were no fewer than three thousand persons who were converted and embraced the faith of Jesus Christ crucified. What is in this very remarkable is that, among these persons, there were several whom neither the words, nor the miracles, nor the admirable examples of Jesus Christ had been able to soften and to attract to His service, and who even had made themselves guilty of His death by asking of Pilate that He should be crucified, as our Apostle reproached them publicly in his sermon. Thus the Son of God did, by His Apostle, what He had not done by Himself, and rendered the word of the former more efficacious than He had rendered His own, in order to show that the remission of sins and the sanctification of souls were a fruit of the effusion of His blood and of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

One saw then in Saint Peter, says Saint Augustine, what an abundant effusion of the grace of the Holy Spirit can do. It strengthened so much this heart before so timid, so weak, that it made it render publicly and courageously testimony to Him whom he had just denied. It opened this mouth which fear had closed for the truth, and it opened it with a singularly remarkable advantage. All those on whom the Holy Spirit had descended received the gift of speaking divers tongues. But Saint Peter was either the only one or the first of all to preach aloud Jesus Christ to this crowd of Jews who surrounded him, and to confound those who had put Him to death by the irresistible testimony which he rendered to His glorious resurrection. If any one, adds the same doctor, wishes to taste the pleasure of a spectacle so holy and so agreeable, let him read the book of the Acts; he will see there with admiration Jesus Christ, preached with intrepidity by him whose denial he reads with grief in the Gospel. He will see there this heart, formerly so cowardly, filled now with a noble courage; this tongue, formerly slave of fear, now full of liberty and of confidence; the mouth, which lately denied Jesus Christ three times, makes Him confessed now by three thousand hostile mouths. Grace shines in him with so much brightness, the Holy Spirit shines in him with so much plenitude, in his mouth the word of truth has so much weight and authority, that this man, who trembled just now in the fear that the Jews would put him to death with Jesus Christ, now makes the Jews tremble, converts a very great number of them, and renders those who took away the life of the Saviour ready to lose their own for love of Him. Such is the work of the Holy Spirit.

But if grace appears admirably in the courage of Saint Peter, it manifests itself no less in his humility. This fire, says Origen,[2] this activity, this boldness in speaking and acting which had been seen until now in him, disappeared almost in the sequel, to give place to a spirit so humble, so moderate, so ready to yield to others, and to humble himself before all the world, that one can scarcely recognise the impetuous nature of Saint Peter and the rank which he held in the Church above all the others. However the following exception must be admitted: when it was a question of the interests of the Church and of exposing himself to fatigues and dangers, then we see him always appear the first.[3] Outside these circumstances, he is well pleased to do nothing but in common with the others, without having any particular honour. The humility which he practised then showed that the promptness and the boldness which he displayed on the other occasions were no longer the effect of his natural ardour, but rather that of the charity which the Holy Spirit had poured into his heart.

The Acts of the Apostles represent to us next that Saint Peter, entering into the temple with Saint John, met there at the gate a beggar aged forty years, who was lame from birth, and whom they brought every day to this place to ask alms of the passers-by; he gave him one much more considerable than all those which he had received until then; for, after having told him that he had neither gold nor silver, he healed him by these

words: “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk!” So great a miracle drew a numerous crowd around the Apostles, and this is what gave subject to Saint Peter to make a second sermon: he advanced the affairs of religion still more than by the first, since he had the happiness to convert there five thousand men. Several Saints have remarked, on this miracle, that, when prelates are models of renunciation, of voluntary poverty, they do great prodigies and effect marvellous conversions; but that, when they attach themselves to the goods of the world, they have no longer the same power. Such was Saint Peter: after the conversion of so many persons who brought their treasures to his feet, he was so destitute of all, that he had not even money to give alms to a poor man.

The priests who found themselves then in the temple conceived an extreme spite at his preaching, and, having seized his person and that of Saint John, they sent them to prison. The next day, Annas and Caiaphas, princes of the priests, assembled the supreme council to take cognisance of this affair, and, having caused the holy Apostles to appear there, they asked them in whose name, and by what virtue they had made the lame man walk. Saint Peter answered courageously: “We have wrought this cure in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you rejected as a stone of refuse and whom you crucified, but whom God, His Father, has raised up to be the source of salvation of all men.” An answer so generous astonished them the more, as, having caused to come also before them this same lame man who was known to all the world, and seeing him walk quite upright, they could object nothing to a miracle so indubitable. Thus, all they could do after a long deliberation was to forbid Peter and John ever to speak of Jesus Christ to whomsoever it might be. But the Apostles answered them with the same courage that they would by no means keep this prohibition, because they were more obliged to obey God, who commanded them to announce the mystery of salvation, than them, who wished to prevent its publication: in spite of this answer, our illustrious accused were sent away. This first persecution, far from being prejudicial to the Church, was, on the contrary, extremely advantageous to it; it was seen at once to increase marvellously by the number of those who ranged themselves in it every day, and one cannot sufficiently admire the holiness with which these first Christians lived under the guidance of Saint Peter. Saint Luke teaches us that they had all but one heart and one soul; that they possessed nothing but in common, and that the distribution of goods was made there with so much justice that there were no poor among them. The Apostle maintained this spirit with an admirable gentleness: he won so much all the faithful that those who had some remains of possession sold them emulously to bring the money to his feet. Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, were of this number: but, whether they did it against the grain and only not to appear singular, or whether they afterwards repented of having done it, they plotted together to declare to the Apostle only a part of the price which they had received for it. Peter, who knew that it is of the office of the Pastor to mingle severity with gentleness, for fear that too great indulgence should give place to relaxation, having known, by revelation, the sacrilegious design of these two Christians, chastised them for it in a terrible manner. Ananias having brought him his money, and having protested to him that that was all the price of his inheritance, he said to him in a thundering tone and worthy of the majesty of the head of the Church: “Why, Ananias, have you given place to Satan to take possession of your heart? Was it not in your power not to sell your field, and was it not still in your power, after having sold it, to keep all the price of it? Why then have you taken this criminal resolution to come and lie to the Holy Spirit? Know that it is not to men that you have lied, but to God.” At these words, which were as a stroke of thunder, Ananias was seized with a fright of death, and, having fallen at his feet, expired. The same happened to Sapphira, his wife. Knowing nothing of the tragic death of her husband, she came, three hours after, to make the same protestation that he had made. Their crime was not to wish to keep a part of their money, since, being able legitimately to keep all the sum and the inheritance itself, they could not be guilty of keeping a part of it; but it was to make profession before God of a perfect poverty and of an entire stripping of all their goods, and to remain nevertheless proprietors, in retaining what they pretended to abandon for His love: which was a hypocrisy and a species of sacrilege. The terrible chastisement which followed this fault was a salutary instruction for the faithful, and holy Scripture teaches us that it imprinted a great fear in the

mind of all those who had knowledge of it. For one act of severity of Saint Peter, we have an infinity of others of benevolence and of mercy. He wrought so many miracles that the streets through which he passed found themselves continually bordered with sick whom each one placed there at the door of his house, in order to receive cure by his touch or by his word. But it was not necessary that he should touch them or see them, since his shadow alone gave health to those on whom it passed; which that of Jesus Christ had not done, to show the truth of what He Himself had said: “that those who should believe in Him would do miracles like those which He did, and that they would do still greater.” There were brought also to Saint Peter the sick and the possessed of all the environs of Jerusalem, and he failed never to cure them. So many prodigies animating the envy and the rage of the priests and doctors of the law, they seized once more Saint Peter and at the same time all the other Apostles, and had them shut up in a narrow prison. But an angel having delivered them in the night, without forcing the doors or making a breach in the walls, they recommenced the next morning to preach the faith of Jesus Christ in the midst of the temple. The Council, being warned of it, sent to seek them without violence, for fear of irritating the people; and, when they had arrived, the princes of the priests asked them why, after the prohibition they had made them, they had not ceased to speak continually to the people of Jesus of Nazareth. “It is,” said Saint Peter again generously, “because we have a Master greater than you, who commands us, who is God, and because we are more obliged to obey Him than you.” This answer, which was approved by all the Apostles, was the cause that they were scourged before all the assembly; but this torment, far from saddening them, gave them an extreme joy, and they thought themselves much honoured to have suffered this affront for the name of Jesus Christ, their Master.

Saint Peter presided next at the election of the seven deacons, whose principal functions are to assist the bishop at the altar, to distribute the blood of Jesus Christ, and to take care of the subsistence of the poor and of the widows of the Church; and he had soon the consolation of seeing one of this blessed troop, Saint Stephen, fight and die for the faith. But, as the great persecution which rose at the same time against all the flock of Jesus Christ obliged the faithful to go out of Jerusalem and to disperse on all sides, our Apostle had a fine occasion to display his prudence, his charity, his zeal and the indefatigable care that he had of this still nascent Church. He remained first with the other Apostles in the city of Jerusalem, for fear that their going out should discourage what remained there of Christians and make their persecutors triumph. But, a little time after, Saint Philip, one of the seven deacons, having converted and baptised many people in Samaria, and even Simon the Magician, who was touched by the great miracles which this great preacher of the Gospel wrought continually, Saint Peter and Saint John came there, at the prayer of the other Apostles, to impose hands on the newly baptised and give them the Holy Spirit. Simon the Magician, seeing that, by this august ceremony, the Holy Spirit descended visibly on the faithful, and that afterwards they spoke divers tongues and wrought great prodigies, offered money to the Apostles to have, like them, the power of giving the Holy Spirit. But Saint Peter, taking the word, said to him: “Let thy money perish with thee, wretched and impious man, who hast persuaded thyself that the gift of God was acquired with money! thou canst have no part in the mystery of life which we announce.” He exhorted him nevertheless afterwards to do penance; but, as this sacrilegious man, who has given his name to the most detestable plague that can be in the Church, we mean to say simony, far from doing penance, continued to sow his errors, not only among the Samaritans, but also among the Jews and the Gentiles, and even as far as in Rome, Saint Peter, who had begun to combat him in Samaria, pursued him everywhere till his death, and we shall see him by and by gain over him great victories, and, after a signal triumph, oblige him to flee and to hide himself so as to appear no more on the earth. Saint Paul, having been converted to the faith on 25 January of the year 33 of salvation, came, three years after, to Jerusalem, to see Saint Peter there and to confer with him on the mysteries of our religion, as he says himself in his epistle to the Galatians, chapter i. It was therefore in the year 38. At this time, peace being rendered to the faithful through all Palestine and Syria, our holy Apostle, who knew that the care of all the Churches had been entrusted to him, resolved to travel through all the places where the Gospel had been

preached, as well by the other Apostles as by the disciples who had dispersed during the persecution, in order to strengthen there the new converts, and to increase there, by his word and by his miracles, the flock of the Lord. It was then, according to the most probable opinion, that he established his see in Antioch, as in the capital of all the East, until he could establish it in Rome, which was the capital of the West, of the empire and of all the world. It is true that Saint Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, makes no mention of this see of Antioch; but, besides the tradition which bears witness to it, we have authentic testimonies of it in Eusebius of Caesarea, Saint Jerome, Saint Leo and several other very ancient ecclesiastical authors: and the Church herself keeps its feast on 22 February. Some say that it lasted only four years, others seven years; but that one must begin from the time of the Ascension of Our Lord. Others finally say that it lasted seven years, according to the opinion of the ancients, and that nevertheless it is not necessary to begin it before the year 38. But this depends on the time of the death of our Saint, since, having held twenty-five years his see at Rome, and seven years at Antioch, there must necessarily have been thirty or thirty-two years between the establishment of this see and the time of his martyrdom.

In the course of the same visit, our holy Apostle being at Lydda, a city situated on the shore of the Mediterranean, and very celebrated in the sequel under the name of Diospolis, cured there a man named Aeneas, who had been paralytic for eight years: this was the cause of the conversion of the inhabitants of this city and of those of Sarona. He raised also at Joppa a holy widow named Tabitha or Dorcas, great almsgiver, and who was considered as the mother of the poor and the asylum of the unfortunate, by saying to her only these three words: “Tabitha, arise!” It was in the same place that, being in ecstasy, he saw descend from heaven a great sheet held by the four ends, where there were all sorts of four-footed beasts, reptiles and fowls, and he heard a voice which said to him: “Peter, arise, kill and eat.” He answered: “God forbid, Lord, that I should eat of these animals! I have never eaten of any of the meats that the law declares unclean.” But the voice replied to him at once: “Call not unclean what God has purified.” This vision recommenced in the same manner three times, and, the third time, the sheet appeared to re-enter heaven. As he meditated profoundly on what this apparition signified, which was the figure of the vocation of the Gentiles to the faith, there came three messengers, on the part of Cornelius, centurion in the Roman troops, to beseech him to come to Caesarea, in order to instruct him, with all his family, in the true means of saving themselves. He consulted the Holy Spirit on this, who ordered him to follow these messengers, as being sent by His movement, and made him know that those who awaited him at Caesarea were those unclean animals which he was spiritually to kill and eat. When he had arrived there, he preached the faith to Cornelius and to a great crowd of other Gentiles, who had assembled to hear him; at the end of his sermon, the Holy Spirit, who had operated invisibly in their hearts, descended also exteriorly upon them; Saint Peter, recognising thereby that God wished to incorporate them in His Church, had them all baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, that is to say, not with the baptism of Saint John, which had not the force to remit sins, but with the baptism of Jesus Christ, in the name of the three divine persons, which had the power to effect this remission.

From there he betook himself to Jerusalem, where he appeased the murmurs of Cerinthus, who afterwards was an impious man and a heresiarch, and of the other Jews newly converted, who found it ill that he had given entrance into the Church to Cornelius the centurion and to the others who were not circumcised. He sent then Saint Barnabas to Antioch, to cultivate in his absence this great field where the faith had been happily planted, and he had the consolation of learning that he made great fruits there, and that the faithful there had quitted the name of disciples to take that of Christians. Some time after, there rose in Judaea a new persecution against the flock of the Son of God, by the impiety of Herod Agrippa, whom the emperor Caligula had made king of the Jews, and who wished, by this cruelty, to gain the good graces of this nation. In effect, Saint James the Greater was beheaded; and Saint Peter, whom he caused to be arrested prisoner, was also to be executed in presence of all the people after the feast of Easter; but an angel drew him miraculously from prison, and rendered him to the prayers, the tears and the groans of all the Church.

It was on this occasion that the Apostles, after having composed the creed which bears their name, and which, in twelve articles, contains the principal points of our faith, took the resolution of dividing the world among them, and of distributing themselves through all the nations of the earth to carry there the light of the Gospel. Saint Peter was to preach in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia and the other provinces of Asia, to fix his first see at Antioch and afterwards at Rome, where the chair of Jesus Christ was to be established, and the head of the Church to reside.

Saint Peter, after having been delivered from prison, went out of Jerusalem, and set out with some disciples to travel anew through the provinces of the East, of Syria and of Asia Minor which they had already evangelised. He went to Caesarea, a very important city then, advantageously situated on the shore of the Mediterranean. Simon the Magician was then in this city, surrounded with numerous disciples whom he had drawn to himself by his prestiges, and by his doctrine which justified all disorders and all sins, as well as all the errors of the human mind. Saint Peter refuted all the errors and the infamies of this impostor; for whatever may be the power of man and of the demon, it cannot prevail against the truth nor against the divine power which resides in the ministers of Jesus Christ. Simon, having been convicted of imposture and of magic, was driven out of the city by the indignant people, and a great part of the inhabitants received the gift of faith.

Saint Peter, after having strengthened the faithful of Caesarea in their belief, quitted this city to go and carry the Gospel elsewhere and destroy the evil which the enemy of God and of the Church was doing in different places. He put at the head of the Church of Caesarea, in quality of bishop, the centurion Cornelius. Having learned that Simon had betaken himself to Tyre, the Apostle called three of his disciples, Clement, Nicetas and Aquila, and commanded them to go there before him, to inform themselves of what was passing there and to give him account of it by letter. The three disciples obeyed, arrived at Tyre, passing by Dora, lodged with Berenice the Canaanite, who informed them exactly of all the success that Simon had obtained over the mind of the inhabitants.

The Apostle, at this news, set out at once, and after having visited and evangelised, in passing, the city of Ptolemais, he arrived in the city of Tyre where he was received amid the acclamations of the inhabitants. After having announced to them one God, creator of heaven and earth, author and preserver of our souls and our bodies, he declared to them that the maladies with which they had been afflicted by Simon and by the demons of whom this magician was the instrument and the minister would disappear when, converted to the true God, they should have been purified by holy baptism. In effect, a great number of Tyrians were instructed, baptised and cured of their bodily and spiritual maladies. The report of these marvels went as far as Sidon; which engaged the inhabitants of that city to send a deputation to Saint Peter who was still sojourning at Tyre. The Apostle finished therefore curing the sick of this last city, instituted a church there, at the head of which he put for bishop one of the priests who accompanied him. Then he set out for Sidon. As soon as Simon learned the arrival of Saint Peter in this city, he went out of it precipitately with his companions. A great number of inhabitants, at the word of the Apostle, believed in Jesus Christ, did penance, were cured and formed a Church over which Saint Peter set a bishop. From Sidon, the Apostle betook himself to Berytus, where, at his arrival, there was an earthquake. The people came to find Saint Peter to implore his help. Then Simon took up his audacity again; he wove a plot, in concert with Appion, Annubion, Athenodorus, and his other companions; but the people precipitated themselves in crowd upon them, covered them with wounds, and ceased not to strike them until they had expelled them from the city.

Afterwards all those who were in the grip of maladies and of demons came to throw themselves at the feet of Saint Peter. Then the Apostle of God, raising his hands to heaven, and conjuring the Lord, cured them by the sole effect of his prayer. He sojourned still some days in the midst of them, and after having confirmed a great number of them in the faith and baptised them, he gave them for bishop Quartus.

On quitting Berytus, the Apostle betook himself to Byblus. There he learned that Simon had just fled to Tripoli. He remained only a short space of time in this city. After having restored health there to several sick and instructed its inhabitants in the doctrine of truth and piety, he gave them for bishop John Mark; then he set out toward Tripoli, in order to follow the traces of Simon, so that it might be manifest that he pursued him, and that he did not seek to avoid him.

Now, as Saint Peter was entering this city, many persons of Tyre, of Sidon, of Berytus, of Byblus, ran before him, desirous of hearing him; the inhabitants of Tripoli, in particular, showed a lively eagerness to see him: they ran, most of them. Those of the brethren who had been sent beforehand related to Saint Peter and to his disciples what was the state of this city, and what Simon had done there. The Apostle was conducted to the house of Maron. Arrived at the door of this dwelling, he turned toward the crowd which followed him, and promised it to speak to it the next day of what concerns the worship of God. Simon, learning his arrival and his brilliant reception, understood that he could not struggle against him in this city, and he went out of Tripoli the same night to betake himself into Syria.

Saint Peter, after having announced to the immense crowd which followed him the words of eternal life, imposed hands on all the sick who were presented to him, and cured them entirely; which caused a great number of men to believe in Jesus Christ and to ask baptism. The Apostle regenerated them in the sacred waters, distributed to them the Eucharist, gave them for bishop Maron, his host, a man distinguished by his virtue and by the consideration which he had acquired, and a Christian already arrived at perfection, then ordained twelve priests and several deacons, who were to provide for the needs of the widows. After having spoken to them of the necessity of order and of the general good accord, having represented to them that the good of the Church was interested in this perfect union and in the respectful obedience to the bishop he had just given them, he made them his farewells and set out for Antioch of Syria, after having remained three months at Tripoli, a considerable city of Phoenicia.

Having quitted Tripoli, Saint Peter set out therefore for Antioch. On his road, he remained a day at Orthosias, not far distant from Tripoli; as almost all the inhabitants of this city had heard the evangelical preaching, he sojourned there only a day, and betook himself to Antarada, or simply Arada. He cured there a paralytic and another woman deprived of the use of her hands, and by his presence delivered a possessed woman. From there, he set out for Balanea; the following day he arrived at Peltus or Paltos, then at Gabala and afterwards at Laodicea. Arrived at the gates of this fair and great city, he said to Nicetas and to those who followed him: It is fitting that we sojourn here some days; for it may be that, in so considerable a multitude, there are found some persons worthy of the promises and of the inheritance of Jesus Christ.

This great Apostle wrought in this city numerous cures, and delivered there several persons possessed by impure spirits. He established there Churches, at the head of which he put bishops. He remained only a few days in this city, and set out to come to Antioch. At his approach, the people of this great city, who had often heard speak of him, came to meet him, received him with joy, as the herald and the apostle of truth. By his prayers and by the imposition of hands, Saint Peter cured in Antioch a great number of sick. He announced to the inhabitants of this city the unity of God and the trinity of the divine Persons. It was there that he conferred baptism on Faustus who had prepared himself for it for some time. At the same time, an order of the emperor caused all the magicians to be sought out. To avoid being arrested at Antioch by the imperial satellites, Simon the Magician fled from this city and returned into Judaea.

Saint Peter laboured, from then on, freely in the bosom of this populous city, increased considerably the Church which already existed there, and gave it for bishop Saint Evodius, before going to found the Church of Rome. He entrusted to Saint Evodius this Church to govern, as the rich man entrusts his flock to the shepherd who is to keep it; he preserved over this sheepfold the same jurisdiction which he possessed before. He sent also Saint Marcian, as bishop to Syracuse, a city of Sicily, and Saint Pancratius to Taormina, another city of the same province.

After having quitted Antioch, he set out for Asia. He came, passing by different cities and boroughs, to sojourn at Tyana, a city of Cappadocia, then at Ancyra, in Galatia; in this last city, by means of his prayer, he raised a dead man, then he instructed in the faith and baptised a great number of persons. He founded there also a Church and established a bishop there.

From there, he came to Synnada, a city of Phrygia, then to Pessinus, metropolis of this province. Gaining then Pontus, he evangelised different cities, such as Gangra, in Paphlagonia, Claudiopolis, Amasea, metropolis of the Hellespont, and arrived as far as Sinope, an important city, situated on the banks of the Pontus Euxinus. From Sinope he betook himself to Nicaea, then to Nicomedia, where he established as bishop the disciple Prochorus. Then he preached at Ilium, or Troy in the Hellespont, and entrusted this Church to Cornelius the Centurion, who already had the episcopal charge of Caesarea in Palestine. According to an ancient author, the Apostle would have returned once or twice to Jerusalem, for the feast of Easter, before finishing his apostolic journeys in Asia. But it is certain that he evangelised the various provinces of Pontus, of Galatia, of Bithynia, of Cappadocia and of Asia, after having founded the Church of Antioch and before going to Rome. This is what the historians have concluded from the letter which he wrote to these various peoples, as well as from the testimonies of Eusebius who marks this preaching of Saint Peter as one of the most important functions of his apostolate. Saint Jerome and Saint Leo attest it equally. Saint Epiphanius says even that since he had fixed his see at Rome, he quitted nevertheless this Church to come and visit those of Bithynia and of Pontus. Pope Saint Agapetus testifies that this Apostle ordained and established different bishops in the East. Ecclesiastical history and all the traditions agree on this point.

Let us add that, among the bishops instituted by Saint Peter, tradition ranks still Saint Urban, who was put at the head of the Church of Tarsus; Saint Epaphroditus, who governed the Church of Andriaca (Andraca or Adriana), a city of Lycia, situated at a little distance from Myra; Phygellus, who was bishop at Ephesus, but who soon after had the misfortune to make shipwreck in the faith, and to embrace the errors of Simon the Magician; Saint Apelles, who was brother of Saint Polycarp, and who was set over the Church of Smyrna. Here is a fact of very great bearing. Saint Peter ordained and instituted the first bishop of Byzantium, to-day Constantinople. This becomes manifest by the letter of Pope Agapetus, which was read at the fifth ecumenical council. One reads in it in proper terms that Mennas was the first bishop of Constantinople whom the Holy See had ordained, since Saint Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, had consecrated the first bishop of Byzantium. This letter, approved by the Fathers of a general council, acquires more weight and authority than all the narratives of the Greek and modern historians.

After having accomplished immense apostolic labours in the East, erected episcopates in the principal cities, and founded flourishing Christian communities; after having, by the virtue of the name of Jesus, taken innumerable spoils from the demon and submitted to the obedience of faith vast regions, Saint Peter, this great Apostle, whose zeal was heroic and courage indefatigable, prayed the Son of God to deign to enlighten him, and to indicate to him manifestly on what points he should henceforth bear his steps and his efforts. It was then, as ancient tradition teaches us,[4] that Our Lord appeared to him during the night in a vision, and said to him: “Arise, Peter, take possession of the West; for it has need that you make shine before its eyes the torch of evangelical light. As for me, I will be with you.”

Saint Peter, who knew already that Rome was to be the principal place of his apostolic chair, understood then that his mission in the East was accomplished. He did not hesitate, he resolved to depart at once. He made known the vision he had had to the faithful of Asia, left them constitutions, then embarked for Italy, then the mistress of the world.

He arrived first in Macedonia, and gave for bishop to the Church of Philippi, Olympas, one of the seventy-two disciples; he instituted Jason bishop of Thessalonica, and Silas bishop of Corinth, where this disciple sojourned awaiting the arrival of Saint Paul. After having also placed Herodion at the head of the Church of Patras, he embarked for Sicily. Arrived in this province, he betook himself to Taormina and

lodged with Pancratius. From there, he took his road toward Rome, passing by different cities of Italy, which, until to-day, glorify themselves for having been honoured by the presence of such an Apostle. It is thus that Naples, that splendid city, which vies in magnificence with Carthage and Corinth and which rivals Rome in greatness, Naples was illustrated by the prodigies which Saint Peter wrought there; after he had celebrated the holy mysteries there, he gave for bishop to this city his disciple Asprenas, or Asprenatus; and never, since this happy event, did the Neapolitans forget to celebrate the memory of it and to testify their gratitude to their signal benefactor. The Apostle was accompanied by Clement, son of Faustus, a man very distinguished in the eyes of the Romans by his noble origin and by his rare wisdom, by Saint Mark, by Saint Martial, by Saint Apollinaris and by some other disciples. Baronius adds, after an ancient tradition, that Saint Peter, driven by the winds, landed at Leghorn; that from there he betook himself to Pisa, where he celebrated the holy sacrifice, and that from this city he directed himself toward the capital of the world. It was the second year of the empire of Claudius, that the Apostle entered Rome. He began at once to enlighten this great city, which had let itself be plunged more than any other in the darkness of idolatry. The infinite number of martyrs, which were seen there soon after, marks sufficiently the great success of his preachings, and with how much happiness he laboured at the conversion of the principal persons of the senate, of the knights and of the people. He sent from then missionaries into divers provinces, not only of Italy, but also of the Gauls, of Spain and of Africa: which acquired a great number of new servants to Jesus Christ. At last, he wrote there his first Epistle, which he addressed to the Christians dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, in order to strengthen them in their belief, to arm them against the snares of the heretics, and to inspire them with the true morality of Christianity.

The foundation of the Church of Rome and of the other Churches by Saint Peter dealt at once a mortal blow to the superstitions of paganism, to the reign of the demons and of idolatry.

The historian Dio testifies that the emperor Claudius was obliged to declare abrogated and suppressed a great number of pagan feasts and ceremonies. The gates of hell, stripped of their ancient power, could no longer sustain their work. Their reign, that of falsehood and iniquity, was then visibly declining. But if they could not arrest their rapid decay, they made at least the greatest efforts then to paralyse the effects of the all-powerful virtue of Jesus Christ, which made itself felt in the preaching of the Apostle. They stirred up troubles and lively agitations in the very bosom of Rome, so that the peace of the empire appeared threatened by them, and the magistrates and the emperor Claudius believed themselves obliged to decree the expulsion of the Jews and of the Christians. This expulsion took place in the ninth year of the empire of Claudius, the forty-ninth of Jesus Christ. This decree, however, had no great consequences. All the Jews soon obtained permission to return into Rome. However that may be, Saint Peter quitted the capital at this epoch to go anew into the East, where his presence was necessary.

It was not without a particular conduct of divine Providence that he betook himself, a short time after, to Jerusalem. There had arisen at Antioch a great contestation among the faithful: some, who were Jews, maintained that Judaism must be joined to Christianity, and that one could not be saved without observing the law of Moses; and the others, who were Gentiles, absolutely refused to submit to this servitude. A question of so great importance well deserved to be examined and decided by him who represented Jesus Christ upon earth. Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas, with some other disciples, deputed by the two parties, came to find him at Jerusalem. He assembled there the Apostles who could be there, that is to say, Saint John who had not gone far from it, and Saint James the Less who was its particular bishop, with the priests who composed that Church, and held with them the first Council of Christendom. The difficulty was proposed there, and the apostle Saint Paul, after having represented how God had made use of him to draw the Gentiles to the faith, declared that it was very ill-timed to wish to impose on them an obligation which the Jews themselves had always regarded as an insupportable yoke. Also, when Saint James had given his opinion in the same sense, it was set down in writing, and the decree was drawn up in these terms: “It has seemed good

to the Holy Ghost and to us, to impose upon you no other burdens than these, which have been judged necessary: That you abstain from meats offered to idols, from the blood of animals, from things strangled, and from fornication." This decree was addressed to the faithful of Antioch, of Syria and of Cilicia, who had quitted the gentility.

As it did not yet forbid to the Jews who had become Christians the observance of the legal ceremonies, they continued always to keep them, and Saint Peter, with the other Apostles, to accommodate themselves to their weakness, kept them also sometimes, above all when they found themselves with them, and judged it necessary in order not to alienate their minds from the doctrine of the Gospel. Thus our Apostle, having afterwards gone to Antioch to confirm in the faith the Gentiles who had become faithful, ate at first with them indifferently of all sorts of meats; but, at the arrival of some Jews who came from Jerusalem to speak to him, fearing lest they should be scandalised to see him live in the liberty which Christianity gave to the Gentiles, he separated himself from these and put himself again into the abstinence from the meats forbidden by the law. Saint Paul, who apprehended that this example of the head of the Church, all of whose actions were regarded as living rules of Christian morality, while serving the Jews, might be prejudicial to the Gentiles, and make them doubt of the doctrine of the Council of Jerusalem, reproved him for it publicly; it is even said, in the Epistle to the Galatians, that he resisted him to the face, that is to say in his own presence, because he was blameworthy. Saint Jerome and the Greek Fathers persuaded themselves that this was done by concert between them, and that Saint Peter, who had an extreme charity for the Christians of both peoples, wished himself, by a holy artifice, to be reproved, in order that, his action preventing on the one side the scandal of the Jews, the remonstrance of Saint Paul might prevent on the other that of the Gentiles. But Saint Augustine opposed this sentiment with all his strength, believing that it did too much injury to the literal sense of Holy Scripture. In effect, it is better to say, with this holy doctor, that Saint Paul judged the action of Saint Peter really blameworthy, and that he made him the remonstrance seriously, because of the evil consequences which he foresaw from it. But this takes nothing from the merit and glory of our great Apostle, since, if he committed some fault there, it was extremely slight and altogether excusable, having no other intention than that of the salvation of the Jews, whom he regarded as the people beloved of God, and not believing that the Gentiles, who knew that he was a Jew, would draw evil conclusions for themselves from seeing him observe ceremonies in which he was born and had been brought up. Besides, Saint Cyprian remarks that he made appear on this occasion an incomparable gentleness and humility, since, far from contesting against Saint Paul, and from defending his action and his intention, he yielded at once to his remonstrances, without his quality of prince and pastor of all the Church, and that sovereign authority which he had received over all the faithful, giving him any movement of indignation against him who reproved him.

The heretics, instead of admiring this modesty of which so few examples are found in princes and in sovereigns, have made use of the dispute of the Apostles to combat the primacy of Saint Peter; but they are not less ridiculous in this than he who should contest the sovereignty of a king, on reading in history that some one of his counsellors made him a remonstrance. God, to keep the greatest men in humility, often makes use of their inferiors to enlighten them and to declare to them his wills. Thus he instructed Moses by Jethro, and David, king and prophet, by other Prophets much less than himself; but this does not combat their pre-eminence, and does not hinder their being above these instruments which divine wisdom employs to instruct them. From Antioch, Saint Peter returned into Italy, of which he traversed the various provinces, announcing the Gospel there. This is what Eusebius, Rufinus and other ancient authors report. In effect, as Asterius testifies, this Apostle having received from Jesus Christ the charge of feeding and nourishing his flock, did not languish in a soft idleness. He did not choose a sweet and peaceful life; he did not seek to avoid perils. He lived, on the contrary, in the greatest and most continual activity; he made long and painful journeys in all the parts of the earth, with the aim of enlightening the blind by the torch of the Gospel, of serving as guide to those who were astray, of encouraging and advancing those who were already walking in the path of truth and piety, of combating without ceasing the enemies of God and of his Church, of exhorting

his soldiers, of suffering all sorts of persecutions, of enduring the horror of the most frightful prisons; in a word, of preaching Jesus Christ in every place, amid all the labours and all the dangers that the mind can imagine.

He had already sent some of his disciples into all the parts of the universe, into the East and into the West. He wished still to go thither himself in person. After having confided to Saint Linus[5] and to Saint Cletus the administration of his Pontifical See of Rome, he set out for Great Britain,[6] which a recent conquest had just opened to the Romans. He crossed the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Ocean, and landed among those warlike, barbarous, inhuman peoples, abandoned to idolatry, and cast into their hearts the fruitful seed of faith, which was soon to produce abundant fruits there. When he had submitted to the yoke of the Gospel several of those inflexible and ferocious men, ready to deliver the roughest battles to the Romans, to repel the dominating yoke, the Fisherman crossed the Ocean to visit Spain, and to pass from there into Africa. Tertullian,[7] Saint Cyprian,[8] Saint Gregory,[9] Innocent I,[10] Metaphrastes,[11] Baronius[12] testify that Saint Peter gave the faith to Africa, and notably to Carthage,[13] to Numidia and to Mauritania.[14] After having traversed the principal places of those countries, as also the two Libyas and Cyrenaica, after having left Saint Crescens as bishop of Carthage, he arrived in Egypt, at Alexandria, where he publicly confirmed the institution of Saint Mark, his disciple, as bishop and administrator of this great city, betook himself from there into the Thebaid, instituted Saint Rufus bishop of Thebes, an opulent city, very populous and very famous for its hundred gates, penetrated then into the depths of Ethiopia, into the vast regions of the Dawn, *visus etiam Memmonis domum et secreta Aurorae extremaque Aethiopum*.

It was then that he had a revelation to go to Jerusalem in order to be present at the passing of the Blessed Virgin.[15] The circumstances which accompanied the presence of the Prince of the Apostles at the death, the burial and the resurrection of Mary are described in the narrative of the assumption of the glorious Mother of Jesus Christ.

From Jerusalem he returned into Egypt, and passed by Africa, to return to Rome. After having sojourned some time in that city, and having regulated all things there, he traversed again the other provinces, instituted bishops and priests there, gave, in particular, Saint Barnabas for bishop to the church of Milan, and Saint Paulinus to the church of Lucca. He provided likewise for the spiritual government of the cities of the Mediterranean. This care of the churches demanded much time.

Now, while he was thus labouring at the ministry of preaching, after he had gained to Jesus Christ innumerable peoples, he received a heavenly warning, and the angel of the Lord said to him: “Peter, the time of your death and of your deliverance approaches, you must return to Rome; it is in that city that you shall suffer the death of the cross, and afterwards you shall receive the crown of justice.” At these words Saint Peter glorified God and rendered him thanks. He finished, during some days, putting in order the affairs of the Churches, and returned to Rome about the eleventh year of the empire of Nero.

What obliged him to this return was, on the one side, the cruel persecution which this emperor exercised against the faithful, in which they had need of no less help than that of their Pastor and of the head of the people of God, and, on the other, the impudence of Simon the Magician, who, having won the mind of Nero by his magical operations, made himself recognised anew in Rome for a divine power and for a god descended from heaven. When our Apostle had arrived there, he fortified the Christians marvellously against these abominations, and, having a moment of leisure, he wrote his second canonical Epistle against a great number of heretics who began, from that time, to torment the Church. He addressed it to all the faithful in general, and, among other things, he warned them that the time of his death was near, and that he had a revelation of it from Our Lord. As for the war which he made on Simon, after several disputes which he had with him, in which he admirably refuted his impostures, he proposed to him at last that , in order to end their differences, the body of a dead man should be brought, and that he who should raise him should be recognised as the preacher of truth. Simon consented, trusting in the enchantments of his magic art; and, in

effect, a dead body was brought and exposed before all the world; but Simon could do nothing else, with all his sorceries, than make it move its head a little. The Apostle, on the contrary, after having left all the time to the people to recognise the impotence of his magic, and the weakness of the demon when he is bound by the virtue of God, invoking the name of Jesus Christ, raised the dead man and made him walk, speak and eat in presence of that great number of spectators. This miracle having discredited the impostor, whom Saint Ignatius calls the first-born of Satan, he soon saw himself abandoned by those who regarded him before as a divinity. In his rage, having made a pact with the demon to be carried off into the clouds and transported into an unknown place, he said to the Romans that, since they did not render him the honours which were due to him, he had resolved to return to heaven, whence he would chastise them with incredible miseries and calamities, and he marked to them the day on which he was to leave them and fly off into the midst of the air. Saint Peter,[16] to dissipate this enterprise which could be only prejudicial to the propagation of the Gospel, ordered, the eve, which was a Saturday, a general fast in the Church: which was, according to some authors, the origin of the fast or abstinence of Saturday; and, after having joined prayer and tears to this mortification, he appeared generously, the next day, at the place which the magician had designated to be the theatre of his imposture. Curiosity had attracted a numerous crowd there. One saw first this impostor, who was invisibly borne by the demon, take his flight toward the midst of the air, and rise to gain the clouds. But the holy Apostle having renewed his prayer, and having sent it on the wings of the angels before the majesty of God, drew down so prompt a succour that Simon was cast down before he was out of the sight of men. Thus he who wished to mount into heaven fell miserably upon the earth; and he who wished to fly like the eagles, breaking his feet and his legs, saw himself in the impotence of walking. He was to die at that very hour; but the Apostle obtained for him a little respite, so that he might have time to know himself, and that the people might be better convinced of his malice and of his impiety. This delay, nevertheless, was very short; for the next day, having had himself carried to a village named Arezzo, near Rome, he expired there as a reprobate, that is to say without weeping for his crimes and without giving marks of regret for his apostasy, his sacrileges, his infamies, and the great number of heresies which he had sown in the world.

As ordinarily the Fathers and the ecclesiastical authors present only the substance and the indication of the facts which accompanied the martyrdom of Saint Peter, and not the details which relate to it, we are going to reproduce the primitive monuments, which contain not only the foundation of the facts, but also the circumstances, developed in a manner entirely conformable to the tradition of the Fathers of the Church. Here is the narrative which Pope Saint Linus addressed to the churches of the East on the passion and martyrdom of Saint Peter:

“After having for a long time and by different sorts of instructions announced the way of salvation, wrought, in presence of the people, striking miracles, delivered for the name of Jesus Christ numerous combats to Simon the Magician and to several other heralds of Antichrist; after having endured multiplied sufferings, the rigours of scourging, the darkness and the horror of prisons, the blessed Peter exulted with joy in the Lord, rendered him thanks day and night with the brethren, at the sight of the multitude who came to embrace the faith of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Constantly applied to prayer and to preaching, as well as to the other duties of piety, especially to those of charity and of chastity, he made grace penetrate into the heart of those who came to hear him, he exhorted those who believed in Jesus Christ to live according to the rules of modesty and continence. In effect, at the sight of the powerful dominion which she exercised over the world, the great city of Rome had conceived sentiments of pride and taken airs of pomp; she had by that very reason, as ordinarily happens in opulence and in an idle security, let herself be dominated by the disorder of sensuality. For very often pride of spirit is accompanied by the dishonour of the flesh.

“It happened then that the discourses of the blessed Peter inspired in several women of different ages, of the noble and powerful classes, a great love of chastity: the greater part even of the Roman Ladies took the resolution to keep their hearts pure, together with their bodies, as far as it should depend on them. But as the

time approached when the fidelity and sufferings of the blessed Apostle were to be rewarded, the chief of the party of perdition came to oppose the progress of the Gospel: the antichrist Nero, who was iniquity consummated, ordered that the Apostle should be chained and put into a frightful prison.

“It was there that he was visited by four concubines of the prefect Agrippa, named: Agrippina, Eucharis, Euphemia and Dione. When he had spoken to them of chastity and expounded all the commandments of Our Lord Jesus Christ, they blushed and conceived pain at seeing themselves thus subject to the passions of Agrippa. From then, having come to an understanding among themselves, they devoted themselves to chastity, and, fortified by Our Lord Jesus Christ, they resolved no longer to acquiesce henceforth in his adulterous desires. They avoided, in effect, not only all commerce with him, but even his presence. Agrippa felt a lively chagrin at it. He had their steps watched, and his people informed him that they betook themselves assiduously to the blessed Apostle to listen to his instructions. He had them brought to him, and, in the violence of his insensate passion, he said to them: ‘I know whence you come. This Disciple of Christ has taught you to see me no more. But I am persuaded that his magic, his artifices, have not been able to diminish the love which you have for me.’ They were insensible to all his caresses, because the discourses of the Apostle had made them firm.

“Seeing then that they followed the doctrine of Peter and that this was the cause which led them not to consent to his flattering words and to despise by common accord his passion, he began to make them the most frightful threats; he swore that he would have them all burned alive in a burning fire; that he would inflict on Peter the greatest torments, and that he would efface his name for ever from the memory of men. But he could not bring them to consent to his passionate views. ‘We prefer,’ they said, ‘to lose life for chastity in every sort of torment, rather than to renounce Jesus Christ, to whom we have made a vow of continence.’ The prefect Agrippa was therefore irritated, principally against the Apostle; he ground his teeth against him, and he sought some occasion and some plausible reason to make him perish. In the meantime one of the matrons of the first nobility of Rome, wife of Albinus, one of the intimates of Caesar, came to hear Peter. She was called Xandippe, and was accompanied by several other distinguished ladies. When she had heard what the Apostle said touching faith and chastity, she resolved, on this subject, to avoid carefully everything that might be illicit. Albinus felt a lively displeasure at it, and was very much irritated against the Apostle. In vain did he employ caresses and threats, Xandippe remained firm in the faith and in her resolution. Albinus was bound in friendship with Agrippa, the prefect of Rome; he made known to him his pain, told him that the preachings of Peter were the cause of it. He begged him, by the friendship which he had shown him until then, to avenge him on Peter. He added that if his friend refused him this favour, he would avenge himself. Agrippa answered that in consequence of the discourses of that man, he had himself to bear similar things, and even harder ones. Albinus, seeing that it was impossible for him to engage Xandippe to renounce the faith and the evangelical rules, concerted therefore with Agrippa to surprise Peter as in a net, and to make him perish as a magician. Now Xandippe, learning this project, sent to Saint Peter a faithful messenger to warn him to go out of Rome and to avoid snares almost inevitable. She herself, nevertheless, made known also the plot of Albinus and of the prefect Agrippa to the son of the prefect Marcus, to Marcellus, who, after having quitted the pernicious doctrine of Simon the Magician, had shown himself on every occasion faithfully and courageously attached to the blessed apostle Peter. The next day, some of the senators rose in the midst of the sitting and said: ‘We call your attention, noble Patricians, to a doctrine which tends to the perversion of the eternal city: Peter unties marriages by the teaching of divorce, he separates from us our wives, and we know not what new and unheard-of law he introduces among us.’ In saying these words, they provoked the others to rise against the Apostle, and to make him appear before the tribunals. Then Agrippa congratulated himself on seeing that the occasion which he desired of accusing Peter had presented itself in the Senate. But neither Peter nor the faithful were ignorant of what had just passed. They had at once received the news from those of the senators whom the Lord had enlightened by the intermediary of Peter. Wherefore Marcellus and the brethren besought Peter to withdraw. The Apostle said to

them: ‘It is not fitting, my brethren and my children, to flee the sufferings which present themselves to be endured for the Lord Jesus Christ, when He Himself, of His full will, with a view to our salvation, offered Himself to death.’

“At these words Marcellus and the brethren melted into tears, and said to him: ‘Have pity on us, Father full of goodness, have compassion on the young persons and on those who are still novices in the faith; forsake us not, abandon them not in the midst of the dangers of idolatry.’ Peter answered their entreaties in these terms: ‘You counsel me to flee, and thus to inspire by my example in youth and in the faithful the fear of suffering, whereas I must announce with constancy the word of God and preserve the fundamental rules of holy purity which I have laid down. You think that I must flee, in order to avoid a death which all the day long I call for by my sighs and by my groans, because I consider it as the entrance of life, and because, moreover, I must by it glorify the Lord, according as He has revealed it to me.’

“On hearing these words, the brethren cried out: ‘O Father, who teach us the truth, what has become of the words which you addressed to us, when you assured us that you were ready to die for our salvation? And now we cannot obtain that, for our salvation, and until we are made firm, you consent to live yet a little time.’

“The young adolescents whom he kept with solicitude, and whom he had brought up with care in the faith and in chastity, raised their hands to heaven, then, considering attentively his face, fell at his feet uttering cries of grief: ‘O good father! good shepherd! you who are, after the Lord, sweetness itself, why, after having surrounded us with so much affection, after having lately begotten us to the Lord in the sacred fountain, why, by a resolution which had never entered into your heart, do you abandon us so prematurely, and expose us to the bites of cruel wolves?’

“The ladies, with their heads covered with ashes, cried out also: ‘Is this,’ they said, ‘that goodness which you preached to us in speaking of the Saviour? In His mercy He granted to your tears an eternal pardon for your momentary denial; and now, in spite of our weeping, and these floods of tears, you do not grant us even a short delay, above all when, remaining in this life, you could still serve the Lord, and merit that eternal crown which is all prepared for you.’

“The guards of the prison, Processus and Martinianus, with other magistrates and employees, conjured him likewise. ‘Lord,’ they said to him, ‘withdraw whither you will; for we believe that already the emperor no longer remembers you; but this unjust Agrippa, whom the love of his concubines and the ardour of his passions excite, hastens to destroy you. If, in effect, he obtained an imperial order, Plautinus, that man to whom we have obligations, who has entrusted to us your keeping and has recommended you to our care, would send us a sentence of death against you. You know it: when, by the efficacy of your prayers, at the sight of the admirable prodigy which made a fountain flow from the rock in the neighbouring prison, you had brought us to the faith, and baptised us in the name of the holy Trinity, you were free to go where you would: no one disquieted you; it would not be the same now, if the demoniacal fire which excites the city should take more and more possession of Agrippa. Wherefore we pray you, you who are the minister of our salvation, to deign to grant us this return; you delivered us from the bonds of our sins and of those of the demons; now, for the salvation of a numerous people, not so much by virtue of our permission as out of regard for our prayers, come out of these fetters and of this frightful prison, the keeping of which is entrusted to us, and go far away!’

“The widows also, and the orphans, and persons bowed down with old age, came, with dishevelled hair, disfigured face, breast bare, and said to him: ‘You have healed diverse maladies, you have even raised persons who came to our help and who took care to relieve us, and to-day, Father full of goodness, you withdraw yourself from our needs. Leave us rather, let us all go before you, for fear lest, deprived of the teaching of your doctrine, our souls should perish, and lest, destitute of the relief which you procured for them, our bodies should be consumed by languors; hasten to send us whither you desire that we should go,

that we may not have the misfortune, being deprived of our master, to see perish the life which he has communicated to us, and that, remaining in this life, we may not die an unhappy death.'

"Peter, hearing these plaints come from all sides, as he was compassionate beyond all expression, and could never see without weeping the tears of the afflicted, was vanquished by so many tears; he said to them: 'Let none of you accompany me; I will go out alone after having changed my costume.' In effect, the following night, after having celebrated the office, he made his farewells to the faithful, gave them his blessing, commending them to God, then he set out alone. On his road, the straps which had served to bind him fell off of themselves. Now, as soon as he wished to go out by the gate of the city, he saw Christ present Himself to meet him; he adored Him, and said to Him: 'Lord, whither are You going?' Christ answered him: 'I am going to Rome, to be crucified anew.' 'You are going to be crucified anew?' Saint Peter asked Him. 'Yes,' the Lord replied to him, 'I am going to be fastened again to the cross.' Peter said to Him: 'Lord, I will return and I will follow You.'

(A little chapel rises to-day at the place of the meeting. It is known under the name of *Domine, quo vadis?*) "After He had finished these words, the Lord ascended into heaven. Peter followed Him long with his eyes, shedding tears of joy. Re-entering then into himself, he understood that the Lord had, by these words, announced to him the death which he was to suffer; that this Saviour full of goodness, who suffers in the person of His elect by a sentiment of compassion and who manifests His protection by the glory with which He honours their martyrdom, was to suffer still in the person of His Apostle. He returned therefore on his steps, came back to the city full of joy, and glorifying God, he related to his brethren that he had met the Lord, and he told them how the Saviour had declared to him that He was going to be crucified anew in the person of His Apostle.

"When he had announced that he was going to suffer death, all shed tears and uttered cries; they made their grief burst forth in weeping and sobs: 'Good shepherd,' they said, 'consider your sheep: consider how useful it is that you should fortify by your word those whose faith is still so weak. See how much these wavering hearts have need to be strengthened by you.' 'It is easy for the Lord,' answered Peter, 'to confirm without my feeble words the hearts of His servants. For those whom He has planted, He will make grow to such a point of perfection that they will be able themselves to plant. As for me, in my quality of servant, it is necessary that I accomplish the will of the Master. Wherefore, if He wishes that I remain still in this body for you, I do not refuse it. And if His design is that I suffer for His name and that by my sufferings He deign to receive me, I am happy, I am ravished with joy at the sight of His benefit.'

"While then by these words and by others like them he consoled the souls of his brethren, and they could not contain their tears, there came Hieros with four apparitors and ten other men who apprehended him. After having torn him from the midst of the faithful, they bound him and went to present him before Agrippa, prefect of the city. Agrippa, seeing him, said to him: 'You are very bold to circumvent the people and to persuade the women to separate from their husbands. You have dared, to the shame of the Jews, to introduce the worship of I know not what Christ, to teach I know not what vain doctrine, entirely opposed to the religion and the sacred ceremonies of the eternal city!'

"At that moment, the face of the Apostle became brilliant as the sun, and Peter spoke to him in these terms: 'I see whither you would come, O you, the torch of libertinism, the friend of illicit pleasures, the inventor of the most atrocious cruelties, the persecutor of the innocent, the abettor of immoral and perverse men, the artisan of falsehood, the dwelling of Satan! You are ignorant of the glory to which I aspire, and it is for that reason that you say that I seek to take possession of the confidence of men and women.' 'Since you know,' resumed Agrippa, 'that I am ignorant of that in which you glory, make it known to me.' Peter answered him: 'May I have no other glory than the cross of my master and Lord Jesus Christ, whose servant I am.' 'Do you wish then,' said Agrippa, 'to be crucified as your Lord and your God was crucified?' 'I am not worthy,' answered Peter, 'to make the world witness of my sufferings from the height of the cross; but I wish, whatever be the

kind of torment which it may please you to make me endure, I desire ardently to imitate the passion of Christ.' Then Agrippa, hiding the passion of his incontinence behind an accusation of superstition, condemned the Apostle to be crucified.

"As soon as this news was spread, there was at once a great concourse of people; the streets and the squares could not contain the men of every age and every condition who ran together: rich, poor, widows, orphans, small and great, all raised their voice and said aloud: 'Why is Peter delivered to death? What crime has he committed? In what has he injured the city? It is not permitted to condemn an innocent man! It is to be feared that Christ may avenge the death of so great a man, and that we may all perish.' At the same time crowds of the people rose against Agrippa; they undertook to deliver Peter and to preserve his life: the tumultuous voices of the people answered one another, and Rome was in trouble and confusion.

"Then Saint Peter stopped a little, then mounted on an eminence; from there, having by a sign invited the people to silence, he spoke to them thus: 'Romans, who believe in Jesus Christ and hope in Him alone, remember His patience, and let the prodigies which He has wrought before your eyes by my hands console you. Await Him at His coming, when He shall come to render to each one according to his works. What you now see passing in my regard was announced to me long ago by the Lord: The disciple, He said, is not above the Master, nor the servant above his Lord. Know then that I am in haste to arrive at that last term, where, delivered from this body, I shall present myself to the Lord. If your charity for me is sincere, if you wish to give me a true proof of your filial piety, do not retain me when I go to God, do not hinder me from going promptly to Jesus Christ. Remain then peaceful, rejoice at my immolation, that, joyful, I may offer my sacrifice to the Lord. For God loves him who gives with a good heart.'

"These words had difficulty in calming the sedition, and in preventing Agrippa from being torn to pieces. For those crowds of peoples could and ardently desired to overthrow this prefect; they feared only to grieve the Apostle who imitated the example of his Master, when He said: I can pray My Father, and He will send Me at this very hour, if I will, more than twelve legions of angels. An infinite multitude followed the Apostle and the apparitors toward a place called *Naumachia*, near the Obelisk of Nero, on the mountain. There a cross was set up. Then the Apostle, considering the people who wept and wished to excite a new sedition, spoke to them thus: 'I conjure you, my brethren, hinder not my sacrifice. Seek not to deal severely with Agrippa, have no bitter resentment against him, for he is the artisan of a work not his own. The author of my bodily death is the demon, who in this abuses the permission which the Lord has left him. He is irritated to see that my evangelical ministry has taken from him vessels of ignominy, which have become vessels of continence, temples of Jesus Christ, tabernacles of honour and of grace. Wherefore, my brethren and my children, show yourselves obedient to my recommendations… It is now the time to offer my sacrifice. Remember the signs, the prodigies and the miraculous healings which Christ, by my ministry, has wrought before your eyes and in your favour. *Mementote signorum et prodigiorum atque sanitatum, quae Christo operante et me ministrante, vidistis et sensistis.* The bodily maladies of several were healed only in order that the souls of all might be saved. Dead bodies were raised, in order that dead souls might be restored to life. But why delay and not advance toward the cross? Farewell, my brethren, be patient, and observe what I have told you; I commend you to the Lord Jesus Christ.'

"He then advanced, and standing before the cross, he said: 'O cross, whose name is a hidden mystery! O ineffable favour; for in the name of the cross is peace! O cross, you who unite man to God, and draw him magnificently from the empire and the yoke of Satan! O cross, you who, always by the means of true faith, represent vividly to the human race the passion of the Saviour of the world, and the redemption of all men until then captive! O cross, you who each day offer to the faithful peoples the flesh of the spotless Lamb, who preserve them efficaciously from the mortal venom of the ancient serpent, and who extinguish without ceasing in favour of the believer the flaming sword which forbids entrance to paradise! O cross, you who each day establish peace between heaven and earth, and put again before the eyes of the eternal Father the

death of the Mediator who rose from the dead to die no more; you who were so happily charged to renew incessantly this great mystery; it is for you that I suffer violence; now that I touch the last term of this bodily existence, I shall not cease to make known the secret mystery which God has hidden in you, and which my soul and my life have not until now ceased to publish. O you who believe in Jesus Christ, do not regard as a cross what appears here to your sight. And now above all, O you who can hear me at this last hour of my temporal life, silence the language of the senses, raise your spirits: from these visible appearances carry them toward what is invisible, and you will understand that in Jesus Christ, by the cross, the mystery of salvation has been wrought. To render to the earth the body which you have received from it, Peter, it is a debt which you must discharge by the ministry of those whose office it is to kill the body.'

"At the same time, he said to those who commanded the executioners: 'Why do you lose time? Apparitors, you to whom I am entrusted, what do you delay? Accomplish the order which has been given you, strip me of this mortal garment, that, clothed with that of immortality, I may enjoy the presence of the Lord.'

"Then he made another request; he begged in these terms those who served the executioners: 'I pray you, you ministers of my true salvation, to place me in my crucifixion with the head down and the feet up. For it is not fitting that the servant should be crucified as the Master of the universe was crucified for the salvation of all the world: I wish to render Him glory by my death. I ask that you grant me this favour, in order also that my eyes may directly contemplate the mystery of the cross, and that the words which I shall address from there to those who surround me may be more easily heard.' The executioners therefore turned the cross, fixed the foot of it above, and the arms below.

"As soon as the executors had finished the crucifixion, Peter, seeing the people weep, began to console them by speaking to them of the mystery of the cross; he said: 'O great and profound mystery of the cross! O ineffable and invincible bond of charity! For it is by the cross that God has drawn all things to Himself. This is the tree of life which destroyed the empire of death. It is by the fruit of this tree that You have opened my eyes, Lord; open likewise the eyes of all these, that they too may contemplate the consolation of eternal life.'

"At these words God opened, in effect, the eyes of those who wept and who shed tears over the sufferings of Peter, and they saw angels present with crowns of flowers of roses and of lilies, and Peter who stood at the summit of an upright cross, receiving from Jesus Christ a book, in which he read the words which he uttered. At this sight, they began to rejoice and to manifest their joy so much in the presence of the Lord that the unbelievers and the executioners, seeing thus in joy and in gladness those whom they had seen before in sadness and in tears, were suddenly as if struck with stupor and as if seized with fear. The blessed Peter, seeing then that his glory was manifested to those who, a moment before, were shedding tears, rendered thanks to Our Lord Jesus Christ, saying: 'You alone, Lord, were worthy to be crucified upright at the top of the cross, because You have redeemed the whole world from sin: I desired to imitate You, even in Your death; but I should have regarded it as an usurpation to be crucified as You were: *Sed rectus crucifigi non usurpavi*. For we are simply men and sinners, born of Adam; as for You, You are God begotten of God, and true light come forth from true light before all ages; toward the end of time, You deigned, in favour of all, to make Yourself man, without contracting the stain of man, in order to be the glorious redeemer of man. Uprightness, elevation, height, belong to You alone. As for us, we are, according to the flesh, the children of the first man, who bent downward to the earth the principal part of his being. His fall marks the mode of human generation. For we are born in such a manner that we are inverted and appear bent toward the earth, and that what is on the right is found on the left, and what is on the left is found on the right; it is that in effect in our first parents the condition of this life was changed. This world regards as the right side what is the left side: it is by this last means, Lord, by Your holy preaching, that You have delivered those who were to perish, as of old the Ninivites. As for you, my brethren, who love to hear the word of God, understand what I am going to announce to you, that is to say the mystery of the whole creation, the principle of all created existence. For the first man had lost all his race. *Nam primus homo, cujus genus in specie ego habeo, misso*

deorsum capite, ostendit olim perditam generationem, mortua enim erat generatio ejus, et nec vitalem habebat motum. But, drawn by His mercy, He who is the principle came into the world, clothed with the corporeal substance, then hung on the cross to honour this holy vocation, that is to say the cross; He re-established and prescribed to us the things which, by reason of the iniquity and error of men, had been inverted, overturned; thus, present things were considered as eternal things, and eternal things were regarded as present and temporal things; what belongs to the right was taken for what belongs to the left. *Restituit et constituit nobis ea, quae antea hominum iniquo errore immutata fuerunt, praesentia videlicet ut aeterna, et aeterna ducebantur ut praesentia, et dextera sinistra.* In effect, He glorified the right, He brought back all the signs to their proper nature, esteemed as goods the things which were not considered as goods, and declared really advantageous the things which were believed hurtful. Wherefore the Lord had said mysteriously: If you do not treat the right as being the left, and the left as being the right, and the things above as being the things below, and what is before as being what is behind, you shall not know the kingdom of God. This knowledge, then, I make appear in myself, my brethren, and what I have just said is the image under which the carnal eyes regard me hanging on this cross. This is, in effect, the character of the first man. As for you, my beloved, who hear these things, if you understand them perfectly and if you apply them to your ancient error, to your first manner of living, you go toward the surest harbour of faith; continue to walk thus, direct your course toward the rest of your heavenly vocation; let your manner of acting be holy: the way you must follow to arrive at this goal is Jesus Christ. It is necessary then to mount upon the cross with Jesus Christ, the true God, who is for us the immutable and living word. It is for this that the Holy Ghost says also: Jesus Christ is the word and the voice of God. Moreover, the word marks this upright cross to which I am fastened. And because the voice belongs properly to the body, which bears particular features that are not attributable to the Divinity, it is recognised that the proper features of the cross figure human nature, which became, by the first man, subject to the error of the inversion of things, but which recovered the true understanding of them by Him who is God and man. In effect, the very key of knowledge was fastened in the midst of the cross, and is obtained only by conversion and by a holy life, by faith accompanied by repentance.'

"The blessed Apostle spoke thus to the people with a joyful countenance and a serene air. He cried out then, and made a prayer in these terms: 'These words of life, Lord Jesus Christ, it is You Yourself who made them known to me; You revealed to me what I have announced touching this wood, this mysterious tree; I render You thanks for it, not with a heart which often admits some affection little conformable to holiness, not with carnal lips nor with a tongue which utters the true or the false, nor with words which the material organs articulate; but I render You thanks, merciful King, with that voice which is understood in the midst of silence, which is heard not in public, not by means of the sounds of a mortal mouth; this word comes not from the earth, nor has anything earthly, it is not written in books, it has nothing material, it touches no one in a sensible manner. Lord Jesus Christ, You who are my king and my Master, I render You thanks with that spirit which believes You, which understands You, which loves You, which embraces You, and with that interior voice which speaks to You, which addresses You, and whose accents, formed by a humble spirit, are heard by You alone. My Lord, my Father, You are full of a friendly goodness, You are the author and the finisher of our salvation. You are the object of my desires, You are my refreshment and my delights. You are all to me, and in my eyes all goods are in You; You are all to me and You hold for me the place of all that exists. In my eyes You are all. It is in You that we have life, movement and being. Wherefore we must consider You as holding Yourself the place of all goods, that You may grant us those which You have promised, which the eye has not seen, which the ear has not heard, which the heart of man has not conceived, and which You have prepared for those who love You. Keep these goods for Your servants, make them enter into participation, into possession of these precious advantages, because You are the eternal and sovereignly good Shepherd, You are the true Son of God. I commit to You, I commend to You the sheep which You have entrusted to me. Make them enter Yourself into Your fold; preserve them, for You are Yourself the door, the fold and the porter. You are Yourself their pasture and their eternal food. To You be honour and glory, with

the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever and ever!'

"As soon as all the people had answered, at that very hour: Amen, Peter gave up his spirit. Thus died this Apostle, who was then nearly eighty years old, after having governed the Church of Rome for twenty-five years, and borne the charge of Head of Christendom during thirty-eight years, since the death of Christ.

"Immediately Marcellus, son of Marcus, prefect of Rome, converted by Saint Peter, and become one of his most fervent disciples, without waiting for the advice of any one, took down from the cross the body of the blessed Apostle, washed it with milk and with excellent wine. Having then pounded aromatic gums, taken fifteen hundred minas of aloes, of myrrh, of balsamic leaves and of stacte, with different other aromatics, he embalmed it with care. He filled also with Attic honey the new tomb which he had prepared, and, after having anointed the body with very precious perfumes, he laid it in this sepulchre. In this work he was aided by three holy men who appeared immediately after the blessed Apostle had expired. They said they had come from Jerusalem in favour of the faithful of Rome. No one had seen them before, and no one could see them afterwards. They had joined Marcellus, that illustrious man who, after having quitted the party of Simon the Magician, had attached himself to the following of Saint Peter; they carried with him the body of the Apostle and placed it at the foot of a terebinth, near a place called Naumachia, and which is still named Vatican. Now these men who said they had come from Jerusalem spoke to the people: 'Rejoice,' they said, 'and congratulate yourselves! for you have deserved to have great patrons! They are the friends of Our Lord Jesus Christ! But know,' they added, 'that after the death of the Apostles, the infamous Nero can no longer hold the reins of the empire.'

"In the very night, as Marcellus was keeping watch at the tomb of the Apostle, and the lively regret for his master made him shed tears, the blessed Peter presented himself to him. At his sight, Marcellus was seized with fear: he rose at once, to go to him. 'Brother Marcellus,' the blessed Peter said to him, 'you have not heard the voice of the Lord who said: Let the dead bury their dead.' 'Beloved Master, I have heard it.' Then Peter said to him: 'Weep not then, as if, dead yourself, you had buried a dead man. But rejoice as living and as having rendered the honours to Him who is in the bosom of life and of joy. Let the dead bury their dead! As for you, as you have heard from my mouth, go, announce the kingdom of God!'

"It was very agreeable news to all the brethren, when Marcellus told them these things; and from then, on all sides, the faith of the faithful, by the virtue of the sufferings of Saint Peter, was confirmed by God the Father, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the efficacy of the sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost.

"Now Nero, learning the death of the blessed Peter, whom he had ordered to be imprisoned, and not put to death, sent people with an order to arrest the prefect Agrippa, for having, without his consent, put Peter to death, to whom he was disposing himself to make undergo divers torments. He complained, in effect, that he was, in consequence of the prestiges of this man, deprived of Simon the Magician, the preserver of his life, and he was afflicted at the loss of such a friend, who, according to his manner of viewing things, rendered innumerable services to the prince and to the Republic. But Agrippa, through the intermediary of his friends, obtained to remain deprived of his office, and to be able to live in his own house as a simple private person, and he avoided by this means the anger of the emperor. But he did not escape the penalty of the divine judgment: heavenly vengeance reached him a short time after, and he perished miserably.

"Finally, the cruel Nero applied himself to persecute those whom he knew to be attached in a more intimate manner to the blessed Peter; he wished, by the torments which he made them endure, to satisfy his hatred against Peter. The blessed Apostle, by revelation, gave knowledge of this to the faithful, and indicated to them the manner of avoiding the fury of this ferocious beast. Nero himself, in a vision, saw Saint Peter present himself before him, and command some one to scourge the prince with force and rigour, and he heard this Apostle say to him: 'Abstain, impious man, from laying hands on the servants of Our Lord Jesus Christ; it is not given to you to arrest them now.'

“A little frightened by this apparition, the tyrant kept quiet. As for the faithful of Rome, they rejoiced in the presence of the Lord that the blessed apostle Saint Peter appeared to them often, and fortified them by his words. They glorified therefore together God the Father Almighty, and the Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost. To Him be glory, power and adoration for ever and ever! Amen.”

We do not undertake to report here the eulogies which the Councils and the Fathers of the Church have given to our holy Apostle: one may read for that the sermons which they have made on the days of his feast; they will be found printed together in the *Library of Preachers* of the learned Father Combefis, of the Order of Saint Dominic. It suffices to say that Saint Denis the Areopagite calls him the sovereign Glory, the highest Ornament, the Pillar and the very strong and very ancient Column of all the theologians, and that Saint John Chrysostom names him the Master of the Apostles, the Principle of the orthodox faith, the great Interpreter of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, the necessary Counsellor of Christians, the Treasury of supernatural virtues, the Temple of God, the Torch which enlightens all the earth, the solid Rock of religion and the ancient Source of the true sentiments of the Church. He testifies also that Peter is his inclination and his love, and that he cannot think of him without being filled with an astonishment mingled with joy. Finally, he wishes that the nails of Peter, as so many precious stones, might compose for him a crown, with which he would find himself more adorned than with all the diadems of emperors.

The bishops of Rome have succeeded him not only for that particular see, which extends over some cities of Italy, but for his primacy over all the bishops and all the Churches of the world, and for his power of binding and loosing throughout the whole earth, of declaring the truths of faith and of defining the controversies which arise concerning them; of making universal laws which oblige in conscience all the Christian people, of assembling general Councils, of condemning heresies, of explaining the true sense of Scripture, and generally of doing all that belongs to the sovereign Pastor of the flock of Jesus Christ. In effect, it is not to Peter in his sole person, but also in that of all his successors, that Our Lord said: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”; and elsewhere: “Confirm thy brethren; feed My sheep.” As this Church was to subsist to the end of the ages, without either the princes of the world or all the powers of hell ever being capable of overthrowing it, it was not enough, to conduct it, to sustain it and to render it immovable, to give it a first pastor who should have, during thirty or forty years, these rights and these privileges; but it was necessary to give it a succession of pastors as stable as itself and which should end only with the universal world, who should exercise the same power. Also all the Fathers, Greek as well as Latin, enlightened by tradition, have perpetually recognised it in the bishops of the See of Rome. This is what makes Saint Jerome say, in his Epistle to Pope Damasus: “For my part, I am united in communion to your beatitude, that is to say to the chair of Saint Peter. I know that the Church has been built upon this rock: whoever eats the Lamb outside this house is a profane man.” And lower down: “I do not recognise Vitalis, I reject Meletius, I know not Paulinus: he who gathers not with you only scatters, that is to say, he who is not of Jesus Christ is of Antichrist.” And again in the same place: “If you declare that one must say three hypostases, I shall have no apprehension in speaking thus.” This is also what makes Saint Peter Chrysologus say, in his Epistle to Eutyches, that he exhorts him to receive with obedience the decisions of the blessed bishop of Rome, because Saint Peter, who lives and presides always in his see, continues to declare there the truth of faith. This is finally what makes Saint Bernard say, in his Epistle to Innocent, that all the dangers and scandals of the kingdom of God must be referred to him, especially those which concern the faith, because it is in this see that the damages of the faith must be repaired, that the faith can receive no alteration nor diminution, according to this word of the Son of God: “Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” In this same sentiment, the same Saint Bernard, speaking to Pope Eugenius, in the second book of *Consideration*, where no one has ever suspected him of having spoken by flattery, tells him that he is the high priest, the sovereign Pontiff, the prince of bishops and the heir of the Apostles; that he is Abel by his primacy, Noah by his government, Abraham by his patriarchate, Melchisedech by his order, Aaron by his dignity, Samuel by his authority of judging, Peter by his power, and Christ by his unction; that it is to him

that the keys have been given and the sheep entrusted; that the other prelates have been called to have part in his solicitude; but that the whole plenitude of power has been communicated to him. Finally, that his jurisdiction has no other bounds than those of the world, whereas that of the other bishops is limited to some particular districts." It would be endless to report what the other holy Fathers have said on this subject, which is one of the principal points of Catholic doctrine against the errors of the last centuries: those who wish to be more perfectly instructed on it may read what Cardinal Bellarmine has written of it, in the first volume of his *Controversies*, and Du Fal, doctor of the Sorbonne, in his *Treatise on the Sovereign Pontiffs*.

Thus the fruit which the faithful ought to draw from this life is not only to imitate the great actions and admirable virtues of this prince of the Apostles, but also to attach themselves with a faith so firm and so constant to the doctrine of his see, that no temptation, no persecution, no craft of the heretics, no difficulty suggested by the demon, may be capable of separating them from it. For he who is attached to this see walks in the light and in the way of salvation; but he who separates from it throws himself into darkness and can expect nothing else than to be condemned with the infidels and the enemies of God.

The attributes of Saint Peter are affirmative of his pre-eminence over the other Apostles.

Thus: 1° numerous monuments, paintings, mosaics, sculptures, show him to us with the keys in his hand, or in the very act of receiving them from the divine Master; it is a figured translation of the promises made by the Saviour to him whom He was establishing as the head of His Apostles and of His Church. It is a chapter of the Gospel reproduced a thousand times by the arts of those first centuries: *Tibi dabo claves regni coelorum.*

2° It is known that, wishing to prelude His sufferings by an example of humility, our Saviour washed the feet of His Apostles. Now, when this fact is represented in our ancient monuments, it is always Saint Peter, and Saint Peter alone, who is brought on the scene. A sarcophagus of Arles shows him manifesting by his gestures and by the animation of his face his astonishment and confusion, as in the sacred text: "You, Lord, wash my feet?"

3° If he is represented with Saint Paul in the bottoms of cups, for example, often the artist distinguishes him by some particular mark destined to show that, though colleagues in the apostolate, Saint Peter and Saint Paul are not equal. When they are figured in bust, clothed both of them in the *lucerna*, this garment, which is plain for Saint Paul, is adorned in Saint Peter with a border of pearls, or with little hills (*colliculi*) all round the neck. When they are seated, Saint Peter occupies a chair with a back, whereas Saint Paul has only a simple bench or *subsellium*. In general, when they appear to converse together, Saint Peter ordinarily makes a gesture of address, or presents with an imperious air a volume to his interlocutor; the latter, on the contrary, listens attentively, makes with his hand a sign of adhesion or presses upon the book which he holds on his knees.

If Saint Peter is represented with all the other Apostles, as in the mosaic of the baptistery of Ravenna, besides the characteristic emblem of the keys, he is crowned with a sort of tiara, whereas the others are bare-headed; in one of the phials of Monza, whose disc is adorned with the busts of the twelve Apostles, Saint Peter, at the right hand of the Saviour, wears a radiated crown which distinguishes him from his colleagues in the apostolate. In bas-reliefs, mosaics and elsewhere, every time that Our Lord, in the midst of His chosen disciples, confers on them His powers, it is invariably to Saint Peter that He hands the unrolled volume, symbol of the sovereign power of teaching and of direction which is given to him, not only over the lambs, but also over the sheep. Elsewhere, always on sarcophagi, the divine Master, again as the good Shepherd surrounded by His twelve Apostles and by twelve sheep which figure them, caresses tenderly with the hand a sheep larger than the others and which corresponds exactly to the prince of the Apostles. When the Church is figured under the emblem of a ship, it is Saint Peter who handles the oar.

4° But here is something much more important still to attest the belief of the primitive centuries in the primacy of Saint Peter. Moses, head of the Jewish Church and lawgiver of the Hebrews, was the figure of Peter, vicar of Jesus Christ and visible head of the Christian Church; or rather the second was only the continuator of the first, as the New Testament was the complement of the Old. This is a truth of which the tradition was constant and common among the first Christians, and which was often developed in the teaching of the Fathers. Such is the origin of the innumerable reproductions of the figure of Moses in Christian monuments. And these representations take him almost always in the feature which constitutes the liveliest resemblance between the role of the old Moses and of the new Moses, that is to say the striking of the rock of Horeb. There, in effect, the comparison is not arbitrary, it is presented by Saint Paul himself: “The Israelites drank the water gushing from the rock, and that rock is Christ.”

Moses draws from the rock a water which quenches the thirst of the Hebrews; Peter makes to spring from the true rock, which is Christ, the mysterious source of grace which reaches the faithful by the channels of the Sacraments. A truly marvellous painting, discovered lately in a crypt of the cemetery of Callixtus, which has been surnamed the chamber of the Sacraments, unfolds this doctrine before our eyes in a series of pictures arranged with infinite art. In the first place, one sees there Moses or rather Saint Peter, striking the mystic rock; from the river which escapes from it, a seated personage draws a fish at the end of a line. It is the image of the conversion of an idolater by the virtue of grace flowing from the side of the Saviour; farther on, in this same divine water, this same man is baptised by a minister standing before him and laying his hand on the head of the neophyte for the triple immersion. At some distance still a priest, stretching out his hands over a bread and a fish, consecrates the holy Eucharist; and finally seven personages seated at a table take part in the sacred feast, where there figures, as previously, only the bread and the fish.

But however palpable this demonstration may be, we have monuments which render it still more certain. It is first a cup-bottom where the determination of the personage striking the rock is fixed by the very name of Peter, *Petrus*, written in the field, and again by the perfect conformity of the head with the traditional type of the prince of the Apostles. This same type is not less recognisable in the greater part of the sarcophagus sculptures where the subject which occupies us is found reproduced. And, that one may not be mistaken, a point of comparison is ordinarily offered close by, the arrest of Saint Peter, and the head of this Apostle and that of Moses striking the rock are absolutely identical.

There is more still: in the bas-relief of a magnificent sarcophagus, truly precious in every respect, a monument of the fourth century, discovered a few years ago at Saint-Paul outside the Walls, one sees first Saint Peter at the moment when Our Lord announces to him his fall and at the same time the prayer which He addresses to His Father that the faith of His vicar, once converted, may no more suffer failure. The cock is at his feet, which removes all hesitation on the attribution of the personage of Saint Peter. The prince of the Apostles carries in his hand the rod, symbol of the authority which is entrusted to him and which is never attributed, in our monuments, to any other Apostle. A little farther on, he makes use of this sceptre to strike the mystic rock, from which one sees an abundant water come out. It is the divine word announced by Peter on the day of Pentecost. The Synagogue splits into two parts: on one side, those of the Israelites who run with avidity to the life-giving waters of Christ; on the other, and this is the object of a third scene, those who, closing their eyes to the light, conspire against Saint Peter, seize him by the arm and drag him before the tribunals of the scribes. And here again Saint Peter holds the rod of command, which, free or captive, he will no more let go. Allegranza gives a very curious ancient Christian stone, which shows the Good Shepherd surrounded by twelve small full-length figures, who are none other than the twelve Apostles. Now the first on the right is recognised as Saint Peter, by the rod which he holds in his hand. One of the most ordinary attributes of Saint Peter is the cross, and commonly the jewelled cross which he holds in his left hand, and rested against his shoulder, while with the right he receives from Our Lord the unrolled volume. This is the common type in sarcophagi, sepulchral stones, mosaics and gilt glasses. The bronze statue which is seen at

Saint Peter's of Rome bears the monogrammatic cross. The attribute of the cross alludes to the kind of death of this Apostle, and the monogram, which is nothing else than the abbreviation of the name of Christ, recalls in his hands the power which had been given him to work miracles by the virtue of that august name: "I have neither gold nor silver," he said to the cripple who implored his pity at the gate of the temple, "but in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk." A sarcophagus of the crypt of Saint-Maximin offers, in the resurrection of Tabitha, an interesting example of the exercise of this power of the prince of the Apostles. There exists also at Fermo, in Italy, a tomb on which all the subjects represented in bas-relief relate to the life of Saint Peter.

Saint Peter ordained likewise Saint Cletus, to be like Saint Linus his vicar or his chorepiscopus. But as long as this Apostle lived, he remained sovereign Pontiff of the Catholic Church.

Worship and Relics. — Monuments. — Writings.

Saint Peter having been laid in the grottoes of the Vatican, on the Triumphal Way, this mountain, which so rich a spoil has rendered more venerable than the Capitol was before, was later enclosed in the city, and the Popes have had built there the basilica of Saint Peter, which is the richest and most superb edifice that has ever been seen in the world. In effect, neither the temple of Ephesus, so renowned among the pagans, nor that of Solomon, so celebrated among the Jews, nor Saint Sophia of Constantinople, which is at present the principal mosque of the Turks, nor the Escurial of Madrid, nor the cathedrals of Amiens, of Beauvais, of Reims and of Paris, which we have in France, have anything comparable to this august basilica: it is all built of marble within and without; its grandeur and its elevation are marvellous; its pavement, its walls and its vault are so admirably adorned that they seem to have exhausted all the force of art: its dome, which mounts, so to speak, to the clouds, is an abridgment of all the beauties of painting, of sculpture and of architecture; its roof is of lead and of gilt copper. In short, everything there is so rare and so exquisite that it surpasses all that one can imagine of it. It is in a place so magnificent that the precious ashes of the fisherman repose, so that all the world may know how much God honours His friends, and how advantageous it is to live and to die in His service. The devotion of all peoples to visit his sepulchre cannot be expressed. An infinity of pilgrims from all the corners of the earth have been seen there at all times. Emperors, kings and the greatest princes of the world have come there to implore the help of him who was drawn from a boat to be made the pastor of the Church. The infidels themselves, and the heretics, have been as if forced to respect him. When Alaric, king of the Goths, took Rome, having permitted pillage to his soldiers, he wished that the basilicas of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul should be asylums, and forbade to touch either the persons or the goods that should be within their enclosure: and when the empress Theodora commanded Anthimus to seize Pope Vigilius, in whatever place he could take him, she excepted the basilica of Saint Peter, as a place so holy and so august that it ought to be exempt from all sorts of violence. During some moments, the relics of the prince of the Apostles reposed in the catacombs of Saint Sebastian, on the Appian Way. They had been transported there at a moment of danger; but they were re-established in their primitive place by Pope Saint Cornelius. Under the emperor Constantine, they were deposited by Pope Saint Sylvester in a shrine of silver, which was enclosed in another shrine of gilt bronze. Above, a cross of gold of considerable weight was placed. The crypt in the midst of which this precious deposit was to remain was covered inside with plates of metal: a solidly built vault defended the access to this venerable subterranean sanctuary against the indiscreet devotion of pilgrims or against the rapacity of barbarians. In the time of Saint Gregory of Tours, a small square opening, made in the pavement and furnished with a bronze door, gave upon the shrine. The whole Confession was splendidly decorated. At the time of the construction of the present edifice, the primitive arrangement underwent no change: Paul V confined himself to remaking the approaches. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, while working at the pavement, the obscure crypt was discovered where the body of the Apostle reposes. Clement VIII, accompanied by Bellarmine and two other cardinals, descended into the sacred grotto, and, by the light of a torch, he contemplated the golden cross placed on the shrine by

Constantine. At this sight, the Pontiff and those present were seized with a profound emotion. The Pope ordered afterwards that this opening should be closed in his presence. The high altar of the present basilica covers the ancient oratory founded by Pope Saint Anacletus, and the altar of the ancient basilica of Constantine. It is therefore placed above the tomb of the holy apostles Peter and Paul. The half of the body of Saint Peter and the half of the body of Saint Paul are in this tomb. The other halves of the bodies of the holy Apostles are at Saint Paul outside the Walls, under the high altar. The heads are at Saint John Lateran, as will be seen farther on.

As the sovereign Pontiffs have always prevented with much care the relics of the prince of the Apostles from being taken away from Rome, scarcely any are seen elsewhere than in that capital of the Catholic world. Nevertheless, the abbey of Cluny possesses a little of his ashes which were brought from Rome by religious. These inestimable relics, contained in a precious urn, were placed under the high altar of the abbatial church by Hugh, archbishop of Bourges, recognised as authentic and venerated with a tender devotion by Pope Callistus II, when he honoured with his presence the monastery of Cluny.

There was seen at Abbeville, in the priory of Saint Peter, of the Order of Cluny, one of the nails with which this holy Apostle was fastened to the cross.

As for the chains of Saint Peter, which are religiously preserved at Rome, we shall speak of them on the 1st of August, the day on which their feast is kept.

The French republicans, having made themselves masters of Rome in 1798, stripped the churches of all their silver plate, and did not respect even the busts which enclosed the venerable heads of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul. These reliquaries, richer than elegant, had been executed in 1369, under the pontificate of Urban V. They were adorned with a great number of precious stones, given by Charles V, king of France. These busts had therefore to be given up; but at the same time particular care was taken for the preservation of the holy relics, which were deposited in a box of tin plate, well sealed and placed above the high altar of Saint John Lateran, where these heads had been venerated for several centuries. They remained there in the same box until 1803. At that epoch, a very rich Spanish lady, named Marie-Emmanuelle Pignatelli, Duchess of Villa Hermosa, a widow, wished to repair a part of the losses which the rapacity of the French had caused to the churches of Rome. She had the crib of Our Lord, preserved at Saint Mary Major, adorned with gold and silver, as well as the notable piece of the true Cross which the church of Holy Cross in Jerusalem possesses; then had executed in silver two great busts of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, whose faces she wished to be of gold. These busts having been carried into the church of Saint John Lateran, Pope Pius VII went there on the 3rd of July 1804, and had the box of tin plate opened, in which were found two other boxes of silver, in the form of balls, carefully wrapped and sealed. On the one was read the name of Saint Peter, and on the other that of Saint Paul. The first contained the skull, the lower jaw and a vertebra of the prince of the Apostles. The official record makes no mention of what the second contained; but one sees by this act that the greater part of the head of Saint Paul was in it. These holy relics were enclosed in vessels of crystal, in order that the faithful might, according to the desire of the donor, see them when they should be exposed. These vessels, mounted in silver-gilt, were placed in the interior of the busts where they now are, and they are taken out of them when the holy relics are exposed to the veneration of the faithful. There is still shown to-day, at Rome, the part of the Mamertine prison where the holy apostles Peter and Paul were chained by order of Nero. It is composed of two dungeons, placed one above the other. A staircase of modern construction permits one to descend into the first, buried twenty-five feet under ground. Under the Romans, there was neither staircase nor door: the condemned were slipped in through a circular opening, made in the centre of the vault, and which is still closed by an iron grating. On the right, one distinguishes the traces of an air-hole which let a little air and daylight reach this living tomb. The upper dungeon is eight metres long, by three wide and four high. The lower dungeon, situated below the first and called the Tullian prison, is narrower, damper and totally deprived of light. The condemned were let down into it likewise through an

opening made in the centre of the vault. The column of granite to which the chain of the holy Apostles was fastened during their captivity is still standing. At its foot flows a fountain whose consecrated water the pilgrims drink with respect. Tradition teaches us that this spring gushed miraculously at the voice of Saint Peter, when the two jailers Processus and Martinianus, converted by the Apostle, received Baptism from his chained hand. An altar has been erected along one of the walls of the prison, which is now a venerated sanctuary where masses are celebrated every day. Above this sanctuary, which bears to-day the name of *San Pietro in carcere*, two churches have been built, one called of the Crucifix, and the other dedicated to Saint Joseph.

On the road to Ostia there rises a little chapel, called of the Farewells or of the Separation. It was erected at the place where the two Apostles, going to martyrdom, said their last farewell. Above the door, a bas-relief in white marble represents the two Apostles giving each other the kiss of peace and of farewell; beneath one reads these words, preserved to the memory of the ages by Saint Denis the Areopagite: “Peace be with you, head of the Church, pastor of all the lambs of Christ!” says Saint Paul. “Go in peace, preacher of heavenly goods, guide of the just in the way of salvation!” answered Saint Peter.

On the Janiculum hill is found the church of Saint Peter in Montorio, which was built in the fifteenth century, under Sixtus IV; it is the church of the convent of the Franciscans. The court of this convent encloses a pretty temple in rotunda, raised also in the fifteenth century on the hole in which the cross of Saint Peter was planted.

On arriving at the place where the Baths of Caracalla were built later, the bandages which surrounded the wound made by the chains on the legs of the Apostle came off. The piety of the faithful noted this spot, and Constantine raised on this site the basilica *della Fasciola*, where the bandages stained with blood were deposited. The monument, rebuilt since that epoch, still preserves its glorious tradition under the cardinalitial title of the holy Nereus and Achilleus, whose name it now bears.

In the church of Saint Mary Traspontina, one sees the columns to which the two Apostles were bound to be scourged before being led to martyrdom.

The church of Saint Mary the New, in the Forum, was built by Pope Paul I, to consecrate the place where Saint Peter had knelt while Simon the Magician was rising in the air. The knees of the holy Apostle remained engraved on the stone, and this stone, kissed with love by millions of pilgrims, is preserved in the very place where the fact took place. It is the most precious relic of Saint Mary the New.

In the basilica of Saint John Lateran, in the centre of the transept, under the great arch of the main nave, supported by two columns of oriental granite thirty-eight feet high, rises the papal altar, the same at which Saint Peter said mass. It is there such as it was drawn from the catacombs by Pope Saint Sylvester. Its simplicity and its very poverty recall well the first centuries of the Church: some boards of fir, without gilding and without ornament save a cross cut on the front part, that is all. Out of respect, it has been surrounded with a balustrade of marble, on which are engraved the arms of Urban VIII and of the king of France. A rich stuff covers it entirely. It is, we believe, the only altar in the world under which there are no relics. To the successor of Peter belongs the exclusive right of celebrating the holy Mysteries there. Above the altar, one sees, at a great height, a tent of crimson velvet heightened with gold. This pavilion covers an arch or ciborium in Parian marble supported by four columns of Egyptian marble with capitals of the Corinthian order in gilt bronze. There are enclosed the heads of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Twice each year, on Holy Saturday and on the Tuesday of the Rogations, they are solemnly exposed to the veneration of the faithful. There is another custom not less worthy of being known. In order to steep all the young levites in the very source of the sacerdotal spirit, spirit of the apostolate and of martyrdom, it is at the foot of the altar of which we have just spoken, under the eyes of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul, that the ordinations take place.

We have two epistles under the name of Saint Peter, which are of the number of those which we call catholic or canonical. The first is addressed from Babylon, that is to say from Rome, to the faithful of Pontus, of Bithynia, of Galatia, of Asia and of Cappadocia. The principal aim of the Apostle is to console and to strengthen in the faith the faithful to whom he writes, and to sustain them in the midst of the afflictions and persecutions which they suffered. Wherefore he often puts before their eyes the greatness of their vocation, the grace which God has done them in choosing them, and the advantages there are in bearing patiently the evils of the present life. He prescribes to them also rules for conducting themselves with wisdom in the different states of this life. He orders them all to obey princes and all superiors; servants, to serve their masters faithfully, not only those who are good and gentle, but even those who are harsh and troublesome; women, to be submissive to their husbands and modest in their dress; all generally, to love one another, to occupy themselves in prayer and in works of charity; pastors, to conduct themselves with entire disinterestedness, and to govern their flock with charity and with gentleness, not lording it over the inheritance of the Lord, but making themselves the models of the flock, by a virtue which springs from the bottom of the heart.

The second epistle was written from Rome, like the first, but some years after, and addressed also to the same faithful of Pontus and of the neighbouring provinces. The design of Saint Peter, in this letter, is to rouse the faithful and to leave them in writing an abridgment of the truths which he had taught them, in order that they might more easily put them again before their eyes after his death. He exhorts them to apply themselves to good works, to persevere in the sound doctrine of the Apostles and to take care not to let themselves be corrupted by the illusions of the false doctors who spread, from then, several errors in the Church and scandalised it by their bad examples. He refutes the errors of those who maintained that there would be neither resurrection of bodies, nor last judgment, nor coming of Jesus Christ, nor conflagration of the world. There has been attributed to Saint Peter a book of his acts, an apocalypse, a gospel, a work having for title: *On the Preaching* or *On the Doctrine of Saint Peter*, and another: *On the Judgment*. But all these works are recognised as apocryphal.

We have completed this life with the *History of Saint Peter*, by the abbé Maistre; Godescard; the *General History of the Church*, by the abbé Danas; *The Three Romes*, by Mgr Gaume; the *Bible without the Bible*, by M. the abbé Gaiiiet, 2 vols. in-8 raisin, laid paper, at M. Guérin’s, at Bar-le-Duc. — Cf. *Rome, its Churches, its Monuments, its*

Institutions, by the abbé Rolland; the *Hagiology of Nevers*, by Mgr Crosnier; *The Apostles*, by the abbé Bourassé; the *History of the Sovereign Roman Pontiffs*, by Artaud de Moutor.

Saint Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles and Martyr

66. — Emperor: Nero.

Considera Paulum apostolum prius persecutorem, postea annuntiatorem, ante hoc zizania, post hoc frumentum, antea lupum, postea pastorem, prius dissipantem, postea aedificantem.

Admire the Apostle Saint Paul; he had persecuted Jesus, and behold he announces Him with a loud voice; he had sown the cockle, and behold he scatters everywhere the good grain. From a ravening wolf he becomes a vigilant shepherd, and the edifice which he ruined a while ago, he employs himself wholly now in rebuilding it.

S. Chrys., in Homel.

Here is, without contradiction, one of the greatest Saints and the most lawfully illustrious that the earth can be proud of having borne. His miraculous conversion, his extraordinary vocation to the apostolate, his immense labours, his unheard-of sufferings, his chains which never arrested the liberty of his speech, his

doctrine so lofty, his epistles so lively, so strong, so apostolic, the very forms, sometimes so rough, of his language, distinguish Saint Paul so much that he sums up in himself all the glories of the apostolate. He is the finished model of it; in the Church he is called the great Apostle; and when one says simply the Apostle, it is he whom one designates.

Born at Tarsus,[1] in Cilicia, in the year 2 of Jesus Christ, of Jewish parents of the tribe of Benjamin, he received at his birth the name of Saul and the title of Roman citizen: God, who destined him to preach the Gospel principally among the Gentiles, willed that he should possess a dignity capable of accrediting him more easily with them, and of delivering him from certain very grave perils to which his work was to expose him. At that epoch there flourished at Tarsus schools which equalled in reputation those of Athens and of Alexandria. Belonging to the sect of the Pharisees, probably by the chance of his birth, the future apostle of the Gentiles frequented them early, to be initiated there into the science of his age. But the family of Saul, which distinguished itself by the uprightness of its morals and served God with a pure conscience, which was rare among the Pharisees, favoured his taste for the science of the law and sent him to Jerusalem, to the school of Gamaliel, head of the Academy and prince of the Jewish senate. This famous master, honoured by all the people, initiated him into the entire and most profound science of the law, as it was then studied, and into the highest speculations of theology, as it was taught in a school where the most considerable young pupils of Judaea were gathered. Saul made under this able master such great progress that none surpassed him in the science of the law of Moses, in the tradition of the Jews, in the history, the customs and the ceremonies of his nation. To this so lofty science he joined a devouring ardour to maintain the practice of it. The highest personification of this minute practice, so cherished by the young student, was Pharisaism. The most authorised sect of Judaism, it made religion serve its personal ambition. With the aim of dominating the people and of making it accept its domination, it struck it by the practical exaggeration of the law. Regarding interior justice with indifference, the exterior form of piety alone seemed to it essential. The Gospel reproaches it vividly with this immoral conduct which it insolently propped up by corrupt maxims. It was in the bosom of this formidable sect that the future persecutor of the nascent Church was formed. With his resolute character, he embraced its prejudices, its illusions, and strove to make a reality of them. His ardent fanaticism, which nothing could moderate, went to strike against Christianity in its cradle. Who could have restrained him! the new faith absolutely destroyed his chimerical ideas and threatened to invade everything; before this conquering march, he did not hesitate to oppose it by the employment of violence.

The occasion was superb; the Church of Jerusalem presented then to the eyes of the world a magnificent spectacle: the Christians, under the direction of the Apostles, formed but one heart and one soul and had put all their goods in common. Deacons had been created, charged with distributing suitably to all the members the revenues of this association. Conquered by this first impulse, a good number of Jews sold their goods and brought the price of them to the feet of the Apostles. The deacon Stephen, filled with the spirit of God, preached with force and became the principal mover of these conversions: the struggle was inevitable, it broke out. Jews of various provinces, irritated by his miraculous actions, came to dispute with Stephen on the subject of religion. Was Saul the first instigator of this dispute or did he let himself be drawn on by the others? According to his character, he must have been the instigator. All these adversaries of Stephen, incapable of resisting the wisdom and the spirit of God which spoke in him, exasperated to see their reputation for knowledge compromised with the people, abandoned themselves to the hateful excitements of a humiliated pride, and, having recourse to the weapon of cowards, they suborned men who dared to affirm that the wonder-worker had pronounced words of blasphemy against God and against Moses. A great tumult arose among the people. Stephen was seized and dragged before the council. There, false witnesses deposed against him with audacity, supported as they were by the sympathies of the crowd and the power of their accomplices. Then the high priest Joseph Caiaphas asked the accused if the charges which were produced against him were real: he, for all answer, his face lit up like that of an angel, pronounced, to the shame of his executioners, that discourse so well known which won him martyrdom. By virtue of the judgment of the

people, he was torn from the assembly and dragged outside the walls of the city to be stoned. The witnesses of his discourse were the executors of the sentence. Now the witnesses who stoned Stephen laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul, as if to express all in a sympathetic manner that it was from him, as representative of the council, that they held the right to stone him. Saul, accomplice in this first murder, thus preluded a more open, more bloody persecution.

The faithful of Jerusalem, stricken with consternation by the violent death of the first of their martyrs, pursued by the hatred of the Sanhedrin and violently dispersed, had thought to find at Damascus[2] a protecting shelter. But this capital of Coele-Syria was then subject to the sceptre of Aretas, whom quarrels with Herod the Tetrarch had made a declared enemy of Jerusalem. It was not unknown moreover in the holy city that the disciple Ananias, a good man, enjoying great consideration among his compatriots, had succeeded in determining a good number of Jews of Damascus to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ. It was a question of striking a great blow whose echo would arrest the progress of a detested doctrine. Saul, still breathing only hatred and carnage against the disciples of the Lord, armed himself with a commission from the Sanhedrin, invested at that time with a dictatorial power over all the synagogues of the dispersion; then he came to find the high priest Caiaphas and solicited of this chief of the deicides letters for the synagogues of Damascus, in order that if he found there any member of the sect of the Galilean, men or women, he might be authorised to bring them loaded with chains to Jerusalem. He set out therefore and already he was approaching Damascus.

But the moment is near when grace is going to work a miracle of transformation and make us assist, not at a scene of psychological romance, as an impious rationalism would insinuate, but at a solemn and mysterious drama, at a prodigy unique in the annals of the predestination of the Saints. It is going to proceed by a thunderbolt, seize the persecutor and change him, in the very midst of his homicidal projects; when his sentiments of rage against Christ and of hatred against His disciples are at their height, it is going to precipitate him into the faith and the justice which it begets: Saint Stephen has prayed for his fellow-student, the pupil of Gamaliel, the Church is going to salute Saint Paul.

The persecutor was about a kilometre from the city protecting the Christians: a dazzling light surrounds him suddenly; he is struck by it as by a flash of lightning and cast to the ground.[3] It was full midday. At the same time, he hears a voice from heaven which says to him: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” At the moment when the voice resounded in his ear, he perceived the face of the Saviour: He did not appear to him with that veiled majesty which He had on earth, and which He retained even with His disciples after His resurrection, in conversing with them; He showed Himself in all the splendour of His glorified body. Saul alone understood the heavenly voice. His travelling companions saw the light; they heard the sound of the words, but did not understand the sense of them and saw no one: they were Hellenist Jews, and the supernatural manifestation was made in the Syro-Chaldaic language, well known to the learned disciple of Gamaliel. “Who are You, Lord?” asked Saul, his eyes fixed on the radiant figure. “I am,” resumed the heavenly personage, “Jesus of Nazareth whom you persecute.” Conquered, the proud Pharisee of a moment ago answers humbly: “Lord, what will You have me do?” And the Lord: “Arise, enter into the city, and there you shall learn what you must do.” When the vision had disappeared, Saul rose; but, dazzled by the light from on high, he was blind: his companions were obliged to lead him by the hand. Arrived at Damascus in an array very different from that which he had prepared, he remained deprived of sight for three days which he employed in fasting and prayer. But if the eyes of the body were plunged in darkness, the eye of the spirit opened to the heavenly light. In three days he lived several years of penitence: grace flooded his soul with divine clearness. Is it not still by the silence and the meditations of a laborious solitude that the Catholic Church forms her ministers for the struggles of the apostolate? Now, the lion struck down at the gates of Damascus had risen an apostle: it was necessary that, by the favour of this providential retreat, his intelligence should understand the most obscure texts of Scripture, and that it should know that the promises

of the old law had had their accomplishment in Jesus Christ, the Messiah awaited by the Patriarchs, announced by the Prophets, the object of the ardent hopes of the faithful nation. After the dazzling clearness which had flooded the body, the interior illumination was to be complete; to this ardent and fanatical nature, ready to make itself the slave of a master who should personify its idea, a new preceptor was necessary; to the converted Saul a Christian Gamaliel was necessary, to whose lessons he could appeal. This instructor is given to the future apostle, and he will be able to inscribe henceforth at the head of his immortal epistles: "Paul, servant of Jesus Christ, called to the apostolate and instructed in his new duties not by men, nor by one man in particular, but by Jesus Christ."

The great convert was instructed, consecration was lacking to him. Now Ananias, in a vision, received from God the order to go and lay hands on Saul, in order to restore him his sight. Surprised, he objects the doings of the persecutor of yesterday; but the Lord reassuring him: "Go, for he is to Me a vessel of election; I have destined him to carry My law among the nations, before kings, and to announce it to the children of Israel. I will show him, moreover, how much he shall have to suffer for My name." At the same hour, Saul had a similar vision which announced to him his cure by the ministry of Ananias. The latter did not delay to knock at the door of a Jew, named Jude, in the Straight street,[4] with whom Saul was lodged. "Saul, my brother," he said on entering, "the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me to you to restore your sight and that you may receive the Holy Ghost." As soon as he had laid hands on him, there fell from his eyes as it were scales and he recovered sight. Saul rose and received baptism at once. Here is the solemn moment: converted, instructed, consecrated, regenerated by the waters of Baptism, the illustrious neophyte had all that was needed to become the instrument of great designs: the diffusion of the faith throughout the whole world, such is the programme whose execution is entrusted to him by his new master; his mission is about to begin. Nothing was lacking to him now but the immediate preparation: Saul went through his trials. Damascus, which was to have been the theatre of his furies, was that of his first apostolic essays. He began to preach in the synagogues, to the great amazement of the Jews who knew the aim of his journey. Unable to pardon him his change of role, they pursued him with an implacable hatred; and to have done sooner with him, they resolved to kill him: this kind of argument, in effect, admits of no reply. But Saul, forewarned of the plot that was being woven against his person, succeeded in withdrawing himself from this argument of the dagger. Flight was difficult for him, the Jews guarded night and day the gates of the city, reckoning to strike their victim more surely. To baffle their malice, the faithful of Damascus let Saul down during the night, in a basket, over the ramparts of the city.[5] He then retired into Arabia. To this ardent nature it was necessary, before running without stopping his new apostolic career, to have a sojourn in solitude: the desert attracts great souls. Saul remained three years in retreat, disposing himself by prayer, meditation, recollection and penance, to fulfil the mission to which God called him. These three years were to replace, so to speak, those which the Apostles had had the happiness to pass in the company of the divine Master. Moreover it was just that Saul should go and meditate the Gospel in the country where Moses had meditated the law, and that he should go, like Elias whose ardent zeal he had, to visit Horeb, that mountain of divine visions. Of the race of the Moseses and the Eliases, it was fitting that he should go and prepare his sublime apostolate in those places illustrated by so many prodigies, and tread with his apostle's feet that earth and those rocks which the greatest zealots of the ancient law had traversed several centuries before him. On coming out of Arabia, at thirty years, he was Apostle and missionary in all the rigour of the expression: he could, on the morrow of the vicissitudes and labours of his hidden life, begin, after the example of the Saviour, the apostolate of his public life.

This is the place to sketch the portrait of him who played so great a part in the diffusion of Christianity. Of all the personages of the apostolic age, Saint Paul is, without contradiction, the one whom we know best. Saint Luke, in the Acts, and still more himself in his Epistles, have depicted his person and his character. He was of middle height; he had three cubits, says Saint Chrysostom, and yet he touched heaven. His physiognomy had more finesse than majesty, therefore the Lycaonians took him for Mercury, whilst they regarded Saint

Barnabas as Jupiter, because of his exterior full of dignity. His enemies of Corinth recognised the force and energy of his soul in his letters; but they were astonished at the weakness of his body and his puny appearance. In the eyes of some persons of refined and difficult taste, his elocution appeared sometimes embarrassed, though it was ordinarily abundant and sufficiently ornate. Absorbed by serious thoughts, he did not make much account of eloquence; but his diction was stamped with a certain pride, and, on occasion, his language became moving, persuasive, noble, sublime. What gave more force to his discourse was that he had the conviction of possessing the spirit of God and that Jesus Christ spoke by his mouth: hence the confidence which animates him, without ever failing him. But, under this frail envelope is hidden a strong soul, a generous spirit, a heart that nothing could cast down, that danger never astonishes nor frightens. If his body is feeble, if suffering overwhelms him, he glories in his infirmities. He feels his own weakness, but he is strong with the strength of God. He shows as glorious memorials the scars of the blows and wounds which he has received in the exercise of the apostolate and with which his body is covered. These are the stigmata by which it is recognised that he is a servant of Jesus Christ. Four times, as he himself informs us, Saint Paul was consoled and strengthened by heavenly visions; he had even an ecstasy in which he was transported into the presence of the divine majesty, and heard mysterious words which could not be repeated. Moreover he was in direct and continual communication with the Saviour who had appeared to him on the road to Damascus. In this supernatural commerce, he found a virtue which revived his strength, often near failing. Ten years or so before his death, he had already been scourged five times by the Jews. In violation of his rights as a Roman citizen, three times he was beaten with rods. At Lystra, after having wished to render him divine honours, the people, in consequence of an inconceivable change, stoned him and left him for dead. In his voyages by sea, three times he was shipwrecked; once he passed a day and a night at the mercy of the waves, sustained on a wreck of a ship. During his apostolic peregrinations, he was chained and cast seven times into prison. In the tribulations which he endures, in the midst of the sorrows that overwhelm him, he sees the continuation and the complement of the sufferings of Jesus Christ in His Passion. Life or death matters little to him, provided his life or his death contribute to the glorification of Jesus. He would have preferred to die to be united to Christ, but he accepts with all his heart the necessity of labour to fulfil his mission.

True model of the Apostle and of the pastor of souls, Saint Paul makes himself all to all, bends to circumstances, identifies himself with the sentiments and the needs of those whom he has converted to the faith. He always keeps the dignity of the Apostle, he is firm in the maintenance of the faith and the important practices; but for the rest he is indulgent, easy, merciful. For his neophytes he has the bowels of a mother. He thinks, he feels, he suffers, he rejoices with them. Instead of imposing laws on them drily, he strives, using all possible condescension, to bring them to have no other will than his own. Rarely does he use command. He seems always to calculate beforehand the effect of his words, guided by his experience of men, and by his love for the new Christians.

The sequel of this history will bring into evidence all the traits of the character of Saint Paul, and set in relief this great figure.

As the success of the propagation of the Gospel and its consolidation in the world depended above all on unity of views and of directions, Saul understood the necessity of putting himself in relation with Saint Peter, prince of the Apostles; with this aim he betook himself to Jerusalem where the head of the Church then resided. This necessary deference, far from diminishing the dignity of his extraordinary vocation, was to give to his preaching a more incontestable authority. By uniting himself to the apostolic college in the person of its head, he preserved the unity of the faith; the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, with which he was to be specially charged and which was to raise against him so many hatreds, calumnies, atrocious persecutions, was to offer nothing abnormal in the eyes of the Church. This interview of Peter and Paul, “the form of future ages,” according to the expression of Bossuet, is one of the most solemn moments in the history of the

Church. Between the first kiss of the two Apostles and their last farewell on the road to Ostia, when they separated to go to martyrdom, the two brothers will have founded Christian Rome and made the name of Jesus adored throughout the universe.

However, when Saul reappeared on the scene of his former furies, all the painful emotions awoke: the former fear reappeared, because his conversion found only unbelievers. Repulsed on all sides, he was in a state of great perplexity, when the happy meeting with Barnabas put an end to it. He was an old friend, they had studied together under Gamaliel, as is thought. Having learned of his miraculous conversion, he took him with him, and, using in his favour his credit with the Apostles, he presented him to them, relating the manner in which the Lord had appeared to him on the road, all that He had said to him in that vision, and how, from that day, he had spoken freely and strongly in the name of Jesus in the city of Damascus. Peter and James, having learned from the mouth of Barnabas the prodigious change of Saul, received him with joy, the first as head of the Church, the second as first bishop of Jerusalem; he remained even with Saint Peter for fifteen days. Recommended to the faithful of Jerusalem by these two great Apostles, he was able to communicate with them.

Scarcely introduced into this Church, the first of all, Saul took not an instant of rest; always an Apostle, he began at once to speak with force to the Gentiles, and to dispute with the Greeks or Hellenist Jews. Conquered in these disputes in which the genius, the faith and the science of Saul shone with so lively a lustre, dominated above all by that love of Jesus Christ which burned his heart and gave so much force to his word, the Hellenists could no longer endure his presence at Jerusalem. In their impotence to impose silence on him by speech, they resolved to silence him by putting him to death. But God watched over His Apostle. Rapt in ecstasy while he was praying in the temple, he was enlightened from on high on the clandestine conspiracy of the Hellenists and their obstinate opposition to his discourses; at the same time, Jesus Christ ordered him to go out of Jerusalem where he was never to find peace, and to go and announce the Gospel to the distant nations to whom he was to be sent. The brethren conducted him therefore to Caesarea of Philippi whence Saul betook himself by sea to Tarsus, his native land. He re-entered it with a science and a wisdom far superior to those which he had carried away on quitting it. Tarsus had sent a disciple to the Pharisaic school of Gamaliel: it was an apostle that Jesus and Saint Peter sent back to it. But it was only for a time. “The persecution made in the time of Stephen,” says the author of the Acts, “had dispersed the faithful. Some had stopped in Phoenicia, others had withdrawn into the island of Cyprus, others had established themselves at Antioch: they made the new doctrine known to the Jews only. But some Cypriots and Cyrenians did not hesitate to announce Jesus Christ even to the Greeks. The hand of God was with them, and many were converted to the Lord.” God poured out abundant blessings on this expansion of the Gospel beyond the narrow limits of Judaism, efficacious blows were thus dealt to the wall of separation raised between the Jews and the Gentiles, and this wall was soon to crumble under the far stronger blows of the great demolisher whom God kept in reserve in the city of Tarsus. However the number of the Gentiles who were converted to the faith in the metropolis of Syria became so considerable that the report of it having reached Jerusalem, the Apostles judged it necessary to send Barnabas to Antioch. A native of the island of Cyprus, he had a great knowledge of the language of that city, and he could labour efficaciously at the conversion of its inhabitants. His hope was not disappointed, the immense multitude which heard him believed and gave itself to the Lord by his ministry. But also, he felt with pain that his word would never suffice of itself alone to sow the truth in a field as vast as that which he had undertaken to clear, a just appreciator of the ardent zeal of Saul, whose vast science he had long known, and whom besides he had heard at Jerusalem, he judged wisely that he ought to call him to his side. He hastened therefore to go and seek him at Tarsus where he found him occupied in evangelising his relatives and his compatriots, he took him and brought him with him to Antioch.

It was a happy inspiration of a generous soul wholly devoted to the work of the propagation of the faith; also this laudable initiative had the most complete success, and, during the year that they laboured together in this

celebrated city, they spread the divine light in floods. The disciples became so numerous that they had to seek a name which could not be usurped either by the Jews or by the Gentiles: they were happily inspired from on high in taking for the first time and for ever that so glorious one of Christians, a name all the more just that they are the rich spoil torn by Jesus Christ from the prince of this world.

While Saul and Barnabas were consolidating by their labours the new church of Antioch, the voice of the prophet Agabus announced that a great famine would desolate the earth: this prediction was accomplished indeed under the reign of Claudius. It excited the pity of the Christians of Antioch. Forgetting that this calamity might reach them, their expansive charity was moved with compassion for the lot of the brethren of Judaea. Generously resolved to prevent a misfortune, they laboured to gather a rather large sum, and charged Saul and Barnabas to carry this offering to the Christians of Jerusalem. The two envoys handed it over to the chiefs of that church, then returned to the capital of Syria, in company with John Mark, a kinsman of Barnabas, whom they brought back from the holy city. This mission of Saul and Barnabas is the first example of a help in money sent by one Church to another Church. This movement of spontaneous compassion is the germ of the great developments which Christian charity was to take with its spirit of devotedness and sacrifice.

Now, in proportion as the labours of the Apostles give greater increase to the nascent Church, the mission of Saul is outlined more distinctly. Still confounded with other sacred ministers, all announces that his apostolic greatness is at last to shine with a more lively lustre; he who is inscribed last on the list of the Prophets and orators of the church of Antioch is to become the first and efface all.

The apostolic college, for the diffusion of the good news in the universe, was to be composed of twelve, according to the designs of the Saviour. Already Matthias had replaced the unfaithful apostle, Judas, who had unworthily betrayed his Master and renounced the honours as well as the labours of the apostolate. Two places were now vacant in the body of the envoys par excellence: Saint James the Greater had just received the crown of martyrdom; Saint James, son of Alphaeus, had been constituted bishop of Jerusalem, and was thus placed outside the apostolic action among the nations. Now, while the ministers of the Gospel were accomplishing before the Lord the functions of their sacred ministry, that is to say while they were offering the liturgy or the holy sacrifice and fasting, God who disposes of the Apostles themselves according to His good pleasure, said to them by the mouth of the Holy Ghost: “Separate Me Saul and Barnabas for the work to which I have called them.” This divine order was intimated with such a manifestation of the heavenly will that all submitted to it with respect. The Apostles designated accepted with joy the labours and fatigues of this itinerary across the pagan nations; their zeal was prepared to overcome all obstacles, to bear with patience all sufferings. The others, animated by the same spirit of obedience and devotedness to the cause of the Gospel, regarded without envy or spirit of emulation the choice of Saul and Barnabas. All together, having fasted and put themselves in prayer, they laid hands on the apostolic travellers, and let them go where the wind of God drove them.[6] Filled with the Holy Ghost, who led them to new conquests, they took the staff of Apostles and departed. Saul and Barnabas thus completed the sacred number of those who were to be employed in an active mission; and they were already journeying toward the idolatrous countries which it was a question of conquering, when He who had arrested Saul on the road to Damascus, or of persecution, willed to cast him down again on that of the apostolate. The mission of Saul was so great that Jesus, who had entrusted it to him, hesitated to believe him sufficiently prepared for so gigantic a work. It seems that there was lacking to the perfection of the divine work a last interview, a sublime farewell, in which the Master would reveal to the disciple the most intimate secrets and in which the disciple would assure the Master that he had perfectly understood him. Saul was therefore rapt in ecstasy to the third heaven; his soul was flooded with lights above the common reach of the human mind: God deigned to open to his eyes the treasures of His grace and of His wisdom. This rude apostolate, in which he was to carry the name of Jesus Christ to all the powers of the age, was to expose him to so many perils, make him undergo so many contradictions and

suffer so many bloody persecutions, that it deserved to be preceded by this vision of the heavenly mysteries. It was this which, by retempering his so strong soul, rendered it so to say invulnerable and made it come happily out of all trials.

We can follow him from then on, preaching from Jerusalem as far as Illyricum and in the surrounding regions, before even having set foot in Italy, as he wrote himself to the Romans. Arabia, Seleucia, the country of Damascus, the region of Antioch, the cities of the island of Cyprus, of Pamphylia, of Pisidia, of Lycaonia, of Syria, of Cilicia, of Phrygia, of Galatia, of Mysia, of Achaia, of Epirus and of the other countries situated between Jerusalem and Illyricum, which embraces a space of four to five hundred leagues round, have heard his apostolic word; these regions saw him founding Churches as he ran and making to spring from the bosom of idolatry the faithful people, destined to adore God in spirit and in truth. Saul and Barnabas, in company with John Mark, who served them as minister, fulfilling the function of catechist and providing for their temporal needs, directed themselves first toward the island of Cyprus,[7] native land of Barnabas, passing by Seleucia on the Orontes, where they made doubtless some conversions and embarked. They landed and preached at Salamis, where the Jews possessed several synagogues. Their zeal made them traverse the whole island rapidly and they arrived at Paphos, where the proconsul Sergius Paulus had fixed his residence. There was the temple of Venus, the most ancient and the most venerated of this abominable idol; but where sin abounded, grace was to abound the more. The arrival of the two Apostles produced a profound emotion. Saul addressed himself first to the Israelites, which he continued to do afterwards in all the cities where a synagogue existed. The word of salvation was to resound first in the ears of the sons of the patriarchs: when these showed themselves indocile, he turned to the strangers. However, the reputation of the two missionaries having reached the ears of the Roman proconsul, he wished to see and hear them. Sergius Paulus was a grave and instructed man, who, as it appears, was versed in the study of religious questions. As soon as the Apostles had begun to speak to him of Jesus Christ, a Jew, named Barjesus and surnamed Elymas or the Magician, began to contradict them with violence. Unable to bear longer the insolence of this furious enemy of the Gospel, Saul reproached him sharply with putting obstacles in the ways of the Lord, and struck him with blindness. The impostor at once lost sight, and sought, in his uncertain walk, some one to give him the hand. Saul finished his work, he instructed the proconsul who embraced Christianity. This conversion was fitted to make a lively impression; also Saul felt an extreme joy at it. From that day, the name of Saul disappears entirely from history, and the apostolic conqueror, adorned with this *spolia opima*, exchanges the Jewish name, which he held from his ancestors, for that of Paul, the proconsul whom he begot to Jesus Christ.

On leaving Paphos, Paul and Barnabas, having still John Mark in their company, embarked for the Asiatic continent. Their first station on the mainland was at Perga, in Pamphylia, the city of the goddess Artemis, whom it adored equally with the Diana of Ephesus; but God, who regulates by His decrees the time of His visit, did not permit the Apostles to stop in this place: leaving Perga in its infatuation without making the light shine there, they went, following the impulse of the Holy Ghost, to Antioch of Pisidia. At that epoch, John Mark quitted his guides to return to Jerusalem, to his mother. Paul was very sensible of this withdrawal, as if the first companion of his travels had appeared discouraged in face of the difficulties or yielding to a movement of inconstancy. Paul was a Roman citizen, he was assured of seeing obstacles fall before him: so Barnabas made no difficulty about remaining with him. The Jews were numerous at Antioch, and they possessed there a frequented synagogue. On the day of the sabbath, the two missionaries entered it: the assembly was considerable. According to custom, when a distinguished Israelite, come from elsewhere, was found in the hall, the president of the synagogue invited him to speak to explain to his brethren the passage of the sacred books of which the public reading was being made. That day, the first chapter of Deuteronomy and the first chapter of the prophet Isaias were read. Paul had a reputation for eloquence: he was invited to make the commentary on the sacred text, and to pronounce some words of edification. The Apostle seized eagerly the occasion to announce Jesus Christ. He rose at once, and with his hand imposing silence:

"Children of Israel," he said, "and all you who fear the Lord, hear me." Then, conformably to a traditional custom among the descendants of Abraham, he recalled briefly some of the great marvels wrought by God in favour of the chosen people. It was a sort of exordium to arrive at preaching openly the coming of the Messiah, the solemn testimony rendered by John the Baptist to Jesus Christ, the divine mission of the Saviour, His passion, His glorious resurrection. If Christ was delivered to death by the princes of His nation, the Apostle fails not to say that they did it through ignorance and because they did not understand the prophecies. "Finally," adds Paul in concluding, "it is by Jesus and in Jesus that the remission of sins is announced to us."

This discourse produced so profound an impression on the minds of the hearers that the missionaries were begged to resume their conferences the following sabbath. Those who had made this prayer attached themselves to the two Apostles who applied themselves to develop in them these happy influences of grace; but also, a good number of the members of the assembly had separated, animated by wholly other sentiments: a quarrel was inevitable. On the day agreed, the crowd was enormous: the Greeks were there in throngs, happy to learn that salvation was prepared for them, and that henceforth there would be no more difference in Jesus Christ between the Jews and the Gentiles. Paul had no sooner opened his mouth than he was stopped by objections, recriminations, even insults and blasphemies. Paul and Barnabas then said firmly to those of their nation: "It was necessary to announce the word of God to you first; but since you reject it with contempt, and you judge yourselves unworthy of the eternal life, we turn to the Gentiles, according to the precept of the Lord." At these words, many Greeks were converted, while the Jews uttered threats. Then, following the practice which the disciples had learned from the Saviour, apostles and neophytes shook the dust from their feet and withdrew to Iconium, capital of Lycaonia. There was honoured at Iconium,[8] as at Ephesus, a stone fallen from heaven and regarded as the image of the divinity. Arrived in this city, then flourishing, represented to-day by a heap of wretched hovels, the Apostles entered the synagogue and set about teaching. A great number of Jews and Gentiles embraced the faith. Filled with a holy boldness, in spite of the obstacles raised against them, Paul and Barnabas prolonged their stay so as to increase their conquests; miracles added a singular authority to their words. Such was the agitation which seized the minds at the sight of these prodigies and in listening to this sublime teaching that the city was divided into two camps: some were openly declared for the Apostles, the others encouraged the passions of the Jews. Popular prejudices at last had the upper hand: a riot was imminent. The preachers of the Gospel, to avoid greater evils, withdrew from the city, while remaining in the same province; they settled at Lystra and at Derbe, whence they evangelised all the neighbouring country.

There was at Lystra[9] a lame man, deprived from his birth of the use of his legs, and whose infirmity was known to all the inhabitants. This man made himself remarked by his application in listening to the word of God. Paul singled him out among all, and, yielding to an interior movement inspired from heaven, he said to him with a loud voice: "Stand up." The lame man rose at once and began to walk. One understands better than one could express the astonishment of the assembly. Stupefaction soon gave place to admiration. All, beside themselves, not understanding the true cause of this prodigy, cried: "Gods, clothed with human form, have come down among us!" In their enthusiasm, they gave to Barnabas the name of Jupiter, because of the majestic features of his face, and Paul was saluted with the name of Mercury, interpreter of the gods, because of his eloquence. The whole city yielded to the same transport, so that the priest of Jupiter ran to the temple and brought thence two bulls crowned with flowers to offer them a sacrifice. The first clamours had been uttered in the Lycaonian idiom; therefore the Apostles were surprised and indignant on seeing the preparations for such an act of idolatry: "What are you doing?" they cried, rending their tunics, "we are mortal men like you; we come precisely to exhort you to quit these vain superstitions of idolatry to adore the living God, Creator of heaven and earth." They had much trouble to calm the popular effervescence. However (sad example of the inconstancy of the crowd), some Jews of Antioch and of Iconium having arrived, succeeded in changing into a furious hatred the admiration, a moment before so enthusiastic, of the

Lycaonians. They rushed upon the Apostles. Paul was dragged outside the city, overwhelmed with stones and left for dead. The disciples, desolate, surrounded him; but, to their great joy, the wounds were less grave than they had feared. The Apostle rose, re-entered the city with them and found himself the next day in a state to depart. He had from then a trait of resemblance the more with Him who, after having been received as king at Jerusalem, was, six days after, conducted by the same persons to Calvary, as a criminal.

At Derbe,[10] in the same province of Lycaonia, Paul and Barnabas resumed with ardour the course of their preachings. Persecution had by no means cooled their zeal. After having made new conquests for the Gospel, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium to confirm the neophytes in the faith, not leaving them ignorant that we must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations. They traversed again Pisidia and Pamphylia, establishing bishops and priests everywhere they judged it useful for the advantage of these nascent Christian communities. They went down at last to Attalia,[11] port of the Mediterranean, whence they embarked for Antioch. The faithful of that great city received them with a holy gladness, after an absence of four years. But their soul overflowed with joy when they learned the great things that God had wrought by their ministry, and the abundant harvest gathered among the Gentiles, to whom the door of the Gospel was so widely opened.

Such was, among the Gentiles, the first mission of Paul and Barnabas, crowned with such happy results. It was only a prelude to other successes still more remarkable, but also bought at the price of greater labours. The two Apostles remained two years in the bosom of this flourishing Christian community of Antioch.

Their repose there was troubled by grave and intestine discussions which suddenly arose there.[12] The ethnico-Christians of Antioch and the Judaeo-Christians of Jerusalem, the converted Greeks of Saint Paul and the converted Jews of Saint James were going to see themselves disquieted in their mutual relations: the controversy, or rather the error of the Judaizers, timid until then, threw off the mask now, and showed itself audacious. These converted Pharisees, come from Judaea with their ridiculous attachment to Mosaic formalism, wished to stifle in worn-out swaddling-clothes nascent Christianity, to bind it in their fetters, to prevent it from moving and walking in its free gait. Pharisees after as before their conversion, they sowed division in the nascent Christian community of Antioch, by maintaining the necessity of circumcision and of the other observances of the ceremonial law as a preliminary initiation into the Christian Church, whereas Saint Paul, the converted Pharisee par excellence, subordinating Judaism to the Gospel, pretended to deliver the neophytes from this worn-out yoke of the law of Moses. At the origin of the Church, at the passage from pure Judaism to pure Christianity, at the definitive separation of the two cults, this dangerous controversy had necessarily to arise, and Paul, whom God had predestined more specially to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles, had almost alone to bear the weight of it. Aided by Barnabas, he repelled with vigour pretensions which tended to nothing less than to chain Christianity for ever to Judaism, the Church to the Synagogue. But all the eloquence of the Apostle could not reduce to silence these fierce Judaizers, who repeated still louder their brutal assertion, and the faithful of the Church of Antioch desired ardently a solution capable of calming the trouble of their conscience. It was therefore resolved that Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by some of the others, should go up to Jerusalem, in order to provoke on this fundamental question the decision of the Apostles and of the ancients or priests of that Church. A formal decision, coming from so high, could alone reassure the timid, give a greater weight to the equality before faith preached by Saint Paul, and cast out of the Church the obstinate who should refuse to submit to it. We see the Apostle give a great example of the respect which one ought to have for the judgments of the Church, in submitting first to this determination.

Paul, Barnabas, Titus and some other members of the deputation crossed therefore Phoenicia following the sea-shore; going up afterwards by Samaria, they directed themselves toward

Jerusalem, where they were received very favourably by the Church, the Apostles and the priests. Paul, taking then the word, made the picture of the success of his first apostolic labours, and of the pretensions, subversive of all unity, of some converts of the sect of the Pharisees. The Apostles who resided then at

Jerusalem were Peter, James and John, regarded as the pillars of the Church. They perceived clearly the gravity of the question raised by the Judaizers, and resolved to assemble to solve it after having previously considered it on all its sides. It was the first apostolic Council held by the first pope. After the debates, Peter, head of the Church, rose, developing this proposition that the Jews ought not to impose on the Gentiles a yoke which they themselves had not been able to bear. The whole multitude of the hearers was silent, approving thus the dogma for ever incontestable of the absolute pre-eminence of faith over the law of Moses. Peter had decided the principle, Paul and Barnabas showed its happy application by relating to the assembly all the prodigies which God had wrought by their ministry among the Gentiles, without their having submitted them to the gross yoke of circumcision and of the legal observances. Saint James, born defender of the Judaeo-Christians, in his quality of bishop of Jerusalem, and daily witness of their susceptibilities, proposed a compromise which would in nothing arrest the dogmatic decision, judging that it was necessary to write to the Gentiles to abstain from the pollutions of idolaters, from fornication, from things strangled and from blood. The decision of Saint Peter and the amendment of Saint James having been generally applauded by the members of the Council, an encyclical letter was drawn up which set forth its canons, and two of the principal brethren, Jude and Silas, were chosen to go, with Paul and Barnabas, to transmit it to the faithful of Antioch. On their arrival in that city, their first care was to assemble the whole multitude of the brethren, principally those whose conscience had been troubled by the Judaizers, and to hand them the synodal letter. On taking knowledge of this so wise decision, they were filled with an inexpressible joy: henceforth they were consoled and strengthened in their faith. Jude returned to Jerusalem: Silas attached himself to Paul and remained at Antioch. Paul and Barnabas also prolonged their stay there: aided by several other preachers, these Apostles taught and announced without interruption the word of the Lord.

However Saint Peter, advised of the prodigious growth of the Christian community of Antioch, and being unable to forget that church where he had established his first chair before transferring it to Rome, came to visit it. Seeing it composed principally of uncircumcised Christians, he judged it fitting to converse and to eat freely with them; but these dispositions changed when ardent zealots of the law arrived from Jerusalem, where the Judaeo-Christians still observed the prescriptions of the law of Moses. Peter, specially charged to preach the Gospel to the Jews, yielding perhaps to the fear of offending them, began to separate himself from the table of the faithful come out of the gentility; he ceased to eat with them. This inopportune conduct led, by the authority of his example, all the faithful come out of Judaism to separate from them likewise, so that Barnabas himself felt his courage weaken and began to withdraw himself from their mode of life. But Paul, more specially charged to preach the faith to the Gentiles, was moved by the incident, and yielding to a movement of zeal, he reproved publicly the prince of the Apostles for this withdrawal whose influence might draw the Christians come out of the gentility to judaize. However, this controversy agitated between Saint Peter and Saint Paul, being a simple question of opportuneness, of fitness, and not of faith, this difference was at once ended; and the two Apostles remained always closely united, until martyrdom gave them at Rome a supreme union.

Having taken leave of the head of the Church, Paul hastened to run after new conquests. Impatient to gain the whole world to Jesus Christ, he proposed to Barnabas to go and see the cities and countries where they had carried the faith. Faithful co-operator of Paul, and intimate confidant of his designs, Barnabas relished this project; but, as he wished to take with him his kinsman John Mark, who had abandoned them in their first journey, and as Saint Paul refused, not understanding that one could be inconstant in the work of the propagation of the faith, they agreed to go each his own way, which had besides, in the secret designs of Providence, the advantage of doubling the number of the preachings. Barnabas then took John Mark in his company, and set sail for the island of Cyprus, his native land, where he evangelised the parts of the country which had not yet received the faith; while Paul, associating with himself the eloquent Silas, set out with him, after having been committed to the grace of God by his brethren. In traversing Cilicia and Syria, he strengthened the churches in the faith, and ordered the faithful come out of paganism to keep inviolably the

precepts of the Apostles and the priests, drawn up at the council of Jerusalem, without stopping at the rash discourses of the Judaizers. Continuing his itinerary, he went to Derbe, and from that city he betook himself to Lystra, the term of his first mission. He met there a disciple called Timothy, son of a Gentile father and of a Jewish mother named Eunice. She had put all her care into bringing him up holily in the study of the divine Scriptures, the exercises of piety, the fear and love of the Lord. Struck by the maturity of his mind, the Apostle judged him capable of carrying the word and of working conversions; he took him with him, laid hands on him in spite of his youth, and, consulting the utility of religion, he did spontaneously what he had refused on another occasion to the Judaizers of Jerusalem, himself giving circumcision to his new disciple, that he might, without obstacles, preach in the synagogues. Paul had henceforth with him two great evangelical workers: his second mission was about to begin. This second apostolic journey was to have results still more considerable than the first. From this epoch, in effect, dates the foundation of the great Churches of Macedonia and of Greece properly so called. Paganism was to be conquered in the capitals of ancient philosophy and civilisation, Athens, Corinth and other renowned cities. The Apostles crossed therefore Phrygia and Galatia, beginning to preach the Gospel there; but soon the Holy Ghost, who directed all their movements, forbade them to announce the word of God in Asia. They were preparing to pass into Bithynia, whence they could have reached Pergamum, when the same prohibition was intimated to them. God foresaw doubtless that the inhabitants of these countries were disposed to despise His word, and He awaited better times before having it announced to them. Faithful to the divine order, Paul, leaving Bithynia, went down with his co-operators to Troas, a maritime city of Little Phrygia and capital of the Troad. He had during the night a vision which made him change entirely his apostolic itinerary. A man of Macedonia presented himself before him and made him this prayer: “Pass over into Macedonia and help us.” Now, certain signs always prevented the Apostle from confounding divine visions received during sleep with the visions begotten by ordinary dreams. Also, this order was scarcely manifested to the evangelical workers when they made ready to depart, so impatient were they to go and spread the word in this Macedonia, first-fruits of the Greece of Europe, where numerous Churches were to be founded by their labours.

However Saint Luke, one of the seventy-two disciples, filled with wonder at the apostolic labours of Paul whom he had known at Antioch, his native city, was in search of this great propagator of the Gospel. He met him at Troas and no more left him, making himself from then the companion of his sufferings and the historian of his life. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke, having therefore embarked at Troas, sailed directly to Samothrace; the next day they landed at Neapolis, but did not stop there, impatient to arrive at Philippi, a Roman colony and first city of that part of Macedonia. Saint Paul was accustomed to go first to the most populous or the most central cities to form there influential Churches, whose salutary action would be felt around. In his quality of Roman citizen, he willingly stopped at Philippi, where there were a considerable number of Roman citizens; they were governed according to the laws and customs of Rome. On favourable occasions, the Apostle did not hesitate to make serve the success of the Gospel this earthly advantage of so great price at that epoch when an immense crowd of men were deprived of it. Now, on the first sabbath day which followed their arrival, Paul, accompanied by Silas, Timothy and Luke, went out of the city and betook himself to the river-side where was situated the ordinary place of prayer of the Jews. Having sat down, the Apostles spoke of the faith to the women who were already assembled there, awaiting the arrival of the people. One of these women, named Lydia, docile to the truth whose sudden illumination chased the darkness from her soul, believed in Jesus Christ with a perfect faith and found herself worthy to be baptised, she and all her family. Manifesting then her faith by an action of charity, she obliged Paul and those of his company to take lodging in her house. This first success, first-fruits of several others, irritated the enemy of salvation; this instigator of troubles raised a very great one, in the hope of putting an end to the progress of the faith: a young girl possessed by the spirit of Python was the instrument of which he made use with the aim of ruining the cause of the Gospel. This girl, having one day met in the streets of the city Saint Paul and those who were with him, began to follow them crying: “These men are the servants of the most high God,

and they announce to us the way of salvation." She continued thus for some days. Saint Paul let her say it at first: it was indeed a remarkable thing to hear the truth published by the father of lies. But seeing that the demon continued always and thus arrogated a function which did not belong to him, he commanded him in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of this girl, whose state besides made him compassionate, imitating in this his divine Master, who had silenced the demons, even when they published that He was the Messiah and the Son of God. Vanquished by the power of the name of Jesus Christ, the demon came out at once from the body of this possessed girl; but the masters of this girl, vexed at seeing themselves suddenly deprived of the illicit gains which her faculty enabled them to make, and colouring their avarice with the appearance of zeal for the religion of their country, stirred up the populace and dragged the Apostles before the magistrates who, without willing to hear them, had them beaten with rods as seditious persons. Luke and Timothy were not subjected to this scourging; being behind Paul and Silas, they were separated from them by the impetuous movement of the crowd. However the magistrates, not content with having covered the bodies of their victims with numerous wounds, adding injustice to injustice, sent them to prison, with order to the jailer to keep them strictly. He executed this order with unheard-of rigour; he put the holy personages in a black dungeon, a sort of prison within a prison, and fastened their feet in wooden stocks which prevented them from stirring and obliged them to remain lying on their backs. This luxury of precautions was useless, neither Paul nor Silas had the idea of flight. In the midst of the darkness of the night and in the bosom of horrible pains, they celebrated, by pious hymns, the signal favour which the Saviour had just granted them in making them share His sufferings. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake: the foundations of the prison were shaken, all the doors opened, and the bonds of all the prisoners were broken. The jailer, having awakened, found the doors of the prison open, and imagining that all those who were under his guard and for whom he answered with his life had escaped, he took his sword in despair to kill himself; but Paul, warned by the Spirit of God, cried to him with force: "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." Touched by this prodigy, the jailer, having asked for a light, entered and threw himself all trembling at the feet of Saint Paul and of Silas; then, drawing them in haste from this low pit where he had cast them, he asked them what he must do to be saved. Saint Paul, who knew so well the cries that come from the bottom of the heart, answered him with Silas: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy family." They began to instruct him, him and all those who were in his house, and they received baptism. When day came, the magistrates sent word to the jailer to let go the two prisoners of the day before; but Paul, who had borne the ill-treatment without complaining, refused to go out, saying that it was very strange that Roman citizens should have been imprisoned without a trial and that it was still pretended to send them away secretly from prison without making them any sort of reparation. He acted thus to intimidate the judges and make them gentler toward the Christians in the future. The magistrates, who had failed doubly against the laws, in refusing to hear and in having a Roman citizen beaten with rods, came in person to the prison and begged the Apostles to leave it, and, when they were outside, they entreated them to withdraw from their city, fearing that this affair would make a noise and be troublesome to them. Saint Paul did not insist on remaining longer; he returned only to the house of Lydia, the woman whom he had converted, to take leave of her and of the faithful whom he had gained to the Lord: he found Luke and Timothy there again. All these neophytes having been consoled and strengthened in their faith, the holy missionaries departed, happy to leave in that city a flourishing Christian community. It is seen, by the epistle which Saint Paul wrote later to the Philippians, that this Church maintained itself and always bore a lively affection to its founder. The intrepid travellers, directing then their apostolic itinerary toward the south, penetrated farther into Macedonia, and traversing Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica where they announced boldly the Gospel, developing the dogma of the necessity of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, of His death and of His resurrection from the dead. Several believed this powerful word and joined the Apostle and Silas after their conversion. These nascent successes were of a nature to revive the tenacious hatred of the enemies of Paul. They excited a great tumult in the city, and, furious, rushed upon the house of Jason, a converted Jew who had given hospitality to Paul and Silas; but they did not find their victims there. The brethren who had withdrawn the Apostles from a violent death,

conducted them out of the city, on the road to Berea, whither the two Apostles directed their steps. The zeal for the salvation of souls which devoured them, like the flame which the more it is driven by the wind the more it grows and sets on fire all that it meets, drove them into the synagogue where Paul spoke with energy on the Messiah of whom he showed all the characters in Jesus Christ. The Jews of Berea, of a gentler nature than those of Thessalonica, showed a great love for the truth: Sosipater, son of Pyrrhus and kinsman of Saint Paul who speaks of him in his epistle to the Romans, was among those who were converted. The rioters of Thessalonica ran to Berea to continue their violences there: but these madmen did not know that the Gospel cannot be suppressed by a riot. The brethren hastened to make the Apostle go out, while Silas and Timothy remained in the city, and by their presence prevented the cause of Jesus Christ from failing there. Paul arrived without hindrance, by land, as far as Athens: there he sent back those who had accompanied him, begging them to tell his two auxiliaries, in the preaching of the Gospel, to come and rejoin him as soon as possible, for Athens offered a great harvest and a difficult one to gather; it required great workers.

Athens, capital of Attica, was situated at a short distance from the sea, in a barren territory. Cecrops, its founder, brought to it the worship of Minerva. At the moment when the Apostle appeared there, it was much fallen from its ancient splendour, and had scarcely preserved anything but its monuments and its fine language, its philosophers, its sophists, its love of novelties, its loquacity and its mocking spirit. While awaiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy, Saint Paul set about traversing this city with the aim of rendering himself an account of the religious spirit of its inhabitants. As a profound and experienced man, he sounded the ground. A sad mixture of darkness and light, such was the spectacle which offered itself to his eyes. Certainly there was much to do, but for that it was necessary to face the mockeries of the Athenians: he who had not weakened before prison and rods would have had care not to recoil before the mocking spirit of the people. Faithful therefore to the divine order, Paul began his preaching by the Jews; on the sabbath days, he went into the synagogues to discourse with them and with the Greeks who feared God; on the other days of the week, he accosted the philosophers and the other inhabitants of Athens whom he met in the Forum. Among the philosophers, the Stoics and the Epicureans divided the arena between them. Could he hope to persuade the mortification of the senses to the Epicureans, and submission to the decrees of Providence to the Stoics, the proudest of men? On hearing him speak of penance and of the resurrection of the dead, some said: “What is this sower of words purposing?” Others replied: “He is doubtless a man who announces new gods.” However that may be, the discourses of the Apostle keenly pricked the general curiosity, and he was begged to go up to the Areopagus. The Apostle must have lent himself with fairly good grace to this invitation; he was not a man to recoil before this tribunal, the most celebrated of the pagan world. Charged with the great mission of rendering testimony to Jesus Christ before all the powers of the age, he let himself be led without resistance where he could plead learnedly the cause of his master. Standing in the midst of the Areopagus, the Apostle made this discourse heard: “Men of Athens, I see you in all things superstitious to excess, for, passing and seeing your idols, I found an altar bearing this inscription: To the unknown God. Now, what you adore without knowing it, I announce to you. The God who made the world and all that is in the world, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands: He is not honoured by human hands, as if He had need of anything, since He Himself gives to all life, breath and all things. He made of one the whole race of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, determining the time of their duration and the limits of their habitation, to seek God and find Him as it were groping, though He is not far from each of us; for in Him we live, and move, and are, and, as some of your poets have said: ‘We are also His offspring.’ Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Being is like to gold, or silver, or stone graven by the art and thought of man. Now, God, overlooking the times of this ignorance, announces now to men that all everywhere should do penance, because He has appointed a day on which He is to judge the world by Him whom He has ordained for this end, and whom He has raised from the dead to manifest Him to all.”

One would not grasp the aim of this discourse if one sought in it a simple exposition of the Christian faith; the Apostle had another idea; he proposed to refute above all the ancient errors of the philosophers and the superstitious opinions of the Athenians on the nature of God; he wished to undermine the subversive doctrines of Zeno and of Epicurus, to crush the unbridled pride of the one and to annihilate the abject materialism of the other, in order to implant in a virgin soil the humility and spirituality of the cross. The hearers assembled in the Areopagus remained struck by the gravity and elevation of this apostolic word, so different from that of the sophists and philosophers with whom the frivolous public of Athens amused itself; but as soon as Saint Paul broached the dogma of the resurrection of the dead, a dogma incredible in the eyes of the pagans, they turned the innovator into derision and let the moment of the truth of God pass. Some, but in small number, insensible to Athenian mockery, joined the Apostle and believed with a firm and unshakable faith. Among these converts, Saint Luke cites Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, perhaps his wife.

On leaving the Areopagus, Paul met Timothy and Silas who were arriving from Berea; he would have wished to retain them near him, but, impatient to console the Thessalonians and to confirm them in the faith, he charged these holy travellers with that mission, and remained alone in Athens with Saint Luke. This sojourn was of about three months. However the faithful co-operators of the Apostle were accomplishing their holy ministry: they returned afterwards to the city where they had left their master, in the hope of finding him there; but, impelled by the Spirit, he had gone to other lands to sow there the word of life. He had set out for Corinth passing by Eleusis, the city of mysteries and initiations. At Eleusis, the temple of Ceres was the monument consecrated to agriculture, and recalled the memory of Triptolemus who first taught men the art of cultivating the earth. In importing from Asia Minor into Greece barley and wheat, he had at the same time introduced certain religious doctrines of which the most mysterious parts were to be revealed only to the initiated. Paul, according to the beautiful expression of a Father of the Church,[13] was a new Triptolemus; he became, in this region of ancient Greece, the great initiator into the mysteries of Christianity. The Apostle arrived at last in Corinth: it was a city of luxury and pleasures, like Athens, and like it also a city of rhetoricians. As everywhere, Paul addressed himself first to the Jews. He had met, very opportunely, a hospitable house where he could meditate in solitude and alone with God the divine teachings with which he astonished the pagan world: it was that of Aquila and of his wife Priscilla, two Jews of the dispersion, whose trade, like that of Saint Paul, was the making of tents. As long as the illustrious stranger remained in their house, he worked with them, earning his living by the labour of his hands, rather than use the right which the

Apostles had to live by the Gospel, so much did he fear that the merchants of this city, so skilful in business, daring to judge him according to their ideas, might imagine, if he had acted otherwise, that preaching was a speculation for him. He gave therefore the day to the word and the night to the work of the hands. Every sabbath day he betook himself to the synagogue where he announced Jesus Christ to the Jews and to the proselytes. Unable to refute the arguments of the Apostle and jealous of the progress which Christianity soon made among the Gentiles, the Israelites had recourse to other arms; they burst out in insults against the preacher and in blasphemies against the new religion. Indignant, Paul rose in the midst of the assembly, shook his garments, and said in a loud voice: “Let your blood be upon your own heads, from this day I am clean and I go to the Gentiles.” At once he went out of the synagogue and quitting, for the cause of the Gospel, the house of his devoted hosts Aquila and Priscilla, he chose for place of meeting the house of Titus, surnamed the Just. His mission, however, was not without fruit among the sons of the promise. A chief of the synagogue, named Crispus, was converted with all his family, as well as several of his co-religionists. Paul baptised Crispus with his own hand and had the others baptised by his disciples.

However the Christian community of Corinth became from day to day more flourishing. The envy of the Jews knew no more bounds; they denounced Paul to the proconsul of Achaia, accusing him of teaching men a new manner of worshipping God. The proconsul was then Gallio, son of the philosopher Seneca; he

affected the greatest indifference for religious questions. The accused was opening his mouth to defend himself, when the proconsul, addressing the accusers, made them this declaration: “If it were a question of a crime or an injustice, I would hear you, but for questions of words and your law, I will not make myself judge of them: it concerns you.” And he dismissed them. Exasperated, they fell upon Sosthenes, ruler of the synagogue, and loaded him with blows; Gallio did not seem to take the least concern for it. Sosthenes was a Christian, Saint Paul speaks of him in his first epistle to the Corinthians.

In the midst of the present success, the Apostle considered with an attentive eye the state of the various Churches founded by his zeal. That of Thessalonica was in a prosperous state and could be cited as a model to the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia. The report of Timothy and Silas on the constancy in the faith manifested by the Christians of Thessalonica in the midst of the persecutions of which they were the object on the part of the Jews and the pagans, rejoiced the heart of Saint Paul so much that he hastened to express to them all his joy. These happy faithful had thus the first-fruits of the apostolic correspondence.[14]

Some felt too lively a grief at the death of their relatives; others had false ideas on the resurrection, on the coming of Jesus Christ and on the last judgment. The Apostle, in the first epistle, praises them for their firmness in the faith, and expresses to them the liveliest affection. He exhorts them not to grieve beyond measure at the death of their relatives, and not to imitate in this the pagans who have no hope. The death of Christians is only a sleep. Jesus Christ, our head, is risen: those who shall have fallen asleep in Christ will rise again like Him, to remain together eternally in the Lord. Several of the faithful manifested an extreme fright, caused by a false interpretation of some passages of this epistle. One may even suppose that an apocryphal letter, under the name of the great doctor, had been put in circulation by the enemies of the Christian faith, in order to trouble consciences. Paul wrote the second epistle to the Thessalonians a short time after the first. He had not said that the last day was near; but that the coming of Jesus Christ would be sudden, and that it could not be foreseen beforehand. To tranquillise them, he makes known to them what certain signs must precede the second coming of Christ. He exhorts them not to let themselves be surprised by false doctors. Let them remain faithful to the teachings which he has given them by word of mouth, and to the traditions which they have learned. The Apostle does not explain himself here at greater length; which makes that there are in this epistle expressions veiled with a half-obscurity, but which those to whom he addressed himself understood without trouble. Before closing his letter, he reproves with a holy vigour those who let themselves go to an uneasy curiosity, or who abandoned themselves to idleness. Finally, after having affixed his signature with his own hand, he engages them to remark it, in order not to be exposed in future to let themselves be surprised by a forger. Corinth had the happiness of possessing for eighteen months the great sower of Churches: it was a considerable time in the life of an Apostle charged to carry the faith to the extremities of the world, from the East to the West. However he was impatient to go to Jerusalem: his thought was always turned toward that mysterious city, theatre of his stormy life during his conversion, city of terrible memories, where Christianity had taken birth. After having said farewell to his brethren, he betook himself, in company with Aquila, Priscilla and his travelling companions, to Cenchreae, eastern port of Corinth. He had his hair cut there because of a vow which he had made: similar to that of the Nazariteship, it consisted in abstaining from wine, from every intoxicating liquor and even from dried grapes, in not cutting the hair during the time of its duration; ordinarily it was of a whole month. This ceremony being accomplished, the Apostle embarked at the port of Cenchreae with Aquila and Priscilla and sailed with them toward Syria. The navigation was stormy. After having traversed the whole Aegean sea, he reached Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia Minor: it was a commercial city, rich and much frequented. Saint Paul understood the importance of a Church founded in this metropolis; the places where there was more activity, exterior life, business and science, the most brilliant theatres of the world in that age, attracted him by preference. He stopped some days in this city; he wished only to set foot in it, to mark it with his imprint as a land of his own, before making a longer stay there. Scarcely landed from the ship, still broken with the fatigues of the navigation, he ran to the synagogue where he conferred with the Jews of Ephesus. His word, new to them,

charmed them; they begged him to remain longer with them. Willingly would he have acceded to their prayer if he had not been in haste to arrive at Jerusalem; but he promised them to return to Ephesus, if such was the will of God.

After having cast this first seed into their heart, the Apostle bade them farewell, leaving among them Aquila and Priscilla with the mission of fructifying the nascent Church. The vessel he had boarded with his other co-operators sailed for Caesarea of Palestine, formerly known under the name of Strato's Tower. He landed there happily. After having saluted the faithful of that city, he went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the approaching feast there, that of Easter, according to some, that of Pentecost, according to others. There, as elsewhere, his sojourn was not long; after having saluted the Church, he went down to Antioch of Syria, where he passed some time, strengthening the Christians in the faith by his powerful word. On leaving Antioch, he traversed in order, and from city to city, Galatia and Phrygia; founder of the various Churches of these regions, he came back to them as apostolic visitor. In the meantime, a man of the name of Apollos, a Jew by nation and born at Alexandria, arrived at Ephesus; mighty in the Scriptures, this man was very eloquent. He was instructed in the way of the Lord, he spoke with zeal and fervour of spirit; he explained and taught with care what regarded Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. Aquila and Priscilla, who were fulfilling at Ephesus the apostolic ministry in the absence of Saint Paul, were as much struck by the eloquence of Apollos as by the imperfection of his science; they took him into their house and taught him, in their familiar intercourse, the way of God, that is to say all the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The scholar soon became a great master in the science of the faith; with his genius, his good will and the lights of the Spirit of God, his successes were rapid. As soon as his word was less necessary at Ephesus, he resolved to pass into Achaia and to exercise his apostolate there. This design received the approbation of the brethren, they even exhorted him warmly to depart. His arrival at Corinth was preceded by letters in which he was strongly recommended to the Church of that city. Since the departure of Saint Paul, it was to be feared that the movement of business would weaken the faith among these Christians exposed, in that city, to all sorts of seductions. The eloquence of Apollos prevented this misfortune; he instructed the ignorant, he strengthened the minds that were growing weak, he triumphed over the contradiction of the enemies of the Gospel. The celebrity of his eloquence and of his erudition, supported by a vehement zeal, gave to this new apostle such an authority in the Church of Corinth that in the eyes of a certain number of the faithful he eclipsed the great Apostle himself. The Church of Corinth divided into two camps; one of the two took the name of this orator, in opposition to Saint Paul; later another party was formed and took the name of Cephas. The Apostle was saddened by this rivalry of names, the ordinary sources of deplorable schisms. It was not that he envied Apollos, still less the success of his eloquence, for he speaks of him with praise and readily recognises in this orator a worthy co-operator of his labours and a true propagator of the Gospel.

However Saint Paul, according to the promise he had made to the Ephesians, had betaken himself to their city. Metropolis of proconsular Asia, one of the most illustrious of Asiatic Greece, this capital of Ionia was situated at the mouth of the Cayster, about a league from the sea. Its inhabitants gave themselves to the pursuit of delights; they were accused of surpassing all the Greek cities by their luxury and the excessive care of their body; they carried to excess the magnificence of garments and of the ornaments destined to embellish them. One understands what great difficulties the Apostle must have met there when he established himself there with the design of preaching the Gospel and of inspiring it with a new spirit. He met there at once disciples to the number of twelve, initiated only in the baptism of John. The question he put to them: "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" and their answer: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost," show us that they were scarcely imbued with the feeblest elements of the faith. Astonished at this ignorance, Saint Paul, continuing to question them, said to them: "In what then were you baptised?" They answered him: "In John's baptism." The Apostle hastened to complete their scarcely sketched knowledge of Christianity, by teaching them the difference that separated the baptism of John from that of Jesus Christ. After this preliminary instruction, he baptised them in the name of our Saviour and laid hands on them: then

the Holy Ghost descended upon them and enriched them with His gifts, for they spoke diverse tongues and they prophesied.

Skilful in seizing the occasions favourable to the advancement of the Gospel, the Apostle, relying on this signal miracle, began to speak with more confidence to the Jews and Gentiles of Ephesus. Full of a noble assurance, he entered the synagogue, where he cast to the children of Israel a free and bold word, capable of convincing them of the truths relating to the kingdom of God. For three months he continued to confer with them, never wearying, so unshakable was his confidence in the cause which he upheld. Alas! the seed of the word fell on their heart as on stone. The prophetic exhortations of the Apostle found them at first insensible as withered trunks; irritated afterwards by his constancy in preaching them, furious at his successes, they strove to arrest them by the weapon of calumny; then, by an artful contrast, they opposed to him the brilliant picture of their temporal Messiah and of his pretended earthly kingdom. Perceiving that this struggle exposed his neophytes to making shipwreck in the faith, the Apostle put an end to it by separating them from these obstinate men. He hastened to transport his chair from the synagogue into the school of Tyrannus. This Tyrannus might well be a Greek philosopher converted by Saint Paul to Jesus Christ, and who kept a literary school. His premises having appeared suitable to the design of the Apostle, he put them at his disposal. Henceforth sheltered from a violent and disorderly opposition, the great doctor of the Gentiles could expound with calm and in all safety the way of God to all who assembled around his chair to hear him. For two years the Apostle taught there every day, without interruption, the doctrine of salvation. All the inhabitants of Asia, Jews, Greeks, strangers, thus had the faculty of hearing his word. It was supported by the working of miracles so numerous and so extraordinary that the linens which had touched the body of the Apostle wrought, by their application to the sick, the cure of their infirmities. The simple touch of these objects had the virtue of driving the evil spirits from the bodies of the possessed. These miraculous cures were besides more necessary at Ephesus than in other cities: the magicians and the strolling exorcists who had flocked from Judaea and other countries abounded in this metropolis.

At the sight of the numerous prodigies of which they were witnesses every day, these jugglers imagined that the name of Jesus Christ, employed by the Apostle, was a simple form of incantation more powerful than their own; they believed therefore that, by stealing it from him, they could work effects similar to his. These Jews were seven brothers of the priestly order and children of Sceva, whom Saint Luke calls prince of the priests. They had the boldness to pronounce over the energumens and other possessed the sacred name of Jesus, in whose divinity they did not believe, saying to them: “We adjure you by Jesus Christ, whom Paul preaches.” This criminal attempt had a sad issue; the unclean spirit said to those wicked men: “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but you, who are you?” At once, the man possessed by a very wicked spirit leaped upon two of these exorcists and having made himself master of them, treated them so roughly that they were forced to flee naked and wounded. The news of this tragic event, spreading instantly through Ephesus, struck with fear the Jews and Greeks who inhabited it. All their illusions on magic were dissipated. They glorified the name of the Lord Jesus, many even came and confessed the criminal actions of their life; others brought their books of magic and burned them before all the world.

According to Baronius and other scholars, Apollonius of Tyana, in Cappadocia, was at Ephesus about the time of Saint Paul and showed himself one of his most violent adversaries. Defender of paganism, he strove to arrest its decay; he could not bear that the Apostle should destroy the idols of the gods whom he adored and overthrow their altars. By his practices and his false miracles, he sought to ruin the work of Saint Paul. Besides this pretended demigod, the Apostle had to combat philosophers. The capital of Ionia attracted them into its bosom; a theatre less celebrated than Athens, they could nevertheless make a lustre there capable of satisfying their pride. To this double obstacle, Saint Paul opposed a double weapon: to his public preaching he joined private teaching, he exhorted each person in particular, his word was often accompanied by tears. Also, says the sacred historian, the word of God grew and was strengthened with force. The blessing of God

co-operating with the word of the Apostle begot this marvellous success.

About this epoch (year 56) Saint Paul wrote his epistle to the Galatians. It is that in which he displays the most spirit. He rises against the Judaizers with a vigour which is not met with to the same degree in his other epistles. He reprimands the Galatians for having opened their ear so easily to doctrines foreign to the instructions which he himself had given them. “Even if,” he says, “an angel from heaven should teach you a doctrine different from the Gospel of Jesus Christ which I have announced to you, let him be anathema!” If he then enters into the details of his conversion, it is to recall that he received his mission directly from Jesus Christ. He insists at length on this point, that the law does not justify, but faith in Jesus Christ. Why then renounce evangelical liberty, to submit to the yoke of the old law? “Know,” he continues, “that they who have faith are the true sons of Abraham.” Before finishing, he exhorts the faithful to do good to all, and principally to those whom he calls *domesticos fidei*; an expression difficult to render, but of an admirable signification. The true Church is the house of God, where the deposit of the faith is kept intact. The believers are of the house of God, they truly belong to the family of the heavenly Father; they are the domestics of the faith, to the exclusion of the heretics, strangers to the privileges of the great family, from which they have voluntarily separated by their obstinacy. After the solidly established foundation of the Church of Ephesus, Saint Paul, at the sight of its flourishing state, found that, by its stability in the faith, its love of the truth, the repudiation of the occult sciences and of evil practices, it had attained a high perfection. He resolved therefore to depart, to visit first Corinth, to go afterwards into

Macedonia, then to return again to Corinth; from that city he wished to gain Judaea, whence, after having handed over to the priests of Jerusalem the collections of money made in Macedonia and in Achaia, in favour of the poor Christians of the first of the Churches, he would have set out for Rome; then, from the queen of the cities of the world, he would have gone into Spain. Such was his plan. While waiting till God permitted him to realise it, he sent into Macedonia two of his co-operators, Timothy and Erastus. As for himself, he remained still for a certain time in Asia, with the intention of traversing Lydian Asia, of preaching the Gospel in the cities neighbouring Ephesus, of penetrating even into Caria and of returning afterwards to Ephesus, where he had resolved to remain until Pentecost.

Saint Paul was turning these projects over in his mind, when Apollos, who suffered from the great schism which had arisen in the Church of Corinth on his account, came into Asia with other brethren, bearer of a letter from the Corinthians to Saint Paul: they consulted him on the grave question of marriage and celibacy. Such was the occasion he had to write his first epistle to the Corinthians: he sent it to them by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, Christians come from Corinth to accompany Apollos. The latter refused to return at once; he did not wish to appear to favour by his presence the faction which covered itself with his name. The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus in the year 56. He always claims Christian liberty in favour of the faithful and resists energetically the attempts of the Judaizers who wish to enslave them to Mosaism. To repair the scandal of the incestuous Christian and to raise this unhappy man from the sad state into which he had fallen, he excommunicates him using the most energetic expressions. For so revolting a disorder, a public condemnation and a manifest reprobation were needed. The Apostle seizes this occasion to treat directly of the duties of marriage. He gives useful counsels to Christian spouses. Not content with recommending conjugal chastity, he raises minds to higher thoughts, and counsels the practice of perfect continence and virginity to the chosen souls to whom God inspires the attraction of this angelic virtue. These counsels, dictated by an enlightened zeal, are set forth with a wholly divine prudence. The resurrection of the flesh is a dogma of which the philosophers of Athens had refused to hear speak in the Areopagus. Saint Paul explains it by the comparison of the grain of wheat. Sown in the earth, the grain undergoes a prompt decomposition. It appears to have fallen into rottenness. But soon it germinates, shoots, grows green, rises and produces several ears; it was not dead then, it was undergoing a transformation. He seizes the occasion of the disorder of the Agapes to recall to the faithful of Corinth the mystery of the eucharistic table. It would be

impossible to express in more precise and more energetic terms the real presence of Jesus Christ under the veils of the sacrament. He who communicates unworthily eats and drinks his own condemnation. Before eating the heavenly bread, one must prove oneself, that is to say one must communicate with great purity of conscience. The Apostle disapproves further that the faithful carry their differences before the tribunal of pagan judges. The Church is an amicable tribunal, venerated by all, fit to arrange all difficulties, to have wrongs repaired, to restore concord, to soften relations become painful, to redress, in a word, all the grievances which too often exist between men. One must not, besides, scandalise the infidels by making them witnesses of the discussions which interest or other human infirmities may raise among the disciples of Christ. Finally, in presence of the magistrate, Christians are exposed to the peril of idolatry, in taking the judicial oath in the name of false divinities. Nothing henceforth could, it seems, arrest the departure of the great missionary; he made his preparations in full security; he had not the least suspicion of the great trouble which was about to cross the way of the Lord. A popular tempest, raised by one of the most lucrative industries of Ephesus, nearly carried him off in its fury. It was a city very famous for the temple of Diana, which was counted among the seven wonders of the world. Asia had employed two hundred years in building it, and all its provinces had contributed to so great a work. Its length was four hundred and twenty-five feet and its breadth two hundred and twenty. One saw there a hundred and twenty-seven columns, made by as many kings, of which thirty-seven were chiselled. Their height went to sixty feet, and all the rules of architecture were admirably well observed in it. But what gave so much reputation to Ephesus was also the cause of its misfortune, because this temple, drawing there the vows of all the provinces of the world, made it attached to the worship of idols. Pagan Greece carried to the extreme its veneration toward this lifeless Diana; a great concourse of worshippers flocked to this temple and would not depart from Ephesus without carrying home a lasting souvenir of this idol. This superstitious desire gave birth to various lucrative industries: skilful workmen made reductions of the idol and of the temple on a more or less minute scale, and sold a considerable quantity of these little shrines of silver. The head of the corporation of these silversmiths, at the time when Saint Paul preached at Ephesus, was a certain Demetrius; he had a great manufactory of little temples of silver on the model of the great temple of Diana. Very perspicacious about his interests, he perceived with dismay the approaching ruin of his industry. Much fewer of his shrines were bought, the sale of his products became more difficult from day to day. When all Asia flocked to the chair of Saint Paul, what hearer, after having heard him, would have had the courage to buy such idols? He assembled therefore his workmen, and, in a warm harangue, he studied to irritate this mass against the great preacher. As soon as they had heard the discourse of their chief, transported with fury, the workmen began to vociferate: “Great is Diana of the Ephesians! great is Diana of the Ephesians!” An extreme confusion filled the whole city at once. The ringleaders betook themselves to the theatre where the bulk of the people was assembled. In their tumultuous course, having met Gaius of Derbe, and Aristarchus of Thessalonica, travelling companions of the Apostle and his co-operators, they seized their persons and dragged them with them. As soon as Saint Paul learned the danger they ran, he wished to throw himself into the midst of this multitude of people in delirium, in the hope of delivering them or of sharing their lot, but his disciples prudently prevented him from facing this storm. At last, after two hours of such vociferation, this multitude, wearied and exhausted by its own cries, gave at last an ear to the secretary of the city and let its anger fall before his words. The fury of the people was appeased, and Paul and his friends delivered from its hands.

This uprising advanced his departure by some days: having sent for his disciples, he made them a pathetic exhortation, embraced them with a paternal piety and took the road to Macedonia. About this same epoch, Aquila and Priscilla, who had generously exposed their lives for the safety of Saint Paul, on the news of the death of Claudius, quitted Ephesus and returned to Rome. The death of this emperor had annulled the edict which had driven them out of the city with the other Jews. The beginnings of a new reign were favourable to this kind of exiles; people closed their eyes to their return. These devoted friends of Saint Paul were at Ephesus when he wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians; their departure must therefore have coincided

with that of the Apostle. In company with Timothy, Saint Paul went down from Ephesus to Troas; his mind was as if troubled at not meeting Titus whom he hoped to find there; after having said farewell to the faithful, he went on board a ship which bore him to Macedonia. Scarcely landed, he began to traverse the Churches of that province, where he counted friends so numerous and so devoted; he sowed the word and sustained the disciples by his powerful exhortations. It is at this epoch that we see him experience interiorly afflictions and terrible frights; outside he had to suffer combats and struggles on the part of the infidels, and too often on the part of the faithful still imperfect; and within he felt fears. God proved him by giving him over to this interior desolation, it was necessary to make him feel that all his strength came from grace and not from his natural qualities. Happily the arrival of Titus consoled him; he rejoiced at the happy news which he brought him touching the state of the Corinthians. The example of their generosity served him to exhort the Macedonians to prepare the sending of their collections in favour of Jerusalem; he told them that Achaia had prepared its sending from the year before. Touched by this example, the faithful of Macedonia showed themselves generous beyond their strength. A short time after, he sent Titus to Corinth to carry his second Epistle to the Corinthians (year 37), and had him accompanied by Saint Luke; they were both charged with preparing the collections of the Corinthians. Saint Paul, of great circumspection in regard to the things which easily give occasion to unpleasant talk, wished the administration of these sums of money to be put beyond all suspicion. This Epistle is remarkable for a wise mixture of force and gentleness, of indulgence and firmness.

Using first of all the power of binding and loosing, he lifts the excommunication laid on the incestuous man who had submitted to penance. He then raises the dignity of the ministers of the New Testament. Indignant that proud and rash men were spreading calumny against the Christian Church and its priesthood, he brands in an ineffaceable manner these false prophets, Jews by origin, puffed up with presumption. He speaks then of patience in tribulations, which becomes the pastor of souls. Finally, that his preaching may not remain sterile through his fault and fall into contempt, Paul makes no difficulty of putting in evidence all that can recommend him in the eyes of the faithful. By his birth, he possesses the same privileges as those of his nation: like them, he is of the race of Abraham. But what he esteems above the privileges of race is that he is "the ambassador of Jesus Christ." In this quality, he glories in his labours, in the fatigues, in the persecutions he has endured, in the chains he has borne, in the scourging he has undergone five times from the Jews. "Three times," he says, "I was beaten with rods, I was stoned once, three times I suffered shipwreck, a day and a night I was tossed at the mercy of the waves; I have been exposed to a thousand dangers from robbers, from the Jews, from the Gentiles, in the cities, in the desert, in crossing rivers, in sailing on the sea; I have borne labours and privations; I have endured hunger and thirst; I imposed on myself watchings and fastings; I suffered cold and nakedness. Besides these exterior things, shall I speak of my daily cares, and of my solicitude for all the Churches?" The Apostle seizes this occasion to make known the ecstasy in which he was rapt to the third heaven, where were revealed to him secrets which it is not permitted to human tongue to repeat. The glorification of the great Apostle is complete. He adds, before finishing, that if he has spoken thus of himself, it is that he has been constrained to it. One feels that he does violence to his modesty, and that grave reasons were needed to engage him to break silence. He may well say: "My heart is enlarged for you, O Corinthians."

After having traversed Macedonia as apostle and as friend, Paul came into Greece, that is to say into Achaia; faithful to his promise, he went to visit the Corinthians anew. According to Saint Augustine, in this third journey to that city he regulated the most suitable mode of offering the holy sacrifice and of receiving the holy Eucharist: he established particularly the law of fasting before communion. His sojourn in these countries was of three months, visiting the churches of Achaia and those of Athens, using everywhere his apostolic authority in the reformation of reprehensible things, and gathering the alms prepared beforehand in these various Churches. According to the general sentiment of the exegetes, Saint Paul wrote from Corinth his celebrated Epistle to the Romans; he dictated it to his secretary Tertius under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost and had it carried to Rome by Phoebe, deaconess of the Church of Cenchreae, the more

celebrated of the two ports of Corinth. The superscription which states that it was written from Corinth would not suffice by itself alone to designate exactly the place where he dictated it; but the recommendation of the author of the Epistle to receive and treat Phoebe suitably, the various salutations in which the Apostle recalls the memory of the persons who accompanied him from Greece to Jerusalem, such as Sopater, son of Pyrrhus of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy and Trophimus of Asia, demonstrate, according to Origen, that it was really written from Corinth.

The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans contains a very lofty doctrine; also has it always passed for being difficult to explain, at least in certain passages. The Jews settled at Rome, yielding, as in many other cities, to a sentiment of jealousy on seeing the Gentiles participate in the grace of the Gospel with the same facility and the same abundance as themselves, gloried beyond measure in the privileges granted to their nation and in the graces they owed to the Mosaic law. They regarded as profane all the peoples of the world, and some, through an excessive complacency in the glory of their birth and in the promises made to their fathers, pretended that the nations ought to have no part in the grace of the new covenant, so long as they remained strangers to the legal observances. The Romans, on their side, obstinate in their vain philosophy, made much of the merit of their philosophers who had discovered the principal precepts of morality, by the sole force of their genius, without the help of revelation and of the law. Abusing the favours with which they had been loaded, the Jews had shown themselves frequently rebellious to God. The Gentiles had adored Jesus Christ as soon as they had known Him, whereas the Israelites had rejected and crucified Him. Saint Paul humbles the Gentiles by showing that the lights of their philosophers had served only to render them more guilty. If they knew God, they did not adore Him as God. They had even fallen into inexcusable errors of conduct and into the most shameful vices. The Apostle fears not to make the enumeration of them, so public and generally known were the disorders of Rome under the reign of Nero. The children of Abraham, on their side, have they good reason to glory? No; for works without faith in Jesus Christ, purely legal works, cannot justify. Saint Paul starts from this to expound the mysteries of predestination and reprobation. Terrible mysteries! Here we must cry out with him: “O the depth of the treasures of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are the judgments of God and unsearchable His ways!” In ending his Epistle, the Apostle exhorts the Romans to peace; he prays God, author of peace and concord, to abide with them and to grant them the spirit of union and charity.

When he had finished his apostolic visit and strengthened in the faith the Churches of Greece and of Macedonia, the Apostle resolved to go directly from Corinth to Syria; a perverse design of his enemies obliged him to change his itinerary. At the moment of setting out, he learned that wicked Jews had laid snares for him on the road he was to travel. Their aim was to seize the collections of money which he was bringing to Jerusalem. He returned therefore by Macedonia, and betook himself directly from this province into Asia properly so called. Sopater, son of Pyrrhus of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe and Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus, both of Asia, accompanied him in this journey, and Saint Luke also, for it is said that these last two preceded them and awaited them at Troas. “As for us, after the days of unleavened bread we sailed from Philippi, and came in five days to them at Troas, where we abode seven days.”

After this rest of seven days at Troas, a city of Little Phrygia, on the first day of the week, that is to say Sunday, the disciples being assembled with a view to break bread, an expression which designates the oblation of the eucharistic sacrifice and the communion, Saint Paul, who was to depart the next day, began a discourse and prolonged it until the middle of the night. The assembly was held in an upper room lighted by a great number of lamps: it was wholly under the charm of this word animated by the fire of charity which sprang from his heart. Forgetting in the ardour of his speech that the hours were flying, the Apostle had been speaking a long time, when a young man named Eutychus, who had sat down on a window, was surprised by a deep sleep; his body, which swayed by a mechanical movement, lost its balance and fell from the third

storey into the street: he was taken up dead! The Apostle interrupted his discourse at once and went down in haste from the third storey into the street, threw himself on the body of the young man, and, having embraced him, he felt that life was reanimating this corpse: “Be not troubled,” he said to those present, “for he lives.” The Apostle renewed in the middle of the street the miracles of Elias and Eliseus, when they recalled to life, the one the son of the widow of Sarepta, the other that of the Sunamite. Feeling the need of recovering the assembly from its double instantaneous emotion of sadness and lively joy, he “broke bread.” After these holy agapes, he took up speech again and continued his discourse until daybreak. Insensible to the fatigues of the night, he went out of this assembly all moved by his word, by his great miracle and by the pious exercises of so long a watch; then, without taking rest, he went to have his co-operators embark on a vessel which was to bear them to Assos, the place where they were to take him up again, according to the order he had given them. As for himself, he preferred to take the road by land. The Apostle rejoined his friends at Assos; he went on board the vessel that bore them, and all together sailed toward Mitylene, one of the principal cities of the island of Lesbos. The rapidity with which Saint Paul and his companions were travelling at this moment left them time neither to stop in this island, nor to visit Mitylene. They arrived the next day opposite Chios, one of the islands of the Archipelago. The little importance of this island, and the haste they had to arrive at Jerusalem did not permit them to land. The next day, they landed at Samos. They went to anchor, to pass the night, at the little island, or rather the promontory of Trogylle. The day after, they went to Miletus, an opulent and voluptuous city. Saint Paul desired ardently to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, to celebrate the anniversary of the promulgation of the Gospel. Wherefore he resolved to pass before Ephesus without touching land. On the other hand, it did not become him to pass by stealth, without casting into the heart of the faithful ministers placed by himself at the head of the Churches of that city one of those lively and penetrating exhortations so capable of reviving their zeal. To this end, he turned to profit his sojourn at Miletus, situated at a short distance from Ephesus: he had the bishops and priests of that Church assemble near him, and when they were all gathered together, he addressed to them these touching words: “I go to Jerusalem not knowing what shall befall me there, save that in every city through which I pass, the Holy Ghost makes known to me that chains and afflictions are prepared for me there. But I fear nothing of all these things, for my life is not more precious than my person, provided I finish my course, and the ministry of the word which I have received from the Lord Jesus, to preach the Gospel of the grace of God.” As soon as he had ended this moving exhortation in which his apostolic soul reveals itself wholly, he knelt down and prayed with them with that effusion of charity whose fire burned his heart. This outpouring of his soul in that prayer stirred deeply the hearts of those present; all at once melted into tears, then, throwing themselves on his neck, they embraced him, afflicted at the thought of seeing him no more. All these holy personages accompanied the Apostle to the vessel that was to bear him away.

After tearing himself with great difficulty from the arms of these beloved bishops and priests of the Church of Ephesus, the great doctor of the Gentiles and his friends went on board the vessel which awaited them; pressed to depart, he set sail at once, left the port and steered straight for Cos, a little island of the Aegean sea, at the entrance of the Ceramic gulf. The next day, they arrived at Rhodes, an island situated not far from the southern coast of Caria. From Rhodes the vessel made for Patara, a maritime city and capital of Lycia, where was a temple of Apollo, whose oracle was regarded as the most celebrated of all Asia. In descending from his vessel, Saint Paul could perceive the sad victims of this superstition smitten to the heart by the Gospel, and groan over their prodigious blindness. The Apostle and his travelling companions quitted at Patara the vessel on which they had already sailed, and went on board a ship which was sailing toward Phoenicia. During their route they perceived the island of Cyprus, which they left on the left, and, continuing to sail toward Syria, they landed at Tyre. Disciples whom they met in that city kept them seven days. Enlightened by a higher light, they foretold to Saint Paul the evils he was to experience at Jerusalem, and urged him not to go up thither. Their eager solicitations left the Apostle unshaken in his resolution. The seven days elapsed, he and his friends made ready to depart. All the faithful of Tyre, followed by their wives and

children, accompanied them outside the city; having arrived on the sea-shore, they knelt on the ground and prayed all together, and, after bidding each other farewell with a holy tenderness, the Apostle and his friends went on board their ship. From Tyre the vessel steered straight to Ptolemais,[15] term of the navigation of the Apostle. The apostolic travellers gave but one day to the brethren of that city. From Ptolemais they went down the next day by land to Caesarea of Palestine, or Strato's Tower. Philip the Evangelist,[16] one of the seven deacons, dwelt in that city. The holy travellers lodged in his house.

During the Apostle's sojourn at Caesarea, a prophet named Agabus, celebrated for his prediction of the famine which raged under the empire of Claudius, arrived from Judaea. In the visit he made to Saint Paul and his friends, he took the girdle of the Apostle and predicted to him, in a symbolic manner, after the example of the ancient Prophets, the bonds which awaited him at Jerusalem. Having bound his feet and hands with this girdle, he said: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, shall the Jews bind in this manner at Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." As soon as the friends of the Apostle and the faithful gathered around him had heard this prophecy, they besought him earnestly not to go up to Jerusalem. All these instances made by sincere friends were powerless to shake his resolution. Future martyr of the faith, he could not help, in the expectation of that glorious crown, answering with tenderness their touching prayers: "What do you mean weeping and afflicting my heart?" But far from weakening, resuming all his natural intrepidity, he added: "I declare to you that I am quite ready to suffer at Jerusalem not only bonds and prison, but death itself for the name of the Lord Jesus." At these firm and truly apostolic words, those present understood that they could not persuade him; they said to him: "The will of the Lord be done." After some days of rest, all being arranged for the departure, the apostolic travellers took the road to Jerusalem: they were followed by several disciples of the city of Caesarea, among whom there was one, already old, named Mnason, a native of the island of Cyprus, in whose house they were to lodge. Possessor of a house at Jerusalem, he could offer hospitality to the Apostle and his friends in those days when the immense multitude of pilgrims rendered the suitable choice of a lodging very difficult.

This fifth journey of Saint Paul to Jerusalem, undertaken by a divine impulse, was one of the most dramatic of his life, which was wholly a veritable apostolic drama. On his arrival in the holy city, he and his worthy co-operators were received with joy by the brethren. The day after his arrival, the Apostle and his friends went to visit Saint James the Less, cousin of Jesus Christ and first bishop of Jerusalem. Advised of the arrival and visit of Saint Paul, Saint James, in the desire to receive him with more honour, had gathered near his person the priests of Jerusalem. The Apostle, after having embraced them all, according to custom, handed to Saint James the amount of the numerous alms which he had collected in the Churches of Achaia, of Macedonia and of other countries. Placed in the bosom of Mosaism, the priests of the Church of Jerusalem underwent the influence of the milieu in which they lived. Obliged to compromise with the Jews converted to the faith, but little disposed to disengage themselves from all the rites prescribed by the law, they observed themselves with these faithful the legal prescriptions. In this state of false conscience, they wished the approbation of Saint Paul; they said to him therefore: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed; but all, in spite of their faith, are zealous for the law. And, as they are the principal part of the Christian Church, the elders in the faith, prudence as much as charity command that one should have indulgence for them in respecting their ideas. Now, they have heard it said that you teach all the Jews who dwell among the Gentiles to renounce Moses, saying not to subject their children to circumcision and not to live according to their ancient customs. There are precisely among us four men who are bound by a vow; take them with you; sanctify yourself with them; furnish them the price of the ceremony, that they may shave their heads, and that all may learn thereby that all the things they had heard said about you were false, since you continue to observe the law. As for those among the Gentiles who have believed, we have written to them that we had judged that they ought to abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled and from fornication." Saint Paul believed he ought to accept this compromise. The Apostle, having therefore vowed himself to God as a temporary Nazarite, took these four men, and having purified

himself with them, he went to the temple the following day in their company. In conformity with the law, they made known the days on which their purification would be accomplished, and the moment when the offering would be presented for each of them. The Apostle, whose maxim was to make himself all to all, in view of gaining all to Jesus Christ, believed, at an epoch when the legal ceremonies were not yet deadly or buried in oblivion, that he ought to use condescension toward the so tenacious prejudices of the Judaeo-Christians of Jerusalem, so worthy of respect. The ceremonies of the vow of temporary Nazariteship prescribed by the law were approaching their term without having met the least hindrance. Peace might already be regarded as assured, when an unforeseen storm burst suddenly, with such violence, upon the Apostle that he was on the point of being crushed. Toward the end of the seventh day of his vow, those Asiatic Jews having perceived him in the temple, seized him and stirred up all the people crying: “Men of Israel, help! here is the man who teaches everywhere against the people, against the law and against this holy place; moreover he has brought Gentiles into the temple, he has profaned this holy place.” The whole city was strongly moved. Those who had seized Saint Paul drew him out of the temple, not wishing to slay him within its precincts; at once the doors of it were shut; in the paroxysm of their anger, they were making ready to kill him, when some one came happily to warn the tribune of the cohort appointed to guard the temple that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an inexpressible trouble and confusion. At once he took soldiers and centurions with him, and ran to those who held the Apostle and were striking him. At the sight of the tribune and the soldiers, they ceased to beat him, less through moderation and a sentiment of justice than through fear of severe reprisals on the part of the Romans, masters of Judaea. The tribune Claudius Lysias seized the Apostle quickly: he chained him first, then, after having loaded him with bonds, he inquired about his person and his pretended crime. Then he commanded his soldiers to conduct the Apostle to the camp, which was situated in the tower Antonia. This fortress, backed against the temple on the north side, served as lodging for the Roman garrison. At the moment of entering the fortress, Paul said to the tribune: “Permit me, I pray you, to speak to the people.” Having obtained this permission from the chief of the militia, Saint Paul, standing on the steps of the portico of the citadel, made a sign with his hand to the people. As long as the Apostle expounded to them the first institution of his life, the miraculous circumstances of his conversion, and his vocation to the apostolate, they listened patiently to his discourse. If his words shocked them a little, they had, at least for them, the charm of novelty. But when he told them that Jesus Christ had charged him to go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, unable to contain themselves longer, they lost patience, and with one voice they cried with force: “Away with such a fellow from the earth, it were a crime to let him live.” They ceased not to vociferate, to cast off their garments and to throw the dust into the air; the tribune had him conducted into the fortress. Unable to discover the cause of these vociferations, he imagined to have the Apostle put to the question and scourged with rods, in order to draw from his mouth, by the violence of torments, the knowledge of the pretended crime which so exasperated them against him. When Saint Paul had been bound with thongs, he said to the centurion charged to preside at this execution: “Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman citizen, and one who is uncondemned?” The centurion, surprised at this word, hastened to go to the tribune and to say to him: “What are you going to do? this man is a Roman citizen.” At this unexpected revelation, the tribune, all troubled, ran to his prisoner and said to him: “Are you a Roman citizen?” — “Yes, I am,” answered the Apostle. The tribune replied to him: “It cost me a great sum of money to acquire this right of Roman citizen!” — “And I,” said Saint Paul, “am so by my birth.” As soon as Saint Paul had manifested his title of Roman citizen, the soldiers charged to scourge him and to put him to the question withdrew after having unbound him.

In the meantime the princes of the priests and the council having assembled by order of the tribune, the latter had the chains taken off Saint Paul and presented him before them. As firm as in face of the multitude in fury, when it demanded his blood, he looked steadily at the members of the assembly and said to them: “Men, brethren! until this hour I have conducted myself in all things before God with the uprightness of a good conscience!” At these words, pronounced with a noble assurance, prelude to a vigorous apology, the

high priest Ananias, son of Zebedee, unable to suffer this liberty of speech in the Apostle, ordered those who were near him to strike him on the face. He answered the man who had given the order to strike him: “Whited wall, God will strike you one day Himself! What, you sit here to judge me according to the law, and contrary to the law you command that I be struck!” The members of the Sanhedrin saw in these words an insult, and said to Saint Paul: “Do you revile the high priest of God!” He answered them calmly: “Brethren, I knew not that he was the prince of the priests; for it is written: Thou shalt not curse the prince of thy people.” Having spoken thus, a discussion arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The tumult increasing by the mutual recriminations, the tribune feared lest his prisoner should be torn in pieces by these madmen. Wishing to avoid this frightful misfortune, he commanded that soldiers should be brought who took him from their hands and led him into the camp. The following night, Jesus Christ appeared to him, and said to him “to be of good courage; for, as he had borne witness to Him in Jerusalem, he was likewise to bear witness to Him in Rome.” In effect, day having come, some Jews banded together among themselves, by a terrible vow, confirmed with oath and imprecation, to eat nor drink anything until they had killed him. Having therefore presented themselves to the princes of the priests, to the members of the senate, they said to them resolutely: “We have made a vow, with great imprecations, not to eat until we have killed Paul! you have therefore only to make known, on the part of the council, to the tribune, that you pray him to bring Paul before you to-morrow, with the aim of knowing more particularly his affair, and we shall be quite ready to kill him before he arrives.” This machination so well contrived, whose effect appeared assured, came to the knowledge of the son of the sister of Saint Paul. This young man, frightened at the peril his uncle ran, ran in all haste to the camp and warned him of this homicidal design against his person. Saint Paul therefore called a centurion and said to him: “Lead, I pray you, this young man to the tribune, he has something to tell him.” The centurion took this young man with him and led him to the tribune; in presenting him to him, he said: “Paul, the prisoner, begged me to bring you this young man who has some advice to give you.” Taking the nephew of the Apostle by the hand and drawing him aside, the tribune asked him what he had to communicate to him; the Roman officers were always disposed to gather all information about persons and things. This young man revealed to him secretly the plan of the conspiracy: “The Jews,” he said to him, “have resolved together to beg you to bring Paul to-morrow before their assembly, under the pretext of knowing more exactly the state of his affair; beware of consenting to their request. More than forty of them have concerted to lay snares for him; they have vowed, with great oaths, neither to eat nor drink until they have killed him. They are already prepared to strike the blow, awaiting your promise.” The tribune Claudius Lysias called two centurions and said to them: “Hold ready from the third hour of the night two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred archers to go to Caesarea.” He ordered them also to prepare horses to mount Paul and conduct him safely to the governor Felix; at the same time he wrote to Felix in these terms: “The Jews having seized this man and being about to kill him, I ran up with soldiers and rescued him from their hands, having learned that he was a Roman citizen. Desiring to be informed of the matter of their accusations, I led him into their council; there I found that he was accused only of certain things relating to their law, and of no crime worthy of death or of prison; and on the report which I received of the snares the Jews had laid against him to kill him, I have sent him to you. I have likewise commanded his accusers to go and plead their cause before you.” The horsemen having arrived at Caesarea went and delivered the letter of the tribune to the governor and presented the prisoner to him. The governor, after reading the letter of Claudius Lysias, inquired of what province the Apostle was; having learned that he was of Cilicia, he said to him: “I will hear you when your accusers are come.” He then commanded that he should be kept in the praetorium of Herod where the prisons of the palace were situated. The enemies of the Apostle, with their ardent thirst for his blood, put no delay in bringing their accusation before Felix. Conformably to the practice usual among the Greeks and the Romans, they had taken a hired advocate named Tertullus. Felix summoned Saint Paul and placed him in their presence, so that after having heard the accusation brought against him, he might put himself in a state to repel it. The orator of the Jews expressed himself in these terms: “As it is by you, most excellent Felix, that we enjoy a profound peace, and that several just and salutary things have been

established by your wise foresight in the midst of our nation, everywhere and always we love to acknowledge it, with all sorts of thanksgiving. We have found this man, a true public pest; prince of the seditious sect of the Nazarenes, he puts division and trouble among all the Jews of the universe; he has even attempted to profane the temple. By interrogating him yourself to judge him, you will be able to recognise the truth of all the crimes of which we accuse him." All the Jews present certified the truth of the criminal facts charged against the Apostle by the orator Tertullus. Saint Paul listened with calm to this lying accusation; before repelling it he waited till Felix gave him permission to refute it. When he had obtained it, he broke one by one, with a formidable logic, all the arms of his enemies. Master of his impressions, Felix listened, without manifesting them, to the accusation of the Jews, and to the victorious defence of the Apostle. Alleging the necessity of fuller information, he put off the parties to another time: "When I shall have informed myself more exactly of this sect, and the tribune Lysias shall have come down from Jerusalem, I will judge your affair."

After this peaceful issue, Felix left Caesarea for a time; he went to fetch his wife Drusilla, who ardently desired to hear Saint Paul speak, so great was the renown of his apostolic eloquence! A few days after, he re-entered the seat of his government with this queen become the wife of a freedman. Felix, born of servile race, was the freedman of the emperor Claudius, and of his mother Antonia. Saint Paul appeared before Felix and Drusilla, not as accused, but as Apostle of the new law. In his first discourse, he had confined himself to repelling the crimes of which his relentless enemies accused him; in the second, he spoke of faith in Jesus Christ, that great object of his apostolic labours. Without any care to displease the governor who held him in bonds, he spoke to him with great liberty of justice, of chastity and of the judgment to come. He spoke with such force that Felix was quite frightened by it.

"That is enough for this hour," he said to him, "withdraw; when I have time, I will send for you." After this audience, he had numerous conversations with the Apostle, in the hope that the holy prisoner would purchase his deliverance by giving him money. Saint Paul had gathered alms in favour of the poor of Jerusalem, but he would have preferred to undergo a perpetual detention rather than have recourse personally to this means of deliverance. Two years having elapsed, Felix was recalled to Rome; he had for successor Porcius Festus. Before his departure, he could have delivered Saint Paul; but with the aim of pleasing the Jews, he left him in bonds. Porcius Festus went up to Jerusalem. Ananias and the chief men among the Jews, pressed by the ardent thirst for the death of the prisoner, went to find the new governor and asked of him his condemnation. The hatred against the Apostle had increased by all the resistance that Felix had opposed to the accomplishment of their homicidal projects. Festus, too just or too skilful, refused to condemn, on their evidently iniquitous demand, an absent prisoner. "In a few days," he said to them, "I shall go to Caesarea where Paul is detained; let the principal men among you come with me, and if this man has committed any crime, they shall accuse him of it before my tribunal." The day after his arrival, having seated himself on his tribunal, he commanded that before any other cause the prisoner Paul should be brought to him. The accusing Jews charged the Apostle with several great crimes, of which they could furnish no proof. With the force which the innocent draws from an irreproachable conscience, he defended himself victoriously from having acted against the law of the Jews, against the temple and against Caesar. Festus easily suspected, from the extreme passion with which the Jews pursued the condemnation of the Apostle, that a secret cause, of which the nature was hidden from him, was the true motive of this affair. However, he used a roundabout way which might cover his responsibility. He said then to his great prisoner: "Will you go up to Jerusalem and be judged there before me on the things of which you are accused?" The great Apostle could not accept such a transfer; wherefore he answered Festus: "Here I am before the tribunal of Caesar, it is before him that I ought to be judged; you are not ignorant that I have done no wrong to the Jews… I appeal to Caesar!" Festus was obliged to accept this appeal to a tribunal superior to his own; after having conferred with his assessors, he said to him: "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go!" Porcius Festus, deprived by the appeal of the Apostle of the right of judging him, awaited the opportune moment to send him to Rome. During this

time, Agrippa the Younger, last king of the Jews, and his sister Berenice, went down to Caesarea with the intention of saluting there the new president of Judaea. Festus, whom the affair of Saint Paul had struck, spoke of it to the king, either as an extraordinary subject of conversation, or because he wished to consult him on this cause so obscure in his eyes. “There is here,” he said to Agrippa, “a man whom Felix left in bonds; the princes of the priests, the ancients of the Jews, came during my visit to Jerusalem to ask me to condemn him to death; I refused, telling them that the Romans had not the custom to condemn a man before the accused has his accusers present before him, and he has been given liberty to justify himself of the crime of which he is accused. But behold he has appealed to Caesar. As, in consequence of this appeal, the cause must be reserved for the knowledge of Augustus, I have ordered that he be kept until the day when I can send him to Caesar.” After this recital, Agrippa said to Festus: “For some time I have desired to hear this man speak!” — “You shall hear him to-morrow,” answered Festus. The next day, in effect, Agrippa and Berenice came with great pomp, wearing rich royal ornaments, surrounded by a brilliant cortège composed of their court, of the tribunes and the principal inhabitants of the city of Caesarea, and having taken their places in the praetorium, Saint Paul was brought to them by the command of Festus. The prisoner of Jesus Christ appeared in the midst of this brilliant assembly without experiencing the least trouble of spirit, in spite of the chains with which he was bound, and his poor garments which contrasted with the dazzling luxury of the persons present. Agrippa, addressing himself directly to Saint Paul, without taking the advice of Festus, said to him: “You are permitted to speak for your defence.” As calm, as firm before this imposing assembly as in face of the multitude in fury, the Apostle stretched out his hand. After an exordium in which he appeals to the knowledge of Agrippa, which allowed him to give to his apology a scientific development necessary, he relates his life of Pharisee in Jerusalem, from his young years, a life known to all the Jews. He relates then the terrible relentlessness with which, driven by his Pharisaic zeal, he had first persecuted the Christians with the design of effacing from this world the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and finally the miracle of his conversion; he ends thus: “King Agrippa, I did not resist that heavenly vision; first of all, I announced to those of Damascus, then to those of Jerusalem, then throughout all Judaea and to the Gentiles, that they should do penance and be converted to God, doing worthy fruits of penance. Such is the subject for which the Jews, having seized me in the temple, endeavoured to kill me. Vain attempt! For by the assistance of God, I have continued to this day, bearing witness always of Jesus to the great and to the small, and saying nothing besides the things which Moses and the Prophets have foretold should come, namely, that Christ should suffer death, and that He should be the first to rise from the dead, and that He should enlighten with His light the Jewish people and the Gentiles.” Festus interrupted brusquely the apology of the Apostle crying out: “Paul, thou art mad; thy great learning hath turned thy brain.” Without stopping at this injurious exclamation which surprise had torn from the ignorance and spite of Festus, he answered him calmly: “I am not mad, most excellent Festus, the words I have just spoken are words of truth and good sense!” And that Festus might come back from his false appreciation, he appealed to the testimony of Agrippa. “O king Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest.” Such is the famous exclamation which the scientific eloquence of Paul draws from the lips of the king: “In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian!” The Apostle replied: “I would to God that not only in a little, but that in nothing at all it were wanting that you and all who hear me this day should become such as I am, except these bonds.” The king, the president, Berenice and those who sat with them, rose then, and, having withdrawn apart, they said together: “This man hath done nothing worthy of death or of bonds.” Agrippa said to Festus: “He might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Caesar.” Thus fell and vanished all the calumnious accusations of his enemies.

The resolution to send the Apostle to Rome to decide his appeal being thus arrested, “it was determined that he should sail into Italy, and that he should be delivered with the other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan cohort.” This voyage having to be made by sea, he went on board a vessel of Adrumetum.[17] Saint Luke and Aristarchus of Macedonia, witnesses of the persecutions and sufferings of the Apostle, blushed not for his bonds; they sought the honour of accompanying him in his maritime voyage, and

of facing the perils of his navigation. Driven by a favourable wind, the next day the vessel landed at Sidon, a celebrated city of Phoenicia. Julius, stripping himself, as regards Saint Paul, of the well-known roughness of soldiers toward their prisoners, treated him with so much humanity that he ceased to see in him a captive. He gave him liberty on parole; he could thus go and visit his friends the Christians of Sidon, and provide for his needs himself. On leaving Sidon, the vessel was obliged, because of contrary winds, to coast the island of Cyprus; having doubled it, it entered the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia, and landed at Myra, in Lycia (according to the Greek), and not at Lystra, as the Vulgate has it. This last city, situated in Lycaonia, is not a seaport. By a happy meeting, Julius found in this port a vessel of Alexandria, which was sailing toward Italy. As this was the aim of his voyage, he abandoned that of Adrumetum, and went on board this new ship with his prisoners and the friends of the Apostle. This one, heavily laden with wheat, sailed with difficulty, having the wind in front, obliged to struggle against the west wind, at an epoch when navigation was scarcely out of the infancy of art; it took many days to approach Cnidus, a city situated on a promontory of the same name, in the part of Caria more specially named Doris. The vessel then took below the island of Crete, by the eastern cape of Salmone, opposite Cnidus and Rhodes, coasted the southern shore of Crete, instead of that of the north, for it would have been exposed to all the violence of the north-west wind, and after a difficult navigation, which obliged it to tack, it arrived at a place named Good Haven or Fair Haven, near which was situated the city of Thalassa or Lasea, whose name still subsists in the south of the island of Crete. This port, much too open, and exposed to gusts of wind, offered a poorly safe anchorage to pass the winter in.

During this painful progress, a great number of days had elapsed: the navigation became more and more painful. Saint Paul knew the imminent peril the vessel ran; at once he gave to those who directed it this prudent advice: “My friends, I see that the navigation will become very troublesome, and full of peril, not only for the vessel and its cargo, but also for our lives.” The centurion Julius preferred the opinion of the seamen; their old experience appeared to him preferable to the supernatural science of Paul. The port where they were offered no suitable shelter for the ship. They put to sea again, in order to gain Phoenix, a port of Crete, which looks to the winds of the west and the south; the winter could be passed there without danger. The improvidence of the seamen was surprised by an impetuous wind which rose a short time after, between east and north; it blew with such violence against the island that it carried off the ship without its mass being able to oppose the least resistance; all manoeuvre becoming useless, it was the plaything of the wind, driven with impetuosity below a little island called Cauda, situated quite near the island of Crete, and celebrated for its wild asses; the boat was with great difficulty got under control. It was necessary the next day to throw the merchandise into the sea, in order to lighten the ship and diminish its rude shocks; three days after, the sea, always insatiable, demanded other sacrifices; they threw with their own hands the tackling of the vessel into the gulf. To crown the horror, neither sun nor stars appeared for several days. Unhoped-for Saviour, the Apostle stood up in the midst of them, and with a noble assurance promised them their lives safe. In the expectation of shipwreck, no one had thought of eating, he exhorted them to take food, saying to them: “My friends, you ought, doubtless, to have believed my word, and not to have departed from Crete; you would have spared us so great a pain, and we should not have suffered so great a loss! Nevertheless, no one shall perish; this vessel alone shall be lost; therefore take good courage now, for this very night an angel of the God whom I serve appeared to me and said: Paul, fear not, you must appear before Caesar; God, touched by your prayers, has given you all who sail with you! Wherefore, friends, be of good courage! my confidence in God shall not be betrayed, all that has been announced to me shall come to pass; we must only be cast upon a certain island.” This firm word raised the hearts of the passengers cast down by the fear of death.

The fourteenth night of this horrible navigation on the Adriatic sea, the sailors perceived about midnight that they were approaching land; at once they cast the sounding-lead and found twenty fathoms, a little farther they found only fifteen. For fear of going to break against a reef, they hastened to cast four anchors from the stern into the sea, and they awaited then with impatience that day should come to throw light on their situation.

Saint Paul, attentive to the needs of the passengers, certain that in a short time they would be sheltered from all peril, exhorted them to take food, saying to them: “Fourteen days have passed since you have been fasting. Believe me, take food that you may be able to save yourselves; for not one of you shall lose so much as a hair of his head.” To this convinced and reassuring word he joined his own example, always powerful on cast-down hearts. He took bread, and after having given thanks to God, in presence of all the passengers, to teach them to thank the Master of the world, even in the midst of an imminent peril, he broke it and began to eat. The calm full of assurance with which he proceeded completed the revival of the cast-down spirits; all, taking courage again, began to eat like him; there were reckoned in the ship two hundred and seventy-six persons; after having been satisfied, they finished lightening the vessel by casting the wheat into the sea.

Julius commanded those who could swim to throw themselves first out of the vessel and thus save themselves on land; all the others got, some on planks, some on pieces of the vessel; by the help of these various means of rescue, all the passengers reached land, and God kept the promise which He had made to His Apostle; not one of them perished! In preserving from a frightful death this great number of persons, the prisoner of Jesus Christ glorified his chains; the opprobrium fell back on those who had loaded him with them. This shipwreck of Saint Paul was the fourth. Escaped from this terrible danger the passengers perceived that they were in the island of Malta; the islanders received them with eagerness and treated them with kindness. Their first care, on seeing the shipwrecked persons all benumbed with cold and still wet with the rain, was to light a great fire to warm and dry them. Not disdaining the little offices of charity, he whose burning heart embraced the whole world, Saint Paul gathered brushwood and threw it on the fire to give it more intensity; a numbed viper, suddenly revived by the heat, came out of the faggots, and sprang upon his hand; when the inhabitants of the island of Malta saw this so dangerous reptile hanging from his hand, struck with astonishment, they said among themselves: “This man is doubtless a murderer; see how, after having saved himself from an angry sea, he is pursued by divine vengeance which will not let him survive.” Without being frightened by their thoughts nor by the viper otherwise dangerous, the Apostle shook it off quietly into the fire and received no harm from it; attentive to the ordinary effects of the bite of the reptile, the barbarians awaited with an avid curiosity for the poison, after having penetrated into his blood, to make his body swell; and after having reached the sources of life, to make him fall dead all at once, as struck by lightning. Nothing of the kind happened: the violence of the venom of the viper was neutralised by a divine virtue; after a long waiting, the barbarians, astonished at the harmlessness of this bite on the person of the Apostle, changed sentiment toward him; full of admiration for this invulnerable shipwrecked man, they went at a bound to the opposite extreme; they cried that he was a god! Perhaps these pagans suspected him of being their Hercules!

In this place, there were lands which belonged to the Chief man of the island, named Publius; this man showed great eagerness to give the example of hospitality; he received with much humanity Saint Paul and his friends; he kept them during three days. During those days, they had time to recover a little from the horrible fatigues of that long tempest, followed by such a shipwreck. Publius received them in his villa which occupied the heights where Civita-Vecchia or Medina-Vecchia now is, the ancient capital of the island, whose cathedral is dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul. By a happy chance, the father of Publius was ill with fever and dysentery; the Apostle went to see him, and finding the occasion to testify to him a truly apostolic gratitude for his good reception, he laid hands on him and cured him. This miracle, preceded by that of the viper shaken into the fire without danger, made a great noise in the island; at once all minds were stirred, all the infirm came to him and were healed. Saint Paul did not confine his ministry to the cure of the bodily maladies of the infirm inhabitants of the island of Malta; all the minds which showed themselves docile to his voice were converted, the idols fell, and Jesus Christ reigned in hearts. The conversion of Publius, whom the Apostle established bishop of this new Church, was the most striking of all and must have drawn others after it. Ancient martyrologies attest these facts; they add that later Publius governed the Church of Athens as bishop successor of Saint Denis the Areopagite; Saint Denis of Alexandria affirms, in effect, that a Publius succeeded Saint Denis, bishop of Athens. This Publius, as is believed, is the same as

that of Malta. According to Saint Jerome, he won the crown of martyrdom.

After three months of forced residence in the island of Malta, where the numerous miraculous cures he had wrought had drawn upon him great honours, the Apostle was at last able to go on board, with his travelling companions, a vessel of Alexandria which had passed the winter in one of the ports of the island, and to sail for Italy. This ship bore for sign the image of Castor and Pollux. From Malta it steered directly for Syracuse where it landed. He sojourned three days in that celebrated city. When Saint Paul reached that city, the Romans had been its masters for three centuries; according to Cornelius a Lapide, he was received there by Saint Marcian, whom Saint Peter had established bishop there several years before. While the merchants and owners of the ship were occupied with their trade, he visited the brethren, and left among them such an imprint of his passage that Christianity bore fruit marvellously, as is proved with evidence by the great number of saints and illustrious martyrs which Syracuse has given to the Church. Making the circuit of the coast, the vessel landed at Rhegium (Reggio[18]), a Greek city founded by the Chalcidians. This city still preserves its name. The day after, the south wind having risen, the vessel weighed anchor and arrived in two days at Pozzuoli, a city of Campania, formerly Puteoli, situated about eight miles from Naples, partly on the sea-shore, and partly on a height. On leaving the ship, Saint Paul found, among the inhabitants of Pozzuoli, brethren who welcomed him with a holy joy; eager to hear him and only too happy to possess him in their city, they besought him, with lively and urgent prayers, to remain with them seven days. The centurion Julius put no obstacle to their desire. During his sojourn, the Apostle, with that powerful word whose accents vibrated so strongly in all hearts, confirmed his brethren in the faith. Paul touched at last that land of Italy, object of his ardent desires. The journey from Pozzuoli to Rome could have been made by sea as far as Ostia; but the centurion preferred to follow the road by land. The brethren of Rome, advised by the letters of the Christians of Pozzuoli of the arrival of the Apostle in their city, and of his departure for the eternal city, went to meet him. It was in the year VII of Nero, about the first days of April at the latest, that he was presented all chained to the stratopedarch by the centurion Julius. He was followed by Luke and Aristarchus, who had accompanied him in his voyage, attentive to serve him and to console him in his chains.

The centurion Julius having therefore handed over to Afranius Burrhus, stratopedarch or prefect of the praetorium, the prisoners whom he brought from the East, this chief of the imperial justice had them all shut up in the prison of the city, with the exception of Saint Paul. By a characteristic distinction, he separated him from all the others, without his having solicited it; he permitted him to lodge in an inn, under the guard of a praetorian. Saint Paul, subjected to the mildest guard, enjoyed a half-liberty. The permission to dwell in a private lodging, to receive there the visits of his friends and of all the persons who wished to speak to him, was granted only to considerable personages: common prisoners were not treated with so much humanity. On the day of his arrival, Saint Paul had not leisure to occupy himself with his appeal, he had to employ the following day in seeking a house and settling in it. Once suitably lodged, he had to receive the visit of the Judaeo-Christians and the ethnico-Christians whose dispute touching their mutual prerogatives and their moral value before God he had appeased by his celebrated Epistle. On the third day after his arrival, he wished, before appearing before the tribunal of Caesar, to confer with the principal men among the Jews who resided at Rome. He had them therefore begged by the Judaeo-

Christians of the city to assemble in his house. This invitation was very well received. The principal men among them came in effect to find him, whether through curiosity or national spirit. When they were assembled, the Apostle engaged them to put no opposition to his release, and even to desist from all pursuit against his person, if such had been their first thought. The Jews of Rome answered the great prisoner: “We have received no letters accusing you from Judaea; no brother has been sent to us to inform us of it; no one even has told us the least evil against your person; wherefore we desire to know your sentiments relative to the sect of which you are one of the ardent propagators, for the only thing we know is that it is opposed on all sides.” The day of a second conference was fixed for this affair. The Jews, faithful to their promise, came in

great number, on the day fixed, to his dwelling. When they were assembled, the Apostle, prepared by prayer, sustained by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, appeared, surrounded by Saint Luke and his other disciples present at Rome, chained to the arm of a legionary, and expounded to them from morning till evening the mystery of Jesus Christ, the necessity of believing in Him if one wishes to be saved. The divine fire which animated his discourse produced its habitual double effect: some, docile to the impression of the Spirit, opened their eyes to the light of truth, and received it with happiness; they believed with a firm faith this new truth which Saint Paul manifested to their understanding. The others, driven by the spirit of contradiction, closed their eyes to the light; they stiffened against the truths which rendered it sensible and palpable to them, and remained attached to the deadly letter of the law.

Saint Paul remained for two entire years in the inn where he had taken his lodging; he received there all who came to see him and to converse with him on the great cause of the Gospel; he preached to them the kingdom of God and taught them what regards Our Lord Jesus Christ, with entire liberty, without any one putting hindrance to his preaching. Against the expectation of his cruellest persecutors, he recovered in the metropolis of idolatry, in the city of all the gods, under the empire of a Nero, and in chains, an entire liberty of preaching the new law to all sorts of persons; a liberty which had been ravished from him at Jerusalem, capital city of religion; his chains, far from putting an obstacle to his word, served to carry it farther and higher. This contrast between a chained arm and a free tongue gave him more celebrity; one would have said that he renewed the marvels of the forum, mute for so long, so much so that his bonds became famous throughout the praetorium, and that there were even Christians in the house of Caesar, converted to the faith by his preaching. According to the formal promise of Jesus Christ: “You must appear before Caesar,” and the manifestation of his bonds throughout the praetorium, it is certain that Saint Paul appeared before Nero in person. Now, when the emperor presided, he had for assessors the prefect of the praetorium and one of his ministers. These personages must have been Afranius Burrhus and Seneca, who, by reason of their charge, could not absent themselves from that audience; they had to be in the place where Caesar administered justice in person. Alone, without patron, without advocate, Saint Paul defended his cause with his admirable presence of mind and eloquence. If we had still his discourse, we should recognise in it the sublimity of that which he pronounced before the Areopagus, and the science which he displayed before king Agrippa; we could above all admire in it the arguments suited to his cause and to the head of the empire. It was by this discourse that he made himself known to Caesar, to the prefect of the praetorium, to his assessors and to the other celebrated personages who surrounded Nero. A crowd of chosen hearers flocked from the city to the imperial audiences; Nero, with his thirst for applause, was not a man to dismiss them. Finding no motive to condemn the Apostle, he sent him away from the charges of the complaint, and thus ended his trial on appeal. The bonds of the Apostle were broken toward the end of the second year after his arrival at Rome.

It is not only in the praetorium and the city of Rome that the chains of the Apostle acquired a great celebrity. The report of his captivity spread promptly as far as the East. All the Churches he had founded followed him in spirit in all his peregrinations, informing themselves carefully of all the events of his life. People sought eagerly all that concerned him. But if all the Churches vied in zeal toward him, there was one nevertheless which surpassed the others by its more tender and lively affection: it is the Church of Philippi, in Macedonia. On every occasion, the saints of that city hastened to testify their attachment to him. Always watching over him, they hastened, as soon as they saw him in pain, to put their goods and their life at his disposal. As soon as they learned his captivity at Rome, without stopping at barren tears or vain emotions, they sent him their Apostle, or the bishop Epaphroditus, charging him to serve him in his chains and to offer him, on their part, a pecuniary help. The noble prisoner of Jesus Christ had no other resources to live on than the labour of his hands. Now, this continual toil, in the midst of his apostolic labours, would have finished breaking his strength if his true friends had neglected to come to his help. At the moment of his departure, the Apostle charged him with his touching Epistle to the Philippians. He wrote it from Rome, where he was still a prisoner. It is a touching monument of pastoral solicitude, and of the noble gratitude of the head of a family

toward his children. The Apostle testifies much tenderness toward his dear neophytes, now confirmed in the Christian way. His heart overflows with joy, not so much because of the abundance of their largesses as by the consideration of their excellent dispositions. For himself, he has long been accustomed to privations: he has lived at times in abundance, often in want. God will take account of their alms. He exhorts them to show themselves constantly in the midst of the world as true children of light: let them shine as stars among the pagans who surround them. Yielding to a constant preoccupation, the Apostle fortifies them against the doctors of Judaism, whom he calls enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ. “Avoid quarrels,” he says to them in ending, and he conjures them to preserve always among themselves a perfect union. “One of the most efficacious means of maintaining peace and concord is to practise humility, after the example of Jesus Christ, voluntarily annihilated, and obedient unto the death of the cross.”

During his sojourn at Rome, Saint Paul met a fugitive slave of the name of Onesimus, who belonged to Philemon, a rich Phrygian and his friend. After having robbed his master, this slave had avoided by flight the harsh chastisement he had deserved. From Colossae, in Phrygia, he had come to seek a refuge in the city of Rome. He hoped to escape all search in that immense city; he did not know that Rome was without bowels for that nameless thing which was called a slave. He ran the risk of dying there of hunger or of being cast as prey to the beasts of the amphitheatre. Happily for him, after having exhausted his last resources, he discovered in that city the Apostle whom he had already known at his master’s house. Onesimus, confiding in the charity of Saint Paul, confessed his fault to him. Touched by his repentance, the great Apostle converted him to the faith, and as he recognised in him precious qualities, he resolved to make of him an evangelical workman. But, always prudent, before employing him in the service of the Church, he wished to obtain the permission of his master; after having transformed him into a new man, he sent him back to him furnished with an Epistle, which shows in a new light his admirable charity. Moved by the reading of his beautiful and touching Epistle, Philemon received Onesimus with kindness and pardoned him his flight and his theft. As soon as he learned that he could be useful to Saint Paul in his bonds, he sent him back to him, restoring him to liberty. Epaphras, bishop of Colossae, a city of Phrygia neighbouring Laodicea, shared at Rome the chains of the Apostle. He was a zealous servant of God, whose preachings had contributed much to spread the Gospel in Phrygia. He manifested a lively and constant solicitude for the cities of Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis, probably the principal theatre of his apostolic labours. Saint Paul calls him his dear brother and his fellow-servant in the service of God. It was from him doubtless that he learned the principal details of the conversion of the faithful of that country. Also, in his Epistle to the Colossians, he tells them that he prays without ceasing for them, asking God to fill them with the knowledge of His will, that they may live in a manner worthy of Him. A grave circumstance decided Saint Paul to write to the Colossians. Seducers had cast trouble and division among them. Pretending that Jesus Christ is too much exalted above men, they imagined mediators, placed between Him and us, destined to bring together, so to speak, the infinite distance and the incommensurable space which separate humanity from divinity. These errors proceeded from Gnosticism, whose progress was continual; they were mixed with Jewish observances and superstitious practices of pagan origin. As usual, these false theories were accompanied by secret instructions and impure ceremonies. As always also, Saint Paul displays the most lively energy against these impious doctrines.

Saint Paul loved the Hebrews of Jerusalem and of Palestine converted to Christianity, with such an ardour that he could not concentrate this fire in himself; in spite of himself it often burst forth; his heart let escape those flames which burned it. In vain did his person seem to cause them a visible repugnance, his zeal carried him toward them. The obstacle, one may say, doubled his love. In the hope of overcoming at last their estrangement, he wrote to them from Rome or from Italy his celebrated and learned Epistle, which is toward them what the Epistle to the Romans is toward the Gentiles. One remains always seized with admiration before his explanation of the spirit of the ancient Law and of the change which it had undergone by the preaching of the Gospel. In spite of intrinsic marks of authenticity, this sublime Epistle had a strange destiny.

Refusing to see in the high science which the author displays the claw of the lion, several exegetes attributed it to Saint Luke, others to Saint Barnabas, some even to Saint Clement of Rome, and finally to Apollos. The latter, a great and powerful orator, left nothing in writing; it is perhaps in consequence of the impossibility in which one is of opposing to them his previous works that they regard him as the author. In reading it attentively and without prejudice, it is easy to recognise in it the profound doctrine of the doctor of the Gentiles. Convinced of this fact, the Church has inserted it definitively in the canon of Scripture. The idea of writing such an Epistle could arise only in the mind of the great Apostle. Paul consoles his compatriots for the persecution which they had to suffer from their brethren: which agrees exactly with the epoch of the martyrdom of Saint James the Less. At the same time, in effect, many disciples of the Gospel were ill-treated, some even to the shedding of their blood. The aim of this writing is easy to grasp. As in his letters to the Romans and the Galatians, the Apostle shows that true justice does not come from the law, but flows from Jesus Christ. Not only could justification not be produced by the Mosaic ceremonies, nor by circumcision, truths developed in the preceding Epistles; it could not come either from sacrifices. On this subject, Saint Paul exalts in magnificent terms the greatness of Jesus Christ, the virtue of the sacrifice of the new covenant and the excellence of His priesthood. The ancient sacrifices have been abolished, because they were figurative.

Scarcely set at liberty, Saint Paul, always animated by the same zeal, resumed his apostolic journeys. The ardour of his natural activity, far from being extinguished, had taken more intensity by contact with the sacred fire of the Holy Ghost, and did not permit him to abandon himself to rest. With his consummate prudence, he chose the places where his presence was most necessary. The island of Crete, to-day Candia, that island of a hundred cities, so flourishing and so renowned in Greek and Roman paganism, attracted his looks first. The Apostle announced the Gospel to the Jews first, according to his custom, then to the Gentiles; the various conversions wrought by his word formed the first elements of the Church of Crete; impure alluvions soon came to soil their purity. In being converted to the faith, the indocile spirit of these islanders did not completely strip itself of its former errors. Their first superstition revived at times, like those evil plants which are extirpated with difficulty. They took a fancy to be obstinate in the dreamings of the Jews and their legal ceremonies, of those above all which seemed to them to have a certain affinity with paganism; these rebellious spirits, incapable of letting themselves be governed by reason, could be brought back into the way of truth and justice only by fear; wherefore Saint Paul wrote later to Titus to reprove them with severity: *Increpa eos dure.* Skilful in the conduct of men, he knew that manners too gentle remain without effect on such characters. From the island of Crete, Saint Paul betook himself to Judaea, whose Churches he visited; he fulfilled then, according to Saint Chrysostom, the promise which he had made to the Hebrews, in his celebrated Epistle, to go and visit them as soon as his bonds should be broken.

After having raised the morale of the Judaeo-Christians of Jerusalem with that great and powerful apostolic manner of which the Epistle to the Hebrews gives us the idea, he visited with the same aim the faithful of Palestine and of Syria. According to the formal promise he had made to Philemon, he could not dispense himself from going to visit the Church of Colossae, a city of Asia Minor, situated at the confluence of the Lycus and the Maeander and neighbouring Laodicea, which Pliny puts among the most celebrated cities of Phrygia. Did the sad state to which an earthquake had reduced the city of Laodicea by overthrowing it from top to bottom prevent him from betaking his steps there? It would have been for the Apostle a motive the more to go and visit Christians so rudely afflicted; for, in spite of their riches, the inhabitants were in great trouble to rebuild it. Assuredly the Apostle could not aid with his money this reconstruction; but he could raise their cast-down morale. One sees nothing that could have put opposition to this journey. He must have ended the course of this apostolic visit toward the end of the year 62, an epoch at which he arrived at Ephesus with Timothy. It was for him an unhoped-for happiness, and one of which he seemed to have lost the hope, to see again that city where he had exercised his apostolate with so much success. When the Apostle had provided with his superhuman prudence, according to the exigencies of the time and of the place, for so

many perilous things, pressed by the imperious duty of following the divine order, he quitted Ephesus and took the road to Macedonia, where his dear friends of Philippi awaited him. That Church was the first in his affections; he found himself there in the midst of true friends, whose heart was always disposed to sacrifice itself in his favour. In spite of his singular affection for the Church of Philippi, so worthy in all respects of his friendship, the Apostle did not forget, during his sojourn in the midst of his friends, the other Churches of Macedonia. All those which were met on his road received his visit. In this short journey into Macedonia, he followed probably the way which he had traversed in the first, when he passed from Asia into this province of Europe, and afterwards from Macedonia into Asia. Obliged to embark in the port where were most ordinarily found ships bound for this province, he had to go from Ephesus to Troas, situated opposite Macedonia.

According to the common belief, Saint Paul wrote from Macedonia the first epistle to Timothy: all see in it a magnificent picture of the duties of the pastoral charge. This epistle sums up the divine and visibly inspired rules for the wise government of the house of God and of the Christian family. It has been constantly regarded in the Church as the first foundation of ecclesiastical discipline relative to the episcopate and to the various degrees of the clergy.

Lest his youth should be despised (Timothy was then scarcely thirty years old), the Apostle addresses to him various recommendations and traces out for him a line of conduct. He must keep on his guard against the profane novelties of language, and fight the good fight of faith. A false science, in effect, tended to corrupt the purity of doctrine. At that epoch, women employed themselves in disseminating error. They served as instruments to doctors of iniquity, by reason of that influence which they easily take over the minds of men. To cut short all abuse, and even to remove the danger from that side, Saint Paul forbids women to teach: they must keep silence in the Christian assemblies, and listen to the instructions with attention and respect.

In his relations as bishop with Christian women, Timothy will treat those who are aged with the respect one bears to one’s mother; he will consider the younger as his sisters, always with extreme reserve. A bishop must be irreproachable in his morals as in his faith, instructed, sober, hospitable, gentle, modest, an enemy of dissensions, generous. If, before receiving the sacred character of the episcopate, he was engaged in marriage, let him keep his children in obedience and regular conduct. How shall a man who does not know how to govern his house be able to govern the Church of God? A neophyte must not be raised to the episcopal dignity, lest he be puffed up with pride and surprised by the demon. Priests who fulfil their charge well must be honoured: no accusation brought against them is to be easily received, unless it be supported by two or three witnesses. The bishop, in all things, must show much calm and use great moderation; he shall pray and cause prayer to be made for all men, for princes and those who are constituted in dignity.

Did Saint Paul write likewise from Macedonia the Epistle to Titus? This one has the same aim, the same ideas and often the same form as the preceding. These two Epistles must therefore, as it appears, have been written at the same time and from the same place; in the one and the other, he traces a plan of conduct to be followed in the organisation of the Church; one finds in them recommendations against the Judaizers.

Saint Paul must have gone into Greece and, from that province, he came, as he announces to Titus, to pass the winter at Nicopolis, a city of Epirus on the gulf of Ambracia, to-day Prevesa. From Nicopolis, the Apostle crossed again into Asia Minor; he followed the ordinary road, coasted the island of Samothrace and landed at Troas, where he lodged with Carpus, a considerable Christian of that city, or perhaps one of its priests. He remained there a certain time. Saint Paul went to visit afterwards Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium and Lystra, where he suffered the great evils of which he speaks to Timothy. He came afterwards to Miletus, where he left Trophimus sick. Having ended his apostolic visit to the Churches of Asia, where he marked his passage by new labours, sufferings and persecutions, he returned to Corinth, where he left Erastus, one of his disciples and of his holy co-operators; he met Saint Peter there, and both went together to Rome, as Dionysius of Corinth describes in his letter to the Romans. According to a tradition founded on the gravest

testimonies, whose bundle does not seem able to be broken, Saint Paul went from Rome into Spain traversing a part of the Gauls. The Apostle, whose activity could be arrested only by death, would not quit the earth without having carried the light of the Gospel to the last limits of the West. The Fathers of the Greek and Latin Church admit this journey almost unanimously. Peter de Marca traces thus the itinerary of Saint Paul into Spain across the Gauls: "Paul," says this learned archbishop, "in going into Spain, must have followed that public road, so celebrated among the ancients, which led from Italy across the Gauls as far as Baetica itself; the itinerary of Antoninus describes this road by Nice, Arles, Narbonne, the Pyrenean mountains, La Jonquera, Barcelona" and the other places. Strabo also explains this road with care: "I have set right the interpreters who have not always well understood it." Stephen VI, in a letter (cited by Labbe) against Sylva and Hermamire, false bishops of Urgel and of Gerona, says that Saint Paul set out from Narbonne in company with Sergius Paulus, and that both reached the confines of Spain preaching the Gospel. In the commentary on Saint Paul attributed to Saint Anselm, or rather to Hervé of Bourg-Dieu, the same fact is read, the departure from Narbonne with his disciple surnamed Paulus. Emmanuel-Cajetan Souza admits also that he made this journey by land across the Gauls. The Church of Toledo places at the head of its bishops Marcellus, son of Marcellus, prefect of Rome, and qualifies him as a disciple of Saint Paul; he was converted by this great Apostle, when he was in Spain. This Marcellus, first bishop of Toledo, had been sent to that city by the emperor, to keep it in obedience to the Romans. The Church of Tortosa regards Saint Ruf or Rufus as its first bishop. Son of that Simon the Cyrenian, who was compelled by the soldiers to carry the cross of Jesus Christ to Calvary, he was celebrated in the Church of Antioch, where he laid hands on Saint Paul and on Saint Barnabas. He accompanied Saint Paul into Spain, and the great Apostle ordained him bishop of this Church. Several believe likewise that Priscilla and Aquila accompanied the great Apostle into Spain and preached the Gospel with him, in this vast province; they even suffered martyrdom there. Warned by a divine revelation that the time to go out of this world was approaching, Saint Paul ended his apostolic itineraries. He took again the road to Rome in company with Luke, Titus, Crescens, Demas and other holy co-operators. Saint Dionysius of Corinth, as Eusebius reports, in his History of the Church, seems to affirm that Saint Paul re-entered Rome in company with Saint Peter. The head of the Church and the great Apostle would have met at the term of their apostolic mission and would have made together their triumphal entry into that city, where their bodies were to repose and be venerated by the whole universe. Baronius adopts this sentiment, after Metaphrastes and other authors. Saint Asterius thinks that Saint Paul found Saint Peter again at Rome, and applied himself, in concert with him, to instruct the Jews in the synagogues, and to convert the pagans in the squares and in the public assemblies. Above all they consoled the Christians who had escaped until then the so horrible persecution of Nero. Equalling their zeal to the excess of the evil, they went to visit the witnesses of the faith in their dungeons and to prepare them for an approaching immolation. Before setting, this sun wished to illuminate a great number of souls still plunged in darkness; he preached to them, with his last force, the Gospel of the grace of God, faith, sanctification, charity, the horror of sin and of idolatry, that impure source of all the crimes which inundate the earth; he exhorted them above all to be permanent in the grace of God: *Ut permanerent in gratia Dei.* The monstrous emperor, already covered with the blood of Christians, could not see without anger either the successes of this preaching, or the holy life of the neophytes, a living satire of his vices, an eternal reproach of his horrible crimes; he ordered his satellites to cast into prison the great Apostle, as well as Saint Peter, the head of the Church, then likewise at Rome.

Following this arrest, Saint Paul appeared before Nero. His friends felt such a fright that they abandoned him in that extremity, and perhaps denied him! Already lost in their eyes, they feared, in lending him their support, to be enveloped in his ruin; all abandoned him. But if all human help failed the Apostle, God gave him a superhuman courage, and rendered him invincible. He came out safe and sound from the lion's den. Was he set at liberty? Was he able to continue at Rome his apostolic preaching? Saint Chrysostom seems to have believed it. He certainly escaped death, but he probably remained in bonds. In the midst of his tribulations and the abandonment of so many cowardly friends, even of the Asiatics who were at Rome, God

reserved for him a noble heart, a friend devoted even to the sacrifice of his life, Onesiphorus! In the desire to succour Saint Paul, he ran from Asia to Rome; he came to crown nobly the services he had rendered to the Church. The almost insurmountable difficulties of finding Saint Paul stopped neither his zeal nor his devotedness. He did not recoil at the aspect of that frightful place; with an admirable greatness of soul he assisted him with all his power, without fearing to expose his life. Moved by this heroic attachment, Saint Paul wishes that Timothy should go and salute on his part the house of Onesiphorus. It was, in effect, from the Mamertine prison, and almost on the eve of martyrdom, that Saint Paul wrote his second Epistle to Timothy, as the testament of his paternal affection. "God," he says to him, "has not given us the spirit of fear, but of courage. Be not ashamed to bear witness to our God… I suffer, but I am not confounded; for I know whom I have believed… For my part, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

The Mamertine prison, in spite of its thick walls, put no serious obstacle to his apostolic preaching. Who can chain the breath of the Spirit, hold back the voice of the divine Word, which resounds like thunder? He laboured to consummate the conversion of the concubine of Nero and of his cup-bearer. Messenger of salvation, Onesiphorus could be employed to carry the words of the Apostle; this service was more agreeable to Saint Paul than that which he rendered to his own person; what mattered to the doctor of the nations the care of his body! That Jesus Christ should be glorified, the rest preoccupied him little. The Apostle, from the centre of this prison, cast his looks on the Churches of the world, and directed them with great solicitude. Pressed by the embraces of the charity of Jesus Christ, he inspected all the faithful. Toward the end of his course, Saint Paul wrote more frequently; he multiplied his Epistles, his advices, his expositions of doctrine; true testament of his inexhaustible charity, last expression of his firm and constant faith, it was as the last spark of the ardent desire he had to see his work of the establishment of the faith among the Gentiles consummated. The Epistle to the Ephesians was written with this aim; neither the Epistle itself, nor history, makes any mention, it is true, of the motive which led the Apostle to write it; schisms, dissensions may have been the cause of it as of the first to the Corinthians, or a defection from the truth of the Gospel as in the Epistle to the Galatians; it was above all the thought that seducing men were to invade this Church and trouble it. This is why he fortifies the Ephesians carefully against all human respect relative to his person; he warns them not to blush for the bonds which hold him captive at Rome, for he suffered these bonds for the cause of the Gospel; their heart was therefore not to grow weak, nor their mind to turn from the right way of truth and piety, whether through shame or through fear. This sublime Epistle was written in the last bonds of the Apostle, and not in the first. Tychicus, faithful messenger of Saint Paul, was charged to carry it to the Ephesians, and to make known to them at the same time the state of affairs and the painful situation in which he found himself. Saint Paul makes mention of this mission of Tychicus to the Ephesians in the second to Timothy. This encyclical Epistle was destined for all the Churches of Asia, for it was addressed to the faithful of Ephesus and of the cities of the metropolis of Ionia; hence it comes that it was sometimes cited as being addressed specially to the Christians of Laodicea. Certain authors even, who attributed to Saint Paul a first letter to the Ephesians, regarded this one as posterior: it was an error; the Epistle to the Ephesians is unique.

The martyrdom of Saint Peter and of Saint Paul put the crown to the persecution of Nero. The captives came out together from the Mamertine prison; they made their way toward the altar of their immolation; they left the city by the gate of Ostia, to-day of Saint Paul. In a place consecrated by tradition, they separated, embracing and addressing words of congratulation to each other. Rome, the city of imperishable memories, could not forget that last embrace of the two greatest victims that Nero ever sacrificed! So many pilgrims have come since that day to visit this memorable spot that the trace of their steps has remained ineffaceable. An inscription, framed between two little columns adorned with a bas-relief, indicates to-day this place to the travellers who traverse the road to Ostia. Saint Paul followed this road to a place named Aquae Salviae. There he was struck with the sword; as a Roman citizen he was to perish thus and not by the cross, a

punishment reserved by Rome for persons of a condition vile in her eyes. The martyrdom of Saint Paul took place on the third of the calends of July, the 29th of June of the year 66. Plautilla, a patrician, a woman of very high nobility, who had been baptised by Saint Peter in the waters of the Tiber, met face to face Saint Paul at the moment when the great Apostle was marching to martyrdom, followed by an innumerable crowd of people; he, seeing her weep, asked her for her veil to bind his eyes, according to custom, at the moment of having his head cut off. Plautilla hastened to give it to him liberally. Later the Apostle appeared to her and returned it to her. According to a Greek inscription, cited by Gruter and which was found at the third milestone of the Appian Way on two columns, the ground on which Saint Paul suffered martyrdom was called the field of Herod; it was doubtless a property of Agrippa. When the sword of the executioner had separated the head of the Apostle from his body, instead of blood, the veins let milk spring forth. Saint Ambrose and Saint John Chrysostom speak of this traditional fact with their ordinary eloquence. Scarcely cut off, the head of Saint Paul bounded three times, and each time it caused a spring of living water to gush from the ground. These three springs have given their name to the theatre where the doctor of the Gentiles received the most beautiful of crowns; it is called the Three Fountains.

Something would be lacking to the life of this Apostle, if we did not give what antiquity has left us to reproduce his physical portrait. The first stroke of the brush is furnished to us by an enemy hand, which thought only of casting ridicule on the physiognomy of the great Paul. Here is what Lucian says: “I met a Galilean bald, with an aquiline nose, who had mounted up to the third heaven, where he had learned astonishing things. Jesus Christ has renewed us by water; He has made us walk in the footsteps of the blessed, and has redeemed us from the abode of the impious. If you wish to listen to me, I will make you truly a man.” The malevolence of Lucian renders us here a veritable service: not only does he give us an idea of the exterior of Saint Paul, but he teaches us something of his manner of preaching in the groups of citizens where he presented himself. Saint Chrysostom tells us a word of his stature: “He who had only three cubits, touches nevertheless heaven.” “Paul,” says Nicephorus, “had a small body, sensibly inclined, the face pale, announcing an age which went beyond his years; his head was small; he had much grace in his eyes, the eyebrows strong and hanging, the nose large and agreeably aquiline, the beard long and rather full, and as on the head, the white hairs shone there in great proportion.”

The ancient monuments very frequently place behind the image of Saint Paul a phoenix on a palm tree, a double emblem of resurrection which has in Greek the same name. Frequent examples of it may be seen in mosaics, sarcophagi, etc., etc., and even on bottoms of cups. This particularity, which resembles almost a hieratic formula, had doubtless for its aim to honour the principal preacher of the future resurrection. Saint Paul carries sometimes as attribute the book of his Epistles. Thus he is seen in a mosaic of the sixth century, of Saint Mary in Cosmedin, of Ravenna, appearing to offer two rolled volumes to the throne of the Lamb, while Saint Peter, on the other side, has his keys in his hands. The attribute of the sword, which was the instrument of his death, was given to the apostle of the Gentiles only in times posterior to the first centuries of the Church.

Worship and Relics. — Writings of Saint Paul

The body of the great Apostle was taken away from the place where he received the crown of martyrdom by Lucina, a most illustrious woman of senatorial rank; she chose in her domain an honourable tomb on the road to Ostia, where she laid it. Later the sacred bodies of the two Apostles were united and carried into the catacombs. The places where the bodies of Saint Peter and Saint Paul were buried, far from remaining obscure or unknown, became on the contrary very celebrated; they excited the veneration of the whole universe. In the midst of the horrible persecutions which so rudely tried the nascent Church and made for it a bloody Calvary of three centuries, neither the persecutors, so relentless in putting to death the disciples of Jesus Christ, nor the worshippers of idols, had the thought of making them undergo outrages. God preserved

these noble and magnificent trophies of their victory from every attack of profanation. No sacrilegious hand dared to soil them by its contact, and while the ashes of the martyrs who perished in fire, or even the body of those who died by the sword, were cast into the Tiber or into the sea, no one sought to cast to the wind that tent of clay which the soul of the holy Apostles had erected as a sanctuary where the Holy Ghost dwelt, and had offered to God as a living, holy and acceptable victim. The whole Church ceases not to venerate these sacred remains; admirable relics, they serve as a shield against her enemies. Destined to be one day absorbed by life, they will shine on the day of the resurrection of the saints, like brilliant stars. In times of persecution, when nature, frightened by the refined cruelty and the horrible variety of the torments, true invention of hell, might yield and succumb to the fright they caused it, the Christians of Rome went to fortify themselves against this terror at the tombs of the great Apostles. There their faith was retempered and took strength to brave the tyrants. Since that glorious epoch, there have always been seen, in all centuries, thousands of Christians flocking to Rome from the most distant regions, from the East and the West, the North and the South, to the tomb where these holy relics repose. There they prostrate themselves and venerate these brethren according to the faith, of whom one bears the keys of heaven, and the other those of science. There issues always from these glorious remains a powerful virtue which revives the most wavering faith and strengthens it against the world, its great destroyer.

The chains of Saint Paul are preserved at Rome like those of Saint Peter. Saint John Chrysostom says that if he had had more bodily strength, and the service and affairs of the Church had not absorbed him, he would willingly have undertaken a journey as long as that from Antioch to Rome, with the sole design of seeing there the prison where Saint Paul had been shut up and the chains with which he had been loaded for Jesus Christ, of kissing those chains which make the demons tremble and are revered by the angels, and of putting them on his eyes after having embraced them. In his book against the Schism of the Donatists, Optatus of Milevis speaks of the monuments of the two Apostles at Rome. Prudentius describes their position on the two banks of the Tiber; he shows the one, situated near the garden of Nero, on the Aurelian Way, in the Vatican basilica, and the other in the basilica of Saint Paul outside the walls.

Simeon Metaphrastes, who gathered the legends of the saints, says that there were formerly in the portico of the ancient church of the Vatican paintings, unfortunately destroyed long since, which represented the deposition of the two Apostles in the catacombs and the exaltation of the body of Saint Peter by Pope Saint Sylvester, when it was placed in the Vatican basilica. By the counsel of Pope Saint Sylvester, the emperor Constantine had a magnificent basilica built in honour of Saint Paul over his tomb, between the road to Ostia and the Tiber; he endowed it with opulent revenues. The emperor Valentinian, finding that it was not of a sufficiently ample size, because of the lack of space, bounded as it was by the road to Ostia, enlarged it by embracing in the circuit of its walls this same road. Theodosius and Arcadius finished this more august construction. This venerable basilica, one of the glories of Rome, known under the name of Saint Paul outside the walls, had passed the first twenty years of the nineteenth century without untoward accidents. By an unheard-of good fortune, it had remained alone a stranger to the various systems of restoration which the course of centuries had made all the other churches of Rome undergo. Its primitive disposition, its paintings, the various particularities of its ancient construction had remained intact. It is not that its architectural lines were all irreproachable, but the effect of it was grandiose. Prudentius makes the description of it. “All here,” he says, “is royal; an excellent prince consecrated this monument, and made its enclosure resplendent with a thousand riches; the beams are gilded that the light may spread within. Columns of Parian marble support panelled ceilings of tawny colour, and the arches are adorned with admirable glasses which recall the variety and brilliance of the flowers of spring.” This edifice, which had braved the centuries and the Barbarians, was destroyed, in 1823, by a horrible fire. A fire whose violence was fed by the cedar wood of which its timberwork was made ruined it almost entirely. This loss was great; art, history and religion saw thus disappear one of their most beautiful and venerable monuments. The pontifical government did not confine itself to deploring this unforeseen catastrophe; Leo XII began to rebuild this august temple, one of the most

beautiful glories of the Roman Church. Thanks to the sustained efforts of his successors and to their enlightened generosity, the Eternal City possesses anew, restored with the most scrupulous respect, this basilica which the first Christian emperors had nobly erected.

This vast edifice, preceded by a portico, extended in five naves as far as the apse; they were divided by a forest of columns of the most precious marble, and to-day not to be found. An immense arch, known under the name of the arch of Placidia, separated the apse from the great nave; a vast mosaic representing the image of the Saviour surrounded by the twenty-four elders of the Apocalypse, to whom had been added the images of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, decorated it. It is to the zeal of Saint Leo, as well as to the munificence of Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius and mother of Valentinian III, that the church of Saint Paul was indebted for this monument. At the Confession, under the altar of the new basilica, there is preserved the half of the bodies of the two Apostles, under a Gothic baldachin, supported by four magnificent columns; one reads on its four faces: *Tu es vas electionis — Sancte Paule apostole — Praedicator veritatis — In universo mundo.* In a chapel of the convent of the Benedictines adjoining the basilica, there are venerated the glorious chains which bound the limbs of the great Apostle. In the new church, four columns of alabaster of unheard-of magnificence are admired.

In the year 380, Saint Damasus, pope, had erected the first and only church consecrated to Saint Paul in the interior of the city of Rome; he chose the site where was situated the house in which the Apostle passed two years a prisoner guarded by a praetorian. A constant tradition had preserved the memory of this dwelling, so much was this place in great veneration among the faithful. He had this sacred edifice built there, known in our days under the name of *Scuola di S. Paolo*, school of Saint Paul. This name goes back to the epoch of the chains of the Apostle, because it was there that he taught from morning till evening the Christian faith to all sorts of personages, Jews and Gentiles. Consecrated by so long a memory, this name still serves to designate the church which has replaced it. All the learned who have written on Rome agree in it. Pope Saint Sylvester, who had an equal veneration for this sacred place, and regarded it as one of the holiest monuments of the Christian religion in Rome, gave to this church an arm of Saint Paul. Urban II, in the bull *Apostolicae sublimitas dignitatis*, honoured it with special privileges. The concourse of foreign faithful there has always been great. This church and the basilica of Saint Paul outside the walls are the two monuments which attest the presence of Saint Paul in Rome and the memory of his martyrdom.

There remain to us of Saint Paul fourteen epistles, of which nine are addressed to seven Churches, one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians; four others are written to his disciples, two to Timothy, and one to Titus, one to Philemon; the fourteenth is to the Hebrews. These Epistles have always been more celebrated in the Church than those of the other Apostles, and they have been not only the subject of the consolation and edification of Christians, but also of the admiration of the Jews and the pagans. Even those who were his greatest enemies and the most jealous of his glory, and who despised his discourses when he was present, thought themselves obliged to avow that his letters were full of force and authority. The reasonings in them are just, the thoughts noble, the style lively and animated. There are obscure places and a little embarrassed, whether because of the sublimity of the matter he treats in them, or because of the frequent parentheses with which they are interrupted, and a rather great number of transpositions and hyperboles. The critics remark also that the Greek is not pure, and that often the turn of the phrase is Hebraic. Saint Paul ordinarily puts his name and his qualities at the head of his Epistles. Sometimes he adds to it that of some of his disciples, whether because they had served him as secretaries, or to do them honour, or to give more credit to his letters, or finally because they were well known to the Churches to which he wrote. We have an example of it in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, which he begins thus: “Paul, Apostle of Jesus Christ by the vocation and will of God, and Sosthenes, his brother”; and in the Epistle to the Thessalonians: “Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church of Thessalonica.” But it has never been doubted in the Church that Saint Paul was the

sole author. Tertius, who says he wrote the letter to the Romans, was only the secretary or copyist of it; and there is appearance that the Apostle dictated also to some one of his disciples the first to the Corinthians, that to the Colossians and the second to the Thessalonians. However, for fear that people might be mistaken and might pass off false letters under his name, he was accustomed to put his signature in all his Letters and to subscribe them in a manner peculiar to himself. This is what he teaches us himself in his second to the Thessalonians, where he says: “The salutation of me Paul with my own hand; this is the sign in every epistle, so I write; the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” Those who arranged the Epistles of Saint Paul in our Bibles had less regard to the time at which they were written than to the dignity of the Churches, or to the merit of the faithful who composed them, or to the greatness of the mysteries which are explained in them, or to the excellence of the matters which are treated in them. The first of all, according to the order of time, is that which Saint Paul wrote to the Thessalonians; the second, addressed to the same peoples, was written a short time after; then, that to the Galatians; after which he wrote the two to the Corinthians, then the first to Timothy, to Titus, to the Romans, to the Philippians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians, to the Colossians and to the Hebrews; the last of all is the second to Timothy. The Apostle wrote it, being at the end of his life and near his martyrdom, as he assures us himself.

There have been sometimes attributed to Saint Paul, but wrongly:

1° A discourse in which he counsels to read the books of the pagans, among others those of the Sibyl and of Hystaspes.

2° A third letter to the Thessalonians.

3° Several letters to Seneca.

4° The Gospel of Saint Luke.

5° Several apocalypses or ascensions.

6° A book entitled: *Journeys of Saint Paul and of Saint Thecla*,

7° Another book entitled: *The Acts of Saint Paul*.

8° An epistle to the Laodiceans.

We have analysed, to compose the substance of this biography, the two most perfect works, in our opinion, which have been published up to now on Saint Paul: that of M. Vidal, curé of Notre-Dame de Bercy, entitled: *Saint Paul, his Life and his Works*, Paris, 1863; and that of the abbé Bourrasse, canon of Tours, entitled: *The Apostles*. Other works of a different order, but not less lofty, such as *The Bible without the Bible* by M. the abbé Gainet; the *History of the Sacred and Ecclesiastical Authors*, by Dom Ceillier, etc., have served us to fill up some gaps.

Saint Marcellus and Saint Anastasius, Martyrs, Patrons of Argenton, in the Diocese of Bourges (3rd Century)

Marcellus and Anastasius were Romans. At the time of the great persecution which reddened all the squares of the city with the blood of Christians, they fled into the Gauls to rejoin their brethren whom the bishop Saint Stephen had sent into those countries to announce the Gospel. They soon arrived at ancient Argentomagus, (Argenton). When they had passed the enclosing wall, whether through weariness or prudence, they did not seek to penetrate farther into the town, and came to knock at one of the first houses of the suburb. They found there a poor widow, weeping over the cradle of a sick child, and resisting the consolations of her neighbours assembled. They gently put aside the crowd, and asked permission to examine the little dying one. The mother raised her eyes mechanically to them, and with a desolate gesture made them understand that all help was useless. Yet, the younger of the travellers insisting and endeavouring to give her

some hope: “Alas!” said the unhappy woman, “for the joy he has in this world, what good is it to try to keep him in it? He is blind, deaf, dumb and lame.” — “Woman,” resumed the traveller, “God is great and merciful.” — “Of what God do you speak?” — “Of the God of the Christians whose servant I am.” Illumined by maternal love, the widow rose: “Christian,” she said, “you have a heavenly face, and you would not wish to mock my grief. Restore health to my son, who, in spite of his misfortune, is my only happiness, and I will believe in your God.” The stranger sat down on a stool, took the frail creature in his arms, rubbed his eyes lightly and murmured some words in his ear. The child, till then inert, started as if he had heard, and cast about him a clear look. The crowd and the widow uttered a great cry. The country was then under the domination of the Romans; warned by one of his confidants, named Tranquillinus, the praetor Heraclius ordered the two men to be brought at once before him. Soon the soldiers invade the dwelling of the widow, seize the strangers and drag them to the praetorium. Heraclius, addressing first the author of the miracle, said to him imperiously: “Who are you, whence do you come, whither are you going?” — “My name is Marcellus,” answers the latter gently: “I am a Christian. I come from Rome and I am going to Toulouse with Anastasius, to rejoin my brethren Denis and Saturninus.” — “What are the names of your father and your mother?” — “My father is Egialhes, my mother, Marcellina.” — “You seek to deceive me; you pretend to give speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf and you despise the worship of Apollo. What is your god?” — “I adore Jesus Christ our Saviour.” — “To-morrow, betake yourself to the temple: sacrifice to Apollo, to Hercules, to Diana, mother of the gods.” — “Those whom you call gods are not such; they are the perdition of the souls that believe in them.”

The praetor, furious, commands the lictors to stretch Marcellus on the rack and to strike him with redoubled blows. The lictors obey, the rack creaks, the cords whistle; but, O prodigy! the strength of the executioners is exhausted, the thongs fall in shreds without breaking the body of the young Martyr. Heraclius orders him to be unbound, and resumes with feigned benevolence: “The emperor enjoins on all his officers to deliver Christians to the cruellest tortures; but your youth inspires me with pity. Obey me, I will spare you such torments.” — “I fear not your torments,” answers Marcellus with the same calm; “have I not the faith which I received at baptism?” At these words, Heraclius orders him to be crushed under an enormous stone; but this rebounds on his breast and falls inert at his feet without doing him the least harm. The praetor roars and wishes Marcellus to be fixed on a gridiron above a great fire. The flame respects him. The praetor, arrived at the last limits of anger, orders him to be seized again and struck violently, then he says to his officers: “Bring a vast cauldron; mix in it sulphur, pitch, tow and bitumen, and cast the sacrilegious man into it.” The flame rises more than fifteen cubits, Marcellus is plunged into the boiling cauldron; but he comes out safe and sound from this last trial.

Already the spectators cried: “The protection of heaven is on this man, he has conquered all torments! the instruments of torture have broken upon him.” Pale and haggard, Heraclius himself was making ready to leave his seat, when Marcellus making him a sign to sit down again: “Be reassured,” he said; “now that the power of God has shown itself, my task is finished and my hour is come.” Then he held out his hands to the lictors who covered him with chains and cast him into the prisons of the governor. The next day, led to the summit of a neighbouring mountain, he knelt without resistance, and his head fell under the first stroke of the executioner’s sword; the faithful Anastasius, likewise prostrate, cried with full voice toward heaven: “Lord, Lord, You who have drawn us from the earth where we were born and delivered us from the hands of the demon, You whose way we have followed and whose holy name we have glorified, separate me not from Your servant Marcellus, that I may merit to arrive with him at the knowledge of truth.” For two hours, his eyes fixed on the body of his friend, deaf to threats and to seductions, Anastasius continued his ardent prayer. And as Heraclius summoned him to sacrifice to the gods of the empire, in order to avoid the fate of the magician Marcellus: “Praetor,” he replied, “I abhor your gods, and I wish to preserve the faith which I received at baptism.” Then, mad with spite and rage, Heraclius had him fastened on the rack, where he did not delay to give up the last breath, about the ninth hour of the day, the third of the calends of July.

The memory of Saint Marcellus, of Saint Anastasius and of the praetor Heraclius lives not only in legends and traditions, but also in the monuments and ruins of the country. A village, situated on an eminence, not far from the site of old Argantomagus, bears the name of Saint-Marcel; its fine church, an ancient and important priory dependent on the abbey of Saint-Gildas, near Châteauroux, contains the relics of the two Martyrs, which attract every year, on the Tuesday of Pentecost, a great concourse of people. Those of Saint Marcellus repose in a little Romano-Byzantine monument, decorated with rich enamels.

Acta Sanctorum, volume of June; translation by M. Jast Veillât, in his work entitled: *Pieustiê légendes du Berry*.

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[1] Saint Gregory, pope (book iv of his Dialogues), speaks of Saint Syrus, and gives him the title of martyr. He had a church at Genoa, of which the same author makes also mention. The clerics regular, says Cardinal Baronius, have just rebuilt this church, ruined by the ages; they have enlarged it and added to it a monastery of their Order. It is during this reconstruction that three coffins were found, enclosing the bodies of the three holy bishops of Genoa. Two of these coffins were furnished with the following inscriptions:

✠ M S. Hic requiescit corpus sancti Syri Episcopi Januensis. Obiit III cal. julii filius Æmiliani. ✠ H. S. Hic requiescit sanctus Felix Episcopus Januensis, qui vixit annos LXX, rexit Episcopus XX, recessit VII Id. julii.

The third coffin bore no inscription; but it is believed that it contained the body of Saint Romulus, bishop of the same city. — Baronius.

[2] It is again by Saint Gregory the Great that we know something of Saint Cassius, bishop of Narni (S. Greg. Homily xxxvii on the Gospel, ii. Dialogue, bk. iii, ch. 6; bk. iv, ch. 6S). He flourished in the time of the emperor Justinian, and occupied the see twenty-one years, from 537 to 558. Here, in effect, is the inscription which is read in the cathedral church of Narni, on the crypt of Saint Juvenal, where it is believed that there reposes also the body of Saint Cassius:

Cassius immerito Præsul de munere Christi, Hic sua restituens terræ mihi credita membra. Quem fato anticipans consors dulcissima vitæ, Ante meum in pacem requiescit Fausta sepulcrum. Tu, rogo, quisquis ades, prece nos memorare benigna, Cuncta recepturum te noscens congrua factis.

Sedit annos XXI, mortuus est anno DLVIII. Requiescit in pace pridie kal. Julii.

The inscription is on a marble of oblong shape. It bears a cross engraved in the middle, and two lambs sculptured on each side. Saint Cassius composed himself the six verses which have just been read; he had them engraved on the tomb which he had had built for himself during his life. The rest of the inscription, from *Sedit*, was added after his death. His relics are kept in the cathedral of Narni. — Baronius.

[3] We have given her life on 12 May, vol. v, page 484.

[4] Mgr Crosnier, *Nivernais Hagiology.*

[5] See the volume devoted to the Venerables.

[6] The Apostles, having their chief at their head, occupied the upper rooms of this house situated on Mount Sion, near the palace of David and not far from the Temple. This house has been called since, or the Church of the Apostles.

[7] Origen, in Joan., p. 381.

[8] S. Chrys. in Act., hom. 81.

[9] Ancient Script. apud Boll. 29 junii; apud Metaphr. et Surium, 29 junii; apud Baron., Annal., an. 44, n. 51.

[10] The ancient ecclesiastical author cited by Bollandus says that Saint Peter instituted bishop his disciple Saint Linus, in order to govern the Church of Rome during his absence. Saint Linus was ordained, adds Bollandus, under the consulate of Saturninus and of Scipio, that is to say in the year 56, and during nine years of the life of Saint Peter, he was his vicar or his chorepiscopus.

[11] Apud Métaph., 29 junii; apud Baron., an. 58, n. 61; apud Sanctorium, in Vita B. Petri, n. 56, et Antiq. Scriptor., ap. Bolland., p. 416; Patricius Junius, Biblioth. Jacobi I, Angliae regis; Vendelinus, apud Labbe, Conc. t. i, p. 190.

[12] Tertull., praescript. I, c. 36.

[13] S. Cyprian., epist. xlv.

[14] S. Greg., liv. ii, epist. lxxv.

[15] Innocent I, epist. i.

[16] Metaphrast., 29 junii.

[17] Baron., an., n. 51, 52; Sanctorius, archiepisc. Urbin., in Vita B. Petri.

[18] Et Antiq. Script., ap. Bolland., 29 junii, p. 416.

[19] Antiq. Scriptor., ap. Bolland., 29 junii, p. 416, t. v; et Metaphrast., die 29 junii; apud Baron., an. 51, n. 3.

[20] Boll., t. v, 29 junii, p. 4.

[21] Bolland.; S. Athanas., De fuga, reports as an established fact that God then made known to Saint Peter and to Saint Paul that they were soon to suffer martyrdom at Rome. (In Tillemont, Mém., t. i, p. 184.)

[22] Now Tarsus. The modern city, in the pashalik of Adana, occupies scarcely the quarter of the ancient one, and has hardly more than 8,000 fixed inhabitants. During the winter, the population rises to 30,000 souls.

[23] Saint Jerome, alluding to the tradition which places in this country the field where Abel was killed by his brother Cain, says that Saul came to this celebrated place to imitate, by persecuting the Christians, the works of Cain toward the imitators of Abel.

[24] About a kilometre from the southern gate of Damascus, at the place where the Christian cemetery now is, the persecutor was cast down on the road. Later, a little church was erected at the very place where the prodigy was wrought. There remain to-day only shapeless ruins, and columns lying on the ground. Every year, on the 25th of January, feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, the Christians of Damascus come there in procession, in memory of that memorable event.

[25] The East, as every one knows, is the land of traditions and old memories. The Straight street still exists at Damascus, in the Jewish quarter, and it still bears the same name. There are counted to-day in the city four thousand Jews; the number of Christians, heirs of the primitive Church founded by Ananias, rises to twelve thousand at least. As in the first days, they continue to be exposed to a thousand dangers, as the recent massacres of Syria show. If the hatred and jealousy of the Jews are always lively, Muslim fanaticism is far more terrible still. The future, however, seems likely to be more favourable. In this region where Saint Paul received the grace of the apostolate, evangelical zeal will never be extinguished. The house of Ananias has given place to a small sanctuary; that of Jude is replaced by a mosque.

[26] The traveller is still shown the place where the escape of the Apostle took place. Along the walls, a hundred times repaired, but of which some parts, composed of enormous blocks, seem to have to be attributed to a Phoenician construction, poor fellahs have leaned their little houses, just as in Egypt they have raised their wretched hovels on the temples and palaces of the Pharaohs. As in the time of Saint Paul, it would be easy to let some one down into the ditches, over the enclosing walls, without awakening the least suspicion, by using the same stratagem.

[27] One sees in this passage of the Acts the origin of the fasts and prayers which the Church employs in ordinations: when the soul raises itself to God by humbling itself in prayer, and offers as a living victim a body mortified by fasting, the Holy Ghost communicates Himself to the faithful with a greater abundance of light and makes known the will of God. One assists moreover here at the birth of the custom of the Catholic Church, of ordaining her ministers during the oblation of the holy mysteries; every priest being destined to offer the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, ought to receive ordination at the moment of His immolation. Was this laying on of hands on Saul and Barnabas an episcopal ordination? it is the general opinion. The miraculous vocation to the apostolate not having exempted Saul from the obligation of receiving baptism at the hands of Ananias, one does not see why this same vocation would have exempted him from receiving the sacrament of Orders. In vocations even extraordinary, God, who always acts with measure, does not suppress the rules which He has established.

[28] This island of the Mediterranean, situated between Asia Minor and Syria, is 225 kilometres by 80, and counts about 100,000 inhabitants.

[29] Now Konieh, city of Asiatic Turkey (Anatolia), chief town of the eyalet of Konieh, 600 kilometres east of Smyrna; 26,900 inhabitants. Greek bishopric. — Its ancient name Iconium has its etymology in the Greek word *eikon*, image, which recalls the stone fallen from heaven that pagan superstition had consecrated to the great Diana, the divinity more particularly honoured in this country.

[30] Now Latik (Lycaonia).

[31] This town, now ruined and reduced to the state of a hovel, known under the name of Bervase, was then, by its situation on the confines of Cappadocia and Pisidia, one of the most agreeable of Asia Minor. Calas, faithful disciple of Saint Paul, was a native of Derbe.

[32] Attalia, situated on the sea-shore, near the promontory of Coryce, owes its name, according to Pliny (book iii, c. 44), to king Attalus, its founder. This name is scarcely altered in our days, for it has been changed into that of Sattulie. It is also called Sathalieh or Adalia (Anatolia), 18,000 inhabitants.

[33] The Judaeo-Christian controversy of which we wish to speak here has been admirably studied and discussed by M. the abbé Thomas, vicar general of Verdun, in his learned work entitled: *Critical Studies on the Origins of Christianity*. Bar-le-Duc, L. Guérin, 1 volume.

[34] Saint Isidore of Damietta.

[35] It is commonly thought that Saint Luke published his Gospel at the time when Saint Paul was writing his two Epistles to the Thessalonians. By putting into the hands of the faithful an authentic history of the Life of the Saviour, and an exposition of His teachings, his aim was to bring into the discredit which they deserved the forged narratives hawked about by false apostles.

[36] This maritime city, situated to the north of Mount Carmel, at the mouth into the sea of the little river Belus, owed its name to Ptolemy Soter. Before receiving this royal name, it was called Accho; it is known to-day under that of Saint-Jean-d'Acre.

[37] The deacon Philip is called evangelist because he had been the first to carry the faith to the Samaritans and had prepared the conversion of the Ethiopian, by baptising the eunuch of queen Candace.

[38] *Adrumettinam*, says the Vulgate:, says the Greek text. One does not know whether we are to understand here the Libyan city of Adrumetum, capital of Byzacena, or that of Adramyttium, in Mysia, at the mouth of the Caicus. However that may be, these two maritime cities, the one of Africa, the other of Asia Minor, held then a distinguished rank among the commercial ports of the East.

[39] The cathedral of Reggio still possesses to-day the rostral column, a monument of the preaching of Saint Paul.

30 June

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The commemoration of Saint Paul, apostle.[1] — At Limoges, in the Gauls, Saint Martial, bishop, with the two priests Alpinian and Austriclinian, whose life was filled with brilliant miracles. 1st century. — On the same day, at Talgue, in Spain, Saint Caius, priest, and Saint Leo, subdeacon, martyrs. — At Alexandria, the martyrdom of Saint Basilides, who, under the emperor Severus, having defended from the insults of the impure the virgin Potamiena whom he was conducting to execution, received from her the reward of that eminent service; for, three days after, she appeared to him herself, placed a crown on his head, and not only converted him to Jesus Christ, but even obtained for him, by her prayers, that after a combat of short duration he should be honoured with the glory of martyrdom. 3rd century. — At Rome, Saint Lucina, disciple of the Apostles, who supplied from her goods the needs of the faithful, visited the Christians in the prisons and busied herself with giving burial to the martyrs, beside whom she was herself laid to rest in a crypt built by her. 1st century. — In the same place, Saint Emiliana, martyr.[2] 4th century. — In the Vivarais, Saint Ostian, priest and confessor.[3]

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Orp-le-Grand, in the diocese of Namur, Saint Adilia or Adile, virgin and abbess, famous for her miracles and for the hospitality which she exercised principally toward the Hibernian priests. About 650. — At Arras, the memory of the candle which was given by the Blessed Virgin to Saint Lambert, for the healing of the sickness called the burning fire. This candle, by a perpetual miracle, although it is often lighted, though it is left to burn several hours, and though there flow from it parts of which other candles are made, nevertheless never diminishes. — At Le Mans, Saint Bertrand or Bertichramn, archdeacon of Paris, then bishop of Le Mans, founder of the abbey of La Couture. His feast is kept on 3 July in the diocese of Le Mans. 623. — At Salanigo, in the diocese of Vicenza, in Italy, the decease of Saint Theobald, a solitary under the habit of a Camaldolese, a native of Provins, in Brie, whose body was carried on 3 July to the cathedral of Vicenza, and afterwards to Sens, into the church of Sainte-Colombe-la-Grande. He is honoured on this same day at Soissons.[4] 1066. — At Troyes, the translation of Saint Maura, virgin, patroness of the village which bears her name, near Troyes, famous for her devotion toward Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the saints Gervasius and Protasius. She died full of good works, and the miracles which she wrought during her life and after her death attested her holiness.[5] 850. — At Marchiennes (Nord), the Blessed Clotsende, called also Glodsende and Glossinde, virgin, abbess of that monastery and sister of Saint Eusebia or Ysoie, abbess of Hamay, in the Low Countries, and of Saint Adalsinde or Adalsende. 714.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

At Douai (Nord), the venerable Frescende, virgin, of the Order of Cîteaux. — At Villiers, in Brabant, the venerable Cornibout, lay brother of the Order of Cîteaux. — In the diocese of

Tarentaise (Savoy), Peter I, abbot of La Ferté, then archbishop of Tarentaise, who must not be confounded with the famous Peter II, archbishop of the same city and whose biography we have given at length on 8 May. Sprung from a family as noble as it was wealthy, he took the monastic habit at Molesme, to lead there a poor and obscure life. Seeing the religious of that abbey relax from their first fervour, he came with Saint Robert and his disciples to found the monastery of Cîteaux where he distinguished himself by his holiness and his writings. He became afterwards abbot of La Ferté-sur-Grône (*Firmitas ad Gronam*, Saône-et-Loire), the first of the four abbeys called Daughters of Cîteaux. 1130. — In the same place, the Blessed Arnoul or Arnulf, Cistercian monk. He was born at Brussels and passed his youth there, where he abandoned himself at

the very first to the dissoluteness of his passions and his evil inclinations. At last he listened to the voice of grace, was converted, put off the old man and put on the new man. His conduct then became wholly different from what it had been till then: instead of seeking the society of libertines, he frequented that of pious persons. He had imposed on himself the law of rising every day before dawn, to assist at the first Mass, and, if sometimes it happened to him to rise too late, he punished himself for this involuntary fault by remaining outside the church in the greatest colds and even in the midst of rain. At the end of two years of this penance, he resolved to enter the Order of Cîteaux, in order to preserve himself still better in the spirit of fervour. There he made himself admired by all by his excessive austerities: every day he scourged himself with the branches and leaves of a thorny bush. Great pieces of wood formed his bed, and a sack of coarse cloth his covering. His ordinary food consisted of vegetables cooked and cold for several days. When he was pressed by thirst, he took a glass of water and carried it to his lips then threw it away, adding thus to the torment of thirst that of an unsatisfied need. At last, after he had for long years edified his brethren by the example of all the virtues, the grace of God flooded him; his soul, ravished in ecstasy, rose above the sensible world, and went to lose itself in a sea of love and of infinite beatitude: Our Lord Jesus Christ and His holy Mother appeared to him and assured him of the salvation of his soul. A few days after, he gave it back into their hands. 1228.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Africa, the holy martyrs Timothy, Fotique, Italicus, Zoilus, Gelasius, companions of the saints Caius and Leo, mentioned above, and carried with them into the martyrology of Saint Jerome and into several others. — At Cologne, Saint Asclin or Asclepe, and Saint Pamphilus, martyrs. — Among the Greeks, the saints Diomedes, Eulampius, Meliton, Peter and Asclepiades, martyrs. The first three had their heads cut off, Asclepiades was cast into the sea, and Peter stoned. — At the Jesuit college of Munster-Eiffel, in the archbishopric of Trier, the translation of Saint Donatus, martyr. In the middle of the seventeenth century, there was found at Rome, in the house of the Jesuit Balthasar Ballorus, after his death, the body of this Saint: Cardinal Ginetti had made him a present of it to reward him for the services which he had rendered in searching for the relics of the martyrs in the catacombs of Rome. Florent de Montmorency, then general of the Order, claimed this body and gave it, in 1649, to the Jesuit college of Munster-Eiffel, where it was transferred in 1652. He is invoked against storms, tempests, hail, lightning, and other inclemencies of the air. In the country of Trier, his feast is celebrated only on the second Sunday of July. — At Asti, in Lombardy, Saint Peter, confessor. There was at Asti a church of his name served by the Knights Hospitallers of Saint John, and where his relics were carefully kept. Of illustrious birth, our Saint made himself poor for love of Jesus Christ; whence it comes that he is willingly represented with the short tunic of workmen, having in his hand a hoe with which he digs the earth. — At Salzburg, in Upper Austria, Saint Erentrude or Erentrui (*Erentrudis*), virgin, abbess of Nonnberg (*Nonnarummontis monasterium*), near Salzburg. Sprung from the royal blood of France, she was niece of Saint Reyner, archbishop of Salzburg, who brought her into his diocese with some other pious maidens to found a monastery there of which Saint Erentrude was the first abbess. She made herself admired there by her virtues and above all by her humility, taking pleasure in exercising the least exalted functions and those which contrasted most with her illustrious birth. The time which she did not consecrate to prayer or to the government of her community, she employed in works of charity, such as making garments for poor and abandoned children, visiting the sick, teaching the people of the common sort the truths of religion. About the year 630. — At Pamplona, in Spain, Saint Marcian, bishop, whose name appears in the sixteenth Council of Toledo. About the year 737. — At Verona, in Italy, the Blessed Henry, solitary. His body reposes in the church of Saint John in Fonte at Verona. There is preserved of our Blessed a hair-shirt of iron mail, and a scourge of thongs of the same metal with which he gave himself the discipline every day. 1350. — At Bougie, in Mauritania, the Blessed Raymond Lull, famous Franciscan theologian, known under the name of Illuminated Doctor, patron of the University of the island of Majorca, his country. He was stoned at Bougie by the Moors, among whom he had gone to preach the faith.[6]

1315.

Saint Martial, Apostle, First Bishop of Limoges, and Notre-Dame de Ceignac

1st century.

Saint Martial brought to Aquitaine the knowledge of the true God, the ruin of the dreadful worship of Druidism, justice in the State, peace in families, union among citizens, the seeds of civilization, the worship of the Christian virtues.

M. l'abbé C. Martin, *Panégyrique de S. Martial*.

We cannot be reproached for giving Saint Martial the title of Apostle, after Pope John XIX and the councils of Limoges and of Bourges, in the eleventh century, gave him that title, after, quite recently still, the Sacred Congregation of Rites and Pope Pius IX maintained him in that title of honour. It was also the usage of the Churches of Aquitaine, of France, of England, of Constantinople and of Mount Sinai, where, from time immemorial, he was invoked in the litanies and the other public prayers, in the rank of the Apostles and before all the Martyrs, as was verified in those Councils and above all in the second of Limoges. It is not that he is of the number of the twelve who composed the apostolic college; for it is wrongly that some have wished to confound him with Saint Matthias; but he is called Apostle, because, according to the immemorial traditions of Aquitaine, being a disciple of Our Lord, and having received from Him his mission, he laboured with the principal Apostles, like Saint Barnabas, Saint Luke and Saint Mark, at the conversion of the infidels, at the destruction of idolatry, at the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and at the foundation of the Christian Church. An ancient legend of Saint Martial, recently published, contains only an abridgment of the principal features of his life, namely: his mission in the time of Saint Peter, the resurrection of Saint Austriclinian, his companion in the apostolate, the baptism and martyrdom of Saint Valeria, the conversion of the inhabitants of Limoges, the blessed death of the holy bishop, and the account of some miracles wrought at his tomb. There exists a more extended legend, which has been falsely attributed to Saint Aurelian, his successor, but which may nevertheless be considered as a collection of the ancient traditions of the country, on the life and the miracles of the Apostle of Aquitaine. This legend was accepted, in effect, as the expression of the public belief, by the bishops and the abbots, who sat in the various councils where the question of the apostolate of Saint Martial was decided. We are going to give the summary of it, adding other traditions which were current in those ages of faith which are called the Middle Ages.

Saint Martial was a Hebrew by origin and of the tribe of Benjamin. The poet Fortunatus, in verses which he composed in his praise, addresses to him these words: "The tribe of Benjamin saw you born of an illustrious blood"; and Gregory of Tours himself, who was mistaken about the true epoch of his mission, acknowledges that he "had come from the East," with the two priests who accompanied him into Gaul. According to some ancient manuscripts of the legend of Aurelian, he was born at Rama,[1] a little town of Palestine of which there is frequent mention in Scripture. His father and mother, who lived in the exact observance of the law of Moses, brought him up in the fear of God; and when Jesus Christ began to preach and to work great miracles in Galilee and in Judea, he had the happiness of seeing and hearing Him with his parents. The word of that great Master wrought so powerfully in their hearts, that they believed in Him and acknowledged Him for the Saviour and for the Messiah, and they were of the number of those of whom the Gospel speaks, whom He baptized, not by Himself, but by His disciples. It is said that it was Saint Peter who administered to them that sacrament, as different from the baptism of Saint John as the shadow is different from the body, the figure from the truth and the sketch from the perfect and finished work. Martial, after his baptism, young as he was, attached himself inseparably to Our Lord.

Several doctors of the Middle Ages, among whom we shall cite Albert the Great and Saint Thomas Aquinas,[2] say that Saint Martial was that little child whom Our Lord set in the midst of His disciples, to teach them to

be humble, when they came to ask Him who among them should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; other writers of the Middle Ages[3] relate that it was he who brought the five barley loaves and the two fishes which Our Lord multiplied so miraculously in the desert, according to that word of Saint Philip: "There is here a young lad who has five barley loaves and two fishes; but what is that for so many people?" — However, these two traditions are not related in the legend written under the name of Aurelian.

What this legend relates and what is also found in the bull of Pope John XIX is that Saint Martial had the honour of serving Our Lord at table, when He ate for the last time the Paschal Lamb, and when, after having washed the feet of His disciples, He instituted the adorable sacrament of the Eucharist. A disciple of the Son of God, he saw Him after His resurrection, was present at the glorious triumph of His Ascension, received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, then attached himself to Saint Peter, whose kinsman according to the flesh and spiritual son he was.[4] Saint Abbo, abbot of Fleury in the tenth century, sang these pious traditions in a Sequence: "In the mystical scene, Martial was the guest of Christ, and took what remained of the heavenly bread; and, joyful, he presented the linens when the Saviour washed, to wipe the feet of His disciples; and far from fleeing from their sacred assembly, he was a pious member of that timid band in which Thomas was not found; moreover, when Christ went up again to heaven, he merited to be blessed with the crowd of those present; and he did not despise the choir of the Apostles who praised God; but he received with them the graces of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, and thus strengthened, he came to Antioch in the company of Peter: thence he betook himself to the great city of Rome."

Rome has preserved the memory of the passage and the preachings of Saint Martial. A tradition of the highest antiquity, recorded in the ancient breviary of Santa Maria in Via Lata, attributes to him the foundation of the underground Oratory of that church, one of the primitive sanctuaries of Christian Rome.

We read in this legend that "Saint Peter having come to Rome, was accompanied among others by the blessed Martial, disciple of Jesus Christ, who preached with him the Christian faith through the streets and the public squares, and made many conversions; and thus the number of the faithful increased more and more in the city. And because Saint Peter remained assiduously with the principal men of Rome, who admired his new doctrine, Saint Martial dwelt in another quarter of the city, in the place which is called Via Lata, where he built a little oratory, in which he celebrated the holy mysteries, and poured forth prayers with the other faithful of Christ; and causing sweet words on the faith of Christ to spring from his heart, he baptized a great number of neophytes. Some time after, the apostle Saint Paul came to Rome, with a great number of disciples, among whom was found the evangelist Saint Luke, and the city of Rome was wonderfully enlightened by their preachings, as by a resplendent sun. But Saint Peter, seeing that the faith was founded and made firm in Rome, and that the city was already filled with pious doctors, resolved to have the Gospel announced to the adjacent provinces and to bring the infidels to the faith. Therefore he sent the blessed Martial to Ravenna and 'into the countries beyond the Mountains,' to preach there the faith of Christ."

A commentary on this legend, printed at Rome in the seventeenth century, says that Saint Martial, founder of the Oratory of Santa Maria in Via Lata, is the same Saint Martial who preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of Limoges, of Toulouse and of Bordeaux.[5]

The zeal which Saint Martial had displayed, in the company of Saint Peter, for the propagation of the faith, determined therefore that great Apostle, whose sight extended over all the earth, to choose him to carry the knowledge of Jesus Christ into the Gauls. He set out from Rome, accompanied by Saint Austriclinian and Saint Alpinian, whom Saint Peter gave him as colleagues, bearing in his mouth the sword of the word of God, to combat the philosophers, the superstition of the Druids, the power of princes and of demons, and, at the same time, to enlighten souls and inflame them with the fire of charity.

But after some days of travel, he saw himself deprived of the help which the Apostle had given him, by the death of one of his companions, Saint Austriclinian, at Cracchianum, on the river Elsa, to-day Granciano,

near the town of Colle di Val d'Elsa, in Tuscany. This unforeseen accident troubled him at first, and served as a trial of his generous courage. He decided then to retrace his steps, to inform Saint Peter, and to pray him to make good the loss which he suffered by the loss of so considerable a help. The Apostle consoled him and strengthened him in his first resolution; and, to restore to him the help which he had lost, he gave him his staff, recommending him to lay it on the body of the dead man, with a firm confidence that he would rise again. Martial took it with great respect, obeyed without resistance the voice of his master, came back promptly to Cracchianum, and touched Austriclinian with that staff. As his faith was incomparably greater than that of Gehazi, the servant of Eliseus, who had had a like order to apply the staff of that Prophet to the corpse of the son of the Sunamite, his action was also more happy and more efficacious; Austriclinian felt its virtue immediately; he opened his eyes, rose in full health, and found himself in a state to continue his apostolic journey.[6]

One still sees, near the bridge of Granciano, an ancient church dedicated under the invocation of Saint Martial, and built over the tomb of Austriclinian; there one reads an inscription which recalls the traditions most glorious for the holy Apostle; and quite near, the town of Colle has been erected into an episcopal see in honour of the disciple of Jesus Christ.

The country which Saint Martial had received the mission to evangelize extended between the Rhone, the Loire and the Atlantic Ocean, and comprised that great part of the Gauls which the ancients called Aquitaine. After having traversed vast regions sowing on his way the divine word, the Apostle arrived, with his two disciples, on the frontiers of the Limousin. He entered the town of Toulx,[7] which is to-day only a village situated on a mountain,[8] but which then was a castle or fortified town, whose triple enclosure and the ruins, which still subsist, attest the ancient extent. We read in the legend of Aurelian that a rich man of that town, who had the happiness of receiving Saint Martial and of lodging him several days in his house, was not deprived of the reward of his hospitality; he had an only daughter, possessed by a furious demon which made her suffer great evils and reduced her to a deplorable state: the Saint had pity on her, and, delivering her from that terrible enemy, gave her back safe and sound to her father; he raised to life also the son of the prince, or Roman governor of that town, and after having conferred baptism on that young man and on a great number of inhabitants, he went to the temple of the false gods and cast down the statues. From Toulx, the Apostle betook himself to the borough of Ahun,[9] with the hope of labouring there with the same success; but the priests of the idols, unable to suffer that the worship which made their living should be abolished, struck him cruelly, him and his blessed companions. By a just chastisement of heaven, they became blind, and, acknowledging their crime, they asked pardon of Saint Martial, who restored their sight. After that, on a word of the Apostle, the statue of Jupiter had been reduced to dust, a great number of pagans, converted by his miracles, received baptism and broke the carved images of the demons. Saint Martial healed also in that place a paralytic; and, having made known to those whom he had baptized that he had received the order to go farther, he separated from his neophytes after having commended them to God, and betook himself to the city of Limoges, the chief and most populous of all the towns of the Limousin. Here is what we read in the ancient life of Saint Martial: "On his arrival at Limoges, he found the multitude given to the worship of idols; he set himself to preach the word of God with such urgency that he made on the people the most salutary impression; at the end of a short time, a great number of pagans asked to be regenerated in the waters of baptism, and to receive on the forehead the sacred impression of the cross of Jesus Christ; by his frequent exhortations the man of God produced, in the midst of that city, abundant fruits of salvation.

"A young girl, named Valeria, nobler by her faith than by her illustrious origin, had the happiness of pleasing God by her virtues. She was already betrothed, she was to contract a marriage in keeping with her high birth; but by hearing frequently the divine word, she preferred the heavenly Spouse to an earthly husband, and, at the voice of Martial, she attained to the grace of baptism; and it is reported that, as she had become a Christian and would not contract the marriage planned, she was put to death by her betrothed, still a pagan."

This is how that ancient life expresses itself.[10] The legend of Aurelian enters into greater details. Saint Martial and his companions, entering the city of Limoges, received hospitality from a noble lady, whose only daughter was named Valeria. There was in the house a man so furious that it was necessary to hold him bound with many chains: but Saint Martial having made the sign of the cross over this man, his chains broke and he was entirely healed. The noble matron, seeing this miracle, begged the man of God to baptize her; and she received baptism with her daughter and the numerous troop of her servants. Then Martial having betaken himself with his disciples into the vast enclosure of the theatre, where the people were assembled, to preach there the Gospel of the kingdom of God, the priests of the idols, fearing that these happy beginnings might be followed by a prompt conversion of the whole city, conceived such a rage against our Saints that they seized them, had them beaten with rods and cast them into prison. But the next day, Martial having set himself to prayer, there appeared in the midst of the dungeon a heavenly light which lit up its darkness and changed it into a temple of glory; and, at the same time, the fetters fell from the feet and hands of those blessed prisoners, and the doors opened to give them liberty to withdraw. Meanwhile the whole city was shaken by a furious earthquake, accompanied by a frightful thunder which set it on fire; it was seen that God took vengeance for the outrage done to His servants; moreover, the two chief priests of the idols, who had laid hands on them, were found dead on the spot by the violence of that tempest, without either their sacrilegious vows or their impious sacrifices having been able to save them from the divine justice. The inhabitants, touched by these prodigies, and fearing to be enveloped in this terrible punishment, ran promptly to the prison to implore the help of the holy Apostles. Martial promised them that they should suffer no harm, provided they would believe in Jesus Christ, and even offered to raise the two priests struck by the thunder, to let them see the infinite power of the God whom he preached to them. In effect, he had hardly commanded them to rise and to say publicly to the people what must be done to be saved, when they both came back to life, and became at the same time the preachers of the truth. They detested the error in which they had lived till then, and in which they had kept so many unfortunates who had been lost, and protested that there was no other God, either in heaven or on earth, than the One whom Martial had come to announce to them. One of them, named Aurelian, was later the successor of Saint Martial. So great a miracle wrought a marvellous change in the whole city; the greater part of the idolaters were converted, the statues of the false gods were overthrown and broken in pieces, and the temple of the idols, where were found the statues of Jupiter, of Mercury, of Diana and of Venus, was changed into a church to honour the true God. It is to-day the cathedral church, dedicated in honour of the first martyr Saint Stephen. It is said that the persons who were baptized rose to the number of twenty-two thousand: which ought not to appear incredible, since we see that in other places the number of the martyrs has often been greater.

Meanwhile the pious matron, who had given hospitality to Saint Martial and his companions, came to die. Her daughter, Valeria, was betrothed to the governor of the province, whom the legend of Aurelian calls Duke Stephen, doubtless because that name was given him when later he received baptism in his turn. The young virgin despised that earthly spouse to merit to be the spouse of the King of heaven, and, having learned from Saint Martial, her master, the advantages of virginity over marriage, she consecrated hers to Jesus Christ, and made a vow to keep it inviolably all her life. Her betrothed, being returned to Limoges, and knowing this resolution, was touched by it with extreme grief; then, fury succeeding sadness, he resolved to avenge himself, by the death of this innocent virgin, for the affront which he pretended to receive from that refusal. He had her led outside the city, and ordered one of his officers to cut off her head.[11]

One reads in the legend of Saint Valeria a particular which is found also in the legends of some other martyrs of the first centuries: it is that this glorious virgin, having been beheaded, took her head in her hands and bore it as in triumph to the altar where Saint Martial was celebrating the holy mysteries.

The legend of Aurelian relates that, at the moment of Valeria’s execution, her holy soul was seen to mount to heaven in a globe of fire, accompanied by the harmonious concert of the Angels: “You are happy, martyr of

Christ: come into the splendour which knows no end!" Surprised at these prodigies, the officer who had cut off Valeria's head ran to relate them to his master. Hardly had he made the recital when he fell dead at his feet, that his death might show that lord the greatness of the crime he had committed. Stephen, terrified, sent for Martial to his palace, and, having promised him to do penance if he gave life back to his officer, he was witness of that resurrection and solemnly performed the promise he had made. His conversion was followed by that of a great number of soldiers of his army and of inhabitants of the city who had not yielded to the first miracles of our Saint. And to repair worthily his past faults, the governor helped Martial to extend and to propagate Christianity in all the country.

Our Apostle, after having laboured with such happy success to reduce the city of Limoges under the yoke of Jesus Christ, undertook the conquest of the other cities and provinces of that part of the Gauls which was then called Aquitaine; we shall cite among these cities Angoulême, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Poitiers. The glorious title which remained to him, of Apostle of Aquitaine, shows well enough that his apostolic journeys were not useless, that he lit there on all sides the torch of faith, that he made Jesus Christ known and loved there, that he established Churches there, ordained priests and bishops, and performed the other functions of his apostolate. It is an immemorial tradition in the province of Angoumois, that Saint Martial, going to Bordeaux to preach the Gospel there, passed through the city of Angoulême, sojourned there some time, converted the people there to the faith of the true God, baptized there Saint Ausonius and ordained him first bishop of that city.

The city of Bordeaux acknowledges itself indebted to Saint Martial for the first announcements of the faith. It is a tradition gathered in the legend of Aurelian, that the Apostle of Aquitaine preached the Gospel there and wrought miracles. An archbishop of Bordeaux, in the tenth century, said in an eloquent prayer: "Do we not believe that our episcopal city, the city of Bordeaux, was acquired by you for Jesus Christ, and that a woman whom you had baptized, laying your pastoral staff on the prince of the city, healed him of an inveterate malady?" We see still, in the Epistle to the Bordelais, that the altars of the demons were reduced to dust, and that the sovereign priest of the idols, converted to the faith, was consecrated by Saint Martial, first priest of that nascent church. From Bordeaux, the holy Apostle went to preach the Gospel at Mortagne, in Saintonge: one sees there still, facing the Gironde, a hermitage hollowed in the rock, whose chapel is dedicated under his invocation, and where it is said he resided some time. Peter the Venerable, speaking of the first apostles of Gaul, assures us that Saint Martial preached at Limoges, at Bordeaux and at Poitiers. It is said that when he was in this last city, the Saviour appeared to him, and said to him: "Know that, at this very hour, Peter is crucified for the glory of my name: therefore found here a church in his honour." The chronicle composed in the Middle Ages under the name of Dexter, the friend and contemporary of Saint Jerome, says that Saint Martial was the apostle of the inhabitants of Limoges, of Cahors and of Toulouse. This last city had written its tradition on the façade of Saint-Sernin, where was seen formerly a statue of the apostle of Aquitaine, with an inscription which gave him as auxiliary Saint Saturninus; finally, the Epistle to the inhabitants of Toulouse is another monument of the Middle Ages which shows the antiquity of this tradition. Ancient documents of the diocese of Mende represent Saint Severian, first bishop of Gévaudan, as a disciple of Saint Martial; old legends assure us that he dedicated altars to the Virgin Mary, at Le Puy-en-Velay, at Rodez, at Mende, at Clermont and at Roc-Amadour: in a word, all the churches of Aquitaine regard him as their apostle and founder. Ancient manuscripts, which were formerly preserved at Ceignac, establish that Saint Martial came to that place, at a short distance from Rodez, that he set up a cross there and had a sanctuary built there in honour of the Virgin. This sanctuary, one of the most ancient and most venerated of the diocese of Rodez, was called Notre-Dame des Monts, by reason of the mountains which surround it, or Notre-Dame de Ceignac. Little by little, a village formed around this sanctuary, then a parish was erected there; and, the primitive chapel proving insufficient, a larger church was built beside it, under the title of Saint Mary Magdalen. Later, time having ruined these two churches, they were replaced by a new one, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin; it is the present church, except first the sanctuary and the first bay, which,

rebuilt in 1455, if one believes the historical notices, are of the secondary Gothic style, as are the first three chapels, while the rest of the nave, in Romanesque style, bears the mark of the thirteenth century; except, in the second place, the last two chapels, which were added afterwards, and the vault of the part of the nave made barrel-fashion, a work of the eighteenth century; except, finally, the beautiful modern windows, which form the rose of the façade, and which present, in the other openings, medallions with figures, of an exquisite taste and a ravishing effect.

At the top of the retable which covers the circular apse is an Assumption, where there has been represented, in a corner of the picture, the Duke of Arpajon, as one of the principal benefactors of the church; and, in the lower part of the retable, are three niches, of which the middle one, surmounted by a fleur-de-lis crown, contains a very large Virgin with the Child Jesus on her left arm; that on the right holds the ancient miraculous Virgin of Ceignac, holding also on her left arm her divine Child, and above one reads: *Antiquae imagini Virginis deiparae miraculis insigni. D. D. D.*; finally, that on the left shows Saint Anne having on her arms, on one side the Child Jesus, and on the other the Virgin Mary, with the inscription

Inclitae parentis Dei genitricis imagini. D. D. D.

The first chapel on the right presents, on one side, the sorrows of Mary at the holy sepulchre, and, on the other, on the step of the altar, her coronation in heaven. The second is called the chapel of Rodez, by reason of the picture placed above the altar, and which the city of Rodez offered, in 1653, for having been saved from the plague.

The treasury of Notre-Dame de Ceignac is not less curious than the church itself. One sees there a statuette of the Virgin, in silver, having at its base a rounded glass which is applied to diseased eyes; a casket containing several relics, on the front of which is a figure of the Virgin in relief, which the pilgrims are made to kiss; twenty silver lamps with revenues for their upkeep; two chalices of silver-gilt; two others of silver; a cross with two candlesticks, a ciborium, a monstrance, four cruets with their dishes; the whole equally of silver and of a value of more than a hundred thousand francs. The greater part of these riches came from the lords of Arpajon, whose castle was near. These high and mighty lords had a special devotion to Notre-Dame de Ceignac; they honoured her during their life, aspired to repose in her sanctuary after their death; the church contains still several of their tombs. John III, baron of Arpajon, is remarkable among all: he instituted a chaplain in the church, to say Mass there each Friday and each Saturday after the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, and on each anniversary of his decease; he gave a cannon to make a bell there; he obtained from the Holy See a plenary indulgence, valid for a hundred years, for the visit of the church, accompanied by communion, on one of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin; finally, he prescribed, by his will of 22 January 1516, that he should be buried in Notre-Dame de Ceignac and that his statue should be placed on his tomb, between those of Saint John the Baptist and of Saint Christopher, representing him kneeling, hands joined, clothed and armed as he was when he was taken by the English in Picardy. The simple faithful, like the great lords, loved to lay their humble offering at the feet of Notre-Dame de Ceignac and never thought they could express enough to her their gratitude. It is that, in effect, one could not tell the number of miracles wrought by the invocation of Notre-Dame de Ceignac. The first which the historical notices relate, and which they place in 1150, is the healing of a prince of Hungary, a palatine lord. Deprived of sight, he had asked for many years his healing of the Blessed Virgin, when she, says the tradition, appeared to him and announced to him that he should recover his sight at Notre-Dame des Monts, near Rodez. The prince at once sets out with an escort of a hundred men; assailed on the way by a tempest, he loses his escort and arrives at Notre-Dame des Monts, accompanied by only three men. He has Mass celebrated there, and, hearing behind him a noise of arms, he turns round instinctively, and sees his banner with his faithful Hungarians whom he believed lost: a cry of happiness escapes him. Thanks to Mary, he has recovered his sight, he has recovered his escort; in gratitude for these two benefits, he gives seven lamps to the church with a precious vase, where were engraved his name and the date of the pilgrimage, and obtains from the bishop that Notre-Dame des Monts

shall be called henceforth Notre-Dame de Ceignac, in memory of the hundred men miraculously found again in that place. Even to-day there is in the church a monument of this fact: they are three wooden statues, representing the Virgin, before her the prince kneeling; behind the prince, his squire, and, above, an inscription recalling the miracle.

In 1604, about the feast of Saint John, a most threatening storm announcing itself in the air, the clergy of Ceignac go in procession through the village, entreating Mary to protect a land that was consecrated to her; and, while all the neighbouring parishes are horribly ravaged by hail, Ceignac alone suffers no damage; which so struck the bishop that he ordered that all the parishes of the diocese should go there in procession; and his order was faithfully executed. The account of all these facts was formerly preserved in the archives of Ceignac, written in the hand of the priest who had directed the procession.

In 1628, the city of Albi was delivered from the plague, which was already at its gates, by the vow it made to go and visit, in a body, Notre-Dame de Ceignac; and it fulfilled this vow on 26 March of the following year. In 1653, the city of Rodez had already lost, by the same scourge, several of its inhabitants; it makes a vow to go, also in a body, to visit Notre-Dame de Ceignac, and to give her two hundred livres for the ornament of the church. Its vow is also granted; and, the following year, not only does it fulfil it faithfully, but it wished to make the memory of the miracle perpetual by a picture which is still seen in the church of Ceignac, and which represents the Eternal Father hurling a javelin, below, the Virgin, the Child Jesus, the cross and Saint Amand.

To these public miracles others were added in favour of private persons, above all to obtain contrition for their faults, reconciliation between divided spouses, fruitfulness of barren women, and the happy issue of the embarrassments one meets so often in life.

In our days still, Notre-Dame de Ceignac is visited with fruit. The seminary of philosophy, which is at Rodez, goes there every two years, singing canticles or reciting prayers during the whole road. The little seminary of Saint-Pierre goes there likewise. Nearly twenty parishes go there in procession each year; and, besides, twelve to fifteen thousand pilgrims come there, either from the various parts of the diocese, or from the neighbouring dioceses. Twelve to fifteen hundred Masses are celebrated there each year; and the ex-votos hung on the walls of the church attest the number of the benefits obtained there.

Independently of the graces which Notre-Dame de Ceignac granted to her visitors, people were still attracted to her sanctuary by two other motives: the first was, not to speak of a crowd of other relics, pieces of the garment, of the veil and of the stone of the sepulchre of the Blessed Virgin, of the crib of Our Lord and of His cradle, of His garments, of the table where He ate with His disciples, of the bread of the last supper, of the stone on which He prayed at Gethsemani, of the reed of His passion, of the gall that was offered Him to drink and of the sponge soaked with vinegar, finally of the true cross. The second motive was the indulgences which this sanctuary enjoyed from 1420; a plenary indulgence, called from time immemorial the great Pardon, was attached to the visit of Notre-Dame de Ceignac for all the holy days of obligation of the Blessed Virgin, as well as for the Sunday within the octave of the Assumption, which is the patronal feast; and Gregory XVI, in renewing this indulgence in 1837, extended it to the day of the Ascension. In 1655, Alexander VII attached to the visit of the seven altars of the church the indulgences of the seven stations of Rome for twelve times a year. In 1843, Notre-Dame de Ceignac, by her affiliation to Notre-Dame des Victoires of Paris, participated in the same privileges; and in 1854, affiliated to Notre-Dame of Loreto, she was put in possession of all the indulgences attached to the Santa Casa.

The ancient life of Saint Martial does not indicate in a precise manner the year of his blessed departure; but one reads in the legend of Aurelian, that in the year 40, after the resurrection of Our Lord, which was the seventy-fourth year of salvation, Saint Martial, after twenty-eight years of episcopate, finding himself at Limoges, received there the happy news of the approach of his death, which was to make him enjoy the

reward of his labours. He made it known at once to his disciples and to his diocesans, and having assembled them, he exhorted them to persevere constantly in the faith and in the confession of the truth which he had taught them, and gave them his blessing. Then, having prayed for them, and having implored for himself the mercy of Him whom he had served with so much fidelity, he gave back his soul into His hands, to be crowned with the glory which had been prepared for it from the time of the creation of the world.

It is said that, on the point of expiring, hearing groans and sobs burst forth around him, he raised his failing hand, and said to his disciples: “Silence! do you not hear the beautiful songs which come from heaven? Assuredly the Lord comes, as He promised.” — And, at that moment, the place where he was was flooded as by waves of sunlight, and a voice was heard which said: “Blessed soul, come forth from your body, come and enjoy with me the sweetness of an immortal light!” — And when the soul of Martial was mounting to heaven in the midst of this brightness, a choir of blessed spirits was heard repeating this verse of a psalm: “Blessed is he whom You have chosen and called to You: he shall dwell in Your eternal courts.”

His body was buried in the very place where Saint Valeria had received burial, and where was raised later the basilica of Saint-Peter-of-the-Sepulchre, first foundation of the famous abbey of Saint-Martial. There were wrought there in the sequel numerous miracles: Gregory of Tours relates two. The first was wrought on a girl, whose fingers, in punishment of some sin, had so adhered to the palm of the hand that it was impossible for her to straighten them. She came to the sepulchre of the glorious Apostle; she watched and prayed there with much fervour, and, the very night of the day of his feast, she obtained the healing of her infirmity. The second miracle was wrought on a man who had become dumb for having taken a false oath in the church; he betook himself to the tomb of the Saint, and, having long groaned in his heart, to obtain pardon of his fault, he felt as it were a hand touching his tongue and his throat and spreading there a secret virtue; which was so efficacious that, after he had had a priest make the sign of the cross on his mouth, he began to speak as before.

A far more celebrated miracle is that of the healing of the malady of the Ardents. In 994, a contagion, called the plague of fire, exercised frightful ravages in Aquitaine. It was an invisible and secret fire, which devoured the members to which it was attached, and made them fall from the body. This putrefaction of living bodies spread in the air an insupportable odour. The plague-stricken died by thousands. The bishops of Aquitaine assembled at Limoges, in order to obtain of God, by the intercession of Saint Martial, the cessation of this terrible scourge. Arrived one of the first, the archbishop Gombaud went to kneel before the tomb of the venerated Apostle, and there, bursting into tears and sobs, and stretching out suppliant hands, he made aloud this eloquent prayer, which history has preserved to us: “O pastor of Aquitaine, you who enlightened it with the lights of faith, arise to succour your people!… Permit not that these infernal tortures reign near your sacred body! O Martial! mirror of virtues, O prince of pontiffs, where then is what we read of you, that you were at the supper the minister of the Saviour, when He washed the feet of His disciples?… Certainly the tradition of our ancient Fathers has transmitted to us that you received the gift of tongues with the other disciples… Show yourself then the disciple of Him who is the source of mercy! Yes, I take to witness all those who hear me, if, before I depart from this city, you do not extinguish this devouring flame in the heart of those who are here, if I do not see you heal this multitude, I shall no more believe any of the admirable things that are said of you! Never again shall I return to this city to implore your patronage! It is in vain that I shall be told that you are called the disciple of the Lord! It is in vain that I shall be told that God sent you as apostle to the nations of the West! It is in vain that I shall be told that you baptized the people of Bordeaux, of which I am the bishop, I shall believe it no more, if I do not obtain the favour which I implore for the salvation of this afflicted multitude. And your pastoral staff, which was preserved until now in my episcopal city as a precious treasure, that relic shall be vile in my eyes if you do not gladden my heart by the healing of all these poor sick!”

A prayer made with so much faith deserved to be heard. In effect, the contagion ceased its ravages, and an immense joy spread in the hearts.

We said, at the beginning, from what sources we should draw the principal actions of Saint Martial. Two centuries ago, the legend composed under the name of Aurelian, successor of Saint Martial in the episcopate, one of the two priests of the idols who died of a stroke of thunder and whom he had restored to life, was rejected as apocryphal. In rejecting that legend, people were not content to contest from the holy bishop the title of Apostle, as had been done in the eleventh century, but they combated also the antiquity of his mission and his quality of disciple of Jesus Christ. But although this writing is not by Aurelian, disciple and successor of Saint Martial, as is shown by certain turns of speech which are much more recent, that ought in no wise to prejudice the truth of the history we have related. This writing is at least a collection of the ancient traditions of the country about Saint Martial: for the biography of a Saint whom a whole country knows is necessarily conformable to what local tradition says of that Saint. Besides, the discussions and the definitions of the various councils which examined the titles of the apostolate of Saint Martial, the declaration of two sovereign pontiffs, John XIX and Clement VI, the testimonies of so many Martyrologies, Rituals and Litanies which were publicly read in the Church more than eight hundred years ago, ought to suffice us to believe indubitably that Saint Martial is one of the disciples of Our Lord, and that he came into the Gauls sent by Saint Peter. It is true that Gregory of Tours placed his mission later, but the text of that historian has been refuted in so peremptory a fashion that it is no longer permitted to use it to combat the antiquity of the first establishment of the Churches of France. And in effect, if it were necessary to defer to it, the bishops of the Councils we have cited, who could not have been ignorant of the text of that historian, would have taken care not to define, on the contrary, that Saint Martial must be Apostle, because, being one of the seventy-two disciples of Our Lord, he received from Him the mission to preach the Gospel and to cooperate with the twelve Apostles in the conversion of the world: which we see, nevertheless, that they did without contestation. Besides, the recent discovery of the ancient Acts of Saint Martial has come to demonstrate that the immemorial tradition of the Limousin, written before Gregory of Tours, was that Saint Martial had received, in the time of Saint Peter, his apostolic mission.

He is represented: 1st, in the company of an angel: it is told that twelve of these protecting spirits ordinarily accompanied him in his journeys through the Gauls; 2nd, receiving the head of Saint Valeria who brought it to him herself while he was celebrating Mass;[12] 3rd, holding in his hand the pastoral staff with which he restores to life Saint Austriclinian; 4th, vested in the chasuble, in his quality of priest; 5th, with the stational cross, or long-shafted cross, on account of the title of Apostle which the Limousins award him; 6th, in a group, in company with the six bishops who pass for having been sent with him into the Gauls: Saint Gatian of Tours, Saint Trophimus of Arles, Saint Paul of Narbonne, Saint Saturninus of Toulouse, Saint Denis of Paris, and Saint Austremonius of Auvergne.

He is the patron of Limoges, of Cahors, of Colle, in Tuscany, of Tulle, etc.

Worship and Relics. — His Writings

Gregory Lombardelli, an Italian author of a life of Saint Martial, at the end of the sixteenth century, relates that when the translation of the relics of the holy Apostle was undertaken, 600 years after his death, his body was found in a state of perfect preservation, with the flesh and the hair: it exhaled a delicious odour. The head of the Saint was enclosed in a particular shrine and suddenly stripped itself of its flesh to be reduced to the state of an ordinary skull. Then, on this bared skull, appeared the very visible marks of the five fingers of the hand of Christ, an ineffaceable remembrance of the laying on of the Saviour’s hand on the head of the young Martial, when He pronounced these words: “Unless you become like this child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The church which held the body of Saint Martial was soon frequented by a great concourse of pilgrims, and a multitude of miracles were wrought there. It became necessary to build a

more spacious basilica, to contain the crowd of pious visitors. It was at least restored in the seventh century and became the centre of a monastery of canons regular: King Pepin, in the eighth century, visited it and made it several donations.

Louis the Debonair, after the death of Charlemagne, wishing to honour the monastery of Saint-Stephen of Limoges which he had caused to be built, transferred there the relics of Saint Martial. A short time after, this king was made prisoner by his three children and cast into a dungeon, which was regarded as a chastisement for the translation which he had caused to be made against the will of heaven. The winter, that year, was of extreme rigour, and floods desolated the whole country; they were arrested only when the body of Saint Martial had been restored to its first dwelling. The tomb of the holy Apostle was enriched, by the piety and gratitude of the faithful, with very precious gifts and ornaments of unheard-of magnificence. These riches tempted the cupidity of Aldegar, bishop of Limoges, at the end of the tenth century; he carried them off without meeting resistance and died soon after. The plague then broke out at Limoges and made a multitude of victims, as we have already related. This scourge was attributed to a chastisement of heaven; recourse was therefore had to the powerful intercession of Saint Martial, and, after three days of solemn fast, the relics of the holy Apostle were borne in procession with all possible pomp. Immediately the scourge suspended its ravages. Immediately, says the record of that translation, a church was built there which was consecrated under the name of Saint Martial. From that day, this place is called Montjoie, *Mons Gaudii*, and that is what is meant by this name of Montjauvy, which has remained to it, in the language of the people, as a remembrance and a monument of this miracle. Pope Urban II, having come to France to preach the crusade, betook himself to Limoges, in the year 1093, to venerate the relics of Saint Martial; he even held a council in that city and made there the consecration of a new and great basilica built in honour of the Saint. In the year 1122 or 1123, following a terrible fire which destroyed the city of Limoges, a fountain sprang from the foot of the tomb of the holy Apostle, with such abundance that it formed a stream of which the monks made use for the service of their monastery. The spring dried up some time after; but the people obtained by their prayers that it should spring forth anew. The venerable head of the holy Apostle was separated from his other relics, in the fourteenth century, and enclosed in a magnificent shrine of gold; a great number of miracles were wrought by this relic. Toward the end of the same century, English priests, sent by the bishop of Lincoln, in England, obtained a fragment of the head of Saint Martial for a monastery dedicated to this Saint. Already Saint Eligius had mentioned a relic of the Apostle, as having been brought to Paris. We shall not relate here all the miracles which were wrought at the tomb of Saint Martial. They are innumerable; there exist four accounts of them written at different epochs and by contemporaries of those prodigies. In all France, and even in foreign countries, the glory of Saint Martial shone with an extraordinary brilliance and drew to his tomb a multitude of pious pilgrims.

The cathedral church of Limoges still possesses his relics, and they are shown to the faithful every seven years; this is what is called the feast of the Ostension.

The foundation of the chapel which stood in the Rue du Saint-Esprit at Limoges, where he made his entry by the Porte Calernie, is attributed to him: this chapel formerly had the right to erect a repository, and on certain days the parish priest came there to give the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

There have been inserted, in the second volume of the *Library of the Fathers*, two epistles under the name of Saint Martial, addressed, one to the inhabitants of Bordeaux, the other to those of Toulouse. In his epistles, Saint Martial takes the name of Martial-Cephas, and gives himself the title of Apostle. Bellarmine, who combated the authenticity of these letters for various reasons more or less solid, avows “that they are pious, and that they could serve to confirm several Catholic dogmas, if one knew positively the time at which they were composed.” It is certain that they are anterior to the tenth century, since they are cited as ancient by a writer of that epoch. Perhaps they were written to replace real epistles of Saint Martial, lost in the invasion of the Barbarians. However that may be, these letters prove at least one thing, that is, that at the ancient epoch

when they were composed, people believed in the apostolate of Saint Martial, for similar epistles were never attributed except to the Apostles or to apostolic men contemporary with the Apostles.

We owe this account to M. Arbellot, parish priest of Rochechouart, who, taking as a basis the life written by Father Giry, has been so good as to summarize for us himself his history of Saint Martial. — Cf. *Les Saints du Rouergue*, by the abbé L. I? ervières.

Saint Bertrand or Bertichramn, Bishop of Le Mans

623. — Pope: Boniface V. — King of France: Clotaire II.

Decet dominicum sacerdotem moribus et vita clarescere, quatenus in eo tanquam in vitae suae speculo plebs commissa et eligere quod sequatur et videre possit quod corrigat.

It is fitting that the priest of the Lord should make himself so well remarked by his manners and his conduct that the people entrusted to him may discover in him, as in the mirror of his life, what it has to do and what it has to correct.

S. Grég. Mag., Ep. xxxii.

God, wishing to console the Church of Le Mans, desolated by the tyranny and the scandals of Badegisilus, gave it for pastor, after the death of that bishop, Saint Bertichramn, or, as is said to-day, Saint Bertrand. He was born about the middle of the sixth century, of one of the principal families of the conquerors of Gaul, allied to a noble and powerful house of the ancient inhabitants of that country. This family was closely united to the Frankish kings, and enjoyed with them great favour; several of its members distinguished themselves among the lords most devoted to the Neustrian party, and our old historians add, with sufficient probability, that this race was allied to that of Clovis. Bertrand had at least two brothers, whose names he has preserved for us in his will: they were called Bertulph and Ermenulph; but history teaches us nothing precise about the place of birth of our prelate. It is however probable that it was in the territory of Autun that he first saw the light; in any case, it is certain that the illustrious abbot of Saint-Symphorien, who became later bishop of Paris, Saint Germanus, held him at the baptismal font.

Bertrand consecrated himself to God early, and received the clerical tonsure at the tomb of Saint Martin, at Tours; perhaps he was then in the school of the monks who served that basilica. From that time, he began to honour that great confessor with a particular worship, and every year he paid to his basilica a due, in witness of his gratitude and his piety. If it was from the very hand of Saint Germanus that Bertrand received this first honour of the clerical state, when in 567 the bishop of Paris betook himself to Tours for the council which was held there that year, it is not surprising that the young levite afterwards passed into the clergy of Paris. He was instructed there in the knowledge suitable to a cleric of merit, under the eyes and the guidance of Saint Germanus, who ordained him priest before his death, which occurred in 576.

During the whole episcopate of Saint Germanus, the school of the cathedral of Paris was one of the most flourishing of Gaul. This holy bishop, who found the means of cultivating letters himself, in spite of the numerous occupations of his ministry, and the cares he gave himself for the good of the State, supervised this school directly, and made piety and solid studies flourish there. Bertrand was one of its most distinguished members. It appears that, not content with studying the ecclesiastical sciences, he applied himself to the study of literature, poetry and jurisprudence. The qualities of Bertrand caused him to be elected archdeacon of the Church of Paris, and he acquitted himself of that function for a rather long time.[1] After the death of Saint Germanus, Bertrand continued his functions under the episcopate of Ragnemodus. It was in that post that the choice of God came to take him to raise him to a more eminent degree, and to continue by him the chain of the holy bishops who had governed the Church of Le Mans. It was Saint Gontran, king of Burgundy, who, governing Maine at that time as guardian of his nephew Clotaire II, named Bertrand to the episcopal see

of Le Mans. This bishop, whom the holy king of Burgundy protected, was equally esteemed at the court of Neustria. He tells us himself, in his will, that he had been particularly favoured by Queen Fredegund, and that she had loaded him with benefits. She had furnished liberally for his alms and for all the establishments of piety which he had founded for the poor and the religious. She had served him at court against his enemies, and against all those who opposed the good he wished to do in his diocese, for the glory of God and the usefulness of the Church. This princess, decried as she was, had this singular feature in her conduct, that she honoured some servants of God, while she persecuted others, according to the interests of her policy. Bertrand showed himself, to the end of his life, full of benevolence for this princess and for her husband Chilperic. This partiality of our prelate finds its reason in the necessities of the political cause which he had believed he ought to embrace.

He needed the support of the royal authority to repair the evils which Badegisilus had caused in the diocese. From his arrival at Le Mans, he found the goods which belonged to the house of the Church invaded by Magnatrude, wife of Badegisilus. She pretended to appropriate all that the piety of the faithful had offered to the Church during the episcopate of her husband, under pretext that these goods formed part of the military apanage of Badegisilus. In spite of her violences and her efforts, she had to restore. It is probably then that, humiliated by her defeat, she withdrew to her domain of Marsialensis

(Marolles) with the daughter whom she had had by her marriage with Badegisilus. Our new bishop soon won the affection of his people, by whom he was as much loved as his predecessor had been hated. It is Saint Venantius Fortunatus who tells us so. This celebrated poet, whom all the bishops and the great men of Gaul disputed among themselves, to enjoy the charms of his cultivated and ingenious mind, came to visit Bertrand in his episcopal city. Fortunatus was not yet at that epoch bishop of Poitiers. Our prelate gave him a very distinguished reception, and admitted him at his side in the carriage which he used, after the example of the lords of the Frankish empire. Fortunatus considers this kindness of the bishop as a distinction which honours him, and he sings the love of this pastor toward his peoples, a love which he compares to the tenderness of the swallow warming her young under her wings; he tells also of the affection of the whole flock for its pastor.

From the second year of his episcopate, Bertrand received a signal distinction from the peaceful king of Burgundy. Judual and Guerech, Breton princes or Kimris, at the instigation of Fredegund, having entered in the year 587 into the country of Nantes with all their troops, did much damage there, and carried off a great number of prisoners. Gontran, warned of these disorders, assembled his army; but, yielding to his instincts of peace and conciliation, before setting his troops in motion, he sent a deputy to the two chiefs to summon them to repair all the harm they had done, otherwise he would have them perish by the sword. Judual and Guerech, intimidated by these threats, promised to restore all they had pillaged and to set the prisoners free. Gontran resolved then to send a more solemn embassy, capable, by the quality of the persons who composed it, of impressing those princes greedy of pillage and always turbulent. At the head of this deputation were Bertrand, bishop of Le Mans, and Namalius or Namas, bishop of Orleans; they were accompanied by counts and other distinguished persons. Having arrived at Nantes, they declared to the Breton princes the instructions of the king, with regard to the damage which had been committed in the territories of Nantes and of Rennes. Judual and Guerech engaged then to repair the misfortunes they had caused, and to pay a tribute to the king of Burgundy and of Orleans; but, in the sequel, feeling themselves urged on by Fredegund, they did not keep their promise.

The bishop of Orleans died during this embassy, and Bertrand had to bear alone the principal burden of it; he betook himself afterwards to the court of Orleans, to render account of his negotiation, and returned promptly to his Church.

About the same epoch at which Saint Bertrand received the government of the Church of Le Mans, a scandal without example in the monastic annals burst forth in the bosom of the monastery of the Holy Cross of

Poitiers.

This house, illustrated from its origin by the virtues of Saint Radegund, had seen elected for abbess a religious named Leubovera. The election of this abbess shocked the ambition of one of her companions, Chrodield, daughter of Charibert, jealous to see that Leubovera, much inferior to her in birth, had been preferred to her. By her promises and by her calumnies against the new abbess, she drew into her rebellion about forty religious. Of this number was Basina, daughter of the unfortunate Audovera and of Chilperic, the same whom we have seen shut up with her mother in a monastery of the province of Le Mans. As these unhappy girls had entered the cloister against their inclination, they could not bear its holy rigours, and threw themselves into the most guilty and shameful excesses. They forced first their enclosures, carried their ambition through Touraine and Burgundy, going to beg the support of the bishops and above all of the princes their relatives. Gontran and Childebert ordered a synod to be held at Poitiers to put an end to this scandal. Gundegisilus, archbishop of Bordeaux, and the bishops of his province, Saint Gregory of Tours, Ebregisilus of Cologne and Saint Bertrand of Le Mans were found at this assembly. Gregory of Tours represented wisely to the Fathers of the council that before all it was necessary to disarm the soldiers whom the two rebellious religious had called to the defence of their cause. Chrodield defended herself to the utmost; at last almost all her partisans were killed in the assault on the monastery. Peace being thus re-established, the bishops assembled anew; Chrodield and Basina presented themselves before them, and accused their abbess on various heads of which she cleared herself. As for the two instigators of the revolt, their crimes were evident, they were cut off from the communion of the Church, until they should have done penance, and the bishops sent their sentence to the two kings Gontran and Childebert. They did not yet submit; later only, Basina, who had shown several times movements of repentance, presented herself before the council of Metz, prostrated herself on the ground and asked pardon, promising to return to the cloister, to live there in peace with her abbess and to keep the rule exactly. These marks of repentance, joined to the recommendation of the king, led the bishops to re-establish her in the communion of the Church, and she re-entered in peace the abbey of the Holy Cross which she never left again. Chrodield received also her pardon, but did not re-enter her monastery. These events, in which Bertrand took an active part, passed in the years 589 and 590.

The following year, a frightful famine ravaged Maine, Anjou and the country of Nantes. “It was,” says Gregory of Tours, “the accomplishment of the words of the Lord, and a warning to the peoples of those regions, to enlighten them and withdraw them from the errors into which they let themselves be drawn.” In effect, the grossest superstitions found access to the minds of the unhappy and ignorant populations. Men greedy of rapine and debauchery passed themselves off as envoys of God; they seduced by prestiges, and drew after them numerous troops of men, women and children, of whom a part was victim of their unbridled lust. These shameful aberrations of the people won even priests, who were seen to attach themselves to these impostors, and carry through the provinces their shame and their debauches. The historian of the Franks, who has transmitted these facts to us, does not tell us at what impure sources these perverse men had drawn their infamous doctrines; but the disorders of their life and the nature of their teaching, although imperfectly known, lead us to believe that Gnosticism was at the bottom of these extravagances.

In the midst of so many scandals, surrounded by wars and by the agitations caused by scourges which attacked the religious and civil order, Bertrand thought only of procuring the happiness of his people and the glory of his Church. At no other epoch, so much as in the sixth and seventh centuries, were the faithful of the various Churches of Gaul seen more preoccupied with the care of augmenting the influence of the monks, by foundations and gifts made to monasteries. The secular clergy did not cease to hold in its bosom great virtues and real talents, but its action is much less marked in the contemporary monuments. In effect, the state of society never demanded so imperiously as in those times the action of an energetic and intelligent force, which should lead the peoples by teaching and by moral ascendancy, toward the labours necessary to its preservation: the monks fulfilled this need admirably. It does not enter into the plan of a particular history

like the one we are writing, to draw the picture of the disorders and miseries which beset almost all existences at that epoch; it suffices to recall that the damages caused by the conquest of the Franks had been only imperfectly repaired. The newcomers were not accustomed to the labours of the countryside, the invasion had been formed of a mass of young warriors, too proud by character to give themselves willingly to the toils of cultivation, above all when they could live by rapine, which the coarseness of the time confounded almost with courage.

On their side, the ancient inhabitants of the Gallic soil, long fashioned to Roman ideas, regarded every manual occupation, and above all the work of the fields, as the lot of slaves. The Churches and the monasteries had received large grants of land; but these lands would have remained long unproductive, without the labours of the voluntary slaves of monastic obedience. The cathedral churches possessed also an inestimable means of rendering these lands fruitful: the families that had remained free after the conquest, but in part despoiled, and whose liberty without protection was at every moment threatened, whose very existence was exposed to all sufferings, came in great numbers to put themselves into the hands of the bishops and of the archdeacons; they received in exchange for a labour ennobled by the liberty which offered it and by the religious sentiment which inspired it, security and an honourable existence. This usage of offering oneself as a gift to the Churches multiplied then much more than in the past, by reason even of the moral and civil state of society in Gaul. Saint Bertrand speaks, in his will, of the numerous enfranchised families, which had taken refuge under the protection of the basilica of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and he recommends them to the charity of the abbot of that monastery.

The cloisters had not this resource alone; the hand of the monks themselves cleared immense lands. These peaceful conquests of free labour, destined in the views of Providence to heal the wounds of armed conquests, begin above all to be realized toward the epoch at which we have arrived. Saint Bertrand, for his part, worked at it actively and on a vast scale. The goods which his family, which was powerfully rich, had transmitted to him, put him in a state to augment the revenues of his Church. He received besides considerable gifts from Fredegund and from the princes of Neustria; other persons put into his hands important estates to endow his Church of Le Mans, and one sees in the will which he himself dictated that he occupied himself constantly with the means of making all these riches yield. He avows frankly that he saw with pain that Saint Domnolus had given as endowment to the basilica of the holy martyrs Vincent and Laurence, goods belonging to the cathedral church, although that had been done at the prayer of the clergy and the people of Le Mans. Bertrand made immense acquisitions of land, not only in the diocese, but also in other parts of Gaul. Everything leads us to believe that some of these acquisitions are anterior to his episcopate, perhaps even to his entry into the clergy.

What is still more remarkable than the augmentation of his fortune is the care he took to have his domains cultivated in the most advantageous manner. In several places, he had clearings made, and by his care, lands desert before became rich vineyards. Thus, in the place known still to-day under the name of Arènes, where was found the ancient amphitheatre near the walls of the city, Bertrand had the soil cleared and the vine planted. He established the same culture, to the right of the road which led from Le Mans to Pontlieue, and later on a land which he had bought of the venerable abbot Eolade, whose monastery is unknown to us. Saint Licinius, bishop of Angers, gave Bertrand several plantings of vines situated near Cariliacenses, a vineyard which the bishop of Le Mans had formerly bought with the land of Sargite. Bertrand strengthened this culture, extended it even to new lands, more active in this than his predecessors, who, as he says himself, had left the various estates of the Church in a scarcely productive state. His active genius exercised itself still on other vineyards which were situated as far as in the Sabonarensis, country of Sabonères, in the diocese of Toulouse;[2] he built a house there, and had these distant properties cultivated by a family of colonists. Finally, he bought of his kinsman and spiritual son Ebroaldus, a domain named Comanicum, which is probably to-day the hamlet of Communal, likewise in the diocese of Toulouse;[3] he had buildings constructed there and

vines planted. These agricultural cares occupied him to the end of his life. In many farms, where he found only few slaves, he placed a greater number.

For the rest, the motive which engaged him in this complication of business was none other than the ardent charity which he felt for God and for the poor. All the immense riches that he acquired for his Church, as much by the gifts which he received as by the purchases which he made, and by the augmentations of value proceeding from a more intelligent culture, all these goods flowed out in foundations for the splendour of worship and for the relief of the indigent. It may be said that none of his predecessors equalled him in the number and the wealth of charitable establishments.

Such liberalities gave birth to a sort of emulation among rich persons, and considerable domains were put into the hands of Bertrand to be employed in the works which he founded. Thus the lord Bandhegisilus and his wife Saucia gave him the farm of Fontanae (Fontaines), on the banks of the Sarthe, near Allonnes. Suadria, sister of the bishop of Marseilles Saint Theodore, bequeathed by her will, to the cathedral church, the two domains of Luciniacum and of Monle (Lugny and Montmain); but in the sequel Bertrand was obliged to take great steps in order that his Church might enjoy in peace this last gift.

Queen Ingoberga, wife of Charibert, king of Paris, was at the same epoch a signal benefactress of the Church of Le Mans. A short time before her death, she sent for the bishop of Tours, Saint Gregory, and wished him to be witness of her last wishes in favour of the Churches and the poor. She bequeathed all her goods to the Churches of Tours and of Le Mans, and to the basilica of Saint Martin, and a short time after, she died, at the age of seventy, leaving liberty to a great number of slaves; it was in the year 589. Saint Bertrand, in his will, recalls the liberalities of this princess toward the Church of Le Mans; he designates as having been given him by this queen, of happy memory, the half of a domain named Culturae (Couture).

Leodault gave him a place named Colonica, for the foundation of the abbey of Saint Peter and Saint Paul of La Couture. The illustrious matron Egidia offered the half of a domain, named Vaiinolonnum, for the same foundation. Beatus, nephew of Babau, son of Theudalde, made gift of the domain of Nociagilos (Nieul-les-Saintes), in Poitou, on the banks of the Loire, in favour of the same abbey. Gonthier gave lands, in the environs of Jublains, for the mother-church of the diocese.

There were still a great number of other generous persons who distinguished themselves by donations at that epoch, as much in favour of the cathedral church as in favour of the monasteries and the hospitals; but none of these benefactors ought more justly to be recalled than the holy bishop of Angers, Licinius, commonly named Saint Lézin. Bertrand tells us that a tender friendship united them both, and that Licinius earned the gratitude of the Church of Le Mans by the lands which he offered it. He favoured with all his power the servants of God, and wished to associate himself with the bishop of Le Mans in the foundation of the abbey of Saint Peter and Saint Paul of La Couture.

At this epoch, the palaces of the Merovingian kings were the theatre of events which were to change the face of affairs, and bring into the Church of Le Mans years of trouble and mourning, after the days of prosperity which she had enjoyed. King Saint Gontran having died in 593, his States were divided between Childebert II and Clotaire II. Childebert, who already reigned in Austrasia, united from that time to his crown the kingdom of Orleans, that of Burgundy and a part of that of Paris; Clotaire, king of Neustria, a child of seven years, received only a portion of the latter. In this apanage were found the city and the country of Le Mans. Bertrand, already attached by his ties of kinship to the family of Fredegund, believed he ought to make to the new king a promise of fidelity, which drew on him and on his Church the greatest misfortunes.

Bertrand, in order not to fall into the hands of the Austrasian army, was obliged to flee from his episcopal city, and while he followed the wandering court of the king of Neustria, the Church of Le Mans was in the most deplorable situation. Covetous men, belonging to different classes of society, clerics and laymen, threw themselves on the spoils of the fugitive prelate, and seized his goods and those of the Church.

However these usurpations, deplorable as they were, did not cause the Church an evil comparable to that which an ambitious and shameless cleric, named Berthegisilus, brought to it. This man succeeded, by the protection of Childebert and of Brunhild, in getting himself given the episcopal unction, and in seating himself on the see of Le Mans, in contempt of the canons and of all the rules of discipline. He gave free course to his covetousness, seizing not only the goods of the Church, but also the lands which Bertrand held from his patrimony.

At last peace was re-established between the Austrasians and the Neustrians; a treaty was concluded, Maine came back under the power of the young Clotaire, and Bertrand resumed the conduct of his desolated Church. Fredegund came to his aid to repair so many evils. The usurpers were compelled to restore the goods they had unjustly seized; but above all Berthegisilus was reduced to lay down the insignia of the episcopate and to disavow his usurpation, by signing a charter by which he restored several domains belonging to the cathedral, among others Champagne and Etival. However, such were his credit and his audacity, that he never returned all the patrimonial goods which he had usurped from Bertrand, and repaired only in part the damages he had caused.

Soon after the re-establishment of Bertrand, the Burgundians and the Austrasians having again coalesced against the Neustrians, spread through Maine, renewing the same scenes of barbarity. Saint Bertrand tried, but in vain, to keep the city for Clotaire; all the party of the young prince was in rout; the bishop himself, regarding himself as inviolably bound by the promise of fidelity which he had made him, was obliged to flee and hide in a place then rather solitary, named Etival, in the heart of the immense forest of Charnie. Perhaps even he was, like Saint Betharius, made prisoner and held in a hard captivity; for he relates, in his will, that he endured successively exile and prison. The holy bishop makes known to us also that during his captivity, he asked his deliverance of God, by the intercession of Saint Martin, and made a vow to found, in honour of that holy confessor, a hospice served by monks, if he recovered liberty. It is to fulfil this promise that he built afterwards the monastery of Saint-Martin of Pontlieue.

To crown his misfortune, the usurpers came back and threw themselves on the goods of the Church and on the patrimony of Bertrand. Berthegisilus recommenced his sacrilegious devastations; he found, in the archives of the cathedral, the charter which he had been compelled to sign, when the first time Bertrand had been re-established in his rights by the authority of Fredegund, and he cast it into the fire.

Peace having been made, Bertrand re-entered at once his episcopal city. He claimed his goods, and, by the authority of Brunhild and of Theodoric, he was able to recover them, at least in great part. He worked also with activity to repair the losses which his Church had made, and he healed, as far as he could, the evils which it had undergone. These events passed in the space of four years, from 599 to 604.

In this last year, Clotaire wished to retake the provinces which he had been compelled to cede by the last treaty of peace. This new war, which lasted only a part of the year 604, forced Bertrand again to leave his see; but it was for the last time.

Clotaire, triumphant, showed himself grateful toward Be ertrand for the fidelity which that bishop had shown him; he listened favourably to his complaints, and caused his patrimony and the goods of the cathedral to be restored to him. But such was the misfortune of the times, that the usurpers of these possessions, who were Frankish or Gallo-Roman lords, for the two races vied in ardour for pillage, found the means of not making the restitution entire, as Saint Bertrand deplores in more than one place of his will. With regard to some of these invaders, the royal authority seems to have given way, in ordering the restitution only after their death. However, if we judge of the activity with which Bertrand pushed his action against these enemies of the Church, from the terms which he employs in speaking of them in his will, we may believe that the prelate did not lack energy.

Not only did Clotaire order that the goods which belonged to Bertrand and his Church be restored to them, but he added to it besides numerous and important donations. Already, after the first flight of our bishop, Fredegund and her son had gratified him with the farm of Bonalpha (Bonelles), situated in the country of Étampes, near the forest of Yveline. Bertrand received also from the same hand the farm of Nimione, near Paris, with vineyards which were at Frontanitum, near Plastarias and Vinitores; then the domains of Crisciacum (Crissé), in the country of Le Mans, of Villa-Thedonis (Thionville), in the country of Étampes, of Talais, in the country of Bordeaux, others still in the Bursay, in Maine, others in the country of Gâtines, near the Loir (Loir-et-Cher); the farm of Fontenay, near Bullion, in the country of Étampes, that of Bobane, on the river Ecolle, to-day Saint-Germain-sur-Ecolle (Seine-et-Oise); a house in the city of Paris. Besides, Clotaire made our bishop enter into partition with the mayors of the palace Gondoland, Bradon and Marnehaire, for domains situated in Berry, in the Albigeois, in the country of Cahors, in that of Agen and in Burgundy. Finally, this prince made Bertrand gift of sums of money so considerable that he was able to buy the domains of Campugnan, Ludon, Coubeyrac and Cameyrac, in the country of Bordeaux and of Cahors.

A short time after, Clotaire granted Bertrand a diploma which conceded to him the right of giving, in perpetuity, to the monastery of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, known afterwards under the name of La Couture, all that this bishop should wish, as much of the domains which he held from his family as of those with which royal munificence had gratified him.

The holy Prelate had attached much importance to obtaining this diploma; for he desired to endow this monastery richly. It was in effect the most beautiful foundation which he made during his episcopate, and he put all his application into adorning and enriching this sanctuary, after a warning which he received from heaven. One evening this holy Bishop had retired into one of the towers built on the outer walls of the city, and which was near the cathedral church: he had chosen it as a peaceful place to give himself there with more liberty to prayer; he passed in effect the whole night there in prayers. At daybreak, the archangel Saint Michael appeared to him, designated to him a neighbouring place then known under the name of Vivereus, and said to him that God wished to be served and honoured there. This place was situated to the south of the city, at a small distance from its walls, and belonged, it is said, to the cathedral church. Bertrand hastened to obey the order of heaven. He had at once begun the construction of a basilica, which was dedicated under the patronage of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and the buildings of a cloister, which, from its origin, showed itself surrounded with a certain splendour. This monastery was from that time for Bertrand an object of predilection; he regarded it, according to his own expressions, as a rampart and a protection for his city.

Not content with assigning to this new solitude considerable revenues capable of assuring its existence, Saint Bertrand interested also in his foundation the powerful friends he had in the Church and in the world. There is named among the benefactors of the monastery the pious and illustrious Egidia, who had already distinguished herself by her largesses toward the cathedral church. King Clotaire showed his benevolence toward the abbey of Saint Peter and Saint Paul by granting the diploma of which we have spoken. Saint Licinius of Angers, whom we have already made known, signalized his love for the monastic life by the generous manner in which he also concurred in the endowment of the new abbey; he gave it for that purpose a piece of land and vineyards which Saint Bertrand recalls in his will.

It was principally from his own goods that Bertrand endowed this monastery; but he assigned to it also goods which belonged to the cathedral church, and that on the pressing request of the clergy.

Bertrand subjected the inhabitants of the new cloister to the Rule of Saint Benedict, which was already called the Rule of the monastic life. He obliged them to give hospitality to all the poor, and to all the strangers who should claim it; and he wished that this house should always contain a great number of monks. He ordained that a matricular register should be kept in this monastery for the relief of the indigent, so numerous at that epoch.

For the dedication of the basilica, Saint Bertrand convoked several bishops, in order to render this solemnity more august. He deposited in the sanctuary relics of Saint Peter and Saint Paul; finally he drew up the charter of foundation, which designated the revenues forming the endowment. All the bishops present confirmed this act, and wished still to add to the gifts made by the founder.

Although one cannot determine positively the year in which this event took place, it is certain that this foundation preceded the death of Saint Licinius, and thereby, that it is anterior to the year 605, and to the last wars of which we have spoken, which had so great an influence on the life of Saint Bertrand.

More than ten years after, in 615, when Saint Bertrand made his will, he added much to the domain of his monastery by attributing to it the lands of Crissé (Sarthe), Thionville (Seine-et-Oise), Colonka Talete, perhaps Talais, in the Bordelais, then other farms in the Bursay, in the Gâtinais, and houses which Waruchaire, mayor of the palace of Burgundy, had given him, in exchange for the domain of Colombiers (Mayenne). The half of the revenues of these lands was to be employed for the relief of the poor, and the other half consecrated to maintaining the lighting of the basilica; but the monks were to take first what was necessary for their subsistence, and that of the poor inscribed on the matricular roll of their monastery. Bertrand bequeathed further to the abbey the domains of Gaviacm, Colonka, Landolense, Ferrensis; in the places named Cellis and Samarciago, near the city of Le Mans, all that had belonged to Portithorengus, whom the holy Bishop had had under his guardianship, all that Ceta, Mancia and Guntha had possessed; the lands of Campus-Chunanus, Ludina and Comariacum; the hamlet of Piciniacum, Hilliacum, another farm also named Colonka, which Leodault had given to Saint Bertrand for the foundations he was making; the lands of Methense and of Voligwne, that of Fontenay, near Bullion (Seine-et-Oise), a hamlet situated at the sources of the Vendée (Deux-Sèvres), vines which went from the ancient arenas of Le Mans to the new cloister; other vines, meadows and lands situated on the road to Pontlieue, and bought of the abbot Eolade; the Breuil, bought of the abbot Leusus, fields on the banks of the Sarthe, the half of the coulonge of Vatinolonnum, the other half having been given by Egidia; the domains of Campaniacum and of Etival; the court or farm and the houses held formerly in the city of Le Mans by the priest Romolos, a house which this same priest had caused to be built on the walls of the city, and other houses still in the same city; the domains of Conadacum, Colkas, vineyards in the Sabonarense and elsewhere, with the families of colonists and their houses; revenues on Talete, Crisciagum and Cameyrac (Gironde), for the poor inscribed on the matricular roll of the basilica; the domain of Vincentia, near Plassac, in the country of Bordeaux, that of Luir in the same country, the place of Brxsetum, also in the same country, with the pitch works, and the families of slaves employed in working them; a considerable sum of money, a third of the movable goods of the testator, the half of the horses; the domain of Comanicum with its vineyards and its buildings, that of the Fountains on the banks of the Sarthe, at Alonnes, given to Bertrand by the lord Bandhegisilus and Saucia his wife, “whose name,” says the will, “shall be inscribed in the Book of Life, and proclaimed in the basilica”; the half of divers farms situated in Berry, in the Albigeois, in the country of Cahors and in that of Agen; the domain of Nociogilus to share it with the cathedral, that of Vocriamnum entire, that of Nueil, in Poitou, on the banks of the Loire, given by Beatus; the place named Luciacus; finally the domain of Kairacum, including the buildings, the serfs, the vines, the meadows, the forests and all the rights that depend on it.

The largesses of Bertrand toward the new monastery of Saint Peter and Saint Paul were not limited there; he gave it besides several domains whose revenues were to be shared with the cathedral. Among these gifts common to the canons and the monks of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, one remarks a house in the territory of Bordeaux, in which they could lodge when they went to that country to buy fish there; which supposes that these journeys were rather frequent. Saint Bertrand bequeaths also, by his will, to the abbot of this monastery, to whom he gives the title of lord, horses and some other objects, and he recommends to him to take much care of the poor, and of the numerous families of slaves employed on the domains dependent on his basilica. In return for so many benefits, Saint Bertrand claims the prayers of the abbot and the monks, and

asks that his name be inscribed in the Book of Life, that is, in the diptychs in which, from the origin of monasteries, the names of the founders and other benefactors were inscribed, in order to recite each day special prayers for their intention.

The monks showed themselves for a long time worthy of the paternal affection which the holy Bishop had testified to them; they edified the peoples by their charity toward all the unfortunate, by their studious and occupied life, and by the zeal with which they applied themselves to honour God.

After having fulfilled the order which heaven had transmitted to him by the ministry of the holy Archangel, Bertrand wished to testify his gratitude to the heavenly messenger by the erection of an oratory, in his honour, in the place where he had appeared to him. He wished, as he says himself, that people should come to this sanctuary to adore God, on account of the marvels that had been wrought there, and which had rendered it venerable to all the world. Already the faithful, informed of the miraculous apparition with which Bertrand had been favoured there, regarded it as a place full of blessings, and one saw religious, and even bishops, come there, as to a holy pilgrimage. To assure the decency of worship, and to satisfy what charity demanded of him, our great bishop had built near it an edifice destined to receive principally the bishops and the religious.

The first thought of Bertrand, in founding this oratory and this hospice, had been to confide the direction of it to his abbey, to which he committed almost all his other works of charity; but during the time that he was obliged to leave his see and to take refuge with King Clotaire, as we have related, the bakehouses of the cathedral church, which were near it, were transported into the buildings of this hospice, and the holy Bishop, returned to his see, did not believe he ought to change this arrangement. He even had established in this place all that was necessary for the reception of the tithes in wheat, wine, cheese, bacon and other substances, which the chapter was to receive on the goods which belonged to it already, or which Bertrand transmitted to it by his will, and for the regular distribution which was made of them to the indigent. Bertrand speaks of this establishment only with the most touching solicitude, and for fear that in the sequel, under another episcopate, these foundations might suffer some diminutions, he prays, he conjures, he urges his successors to fulfil his intentions toward the poor, and he reminds them that he has well the right to dispose of it thus, since he has so magnificently endowed the house of the Church.

Saint Bertrand had just provided for the needs of the poor of the city, by the creation and rich endowment of the matricular roll of Saint-Michael; it remained for him still to relieve the needs of strangers. Already we have seen that there existed, near the tombs of our first bishops, a hospital for the reception of the pilgrims whom devotion drew there; Saint Innocent confided the administration and the service of it to monks. Saint Domnolus augmented the buildings and the revenues of this establishment, that it might receive a greater number of unfortunates. Saint Bertrand assigned to it an endowment in horses, and further the place named Lucianus and the farm of Bauciallurriy, situated on the Loir, with the serfs and all the improvements which had been made there.

Bertrand, nevertheless, wished still to add to so many monuments of his charity; he wished it to go, so to speak, to meet miseries and sufferings, and he created to the south of the city, at Pontlieue, on the banks of the river Huisne, and on the most frequented way of those that end at the city, a new hospice. As he had made a vow, during his exile, to raise a monastery and a hospice in honour of Saint Martin, if he had the happiness to return to his Church, he fulfilled his promise, and put this foundation under the patronage of that great bishop. He enriched it with the domains of Logiagx (les Loges), Nogintum (Nogent-sur-Loir), Novavilla (Neuville-sur-Sarthe), Antoniacum (Antoigné-sur-Sarthe), Monasteriolum (Montreuil-sur-Sarthe), and another domain at Pontlieue itself; then with certain dues to be raised on the farms of Talete, Cnsciagus, Cameyrac (Gironde). He wished this foundation to serve several ends: strangers and pilgrims were to be received, fed, lodged, clothed and relieved there in all manners. He ordained also that sixteen poor blind or infirm persons should be inscribed there on the roll, to receive each day sufficient food; and as charity is

never better exercised than when it is accompanied by religious devotion, Bertrand put this ministry and this hospice into the hands of the monks of the abbey of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. He placed the house under the dependence of the abbot of La Couture, charging that prelate to watch in a particular manner over the care of the poor on the roll of this basilica, the reception of strangers and the maintenance of the divine office, which was to be celebrated there in the same manner as in the basilica itself of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Wishing to prevent the effects of the spirit of covetousness which sometimes slipped even into the sanctuary, the holy Bishop recommends with force that no attack be ever made on the dispositions he has made in favour of this establishment, and he threatens with the chastisements of God and the wrath of Saint Martin the bishop his successor who should render himself guilty of such a theft, as well as the abbot of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, if he did not defend suitably the revenues of the poor.

To perpetuate the witness of his gratitude toward Saint Martin, Bertrand ordained that the feast of that great confessor should be celebrated every year in the abbey, with more than ordinary solemnity. On that day, the bishop and all the clergy of the city were to repair to the basilica, to celebrate there all together the divine offices in honour of the holy patron, then to sit down to a repast which the abbot of Saint Peter and Saint Paul was to furnish out of the revenues assigned by the founder.

The monuments have not taught us whether the generous bishop made no other gifts to the basilica of Saint-Martin of Pontlieue; but in his will he testifies a great desire to be able some day to augment its revenues.

Bertrand caused to be raised at a short distance from the city, between the north and the west, beyond the course of the Sarthe, a basilica in honour of Saint Germanus, bishop of Paris. He discharged in this a debt of gratitude; for he owed to that illustrious pontiff not only a distinguished education, but also his having himself been raised to the honour of the pontificate. It is not that the bishop of Paris had been in a position to influence directly the elevation of Bertrand to the see of Le Mans, since, as we have said, Germanus had been dead several years when our prelate received the episcopal unction; but Bertrand attributed this favour to the prayers of his former master.

By a sentiment full of propriety, and moreover by a necessity of the epoch, Bertrand founded a monastery of religious to serve this sanctuary, raised in honour of a bishop who had long practised the life of the cloister, and who had always cherished and favoured monks. To assure there the celebration of the divine service in perpetuity, he gave to the inhabitants of this monastery the domains of Charisacus, Chérizay (Sarthe), of Landolenae, of Grassac (Charente), and of Manciacus, then the agricultural holding of Tronchet, vines at Sillé (Sarthe), other vines at Rouillon, and the half of several pastures situated in the same place.

Bertrand did not limit there his gratitude toward Saint Germanus. There was still kept at Le Mans the hope of possessing the precious remains of the bishop of Paris, and the tomb which Saint Domnolus had had prepared for him in the basilica of Saint Vincent and Saint Laurence was still disposed to receive him. Saint Bertrand gave to this basilica the land of Bobane, Saint-Germain-sur-Ecolle (Seine-et-Oise), situated in the territory of Étampes, on the river Cella. He put as condition to this legacy, that if the body of the holy confessor remained in the basilica of the Holy Cross and Saint Vincent, at Paris, where it had first been deposited, or if it were transferred elsewhere, this domain should always remain the property of the monastery enriched with the sacred remains of the holy bishop. Bertrand asked only in return that his name be inscribed in the Book of Life of the monastery to which this farm of Bobane should fall.

The zeal of Bertrand, for so many pious and useful foundations, did not prevent him from applying himself to repair the wounds which the misfortune of the times had made in discipline. His piety, his lights and the favour of Clotaire drew on our holy Bishop a signal distinction. At that epoch, the Apostolic See often chose for vicar, in distant countries, such as Gaul was, a bishop of eminent merit. Several times this distinction was granted, not to metropolitans, but to simple bishops, because, translations being extremely rare then, superior

merit was not always found in the highest sees. Princes coveted this distinction for the prelates whom they esteemed the most. At the epoch when Bertrand governed the Church of Le Mans, Queen Brunhild was seen to solicit Saint Gregory the Great to grant it to Siagrius, bishop of Autun; she obtained the object of her request, and the great man on whom this honour was conferred fulfilled worthily so high functions; but death, which carried him off soon after, hindered him from enjoying this prerogative long.

Several years after, Clotaire having become sole master of Gaul, made request to Saint Gregory, or to his successor Sabinian, in order to obtain the same honour for Saint Bertrand. According to usage, our prelate had also to address a request to the same effect to the Pontiff, and to send him a cleric of his Church, if he did not himself make the journey to Rome. The Pope listened favourably to these requests, and sent to Bertrand the insignia of this dignity, that is, the Pallium. This ornament, which the Holy See is accustomed to grant to-day to all the metropolitans and to a small number of other bishops, was obtained with more difficulty in the seventh century.

When a bishop received the insignia of the Pallium and the functions of Vicar of the Holy See, he began to hold a rank higher than the other prelates; if his Church was not metropolitan, he became protothrone in his province, and sometimes this title with its honours has remained attached to the see itself. We may believe that the Church of Le Mans already enjoyed this undisputed right, since it appears first after the metropolis of the third Lyonnaise, in all the Notices of the Empire. But other prerogatives wholly personal were attached to this Vicariate; they were more or less extensive according to the tenor of the pontifical Letters which conferred them, but they always comprised an inspection over all the Churches of the kingdom, the charge of watching over the maintenance of discipline, and the right to convoke and direct the councils of the ecclesiastical provinces.

History keeps silence on what Bertrand did in his quality of Vicar of the Apostolic See. During the years that he exercised these functions, there were several councils in Gaul; but the ancient monuments furnish only imperfect notions on these assemblies, and it is not known what part our great bishop played in them; so, in order not to exceed the positive data of history, we shall enter into no detail in this regard.

Our prelate, warned by the great number of his years that death might approach him, resolved to make his will. For this purpose, according to the laws of the time, he solicited of Clotaire signed letters which should permit him to dispose of all his goods, as well of those which he held from royal munificence as of those which he had received as inheritance from his family, or finally, in any other manner. The king authorized him to dispose of all his goods in perpetuity.

Bertrand assembled then seven other bishops or chorepiscopi, and, in their presence, he dictated to the notary Ebbon that celebrated will which begins in these terms: “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, on the sixth of the calends of April, the thirty-second year of the reign of the most glorious lord King Clotaire, I, Bertrand, sinner and unworthy bishop of the holy Church of Le Mans, being perfectly sound in body and in mind, but fearing with reason the consequences of human frailty, I have drawn up my will, and I have begged my son, the notary Ebbon, to write it at my dictation. If, for any cause whatever, this will of mine should become invalid, whether for civil law, or for praetorian law, or by the intervention of some new law, I will that it have at least the value of a codicil *ab intestat*.”Thus then, when I shall have quitted the earth and paid my debt to nature, you shall be my heirs, you, most holy Church of Le Mans, jointly with the holy and venerable basilica of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, apostles, which I have raised by my own care, in sight of the city, to protect it and to serve the public utility. I constitute and declare you my heirs…”

By these words, “the holy Church of Le Mans,” Bertrand understands the cathedral church, or rather the chapter which represented it. He constitutes it, as one sees, his heir jointly with the basilica of Saint Peter and Saint Paul; all the lands or houses which he bequeaths to the one and the other are then enumerated; he makes also some gifts to different churches or basilicas, and to several private persons.

One remarks, in several passages of his will, that the motive of all his largesses was, besides the endowment of the numerous clergy attached to the cathedral, the maintenance of a great number of poor on the roll, or inscribed on the lists of the chapter to be succoured in all their needs. Another motive which may likewise be recognized, because it is expressed in several places, is the care of worship, and in particular of the lighting, not only in the cathedral church, but also in several basilicas. For this purpose, Bertrand assigns entire domains to each of these sanctuaries, that the light may never be extinguished either in the cathedral church or in the basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, of Saint Martin of Pontlieue, and of the Holy Cross.

The prelate lived still a long time after having drawn up this act, and, although in a very advanced old age, he busied himself without relaxation with the spiritual and temporal good of his Church. It was at this time that he founded or at least greatly augmented the monastery of Etival.[4]

At a small distance from the city of Le Mans, going away toward the west, one met, at the beginning of the seventh century, a very thick forest which extended as far as the banks of the river Erve and beyond. It was one of the most solitary and savage places of the whole province, and even of the empire of the Franks. Bertrand, obliged to flee before the enemies of King

Clotaire and his own, had withdrawn, as we have said, for some time into this solitude; he found there safety and repose and built there, it is said, an oratory. When tranquillity had been restored to the whole empire of the Franks, by the peaceful reign of Clotaire II, the holy bishop built a monastery in this wild place, in order that its inhabitants might receive the instructions of the faith and the help of the Sacraments. The history of this monastery is besides unknown to us, like that of a great number of others of the same epoch.

All the labours of Saint Bertrand did not prevent him from applying himself still to the cultivation of letters; he kept up an epistolary commerce with some of the most distinguished prelates of the epoch, such as Saint Licinius of Angers, Saint Arnulf, bishop of Metz and one of the most devoted partisans of Clotaire, and finally Saint Venantius Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers. He addressed sometimes to the latter, as to the man most capable of judging them, the poems which he composed and which we have unfortunately lost.

Bertrand attained an extreme old age, and died in peace on the eve of the calends of July, about the year 623.

He was buried by the comprovincial bishops, and by his disciples in his dear basilica of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The memory of this great bishop remained precious to the populations, who continued, for long centuries, to visit his tomb fruitful in miracles till these latter times.[5]

We have borrowed this life from the *History of the Church of Le Mans*, by Dom Piolin.

Saint Adilia or Adile, Virgin and Abbess, in Brabant

About 650.

Adilia or Adile, who must be carefully distinguished from Saint Odilia, virgin and abbess of Hohenburg and patroness of Alsace, with whom most hagiographers have confounded her, and whose feast the churches of Germany celebrate only on 13 December, devoted herself to the religious life on the mountain which is near Orp-le-Grand, in Brabant. She directed there, in the seventh century, a monastery of virgins whom she had gathered with the particular aim of exercising hospitality toward pilgrims, above all toward the preachers of the Gospel. Seeing that the height and the difficulty of the mountain prevented several from coming to the monastery, she had built in the bottom of the valley, at the foot of the same mountain, a church dedicated to Saint Martin, with a monastery and a hospice, and established herself there with her religious.

It is affirmed that she was sister of Saint Bavo, patron of Ghent, who was born in the Mesboie where he possessed a vast patrimony. This is the opinion of Molanus, who says he discovered this relationship in an old missal of the ancient priory of Saint-Bavo.

When, laden with merits, she had passed from this life to a better, she was buried in the church of Orp-le-Grand, which she had caused to be built with her great goods. She reposed there in a crypt, before the altar of Saint John the Baptist, until the day when her sacred relics were raised from the earth and placed in a shrine. God has honoured them with different miracles, and the inhabitants of Orp follow them every year in a solemn procession. *Proper of Mechlin*.

The Blessed Adalsende,[1] Religious at Hamay, and Saint Clotsende,[2] Abbess of Marchiennes

The ties of blood and of virtue united these young virgins during their life; the authors do not separate them either after their death. They were both daughters of Saint Adalbaud, duke of Douai, and of Saint Rictrude. This virtuous lord having been assassinated in a journey which he made in Gascony to the country of his wife, they followed their venerable mother, who withdrew a short time after to the monastery of Marchiennes.

Adalsende, who was the younger, took the veil in the monastery founded by her grandmother Saint Gertrude, at Hamay, in the Low Countries, and died in the flower of her age; as a pious hagiographer says, “she who had arrived last at the gate of temporal life, entered first, by the gate of death, into eternal life.” One may add with him still, when one considers the precocious piety of this young child, “that she, like her sisters, generously trampled under foot the pomps of the age, and despised the most brilliant alliances to consecrate herself to God.” Such were the dispositions of her heart, when it pleased the Lord to recall her to Himself and to reward her for the holy works which had already filled her career of some years. Clotsende, remaining alone with her venerable mother, applied herself with care to follow her wise counsels and to imitate her virtues. She succeeded her, after her death, as abbess. This young virgin had been held at the baptismal font by Saint Amand himself, who served her as spiritual father. The lessons which that illustrious apostle gave her and those which she received from her pious parents made of her an accomplished religious. According to Lecointe, Clotsende lived seventy-nine years, and died on 30 June 714, after having directed the abbey of Marchiennes for the space of twenty-six years. The relics of the virgins Adalsende and Clotsende reposed in the church of the monastery of Marchiennes, as did those of their sister Eusebia or Ysoie who was transported there in 1133. It is there that they were honoured with a public worship.

Abbé Destombes, *Lives of the Saints of the Dioceses of Cambrai and Arras*.

End of the Month of June.

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[1] See his life on the preceding day.

[2] There was formerly at Rome a church of her name, which is mentioned in the first of the councils held in that city, under Pope Saint Symmachus, in 499.

[3] His body formerly reposed in the church of Saint-Martin outside the Walls, at Viviers. The inhabitants of the town held him in great veneration, and, in time of drought, they were accustomed to come and pray at his tomb to obtain the cessation of the scourge.

[4] See his life on 1 July.

[5] We give her life on 21 September.

[6] See his notice on 29 March, volume iv, page 56.

[7] A cosmographer of the sixteenth century, André Théret, says he saw, three leagues from Rama, at the village of Aronha, a church built in honour of Saint Martial, who was said to be a native of that place. (*Cosmogr. Univers.*, vol. 1, p. 169.)

[8] We may cite further Anselm of Laon, Peter Comestor, Gerald de Frachet, Adam of Clermont, Durand of Mende, Nicholas of Lyra, Ludolph the Carthusian, etc.

[9] Bernard Guidonis, Saint Antoninus, etc.

[10] *Dissertation on the Apostolate of Saint Martial*, page 95.

[11] *Unpublished Documents on the Apostolate of Saint Martial*, page 56.

[12] The ancient acts of Saint Martial, in relating this resurrection, express themselves thus: “The thing happened as Saint Peter had announced, as popular renown attests. Hardly had Saint Martial touched with the staff of Saint Peter the corpse of his companion, when the members which the heat of the blood had abandoned were restored at once to a new life; Austriclinian began to see with his own eyes the light of which he had lost the enjoyment in dying. Why this miracle, unless to make shine in all its lustre the faith of Peter, in whose name it was wrought?”

[13] *Unpublished Documents on the Apostolate of Saint Martial*, page 37.

[14] Toulx-Sainte-Croix, canton of Bonssac, (Creuse), and not Tulle (Corrèze), as some authors little versed in the traditions of the country have advanced. See on the ruins and monuments of the Celtic town of Toulx the *Researches* of M. Bnrailon, corresponding member of the Institute, pp. 316 and 384.

[15] Chief town of a canton (Creuse), on the Roman road from Lyons to Limoges.

[16] *Unpublished Documents on the Apostolate of Saint Martial*, page 37.

[17] Saint Valeria is honoured as the first martyr of Aquitaine in the diocese of Limoges, where an office of double of the second class is celebrated in her honour on 10 December.

[18] Painting of the thirteenth century, on enamel, from the shrine of Saint Valeria.

[19] It is said that Bertrand was archdeacon of Paris for two years; he would have been so scarcely a year, according to Father Papebroch (loc. cit. num. 6). Baillet pretends that he was charged with this function for ten years, that he received it from the hands of Saint Germanus, and continued to discharge it under his successor. This is indeed the most probable opinion.

[20] A parish of the department of Haute-Garonne, arrondissement of Muret, canton of Rieumes.

[21] This hamlet is in the parish of Azas, department of Haute-Garonne, arrondissement of Toulouse, canton of Montastruc.

[22] Stivale, estivale, *Aestivalium*; a parish of the great deanery of La Quinte of Le Mans; at present in the canton of La Suze.

[23] One saw, not long ago, near the abbey church, to-day parochial, of La Couture, a fountain which bore the name of our holy bishop, and where the faithful came to draw water to use in their maladies.

[24] Alias, Adalsinde.

[25] Alias, Glodsende, Glossinde.

1 July

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The octave of Saint John the Baptist. — On Mount Hor, in Arabia Petraea, the decease of Saint Aaron, first priest of the Levitical Order. 1471 B.C. — In England, the holy martyrs Julius and Aaron, who were put to death after Saint Alban, during the persecution of Diocletian. At the same time, several Christians of the same country, after having been tortured in a thousand ways and cruelly torn, attained to the joys of the eternal city, in recompense for their generous combat. About 304. — At Mechlin, in Belgium, Saint Rumold or Rombaud, martyr, son of a king of Scotland and bishop of Dublin. 775. — In the ancient city of Sinuessa, in Campania, the holy martyrs Castus and Secundinus, bishops and martyrs. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Martin, third bishop of that see and disciple of the Apostles.[1] 120. — At Clermont, in Auvergne, Saint Gall I, bishop. 553. — In the diocese of Lyons, Saint Domitian, abbot, who first exercised, in those regions, the eremitical life; after having assembled there several religious to apply themselves to the worship of God, having become very famous by the excellence of his virtues and the brilliance of his miracles, he was at last called into the company of the Saints in a blessed old age. 440. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Thierry, priest, disciple of Saint Remigius, bishop. 533. — At Angoulême, Saint Cybard, abbot. 581. — At Emesa, in Syria, Saint Simeon, surnamed Salus, who counterfeited the madman for Jesus Christ, but whose profound wisdom God discovered by great miracles. 570. — At Vicenza, in Venetia, the decease of Saint Thibadt, hermit, of the family of the counts of Champagne, who, by his holiness and his miracles, merited to be placed in the number of the Saints, by Pope Alexander III. About 1066.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Belley, Saint Domitian, abbot, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Paris, in the church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, the veneration of the miraculous host, which, pierced with a penknife and

a lance by a Jew, gave forth a quantity of blood; thrown afterwards into the fire and into a cauldron of boiling water, not only was it not consumed there, but, after having reddened that water with purple, it rose above it all radiant with splendour, which made the faithful recognize it. It was preserved very long in that church, to serve as an eternal witness of the real presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist; the house of the Jew where these great miracles had been wrought was changed into a chapel, under the name of Billette; it was long occupied by the Carmelite Fathers of the Observance. — At Rennes, in Brittany, Saint Léonore or Lunaire, bishop, who governed that see in peace under the emperor Constantine the Great. — At Saint-Pol-de-Léon, in the diocese of Quimper and Léon, Saint Goulven, bishop, whose worship is very popular in Brittany. 10th century. — In the country of Maine, Saint Calais, abbot. Formed to the monastic life at Micy (Miciacum, diocese of Orleans, Order of Saint Benedict, under the invocation of Saint Stephen), by Saint Mesmin and Saint Avy, he imitated perfectly their virtues and himself founded the monastery of Anisole, in the diocese of Le Mans. This was the cradle of the present town of Saint-Calais, Anisola (Sarthe). 545. — At Denain, in the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Reine, kinswoman of King Pepin and wife of the Blessed Aldebert, count of Ostrevent. She founded, near the banks of the Scheldt, and under the invocation of the most holy Virgin, the abbey of Denain, which was the nucleus of the town of the same name.[2] End of the 8th century. — In the diocese of Rodez, Saint Florez or Fleuret (*Floregius*), regionary bishop of the country of Auvergne and the neighbouring regions. 7th century. — In the diocese of Autun, memory of Saint Theobald, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Laval, memory of Saint Calais, cited in the martyrology of France of this day. — At Autun, Saint Leontius, bishop of that see and confessor. Although his life is buried in the darkness of distant ages, there are few bishops whose holiness is so universally recognized, and one is astonished not to see him honoured in the new Breviary. About 460. — At Mechlin, in Belgium, the venerable Clarisse, virgin, Beguine religious. While still quite young, her parents wished to have her instructed in the human sciences, but she had no taste for study and loved holidays much. Her mistresses profited by these dispositions to raise her heart toward heaven: “In Paradise,” they said to her, “it is always Sunday, always feast, always holiday.” The child cried out that she wished to go to paradise, and as she was dreaming of the means of mounting there, she was told that one did not arrive there by material steps, but by steps of the soul, which are good conduct and good works; she resolved then to remain very good. Reason came and good will remained: Clarisse continued what habit had begun. Later she made the vow of chastity and entered the béguinage, where, with the grace of God and the help of prayer, and by the efficacy of the Sacraments, she overcame temptations and passions, and died in the odour of sanctity. 1460. — At Le Mans, Saint Hilary of Oise, confessor, whose body reposes in that city, in a church which bears his name. 535. — In the dioceses of Nantes and of Poitiers, Saint Lupien, confessor, who was, it is said, baptized by the illustrious Saint Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, and died a few days after his baptism. The town of Machecoul (Loire-Inférieure) possessed formerly his tomb and his relics; Saint Gregory of Tours assures us that the blind recovered sight there, the paralytics the use of their limbs, and the deaf that of hearing. The devastations of the Normans have deprived the faithful of the precious relics of Saint Lupien, and he is no longer even honoured with a public worship in the diocese of Nantes. 4th century. — At Lille, the feast of Our Lady of Loreto. — At Paris, the feast of Our Lady of Good Deliverance. — At Fougères, in the diocese of Rennes, Our Lady of the Marsh.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

On Mount Hor, in Arabia Petraea, Saint Mary, prophetess, sister of Moses and Aaron. It was she who took care of the young years of the future lawgiver of the Hebrews, after the daughter of King Pharaoh had given him back to his mother Jochabed. After the passage of the Red Sea, when, on the scene of a victory so unexpectedly won, a pompous hymn was intoned to celebrate the deliverance of Israel, Mary led the choir of women, and repeated with them the refrain of that sublime song: “I will sing to the Lord, for He has displayed His glory with splendour and cast into the sea the horse and the rider.” At the moment when the long and hard exile of the Hebrews was about to end and when the image of the fatherland appeared already

on the horizon, Mary died and was buried at Cades-Barne, a city of Idumea, at the eastern extremity of the desert of Sinai. 16th century B.C. — At Susa, in Persia, the memory of Queen Esther, the illustrious wife of Ahasuerus.[3] — At Rome, Saint Eleutherius, pope and martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of 26 May.[4] 185. — At Nicomedia, the birth into heaven of Saint Zoilus, martyr, named in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Isicius or Isicia, Processus, Marina, Antony or Antoninus, Serena and Victor, mentioned by the same. — In Mesopotamia, Saint Zelus and six of his companions, martyrs; further, Saint Orion and eight of his companions, and two hundred and sixty-four others, likewise martyrs. — At Antioch, the saints Severian, Zoelus and Epose, martyrs. — The saints Primus, Idonea, and their companions, whom Saint Jerome is content to cite in his martyrology without further details. — Among the Greeks, Saint Basil, abbot, founder of the ancient monastery of Christ the Saviour, surnamed of the deep waters. — Among the Greeks again, Saint Leo, anchorite, and Saint Maurice, martyr. — At Nicomedia, the birth into heaven of twenty-five martyrs who suffered the torment of fire. — In the Orkney Islands, to the north of Scotland, Saint Servanus, bishop and confessor, apostle of those regions. A Scot by origin, he was created bishop of Orkney by Saint Palladius, who was already busy converting to the faith the peoples of that country. His name is popular in Scotland because of the miracles of which tradition reports that his life was but a tissue. He is patron of the Orkney Islands, and is honoured also in Wales, in England. 6th century. — Near Cologne, in the Rhenish province, the Blessed Héchard, priest and confessor, founder of the monastery of Scheiden, of the Order of Prémontré. This abbey, called also Scheida or Segor, took its origin in 1173 on the ruins of a chapel which Noiand, lord of Ardeya, had caused to be built in honour of Saint Severinus in his citadel of Scheida. After the death of Noiand, Héchard counselled Witrude, widow of that lord, to destroy the citadel and to have a monastery built in its place, which was done. The body of our Blessed was buried in his abbatial church. About the year 1174. — At Vicenza, in Venetia, the Blessed Bartholomew of Bragança, bishop of that see, of the Order of Friars Preachers.[5] 1270. — In the solitudes of Nitria, in Egypt, Saint Pambo, anchorite. It is not known in what year he was born, nor what was his country. But he quitted the world early and withdrew near Saint Antony under whose guidance he made marvellous progress in the interior life. God having called him afterwards to the desert of Nitria, He made him there one of the firmest supports of the religious life, by his counsels and his examples. His principal virtues were love of silence, renunciation of his own will, detachment from the things of the world, the practice of bodily austerities and of works of charity. Saint Athanasius, who knew the merit of Saint Pambo, called him to Alexandria to bear witness there to the divinity of Jesus Christ, as he had called Saint Antony there. About 387.

Movable Feasts of July

The first Sunday of July, feast of the most precious blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.[6] — In the diocese of Le Puy, the Sunday which precedes or immediately follows 11 July, the anniversary of the dedication of Notre-Dame du Puy and of all the churches of the diocese. — In the same diocese on the following Sunday, octave of the dedication of the same church of Notre-Dame and of all the churches of the diocese. — In Portugal, the third Sunday of the month, feast of the Angel protector of the kingdom. — At Castres, a little village a league from Hazebrouck (Nord), the first Sunday of July, pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Grâce. Castres derives its name from two Latin words, *castae tres*, the three virgins. They were three daughters of Kenulf, king of Mercia, in England, who, after their conversion to the faith, in 855, consecrated themselves to God by the vow of chastity, and were massacred in hatred of religion in the forest which neighbours the village of which we speak. A holy old man, who had lost his sight, learned in a vision that, if he had himself conducted to a certain place of the forest, he would find the bodies of the three young virgins, martyrs of chastity, and that their blood, applied to his eyes, would restore his sight. The fact confirmed the prediction. Suddenly the forest was illuminated, and Mary, surrounded by angels, appeared to the old man, who promised her to raise in that place a monument consecrated to her worship and where the relics of the three virgins were to be venerated. The statue of Mary was placed above the principal altar. Such was the origin of the sanctuary of Notre-Dame de Grâce. Soon people came there in pilgrimage from all the neighbouring

countries; the statue has always remained on its altar, even in the midst of the troubles of the Revolution, and, in 1843, the Holy See granted a plenary indulgence to those who should visit it from the last Sunday of June until the following one. — At Boulogne, in the diocese of Paris, the second Sunday of July, pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de Boulogne-sur-Seine, founded by the inhabitants of Paris on the model of that of Notre-Dame de Boulogne-sur-Mer. King Philip the Long laid, in 1320, the first stone of the new sanctuary, which was only finished at the beginning of 1330, under the reign of Philip III. The latter obtained from Pope John XXII the erection into a parish of the new church and of its territory in the separating it from Auteuil. From that time, all the sovereign pontiffs have honoured this sanctuary with abundant indulgences. In the month of May 1853, the confraternity established in the church since Philip the Long, and destroyed at the Revolution, was reconstituted by the parish priest and enriched, by Pius IX, with new spiritual favours. — On the Saturday before the first Sunday of July, in the town of Guingamp, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours. It is the most celebrated and the most frequented of the diocese; it dates from the fourteenth century. The sanctuary forms an oblong square of five naves, indented at the north-west by an outer chapel embedded in the north side aisle and commonly called Portail Notre-Dame. There is the venerated statue of the Virgin of Bon-Secours and the place of the pilgrimage. The revolutionary fury of the last century fell wholly on this monument of the faith of the faithful. In 1853, it was completely restored and its first splendour given back to it. Since this fine restoration, the sanctuary of Bon-Secours ceases not to be visited by pious pilgrims who arrive from five o'clock in the morning when it opens and follow one another until nine in the evening when it closes. Guingamp is, on that day, the meeting-place of all Brittany. — At Goadelin, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, feast of Notre-Dame de l'Isle, so called because the brook which winds in the valley where she stands surrounds it with water almost on all sides. A humble oratory in the beginning, the twelfth century made of it a splendid sanctuary which the Revolution of '93 greatly damaged. Rebuilt on the reopening of the churches, it is composed at present of three parallel naves separated by two rows of columns: three bas-reliefs, representing different scenes of the life of the Blessed Virgin, cover the retable of the high altar. Since this reconstruction the fervour of the faithful has taken a new impulse, and the favours of Mary have multiplied with the concourse of pilgrims. — At Candau, in the diocese of Vannes, the second Sunday of July, pilgrimage to the chapel of Notre-Dame de Vérité. On that day people come there in crowds and a Breton canticle of twenty-eight verses is sung there, which sets forth some of the miracles obtained in that place. — In Auvergne, the Sunday which immediately follows 2 July, feast of Notre-Dame de Vassivière.[7]

Saint Aaron, High Priest of the Hebrews and Brother of Moses

1593–1471 before Jesus Christ.

Suscitabo mihi sacerdotem fidelem, qui juxta cor meum et animam meam faciat.

I will raise up for myself a priest, who shall act according to my heart and my soul.

1 Reg., II, 35.

Aaron, of the tribe of Levi who was his great-grandfather by his father Amram and by his mother Jochabed, was born in Egypt, before the edict which the king had issued to put to death all male children at the time of their birth had been put in execution. He had a sister named Mary, who was his elder by three years, and he was himself three years older than his brother Moses. He married Elisabeth, daughter of Aminadab, of the tribe of Judah, and had by her four sons, Nadab, Abin, Eleazar and Thomas. When Moses wished to excuse himself from going to ask of Pharaoh the liberty of the children of Israel, alleging the difficulty he had in speaking, God told him to take with him his brother Aaron, because he expressed himself easily, adding that he would be his organ with the people. Moses having set out from Madian to return to Egypt, God commanded Aaron to go to meet him in the desert: he joined him at the foot of Mount

Moreb, where they embraced. Moses then related to him all that the Lord had said to him in giving him his mission, and declared to him the miracles which He had ordered him to work. Having come together into Egypt, they assembled the elders of the Israelites, and Aaron reported to them all those marvels.

The two brothers went afterwards to speak to King Pharaoh and asked of him for the people of Israel the liberty to go into the desert to offer sacrifices to God. The resistance and the hardening of the king are known, and the plagues which afflicted Egypt in punishment of the sin of its chief. The rod which Aaron carried in his hand was the instrument God made use of in this circumstance to work several miracles. It was changed into a serpent, turned the waters of the Nile into blood, filled Egypt with frogs and covered the whole country with gnats. Aaron had part in all that Moses did afterwards for the deliverance of the people of Israel. He was the interpreter of his brother, both with Pharaoh and before the people, God having established him the prophet of Moses, as He had established Moses the god of Pharaoh. It was he again who gathered the manna in a vase which was afterwards put into the tabernacle to preserve it for posterity. During the battle which Joshua fought against the Amalekites, Aaron and Hur, his brother-in-law, assisted Moses who was praying for the victory, on the top of the hill, and sustained his arms, each on his side, for they remarked that the enemies had the advantage when weariness made him lower them. When, a few days after the victory, they went to camp at the foot of the mountain of Sinai, God willed that Aaron should go up with Moses to hear His commandments, although it was forbidden to any other, under pain of death, even to touch the foot of the hill. It was there that Aaron was established substitute of Moses, and charged to settle the difficulties which might arise during his absence, which was to be forty days. Meanwhile, the people, impatient to see Moses again, went so far as to forget God Himself. They came in crowds to besiege Aaron to oblige him to give them other gods. Aaron had the weakness to yield to the pressing demands of this indocile multitude, and consented to the making of the golden calf; but his repentance equalled his fault, and God chose him for the high priest of the Jewish religion. This preference excited a revolt which had for chiefs Core, Dathan and Abiron, three ambitious men who aspired to that dignity and who were swallowed up with their families in the bowels of the earth. A great number of their partisans were consumed by the flames which issued from the altar, at the moment when they were making the usual incensations; others, in still greater number, perished by the fire from heaven, which would have exterminated all those rebels if Aaron had not placed himself, censer in hand, between the dead and the living, to appease the wrath of God. A new miracle, less terrible, but not less capable of reducing the murmurers to silence, came to confirm his priesthood. The twelve rods of the twelve tribes were placed, by the order of God, in the tabernacle, and the sovereign priesthood was to be conferred on the tribe whose rod should have flowered during the following night. The next day, the rod of the tribe of Levi, that is, that of Aaron, was found laden with flowers and fruits. He was therefore proclaimed high priest a second time, and this dignity, which he exercised all his life, became hereditary in his family.

When the term of his career had arrived, God told Moses to lead him up to Mount Hor, and to strip him of the insignia of the priesthood to clothe with them his son Eleazar, who was to succeed him. Aaron had not the consolation of entering the promised land, for having doubted the power of God, who commanded him to strike with his rod the rock of Cades, in order to make water issue from it. He struck two blows instead of the one which was prescribed him, and this distrust was punished in this world; which does not hinder his having been rewarded in the other; for the Church honours him as a saint, and his name is read in the Roman martyrology of the first of July. He died at the age of a hundred and twenty-three years, and the people mourned him for thirty days.

Aaron was buried on the summit of Mount Hor, where his tomb is still venerated. An old Arab, who dwells at the top of the rock, serves as guardian of this venerated place. Scarcely any other relics of Aaron have been shown than the rod of which we have spoken, and which Moses had caused to be preserved near the ark of the covenant, in memory of that marvel. Since the ruin of the temple by Nabuchodonosor, it is not known

what has become of it; it has not failed, however, to be said that it was preserved at Rome, with that of Moses, in the church of Saint John Lateran.

The greater part of the engravings, sculptures and paintings represent him holding in his hand the flowering rod which served to recognize the choice God had made of him to become sovereign sacrificer: this characteristic appears the most rational. — A stained-glass window of the eighth century, in the cathedral of Le Mans, shows him holding in his arms the dying synagogue; another of the sixteenth century, in the church of Saint-Patrice at Rouen, holding the brazen serpent. — The mitre is again the attribute which the ancient windows give him fairly frequently. — A figure taken from a miniature of the Bible of the eleventh century represents him at half-length, facing Moses, and holding a vase which is doubtless that which contained the manna in the ark of the covenant, or the blood of the victims. — He is seen sometimes showing to the Hebrew people the golden calf, around which a dance forms; or again striking the rock from which a spring of living water issues. — Finally, modern paintings represent him willingly with a censer in his hand. *Acta Sanctorum*, volume 1 of July; — Cf. Baillet, etc.

Saint Thierry, Abbot of Mont-d'Or, in the Diocese of Reims

533. — Pope: John II. — King of France: Childebert I.

Religiosi mundo sunt mortui, eorumque in caelo est cum angelis conversatio.

Religious are dead to the world and their conversation is in heaven with the angels.

B. Alan, de Rupe, serm. xxxi, de Excell. Relig.

God, who draws the rose from a bud surrounded with thorns, and who causes the most beautiful fruits to be born of a muddy earth covered with dung, caused also this excellent religious to be born of a father of very low condition, and who rendered himself still more worthy of contempt by the vices to which he was addicted, for he was a poor peasant named Marquard, of the village of Ménancourt, on the river Suippe, near Reims, who, instead of earning his living by the innocent exercises of country life, supported his family by the thefts which he committed in the woods and the environs of his village. Scarcely had Thierry come forth from so bad a stock, when it was seen, by a great miracle, what his innocence and the purity of his soul were one day to be. The well in which were washed the sheets and swaddling-clothes that served to wrap him contracted no more any stain, although it remained open as usual and nothing was put over it to close it. Flodoard, who lived more than four hundred years after him, assures us that this marvel still subsisted in his time.

The mother of our holy child, who had not so bad a soul as her husband, took some care to have him instructed in the little schools; he made there still more progress in virtue than in reading and writing. When he had reached the required age, his parents obliged him to marry. He resolved nevertheless to preserve inviolably, in that state, his virginity as a treasure to which all the goods of the world are not comparable. He had great difficulties to overcome, for his wife, when he had communicated his design to her, was very much irritated by it; she believed that her husband lacked affection for her. Thierry, not knowing how to win her, goes to Reims to find a holy abbess, named Susanna, who, under the guidance and authority of Saint Remigius, archbishop of the place, governed a community of holy maidens in a famous monastery of the city; he throws himself at her feet, opens to her the secrets of his heart and begs her to assist him with her wise counsels and her prayers in so thorny a conjuncture. The holy lady received him with much kindness, and after having done her best to console him in his trouble, she counselled him to address himself to the holy prelate, who would not fail to mark out to him the most just and the surest ways to succeed in his pious design. Thierry, who had already received salutary instructions from Saint Remigius, and who regarded him as a perfect model of holiness, came to find him at once and discovered to him all his intentions. The holy Archbishop, who knew that the marriage he had just contracted took from him the liberty of living in

celibacy, without the consent of his wife, ordered him to go back to her, to represent to her the immortal crown which the King of heaven and earth promises to those who have courage enough to preserve their purity in the midst of the corruption of the age, and to make her understand that the vow of virginity is the homage of the Christian most glorious to God and the virtue most agreeable to the angels. Thierry obeyed the orders of his pastor and returns to his wife: as much as she had appeared invincible and indignant at the first words which he had brought her on his design, so much did she show gentleness and condescension at this second visit; her mind began to be convinced and her heart to soften at seeing the zeal of her husband; and, letting herself at last be moved by his touching persuasions, she assured him that, in imitation of him, she would have no more love except for Jesus Christ; so that, from that moment, she too consecrated her virginity to Him for ever. Her generous husband testified to her the joy he felt at so unhoped-for a change; and after having given her the kiss of peace, he withdrew from her, to avoid every occasion of weakness or inconstancy.

There remained for our Saint only to find a solitary place in which to pass the rest of his days in the contemplation of heavenly things. He returned therefore to Reims, where, first, he addressed himself again to the holy abbess Susanna, who, by the sensible examples of her high piety and by her edifying discourses, encouraged him anew to the study of perfection and to the accomplishment of the great desire he had to separate himself entirely from the world. He came also to find Saint Remigius again, who, seeing the good dispositions of his heart, besides the salutary instructions he gave him for the conduct of his interior, wished further to have him study, and then to honour him with the august dignity of the priesthood: Thierry responded to it with such force that in a short time he made considerable progress in the science and in the virtues most conformable to that character. Thus the holy archbishop, who thought only of making Christianity flourish in his diocese, cast his eyes on this great servant of God to confide to him the care of a monastery of religious which he had the design to establish in a little forest, on a mountain named Mont-d'Or, rather near Reims. One day when he sent him to that place, with the holy abbess Susanna, to recognize the spot most suitable for this edifice, an eagle descended miraculously from heaven, and, halting in a small space of the forest, hovered around it for a rather considerable time, without ever straying from it, to make known that God, who had inspired the holy Prelate with the design of this establishment, wished also to determine the place of its situation and as it were to mark out its plan. And in order that this miracle might not pass for a chimerical vision, nor for an effect of chance, in the four following years there was seen, on the day of the Nativity of Our Lord, a like bird hovering all around and over the whole extent of the monastery, which the holy archbishop afterwards dedicated in honour of Saint Bartholomew.

Saint Thierry did not see himself sooner in possession of this nascent abbey, of which he was the first religious, than he made appear the fruits of his zeal and of his eminent holiness. For, following the movements of the charity of Jesus Christ which pressed him, he went into all the places round about to preach the Gospel there and to instruct the people in the most important maxims of Christianity; he won in this way many souls to God. It is true that several of the penitents contented themselves with putting themselves back on the true road of virtue, from which they had strayed; but the others, animated with the desire of a higher perfection and of great austerity, resolved to quit their houses and their families, to renounce riches and all the grandeurs of the earth, to follow so generous a captain and to pass the rest of their days in fighting the flesh and the demon under his glorious standards. One remarks, among others, Saint Theodulf, otherwise Thion, of very illustrious birth, who, after having imitated his virtues and passed several years in a perfect mortification, was found worthy to be his second successor in the government of his abbey. But the most famous conquest of our holy Abbot was that of his own father. He touched his heart so keenly by his prayers, by his tears and by the force of his remonstrances, that he won him altogether to God, and gave him even, at his prayer, the holy habit of religion in his monastery, in order that, in the little time that remained for him to live, he might do something for the expiation of his crimes. Thus this old man, already decrepit, from a robber that he had been before became a perfect penitent, from a debauched man a holy

religious, and from a slave of the demon a true disciple of Jesus Christ. The report of this rare holiness of Thierry spread soon through the whole kingdom and came even to the ears of the king, who also bore the name of Thierry and was one of the four sons of Clovis. This monarch found himself then attacked by a great malady of the eyes: he was threatened with losing his sight altogether, without any remedy being able to be applied; this gave him much sadness and obliged him also, seeing no more relief to be hoped from men, to place all his hope in the goodness of God and the help of the Saints. With this thought, he resolved to send two of his officers to the holy abbot, to beg him on his part to come without delay to court. Thierry, who had always preferred the sweetness of his solitude to all the grandeurs of the world, believed nevertheless that it was his duty to quit it on this occasion to obey his sovereign. He set out therefore at once from his monastery and betook himself to the king; the latter received him with great honours and related to him the pitiable state to which he was reduced; he declared to him that there remained no more hope for him except in his prayers and merits, and conjured him not to abandon him in an extremity where all medicine had remained powerless and from which no human industry was capable of drawing him. At these words, our Saint, who was wholly filled with charity, but who knew besides that miracles are the works of the all-powerful hand of God, and not of the weakness of men, prostrated himself with his face to the earth; and, raising his mind to heaven, prayed for a considerable time. His prayer ended, he rose and dipped the tip of his thumb in a little consecrated oil; then, invoking the name of the august Trinity, he applied it in the form of a cross on the eyes of the king, who received at the same moment a perfect cure and recovered his sight entirely.

Nor was he ungrateful for so extraordinary a benefit; he rendered a thousand thanks to God, and thanked afterwards warmly him who had obtained for him so considerable a favour. The whole court testified the same gratitude, and the people raised acclamations of joy. These marks of veneration only increased the humility of the holy Abbot. For, believing that it was a thing too far above him to bear the same name as his sovereign, he changed it to take the diminutive, and would no longer in the sequel be called Thierry or Theodoric, but Theodorion. He had still much trouble to suffer that this monarch should kiss his hands and ask his blessing before his departure. At last, after all these ceremonies, he was conducted back to his monastery; he was no sooner returned there than he saw an extraordinary concourse of all sorts of sick persons drawn from all parts of Christendom by the reputation of the famous miracle he had just wrought. And, an admirable thing, the greater part of these unfortunates were well repaid for the fatigues of their journey by the relief which they received in their ills. He gave sight to the blind; he made the dumb speak; he put the paralytics back in the free use of their limbs; he compelled the demons to go out of the bodies of the possessed; in a word, there was no kind of malady that was proof against the miraculous power which he had received from heaven.

The historian of his life relates to us still a great prodigy which he wrought at court. The king made a quite particular esteem of the piety and merits of Saint Remigius, because it was he who had drawn his father, Clovis, from the abyss of idolatry, and had led him into the bosom of the Church by the force of his prayers and by his instructions. Seeing therefore one day the princess his daughter reduced to such an extremity that she was abandoned by the physicians, he sent to Reims to beg this holy prelate to come and visit her, in the hope that, if he would but touch her with his garments, he would restore her to health and to life. But this great bishop was himself detained by an illness; he ordered therefore Thierry, whose virtue and merits he knew perfectly, to go there in his place. The holy abbot, relying not on his own merits, but on the virtue of God, obeyed his prelate blindly and made ready to set out. Scarcely was he in the middle of the road when he met a courier who told him that the princess had just died, and that, as she was no longer in a state to receive any help, he might spare himself the fatigues of the rest of the journey. This sad news was not able to stop the zeal of Thierry; wishing to accomplish the command of Saint Remigius, he did not fail to go on, to pursue his road as far as Metz, where the court then was. Having arrived, he came first to the palace, where he found the king and queen who were weeping bitterly the loss of a daughter for whom they had always had much tenderness. Having done his best to console them in their affliction, he passed to the chamber of the

deceased, whence he caused everyone to withdraw, except two or three persons whom he ordered to remain with him. Having approached the corpse, he raises his hands to heaven and addresses his prayers there in all the fervour of his soul; having ended them, he takes some holy oil of which he always carried a little phial on him; and, hardly has he touched with it the principal organs of the deceased, when she resumes movement, opens her eyes, recovers speech, and cries aloud that she is raised by the merits of Saint Thierry. The report of so signal a miracle spreads at once through the whole palace; the king and queen run to know the truth; they throw themselves at the feet of the blessed abbot and render him their thanks: the whole court remains suspended between admiration and joy, and the people makes its own appear by the applause and the honours it comes in crowds to render to this great Saint. But the king, who wished to give, both to the holy archbishop and to his blessed disciple, marks of his gratitude and of his royal magnificence, made gift to the church of Reims of the village of Vandières, situated on the Marne; to the abbey of Saint-Thierry, of that of Gaugy, situated in the environs of Reims, on this sole condition that they should both join their prayers to obtain the blessings of heaven on his person and on his kingdom. For the rest, there is much appearance that this miraculous resurrection of the king's daughter preceded the healing of this prince of which we have spoken; but we follow here the history of Flodoard, who relates them in that order.

If Saint Thierry was so happy in the cure of bodies, he was not less so in that of souls; here is one of the most remarkable effects of his zeal for the salvation of his neighbour. He knew that debauched women inhabited a sort of caves made in the flanks of a small mountain rather near the gates of Reims; it was a place of perdition for many souls. His angelic purity did not allow him to see, without extreme grief, this grave damage done to the reign of Jesus Christ; he sought from day to day the means of warning Saint Remigius of it. The holy prelate, who esteemed and loved Thierry much, visited him often in his abbey, to enjoy his edifying conversation. One day when they were going there in company and were reciting their office on the way, as they came to pass by that mountain of malediction, our holy Abbot, reflecting on it, heaved a sigh from his heart with such violence that, speech failing him, he could not pronounce the verse which he had to say in his turn. The good archbishop scarcely took notice of it at that hour; but as on the return he perceived that the same thing happened, he was extremely surprised and could not help saying to him: "My dear brother, here is something quite extraordinary, that, in one same day and at the same spot of the road, you have twice stopped short in your office, and at the same verse too, you who have always taken so much pleasure in chanting the praises of the Lord." — "It is true, holy Father," answered our blessed Abbot; "also this accident came to me only from the extreme grief into which horrible disorders have thrown me; they are committed here in this place, at the gates of your metropolitan city, and no remedy is applied to them." Saint Remigius had himself at once informed of these disorders and put a stop to them: some time after, this place of debauch was changed into a monastery of Christian virgins. It is remarked further in the life of this holy Abbot that, every time the king found himself in these regions, he never failed to testify to him his gratitude for the graces he had received from heaven by his merits, by going also to visit him in his monastery; it is perhaps thence that there came for our most Christian kings the holy custom of going to the sepulchre of Saint Thierry, and of dining in his abbey on the day after their anointing.

For the rest, this great Servant of God persevered until death in monastic perfection, and his heart, perfectly detached from the riches and grandeurs of the earth, aspired never but to the goods of heaven and to the possession of his God. There is no virtue in the Gospel of which he did not show the example before preaching it to others: his charity was so ardent that, in whatever place he went, he did good to everyone there; also the marvels which he wrought in the healing of the sick and in the conversion of sinners were so frequent that they had become as it were familiar to him. At last, the time arrived at which he was to receive the reward which the justice of his Judge reserved for his labours and merits. He departed therefore from this world on the first day of July, in the year 533, and, if we believe the first who wrote his history, his fair soul was carried up into heaven by the ministry of angels.

The king, having received the news of his death, was sensibly touched by it; he set out at once with the principal nobility of his court, to come and honour the funeral pomp with his royal presence; and to give the last marks of his respect and gratitude toward this illustrious abbot, he wished to carry him himself to the tomb, having himself assisted by three prelates of eminent holiness: Saint Nicetius, archbishop of Trier; Saint Hespert, bishop of Metz, and Saint Lupus, bishop of Soissons, without allowing any other to touch his coffin. After the ceremony, he asked of God that his holy remains should never be raised from the earth except in the presence and by the ministry of a king; which God granted him. He is represented: 1st, having near him an eagle which designates to him the site of the monastery he was to found; 2nd, healing King Thierry, threatened with losing an eye.

He is the patron of Reims.

Worship and Relics

The archbishop Adalbero, wishing to take the relics of Saint Thierry from the sepulchre, about the year 976, to place them in a more eminent place and in a silver shrine, it was impossible to move them until a religious of the place, having given notice of the request which King Thierry had formerly made to God and of which it seemed that the accomplishment was being seen, this prelate went to beg King Lothaire to be pleased to be present at this translation. This prince granted this prayer; and, to render the ceremony still more august, he wished Queen Erame, his wife, and daughter of Lothaire II, king of Italy, to assist at it with him. Thus the king and queen, full of humility and of faith, put the hand to the sepulchre of the Saint, which they raised without any difficulty to place it in the spot destined for it.

The tomb of Saint Thierry has always been a source of miracles. The faithful visit it with much devotion, in imitation of our most Christian kings, who fail not to go there, as we have said, after they have received the sacred anointing in the cathedral of Reims. Flodoard relates that a poor woman having had the temerity to work on a Saturday evening, at which began in that time the solemnity of Sunday, the instrument she was holding stuck so fast to her hand that it was impossible to separate it. The regret for her fault and the shame of her punishment made her have recourse to Saint Denis, whose relics had been transported to Reims for fear of the Barbarians; but, during her prayer, that great Saint appeared to her with a quite joyful face and commanded her to go to the tomb of Saint Thierry, where he assured her she would be delivered from this inconvenience. In effect, after she had passed the night there in prayer, the wood which was attached to her hand fell of itself and left it free: which was seen by several persons who were present.

In 1632, the bishop of Châlons made at Reims the translation of the body of Saint Thierry into a new shrine of silver gilt, in presence of the Queen of Austria, who was lodged in the abbatial house of Saint-Thierry. This abbey was united to the archbishopric of Reims in 1696 and suppressed in “me”. As for the relics, they were enclosed in a shrine of gilded copper, in 1777, and transferred into the church of Saint-Thierry, where they are still found. Billy, counsellor and almoner of the king and abbot of Saint-Thierry, has given the life of this holy Abbot, which he dedicated to Queen Anne of Austria; Flodoard has likewise written it.

Saint Calais or Karilef, First Abbot of Anisole, in Maine

645. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Childebert I.

Fuge hominem et saeculi rumores, quia non potes satis esse Deo et hominibus.

Flee men and the noise of the world: you cannot satisfy at once God and men.

S. Bonav., in Alphabet. religiosor.

Calais was born in the country of the Arverni, of parents who occupied in the world a very distinguished rank, and who served God with great fervour. Having reached the age suitable for studies, he was sent to the

monastery of Menat, in the diocese of Clermont, not far from the place of his birth, to receive his education there. There, the lessons and the examples of a flourishing community soon formed him to piety and to learning. As the precious qualities which he had shown from the first had prepossessed all the monks in his favour, each hastened to forward his progress in studies and to advance him in virtue. There was besides, in the monastery of Menat, a brilliant school, and several monks distinguished themselves there at once by their experience in the spiritual ways and by their skill in letters. Calais feared the applause which his great qualities drew upon him, he dreaded above all the sojourn in a country where his kinsfolk were rich and honoured. Already he had consecrated himself to God in the monastery of Menat, but he sought a more complete solitude. One day he manifested the desire he felt to Avitus, a monk of the same monastery, and in whom grace had inspired a like thought.

Avitus had conceived, like Calais, a lively desire for solitude. Delighted to meet in one same thought, they sought to know at once the will of heaven, in their impatience to execute the inspiration which they believed they had received. Following a usage very common in those times, and which even the gravest personages practised, they opened the holy Gospels to find there the answer to their doubt. “He who loves his father, or his mother, or his brothers, or his sisters, more than me, is not worthy of me.” Such were the words which presented themselves first to their eyes; they believed they saw in them a confirmation of their design, and they prepared to leave the monastery the following night.

Avitus hastened to gather together the keys of the different offices which had been entrusted to him, and he placed them softly under the pillow of his abbot, during the sleep of the community, then he set out on the road with his young companion; for Saint Calais was much younger than he. After a long march, they arrived on the banks of the Loire, crossed the river in a boat and reached one of the suburbs of Orleans. They were not long in hearing of Saint Maximinus and of the monastery which he directed at a short distance from that city. Under the guidance of this holy abbot, this new community had become very flourishing; holy psalmody, continual study, and the labour of the hands made the whole occupation of the monks who composed it. Such was the monastery of Micy where were formed to the virtues of the cloister so great a number of religious who sought afterwards a deep solitude in the diocese of Le Mans. Maximinus received the two monks with kindness, and engaged them to dwell in the cells which he had just built. Our saints gave in this monastery the example of all the virtues, and made new progress there in perfection.

But no one appreciated their merit better than Saint Maximinus, who took care to have them both ordained priests. He attached himself even to Calais, and kept him almost always near him.

However the two holy friends felt always the need of that solitude which had led them to flee from Menat. To obey this inspiration, they withdrew first into one of the most deserted parts of Sologne, and built themselves there cells of tree branches. They passed several years there in the exercises of the most austere penance and of the sweetest contemplation. They withdrew afterwards into the vast deserts of Perche. After having traversed a rather great extent of wooded land, they arrived almost at the extremity of these forests, in the country of the Cenomani. Having found near the little river Braye a place suitable to their design, they halted there.

They built there a little oratory in honour of Saint Peter, and some cells for themselves and for a small number of disciples who had followed them. They remained there some time; but having soon been known and visited by the inhabitants of the surrounding country, they re-entered the thickness of the forest, returning toward Perche.

In traversing these woods, they met a fertile spot which bore the name of Piciacus (Piciac), and which is called to-day Saint-Avit.[1] The Lord caused a spring to gush miraculously in that place to quench the thirst of His servants; Calais built a little wall to protect this fountain, and later the piety of the faithful had a more important construction raised there. Having adopted this site as designated by Providence, Calais and Avitus

established their cells there.

Meanwhile, the odour of their holiness spread more and more, and the report of the works and virtuous life of these anchorites reached the ears of King Childebert I. This prince had built for Avitus, Calais and their companions, a basilica and a monastery which he endowed with royal magnificence. This monastery was afterwards known under the name of Saint-Avit-de-Châteaudun; the Institute of Saint Paul and Saint Antony was followed there at first. It soon became flourishing by the number of monks who flocked there to serve God under the guidance of the abbot Avitus.

Two men of so eminent a holiness ought not to remain in one same monastery, and as it entered into the secret views of Providence to multiply these pious asylums in the diocese of Le Mans, the two holy abbots had to separate. Ever united by the ties of the closest friendship, Avitus continued to dwell in the new cloister, while Calais, having with him Daumerus and Gall, turned his steps toward the country of the Cenomani. He came to a place named by the ancients Casa-Gaiani, situated in the canton of Lavardin, watered by the river Anisola, the Anille, and then in the midst of a deep solitude. This retreat pleased him, and he halted there with his companions. They were not long in recognizing that the soil was very fertile; they found there also a fountain of living water and the walls of an ancient edifice falling from age, and whose ruins, still existing several centuries after, attested its first importance. There was also quite near a small vine which Calais remarked. At the sight of a dwelling so well prepared for their retreat, the holy abbot and his companions had at first no other thought than to render thanks to God, and to ask Him that it might be given them to gather there likewise the fruits of a spiritual harvest. After a first night entirely consecrated to prayer, they built in the midst of the ruins, by interlacing branches, an oratory and cells for each of them; then they applied themselves to cultivating the earth. God soon gave His servant a sign of the great destinies which He reserved for this new solitude. One day when the holy abbot was working at the cultivation of his vine, he was compelled by the heat of the sun to lay aside a part of his garments, and he hung them on a neighbouring oak. A sparrow came to hide there, and, in withdrawing, left an egg there. Calais, having finished the work of the day, came toward evening to the tree to take up his garments again and discovered the egg of the little bird: this sight caused him the liveliest joy, and he passed the night praising God.

As soon as day had come, having taken with him Daumerus, he went to find Avitus to consult him, and to let him know the advantages which the place he had discovered presented. In their pious conference, Calais related to the saint the event which had brought him to him. Avitus listened to his account with lively emotion, and recognized in it a sign from heaven, then he added: “O my brother, persevere in your labours, these promises are not vain; the egg which the bird has brought forth presages the abundant harvests which this place is to produce; know that the flock of the Lord which shall gather there will be much more numerous than that which presses around us. The inhabitants of this place, like valiant soldiers, will consecrate their life to the exercises of the Lord, and after the triumphs won over the flesh, God will reward their labours with incorruptible fruits.” Then they passed the night in holy converse, and in songs to the praise of God; but as soon as the day reappeared, Calais took again the road to his dear solitude. The holiness of Calais drew around him not only the little birds, but also the wildest guests of the desert: often the holy man was visited by them, so that he seemed specially designated by these words of the book of Job: “And the beasts of the earth shall be at peace with you.”

Often a buffalo, an animal already rare in these forests, came toward the servant of God, bowed its enormous head before him, as if it would adore him; the holy abbot approached without fear, passed his fingers between the horns of the wild animal, over its thick hair, over its muscular neck. King Childebert and Queen Ultrogotha had come with a numerous suite to pass some time in the royal farm of Matovall, neighbouring the new cloister built by Calais. While the king gave himself with the chiefs of the truste to the exercises which he cherished above all, hunting, fishing, swimming, he was informed that a buffalo was to be found in the neighbouring desert. At once he orders his huntsmen to prepare everything necessary for the pursuit of

this beast, because he wished, from the following day, to hunt it. All the preparations were made with the greatest speed, and the next day, before dawn, the king and his companions were in search of the animal. The dogs soon discovered it; but the buffalo, on the point of being overtaken, runs to the holy abbot, and takes refuge near him as in an assured asylum.

Meanwhile the hunters, bent on the pursuit and directed by the barking of the dogs, arrive at the cell of the solitary. What strikes them first of all is the sight of the man of God occupied in prayer, and behind him the animal, peaceful but trembling. Troubled themselves by this extraordinary and unexpected encounter, they dare neither strike the beast, nor cause the least pain to the holy man. Meanwhile the king having arrived, asks the cause of these delays, and accuses his companions of sloth and cowardice. They answer that they have done their duty; could they go farther? “We found,” they say, “in a hut a man unknown to us, and the ferocious animal stood as if tamed beside him. Might not this man, who thus subdues animals, be a servant of God? Could we disturb his repose, strike the animal which he protects?” At these words the king falls into fury: “Let us go and see,” he says, and the whole hunt directs itself toward the cell of Calais. Arrived at the door of the humble dwelling, and perceiving the Saint still occupied in his prayer, and the buffalo beside him, Childebert says with fury: “Whence comes to you, unknown man, so much presumption and so much audacity? Dare you, without my permission, invade forests which are mine, and thus hinder the pleasure of my hunt by your importunate presence?” Calais opposed only gentleness to this fire: “It is not to brave you, excellent prince,” he said, “nor to put an obstacle to your hunts that we have come here, but to serve God with more devotion.” The king, too irritated to hear, added: “I enjoin you to withdraw from here, you and your companions; take care that none of you be found here henceforth.” Calais, unmoved, answered: “We, your servants, illustrious king, have gathered a little wine, the produce of a small vine which we found here, and which we cultivate with our hands; may your Serenity do us the grace to drink of it, that you yourself and the persons who accompany you may return more gaily to the palace.” The fury of the prince had made him deaf, he turned away and launched his horse on the road that was to lead him to the royal domain.

God wrought a prodigy to console His servants and enlighten the barbarian prince. Suddenly, at the moment when Childebert urges his horse to make it go with the greatest speed, the animal, struck with a sudden stupor, stops, and the spur becomes powerless on it. The astonished king asks his companions what the cause may be; one of them says to him: “That man whom we have overwhelmed with injuries and outrages is a servant of God, and, if my thoughts do not deceive me, the Lord grants this marvel to his virtues; it is because you have treated him unjustly that you are forbidden to pursue your road.” This advice appeared wise, the king applauded it, and sent someone of the troop to the servant of God. The messenger having explained to Calais the accident which had just befallen the king, the Saint rendered thanks to God and said to the envoy: “Go, my son, tell the king to return, and, as he went out from here without our blessing and full of wrath, let him come to receive the blessing of God by the mediation of His servant, and he will then regain his palace without any mishap.” This order was at once carried to Childebert, who, without delay and with complete docility, came and threw himself at the feet of the Saint, and, striking his breast, confessed his wrongs.

Calais showed as much gentleness as the king showed humility, he raised him, clasped him in his arms and exhorted him to preserve himself henceforth from like transports. Childebert asked first for that wine which he had refused, and Calais offered it to him with his own hand. The king drank of it and all his companions likewise; but, marvellous thing! although Childebert and all his people had drunk at discretion and the cup was small, the wine was not found diminished.

Childebert said further to Calais before withdrawing: “Now I am sure, O best of men, that you are a true servant of God and that He hears your prayers; therefore I ask that you yield to my wishes by accepting in this domain which belongs to me, a portion of land as extensive as you shall judge fitting, in order to build there a monastery which Christ will bless.” The man of God resisted this offer long, but the king insisted and

Calais had to yield. However, he declared that he would accept no greater space of land than that which he should go round, travelling on his ass during one day.[2] Childebert asked the blessing of the servant of God and directed himself toward his palace. When he had seen Ultrogotha again, and had informed her of what had just passed and of the promises he had made to the holy man, she associated herself with his good designs and urged him to execute them. Calais rejoiced less at these temporal advantages as regarded himself personally than because they put him in a position to relieve the poor and travellers. But soon Providence made him know by a new sign that a great monastery was to be established in that place. One day when he was working alone at turning the earth with his mattock, for the community still lacked a plough, while the brethren were resting, he discovered a treasure. This encounter offered him the occasion of leading all his disciples to praise God, and of giving them new encouragements to perfection. For the rest, he himself furnished them the example of all the virtues; he was very liberal in his alms, very fervent in fasts, indefatigable in vigils; his prayers and austerities were the admiration of all. The earth itself produced fruits at his command and without cultivation; but what was admired above all was to see the buffalo, of which we have already spoken, obey his voice docilely. So many marvels could not remain long hidden from the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Seven very poor families dwelt rather near the cells of Calais and his companions; their heads came to address themselves to the holy abbot. He relieved their indigence, by making them a share of the treasure he had discovered, and they in return helped the monks in the construction of a larger monastery, and they even contracted toward the religious ties of vassalage, to which their descendants showed themselves still faithful several centuries after.

When the basilica of the new abbey had been built, it was consecrated under the invocation of Saint Peter and Saint Martin. Queen Ultrogotha had long desired to see the holy abbot. She sent him some of her officers to beg him to come to her at her palace of Matovall. Calais did not comply with her request: “Go, my good young men,” he said to the envoys of the princess, “and carry back these words to the queen: ‘If I can do anything, I shall pray for her; but let her know that as long as I live, I shall never see the face of a woman, and none shall enter the monastery I have founded.’” — “This Rule,” adds the biographer of our Saint, “has been, by the grace of the Lord, inviolably observed in this monastery to this day, that is, during more than a whole century.” As for the wife of Childebert, although she felt pain at seeing her project come to nothing, she admired the wisdom of the servant of God, and even feared to have disturbed him.

This trait has nothing surprising on the part of Calais, for he fled the society of men, and dreaded nothing so much as their esteem; but, in spite of all his precautions to hide his virtues, and the treasures which heaven had put in him, one saw souls eager for contemplation and for knowledge hasten toward his solitude. In a short time, numerous choirs of monks filled the cloisters which he had built. He distributed to them at once both the doctrine which animates souls in the service of the Lord, and the science which enlightens minds. These lessons of the holy abbot drew to the academy he had founded, in his lifetime even, a reputation for knowledge and piety which spread through all Gaul. The pilgrims of asceticism and of letters directed themselves from that time toward this monastery become promptly famous. History has preserved to us the memory of one of the most indefatigable friends of sacred studies, who came to sojourn some time in the cloister of Anisole.

Several years before the death of Calais, the existence of his monastery was guaranteed by a royal act, which proves in what recommendation the illustrious abbot stood with Childebert. During a stay which the king was making in his domain of Matovall, he assembled a plea there, and there he gave the charter of foundation of the monastery of Anisole. The prince begins by declaring that he obeys the custom of the kings his predecessors, in assuring to the servants of God a peaceful dwelling; then he says that Calais, come from the country of the Arverni, has asked of him for himself and for his monks a place where they may dwell in peace, and implore for the monarch and his people the mercy of God. As this request has appeared to him just, and as he has recognized besides the holiness of this man by the miracles he works, he has listened

favourably to his petition. Consequently, he has granted him in the fiscal domain of Matovall, at the place designated under the name of Casa-Gaiani, a piece of ground to build there an oratory and a cell for him and for the monks who shall come after, as well as a hospice to receive the poor, and this alms he has made for the relief of his lord and father, King Clovis. After having enumerated at great length the places which he assigns as limits to the endowment of the nascent abbey, he declares that he gives all these lands to Calais and his monks to cultivate, to plant in and to build buildings on. Thus he takes under his special protection and defence the man of God, all his monks and all their goods. “We order by this decree,” he adds in finishing, “that none among you, none among your successors, nor anyone whatever among our faithful, meddle in the affairs of this holy man, diminish the goods and lands which we grant him, or harm him in anything. Let him on the contrary be left to enjoy in peace the privilege which he possesses under our patronage, and which our authority assures him; let him enjoy it, not only he, but also his successors.” Childebert might have still other motives, of which he does not speak in this charter, for granting so magnificent an endowment to the monastery founded by Calais, for, although it is difficult to determine precisely all the limits which are designated in it as bounding the domain of the abbey, it must be acknowledged that it was of great extent, and of uncommon richness. The abbot of Anisole, as we have said, belonged to a powerful family of Auvergne, and the ambitious king of Paris, who had not abandoned his projects on that province, ought to secure there all intelligences and all sympathies.

The monastery of Anisole from its origin depended in nothing on the bishop of Le Mans; but, being of royal foundation, it was subject to the inspection of the archchaplain of the palace. For the rest, as to regular discipline, it depended only on its regular superior.

Calais, after a long and laborious career, understood that the hour of repose was approaching for him. A violent fever finished exhausting the forces of his body, but his soul, impatient to be united to God, felt no failing, and prayer left not his lips. His monks pressed in crowds and in great anxiety around him; he warned them that his death was near, begged them to remember him in their prayers, and added in a supreme effort: “My children, my last hour has come, therefore, I beseech you, forget not your engagements toward the Lord; be unshakable in your faith, preserve it from all impure alloy; follow the precepts of Christ, let charity and obedience be united in your heart and in your works, in order not only to avoid the pains of hell, but also to win, with the aid of God, the triumphal crowns of eternity.” He continued these teachings as a last farewell which he offered to his brethren, and at last rendered his soul to his Creator, on 1 July, about the year 545.

After having given some time to their grief, the monks prepared the burial of the servant of God, and interred him in the basilica which he had himself built. That place soon became famous by the number of miracles which were wrought there. Being unable to relate them all, the biographer of our Saint contented himself with giving the following.

We have said that Calais, following a usage practised then in several monasteries of Gaul, had forbidden women the entrance not only of the cloister, but even of the church. This Rule was inviolably kept for a long time in the abbey of Anisole. When Saint Siviard was abbot of this monastery and was writing the life of the holy founder, a woman named Gunda, who was little regular in her morals, resolved to test whether the Saint, from the height of heaven, still took an interest in the maintenance of this usage. For this purpose, she cuts her hair and disguises herself in men’s clothes, in order thus to penetrate the cloister without being known, and to deceive the servants of God. She chose the moment when, the brethren coming to the office, the doors of the basilica were open. Already she was directing herself toward the tomb of the Saint, looking from side to side with effrontery, when suddenly she feels herself struck by the hand of God; she loses sight suddenly, and the demon, seizing her, makes flood of black blood gush from her breast. At the same time, she uttered cries so horrible that they attracted the attention of all who were in the church. At first it was believed that it was a man who came to visit the tomb of the Saint, but, when she was questioned, she confessed the crime she had just committed. This chastisement inflicted by heaven on the impudent presumption of this woman

produced a salutary effect; it sufficed long to stop persons who would have been tempted to take a like liberty.

Saint Calais is represented: 1st, praying in his solitude; 2nd, digging the earth and finding a treasure there at the moment when he was asking how he could feed the companions of his retreat; 3rd, a barrel in his hand. Having found King Childebert in a forest where he was hunting, the Saint wished to pour him drink by way of rejoicing; a small barrel sufficed to quench the thirst of the king and the hunters who accompanied him; 4th, with a sort of buffalo bending down under his hand. The beast, pursued by the king's hunters, had taken refuge near the hut where our Saint lived in a wood of Maine. It was thus that the huntsmen discovered the retreat of the solitary and that Childebert made his acquaintance.

Worship and Relics

At the epoch of the invasion of the Normans, the religious of the abbey of Saint-Calais, foreseeing the sad fate reserved for their monastery, transported to Blois, under the safeguard of Count Robert, the body of their illustrious founder. The holy abbot soon obtained a special worship on this new theatre which heaven had destined for his glory. From the year 874, he reposed in an oratory built within the very enclosure of the castle and dedicated under his name. In 1171, the archbishop of Sens, William, who passed afterwards to the archbishopric of Reims, and who was then legate of the Pope in France, made the opening of the tomb of the Saint, at Blois, of which Count Thibaut, his brother, son-in-law of King Louis the Young, was the lord. He took from it a part of the bones, of which he made the translation on 25 August of the same year. The chapel of the castle, or the church dedicated under the name of Saint-Calais, was then served by monks of Saint Benedict. It was afterwards reduced to a priory dependent on the abbey of Bourgmoyen, which belonged to the Canons Regular of the same town. In 1653, the bishop of Chartres, Jacques Lescot, opened also the shrine of Saint Calais in presence of Gaston, duke of Orleans, count of Blois, brother of King Louis XIII. He drew from it some relics consisting of a considerable part of his skull, and some vertebrae which were transported on Sunday 21 September, and deposited in the abbey of Anisole, which for a long time had been known only under the name of Saint-Calais which it still keeps, as does the little town which has formed there. Besides these relics, the inhabitants of Saint-Calais, at the beginning of the Revolution, asked that the relics of their patron, which were at Blois, should be restored to them, and obtained them.

Taken from the *History of the Church of Le Mans*, by the Rev. Father Dom Paul Piolin, Benedictine of the Congregation of France.

Saint Gall I, Monk at Cournon, Bishop of Clermont in Auvergne

553. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Childebert I.

Injurias magnanimus debet parvipendere et a memoria repellere; tunc in mente sua quietus erit.

The magnanimous man ought to pay little heed to injuries and drive them from his memory; it is then that he will enjoy peace of soul.

S. Antonin., de Ira.

Saint Gall, born about the year 489, had for native place the city of Auvergne, known since under the name of Clermont. George, his father, was sprung from one of the best houses of the province. Leocadia, his mother, descended from the family of Vettius Epagathus, a famous Roman, who shed his blood at Lyons for the glory of Jesus Christ. Both took much care of the education of their son; and when he was of an age to be married, they thought of having him marry the daughter of a senator, which was a very honourable match. But the Saint did not lend himself to their arrangements; animated by an ardent desire to live only for God in retreat, he fled secretly from the paternal house. He begged the abbot of the monastery of Cournon, three

leagues from the city of Clermont, to receive him among his religious; which was granted him, when he had obtained the consent of his father. He saw with joy the day arrive on which he renounced all worldly vanities to embrace monastic poverty.

He was soon remarked, among all the others, for his zeal for mortification and his fervour in all the exercises of the community. His piety and the sweetness of his voice in the chanting of the psalms charmed all who saw and heard him in choir. Saint Quintian, bishop of Clermont, wished to attach him to himself and ordained him deacon. He taught him theology himself and was his director in the spiritual life.

Some time after, Thierry, king of Austrasia, obliged Quintian to cede him to him. He had him come to his court, and kept him there until the year 527. Having one day accompanied the king to Cologne, our Saint saw with grief the superstitions of the people, and the abominations which were committed in a temple consecrated to the pagan divinities. The zeal which he had for the glory of God could not endure these impieties, so that the following night, accompanied only by one cleric, he went and set fire to the temple, then deserted. The pagans, seeing the smoke rise to heaven, ran up in all haste to extinguish the fire. Saint Gall took refuge in the king's palace; but the idolaters pursued him there, complained to the king and demanded justice for the wrong which had been done them. The king, having learned what had passed, appeased the discontented with words full of gentleness. However Saint Gall was only half satisfied with what he had done, and he reproached himself many times afterwards, and always with tears in his eyes, with the timidity which had made him flee before those who pursued him, and which had prevented him from shedding his blood for Jesus Christ on that occasion. The holy bishop of Auvergne being dead, the people asked Saint Gall of him for pastor, and at last he had the satisfaction of obtaining him. The humility, gentleness, charity and zeal of the new bishop shone with the liveliest brilliance.

His patience in bearing injuries was especially admired. A brutal man having dealt him a blow on the head, he suffered in silence the affront that was done him, and disarmed by his gentleness him who had insulted him. Evodius, who from a senator had become a priest, forgot himself one day so far as to speak to him in the most unworthy manner: the Saint rose quietly without answering him anything; he treated his enemy with kindness, and went off to visit the churches of the city. Evodius was so touched by such conduct that he threw himself at the Saint's feet, in the middle of the street, and asked his pardon. From that time, they lived always in perfect understanding.

Saint Gall laboured for the salvation of his peoples with much zeal and vigilance throughout the whole course of his episcopate. He was present, as far as it was possible for him, at all the assemblies which the bishops of the kingdom held to maintain the purity of the faith and to re-establish good discipline in the Church. One was held in his city in 533, which is commonly called the council of Auvergne, where he is given the first rank after the metropolitan, who was Honoratus, bishop of Bourges. Being unable to attend the third of Orleans, which was assembled three years after, he deputed there in his name, as he had done at the second of that same city in the year 532. But he was present in person at the fourth and fifth held in the same city: the one in 541 and the other in 549, where he had a part in all that was done for the reformation of morals in the Churches of France.

Saint Gall was favoured with the gift of miracles. He arrested by his prayers the flames of a fire which naturally must have reduced the whole city to ashes. Another time, he delivered by the same means his flock from an epidemic malady which was causing great ravages in the neighbouring provinces. It was on this occasion that he instituted Rogations at mid-Lent, to go in procession on foot, singing psalms, as far as Saint-Julian of Brioude.

The last illness which he had was so violent that it made his beard and hair fall off entirely; but it served only to make shine still more in these last moments the patience which had been admired in him throughout the whole course of his illness. Three days before his death he had the faithful assemble in his chamber; and by

an effort in which God visibly assisted him, he broke once more for all the bread of communion. The third day, which was a Sunday, having come, he wished still to complete his office, which he ended with the psalm *Miserere*, and another of praise and thanksgiving. He then gave up his spirit to God, full of good works and merits, about the year 553. Four days after his death the provincial bishops celebrated his funeral, which was accompanied by an incredible crowd of people; they buried his body in the church of Saint Laurence. It remained there until 1285, the epoch at which Guy, bishop of Clermont, made the translation of it into the cathedral church called Notre-Dame du Port.

A great number of miracles illustrated his tomb; he is invoked principally against fever.

Saint Gall is represented: 1st, with an angel presenting to him an alb or a white chasuble as a sign of the divine grace which his holy life had merited for him; 2nd, making a fire cease by casting into it the book of the Gospels, perhaps to recall his zeal against the pagans of Cologne whose temple he burned; 3rd, praying to God for the cessation of the plague: an angel in heaven returns the sword to its scabbard.

Taken from Godescard, from Saint Gregory of Tours, *Vit. Patr.* c. 6, and *Hist. Franc.*, book iv, c. 5. See the remarks of Mabillon, *saec. i, Ben.*; the *Gallia christiana nova*, vol. ii, p. 237, and Sollier, one of the continuators of Bollandus, vol. i, July, p. 103.

Saint Léonore or Lunaire, Regionary Bishop in Brittany[1]

About 560. — Pope: Pelagius I. — King of France: Clotaire I.

Renuntiandum est saeculo omnibusque rebus, ut nobis Deus portio sit.

We must renounce the world and all goods, that God may be our only inheritance.

S. Hilar., sup. psalm. cxviii.

Hoel I, surnamed the Great, king of the Bretons, and Saint Pompeia, gave birth to Saint Léonore, who was born in Cambria about the year 509, at the time when they dwelt in that country. They were both of a remarkable piety, and had both some predictions of the birth of this child and presages of his future greatness; which made them the more careful of his education. Scarcely had he reached the age of five years when they led him to the school of Saint Iltut, where he had for fellow-pupils Saint

Tugdual, his brother, Saint Paul Aurelian, Saint Samson and Saint Magloire, and where he prepared himself by an austere life for holy orders and for the episcopate. The happiest dispositions for virtue had been remarked in him from early years. The poor, from that time, were so dear to him that he deprived himself in their favour of all of which he could dispose. So charitable a conduct fixed on him the attention of his master, who, besides, remarked in this young man a solid mind, joined to a premature wisdom and capacity. Iltut, seeing himself near his end, presented Léonore to Saint Dubricius, bishop of Caerleon, that he might be admitted and employed in the ecclesiastical ministry. The young servant of God passed through all the degrees of the holy militia. Dubricius, before dying, believed he ought to respond to the wish which the peoples expressed and consecrate him bishop. He was promoted early, on account of his extraordinary merit; but one cannot believe what the Lessons of his office say, in the ancient Breviary of the diocese of Léon, that he was only fifteen years old when he was raised to the episcopate, whatever resistance his humility might make.

The desire of being useful to his compatriots, who, having formed settlements in the countries of Vannes and of Quimper, had need of spiritual help; that, perhaps also, of following his virtuous brother Tugdual, and of finding a more peaceful sojourn than Great Britain then was, occupied almost entirely by the Saxons, determined Léonore to quit Cambria and to pass into Armorica, in order to live there in greater retreat, for which the forests found there offered great conveniences. The grace of the Holy Spirit and his particular inclination carried him efficaciously to this kind of life; for his episcopal dignity did not prevent him from

always living as a solitary, and there is even appearance that he had no particular see, and that, without obliging him to leave his monastery, the dignity of bishop was conferred on him for the spiritual good of the neighbouring peoples; which seems to have been quite ordinary among the Breton nation in the country of Cambria. Léonore, wishing like Abraham to quit everything to follow the interior inspiration which called him out of his country, embarked with seventy-two disciples and some domestics, to come into Armorican Brittany, of which Childebert was sovereign. It was in the north that he landed, on the coast which is between the rivers Rance and Arguenon,[1] and he was no sooner arrived in that country than he and his companions established themselves in that place which was granted them by his brother Hoel or Jona, second of the name, who then reigned in Brittany. Léonore, having found in that place an oratory in ruins, re-established it and placed there an altar which he had brought with him. He then gave himself with zeal to the ministry of preaching. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, touched by his discourses and edified by his virtues, determined by common consent to clear for him the forest in which he found himself, that he might build a monastery there.

King Childebert, informed of the admirable life of these holy solitaries, and above all of Léonore, invited him in a very pressing manner to come and see him at Paris. The Saint went there followed by some of his disciples, and was received by the king and by Queen Ultrogotha with great testimonies of esteem and of veneration. He did not remain long at court, because he was too much honoured there, and because the concourse of those who addressed themselves to him hindered him from attending freely to his spiritual exercises. It was during his stay at Paris that there occurred, in 547, the cruel assassination of his brother Hoel II, named also Jona. When Léonore was returned to his retreat, he passed the days in labour, the nights in prayer; and, living less as a man than as an angel, he edified by his conduct and animated by his exhortations his holy community.

The monastery of Léonore was not very far from the residence of the sovereigns of Brittany, where Conao or Conomor, murderer of Jona, then was with the widow of that prince whom he had married. Judual, son of Jona, took refuge in the monastery of Léonore, his uncle, who did not judge he ought to keep him in his house, where he saw well that the young prince would not be in safety. But, taking other measures to save the life of his lawful lord whom the usurper, at last unmasked, sought to put to death, he had Judual embark for Great Britain, without fearing to expose himself to the whole fury of Conao. He was not content with having drawn the innocent one from peril, he even braved the persecutor, by showing him the ship in which Judual was sailing under full sail.

The usurper, however, did not put Saint Léonore to death, whether he liked to commit crimes only when he could draw some advantage from them, or dreaded this time to dip his hands in the blood of his brother, or feared to lose himself altogether in the mind of the king and queen, and of the peoples, who loved and honoured the holy bishop as a wholly divine man. The legend of Saint Léonore says that Conao gave him a blow, and that after this insult, quite beside himself, he spurred his horse; that the horse took its course with such impetuosity that he could not hold back at the edge of a precipice, where he broke his neck; that Conao broke his thigh in three places by this fall, could never be cured of it, and died at last miserably after having long suffered very cruel pains. But this fact is not certain; it appears on the contrary that this wicked prince, having supported Chramn, revolted against Clotaire, his father and king of France, perished in 560 with this rebel son.

The death of Conao having given Judual the possibility of returning to Brittany, Saint Léonore, who joined to the natural affection he had for his nephew the charity with which the Saints are animated, applied himself with all his power to make him re-enter into possession of his States. He did not survive this last event much, and ended, by a death precious in the eyes of God, his holy career, at the age of about fifty-one years, about the year 560. Saint Léonore is represented: 1st, a little bell in his hand. King Childebert had granted him, it is said, as much land as the sound of the Saint’s little bell could cover. The latter called the royal stewards and

went up a hill from which he made his bell ring out. The witnesses deposed that it had been heard four miles round about, and the taking of possession was established on that fact. — 2nd, ploughing with twelve stags, for want of oxen. The Bollandists relate that at the moment when, in company with his disciples, our Saint was betaking himself to his lands to plough them, they perceived lying on the ground a stag of extraordinary size. Saint Léonore ordered it to be flayed and its skin alone served to make reins. At the same instant, twelve other stags presented themselves to their astonished eyes; lowering their heads, they let themselves be fastened to the yoke, and during five weeks and three days, they betook themselves regularly to the lands of the Saint to help him to cultivate them; only on the days of Sunday they remained in the neighbouring forest. The work being finished, they all came together to beg their master to let them go: he then blessed them with his hand and dismissed them. — 3rd, hanging his cloak on a ray of the sun. The same hagiographers pretend that one day King Childebert begged our Saint to celebrate the holy mysteries before him and all his court. The servant of God, before putting on the priestly vestments, took off his cloak and wished to hang it somewhere; as he sought to hook it up, suddenly a ray of the sun entered by the window of the room where he was and charged itself, to the great surprise of the spectators, with sustaining this precious burden.

Worship and Relics

The ancient breviary of Léon marks the feast of Saint Léonore on 1 July, and gives its office in nine lessons. The ancient breviary of the abbey of Saint-Méen makes memory of him the same day. This memory was also made at Paris until 1607, the epoch at which it was suppressed. His name is still found in the Parisian martyrology on 1 July. His feast was kept at Dol on 16 February, at Saint-Malo on 16 July, and at Coutances on the 3rd of the same month. There is a parish near Saint-Malo which bears the name of the Saint, whom they call there by corruption Saint-Lunaire. One sees in the parish church his tomb, raised two feet from the ground, and his relics were preserved there, the head apart in a silver reliquary, and the other bones in two ebony reliquaries. Another part had been carried to Paris in the tenth century with those of the other Breton saints, and afterwards to Beaumont-sur-Oise, where Saint Léonore was honoured in a priory which bore his name, and had been founded, in 1185, by Matthew, count of Beaumont; this lord had at that epoch obtained the relics of the Saint. They were burnt by the Calvinists in the sixteenth century. Besides his feast, which the church of Saint-Malo celebrated on 1 July, another was also kept there on 13 October, under the name of Translation. There was in the church of Rennes a chapel dedicated to Saint Léonore, and several parishes acknowledge him for patron, some under the names of Lunaire, Lourmel and Launeuc.

We have drawn this biography from the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*, by Dom Lobineau. — Cf. the ancient Breviary of Léon; the Bollandists, volume i of July; the Proper of Dol and of Saint-Malo, and the Breviary of Coutances of 1741.

Saint Simeon, Surnamed Salus or the Fool, Solitary of Mount Sinai

6th century.

Nemo se seducat; si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc saeculo, stultus fiat, ut sit sapiens: sapientia enim hujus mundi stultitia est apud Deum.

Let no one deceive himself: if there is anyone among you who passes for wise in the world, let him become a fool that he may become wise; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God.

1 Cor., iii, 18.

When one is well persuaded of this truth of the apostle Saint Paul, that what appears folly before men is often true wisdom in the eyes of God, one has no difficulty in believing the surprising things which the sacred historians relate to us of several Saints; eager for the greatest humiliations, in order to render themselves more conformable to Jesus Christ laden with opprobrium, they have done actions so extraordinary and so

much against human reason that they have passed for some time in the esteem of the world for madmen. This is what we are about to see in a striking manner in the life of Saint Simeon, surnamed Salus, a Syriac word which means the Fool; he knew so well, by a thousand ingenious artifices, how to hide from the eyes of men his wisdom and holiness, discovered nevertheless by the brilliance of miracles, that the name of fool and madman has remained to him as a very honourable title.

History teaches us nothing of his childhood or his youth, except that he was born in the city of Edessa, in the province of Syria, of very rich and Catholic parents, and that he became very learned in the Greek language, and fairly skilled in several sciences, until his perfect conversion. As in the time of the emperor Justinian the elder, the faithful were carried with a singular devotion to visit the holy places of Jerusalem at the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, two young men, of whom one was named Simeon and the other John, set out together to make this pilgrimage in the company of their parents. When they had satisfied their piety, they took their road by the valley of Jericho to return to their country; and, because in this place one discovered a great number of monasteries, built along the river Jordan, they stopped to consider attentively this agreeable spectacle. They were in admiration; John took the word and said to Simeon: “Do you know well who are the persons that inhabit all these cells? They are earthly angels whose occupation is only to think of the things of heaven.” — “Can one see them?” answered Simeon. — “Yes, without doubt,” replied John, “provided that we are willing to render ourselves like them.” Their desire inflaming more and more, they alighted from their horses, as if to rest, and, having given them to their valets, they ordered them to go on ahead always. A short time after, they perceived a little road which led to the Jordan; John said to Simeon: “Here is the road which leads to life, whereas that on which we are leads to death.” They both knelt then, and prayed God with all their heart that He would make known to them His holy will on the road they were to take. Then they cast lots: the road of the Jordan fell to them, which rejoiced them extremely; forgetting their parents and the great goods they had in the world, they turned toward the monasteries. The first they met was that which bore the name of the abbot Gerasimus, of which they found the door open and a venerable old man, named Nicon, who awaited them, because he had had a revelation of their arrival. Thus they were received, both of them, as persons sent on the part of God.

The next day, this holy old man made them a beautiful discourse on the subject of their vocation; he excited them to undertake with fervour the penitent life of the solitaries and to persevere constantly in their pious designs, without ever relaxing in the practice of virtue. His word, finding their hearts well disposed, inspired them with so great a desire of perfection that they begged him with much insistence to give them the monastic tonsure and to clothe them in the religious habit. This holy ardour increased still marvellously when, the superior having brought into their presence a young man to whom the habit had been given the week before, they perceived on his head a crown all brilliant with light: they threw themselves at the feet of the holy abbot, and pressed him still more strongly to make them like the novice they had just seen; he was therefore obliged to grant them the grace which they asked of him with so much ardour and of which they rendered themselves so worthy. In effect, as soon as they were clothed, they saw reciprocally on the head of each other a like crown, and their faces appeared even at night, in the midst of darkness, all radiant with a heavenly clearness: but, two days after, no longer perceiving a crown on the head of the novice, they were much astonished at this change, and, fearing that the same misfortune might befall them, they deliberated between themselves on what they ought to do. Simeon, taking the word, said to his companion, by a divine inspiration: “If you will believe me, my brother, we shall lead a life still more hidden than that of these solitaries, for I feel myself so inflamed with the desire to remain unknown to the world that I am resolved to see no one more, to speak no more to men, and, in a word, to listen no more but to the voice of my God.” John was extremely touched by this discourse, and, feeling himself inwardly urged to follow him, he acquiesced in his proposal: so that after having received the blessing of the holy old man Nicon, to whom God had made known by revelation that their design came from heaven, they withdrew from this monastery, and taking their way toward the Dead Sea, they found on the shore the cell of a holy old man who had died

some days before; they believed that this was the place God destined for them; therefore they lodged there as in an earthly paradise, to lead there a wholly angelic life.

The demon failed not to tempt them there in all sorts of ways; to make them regret the world, he set again before their eyes the dearest objects of their tenderness. Sometimes he appeared to them under hideous forms, to oblige them to abandon their solitude; at other times he excited them to gluttony; in a word, he went about it in every manner, either to make them return to their country, or to render them slack and slothful in their exercises, this means being the most efficacious to make great souls succumb. But the young solitaries rendered his efforts useless, as much by their prayers as by their fidelity and by the continual exhortations which they made each other to animate themselves to perseverance. God, moreover, fortified them so by heavenly visions which filled their hearts with an unspeakable joy, that after having been tormented by the thought of their parents for the space of two years, they were at last entirely delivered from this pain, and enjoyed thereafter a very great tranquillity of mind.

They were in this fair interior disposition when they learned almost at the same time, by revelation, the decease of the two persons whom they loved so dearly; the blessed Simeon knew, in an ecstasy, that his mother was in agony and near death; he came at once to announce this news to his companion, in order to make prayers together to obtain for her a good death. After which, Simeon being unable to refuse to his heart the sentiments of tenderness which nature inspired him for so good a mother, addressed to God these words interrupted by sighs and sobs: “Lord, who received the sacrifice of Abraham, the holocaust of Jephthah and the gifts of Abel, and who honoured Anna with the gift of prophecy on account of her son Samuel, receive, if it please You, the soul of my mother for the love of Your poor servant, who prays You most humbly. Remember, my God, the pains she took for me, and the tears she has shed since I left her to consecrate myself entirely to Your service. You know the care she had of my education, in the hope that I should console her in her old age, and yet my flight has deprived her of the fruit of her labours. She could not be a moment without seeing me: all her joy was to keep me near her, and she has scarcely enjoyed those sweets. It is for Your glory, O my Lord, that I have reduced her to this state. She has done nothing but groan and weep since my separation; the nights, which give some rest to the most afflicted, have been for her years of anguish and sorrow; the thought that she had lost me so wrung her heart that she was always plunged in bitterness. Grant her then the grace, O my God, to die now in peace, pardoning all the faults she has committed against Your divine Majesty. And, after having left her so long in tears and groans, reward, if it please You, her afflictions with the heavenly consolations which the Saints enjoy in Your presence.” His prayer was heard, as was revealed to the blessed John, to whom God, some time after, made known in a vision that his wife was dead, and that she enjoyed the same glory as the mother of Simeon.

These blessed solitaries, having nothing more in the world which could oblige them to return to it, passed twenty-nine years together in that solitude, in all sorts of exercises of penance: suffering hunger and thirst, the ardour of the sun and the rigours of winter, and sustaining the most horrible temptations which the demons never ceased to deliver to them to bring them to relaxation. But, at the end of that time, God, wishing to confound the vain wisdom of the people of the world by the apparent folly of Simeon, gave him a strong thought to appear in public, in order to labour there, in a new manner, for the salvation of his neighbour and the conquest of souls. He was the more confirmed in his design in that the holy hermit Nicon appeared to him, and assured him that henceforth he would no longer be susceptible to any movement of the flesh. He disclosed his thought at once to his dear companion, who, prudently apprehending that so specious a pretext might be a snare of Satan to ravish from him the crown of perseverance, represented to him vividly all the perils to which he was going to expose himself, and did all he could to make him change his resolution. Nevertheless, having known by his answers that it was in no wise a temptation of the demon, but a divine inspiration, he approved his enterprise, and at last acquiesced, though with much regret, in a separation which was the more sensible to him in that he had believed death alone capable of making it, on condition

however that they should see each other once more before dying.

Simeon quitted therefore his solitude, and, leaving the blessed John in tears, he betook himself first to Jerusalem to visit anew the holy places; he employed three days in this devotion; he asked of God, with an incredible fervour, to hide during his life the marvels which He should work by him, that he might remain always unknown to men. He obtained this uncommon grace. From Jerusalem he went to Emesa, in Syria, to labour there for the conversion of souls, by counterfeiting the madman, according to the extraordinary project which he had formed in his mind by a wholly heroic humility; and he did there actions so extravagant and so contrary to the rules of human prudence that, if God had not authorized them by miracles, there would be reason to condemn so irregular a conduct. Until his death, his life was only a succession of actions ridiculous in the eyes of men, although they were worthy of the approbation of God and of the Angels. In effect, they were only pious inventions of his humility and of his charity; of his humility, to hide the miracles which he worked continually; for, when he had wrought some, he feared that the glory of them would be attributed to him: it was then that he did extravagant actions; of his charity, to gain souls to Jesus Christ; whether by touching words which he threw in by the way in companies by way of raillery: the most libertine did not fail to reflect on them, and they served to inspire them with good sentiments; or by making, out of season, it seems, exhortations to virtue or declamations against vice, which struck home afterwards; or by telling everyone truths which would not have been well received if he had not counterfeited the madman to say them more freely. By this means, he converted almost the whole city of Emesa. Such, in general, were the artifices which he employed to avoid the praises and honours of men and to gain souls to God; but it must be avowed that, whatever address he had to play this part, the brilliance of his miracles would doubtless have discovered his profound wisdom and his eminent holiness, if God, by a particular providence, had not Himself hidden them from the eyes of worldlings; for, in short, what esteem ought not to have been made of a man who delivered the possessed, who carried burning coals in his hands without being hurt, and in his robe without its being in the least burnt; who predicted things to come, who discovered the most hidden secrets of the heart, who multiplied provisions, who converted Jews and heretics, who healed the sick, who drew debauched women out of crime, engaging some in lawful marriage, and making the others vow chastity? What esteem, we say, ought not to have been made of a man whose life was filled with so many marvels? Since he always remained hidden, ought we not to say, with the author of this life, that if God, in His ordinary conduct, takes pleasure in making the merit of the Saints shine forth, He took, on the contrary, a particular care to hinder men from recognizing the holiness of Simeon, in the midst of so many virtues which were so evident? This, assuredly, is admirable and shows the great condescension which God has for His servants, when they have zeal to enter into the humiliations of Jesus Christ. In effect, He wrought new miracles to keep our Saint in obscurity, when the brilliance of those which he did gave men occasion to glimpse some rays of wisdom through his extravagant actions. A great lord, who dwelt near the city of Emesa, had recognized the holiness of Simeon, because he had disclosed to him the secrets of his heart; as he opened his mouth to publish this marvel, his tongue remained motionless, so that it was impossible for him to speak of it.

This apparent folly made him relax nothing of religious austerity nor of the other exercises of true wisdom which he practised in solitude. His fast was so rigorous that he passed weeks and sometimes even whole forties [of days] without eating. To hide from men this prodigious abstinence, when he took some nourishment, he did it in public. He had for bed only a little vine-cutting and even most often he was all the night in prayer and watered the earth with his tears. In a word, he rendered himself as exact in all his practices of devotion as the solitaries most retired from the world and the most regular in their conduct. Also, God loaded him with all sorts of blessings, as much by the ineffable sweetnesses with which He filled his soul as by the prodigies with which He accompanied his words and actions. We have spoken of them only in general; but it is fitting to relate some examples in particular, in order that one may judge well of the eminence of his grace. While Simeon dwelt at Emesa, he lodged ordinarily with a deacon of that church, named John, who had taken him into his house out of compassion for his poverty and his folly. It happened

that this virtuous host was accused of being the author of the murder of a man who had been assassinated and whose murderers had thrown the corpse into his house, by the window. On this accusation, which such an indication rendered admissible, the magistrate, without other information, condemned him to death as guilty of homicide. When he was being led to execution, seeing that human means failed him to prove his innocence, he had recourse to God as to the powerful deliverer of the oppressed, saying to Him in the depth of his heart: “O God of truth, assist me in the state in which I am.” Meanwhile Simeon, who had learned the danger in which his benefactor was, was making his prayer, prostrate on the ground, to ask of God his deliverance. Admirable thing! as they were on the point of fastening him to the gibbet, two horsemen were seen to appear who cried that this innocent man should not be put to death, because the true authors of the crime of which he was unjustly accused had been discovered: which caused him to be set at liberty. As soon as he saw himself delivered, he came to find Simeon at the place where he knew that he ordinarily hid to make his prayer, doubting not that it was to his charity that he was indebted for his life. In effect, he found him there on his knees, tears in his eyes and hands raised to heaven, and saw at the same time globes of fire which descended on his head and burning flames which surrounded him on all sides. He dared not approach him nor interrupt him in this state; but our Saint having perceived him, said to him: “My friend, thank God for your deliverance, know that this misfortune befell you only because you refused alms to two poor men who asked it of you, although you had wherewith to give it to them: for you must always remember, my brother, that the goods you have are not yours, but that you have received them to assist your neighbour. Are you not yet penetrated with the words of Jesus Christ, who promised the hundredfold in this world and eternal life in the other to those who should give alms for His love? If you had this belief, why did you not do charity to these poor men? and since you did not do it, is it not a mark that you lack faith?” One sees by these fair words that besides a very high wisdom with which Simeon was enlightened, he had still the gift of prophecy, by which God had made known to him the hardness of his host toward the poor, and the true subject of his condemnation. It was by these admirable lights that he conducted himself in all his actions, which the world took for follies, as formerly those of the Prophets in the old law; and if we wished to consider them in detail, we should see that each contained its mystery. Foreseeing by this same spirit the great earthquake which occurred under the emperor Maurice, by which the city of Antioch was almost entirely overthrown, he entered a public edifice which was supported on several columns, and with a whip in his hand. He began to strike some of them, saying these words to them: “Your Lord commands you to stand firm,” and he said to one in particular: “As for you, you will not fall, but neither will you remain.” In effect, when the earthquake occurred, none of those to which the Saint had ordered to remain was shaken, and this last was found only a little inclined and split from top to bottom: and then it was known that what he had done had not been without mystery.

Another time, having had revelation that the city of Emesa would soon be afflicted with a great plague which would cause many persons to perish, he went through all the schools, and there, choosing some children among the others, according as the grace of God inspired him, he saluted them and said to them: “Go happily, my dear child.” Then turning to the master: “For God’s sake,” he said to him, “my friend, beware of beating these children whom I love, because they have a long road to travel.” These masters took these actions of Simeon for extravagances; but the event showed well that they were so many prophecies of what was to happen, for all those children whom he had thus saluted died of the plague. When he had known by a heavenly light that the precious time of his death would soon arrive, he went to find the blessed John in his ancient solitude, according to the promise he had made him on separating from him. History teaches us nothing of the conversation they had together: it says only that our Saint, to whom God had also revealed that the death of this dear companion was near, said to him these words: “Come, my brother, let us go, the time has come”; and he saw on the head of this holy solitary the same crown of which we have spoken, with this inscription: “The crown which he merits who perseveres in the sufferings of solitude.” Being returned from this journey, he heard a voice which said to him: “Come to me, Simeon, Simeon, come and receive, not a

single crown, but as many crowns as you have gained souls to my service." Two days before his death, he disclosed the secret of his whole life to the deacon John, his host, from whom he had not been able to hide it entirely, on account of the long sojourn he had made in his house; then, having made him a pressing exhortation on mercy toward the poor and on the perfect love of enemies, he retired into his cell, where he begged him not to enter until the end of two days, to see in what state he would be. He knew well that he would be found dead; but as by an ingenious humility he had taken much care during his life to hide his virtues and the great graces he received from God, he wished also to die in the same manner. That no more honour should be paid to his body after his decease than he had received during his life, he hid himself under the vine-cuttings which served him for bed, and in that state he rendered peacefully his soul to Jesus Christ on 1 July, toward the end of the empire of Maurice.

Two days after, as he was no longer seen to appear as usual, they came to his cell to see whether he was not ill; but as they found him dead in the state we have just said, they conceived still less esteem than before, in the thought that he had died in some wandering of mind; therefore, not believing that the honours should be paid him which the Church is accustomed to render to the dead, they carried his body, without washing it or reciting psalms, and without lights or incense, to the cemetery of the pilgrims; but God knows how to exalt the merit of His servants who have abased themselves for His love; He sent a multitude of angels to supply his burial in default of men; so that a multitude of voices was heard in the air celebrating his obsequies with much more solemnity than all the men of the earth could ever have done. The report of this marvel having spread through Emesa, those who until then had believed him a madman, coming back, so to speak, from a deep sleep which had hindered them from recognizing his holiness, began to relate to one another the miracles they had seen him work, and the virtuous actions of which they had been witnesses; they avowed that all this fiction of folly had been made only by a movement of the Holy Spirit, and admired the incomprehensible conduct which God holds toward His elect. It is remarked among other things that, since he had returned from solitude, his hair and beard had never grown, and that his monastic tonsure had always remained in the same state, without its being necessary to shave it.

He is represented: 1st, followed by troops of children whom his strange ways amused every day, in the streets of Alexandria; 2nd, seated and playing the bagpipe: this is another way of recalling the singularities of which this man of God gave the spectacle, through contempt of the world. The life of Saint Simeon was written by the deacon John. Afterwards, Leontius, bishop in the island of Cyprus, composed it more elegantly, as it is related by Metaphrastes and by Surius. The Roman martyrology makes a very honourable memory of him on this day, and Cardinal Baronius has not failed either to make an illustrious mention of him in his learned Remarks.

Saint Cybard or Eparchius,[1] Solitary, in the Diocese of Angoulême

581. — Pope: Pelage II. — King of France: Childebert II.

Recordatio tenebrarum exteriorum facit non horrere solitudinem.

The remembrance of the outer darkness takes from solitude the horror which it might inspire.

S. Seru, Ep. i ad Robertum.

Saint Cybard, one of the glories of the diocese of Angoulême, was born in Périgord, about the year 504, of a Gallo-Roman family. His father was called Felix, and had also the surname of Auriolus; his mother was named Principie,[1] and his paternal grandfather Félicissime. The latter had been established by Clovis count or governor of Périgueux, when, after the battle of Vouillé (Voulon), that king had delivered the whole south of Gaul from the yoke of the Arian Visigoths. It was with this high official that the young Cybard came, at the age of eighteen, to be initiated into the secrets of administration; and doubtless the old count, in receiving the useful services of his grandson, flattered himself that he would one day have him for his successor. But

the thoughts of our Saint were very far from that smiling future, for the more he saw of the world and its pleasures, the more he felt the disgust and vanity of them; the more also he penetrated into the embarrassment and difficulties of public affairs, the more his delicacy of conscience took alarm at them, just as his humility fled from their splendour and honours. The monastic state was the object of all his desires; so he took advantage of a happy circumstance to leave secretly the city and his father's house, and to go to the monastery of Sessac (Sedaciacum) and cast himself at the feet of the holy abbot Martin, entreating him to admit him among his religious. This admission was not without difficulty, on account of the opposition of his family; but, says the contemporary historian, the mercy of God intervened, doubtless by calming the grief of his parents, and by making them consent, though with regret, to the happiness of their son.

It was in effect happiness that Cybard had found under the roof of a humble monastery; and the rough prescriptions of the Rule became, from the first days, sweet and easy to him, because he always observed them with love and fidelity. He was then thirty-three years old, and, the forces of the body seconding the ardour of the spirit, he accepted with all his heart and valiantly fulfilled the rough labours to which they subjected him. But if he was in this the edification of the religious, he was no less that of the seculars who came to the monastery, for they saw in him a man brought up in the pomp and softness of great houses clothe himself in a poor habit, attend to the labours of agriculture, content himself, toward the end of the day, with a little bread and vegetables, and, after the fatigues of the day, still give to prayer the better part of the night. Such a spectacle has always been powerful over souls; and even today, that poverty and voluntary labour which are united in the Trappists to the greatest austerity of monastic penance win for them our respect and our sympathies. As for our Saint, wholly given to his duties, he studied only to render himself unknown to men, and groaned before God over the high renown which his eminent virtue was beginning to draw upon him. It was said, in effect, that animals showed themselves docile to his voice, and that this privilege was the reward of his gentleness and innocence. Thus he had been seen stopping at the edge of a wood a young hind which had come to kiss his hands and which fled only after having received his blessing. Another time it was a bird, a mother settled on her tender brood, which, frightened at his approach, was about to fly away, when he asked her to wait for him. The bird did not stir, and Cybard could at leisure caress the mother and the little ones, but, as one may well presume, without attempting their liberty.

On another side, the sick who came to the monastery to seek care praised not only that which his charity lavished on them; they published the cures which they attributed to his merits, and which he himself vainly strove to hide. But it was precisely this reputation of holiness which soon became insupportable to him and which, after a sojourn of five years, decided him to quit his monastery. At that period monastic profession did not carry with it the vow of stability. Saint Benedict had only just introduced it into his Rule, and it was still unknown in the monasteries of the Gauls. Thus a monk, provided he remained faithful to the common laws of his profession, could pass from one house to another, and even abandon the cenobitic life to embrace that of recluses or anchorites. It was therefore by a prudent use of this liberty that our Saint, having secretly left the monastery of Sessac, set out in quest of a solitude which might suit his designs, that is to say, hide him entirely from the eyes of men. He traversed first a part of the present diocese of Bordeaux, and not finding there what he sought, he took the road toward Angoulême. The see of that city was then occupied by Saint Aphtone or Aplone, who had just succeeded Lupicin; the latter, chaplain of King Clovis, had been placed by him at the head of that unhappy Church, to repair the immense evils which, during half a century, the domination of the Arian heresy had accumulated.

Saints divine Saints and know how to attach them to themselves. This was seen in this circumstance; for as soon as Aplone had learned from some inhabitants who recognized him the presence of our Saint in his episcopal city, he had him prayed to come to him. Perhaps he had known him formerly in the house of the count of Périgueux, or at least he had heard him spoken of. He was therefore delighted to see him; but when a conversation with the young solitary, on the things of God, the vanity of the world and the charms of

solitude, had allowed him to appreciate more completely all the treasures of wisdom and piety which this chosen soul contained, he resolved to do everything to fix him near his episcopal city. This is why he chose for him and showed him, on the slope of the mountain on which it is built, a place of retreat which, inaccessible on the side of the city and closed below by the Charente, presented every facility for living there separated from the world, as in the midst of the most remote desert. Let us add that a fountain, which oozed from the rock, furnished the water necessary to the hermit and completed the charm of that solitude. Thus, says his historian, the holy man had no sooner seen it than he was smitten with it, and could not sufficiently express the joy of his soul. Doubtless it would have been sweet to him to settle there immediately, but, through a sentiment of delicacy and religious subordination, he would not do so before having obtained the consent of his bishop and of his former abbot. Saint Aplone took charge of this negotiation, and deputed to Sébauris, bishop of Périgueux, and to Martin, abbot of Sessac (today Issigeac), the first priests of his diocese: these were the archpriest Fronton, who later merited to be raised to the episcopate; the archdeacon Arthemius, who is called a perfect servant of Jesus Christ; and another Arthemius, who had the title of defender, that is to say, who was charged with upholding the civil rights of the church of Angoulême.

The choice of Aplone's envoys shows well what price he attached to the happy success of their mission; so he welcomed with great joy their return and the favourable answer they brought. The whole city, certain henceforth of possessing Saint Cybard, and appreciating this rich treasure, testified to the man of God the liveliest interest, and they busied themselves actively in preparing the grotto in which he was to shut himself up; it was necessary, in effect, to close it on the north side, and to make some other indispensable arrangements. In the meantime Cybard remained in the city, doubtless near Saint Aplone, sighing for the day when it should be given him to bury himself in this tomb of his choice. The night which preceded this much-desired day, he felt urged to visit his dear solitude; quitting therefore his couch at the hour of midnight, he betook himself there alone and secretly; and, after having prayed there a long time, because he felt weighed down by sleep, he took, a new Jacob, a stone for pillow, and had, like the patriarch, a heavenly vision. An angel appeared to him and said to him: "Cybard, remain here, and seek no other solitude": a divine order which, in strengthening him in his pious designs, made him vividly desire the prompt realization of them. He hastened therefore to return to Aplone to relate this vision to him, and passed near the prison where a great number of prisoners of war were groaning, who, not having yet been able to be ransomed, had no other prospect than to be kept captive, or sold as slaves. It is known that the deliverance or ransom of these unfortunates was, in that time, one of the principal works of the Saints, and that the Church employed in it liberally her treasures and even the vessels of the altar; by this noble use these vessels became redeemers like the divine blood which was consecrated in their ruddy cups; and more than once also, God authorized by miracles the compassionate zeal of His servants. So it happened in this circumstance; for our Saint felt inspired to pray for these captives, and he had scarcely ended, before the door of the prison, his fervent prayer, when suddenly, under the very eyes of the jailer, this door opens, and the iron bar which closed it breaks and is hurled outside. The prisoners then rush toward the church to seek refuge there and thank God for their deliverance. On his side, the people run up, and in their acclamations unite to the name of the Lord, who has broken the fetters of the captives, that of Cybard, who, on the point of becoming the voluntary prisoner of penance, wished to restore to liberty the victims of war and of misfortune.

One easily understands that after such a miracle this same people accompanied our Saint in crowds when the bishop, followed by his clergy, led him to the grotto which was henceforth to be his dwelling, and shut him in it with all the apparatus of the sacred ceremonies. And now some will perhaps ask what the holy recluse could do in his narrow and silent cell: he did there what, from the age of fifteen to that of a hundred and thirteen, Saint Paul the hermit did in the depths of the deserts, and what so many eminent men have done in all ages, who have passed, either their whole life or long years, in the most profound retreat, and who were never more eloquent than when they spoke of their dear solitude. It is that they occupied themselves with God, that they conversed with Him, that they meditated His word, and that they found in it an inexhaustible

source of pure and holy joys. Let us add that, thanks to the abundance of penances, prayers, expiations and sufferings which Saint Cybard multiplied each day, he had more real favours to distribute and more benefits to spread than the most opulent monarch. Saint Aplone understood it at once, and, to extend still further this salutary influence by preaching and the direction of souls, he raised Cybard to the priesthood, and permitted several of his clerics to put themselves under his guidance. He himself came often to visit him, and between these two saints the hours passed sweetly and swiftly in their agreeable conversations on spiritual things. Moreover, on determined days and hours, the faithful gathered before his grotto, either to assist at Mass and receive the holy communion which he gave them through a small latticed window, or to listen to his instructions, or gather his counsels, and above all his consolations, for he possessed quite specially the gift of relieving the affliction of souls, even more than that of healing the ills of the body, although miracle was nevertheless as it were familiar to him. His historian tells us, in effect, that he healed several lepers, that he delivered the possessed, that he restored sight to three blind men and wrought many other cures by the anointing with blessed oil which he kept in his cell. Among these miraculous facts we choose the two following, which have seemed to us particularly remarkable.

A lady of noble birth, named Clara, or Arania, had her limbs all contracted by a horrible malady. On the reputation of Saint Cybard she had herself brought to him, and besought him with loud cries to have pity on her; he kept her near his grotto a whole week, recommending her earnestly to God, and then sent her away perfectly healed. If her gratitude was great, her confidence in the intercession of our Saint was no less: one may judge of it by the following trait: returned to her country and to her house, which was situated on the seashore, she saw one day a ship about to perish in the midst of the waves; she invoked at once the help of God and the prayers of Saint Cybard; then, remembering that she possessed a letter from him, she runs to fetch it, and, stretching it toward the shore, she cries: “Cybard, servant of God, this letter is a pledge of your charity; deign, by the name of Jesus Christ, to make it serve for the salvation of these unfortunates.” Her hope was not deceived, for suddenly the ship, in spite of the violence of the waves, came to land happily, far from all ports, at the very place where she stood praying.

The second miracle took place on the person of a young man named Artemius, and it shows us the simple and modest virtue of the true solitary in opposition to the proud fanaticism of a false religious. Artemius, of himself, without heeding any counsel, and outside the authority of his bishop, had made himself a recluse in the country of Saintonge; but neither his virtue nor his head was solid enough for such a manner of life. Thus, after some years of an imprudent seclusion, he was seen suddenly to fall into madness, and to ask to be conducted to King Childebert, because he had, he said, to take his orders in order afterwards to visit and inspect the kingdom. His afflicted relatives, feigning to enter into his views, set out with him, and, half by ruse, half by force, brought him to the grotto of Saint Cybard. But, in the presence of the Saint, Artemius fell into a sudden fit of fury; his hair, which he wore very long, tossed in disorder, his arms twisted violently, and his fingers clenched convulsively; he cried out at the same time that he recognized no one equal to him in holiness, and that it was therefore an outrage to bring him to another solitary; he mingled besides with these inanities a thousand other follies, and even words of blasphemy. Nevertheless our Saint, touched with compassion, stretched out his hand through the window of his cell, and made over him the sign of the cross. In an instant all these cries and furies ceased; the next day he ordered his hair to be cut, which could be done only with difficulty, because Artemius offered a strong resistance, and the day after, Saint Cybard declared that he might be admitted among the clerics and receive the tonsure. This done, the poor young man remained perfectly tranquil, and after some days, which the Saint employed in consoling and instructing him, he returned to his family completely sound in mind and body. His cure did not belie itself up to his death, and it was even judged so firm that Artemius was later raised to the diaconate.

The tender compassion which Saint Cybard had always had for prisoners and captives had followed him into his retreat: their deliverance was still his favourite work, and he employed in it the gold and silver which the

alms of the faithful poured at his feet. The number of those whom he thus restored to liberty is put at no less than two thousand. His charity extended equally to criminals themselves; and often Saint Cybard made use happily with the judges, either to moderate the penalty or to obtain an entire pardon, of the ascendancy which his virtue and holiness gave him. One day, however, he saw refused him by the count, or governor, of Angoulême the commutation of the sentence of death which he had pronounced against a thief whom public clamour accused with more violence than justice. The sentence was therefore executed in the presence of the governor and of a numerous people. Warned of the hour of this execution, Saint Cybard sent one of his monks to it, saying to him: “Know, my brother, that what man has refused us, God by His grace will grant us.” He then betook himself to prayer, and when the religious arrived at the place of punishment, all was over, the thief had been hanged, and the crowd was withdrawing satisfied and unconcerned. Meanwhile the monk, his eyes fixed on the gibbet, awaited with confidence the effect of the words of his holy abbot: and behold, suddenly the rope breaks of itself, as well as the chains which bound the hanged man, and he falls to the ground, free in all his limbs. The monk runs at once to him, hastens to tell him to whom he owes his deliverance, and leads him safe and sound before his deliverer. The latter, after having thanked God, has the count asked to come to his grotto, and presents to him alive this man whom he recognizes perfectly for the same whom he had left for dead a few moments before. Struck with stupor, he then casts himself at the feet of the holy abbot, promising to be in future more docile to his requests, and not to lavish so much the penalty of death.

However extraordinary this miracle may appear to us, its authenticity cannot be called in question, for Saint Gregory of Tours, who relates it in the sixth book of his History of the Franks, declares that he had the account from the mouth of the count himself. Moreover, unless one wishes, as a foregone conclusion, to believe in no supernatural fact, nor in any intervention of God in human events, one cannot say that such a miracle was unworthy of His power, His wisdom and His goodness, for it was a great lesson given to the judges who, in those times, condemned a man to death so lightly, and to the people who often, by caprice or by blind prejudice, demanded the punishment of an innocent man. Nothing, then, was more worthy of God than to protect, by a striking sign, human life against such frightful excesses.

Meanwhile some disciples having come to place themselves under the direction of Saint Cybard, he assigned them at first for dwelling the four or five grottoes near his own, and then, as their number increased, he had a monastery built for them at the foot of the hill. Though shut up in his cell, he governed this community by his word with as much gentleness as strength, for he knew at need how to reprove severely the religious who strayed from the Rule. Besides, they came frequently, either all together or each in particular, to receive his instructions; and none withdrew without having warmed his piety, or revived his languor at the heavenly fire of his soul. One of the prescriptions of the Rule ordained that the monks should live only on the voluntary alms of the faithful; and one easily presumes that more than once this Rule reduced them to hard privations. It happened even one day that bread failed them absolutely; then they came, sad and cast down, to cry famine at the grotto of Saint Cybard. But he, receiving them with an amiable gaiety, said to them: “Come, my children, faith fears not hunger”; and then, to revive their courage and perhaps also to charm their appetite, he set himself to relate to them certain marvellous traits of the life of the Fathers of the desert. Now, while he was speaking to them, provisions so abundant were brought to the monastery that there was enough to refresh not only the whole community, but also a great number of the poor.

If we enter now into the intimate life of Saint Cybard, we shall say that the austerity of his fasts and vigils appears scarcely credible, that he never drank wine, that his meals were so short and so light that it was not understood how he could sustain himself, that his bed was only a mat placed on the bare rock, and that his poor and coarse garment was of a roughness which made it a true hair-shirt. His austerities increased still further in a frightful manner during Lent and at certain other times of the year. Moreover, ceaselessly applied to prayer, giving to psalmody and to the recitation of the divine office the better part of the nights, he

interrupted his conversations with God only to instruct in the things of the spiritual life the religious of his monastery and the seculars who came to ask him advice or counsel. But whoever they were, he ravished them all by his humility and his unalterable gentleness. At last, after having passed thirty-nine years in this severe seclusion, without ever having shown the least weariness or the least tedium, he was seized with a slight fever and rendered peacefully his soul to God, on 1 July 581, and at the same hour at which he had heard the heavenly voice which said to him: “Cybard, remain here and seek no other dwelling.” As soon as he had expired, his holy body was taken from his cell and brought down to the monastery to be buried in the church. There took place at his funeral, which God honoured by several miracles, a great concourse of people. But what was most touching was the multitude of the captives he had delivered, who all ran there to offer to their benefactor this last homage of gratitude.

He is found represented: 1st, pouring a bag of silver upon a stone before one of his disciples, to teach him contempt of riches; 2nd, placed in the midst of a glory from which go forth rays on which are written the names of the virtues which most honoured his life and contributed to his canonization; 3rd, having near him a chain, or better, prisoners whose chains break: this is the ordinary characteristic of the saints who, above all in the Merovingian period, interposed a protection often blessed by God between the conquered race and the invaders who treated it roughly; 4th, a window of the church of La Rochefoucauld (Charente) recalls the vision which he had in his grotto. Saint Cybard is, with Saint Peter, the patron of Angoulême.

Worship and Relics

Soon after his death a public worship began to be rendered to him, and the bishop of Angoulême Nicasius, who had mounted that see only a year before, associating himself with the impulse of the populations, was the first to give the example of building a church under the title of Saint Cybard. In imitation of him, a great number of parishes in the dioceses of Angoulême, Périgueux, Saintes, Poitiers and Limoges chose him for patron; and the monastery which he had founded became the goal of a pilgrimage, to which people came from very far to venerate the body of the Saint, which the piety of his children had religiously laid under the high altar of the church. But in 1568 the Protestants, having seized the monastery, massacred the religious, violated the tombs of several counts and bishops of Angoulême who had chosen their burial there, and burned the relics of Saint Cybard. Today there are preserved of them in the cathedral church only a few small fragments. As for the monastery, it rose from its ruins and subsisted until 1791, at which time it was sold and in great part demolished. Some portions, however, still subsist, among others the chapter-room and half of the cloisters; and they form part of factories, workshops and private houses. There remains, to console piety for so many losses, only the grotto of the Saint. This grotto, piously frequented by the devotion of the faithful, was in 1673, through the care of Henri de Reffuge, commendatory abbot of Saint-Cybard, enlarged a little toward the back, so as to leave projecting the place where the Saint habitually stayed. It is at this spot that an altar was raised which François de Péricard, one of the greatest bishops of Angoulême, consecrated on 21 August of the same year. He also had carved in the living rock the bas-relief which is still seen today and which represents the vision of Saint Cybard. But in the middle of the last century a road which climbed from the bridge of Saint-Cybard to the place du Palet, having separated the top of the hillside from the enclosure of the abbey, the grotto was too much neglected by the religious, and they ceased to celebrate Mass there even on the day of the feast of the Saint. Then came the Revolution of 1793, which sold the abbey and the ground where the holy grotto was. The new owner used it to keep garden implements, and things remained in this state until the year 1831, when Mgr Cousseau, bishop of Angoulême, had the good inspiration to acquire this grotto so full of religious memories and to restore it to the worship of the pious solitary. This took place on 1 July of that year 1831, the twelve hundred and seventieth anniversary of the death of Saint Cybard. Since then His Lordship never fails to come there every year to celebrate the holy sacrifice, and nothing is more touching than this Mass said in this place at once elevated and subterranean, which recalls at the same time the catacombs of Rome and the cells of the Thebaid. Another project of His

Lordship is to re-establish the ancient monastery of Saint-Cybard by placing it in the midst of the suburb which bears his name; already an elegant chapel has been built which, later, will become the abbatial church, and every Sunday Mass is said there. May this holy work, which will cast a new glory upon the episcopate of Mgr Cousseau, be soon realized! and may we thus see flourish again among us the great monastic memories of Saint Cybard! We owe this biography to the kindness of M. J. Duchassaing, honorary canon of Angoulême, who extracted it from the life of the Saint published in 1851 by Mgr Cousseau.

Saint Humold or Rombaud,[1] Bishop and Martyr, Patron and Apostle of Malines

175. — Pope: Adrian I. — King of France: Carloman.

Verae divitiae sunt paupertas cupiditatum.

The true rich are those who are poor in desires.

S. Clem. Alex., lib. ii Paedag.

Saint Rumold, Anglo-Saxon by birth, left the world from his youth to embrace voluntary poverty; convinced that all that exceeds the needs of nature is a heavy and dangerous burden, he forbade himself the use of all pleasures. Carried away by the desire of perfection, he set out for Rome, to visit the tomb of the holy Apostles and all the places consecrated by religion in the capital of the Christian world. On the way he lost no occasion of announcing the word of God. During his sojourn at Rome he visited continually the tombs of the Apostles and Martyrs; he represented to himself by imagination their virtues and their combats, and the ardent desire of martyrdom took more and more possession of his soul.

Obeying a warning from on high, he set out for Gaul, having obtained the blessing of the sovereign Pontiff, and he came to Malines, where he was received with kindness by Count Adon, to whose wife he announced a happy fruitfulness. He conferred baptism on the child she brought into the world, and gave him the name of Libert. Later, this child having been drowned, the Saint recalled him to life. In gratitude for so great a benefit the parents gave a piece of land to Rumold, and the Saint began the construction of a monastery which was later changed into a college of regular canons.

Rumold established the faith of Christ at Malines and in the neighbouring places with such zeal and labours that he deserved to be named the apostle of Malines. Often he interrupted the exterior functions of the ministry to go and recollect himself in solitude. He was assassinated there on 24 June 775 by two villains, one of whom, guilty of adultery, had felt the effects of his zeal. The assassins threw his body into a river; but it was discovered miraculously and buried by the care of Count Adon in the church of Saint Stephen; his relics were afterwards transferred to a church of his name which is at Malines, and which Pope Paul IV raised to the dignity of a metropolitan church. On 3 April 1369 they were laid in a shrine of gilded silver which was melted down in 1578 during the troubles which agitated the Low Countries. This loss was repaired in 1631 by means of a second shrine in silver; it was carried off in 1794, at the second invasion of the French armies, and taken to the mint of Brussels to satisfy the exactions of the enemy. Finally, in 1823, on the occasion of the semi-centenary jubilee which was celebrated at Malines, the diocese contributed by voluntary gifts to the making of a new silver shrine which still exists today. He is represented: 1st, having a crown on his head, because he passes for the son of a Scottish or Irish lord; 2nd, restoring life to the young duke of Malines who had been drowned three days; 3rd, preaching in a wood; 4th, coming to France and healing a blind man; 5th, handing back to the Pope the insignia of the episcopate to become a monk; 6th, healing a possessed person; 7th, having a monastery built; 8th, protecting by his prayers a religious carried off by pirates; 9th, making a spring of living water come out of the earth by striking it with his crozier; 10th, beaten to death with pick, mattock, axe and club by workmen whom he employed on the building of his church and whom he had blamed for their misconduct; 11th, found again in the water by means of a

miraculous light which had risen above the place where his body had been thrown by his murderers; 12th, glorious and trampling his assassins underfoot.[1]

Acta Sanctorum, vol. i of July; — Cf. *Propre de Malines*, Godescard, Rivet, etc.

Saint Thibaut[2] of Provins, of the Order of the Camaldolese, Priest and Hermit in Italy

lOn–lOfiB. — Popes: Benedict VIII; Alexander II. — Emperors of Germany: Henry II; Henry IV.

Per vitae austeritatem vincitur hostis.

It is by a mortified life that one triumphs over the enemy.

Hugo Card., sup. psalm. xxxiv.

Thibaut was born at Provins, one of the most considerable towns of Brie: his father was called Arnoul, and his mother Gisle or Guille; both were of an illustrious family and allied to the greatest houses of the kingdom; some authors even make them descend from our kings, and others pretend that Arnoul was sprung from the counts of Brie and Champagne. Before this child came into the world, God made known what his holiness would be by two predictions which gave much joy to his parents; for one day the blessed Thibaut, archbishop of Vienne, his great-uncle, conversing with his grandmother, said to her among other things that she had great reason to console herself, because she would have a daughter whose son would be great before God and before men, and would surpass all his ancestors in virtue and merit. And a little before his birth a poor woman having accosted his mother assured her that he whom she carried in her womb was predestined by God, and that he would be the glory of all his race and the honour of his country. Having received from his parents governors and masters of singular wisdom and probity, he responded so perfectly to their care that there was never seen anything childish in his manners, nor light and infantine in his conduct; but he always showed much restraint, modesty, piety and devotion. The world was not contagious for him. He was in the midst of pleasures and grandeurs, and he had in his house all that can flatter covetousness and vanity; but he did not fail to preserve his innocence there and to remain as detached from the things of earth as if he had lived in the deserts. He was taught to ride, to fence and to draw fortifications; but what he was disposing in his heart was to fight the demon and his passions with those spiritual arms which Saint Paul calls the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit. The court itself, dangerous as it is, served only to discover to him the vanity of what men seek with so much ardour and which engages them in so many useless thoughts and desires.

The strongest inclination of our young lord was for solitude. He was charmed with the angelic life of Elias and Eliseus on Mount Carmel, of Saint John the Baptist on the banks of the Jordan, and he felt the greatest joy at the account of the virtues of the Pauls, the Anthonys, the Hilarions and the Pachomiuses in the deserts of Egypt and the Thebaid; the severity of their silence, their continual abstinence, their assiduity in the exercise of prayer and contemplation, their love of poverty and the familiarity they had with the Angels were all-powerful attractions which ravished his soul and made the delights of the court insipid to him. He formed therefore the design of imitating them; but, as he was endowed with great wisdom and a singular prudence, distrusting his own lights and the sentiments he experienced in his heart, he took the resolution of consulting a hermit named Burchard, who lived as a solitary on the banks of the Seine, where he was in great reputation of holiness. Some say that this hermit had been his preceptor, and that, disgusted with the vices of the court, he had retired to these shores to do penance, and that afterwards he became a religious at Sens in the abbey of Saint-Peter-the-Living. Others believe that it was the blessed Burchard who, from a hermit on the banks of the Seine in Burgundy, was made archbishop of Vienne at the solicitation of Rudolf, king of Burgundy, and Irmengarde his wife; God has manifested his holiness in our days, said Father Giry in 1685, by a great number of miraculous cures which have been wrought and continually are wrought at his tomb: also Jerome

de Villars, archbishop and count of the same city, informed Pope Paul V and the sacred college of cardinals of it.

Thibaut went therefore to visit this holy hermit, and declared to him the design which God inspired in him of leaving his parents and all his acquaintances to embrace the solitary life. Burchard kept him some days in his hermitage; and, to try his vocation, he made him practise during that time all the exercises of a penitent life. He accustomed him to wear the hair-shirt, to bloody his body by rough disciplines, to fast often, to pass whole hours in prayer, with arms extended and eyes raised toward heaven, to mortify his inclinations and appetites, in a word, to wage a continual war against himself. When he had tried him sufficiently, recognizing the truth of the eminence of his vocation, he encouraged him to obey it; Thibaut felt himself drawn to it more than ever, and he conceived so great a desire for that blessed state which disengages the soul from all sensible things to attach it only to the heavenly and the eternal, that, afterwards, no difficulty nor temptation, nor even all the rage of the demons, could tear it from his heart. In this sentiment he asked the blessing of Burchard, and, having taken leave of him, he returned to his parents' house to await the time favourable to the execution of his design.

Scarcely had he arrived there when his father, who wished to engage him in the world and establish his fortune by a great alliance, spoke to him of marrying. In effect, as he was very well made, and as his good qualities of body and mind, joined to the advantages of his birth and the riches of his house, rendered him one of the best matches of the kingdom, he could not hope for less than a great princess; but the most accomplished person was not capable of pleasing him, because, having consecrated himself to eternal wisdom, he saw nothing on earth which could be compared to it. "All the beauties here below," he said to himself, "will pass like a dream, and we shall pass with them. Should I be wretched enough to amuse myself with them? They would soon leave me; it is necessary then that I leave them first." Meanwhile Eudes II, count of Blois, to whom Queen Constance, wife of King Robert, had caused the city of Sens to be given, raised a great army to put himself in possession of the kingdom of Upper Burgundy, which he pretended belonged to him after the death of Rudolf III (1032), and which was disputed with him by the emperor Conrad, called the Salic. Arnoul, father of our Saint, who was a relative and vassal of Eudes, and in that quality obliged to support him, raised some companies of soldiers for this war. He wished to give the command of them to his son, still very young, who by this means would have been at the head of the nobility of Champagne. But our Saint refused this honour: he desired to serve God and not princes, to fight himself instead of shedding the blood of others. After having passed still some years in the paternal house, he resolved to abandon the world definitively: he left his family with a gentleman, a friend of his, named Gauthier, and went to Reims, where he lodged in the abbey of Saint-Remi. They were both on horseback, and each had a servant who followed them; but having left the servants and the horses in the inn, they went out of the town on foot, changed clothes with two poor pilgrims whom they met on the way, and fled thus barefoot and covered with rags: having crossed the Rhine they stopped in the forest of Petingen, in Swabia (1033), and built cells there.

One can conceive nothing more humiliating than their manner of living in that retreat. One would say, to see them, not only solitaries but also poor men and hirelings; for, to have wherewith to feed themselves, they go from time to time into the neighbouring villages and hamlets, where they carry stones with the masons, work in the meadows with the mowers, make charcoal with the charcoal-burners, clean the stables and stalls with the lowest servants and abase themselves to the other most vile offices of the country. If they receive some money for their labour, it is only to have a little bread, which ordinarily makes the whole fare of their table and the whole provision of their hermitage; as long as these provisions last, they pass the days and nights, now in contemplating the grandeurs of God and the mysteries of our salvation, now in singing psalms and hymns in honour of their sovereign Lord, now in afflicting their bodies by bloody disciplines, painful postures and long prayers, the face against the ground. How admirable are these first steps of the life of

Thibaut! How perfect these first essays! How worthy of praise this novitiate! Thibaut, nourished in delights and raised in the pleasures of a rich and abundant house; Thibaut, who, far from suffering any inconvenience, was always treated with so much delicacy, is now in continual sufferings and sighs under the rigour of the cold and the ice of the North. He who reposed on purple and brocade, and who ate the most delicious dishes, has for bed only the earth, for clothing only wretched rags, and for food only a little black and hard bread which he soaks in the water of his tears; he whose exercises were noble and agreeable, who conversed only with the children of princes, and whose ears were accustomed to hear the praises, caresses and flatteries of courtiers, sees himself cast down under the most vile labours, and has no other company than the animals of the woods, or poor labourers who have for him only insolence and harshness. How virtuous one must be to live in this manner! What profound humility one must possess to expose oneself thus voluntarily and without necessity to the insults, the railleries and the insolence of uncultivated and coarse people! But, besides, how happy is Thibaut to find in his workshops, his furnaces, his stables and his desert the accomplishment of his pious desires and of the will of God! He fled the court and his father's house only through aversion for the grandeurs and vanities of the world, and he finds himself in a state so low that he has nothing to fear on the side of pride. This is also what he said to his dear companion to animate him to patience and to bear courageously the pains he endured. "How happy we are to be sheltered from pride, from envy and from so many disorders which reign in the world! For my part, I esteem our poverty, which puts us beyond the reach of so many storms, more than sceptres and diadems, which are exposed to an infinity of cares, griefs and dangers." For the rest, if he did not embrace at first an entirely solitary life, it was only by the counsel of Burchard, whom he had consulted from the beginning; for this holy man, who was very experienced in spiritual direction, advised him also not to separate himself all at once from the commerce of men, but to dispose himself for a state so difficult and so perfect by the practice of the most austere virtues, and above all of humility and holy abjection.

Meanwhile he drew down, in the sequel, so many blessings on the houses of the masters who employed him that they began, in the country, to honour him and to regard him as a saint. Having perceived it, he was extremely pained; and, in order not to lose at Petingen what he had wished to avoid by leaving Provins, he took the resolution with Gauthier to make the pilgrimages of Saint James of Compostela in Galicia, of Saint Peter at Rome, and of the holy places of Palestine. They set out therefore for Saint James, barefoot, and having only a little money which remained to them from the wages of their labours. One cannot imagine how much they suffered on the way, from heat, cold, pebbles, thorns, hunger, thirst, the harshness of their garments and the other things which are wont to incommode travellers. But nothing of all this was capable of weakening their courage or slackening their devotion. Their fervour in that place of holiness was admirable; they passed several days there in prayer: their bodies were on earth, but their spirit was in heaven. Their conversation was with the Saints and with Jesus Christ Himself; and the consolations they received from it were so abundant that they could not cease to bless the day on which they had left the world to give themselves to the service of God. On the return, the demon, to whom the austerity of Thibaut was insupportable, appeared to him in human form, and, having lain down across his path, made him fall very roughly; but the Saint received no harm from it, and having made the sign of the cross over him and implored the assistance of Our Lord, he compelled this monster to disappear and to withdraw into the abysses. What gave him more pain was, on arriving at Trier, to meet there the lord Arnoul, his father, who was seeking him on all sides and was in extreme grief at his absence. He recognized him easily, but was not recognized by him, because his austerities and the fatigues of so many labours and journeys had made him unrecognizable. His bowels were moved at the sight of this object which he loved tenderly, and by whom he knew he was infinitely loved; but he rose above nature, and stifled all those human sentiments which solicited him to declare himself. To avoid being exposed to a like trial, he resolved with his companion to withdraw from Trier.

They betook themselves therefore to Rome, and there honoured the ashes of the blessed apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul. They visited there also the other places of devotion, which they often bathed with their tears, and passed there the days and nights in prayer. After having acquitted themselves of these duties, they resolved anew to make the journey to Palestine, to adore there the footprints of the Saviour of the world and to revere those places which He sanctified by His presence and watered with His tears and His blood. They went for that purpose to Venice, with the design of embarking there; but, when they thought themselves near to sailing, they learned with much grief that the war kindled between the Christians and the Saracens closed the entrance to the Holy Land and rendered this pilgrimage impossible (1035). In this accident they adored the secrets of the Providence of God, and, prostrating themselves before His majesty, they prayed Him with tears to inspire them with what they should do to be more agreeable to Him (1056). Their request was granted, and God made known to them that He wished them to live as solitaries in a place called Salanigo, near Vicenza, in Italy. They found there an old chapel which had been dedicated under the name of Saint Hermagoras and Saint Fortunatus, martyrs, but which was so much in ruins that the divine offices were no longer celebrated in it. Having judged it suitable for their design, they obtained the gift of it from those to whom it belonged, and built close by two cells to retire each in his own particular.

Thibaut, seeing himself in the place where God willed that he should end all his wanderings, was animated with such a fervour that he seemed to have done nothing until then. He gave himself to new austerities of a rigour such that one cannot think of them without dread. He wore for five years a hair-shirt which he never took off except to have the means of drawing blood with a discipline made of long thongs. He forbade himself at first every sort of meat, then reduced himself to barley bread and water; finally, what is very extraordinary even among the severest penitents, he deprived himself even of bread and water, content with fruits and raw herbs such as he found in the fields. His bed was at the beginning a chest or a plank, his pillow a tree-trunk, and his covering the very habit in which he was clothed; but toward the end he had no other bed than the wooden seat on which he was accustomed to sit. His sleep was very short, because he passed almost the whole night in prayer; but he had the address, to hide his mortification, to put himself in a state of sleeping before he who attended him withdrew, and to do the same thing also a few moments before he returned.

Sindicherius, bishop of Vicenza, a very vigilant prelate and very careful of the salvation of his people, being charmed with the holiness of Thibaut and persuading himself that he would be still more useful to the Church if he were honoured with the character of the priesthood, absolutely wished to ordain him priest. Rayer, canon and councillor of Provins, who composed his life in our language, says that he received only the diaconate and that he never suffered himself to be promoted to the priesthood; but we have too powerful testimonies of his ordination to the priesthood to be able to call it in doubt. His history assures us that he healed a religious named Odo, by saying Mass for him and giving him communion with his own hands. His eulogy, in the form of an epitaph, which is seen in his chapel in the cathedral church of Vicenza, says that he was titular priest of that church, as Ughellus relates, in volume v of the *Italia Sacra*, under the title of the bishops of Vicenza.

This new dignity giving him still more reputation and credit in the country, a great number of persons gathered round him, who desired to be instructed by his mouth and to imitate his actions. In place of Gauthier, his faithful companion, whom death took from him two years after his establishment at Salanigo, he saw himself surrounded by a troop of disciples, who walked courageously in his steps and composed a new monastery of which he was the father and abbot. Meanwhile the demon, unable to endure the great fruits which he produced by his word and by his example, tormented him in various ways, in the hope that by the importunity of his temptations and persecutions he would at last compel him to relax in his spiritual practices and to lead an easier and less severe life; but the heart of Thibaut was too well fortified by grace to yield to the efforts of the infernal monster. He overcame him in all sorts of encounters, and even when, by his malice,

he fell into a river, he came out of it not only without inconvenience, but also without being wet. Besides, our Saint was often consoled by heavenly visions and revelations. The Angels visited him several times and showed themselves to him in forms and representations full of sweetness; and one day when he was weeping bitterly over his sins, one of them said to him: “Weep no more, for thy sins are forgiven thee.” About the same time the holy martyrs Hermagoras and Fortunatus, whose oratory he had restored, honoured him with their conversation and thanked him for the care he took to have them praised and venerated in that place.

His reputation, being no longer able to remain shut up in Italy, spread as far as France, and came to the ears of his father, his mother and his relatives. One cannot express the joy they had in learning that Thibaut was not only not dead, but that he had risen, by the grace of God and by his generous efforts, to so high a degree of holiness. They went expressly to Italy to see him, to embrace him, to rejoice with him over the happy choice he had made, and to commend themselves to his prayers. They could not restrain their tears in his presence; but they were rather tears of a holy joy than of sadness and grief. His pale and emaciated face, his body all broken with labours and austerities, his vile and despicable habit gave them no disdain, but on the contrary a holy desire to walk in his steps and to do serious penance for their own sins. His mother was so touched by his example that, forgetting the splendour and riches of her house and all that the world had until then presented to her of the agreeable, she begged her husband earnestly to permit her to dwell in a cell near her son. She obtained it at last by the force of her prayers, and Thibaut, who lodged her in a little retired hermitage, took particular care to instruct her in all that was necessary for her perfection; until her death neither heat nor cold, nor rains nor snows, could hinder him from paying her the visits she needed to strengthen her in a manner of life so different from that which she had led in the world. God then rewarded the piety of His servant by a very extraordinary grace: two years before he died, he was freed from all sorts of temptations and illusions of the demon, and from the disorderly movements of the flesh; but, as it was necessary that he should go out of this world as pure as gold refined seven times in the crucible, divine Providence sent him a terrible illness, which caused him extreme pains. He had not a member sound and of which he had the free use. His feet were so weak that they could not carry him, and his hands so crippled that he could not lift them to his mouth. Nevertheless, in so great a deluge of ills he would never relax anything of his fast or of his other ordinary austerities. Seeing therefore his end approach, he sent to pray Peter, abbot of Vangadice, of the Order of the Camaldolese, who was his faithful friend and who had given him the monastic habit, to come to see him, and he recommended to him his mother and his disciples, whom he was going to leave orphans by his death. Three days before he arrived there was, five times, a great earthquake in his cell, a mark of the presence of Him of whom it is written: “He looks upon the earth, and He makes it tremble.” Then Thibaut entered into a terrible agony, in which he suffered much, according to the testimony of those who were present; but, having come out of it victorious, he received the last sacraments with an admirable fervour and devotion. At last, having often repeated these words full of charity: “Lord, have pity on Thy people!” he rendered to God his soul all laden with merits and disposed to receive the crown of glory. This was the last day of June, about the year 1066, although commemoration of him is ordinarily made in the divine offices only on 1 or 4 July. His body, after his decease, appeared quite other than it had been during his life, for there were seen on it no more wounds or ulcers, but a surprising beauty and brightness, which made it sufficiently known that he was destined to the glorious resurrection. The abbot of Vangadice, of whom we have just spoken, and who is believed to be the author of the first history of the Saint, says that the inhabitants of Vicenza in Italy and those of the neighbouring castles, having learned his death, all went in crowds to his solitude and brought him to the city, where he was buried in the church of Our Lady of Vicenza. Many miracles were afterwards wrought at his tomb: a dropsical man and a paralytic, five cripples and twelve blind men were healed there.

He is represented: 1st, with the habit of the Camaldolese under which he died near Vicenza after a pilgrimage to Compostela; 2nd, with the attribute of the most holy Trinity, because it is claimed that he was raised during his life to an extraordinary knowledge of that mystery; 3rd, praying in his solitude while his

companion builds their cell; 4th, visited in his cell by his father and mother, who find him dying and all covered with infirmities, the result of his mortifications; 5th, setting out for the hunt; he has his head covered with a cap and encircled with a halo radiant like the sun.[1] His mantle is violet; he has a robe brocaded with gold, turned-up boots and spurs with light-blue stirrups. In his left hand he carries a bird of prey and with the other he guides the white horse on which he is mounted. A pack of hunting dogs surrounds him, and in the midst of the dogs, before him, is a tame lion, launched at a run.

The tanners have chosen him for their patron, we know not well why. He is invoked chiefly in Luxembourg, at Huy, at Provins, at Thann, at Vicenza. He is patron of three parishes of the diocese of Troyes: Mesgrigny, Saint-Léger-sous-Brienne, Saint-Thibaut.

Worship and Relics

The question of the relics of Saint Thibaut is not without some difficulties. Ughellus, who wrote in the seventeenth century, says that his body rested in the cathedral of Vicenza; but at the same period the vicar general of Vicenza (Silvius Trissinus) declared that there was at Vicenza only a chapel and an altar dedicated to Saint Thibaut, and that, according to tradition, his body, after having rested in this chapel, had since been carried to the abbey of Vangadice. It appears in effect quite certain that the body of a Saint Thibaut has rested in the church of the abbey of Vangadice. Ferrari says that the hermit of Vicenza became later abbot of Vangadice, and that he died there. The author of the history of the Camaldolese (Augustinus Florentinus) also makes him die at Vangadice, but simply as a guest of the abbot, opinions formally contradicted by the author of the life of Saint Thibaut, as could be seen above. Therefore, to resolve this difficulty, the Bollandists admit, besides our holy hermit, another Saint Thibaut, abbot of Vangadice, who died in 1050.

Whatever be the case with the relics of Saint Thibaut which may have remained in Italy, it is incontestable that a notable part of his body was brought to France. Du Saussay, as well as the historians of the abbeys of Sainte-Colombe and of Lagny, say so formally. The worship of Saint Thibaut spread very early both in France and in Germany, and a great number of churches or chapels were raised there in his honour.

According to the common opinion, it was the very brother of Saint Thibaut, Arnoul, abbot of Sainte-Colombe-lès-Sens and of Lagny, who went to claim the relics of the Saint in Italy, in the year 1078. On his return, passing by the priory of Beaumont, today Saint-Thibaut-aux-Bois, which depended on the abbey of Saint-Germain of Auxerre, he left there a part of his precious deposit, at the instance of the prior and the monks. These relics, transferred in 1400 to the abbey of Saint-Germain of Auxerre, were burned there in 1567 by the Calvinists. While they were still at Beaumont, the abbot of Saint-Germain is said to have given a part of them to the Cordeliers of Provins in 1321; but no trace of it remains. Richer, archbishop of Sens, went as far as Joigny to meet the holy relics, which were received with great pomp at the abbey of Sainte-Colombe. Arnoul could not forget his abbey of Lagny, and it is certain that he brought there relics of his brother, notably an arm. But the historians do not agree on the date of this translation, which some place in 1078, and others in 1096.

A short time after these relics had been brought to Lagny, in consequence of apparitions of the Saint and of numerous miracles, Abbot Arnoul had built, near his abbey, at the place called the Bois du Fou (or of the Beeches), a church in which the relics of the Saint were deposited. This is the origin of the priory of Saint-Thibaut-des-Vignes, whose church was erected into a parish by the bishop of Paris in 1543.

The present church certainly goes back to the beginning of the twelfth century. Mgr Allou, bishop of Meaux, making the visitation of the relics of his diocese in 1854, found in the shrine of Saint Thibaut two bones of the right arm (humerus and radius), some small bones and the remains of a hair-shirt. The two bones of the arm were wrapped in a cloth of gold and deposited in a new shrine of gilded copper given by His Lordship, who reserved to himself a part of the radius in order to give fragments of it to the churches of his diocese

where Saint Thibaut is particularly honoured, and notably to two churches of Provins, Sainte-Croix and Saint-Quiriace, which had no longer any relic of the Saint.

We have composed this biography according to the abbot of Vangadice, Ughellus, Du Saussay and Rayer; local notes have enabled us to draw up with less uncertainty the primitive state and the present state of the worship and relics. Cf. *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Troyes*, by the abbé Defer.

Our Lady of Good Deliverance, at Paris

Maria pia est exorantibus, dulcis diligentibus.

Mary is full of tenderness for those who pray to her, full of sweetness for those who love her.

S. Bernard., term. iv in Assumpt.

The church of Saint-Étienne-des-Grès has, from time immemorial, drawn all its celebrity from a black Virgin, called Our Lady of Good Deliverance, placed in one of its chapels; and in the sixteenth century there was formed there, in her honour, a confraternity which became illustrious, under the title of the confraternity of Our Lady of Good Deliverance.

In effect, people flocked from all sides to this confraternity, and soon more than twelve thousand brethren had themselves enrolled under the standard of Our Lady of Good Deliverance. This single title spoke to all hearts: for who has not need to be delivered from some pain of mind, some anguish of heart, some infirmity of body, some passion which tyrannizes within or some contradiction which comes from without? But this title touched especially prisoners for debt, women near their time, and the sick in danger of death. It touched the students of the colleges themselves; and these young people, faithful to the pious traditions of the domestic hearth, came in crowds to enrol themselves in the service of the Queen of virgins to put under her guard the honour of their first years. They rose before day to recite the office of Our Lady, and gathered in common around the venerated statue to say the rosary. Of this number was, in 1578, Francis de Sales, then aged seventeen. His most delicious moments were those he passed at the feet of the miraculous image of Mary, telling her all that passed in his innocent soul, nourishing himself on the remembrance of her benefits and of the gratitude they begot in his heart. It was there that, in the holy ardours of his piety, he took the firm resolution to consecrate himself for ever to God and to Mary and to keep perpetual chastity; it was there above all that he obtained deliverance from a terrible temptation which almost brought him to the grave. This holy young man had been seized by the thought that perhaps he would not be saved, that perhaps he would go to hell and be deprived for all eternity of the happiness of seeing God and loving Him, of seeing and loving Mary, his tender mother; and this thought had so overwhelmed him that he could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep; he wasted away before one’s eyes, and the jaundice, invading his whole body, caused him acute pains. At last, one day, returning from the college, he enters the church of Saint-Étienne-des-Grès, goes and prostrates himself before Our Lady of Good Deliverance, and says to her with many tears, more from the heart than from the lips: “Remember, O Virgin Mary, my tender mother, that never was it known that any one of those who have had recourse to your protection and implored your assistance was rejected. Animated with this confidence, O Virgin, mother of virgins, I run to you, I cast myself at your feet, groaning under the weight of my sins. O mother of the Word, despise not my prayers, but make yourself propitious to my needs and hear me.” Then, addressing God, he asks Him, through the intercession of Mary, that his mind and his body be restored to their former state, makes a vow of perpetual chastity and promises to recite every day, in memory of this vow, a rosary of six decades. Scarcely has he said these words when full health is restored to him, and his soul, reassured, re-enters, after six weeks of unheard-of sufferings, into a profound peace. Full of the same confidence in Our Lady of Good Deliverance, Father Bernard, surnamed the poor priest, whose beatification the clergy of France has several times solicited, obtained before the same statue a grace no less signal. Returned from a life of wandering to a Christian conduct, he found himself exposed to an imminent

peril by the arrival in the house where he dwelt of a very dangerous person who wished to fix her domicile there. In this crisis he runs and casts himself at the feet of Our Lady of Good Deliverance, prays to her with all his soul, returns to his lodging, and the person had already gone from it never to return.

These facts and several others increased the devotion of the faithful toward this religious sanctuary. The sovereign Pontiffs vied in enriching it with the most precious indulgences; the most illustrious personages, kings and queens, princes and lords, men-at-arms and women of the world, had themselves inscribed in the register of the confraternity, and their names figure there beside the most common names. One sees there Louis XIII and Anne of Austria, Louis XIV, still a child, and, after his example, all the children of France, inscribed from their birth, the duke of Orléans, brother of Louis XIII, and the duke of Anjou, brother of Louis XIV, the great Condé and the princess of that name, the prince and princess of Conti, Maria Theresa of Austria, wife of Louis XIV, and Louis, Dauphin. We should never end if we wished to name all the celebrities who came to mingle with the simple people under the banner of Mary; and their piety showed itself generous in equal measure with their veneration for Our Lady of Good Deliverance. Louis XIII gave for the decoration of her chapel a truly royal present in silver plate, Anne of Austria silver candlesticks adorned with fleurs-de-lis, a magnificent lamp and a holy-water stoup, both of silver, and finally a complete ornament of red velvet. Excited by the example of the court, some gave rich garments and precious robes to cover the holy image on the great solemnities; others poured into the treasury of the confraternity abundant alms which were devoted to the deliverance of prisoners for debt. Moreover, a collection was made at all the offices for this fair work; and every year the governors of the confraternity went about the various prisons of Paris, provided with the gifts made to Our Lady of Good Deliverance, had the doors opened to the unfortunate debtors, and restored them to their softened and grateful families.

However, the fervour of these faithful servants of Mary stands out still better from the religious offices which the confraternity celebrated, and whose multiplicity, like their length, would greatly frighten the lukewarmness of our age today.

Each Sunday, after the chapter Mass, a solemn Mass was celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin with deacon and subdeacon, cope-bearers and organ, and the celebrant recited there a *De profundis* after the offertory, and another after the Mass, for the deceased brethren. In the same way, in the afternoon, the Vespers of the chapter were followed by an office sung with nine psalms and nine lessons.

On all the first Sundays of each month there were, in the evening, the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin, a procession around the church, in which were sung the litanies, the *Salve Regina* or another hymn, according to the season, the *Domine, non secundum*, the *Exaudiat* with the prayer for the king, the *Languentibus* and the *De profundis*; then a solemn Benediction.

Each Monday, Lauds and a solemn Requiem Mass were sung for the deceased brethren. Each Tuesday, solemn Mass of Saint Roch, with commemoration of Saint Sebastian, followed by a low Mass of Our Lady of Pity. Each Wednesday, solemn Mass of the Holy Spirit. Each Thursday, solemn Mass of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by a low Mass of Saint Stephen. In the evening, solemn Benediction, and, on all the first Thursdays of the month, procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Each Friday, solemn Mass of the Holy Cross, followed by the reading of the Passion. Finally, each Saturday, solemn Mass of the Blessed Virgin, followed by the *Stabat Mater*. These rules were departed from only on the feasts on which the rubric opposed it; and at the end of each Mass the *De profundis* was said for the deceased brethren. Besides this, a Mass was said every day for the benefactors of the confraternity. On all the feasts of the Blessed Virgin the whole office of the breviary was sung, beginning with the first Vespers; there were in addition two high Masses; then, evening and morning, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with preaching. On the feasts of Saint Peter and Saint John the Baptist, of Saint Stephen and Saint Denis, of Saint Roch and Saint Sebastian, of Saint Genevieve and Saint Barbara, who were the patrons of the confraternity, the whole office was likewise sung. Finally, at the death of each brother, Vespers of the dead were sung, Matins with nine psalms and nine

lessons, Lauds and commendations, three high Masses and the absolution.

But what was most remarkable was the general procession which was made every year, on 1 May and 24 August, from the church of Saint-Étienne to another parish chosen each year. They set out at eight o'clock in the morning, and all the brethren and sisters assisted at it with a numerous clergy.

This procession counted two centuries of existence and glory when, on 6 February 1737, the Parlement of Paris, possessed with the mania of meddling in spiritual things, thought fit to suppress this solemnity, which rejoiced all Christian hearts and molested only the eye of Jansenism, then in great vogue, or of the impiety then being born in the bosom of the fatherland. But if human power could suppress an exterior ceremony, it could diminish nothing of the confidence and love of the children of Mary for their mother. Thus the sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Deliverance continued to be the object of the devotion of the faithful and the goal of their pious pilgrimages.

At length came the evil days of the revolution and the supreme triumph of impiety. The priests were driven out, the churches pillaged, and in this sacrilegious devastation Saint-Étienne-des-Grès was not forgotten. This church offered to cupidity a bait too seductive to escape the fury of the devastators. It was therefore stripped of all the riches which the faith of princes and of the faithful had amassed there for several centuries: they carried off the gold, the silver, the iron, the grilles, the marbles, the woodwork, all the works of art which decorated the walls, finally the statue itself, to sell the whole by auction. A pious lady, the countess of Carignan Saint-Maurice, informed of the fact, runs at once to the municipality of Paris, succeeds in buying the holy statue, has it carried to her mansion, and there dedicates to it a little oratory where a hidden priest celebrated the holy mysteries every day. The pious countess enjoyed her treasure in secret when, according to the fashion of the time, she was incarcerated as a suspect in the house in the rue de Sèvres called the Oiseaux, which had been transformed into a supplementary prison; but the holy statue, having escaped the eyes of the evildoers, remained always in its little oratory; and on 4 October 1794 the pious countess, set at liberty through a protection of Our Lady of Good Deliverance whom she had invoked every day during her captivity, resumed her prayers before the holy image. Four months after, learning that the hospitaller ladies of Saint Thomas of Villeneuve, whom she singularly cherished, were on the point of being driven from their community by the government, she made a vow to give her beloved statue to these ladies if the government, renouncing its hostile designs, ceased to disturb them. On their side, the religious made a novena to Our Lady of Good Deliverance; so many prayers were heard, and the religious remained tranquil in their community. The countess of Carignan then offered to fulfil her vow: the ladies of Saint Thomas accepted it with joy, hastened to build a chapel to receive the statue; and on 1 July 1806 the miraculous image was transported to Saint-Thomas-de-Villeneuve, where it became also the object of a fervent worship and the goal of numerous pilgrimages. Thus was replaced the celebrated chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Grès, which fell, together with the church, under the hammer of the demolishers.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of the Marsh, at Fougères, in the Diocese of Rennes

The church of Saint-Sulpice at Fougères possesses, in a niche above the entrance door, and under a little edifice such as one sees in certain country churches, Our Lady of the Marsh, so called from the place where she was discovered. This celebrated statue was for centuries, according to a constant tradition, buried in the ground beneath the spot where she is exposed to the veneration of the faithful. She was discovered in digging the foundations of the church of Saint-Sulpice; and as this ground was originally a marsh, long since dried up, she was named Our Lady of the Marsh. So speaks the tradition of the country; and this tradition agrees in all points with history; for history teaches us that from the first years of the eleventh century there existed a church, under the title of Mary, within the very enclosure of the castle of Fougères, precisely opposite, and at a distance of fifty metres from the spot where tradition places the discovery of the statue. History teaches us,

in the second place, that the castle of Foug ères was razed from top to bottom in 1166; consequently the church enclosed within its precinct must necessarily have been involved in its ruin; the stone statue honoured in this church must have rolled with the rubble into the moats of the castle, where she was found three centuries later, when the ground was dug for the construction of that part of the church of Saint-Sulpice; and, without having recourse to the character of the marvellous which some have attached to the discovery of the statue, these very simple facts bring out clearly the antiquity of the worship of Mary at Fougères; they demonstrate that from the eleventh century the Blessed Virgin was honoured as patroness of the town and protectress of the country.

The statue thus found in the rubble of the castle is eighty centimetres high, and represents the Virgin seated, her head girt with a crown of three entirely smooth fleurons, holding with her left hand the Child Jesus standing on her knees, while with her right hand she gives him her breast. The divine Master seems to smile at his Mother, and has his hand raised as if to bless. This image is of a single block of granite, of an extremely fine grain. An unfortunate artist of the middle of the last century wished to remake it according to what he called the forms of the beautiful; happily he succeeded only by half, and left it, in spite of himself, its primitive character; so that, notwithstanding the layers of gilding and whitewash with which he covered it, the stamp of high antiquity which tradition attributes to it stands out from the purity of the expression and the naïveté of the poses, as from the simple arrangement of the draperies.

During the time that this venerated statue remained buried, the worship of Mary suffered no failing: she was honoured with quite a particular worship in a chapel of the church of Saint-Sulpice; a confraternity in her honour flourished there under the name of the great confraternity of Our Lady, served by seven chaplains; and God testified several times to the inhabitants of Fougères how agreeable to Him were the homages they rendered in that place to His holy Mother. We read in the account of the treasurers of the parish for the years 1494 and 1495 that frequent and striking miracles were wrought there, in consideration of which the bishop granted forty days of indulgence for every day of the week. We read there that, on 19 September 1495, a great candle lit itself there of itself, and remained thus lighted for twenty-four hours, that the whole town was witness of the prodigy, and that two sermons were preached to bring out the marvel. These various favours and marvels, by which God glorified the image of Mary, inspired in the inhabitants of Fougères an unbounded attachment to her; and every time that in the times of civil wars the enemy approached the ramparts, the first care of the inhabitants was to transfer the statue to a safe and well-hidden place. It was not that they doubted the protection of Mary, to whom they had committed the guard of their town, by placing her image on each of the four gates which defended its entrance: a remarkable fact, of which the proof is still seen, not only in the one of these gates which exists today, and which presents to the eyes this same image, but also in the statues placed near the old demolished gates, and in that which was transported to the church of Saint-Léonard, where the marquis du Bois-Février founded a lamp which was always to burn before it. But although Mary had so well protected them that never had a Protestant army been able to penetrate into the town, they thought it more prudent to neglect no precaution.

Toward the middle of the seventeenth century, the devotion to Our Lady of the Marsh took an extraordinary development, and spread with an expansion which seemed to border on the prodigy: it was no longer isolated persons who came to claim her protection, but entire parishes which went there every year on pilgrimage, and parishes foreign to the diocese, such as Montaudin, Larchamp and Landivy, all three then of the diocese of Le Mans, today of the diocese of Laval. These pious pilgrimages continued until ’93; and even today the inhabitants of Landivy, religiously preserving the traditions of their fathers, come every year, on the first day of July, to prostrate themselves at the feet of Our Lady of the Marsh, and assist there at the holy sacrifice, celebrated by their curé, who always directs this holy journey.

To facilitate for the pilgrims the recollection of prayer, by separating them from the comings and goings, and from the disturbance which the parochial office caused them, a pilgrimage chapel was built, where the

venerated statue was placed under a sort of baldachin, above the opening by which it communicates with the church. It is there that Mary appears, in her humble sanctuary, as formerly in her modest dwelling of Nazareth, stripped of all worldly glory and of all brilliance, but ever full of graces, and pouring them out without reserve upon those who invoke her. It is there that there is ever kept rooted in the heart of the pilgrim a devotion which has withstood the test of centuries, and which, far from diminishing, in the midst of the failings of faith, seems to strengthen itself more every day; a fact which would be of itself a miracle, if the signal graces obtained in this sanctuary did not give the explanation of it.

Before the Revolution there were seen hanging at the feet of Our Lady two iron chains with which the condemned were bound, and which two accused men had presented to her as an homage, having obtained, through her intercession, that their innocence should be recognized. M. Paumier, who died curé of Saint-Sulpice in 1715, relates, in a notice which is still preserved, the sudden cure of a young blind girl of the parish of Saint-Sauveur-des-Landes, who had herself led to the feet of her who is never invoked in vain. Finally the admiral count du Boueis de Guichen, native of Fougères, seized in one of his maritime excursions by the most horrible tempest, made a vow, if he escaped the danger, to come as a pilgrim to thank Our Lady of the Marsh; and scarcely had he made this vow when the sea grew calm. When he was back in France, he hastened to come to Fougères, and betook himself barefoot into the sanctuary of Mary, proclaiming before the world the favour he had received from her.

Notre-Dame de France, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of Loreto, at Lille, in the Diocese of Cambrai

There were at Lille two chapels of Loreto: the first, near the old church of Saint-Étienne, founded in 1537 by the intendant general of finances, was of an elegant and graceful construction, rich in pictures and sculptures; and the statue of the Virgin placed above the altar passed for a masterpiece. Since 1651 it had possessed the statue from the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Burning [Notre-Dame des Ardents], which, after having been for four centuries visited with fruit by the sick afflicted with Saint Anthony’s fire, was then demolished; and people continued to come to pray before this image to obtain the cure of fever and of carbuncle. The second chapel of Loreto, far more celebrated than the first, was founded by the elector of Cologne, Joseph-Clement, with the ladies of the Abbiette. This prince, finding little worthy of the Blessed Virgin the humble chapel where she had been honoured for two centuries, conceived the project of replacing it with a more decent one, of which he laid the first stone on 9 February 1708. In this construction he neglected nothing to make of his new chapel a faithful copy of the Santa Casa venerated at Loreto in Italy; and at the end of the month of June, the edifice being finished, he went, with great solemnity, to fetch from the convent of the Dominican ladies the statue of the old chapel which he had had deposited there. On 1 July he made the consecration of this new sanctuary; on the 2nd of the same month he celebrated Mass there, and Fénelon came there in the afternoon to make his prayers. On the following days the octave of the consecration of the chapel was celebrated very solemnly. On all those days there was high Mass, the first day by the Dominicans, the second by the clergy of Saint-Étienne, accompanied by the magistrates in a body and in robes, offering a heart of gold with this inscription: *votum populorum*, the vow of the peoples, and above, the arms of the city; the following days by the chapter of Saint-Peter, by the parishes of Saint-Sauveur and Saint-Maurice and by the mendicant orders. As long as the elector remained at Lille, he had the rosary said each day in the chapel of Loreto, and assisted at it; and since then this holy practice has always been preserved there.

Some time after, the city having been taken by the heretics, the inhabitants dared, in their presence, to manifest, as before, their devotion to Our Lady of Loreto. Every morning people came there to hear Mass or to make their prayers, in such great numbers that it was hard to find room; every evening they returned there to sing the litanies of Our Lady of Loreto; and hearts of gold and silver, pictures, candles offered at the altar, attested the piety of the faithful toward the Mother of God. From the year which followed the construction of

the new sanctuary, unhoped-for cures were wrought there; and the report of it spreading far, the vicars general of Tournai judged it opportune to have an inquiry made on the subject. The inquiry, begun on 6 February 1710, established several miraculous cures, as well as two resurrections, which allowed baptism to be administered to two children dead at birth; and the depositions of the witnesses, the certificates delivered by men of the art, as well as the registers in which these miraculous facts were recorded, were preserved, until the Revolution, in the monastery of the religious of the Abbiette. The precious image, happily escaped from the spirit of destruction of ’93, is venerated now with the religious of the hospital of Saint-Sauveur.

Notre-Dame de France, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Saint Domitian, Abbot, Founder of Saint-Rambert of Joux, in the Diocese of Belley (440)

Domitian was born at Rome of a distinguished family, about the year 347, under the empire of Constantius. Philip, his father, and Marcianille, his mother, carefully cultivated the happy dispositions which he manifested from his earliest age; they watched above all to preserve him from the errors of Arianism and took every care to strengthen him in the Catholic faith. At the age of twelve he was sent to a Christian school to learn letters sacred and profane. In the meantime he lost his father, who was put to death by the Arians in hatred of religion; his mother died of grief a short time after. Domitian from that time took the resolution to leave the world: he rid himself of his patrimony, divided all his fortune among the indigent of Rome, and withdrew, quite young still, into a religious house to embrace the monastic state in his native city. Later (426), the factions which agitated the State troubled the solitude of the cloisters: Domitian then took the course of withdrawing into the Gauls. He landed at Marseilles, where he met a pious ecclesiastic named Salvian, who made him enter the abbey of Saint-Honorat of Lérins, in the diocese of Fréjus. Saint Hilary drew him from it to confer the priesthood upon him (428), but he re-entered Lérins and left it only some years after to found, in the place then called Axance, today Bourg-Saint-Christophe (Ain), a little oratory which he dedicated to Saint Christopher.

He gave himself there to fasting, prayer, vigils and the celebration of the holy mysteries. The number of his disciples increasing from day to day, he abandoned the oratory of Axance, which he entrusted to a priest with the gardens he had formed there and the vineyard he had planted there, and built, on a plateau which dominates the fountain of Bébron, a monastery and two oratories, one in honour of the Blessed Virgin, the other in honour of Saint Christopher, martyr. Some time after, having converted from Arianism to the Catholic faith a rich lord of the neighbourhood, named Latinus, the latter gave Domitian lands and money, which enabled him to enlarge his monastery of Bébron. Saint Rambert having been pierced with a lance in the neighbourhood, by the orders of the cruel Ebroin, was buried there, and from that time the monastery of Domitian took the name of Saint-Rambert of Joux. After such fair labours, weakened by age and austerities, Domitian rendered his soul to God. His mortal remains were laid in a beautiful sarcophagus which his religious placed near the altar dedicated to Saint Genesius, martyr. A part of the relics of this holy solitary was transported to the priory of Saint-André-en-Forez about the year 1078, under the episcopate of Saint Gébuin, bishop of Lyon. There no longer exist today of these precious remains but a few fragments which are in the church of Saint-Rambert (Loire).

Abridged from the life given of him by Mgr Depéry in his *Histoire hagiologique de Belley*, and by the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. i of July.

Saint Fleuret or Florez, Regional Bishop of the Country of Auvergne (7th century)

Saint Fleuret (Floregius) was adorned with the qualities of mind and the gifts of grace in a large measure. Neither his be rceau, nor his genealogy, nor his existence is known to us, says Du Saussay. If it were permitted to put forward an opinion, we should believe we could advance that Saint Fleuret came into the world about the seventh century, that he saw the light in the very bosom of the mountains of which he was later the apostle, and that he was perhaps sprung from that noble family of Estaing which made it an honour to place him among its relatives, and of which it has preserved the portrait in the gallery of its ancestors. The legend pretends that this Saint was bishop in Auvergne, which seems to indicate Clermont; but the name of this prelate is not found in the lists of the bishops of that church. We believe, with a hagiographer of Rouergue, that Saint Fleuret was a regional bishop of the country of Auvergne and the neighbouring countries. In the fifth century, regional bishops were instituted without fixed see, but having a certain extent of country under their jurisdiction, like apostolic missionaries, in order to provide for the pressing needs of the time and to extirpate the heresies which the misfortunes of the times allowed to creep in. From this world, God glorified His servant with the gift of miracles. It is related, among other things, that a blind man recovered sight by bathing his eyes with the water in which the holy prelate had washed his hands before celebrating the divine mysteries. Several lame men also owed their cure to him. When our Saint was ripe for heaven, God gently snatched him from the earth after an illness of eight days. Passing through Estaing, a small town of the diocese of Rodez, he left there his mortal remains.

Thus his memory has always been in veneration on account of the holiness of his life, and the most striking miracles have come to recommend it more and more to the love of the peoples. His body, almost entire, reposes in the church of Estaing: every year, on the first Sunday of July, he is the object there of a solemn worship which nothing has been able, to this day, either to interrupt or to diminish or weaken. A concourse of strangers, come from the neighbouring parishes and from the confines of upper Auvergne, presents to him the homage of their prayers, with the offerings which the sentiment of faith that animates them inspires.

At the gates of Estaing a chapel has been built under the title of Saint Fleuret and dedicated to this blessed patron; and beside this same chapel flows a fountain whose origin the religious populations of the country attribute to the fervent prayers of Saint Fleuret: they are even in the pious custom of drawing from this source as soon as they are visited either by infirmities or by some illness.

On the eve of the feast of Saint Fleuret his notable relics are exposed to the veneration of the faithful: this pious ceremony, which takes place with solemnity, in the midst of the chants of the Church and of the *Iste confessor*, the liturgical hymn of confessors, is called the opening of the “holy body.” The singing of a particular antiphon consecrates this touching ceremony. Saint Fleuret is invoked to obtain from God the preservation of cattle from the various epidemics, the health of the sick and the preservation of the fruits of the earth. The numerous pilgrims who go to his tomb to ask of God these graces through his intercession are accustomed to have bread and salt blessed, which they carry away to make a holy use of at home, and they offer, besides, a Mass to God in honour of Saint Fleuret. One of them said, in one of the last pilgrimages he made to the tomb of Saint Fleuret, “that he had gone there every year for sixty years, to remain faithful to the promise he had made to his old father on his death-bed; and that he had recommended to his son to follow, after his death, his example, because he had found himself well from the devotion which he had been constant in showing for Saint Fleuret.”

The abbé Bousquet, secretary general of the bishopric of Rodez. — Extract from the *Proper of the Church of Estaing*, and from the *Proper of Rodez*; — Cf. L. Servières, *Les Saints du Rouergue*.

Saint Goulven,[1] Bishop of the Ancient See of Léon, in Brittany (10th century)

Saint Goulven was born in a country of Brittany called Odena; his father was named Glaudoa and his mother Golaguen. A rich Breton proprietor having adopted him with the design of making him his heir, he neglected nothing for his education, and above all he made him apply to the study of letters, in which the child

succeeded completely. His father and mother died, and Goulven, who had already renounced the world in his heart, made such great progress in perfection that all the sick of the neighbourhood, persuaded of his credit with God, ran to him from all sides to be relieved in their ills. Still more attentive to the needs of their souls than to those of their bodies, he instructed at the same time that he healed; and his word, seconded by the grace of God, carried life and health into hearts, as the imposition of his hands drove out bodily diseases.

The numerous praises which the general gratitude and admiration drew upon him ended by alarming his modesty; to avoid the temptation of vainglory, he went and hid himself in woods and thickets which bordered the marshes of his country. He built there an oratory which he called Peni-ti, that is to say House of Penance. Shut up in this solitary place, he applied himself there night and day to contemplation and to the praises of God. He ate only once a day; his food was only bread and water, and very little other nourishment. He went out only once a day to make in the wood a procession of three or four hundred paces. He had planted three crosses there, and he stopped some time at the foot of each to make his prayer: this is what has since been called the stations of Saint Goulven.

Meanwhile the people and clergy of Léon, charmed with the virtues of the pious anchorite, wished to compel him to accept the episcopal dignity. Saint Goulven, to escape them, made the journey to Rome. No attempt was made to retain him when he declared that he was bound to it by vow; but they sent to the Holy See the decree of his election with the eulogy of his angelic life. The Pope gave with joy the sacred anointing to a subject of so great merit and sent him back to Brittany to govern the diocese of Léon.

After some years of episcopate our Saint, having betaken himself to Rennes for ecclesiastical affairs, was attacked there by fever: he died of it after having predicted the day and the hour of his death.

The religious of Saint-Melaine buried his body in their church, where God has wrought great miracles through his intercession. In the sequel his body was raised from the earth, and some persons of the country of Léon obtained a joint of one of his fingers, which they deposited in the church of Saint-Goulven. The rest was placed, part in the cathedral church of Rennes, part in that of Saint-Melaine (Ille-et-Vilaine), and another part in the parish church of Goulven (Finistère). Besides the church built near the Peni-ti, which has since borne the name of Saint-Goulven, the faithful built a chapel in his honour at Odena, his native country.

He is represented near a spring of living water which gushes from the earth. It is related that his mother brought him into the world during a journey which she was making with her husband; far from any dwelling, she feared to lack water to baptize the newborn child, whom she saw in danger of dying: a spring gushed miraculously from the earth and served her designs. Abridged from the detailed biography given of him by Dom Lobineau in the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*.

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[1] About the year 109, Saint Alexander, pope, sent Saint Martin, a Roman by birth and disciple of the Apostles, to govern the Church of Vienne. The persecution which was kindled with fury under Hadrian, adopted son of Trajan, ravished from this city its holy bishop, after an episcopate of eleven years and one month. The Christians buried his body in the chapel which he had raised over the tomb of his predecessor Saint Zacharias. The revolutions which have several times buried Vienne under its ruins have made us lose the knowledge of the place where the bodies of these two bishops now repose.

[2] We gave her notice, with that of her husband the Blessed Aldebert, on 22 April, volume iv, page 54.

[3] We gave her Life with that of, on 24 May, volume vi, page 182.

[4] See his biography on 26 May, volume vi, page 179.

[5] See some details of his Life on 23 October, the day on which he is honoured by the Order of Saint Dominic.

[6] See in volume xvi, devoted for the most part to the Movable Feasts.

[7] See on 3 July.

[8] In the Dunois, in the diocese of Chartres, canton of Bron, near the place where the town of Châteaudun now stands. The name of Piciac is also given to the monastery which Saint Avitus built in that place. — Dom Rivet, *Histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. iii, p. 266.

[9] This manner of determining the limits of a territory was fairly frequently used during the Merovingian times; a memorable example of it is seen in the life of Saint Remigius, bishop of Reims. — Flodoard, *Historia Ecclesiae Remensis*, lib. i, cap. 14.

[10] Alias: Liénuer, Lénor, Léonor, Leonarius.

[11] Taken from the place named afterwards Pontual by abbreviation, and which signifies bridge of Tugdual, called doubtless thus in memory of Saint Tugdual. It is situated a league and a half from Saint-Malo and in the parish of Saint-Lunaire.

[12] Alias: Ybar, Eparète, Eparchius.

[13] They were the object of a worship at Trémolat, in Périgord, where Saint Cybard was born and where his parents dwelt. They were buried in the church of that place, of which they were lords, and several miracles were wrought at their tomb. — Father Dupuy, *State of the Church of Périgord*.

[14] Alias: Rimaud, Uaimbaud, Rouband, Grlmbaut, Ramwold, Rumwold, Rumoldus.

[15] One may see these various representations: 1st, in the mural paintings executed in the church of Malines in 1590; 2nd, in the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. i of July (Palmé edition, 1867), where they give the figure of the Saint full-length, and his shrine, sixteenth- or seventeenth-century style, with bas-reliefs representing various subjects from the life of the Apostle of Malines.

[16] Alias: Thibault, Thibert.

[17] Window of the parish church of Saint-Thibaut (diocese of Troyes).

[18] Alias: Goalehen, Goalchao, Golvinus, Golvenut.

2 July

Martyrologies

Roman Martyrology

The feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Saint Elisabeth. Year 1 before Jesus Christ. — At Rome, on the Aurelian Way, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Processus and Martinian, who, having been baptized by Saint Peter, apostle, in the Mamertine prison, under Nero, had their mouths and teeth broken with stones; then endured the rack, blows of the stick and of the ox-sinew whip, the violence of fire and of scorpions, and were at last crowned with martyrdom by losing their lives by the edge of the sword. 1st century. — Again at Rome, the punishment of three blessed soldiers, who, having been converted to Our Lord Jesus Christ by the martyrdom of the apostle Saint Paul, went to enjoy with him the happiness of eternal glory. Under Nero. — The same day, in Campania, the holy martyrs Ariston, Crescentian, Eutychian, Urban, Vitalis, Justus, Felicissimus, Felix, Marcia and Symphorosa, who were all crowned with martyrdom, at the time of the cruel persecution of the emperor Diocletian. About the year 285. — At Winchester, in England, Saint Swithu, Swithun or Swithin, bishop, whose holiness was manifested by the miracles which he wrought.[1] 863. — At Bamberg, in Bavaria, Saint Otto, bishop, who brought by his preaching the peoples of Pomerania to the faith of Jesus Christ. 1139. — At Tours, the decease of Saint Monegund, a pious woman. About 570.

Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Avignon, the blessed Peter of Luxembourg, cardinal and bishop of Metz. While still quite young he was honoured with the purple and the episcopal character. His body rests in the church of the Celestines of Avignon, where it is surrounded by the veneration of the faithful; the church of the Celestines of Paris possesses his mantle, which works great miracles in favour of the sick who ask to be covered with it. The town of Ligny-en-Barrois, in the diocese of Verdun, keeps his feast on 5 July.[2] — In the church of the Sorbonne, at Paris, the translation of the relics of Saint Euphemia of Chalcedon, of which the illustrious house of Sorbonne possesses some fragments.[3] — In the diocese of Meaux, Saint Jéroche or Géroche (*Gerundius*), curé of the ancient parish of Saint-Peter of Gilmouiiers, in Brie. He is honoured at Rebais (Seine-et-Marne), and his body was formerly kept at Faremoutiers (*Fari Monasterium*, *Sancta Fara*, *Evoriacense*), which was an abbey of women, of the Order of Saint Benedict, founded in the diocese of Meaux, about the year 617, by Saint Fare, daughter of Agnenc, one of the principal officers of the court of Theodebert II, king of Austrasia. Tradition reports that Saint Jéroche was the confessor of Saint Fare, which explains how his body was deposited in the monastery of which this holy maiden was the foundress. A

church has been built under his name at Dagny, near La Ferté-Gaucher (Seine-et-Marne), where a part of his head has been religiously preserved from time immemorial. 7th century. — In Brittany, Saint Oudocée or Oudothée, third bishop of Llandaff, in England. 564. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Amasius, confessor. He was honoured formerly in the abbey of Saint-Martial of Limoges. Tradition reports that he goes back to the very time of Saint Martial, apostle of Aquitaine, and that the preachings and virtues of this apostolic man contributed not a little to convert him to Christianity. His body was buried beside that of Saint Martial, in a tomb which he had built for himself. 3rd century. — At La Voûte-Chilhac (Haute-Loire), in the diocese of Le Puy, the feast of Our Lady Found [Notre-Dame Trouvée]. It is a little statue of Mary which children found while amusing themselves by throwing pebbles against one another. One of these pebbles having split in two with the shock, there was perceived in the interior a little image of Our Lady, holding the Child Jesus on the left arm, painted gold and azure, the head uncovered, with five fleurs-de-lis on the robe and a star on the breast. The image was placed in the church, where it wrought several miraculous cures. The feast is celebrated with great solemnity and attracts a great concourse of priests and faithful. — At Lescure (Cantal), in the diocese of Saint-Flour, the feast of Our Lady of the Visitation, whose statue was discovered, in 1717, by a pious shepherd of the country who had a modest oratory built to deposit it there, which was replaced, in 1725, by a more worthy chapel that serves as choir to the present church. The venerated sanctuary, which saw the number of pilgrims increase every year, was sold during the Revolution of ’93; when those evil days were past, the inhabitants bought it back, mutilated as it was, and hastened to repair it. Since that time, besides more than a thousand persons whom the town of Aurillac or its environs sends there every year, pilgrims come there, not only from the different parts of the Cantal, but from the Aveyron, the Lot, the Lozère, the Haute-Loire, the Puy-de-Dôme, and even several parishes go there in procession. — At Molompize (Cantal), in the diocese of Saint-Flour, the feast of Our Lady of Good Help. The parish of Molompize, on which it is situated, goes there in procession on the same day and offers the holy sacrifice there. Travellers salute it from as far as they perceive it and never fail, when they pass near, to stop to pray there. — East of Mauriac (Cantal), in the same diocese of Saint-Flour, the feast of Our Lady of La Font-Sainte. — At Lille (Nord), the feast of Our Lady of the Treille. — At Esquermes, near Lille (Nord), the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Esquermes. — At Verdelais, a hamlet of the commune of Aubiac (Gironde), in the diocese of Bordeaux, the feast of Our Lady of Verdelais. — At Torcé (Sarthe), in the diocese of Le Mans, the feast of Our Lady of Torcé. — At Saint-Martin-de-Connée (Mayenne), in the diocese of Laval, the feast of Our Lady of the Oak. — At Saint-Brieuc (Côtes-du-Nord), the feast of Our Lady of Hope. — At Boëge (Haute-Savoie), in the diocese of Annecy, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of the Voirons. — At Aix-les-Bains (Savoie), in the diocese of Chambéry, the feast of Our Lady of Aix and of the Waters. — On the mountain of Étang, near the village of Velars (Côte-d’Or), in the diocese of Dijon, the feast of Our Lady of Étang. — At Besse (Puy-de-Dôme), in the diocese of Clermont-Ferrand, the feast of Our Lady of Vassivière. — At Bollozeale, near Dunkirk (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, the feast of Our Lady of the Visitation. It dates from the thirteenth century; she is invoked chiefly against the plague and contagious diseases. The princess Isabella, wife of Prince Albert, made this pilgrimage in 1621, and Marie-Thérèse, wife of James II, king of England, in 1687. Pope Innocent XII attached a plenary indulgence to the visit of this sanctuary on the day of the Visitation or during its octave, and Gregory XVI confirmed it in 1845. — On the crest of the mountains of Vailly (Haute-Savoie), in the diocese of Annecy, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Hermone, famous for the numerous miracles which the Blessed Virgin works there daily. The ancient sanctuary was formerly a chapel of a monastery of Cistercian nuns. It was almost entirely rebuilt, in 1840, by the inhabitants, who had a Way of the Cross erected on the principal avenue which leads to it. — At Plougoulm, near Saint-Pol-de-Léon (Finistère), in the diocese of Quimper, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Pra-Coulm, so called from two Breton words which signify: Song of the dove, because, it is said, a white dove always hovers above its bell-tower. The crowd presses with faith and recollection into this venerated sanctuary, whose walls are hung with *ex-voto* offerings, precious souvenirs of the confidence and gratitude of the faithful. — At the village of Weiler, near Wissembourg (Bas-Rhin), in the diocese of Strasbourg, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of the Seven

Sorrows. Its chapel was built, in the twelfth century, by the Benedictines of the abbey of Wissembourg. Devastated during the wars which desolated Alsace at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was rebuilt, in 1719, by the dethroned king of Poland, Stanislas Leczinski, who gave six hundred florins for its maintenance and the foundation of a Mass on the six principal feasts of the Virgin. The concourse of the faithful increasing from day to day, in 1774 the nave was lengthened by twenty-two feet, by adding a porch. The pilgrimage takes place, in our days, not only on 2 July, but also on Passion day and every Friday of the year. — At the borough of Roderen, near Thann (Haut-Rhin), in the diocese of Strasbourg, the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Roderen. Its chapel dates from 1716. Pius VI granted, in 1786, an indulgence of two hundred days to those who should recite there the litanies of the Blessed Virgin. Restored in 1843, this sanctuary is more and more frequented; the conscripts, before leaving for the army, have a Mass said there, and the soldiers of the Crimea went there barefoot, on returning from the expedition, to thank Our Lady for having protected them. — At Saint-Martin, a hamlet of the commune of Onet-le-Château (Aveyron), in the diocese of Rodez, the feast of Our Lady of La Salvage, situated in a solitude, in the midst of a vast forest. It was formerly a little square oratory, with a semicircular vault, in the middle of a great enclosure of which traces are still seen. It was later replaced by a new chapel which the Revolution of ’93 destroyed, and which the inhabitants of Saint-Martin rebuilt in 1838. The beautiful statue seen above the high altar is a gift of Cardinal de Bonald, archbishop of Lyons. The present church is eighteen metres long, twelve wide, all in proportion, and the ancient sanctuary serves it as sacristy. It is the meeting place of the faithful of the Aveyron, the Lozère, the Hérault and the Gard. — Near Dournon (Jura), in the diocese of Saint-Claude, the feast of Our Lady of Moutaigu. This oratory dates from 1493 and was built by the magistrate of Arbois, in gratitude for a victory gained over the troops of Charles VIII, king of France, and attributed by public voice to the protection of the Blessed Virgin. Its primitive chapel, which is today’s sacristy, is called Our Lady of Mont-Serrat. A victim of the revolutionary furies of ’93, this blessed sanctuary has been restored by the inhabitants to its former splendour. — At Cessales, near Villefranche-de-Lauragais (Haute-Garonne), in the diocese of Toulouse, the feast of Our Lady of Clary. Its sanctuary dates from the tenth century.

Demolished by the Albigenses at the beginning of the thirteenth century, it was rebuilt toward the end of the fourteenth, destroyed anew in ’93, and definitively restored in 1854. The statue is above the retable of the high altar. There was, in the church of Clary, a confraternity in which most of the pilgrims had themselves enrolled and which had the privilege of several indulgences attached either to the visit of the church or to the title of member of the confraternity. Pius IX, by his brief of 7 September 1853, renewed these indulgences.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to Saint Elisabeth. Pope Urban VI granted indulgences to the persons who assist at the office and at the Mass during the octave of this feast. Boniface IX confirmed them.

Additions Made After the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Italy, Saint Hyacinth, martyr. He was born in Phrygia, which is a region of Asia Minor, and received a Christian education there. He came to Cumae, a city of Campania, and healed the sick there in the name of Jesus Christ; but idolaters seized his person and led him before the prefect of the province. The latter had him tormented on the rack, then, after a miracle which our Saint wrought before him, he was converted to Christianity and restored Hyacinth to liberty. The inhabitants of Cumae then undertook to overwhelm him with ill treatment. The servant of God made his prayer, and immediately a great earthquake shook the city to its foundations and threw down all the idols. This earned our Saint to have his limbs broken and to be cast into a dark prison. At last his chains were taken off; he then traversed the whole country anew to heal the sick until, being himself the victim of a malignant fever, he gently escaped from the earth to go and salute his Beloved in heaven. 189. — In the ancient monastery of Baume-les-Moines (*Balma*, Jura), Saint Aldegrin,

confessor, already named in the Martyrology of France on 5 June.[4] This abbey of Baume goes back, it is said, to the fourth century: it was rebuilt, in the year 926, by Saint Bernon, founder and first abbot of Gigny (*Gigniacum*, Jura). It is said that the same Saint Bernon drew from it some time after religious to establish the observance in the monastery of Cluny, then newly built. The abbey of Baume-les-Moines was situated in the midst of the mountains of the Jura, a few leagues from Lons-le-Saunier. 10th century. — At Sezza, near Piperno, in Italy, Saint Lidan or Ligdan, called also Lindan and Lindane, abbot, of the Order of Saint Benedict. He passed long years in a certain monastery of Saint Cecilia, and made himself admired there by all by the brilliance of his virtues. The miracles which he wrought during his life and after his death are irrefutable witnesses of the holiness and of the glory which he enjoys in heaven. 1118. — In Phrygia, Saint Quintus, martyr, under the reign of Aurelian. — At Rome or in Mesopotamia, the saints Hisique, Amide, Amigradin, Arixe and Jocundianille, martyrs, indicated in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — In the diocese of Milan, Saint Adeodatus, priest and confessor. — At Vicenza, in Venetia, the blessed John of Vicenza, of the Order of Preaching Friars. Attracted by the renown of the virtues of Saint Dominic, he joined his first disciples, preached with fruit at Bologna, a city of Romagna, in Italy, and directed the convent of Padua, a fortified city of the same kingdom. It was he who was charged with the inquiry for the canonization of Saint Anthony of Padua. 13th century.

The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to Saint Elisabeth

Year 1 before Jesus Christ. — Roman Emperor: Augustus.

Si Mariam diligitis, si contenditis ei placere, imitamini modestiam ejus. Nec in sola tamen Mariae taciturnitate commendatur humilitas, sed evidentius resonat in sermone ad angelum et ad Elisabeth.

If you love Mary, if you strive to please her, imitate her modesty. It is not only in her silence that her humility shines; her words to the archangel Gabriel and to her cousin Saint Elisabeth proclaim it in a manner still more striking.

S. Bern., Hom. de Praerogat. B. M. V.

Here is the second mystery of the economy of our salvation, and the first after that of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. The grace of Head and Saviour which was in Him could not remain long shut up: it was necessary to give it air and put it in exercise, that He might imitate in some manner, in His supernatural emanations, the fecundity of His eternal Father, who has never been without producing and without communicating Himself. The first subject whom He chose to exercise His office on was Saint John the Baptist, son of Saint Zachary and of Saint Elisabeth, and designated His precursor. Thus, after the departure of the angel Gabriel, who had announced to the glorious Virgin the marvels which were to be accomplished in her, and had also revealed to her that Saint Elisabeth, her cousin, was six months with child, Our Lord inspired His mother to go and pay a visit to this dear cousin, in order to labour without delay at the work of the sanctification of her son. Mary received this inspiration with a profound respect, and submitted to it without delay. “She arose,” says the evangelist Saint Luke, who had the mission of teaching this secret to the Christian Church, “and went in haste into the hill country, to a city of Juda, and, entering the house of Zachary, she salutes Elisabeth.”

We see in this action her obedience, her charity and her gratitude. Her obedience, since, without reasoning on the length and difficulty of the road, nor on the inconvenience of the season, which was the end of winter, she executed without any delay what the Spirit of her Son inspired her. Her charity, since she undertook this journey with the design of assisting her cousin in the needs of her pregnancy, and of rendering her all the services which women are accustomed to render one another on such occasions. Her gratitude, since she did it doubtless in part to acknowledge the assistance which she herself had received, in her childhood, from that holy woman, who, having authority in the apartments of the temple, as wife of one of the principal pontiffs,

had taken particular care, according to several doctors, that nothing should be lacking to her during the time she was retired there.

But the virtue which shines most in this resolution, and which Saint Ambrose also weighs there more particularly, is humility. Mary has just been raised above all the creatures of heaven and earth by the incomparable grace of the divine maternity; she has just been established Queen of angels and of men, and Sovereign of the whole universe; yet she makes no difficulty of going to visit this holy woman who was infinitely below her, and she undertakes a long and painful journey to make herself, so to speak, her servant for the rest of her pregnancy. What a prodigy of abasement! It must not, however, cause astonishment: humility could not be separated from the divine maternity, and it was fitting that it should be as profound in Mary as her dignity of Mother of God was sublime, so that she should resemble her Son no less in the excess of her abasement than she approached Him by the greatness of her elevation. Thus we may say that the contempt of herself which she showed in this conduct is one of the most signal graces she received from the divine liberality, and the disposition by which she was most agreeable to God and won His heart with more force and power.

It was in this disposition, then, that she set out from Nazareth and advanced toward the city where Zachary and Elisabeth dwelt. Some authors have believed that Joseph accompanied his Spouse on the way, and that, having conducted her to the house of Zachary, he returned on his steps to continue his habitual work, without having known anything of what had passed between her and Elisabeth in the moment of their mutual salutation. There is scarcely any likelihood, they say, that a young girl of fourteen, such as the Virgin was, would have wished to go alone through the country to a place so distant, and which was twenty-eight or thirty leagues from Nazareth. But this journey of Joseph is uncertain; Scripture and tradition do not speak of it; besides, the Virgin may have been accompanied in her journey by some of her relatives or neighbours.

The Gospel does not name the city where the holy pontiff Zachary dwelt; but it is commonly held that it was Hebron, because among the priestly cities there was only that one which was on the mountains of Juda. This city was very ancient and one of the most considerable of Palestine: for it had been formerly the capital city of the Giants, so celebrated in Scripture under the name of Enakim, and, afterwards, it had become very illustrious by the sepulchre of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, by the translation of the bones of Joseph and by the first seat of the reign of David. There was near its gates a terebinth which was said to be as old as the world, and which still lasted in the time of Hegesippus and of Saint Jerome, that is to say after more than four thousand four hundred years. The Virgin, having entered there accompanied invisibly by a great number of angels who admired her humility and her courage no less than they adored her divine maternity, saluted her cousin Elisabeth. Saint Luke does not relate what she said to her, nor what salutation she gave her. There is great likelihood that the Holy Spirit, who guided the pen of this Evangelist and inspired him with what he ought to write, so disposed it to favour the humility of the Virgin, whose whole inclination was to speak very little of herself, and to let very little be spoken of her. One might even think that, as it was she who taught Saint Luke all the sequence of this holy history, she hid this circumstance from him on purpose, telling him only what was absolutely necessary to disclose to the faithful for their edification, in order to confound the vanity and presumption of the children of Adam, who cannot help speaking of their own actions, although they are full of defects and imperfections, and bear, from beginning to end, the evident marks of their depravity and weakness. Let us not then curiously seek with what words this admirable Virgin accosted her cousin; and let it suffice us to admire the effects, which are altogether surprising and show clearly that the eternal Wisdom which resided in her womb spoke also by her mouth, and gave force and blessing to all she said. She pronounced two or three words, as one is accustomed to do in saluting a friend, and immediately the Child that Elisabeth bore in her womb leaped with joy, and this holy woman was herself filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried out with a loud voice: “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? for behold, as soon as the

voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant that I bear leaped for joy in my womb. Thou art, in truth, blessed for having believed; for the things which were told thee on the part of the Lord shall be infallibly accomplished." At that moment the little Saint John the Baptist received grace and reason, and his spirit was raised to the knowledge and adoration of the Lord Almighty who was before him. And it was by the abundance of this grace and by the force of this light that he had an extraordinary movement in his mother's womb, whether he turned as if to salute Jesus Christ and the Virgin, according to that fine saying of Saint Augustine: *De utero in uterum salutabat*; "from one womb he saluted Him in another womb"; or whether he only made a miraculous leap, in order to testify the greatness of his gladness at their amiable presence. Not only was he filled with grace and light, but he filled his mother with it also, according to this other saying of Saint Ambrose: *Spiritu Sancto repletus, replevit et matrem*: "Having received the fulness of the Holy Spirit, he communicated it to her who bore him in her womb"; so that Elisabeth, by a wholly divine illumination which was given to her in consideration of her son, knew at that instant the two greatest works that ever came from the hand of God: we mean the Incarnation of the divine Word in the womb of a Virgin, and the elevation of a Virgin to the august quality of Mother of God; and she was also the first who rendered an exterior and public homage to these two mysteries, saying: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." As Saint Ambrose remarks, Elisabeth heard first the word of Mary, but John felt first the wonderful grace which flowed from it; that which was given to Elisabeth was a rebound of that with which John had been filled; Mary was the organ of the one and the other, and Jesus, speaking by her mouth, was the first principle of it, or rather Mary bearing Jesus, and Jesus borne and applied by Mary, were as it were one single principle of it, because Mary had then that incomparable honour of being as it were one same substance with Jesus.

This is then a mystery of manifestation and of sanctification, but of a manifestation and sanctification so extraordinary that they have never had and never will have their like. Children who are not yet born enlighten their mothers and speak to one another by their mothers. Jesus, still residing in the womb of Mary, makes Himself felt to John, enclosed also in the womb of Elisabeth; He purifies him from original sin, confers grace upon him, justifies and sanctifies him, fills him with the Holy Spirit, raises him to a high contemplation of the divinity and of the ministry of our redemption, makes him know the eminence of the state to which He calls him, and pours into his soul the dispositions necessary to fulfil all its duties; in fine, child though He Himself is, He makes of that child a prophet, an apostle, a great preacher and a prodigy of wisdom and holiness. And how does He work these marvels? He works them by a word which He puts in the mouth of Mary: a word so powerful and so efficacious that, passing through the ears of Elisabeth, it enters even into the mind and heart of her fruit, and that of a vessel of wrath He makes a vessel of grace and of all sorts of blessings. Besides, Saint John answers Jesus and Mary: he speaks to them by his leaps, says Saint John Chrysostom: *Nondum nascitur, et saltibus loquitur.* He testifies to them his joy and gratitude, he expresses to them the desire he has to go out of his prison to begin his office of preacher, prophet and precursor. *Quid hic sedeo vinctus?* makes him say that golden mouth: *exibo, praecurram, et praedicabo omnibus: ecce Agnus Dei:* "Why shall I stay here bound? I shall go out, I shall go before my Lord, and I shall preach to everyone that the Lamb of God has come." But as he was still mute, he makes use of his mother to declare his sentiments. He pours into the mind of his mother a prophetic light, which makes her know the great marvels that were before her eyes: *Spiritus sui et gratiae superabundantiam in eam refundit*, says the abbot Guerrier. He makes arise in her heart, with an inestimable joy, a singular reverence for the Virgin who bore in her womb her sovereign Lord. In fine, he puts into her mouth the most obliging and most amiable words that this Virgin could expect from her piety. Words of a profound humility: "And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord deigns to visit me?" Words of praise and blessing: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Words of thanks and congratulation: "As soon as thy voice sounded in my ears, the infant that I bear leaped for joy in my womb." Words of applause and admiration: "Thou art in truth blessed for having believed." Finally, words of faith and prophecy: "The things which have been announced

to thee on the part of the Lord shall be infallibly accomplished in the sequel of all the ages."

There is in all these things matter to admire and to imitate. We must admire the marvels which the Almighty works to manifest His Son and to exalt the lowliness of His state as a child; but we must imitate the virtues which shine in these two children and these two mothers, which are, in a few words, humility, charity, gratitude, devotion, fervour, and many others which holy souls will be able to remark there by a pious meditation. It is time to listen to the Virgin and to see what she answered to the praises which Elisabeth gave her.

"My soul," she says, "doth magnify the Lord." Elisabeth praises Mary; but Mary rises above these praises and applies herself solely to blessing Jesus Christ, whom she bore in her womb. She is not like the children of Adam, who cannot be praised for their actions and for the very gifts they have received from God without their being shamefully preoccupied with what is said to them, and taking pleasure in it by a criminal and insupportable love of their own excellence. As she is wholly withdrawn in God, and wholly filled with the consideration, or, to say better, the sentiment and taste of His greatness, His power and His goodness, before which every creature is nothing, she can receive praise only for Him, she sends back to Him every sort of honour; and her soul, which is truly her own, because she does not let it be stolen from her by things frail and perishable, has no action but to bless and exalt Him. She glorifies Him by her words and by the profound annihilations of her heart, she glorifies Him in acknowledging before heaven and earth that He alone deserves the adorations of angels and of men. "She glorifies Him," says Saint Augustine on the Magnificat, "by a respect full of love, tenderness and affection."

"And my spirit," she adds, "hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." The soul and the spirit in man make one same immaterial substance: this substance is the soul inasmuch as it animates; this substance is the spirit inasmuch as it accomplishes the intellectual operations and puts itself thereby in relation with the immaterial world, and rises toward God. In the state of innocence man was borne toward God, not only according to the rational and intellectual part, but also according to the part which we call animal: for the grace of that flourishing state, which is called original justice, was so sweet and so powerful that it held the flesh and all the senses agreeably subjected to the spirit: which caused them to tend to God under its guidance without any contradiction, and to participate even, in some manner, in the dignity of the rational part. But this happy condition was entirely ruined by the sin of the first man; and, whereas the flesh was then a little spiritual, the spirit, since that fall, has become carnal and gross, having now only thoughts and sentiments which apply it to the things of earth. And, although our nature has been repaired by the grace of the Mediator, this perfect obedience of the flesh to the spirit has not nevertheless been repaired, and the most just have reason to complain, with Saint Paul, that they feel in their members an accursed and criminal law which opposes the law of their reason. But it is not so with the sacred Virgin: as she had had no part in the sin of our father, and as she was incomparably purer and more privileged, not only than innocent Adam, but also than the heavenly spirits, her soul and her spirit were not opposed to each other; they had both one same object and one same end; they were borne both to God, and she could say continually what the Royal Prophet said once: "My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God." This is what she expresses admirably in the words of her canticle, when she says that "her soul doth magnify the Lord, and that her spirit hath rejoiced in God her Saviour." For, by these few words, she shows that her soul has the same functions as her spirit, which are to glorify God, and that her spirit extends also to the functions of her soul, which are to rejoice in having a Son of a merit so great and so far above the merit of all men. She glorifies God then, and rejoices in Him, by her spirit and by her soul, and her joy is the greater in that the subjects she has to rejoice, as much according to nature as according to grace, are eminent and surpass all that can give joy to a creature. For the rest, it is with great justice that she calls God her own Saviour; for He was Saviour of other men only by the salvation of deliverance and redemption, whereas He was hers by the salvation of a perfect preservation, preventing her, by the merits of His blood, to which God had regard from the beginning of the world, from having any part in

the sin of Adam.

She says next: “Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid.” Some authors translate: “the lowliness of His handmaid,”

grounded on this, that the Virgin was too humble to attribute to herself the virtue of humility, and to say that this virtue had rendered her worthy to be Mother of God; but they do not consider that Mary spoke as of herself and as organ of the Holy Spirit, who made her say truths she did not expect, and which her admirable modesty hid from her; speaking as of herself, she spoke only “of her lowliness and her nothingness,” and the sense of her words is that she rejoices in God her Saviour because He cast a look of favour and mercy upon her unworthiness, and that without any merit on her part He raised her to an inestimable glory; but speaking as organ of the Holy Spirit, she speaks of her prodigious humility, because the Holy Spirit wished to teach us by her mouth, without her pretending it, that it is this humility which rendered her agreeable to the Most High, which drew upon her the regards of the most holy Trinity, which consummated the dispositions that were necessary for her to be Mother of God, and which rendered her worthy to bear in her womb Him who is the greatest and at the same time the most humble of all the children of men. Thus, to fill the whole signification of these words: *Respexit humilitatem ancillae suae*, one must not translate: the lowliness of His handmaid; but: the humility of His handmaid: because this word humility signifies both, that is to say lowliness and the virtue of humility. It may be said that the Greek word ταπείνωσις, which the holy Evangelist uses, signifies only smallness and abjection; but this is not true, since, according to the observation of Saint Jerome in his Letter to Algasia, there are other places in Scripture, as in Saint Matthew, chap. ii; in the Epistle of Saint James, chap. iii; and in the first of Saint Peter, chap. v, where it signifies also the virtue of humility: because in effect lowliness acknowledged and felt is a true humility. One may see on this the learned Benzonius, in the explanation of this verse.

“All generations shall call me blessed.” This is the continuation of the same verse in which our august Queen, shut up in a corner of Judea and in the little house of Zachary, makes a prediction of which we see the truth daily. She says that “because God has regarded the lowliness and humility of His handmaid, and regarded her with an eye so favourable that He exalted her to the eminent dignity of Mother of God, all nations and all ages shall proclaim her blessed.” This is accomplished in all the places where the Church is spread: it has been accomplished since the birth of Christianity, and will be accomplished until the consummation of the world: for in what place is it not sung with gladness: “Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary which bore the Son of the eternal Father, and blessed the breasts which gave suck to Jesus Christ Our Lord?” But although the words of Our Lady do not refer except to the future time, we believe nevertheless that they can and even must be extended to all times. For if the Christian Church and all that there have been of faithful in the New Testament have called her blessed: which will be done still until the day of judgment and in eternity; it is certain that the Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Testament, who saw her in spirit, also applauded her happiness. This is what merited for her the union of fecundity with virginity: for if she had been Virgin and had not been Mother, the synagogue, which preferred mothers to virgins and to the barren, would not have called her singularly blessed. If, on the contrary, she had been fruitful and Mother and had not been Virgin, the Church, which esteems virginity far more than fecundity, would not have preferred her happiness to that of virgins; but uniting in herself the qualities of Mother and of Virgin, and uniting them so closely that her virginity honours her fecundity, and her fecundity infinitely exalts her virginity, she is the object of the veneration and benedictions of all ages, and there is none that does not proclaim her blessed and the happiest of all virgins, of all mothers and of all women.

She explains herself further next, and adds: “Because He that is mighty hath done great things for me.” A marvellous expression, and one in which the humility of this Queen of angels shines forth again admirably: for she does not say that the Almighty has done great things by her, but for her: *fecit mihi*. Yet it is certain that it is in her and by her that these great things were done: for it is by her that the eternal Word took human

flesh, that He was conceived, and that He was made the Christ and Saviour of men. Thus Mary cannot open her mouth without giving marks of her modesty and perfect humility; she speaks only to praise God. And although it seems impossible that she should praise God without relating the things which render her infinitely commendable, she does so nevertheless in a manner so ingenious that she sends back all the glory to God, and attributes to herself only the happiness of having received the effects of His liberality and mercy. For the rest, the terms she uses: “The Almighty hath done great things for me,” have an infinite signification, and show us that what God has done for Mary, in Mary and by Mary is so great, so august and so ineffable that there are no words which can represent it. “He hath done for me,” she says, “great things. He gave me for son in time Him who is His Son in eternity; He made me conceive in my womb Him whom He conceives in the bosom of His divine understanding; He made me Virgin and Mother together, and made me bear that eternal Light without any breach in my virginal purity.” The Holy Spirit, of whom she is the organ, makes her express yet by these words what her profound humility forbids her to relate to us. He teaches us that God has united in her all that heaven and earth, grace and nature, angels and men have of rare and excellent; that He gave her the faith of the Patriarchs, the zeal of the Prophets and the virtues of all the just who shall be in the New Testament; that she surpasses the Thrones in beauty, the Cherubim in light and the Seraphim in ardour; that her innocence is perfect, her fidelity inviolable and her charity consummate; that, as she encloses the Holy of holies in her chaste womb, she is also clothed with His life, His spirit, His sentiments and His inclinations; that she participates eminently in His divine and human holiness, and that she is as it were another Himself; that there is no reserve for her, and that all the treasures of grace and glory are open to her. He discovers to us further by these terms that, as mothers have part in all the prerogatives of their children, Mary, with child of the incarnate Word, is raised to three societies with Him: a society of greatness, which must make her recognized as Queen of the heavens, Lady and Mistress of the angels and Sovereign of the universe; a society of office, which will cause her to be called by the Fathers and Doctors “the Repairer of the world, the Redemptrix of the human race and the Reconciler of sinners,” inasmuch as it is she who furnished the body and blood by which we have been redeemed; a society of influence, which will make her co-operate until the end of the world in all the works of grace which God will work in the economy of salvation. She was far from wishing to relate to us these great things of herself; but the Spirit of God, in whose hands are the tongue and voice of the Prophets, has enclosed them all under the two words she spoke to us; so that, by an admirable conduct of divine Providence, Mary, wishing to praise God without praising herself, gave us occasion to recognize what is greatest and most praiseworthy in her.

She ends this verse by saying: “And holy is His name.” She speaks of the name of God as God, which no one was permitted to pronounce, and of the name of God made man, which the angel Gabriel had already brought her from heaven, and which was the name of Jesus; and she calls both Holy, because they signify the source of all holiness. But she speaks of them only as of one single name, because that of God is enclosed in that of the Saviour and of Jesus, as we said at the feast of the Circumcision. For the rest, we doubt not that she represents here the holiness of her Lord by a new secret of humility, in order to turn Elisabeth’s eyes from her perfections by the consideration of the divine holiness, before which all the perfections of creatures are but a faint gleam which is eclipsed and disappears entirely. In the rest of her canticle she dwells in an admirable manner, full of religion and reverence, on the perfections of God: principally on His justice against the rich, the proud and the great of the world who abuse their power, and on His mercy toward the poor and the humble who walk in the fear of offending Him. She represents also that there is no longer ground to complain that the promises of God are not accomplished, since at last this sovereign Goodness has remembered His mercy, and has regarded with a favourable eye Israel His servant, associating him to His divinity, as He had promised to the holy Patriarchs, and above all to Abraham, the head of the Jewish nation.

Here is a feeble expression of the great mysteries enclosed in the canticle which Mary pronounced in the presence of Saint Elisabeth her cousin. Let us say further in brief that her humility opposes the praises which this holy woman had given her with so much justice. Elisabeth had glorified her, and her soul glorifies only

the Lord. Elisabeth had rejoiced at her visit and her salutation, and her spirit finds joy only in God her Saviour. Elisabeth had complimented her on her new dignity of Mother of God, and she takes no other quality than that of His most humble Handmaid. Elisabeth had attributed to her faith the miracles which had been accomplished and which were still to be accomplished in her, and she contents herself with saying that "the Lord has deigned to cast His eyes on her littleness, and that He has treated her with great liberality." Finally, continuing still in the same style of her humility, she attributes to her happiness, and not to her merits, the great things which the power and wisdom of God had wrought in her, and passes promptly to the general praises of that Lord, who is all her joy and the whole object of her love. It is thus that we should skilfully turn aside the praises which are given us, and, instead of occupying ourselves with them and taking pleasure in them, send them back promptly to Him to whom all honour is legitimately due.

For the rest, if it is true that the two words which Mary uttered at the first meeting with her holy cousin were so efficacious that they carried sanctification and prophetic light into the soul of Saint John, to rebound thence upon the spirit and heart of his mother, what shall we think were the effects of that beautiful canticle, composed of ten verses and pronounced by this holy Virgin in the ardours of an incomparable love? For there is no doubt that the Holy Spirit, who was its first author and who put it in the mouth of our heavenly singer, made it also heard by the holy Precursor and explained to him its sense and all its mysteries. Oh! what knowledge did He not give him of the great sacrament of the Redemption of men! What acts of faith, adoration, thanksgiving and love did He not make him make in the consideration of the goodness of the Almighty! What tenderness did He not imprint on him for this august Mother who was the subject and organ of so many miracles! In fine, what new desires did He not inspire in him to employ himself as soon as possible in publishing the grandeurs of His Son, and in glorifying Him everywhere, saying to the Jews that he was not even worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes!

The Gospel does not tell us what Elisabeth answered to this canticle, nor what was the conclusion of the conversation of these illustrious mothers. It contents itself with adding that Mary remained about three months in the house of Zachary, and that she then returned to Nazareth. It is for us to think what blessings so long a stay drew upon that house. We read in the second Book of Kings that the Ark of the Covenant having been placed by David in the house of Obededom, where it remained three months, all sorts of blessings fell on this good man and on all his goods: which made David resolve to transport it to Jerusalem. Now Mary was incomparably more than the Ark of the Covenant, and she bore in her womb, not the tables of the law, nor the rod of Moses, nor a little of the manna which served as nourishment to the children of Israel in the desert, as that Ark did; but she bore the Lord of all things, of whom those tables, that rod and that manna were only most imperfect figures. What then were the spiritual and temporal graces which her three months' stay procured for the whole house of Zachary, and what progress did not the three august persons who composed it make in that time in virtue and holiness, we mean Zachary, Elisabeth and Saint John? This is what pious souls can meditate, but it is what we cannot represent with our pen. There are authors who believe that the Blessed Virgin assisted at the confinement of her cousin, and that she did not return home till after the accomplishment of the marvels that occurred at the birth and circumcision of the holy Precursor. But, as Saint Luke relates her return before describing the history of that birth: "Mary," he says, "abode with Elisabeth about three months, and returned to her own house; and Elisabeth's full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son," it is much more probable that she left this holy woman before the nine months of her pregnancy were completed. Nicephorus Callistus says she did so because it was the custom of virgins to withdraw in a like circumstance. Simeon Metaphrastes, in his Sermon on Saint John, adds that it was to avoid the multitude which was to be present at the time of the nativity of that child. And the abbot Hupert says further that it was for fear that her pregnancy should appear to others before appearing to Saint Joseph. *Ne prius ab aliis deprehenderetur in utero habens quam ab ipso beato Joseph.* The author of the Homilies attributed to Eusebius of Emesa says that Zachary and Elisabeth shed many tears at her departure, at seeing themselves deprived of so holy and advantageous a company, and that Saint John

himself, to whom the Holy Spirit revealed it in his mother's womb, felt much grief at it: but there has never been joy in this world which has not been preceded and followed by some affliction: and it seems that this pain was necessary to them to dispose them for that great joy which came to them soon after, when the divine Precursor appeared in the world.

For the rest, this mystery of the Visitation of Our Lady is so lofty and so full of marvels that it well deserved to be honoured in the Church by a particular feast. He who first thought of establishing it was Saint Bonaventure, general of the Order of Minors; he made the decree of it throughout that Order, in his general Chapter, held at Pisa, in the year 1263. Afterwards Pope Urban VI extended this feast to the whole Church; his Bull is of the year 1389, but it was published only the following year by Boniface IX, his successor. The Council of Basel also ordered it (1441) and marked its day at 2 July. Some authors have inferred from this that the Blessed Virgin left the house of Zachary only on the day after the circumcision of Saint John, which was 1 July; but such arguments are uncertain, and one should stop at them far less than at what the natural sense of the sacred text seems to require. Besides this feast, which is celebrated with solemnity in the Church, God willed to honour further the mystery of the Visitation by a sacred Order of religious women, which bears its name. It is Saint Francis de Sales who is its institutor, with Saint Jane Frances Fremiot, formerly baroness de Chantal, and then first religious and first mother of this illustrious Congregation. The great number and splendour of the houses which compose it, and which were established in so short a time, and above all the good odour of Jesus Christ and the holiness which reign everywhere in it, show sufficiently that it is not a work of men but of God, and that it has part in the graces of which the Visitation of Our Lady was the source.

As for the Canticle Magnificat, which is called the Canticle of the Blessed Virgin, it is well known that it is sung every day at Vespers: which is of very high antiquity, since the venerable Bede, who lived in the eighth century, makes mention of it in a Homily for the Ember Days of Advent. The learned Benzonius, who has given a rich commentary on it, believes that in its original language, which was Syriac, it was written in verse, like the canticles of Mary, sister of Moses; of Jael, wife of Haber; of Deborah the prophetess; of Anna, mother of Samuel; of Judith and of Esther, so that the Mother of God should yield in nothing to those illustrious women of the Old Testament. He adds that its mere pronunciation is extremely dreadful to the demon, and that he has often been seen at Loreto to shudder with spite at these words: "He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid"; and at these others: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted the humble." Finally, he relates several miracles which have been wrought by the invincible force of the words which compose it; they may be seen in his works, book i, chap. xxii.

We have made use, in treating this subject, of what has been written on it, after the holy Fathers, by Christopher de Castro in the *Life of the Virgin*; Louis of Granada in his *Meditations*; and Father Gibieuf of the Oratory in the second part of his *Life and Grandeurs of Our Lady*, chap. ii, iii and iv, from which we have borrowed some thoughts.

Saints Processus and Martinian, Martyrs at Rome

1st century. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Emperor: Nero.

Licet Christi passio nobis sufficiat ad salutem, tamen etiam Sanctorum martyrum nobis consulit ad exemplum.

Although the passion of Christ suffices for our salvation, yet that of the martyrs is very useful to us for an example.

S. Aug., Serm. ii S. Petri et Pauli.

When Saint Peter had won over Simon the Magician the illustrious victory of which we have spoken in his life, he was cast into the Mamertine prison, with the apostle Saint Paul, by command of the cruel Nero. Among the soldiers who were charged to guard them, Processus and Martinian were among the principal. As they were witnesses of the marvels which the Apostles wrought at every moment on the sick and possessed who were brought to their feet, they resolved to make themselves Christians. Addressing themselves therefore to them, they said: “It is already nine months, venerable servants of Jesus Christ, that we have held you in this prison by order of the emperor; as there is much appearance that he thinks no more of you, you may therefore go where you please; we ask of you one favour before you go out: it is that you confer baptism on us in the name of Him by whose virtue you work such great prodigies.” The holy Apostles told them that if they would believe with all their heart in the most holy Trinity, they could themselves work like marvels; which the other prisoners having heard, they began to cry out all together: “Give us then water by the power of Jesus Christ, for we are consumed with thirst.” Saint Peter answered them that if they believed in God the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ His only Son, and in the Holy Spirit, they would obtain all they asked; and, making his prayer at the same time, he caused to spring forth, by the sign of the cross which he imprinted on the Tarpeian rock on which the prison was situated, a fountain of living water which has not ceased to flow until now; and with this same water he baptized Processus and Martinian, and fifty-seven other prisoners of both sexes.

The report of this conversion having soon spread through the whole city, Paulin, a very illustrious magistrate, had Processus and Martinian arrested, and had them appear the next day before his tribunal. When they were in his presence: “What!” he said to them, “my friends, have you been so mad as to abandon the gods of the empire and the service of your prince, for this new religion which the Romans know not? Return, I pray you, to yourselves, and re-enter the worship of the all-powerful gods; do not quit the ornaments of your soldiery, and make yourselves commendable by your obedience to the wills of your sovereign; renounce this folly which has been put in your mind, and adore the immortal gods whom you have known from your infancy and in whose religion you were brought up.” — “We were then in ignorance,” answered the generous confessors; “but now that we have been enlightened by a light from on high, and have received the sacraments of the heavenly warfare, we profess to be Christians, and we protest to you that we shall be all our life the faithful servants of the true God, whom the blessed apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul announced to us, and expect not that we shall be cowardly enough to abandon so just a cause. Your threats no more than your tortures astonish us, and we are all ready to die for Our Lord Jesus Christ, whose faith we have embraced.” Paulin seeing well, by this intrepid confession, that he would gain nothing over them, and that his words would make no impression on their hearts, which faith rendered invincible, had their teeth broken and their jaws smashed with stones. But this torment was far from shaking the constancy of the holy Martyrs; on the contrary, with their eyes raised to heaven, they sang with all their strength canticles of praise, to thank God for the grace He granted them of suffering something for the glory of His name. Then the tyrant, having had an idol of Jupiter brought, commanded them to offer it incense, under pain of enduring new torments. But the brave soldiers of Jesus Christ, despising the threats of Paulin, instead of sacrificing to that false divinity, loaded it with insults and spittle: the judge, irritated, had them that very hour put to the torture; their limbs were dislocated with unheard-of cruelty, their sides burned with plates of red-hot iron: they were so little troubled that, in the height of this torment, they sang these beautiful words: “Blessed for ever be the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has called us to His knowledge by the blessed apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul!” Among the persons who looked on at this horrible spectacle there was found a Roman lady named Lucina, who exhorted them powerfully to perseverance. “Generous soldiers of Jesus Christ,” she cried to them in the midst of the crowd, “show that you have heart: fear not torments which pass in a moment, you will be amply rewarded for all your pains.” To hinder them from hearing the pious exhortations of this holy woman, they cried in their ears, while tearing their bodies with scorpions: “If you wish us to cease tormenting you, obey the orders of the emperor, refuse not to sacrifice to the gods, and we will leave you in

peace; delay no longer to acknowledge the religion of the empire, and you shall be set at liberty." But Processus and Martinian, far from letting themselves be touched by these words, strengthened themselves on the contrary more and more in the faith and in the love of Jesus Christ, and mocked the cruel torments that were made them endure. Nevertheless God did not leave this cruelty unpunished; for, during this torture, Paulin lost his left eye: and as, instead of acknowledging the power of the true God, which shone forth by this first chastisement, he had the holy Martyrs shut up more closely in prison, to reserve them for other torments, three days after, the demon, having seized his body, made him die and carried off his soul into hell. Pompinius, his son, wishing to avenge his father, ran at once to the palace to demand justice against our holy Confessors; so that Nero ordered Caesarius, prefect of the city, to delay their condemnation no longer. This new judge had no sooner received this order than he executed it: having had them led outside the walls of Rome, he had their heads cut off on the Aurelian Way, near the aqueduct, on 2 July of the year 68 of salvation, and the thirteenth year of the empire of Nero. Their bodies were left in the midst of the country to be devoured by dogs; but the virtuous Lucina, who had followed them with all her family, having had them promptly taken up, embalmed them with precious perfumes, and buried them in her estate, whence they were afterwards transferred into a church which was built in their honour. But this church having been ruined, Pope Paschal I had the relics of the two Martyrs transported, about the year 820, into that of Saint Peter at the Vatican, where they are still preserved today.

Saint Gregory the Great, in the thirty-second Homily on the Gospels, which he delivered before the people on the day of their feast and in the presence of their relics, says that the sick who prayed at their tomb found their cure there; that those who had the temerity to make false oaths there were at that very hour seized by the demon, and that the possessed found their deliverance there. He relates also this trait: a pious woman was accustomed to visit often the church of the holy Martyrs; as she was coming out of it one day after having made her prayer at their sepulchre, they appeared to her under the form of two religious, who, approaching her, said to her: "You visit us now, and we, on the day of judgment, will seek you among all other creatures to render you every service we can." Thereupon this great Pope exhorts the faithful to invoke these two martyrs, in order to have them as defenders on that terrible day, which will seize with fear the most innocent.

Saint Processus and Saint Martinian are represented: 1st, guarding in the Mamertine prison Saint Peter and Saint Paul, who converted them to the faith; 2nd, stretched on the rack and struck with whips armed with lead or with rods of rush, called *escourgées*.

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. *History of Saint Peter*, by the abbé Maistre.

Saint Monegund, Recluse at Chartres, then at Tours

570. — Pope: John III. — King of France: Chilperic I.

Qui elongant se in solitudine, qui secretum inhabitant, qui in silentio requiescunt, isti sunt qui vocem turturis audiunt.

Those who withdraw into solitude and live in retreat, peace and silence, those hear the voice of the turtle-dove.

Hugo a S. Vict., Serm. de Assumpt. Virg.

Saint Monegund was born at Chartres, a city very celebrated for the ancient devotion which its inhabitants have borne to Our Lady, even before the Incarnation; for it is believed that the Druids (this is how the Gauls called their priests) had erected, long before the birth of the Saviour, a statue which bore this inscription: *Virgini parituræ*, that is to say, "to the Virgin who shall bear a child." It was also in this city that, to satisfy the inclination of her parents, our Saint engaged in marriage: she had two daughters. But the joy she had in seeing herself a mother was not of long duration; for God having taken her children from her, a short time

after their birth, she was deprived by their death of all the consolation she had in this world. The affliction she conceived from this loss was so great that she ceased not to weep day and night, without her husband, her friends or any of her relatives being able to bring any relief to her grief; but at last, entering into herself, and considering that her sadness was excessive and might displease God, she took the generous resolution to dry her tears and to say for the rest of her days with Job: “The Lord gave them to me, the Lord hath taken them away; He hath done what He willed: blessed be His holy name for ever!” Then, having obtained from her husband permission to lead a retired life, she shut herself up in a little cell which she had built expressly: there, seeing the day only through a skylight, she lived in a general detachment from all the vanities of the world and all the delights of the senses, to think no more but of her God, in whom alone she wished to place all her hope. In effect, all her time was passed in conversing with Him and in pouring out her heart before His divine majesty by fervent prayers. She had reserved to herself, for all temporal help, only a little girl who took care to bring her a little barley flour with water; she made herself of it for her food a sort of paste, into which she put ashes: and even then she ate of it only after having first weakened herself by long fasts.

Monegund lived thus content in her retreat, when God, to try her patience, permitted her little servant to abandon her: the Saint remained thus five days without anyone bringing her any food; but, instead of being uneasy about it, she remained tranquil and united to God, hoping that, as He had formerly sent manna from heaven, and made water come out of a rock, to feed His people in the desert, He would have the goodness to supply her necessity, so that she should not be constrained to quit her solitude. She was in these pious thoughts when she perceived that snow was falling round her cell. This was all she needed; for, stretching out her hand through her window, she gathered enough of it to compose her ordinary paste: she passed by this means five other days. There was near her cell a little garden, in which she walked sometimes to give some relaxation to her mind, which she kept always applied to God. One day when she had entered it to take a little air, a woman who perceived her, stopping to consider her with too much curiosity, was struck that very hour with blindness. She recognized well that this misfortune had befallen her in punishment of her fault: she came to find the Saint, and, laying before her her disgrace, besought her to obtain mercy for her. Monegund, touched with compassion, betook herself that very hour to prayer, saying: “Woe to me, vile creature and poor sinner! must this woman then have lost her sight on my account!” This short prayer, which proceeded from a profound humility, pierced the heavens at once: for Monegund had no sooner ended it than, making the sign of the cross on this poor woman, she restored her sight.

This miracle, which was followed by some others, soon drew to her cell a great concourse of persons who came to implore the assistance of her prayers: which obliged her to think of another retreat. As she had shut herself up only to flee more surely the honours of the world and to lead a hidden life, seeing herself exposed in her little hermitage to the visits of creatures, she left her country, her family, her husband and all her acquaintances, and betook herself to the tomb of the great Saint Martin, at Tours, where she shut herself up in another cell. But honour, which is no less obstinate in following those who flee it than in drawing back from those who are greedy of it, never left her, neither in her journey nor in her sojourn: for she healed everywhere several sick by the virtue of her prayer, which she founded only on the knowledge of her unworthiness; these great miracles failed not to make her eminent holiness shine forth on all sides. The reputation of it came even to Chartres: which brought her husband to find her at Tours, and lead her back to her first cell. Nevertheless, a short time after, whether her husband had died or gave his consent to it, she left it a second time to resume that of Tours, where she passed peacefully the rest of her days in fasts, vigils and prayers, and without any commerce with persons of the world. Her charity, however, being unable to be shut up in her heart, she received into her company some pious maidens who were drawn to solitude: with them she performed all her spiritual exercises, so that, labouring together at the practice of virtue, they might render themselves more agreeable to Jesus Christ. We shall not relate here in detail the great number of miracles which God wrought by her mediation; it is enough to say in general that she healed a very great number of sick with a little saliva; that she purified persons covered with ulcers, and that, by the sign of the cross, she delivered the possessed,

restored health to the dying, gave the use of their limbs to paralytics and that of their eyes to the blind. God having thus rewarded from this life the piety of Monegund by the gift of miracles, He called her to Himself to crown still more amply in heaven her incomparable virtue. Her pious companions, seeing that this last hour was near, said to her, all dissolving in tears: “Do you then abandon us entirely? Remember that you are our mother, and that it is you who assembled us here to serve God; tell us then to whom you commend us after your death, we who are your dear daughters.” — “If peace reigns among you,” she said to them, “and if you continue to labour at your sanctification, God Himself will be your protector, and you will have for pastor of your souls the great Saint Martin, bishop of your city. I shall not withdraw from you either; but as soon as you call me to your help, I shall find myself in the midst of your charity.” — “The sick,” replied the holy maidens, “will not fail to come, according to their custom, to ask your blessing; what shall we do when we have you no more? will you have them go back from here without any relief, after having received so many graces here by your mediation? We beseech you to bless at least a little salt and oil, so that, applying them to themselves, they may ever feel the effects of your intercession.” Monegund could not refuse them what they desired, and it was the last action of her life; for, after this blessing, she died in peace, on the second day of July, in the sixth century of the Church. The things she had blessed served afterwards for the cure of an infinity of sick. Her body was buried in that same cell which she had sanctified by her tears, her prayers and her penances, and her tomb was honoured by several great miracles which Saint Gregory of Tours relates, and of a part of which he assures us he was witness. We shall content ourselves with a single one, which shows the profound humility of our Saint even after her death. A blind man had himself led to her sepulchre, where, after a long prayer to obtain his cure, he was overcome by sleep: then Saint Monegund appeared to him and told him that, without daring to compare herself to the Saints, she obtained for him at present the use of one of his eyes; but that, for the other, he must go to the sepulchre of the great Saint Martin, and that he would there be perfectly cured. In effect the blind man on waking found himself cured of one eye, and having betaken himself promptly to the tomb of Saint Martin, he received there the use of the other: we see by this that God is pleased that we have recourse to some particular Saint, to obtain, by his means, the relief we ask. The diocese of Tours no longer possesses relics of Saint Monegund. In 1562 the Protestants, masters of the city, pillaged the churches and burned the bodies of the Saints. That of Saint Monegund, preserved at Saint-Pierre-le-Puellier, in the quarter of Saint-Martin, was not spared. The worship of Saint Monegund has not perished in this diocese. In the ancient Breviary her feast was celebrated on 2 July, at least as a commemoration and by the recitation of a ninth lesson. Since the Roman liturgy has been adopted, this feast, sent back from 2 July, is fixed in the proper calendar on the 7th of the same month, with the double rite: three lessons are devoted to her legend. Saint Monegund is represented: 1st, receiving her food through a window of her cell; 2nd, blessing, on her death-bed, a vessel of oil and a provision of salt which afterwards became the instrument of numerous cures. We have drawn the life of this illustrious woman from what Saint Gregory of Tours relates of her in his books of the *Life of the Fathers* and of the *Glory of the Confessors*: it is from this source that Trithemius, Surius and all the others have drawn.

Our Lady of the Treille, at Lille, in the Diocese of Cambrai

Our Lady of the Treille, the most celebrated sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin at Lille, was situated formerly in the church of Saint-Peter. The statue which is honoured under this title is surrounded by an iron trellis [*treille*] on which the pilgrims fastened their gifts; it is of white stone, artistically carved; its pose is that of a queen seated on a throne; she holds on her left arm the Child Jesus and in her right hand a sceptre.

The worship rendered to this image is as ancient as the city of Lille; it is as it were rooted in the foundations of the city, which proudly calls itself the city of Mary, *Insula civitas Virginis*. It goes back therefore at least to the year 1066. Baldwin V, count of Flanders, and founder of the city of Lille, which before him was only an assemblage of houses around the castle, without walls of defence, built the church of Saint-Peter, placed there the image of Our Lady of the Treille, and had its dedication celebrated, in the presence of all that the

clergy had most venerable, the chivalry most brilliant, Flanders most illustrious.

The canons honoured Our Lady of the Treille by an exemplary piety, as much as by an incomparable zeal for the magnificence of her altar and the splendour of her feasts. Some constituted her by testament their universal heiress; others made foundations there suited to raise the glory of her worship; and when, in 1214, Philip Augustus, victor at Bouvines, had reduced Lille to ashes, the chapter, in spite of the calamities of which it was one of the first victims, undertook the reconstruction of Saint-Peter. When, in 1344, another fire came to destroy the constructions begun, the chapter, without letting itself be discouraged, set to work again; it pursued it with constancy during the century which the completion of the edifice demanded.

This devotion of the chapter to Our Lady of the Treille drew illustrious visitors there. Saint Thomas of Canterbury came to pray to her in the days of his exile; Saint Bernard, who accompanied Innocent III, a refugee in France, came to salute her with that filial piety which is one of his most beautiful characters, and there is no doubt that his so powerful, so sympathetic word kindled then in the heart of the people of Lille that tender love for the Blessed Virgin which has always been one of their fairest religious glories.

Thus in 1254, a famous epoch in the history of Our Lady of the Treille, Mary made her power and goodness shine forth toward a people which showed her so much devotion. On 2 June, the octave of the Trinity, an extreme throng of pilgrims surrounded the holy image, asking the cure of ills reputed incurable, when suddenly blind, lame, deaf, paralytics, all are healed in an instant. Immediately cries of gladness burst forth on all sides, the praises of Mary are repeated at every point of the city, and they are celebrated by a feast called that of the new festivity. This was, however, still only the beginning; the prodigies continued almost every day; and a mysterious power seemed, from that epoch, attached to the holy image. This power, which has been preserved through the course of the centuries, has for guarantee the most irrefutable proofs. The bishop of Tournai, after an inquiry made according to the rules of the Church, so severe and so judicious in such matters, establishes fifty-three prodigies.

To perpetuate the memory of the miracles which began, in 1254, to illustrate Our Lady of the Treille, an annual procession was instituted within the precinct of the collegiate church; but in the month of February 1269 the countess Margaret instituted, by letters patent, the procession around the city. Each following year saw the splendour of this procession increase; and luxury, growing with the ages, added new ornaments to the preceding solemnity. The procession of 1749 was remarkable among all the others: there was admired above all a troop of angels which opened the march, bearing on banderoles these words: Who is like God? *Quis ut Deus?* soldiers and priests in Hebrew costume, carrying some the sceptre, the sword, the crown of Solomon, figure of Jesus Christ, others the spoils of Goliath and the book of the law; the prophet Nathan, with a car representing the anointing of Solomon, surrounded by the Virtues and Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Thus people came to these feasts from all parts of Flanders; and the immense basilica of Saint-Peter scarcely sufficed to contain the incessant flood of the people who came to venerate the miraculous image. They prayed until a very late hour of the night; and, from dawn, new pilgrims besieged the doors of Saint-Peter. They poured out their souls for long hours before Our Lady, and when the procession set out they followed it, most carrying little banners adorned with the image or the cipher of Mary.

Love for Our Lady of the Treille inspired the people of Lille, from the year 1237, with the thought of erecting a confraternity in her honour, under the name of the Charity of Our Lady. There were distributed to the associates psalters, hours and other books of prayers, so precious at a period when, printing not yet being invented, one could have these things only in manuscript. They loved one another more

Christianly as children of the same mother; and each house seemed a temple dedicated to Mary, of which the father of the family was the pontiff: it was already a fair beginning for the confraternity; but it lacked the sanction of the Holy See, without which the children of the Church can constitute nothing durable or regular. This sanction did not delay in coming. In 1254, a year so famous in the annals of Our Lady of the Treille,

there arrived letters of Pope Alexander IV, who erected the confraternity canonically. Then a register was opened; and the countess Margaret and her son Guy de Dampierre had themselves inscribed in it first. After them were inscribed the canons of Saint-Peter, all the great families of the country, all the people, who saw in this register as it were another book of life. Parents had newborn children inscribed in it, betrothed persons renewed their enrolment there to consecrate the new household to Mary, and, at the moment of death, all had recourse to her as to a patroness and a mother.

From Flanders the renown of the confraternity soon spread through all Europe. From the extremities of France, Italy and Germany, people asked to be inscribed in the register of the associates. The Montmorencys, the Croys, the de Lannoys, the d'Humières, the princes of the imperial family of Austria, the most celebrated universities, hearths of science and light, entire cities, represented by their magistrates, Bishops and Popes, Charles V and Philip II, asked that their names should figure in these holy annals, mingled with the most obscure names, with all professions and all ages.

Among these names there are two which shine with quite particular brilliance: the first is Saint Louis, king of France, who in 1255 made to Our Lady of the Treille a pilgrimage of which the annals of the time have faithfully kept the memory; the second is Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy and count of Flanders. This prince, as wise in council as brave in battle, of a piety as gentle as firm, had a special affection for Our Lady of the Treille. He contributed, with a princely generosity, to the completion of the collegiate church of Saint-Peter, and especially of the chapel which was to receive the miraculous image. Behind the high altar he had the shrine containing the relics of the Blessed Virgin placed in a raised spot, whence all eyes could perceive it. In the chapel which occupied the left transept he raised two altars; one, surrounded by obelisks of white stone, was an altar of Our Lady, above which the holy image was seen standing out gracefully against a ground of azure sown with stars of gold; the other was an altar of Saint Anne, which he had placed there to associate the mother in the homage received by her blessed daughter.

Philip did not stop there: he had the walls of the chapel covered with carved woodwork; and on the table of the altar, of gilded wood, he had the mysteries of the Blessed Virgin represented. When he created the order of the Golden Fleece, that celebrated order which counted only thirty-one knights, but all without reproach and of the most illustrious, all bound by oath never to leave the field of battle except as conquerors, or dead, or prisoners, he placed it under the patronage of Our Lady of the Treille; he even wished to hold the first chapter of it at her chapel; after the divine service, pompously celebrated, the sovereign and the knights betook themselves to the stalls of the canons; and there they heard from the mouth of the registrar the reading of the statutes of the Order, those statutes, the fairest code of honour and chivalrous virtues, which prescribed to all fidelity to the holy Church, integrity of the Catholic faith, loyalty toward the sovereign, friendship among the knights and honour in arms. The prince had then read, by his herald at arms, a writing in which he said that he devoted himself to God and to the most holy Virgin, and that he engaged all the knights to do the same. They answered this invitation with all their heart: one of them, the lord of Pons, even made the singular vow not to stay in any city until he should have found a Saracen whom he could fight hand to hand with the aid of Our Lady, for love of whom he would never lie, on Saturday, in a bed, before the entire accomplishment of his vow; and, before separating, all hung round the altar the escutcheons of their arms, as a perpetual homage of their sentiments toward the Blessed Virgin. Thus ended the first chapter of the Golden Fleece, of that illustrious order which, in the course of two centuries, was to count in its ranks a hundred and four crowned heads.

To perpetuate the memory of his consecration, the prince founded two Masses a day at the altar of Our Lady of the Treille, and moreover, every Saturday, a Mass sung by a canon of Saint-Peter. He then obtained from Eugene IV new indulgences for all who should come to pray before the holy image; and, in 1430, he had the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows placed beside the altar; the canons of Saint-Peter were authorized to make the office of it, which was afterwards extended to the whole Church. Later the seven sorrowful stations of the

Blessed Virgin were erected there, with the approval of the bishop of Tournai, who attached indulgences to them. Surrounded by all these testimonies of honour, Our Lady of the Treille made her power shine forth more and more; and miracles multiplied, especially from 1319 to 1527, and from 1634 to 1638. At the sight of these ever-renewed prodigies, the piety of the people of Lille seemed to take a new impulse; the whole city breathed only devotion to Mary; everywhere her image shone: it was seen at the corner of streets, where the poor woman, saving from her wages, laid at her feet a candle or a bouquet of flowers; it was seen above the gates of the city, where she seemed to watch over the guard of the citizens; it was seen at the town hall, where there was a chapel in her honour. Some wore medals bearing her effigy, others rings on which she was represented. In the midst of this universal zeal for the honour of Mary, a pious lady conceived the design of decorating more splendidly the altar of the venerated Virgin. With this view she obtained from the chapter of Saint-Peter that the holy image should be displaced for a time; but the work finished, the chapter thought, before replacing it on its throne, that it should decree it a magnificent triumph, by a general procession and the solemn consecration of the whole city to its beloved patroness. This idea ravished all hearts, and on 28 October 1634 this touching ceremony took place. It was a fair day, that. From morning the cannon thundered on the ramparts, the bells rang at full peal, the city had put on its festal dress; everywhere elegant hangings, everywhere flowers, everywhere the purest joy. At nine o'clock the aldermen come out of the town hall, in red robes, preceded by the herald holding a labarum, one side of which bore these words: The magistrate and the people consecrate Lille to Our Lady of the Treille, and the other offered the sweet image of Mary, fixing her benevolent looks on the city of Lille depicted at the foot of the labarum with these words under the effigy of the city: *Dicet habitator insulae hujus: Haec est spes nostra*; "The inhabitant of this island shall say: This is our hope." They betake themselves thus to the church of Saint-Peter, magnificently decorated with draperies interlaced with fresh garlands of verdure; at the end, the altar appeared surrounded with a halo of candles; and waves of incense encircled the statue with moving clouds. In the midst of these splendours, which made one think of those of heaven, the solemn Mass is begun. At the offertory the chants are silent, there is a sublime silence. Then the chief of the aldermen advances, holding in one hand the labarum, in the other the keys of the city; he hands them to the officiant, who places them on the altar; then, before all this prostrate people, he pronounces the formula of consecration of the city to Our Lady of the Treille. In the evening a general illumination reproduced the scene of the morning; on all sides one saw on the transparencies these words dear to all hearts: *Insula, civitas Virginis*; "Lille, city of Mary."

The following year the bishop of Tournai came to Lille to consecrate himself with all his diocese to Our Lady of the Treille; Ferdinand II, emperor of Austria, consecrated to her his diadem and had himself inscribed in the confraternity. In 1639 the whole city of Tournai came in procession to consecrate itself to so good a patroness, and renewed this act every year until 1792. Several times there were nearly five thousand pilgrims there. In 1667, when the city, besieged by Louis XIV, was reduced to capitulate, it required that the king should swear, before Our Lady of the Treille, to maintain within its walls the Catholic faith, to send there neither Protestant governor, nor officers, nor soldiers, to respect its franchises, and to leave it its administration. Louis XIV swore it with his hand on the Gospel. And when, forty years later, in 1708, the city was besieged by Prince Eugene, at the head of an army almost entirely Protestant, it promised, if it were preserved from pillage, to make a special procession to thank Our Lady of the Treille. After this promise the miraculous statue is exposed in the midst of the church of Saint-Peter, which the cannon-balls riddled; and, a marvellous thing, at the end of three months of siege, obliged to capitulate yet, it obtained at least the most honourable conditions with complete liberty for the Catholic worship. Such was even the incredible benevolence of the enemies, most of them ardent Protestants, that on the very evening of their triumphal entry the people carried confidence so far as to sing publicly the litanies of the Virgin before her images which adorned the houses; on the other evenings they gathered in the streets for the same purpose; and on 2 June the general procession was made, as if there were no enemy army in the town. Some Protestants did try to pervert the faith of the inhabitants, but, far from succeeding, several were won to the true belief and

became Catholics.

So visible a protection of Mary attached all hearts to her more and more; and when there came, in 1754, the five-times-centenary anniversary of the first miracles of 1254, a greater magnificence than ever was displayed. The programme of the feast bore the title of Triumph of the Blessed Virgin, and it fully justified its title. Fame opened the march, bearing on the banderole of her trumpet these words: *Audite, insulae, et attendite, populi de longe*; angels surrounded her, the name of Mary on their standard. Then came four cars: the first bore the six sibyls who had announced, in prophetic terms, the principal glories of the Mother of the Incarnate Word; in the second was Moses, represented on Mount Horeb; in the third, the effigies of the monarchs who had come, at various epochs, to render homage to Our Lady; in the fourth, the Popes, cardinals and bishops, protectors of the confraternity. There followed groups of angels, bearing the book of the confraternity of Our Lady, with the arms and names of the cities or provinces consecrated to the Virgin of Lille. The pilgrims of Tournai were represented on an elegant car; another car all covered with lilies offered the double emblem of the French monarchy and of the Virgin without stain; then came the historic figures of Margaret of Flanders, of Guy de Dampierre, of Philip the Good and of the principal knights of the Golden Fleece, all clothed in costumes as rich as exact, all surrounded by angels, and followed by the magistrates of the city, the banners of the town and of the chapter, and the labarum offered in 1654. There were seen next angels bearing tufts of roses and lilies before the car, on which was the holy image, surrounded by a trellis.

This procession, which was renewed for nine days, in the midst of an immense crowd, was the last brilliance cast by this celebrated worship. There came the ill-omened days of the revolution; and the ancient collegiate church of Saint-Peter was, in ’91, first closed as a useless building, then given to the public as a storehouse; in ’92, ceded to the commissaries of war as a sheep-park; in ’93, sold to greedy speculators, and soon demolished. Among the rubble that strewed the ground the miraculous statue was thrown; but happily a generous Christian, Alain Gambier, having recognized it, bought it for money from the keeper of the ruins, and carried it home as a treasure. At the re-establishment of the Catholic worship he gave it to the church of Saint-Catherine, which the revolution had left standing as an edifice of no importance.

In this new sanctuary Our Lady was for a long time without honour, now at the bottom of the church in the chapel of the dead, now behind the high altar: so far had the new generation broken the thread of the ancient traditions and pious sentiments! But in 1842 the curé of Saint-Catherine having consecrated the whole month of Mary to Our Lady of the Treille, piety, asleep, seemed to awake. Soon after, the exercises of a jubilee granted by Gregory XVI having been placed under the auspices of Our Lady of the Treille, the success was complete: the name of Our Lady of the Treille, so long forgotten, returned to all lips; and her worship, so long abandoned, took again its place in all hearts. The miraculous statue was transported to the altar of the Blessed Virgin; medals of Our Lady of the Treille were struck; and all wished to have one. In imitation of what is practised at Our Lady of Victories at Paris, a particular Benediction was established under the name of the Benediction of Our Lady of the Treille; the ancient confraternity was revived by a rescript of Gregory XVI; near the sanctuary of Mary there was formed a congregation of religious called of Our Lady, with the aim of favouring the development of her worship, of furnishing voices to sing her praises, and of devoting themselves to the care of the poor sick, the instruction of poor children, and the various works of charity: for the worship of Mary rightly understood inclines to all devotions. Finally, the feast and procession of Our Lady of the Treille began again on 9 June 1834, within the precinct of the Church. Unhoped-for conversions, unexpected cures, sudden consolations brought to evils that seemed without remedy, recalling to all the power of Our Lady of the Treille, increased from year to year the ancient devotion to the holy image. At last, in 1853, devotion came to such a point that people could no longer suffer that so venerated an image should have only a borrowed sanctuary. All, with one voice, declared that they wished to replace the ancient church overthrown in days of vertigo, and to raise to the patroness of Lille a monumental church. All, passing at once from enthusiasm to action, engaged themselves, by voluntary subscriptions, to contribute to it according

to their power.

Such was the general disposition of minds when 1854 arrived, the six-times-centenary anniversary of the beginning of the prodigies of Our Lady of the Treille. — To heighten as much as possible the brilliance of this traditional feast, the archbishop of Cambrai, after having obtained from the Holy See the favour of a jubilee attached to the church of Saint-Catherine, assembled to preach its exercises the first preachers of the time, and summoned for the great ceremonies which were to take place as many cardinals, archbishops and bishops as he could. The whole city, on its side, set to work to decorate the temples, streets and squares.

Garlands of every kind, cloths of gold and silver, silk, paintings, sculptures, banderoles, chandeliers, rich costumes, everything was put to use, not to speak of what the chants, preachings, prayers and communions added of the touching.

On the first days the neighbouring parishes went processionally to the jubilee church, crossing the city in an attitude of recollection, and edifying by their chants and prayers the population whose waves pressed on their steps. Then came the various parishes of the city, all prepared and revived in the Christian spirit by eloquent preachings.

In the midst of this marvellous concourse took place a ceremony which filled all hearts with gladness: the laying of the first stone of the great basilica which it was proposed to raise under the double title of Our Lady of the Treille and of Saint-Peter, and, to carry the work to a good end, the institution of two commissions, one of men, the other of ladies, charged with collecting the funds for this grand undertaking. Finally, on Sunday 2 July, the great feast was celebrated: the most splendid decorations shone on all the façades, at all the windows; the walls disappeared under draperies and flowers, and domes rose in the midst of the streets. Until then the sky had been dark, the rain threatening; but at the precise moment when the image of Our Lady sets out for the procession, a radiant sun pierces the clouds, and the cortege leaves the temple; at the head march the six parishes of the city; then come the hospices, the trade guilds, the charitable associations, the religious bodies. After this long file appear the relics of the principal patrons of the country; the historic deputations of Tournai, Douai, Cambrai, Aire, each bearing its traditional *ex-voto*: Tournai, a great candle; Douai, the arms of the city, chased on silver, with the inscription: Douai to Our Lady of the Treille; Cambrai, the image of Our Lady of Grace, chased in silver, with the inscription: Cambrai, city of the Virgin, to Our Lady of the Treille; finally, Our Lady of the Treille, surrounded by a guard of honour, advancing in an octagonal shrine of gold, seven metres high, and in flowered Gothic style, borne on a litter by twelve ecclesiastics in dalmatics of gold, accompanied by priests in sacerdotal vestments, canons in choir dress, followed by the archbishops and bishops, clothed in copes of gold, with mitre and crozier, and by the cardinal of Reims, officiating. To tell all that there was of graceful and magnificent in this immense cortege of several thousand persons, whose march past, executed in the most perfect order, lasted more than an hour and a half; to tell the sight offered, on the great square, by a dense population estimated at more than eighty thousand persons; to tell all the emotions that so many striking scenes produced, repeated in the course of this fair procession, would be impossible. The ambassador of Spain at Brussels, delegated by his sovereign to represent her in this ceremony, said: “I lived at Rome twenty years, I saw nothing there that equals what I have just witnessed.” — “I was at the coronation of Charles X,” said a colonel of hussars, “I prefer what I have seen today.”

After this fair feast the city of Lille hastened to raise to Mary a superb basilica.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice. — Cf. *Rosier de Marie*.

Our Lady of the Voirons, at Boëge, in the Diocese of Annecy

In the north of Savoy, on the confines of the Chablais and the Faucigny, one sees a valley remarkable on many counts. It was formerly an immense forest, which the Allobroges called Boëge, or country of woods. It

was also designated, in the Middle Ages, by the name of Black Combe.

The canons of Saint Augustine of the abbey of Filly came to cultivate it, probably in the eleventh or twelfth century, and seemed to take possession of it in the name of the Queen of heaven, by dedicating to Our Lady their priory of Burdignin.

This valley, formerly so sombre, counts today among the prettiest and most curious of Savoy. The mountains which bound it on all sides are not, as elsewhere, steep rocks; they are meadows and bushy woods, which take, as they rise into the air, the most varied forms. A torrent crosses it through its whole length, charming groves are planted on both banks, and on either side extend orchards and fertile fields. The borough, which is in the centre, and a great number of villages, especially those grouped near the bell-towers, have an air of ease and prosperity which is pleasant to see. It had, in the Middle Ages, several castles which played an important part.

It is in the bosom of this valley, and in the borough of Boëge itself, in Faucigny, that was re-established, in 1852, one of the most celebrated pilgrimages of Savoy, that of Our Lady of the Voirons, whose history is connected with the definitive destruction of Roman idolatry in this country.

The Voirons are a small chain of mountains, placed between the Chablais and the Faucigny, east of Geneva and west of Lausanne. The Calvary, which is the highest point of this chain, and near which rise the ruins of the ancient convent of Our Lady, offers one of the finest views in Europe.

In the time of the Allobroges the Voirons and the valley of Boëge were consecrated to the Celtic divinities, and, to all appearance, to Teutates, the god of forests. The names of Great and Little Fayet, given to two woods which extend on the eastern slope of the mountain, opposite Boëge, scarcely permit doubt that fairies or druidesses dwelt in these ancient solitudes.

After the conquest of Allobrogia, the Romans, following in this their custom, dedicated to Jupiter the altars which the druids had raised to Teutates on the Voirons and in the valley of woods. One still finds in the centre of this valley a Mount Jovet and, on the mountain, two forests of Jou which evidently bear the name of the master of Olympus.

Although the city of Geneva had had its episcopal see from the end of the second century, and the progress of Christianity had been great in this diocese, under bishop Eleutherius, friend of Constantine, the worship of idols subsisted long still in some remote places.

The altars of the false gods were raised again at Geneva under Julian the Apostate, and, when they had been overthrown anew, several pagan temples remained still standing on the summit of some mountains or at the bottom of certain unknown valleys. The invasion of the Barbarians, which was so long in our Alps, favoured this state of things, and, in the tenth century, Jupiter was still adored on the Voirons, as on Mount Jou, which became so celebrated by the zeal of Saint Bernard of Menthon.

It is said that the idol of the Voirons also gave oracles and exacted an assiduous and minute worship. Woe to him who failed in the ceremonies which the god of the mountain prescribed! He inspired such terror that the Christians of the time believed that the demon animated this strange divinity, which probably had no other soul than that lent it by the cunning of its interested guardians and the superstition of its worshippers.

The bishops of Geneva could no longer behold this hearth of idolatry quite near their city, and in the midst of the fairest regions entrusted to their zeal. They therefore had the temple of the Voirons razed and its idol reduced to powder. The temple and idol of Mount Jovet must have had the same fate.

Now, behold a horrible boar shows itself on the mountain, and chooses it for its dwelling. All that dares approach is a victim of its fury. The devastations increase from day to day, and the terror grows with them. The fright becomes so great throughout the country that the people believe that the same demon which lately

animated the idol of the Voirons has passed into the savage beast.

There was then at the castle of Langin, on the western slope of the mountain, a courageous and devoted lord. He would have thought he compromised his reputation for bravery if he had not attacked the boar, and he would have failed in a duty if he had not done his best to deliver from it those whom his arm was bound to defend. Prudence, however, did not permit him to confront alone so terrible an adversary, the more as he believed he had to do with a demon far more than with a wild beast; for this reason he invited some friends to join his enterprise. They hesitate at first; but the proud castellan accuses them of cowardice and they determine to follow him. A great hunt is organized, they assemble, they set out and soon arrive at the summit of the Voirons. The boar, which was seeking prey, throws itself upon the hostile band. The companions of the lord of Langin disperse and flee in all haste; he remains alone on the field of combat, and behold the boar which flings itself upon him with fury, which tears him cruelly, and ill-treats him so that he remained as dead on the spot.

In his distress he cast his eyes toward heaven and made a vow to the most holy Virgin to build her a chapel in the same place, if, by her prayers and intercession, this savage beast could be killed or driven away, and if he himself could escape so many wounds, the least of which he thought mortal. The Blessed Virgin did not refuse him her help; for, though he was on the point of giving up his soul, he recovered strength enough to withdraw to his castle. He soon healed of his wounds and the terrible enemy disappeared for ever from the country.

The grace was too signal not to hasten the accomplishment of the vow which had obtained it. The lord of Langin had the chapel built which he had vowed to the Queen of heaven; in this chapel he made an altar, and on this altar he placed the image of his deliverer. It was a wooden statue: the Virgin held in her arms the divine Child, and a bishop of Geneva had blessed it.

The chapel of the Voirons is the first of the sanctuaries of Mary in which we find a black Virgin. The most ancient statues of this kind were brought from Lebanon, from the first centuries of Christianity, by the pilgrims who visited the Holy Land. They had been made by solitaries who had vowed their work to the Mother of God.

The lord of Langin, unable to testify enough his gratitude to God and to the Virgin for the protection with which they had covered him, had a little hermitage built near the chapel of the Voirons to go and end his days in the shadow of the altar of Mary. He reserved to himself only the revenue necessary for the poor and retired life which he embraced, ordained that at his death his body should be buried in the chapel of Our Lady, and that the bodies of his heirs, dying at Langin, should be carried there before being laid elsewhere. He distributed great alms, bade farewell to the world, and withdrew with a friend who wished to follow him into the solitude.

He prescribed to himself a rigorous rule of life which he had approved by his bishop… He passed the rest of his days in prayers, meditations, fasts, interior mortifications, macerations of the body, embalming all the neighbourhood with the odour of his virtues, giving the example of a solid devotion, and leaving after his death the precious and most sweet memory of his life. The work of which the foundations had just been laid was God’s, it could not go down into the tomb with its founder. When he was no more, new hermits came to join his friend, who had survived him; others succeeded these, and, for a great number of centuries, chosen Christians were seen renouncing the world to come and sing in solitude the praises of Our Lady of the Voirons.

From its origin the holy hermitage began to be frequented by a great number of persons who came from afar, from all sides, as much to thank God for the favours they had obtained by the intercession of the glorious Virgin as to learn the way to heaven from the mouth of the holy hermits.

The feast of the Visitation, which Saint Bonaventure had established for the Friars Minor, from the year 1263, and which Pope Urban VI extended to the whole Church in 1389,[1] appears to have been the patronal feast of the Voirons from the end of the fourteenth century. It became the day of the principal concourse on the holy mountain, and was no longer known in the Chablais and the Faucigny except under the name of the feast of Our Lady of the Voirons.

Popular tradition has preserved to us a trait which relates to the epoch of which we speak, and which deserves to find a place in this notice. A young person, who had come, doubtless, to put herself under the protection of the Queen of virgins, was at some distance from the chapel of Our Lady when she met on her way one of those lost men for whom nothing is sacred. She flees in terror, but the savage man pursues her. In the trouble that agitates her she has not seen a bottomless precipice which lies under her steps, or, if she has seen it, she prefers her virtue to life, throws herself into the abyss, and merits to count among the most heroic virgins. It is said that the hand of God supported her in her fall, and that she found herself at the bottom of the precipice without having any hurt. This intrepid virgin well deserved a monument: the peoples raised her one which will long remain standing; they gave to the perpendicular rock from which she had thrown herself the name of the Maiden's Leap [Saut de la Pucelle], which it still preserves today.

This rock is a kilometre from the old chapel, on the west side. In 1536 the Bernese established heresy in the Chablais with arms in hand, and exercised a thousand ravages there. The holy hermitage of Mount Voiron was not exempt; they came there armed as if it had been to assault some fortress, ill-treated and drove out the hermits, carried off by a horrible sacrilege the sacred vessels, vestments, furniture, papers of foundations, donations, sales, privileges, indulgences and other rights, set fire to the buildings, ruined them and demolished them entirely, even to rolling the stones down the mountain.

The sacrilegious demolishers thought they had triumphed, but God did not leave these wickednesses unpunished; for, very shortly after, those who had co-operated in the demolition of this holy hermitage all perished miserably.

Nevertheless the statue of Our Lady was miraculously preserved. John Burgnard, a Chablaisian, of the parish and village of Brens in the Chablais, having not only embraced the heresy of the Bernese, but moreover having joined them to lead them to the hermitage, threw himself at the first onset upon the altar to carry off the statue, as he did; and, having tied it, dragged it behind him as he descended, with all sorts of ignominies, and said in mockery: "Come after me, my little Moor! if thou hast so much power as they say, show it now! why dost thou let thyself be thus dragged? why dost thou not defend thyself?" And behold, while he vomits such outrages and blasphemies, at once the statue stops and remains immovable, although it was in a place where the ground was level, in the midst of a meadow. This wretch, seeing that he could no longer draw it, turned his head to see what hindered; but, by a double miracle, his head remained thus all twisted round, and he was at the same instant crippled and maimed in one arm and one shoulder, so that he could never turn himself straight again; so that he was constrained to leave the statue in that same place, and descended with difficulty, bearing on him, for all the rest of his life, the punishment of his impiety and the evident testimony of the sovereign power of the Queen of heaven.

But here is yet another marvel: there was a great bell that could be heard from Geneva and from Lausanne; the heretics having taken it down, and not being able to carry it off because it was too heavy, nor to break it in pieces, rolled it into a valley called the Wood of Lajou, with the design of coming back to take it the next day. It was at the beginning of the month of August; nevertheless, all night there fell so great a quantity of snow on that side of the mountain, and not elsewhere, that the soldiers, having returned with ropes and hammers to break and drag away the bell, could never recognize either the paths or the very place where they had put it; so that they were constrained to go back. Some time after, the snow having melted, a peasant of Boëge, named Chevalier, to whom the place belonged, found it, and had it transported into the parish church of Boëge, where the statue of Our Lady of the Voirons was also brought.

A little time after, a holy religious, Francis Monod, of the Order of Hermits of Saint

Augustine, having restored the chapel with the hermitage, replaced there the miraculous statue of the Virgin which was kept in the church of Boëge.

From then on the devotion began again with so great a fervour that the heretics, being indignant at it, did all they could to hinder the holy exercises which the people of Faucigny made there; but the inhabitants of Boëge and of the neighbouring parishes went there armed, especially on the day of the Visitation, and thus gave the leisure to celebrate Masses and perform other divine offices, to the consolation of the poor Catholics.

On 1 July 1595, the eve of the feast of the Visitation, the Apostle of the Chablais took the pilgrim's staff and set out for the Voirons. He had understood that he needed a superhuman strength to accomplish the mission he had just undertaken, and he went to ask the assistance of Her whom the Church has so well called Queen of Apostles. The heretics perceived the man of God directing himself toward the holy mountain; they followed him, attacked him and did him a thousand outrages. Saint Francis said afterwards that he escaped from their hands only by a special protection of the Blessed Virgin. It is to be remarked that his labours, which until then had remained fruitless, began to be crowned with a success which, ever increasing, ended in the conversion of seventy thousand heretics.

After the return of the Chablais to the Catholic faith, the hermitage of the Voirons was re-established in its primitive splendour, and, in the year 1620, Saint Francis de Sales gave Rules to the hermits of Our Lady, of whom he made a particular congregation.

The Saint prescribed to them, among other things, to hold hospitality in very great recommendation, and a quite particular care of pilgrims and strangers. They were to make a quite special profession of devotion toward Our Lady. Their evening prayer began with the litanies of the Virgin, and every Saturday after supper the hermits were to sing in choir the hymn of her joys before the image of the chapel.

Charles-Auguste de Sales was a hermit of the Voirons before becoming bishop of Geneva. He had renounced the dignity of provost of the cathedral and dean of the collegiate church of Annecy, to retire to the holy mountain, where he led the most mortified life. When he had been made bishop, he determined the hermits of the Voirons to unite with the Preaching Friars of Annecy, and from that time the keeping of the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Voirons was entrusted to the sons of Saint Dominic. Dom Luc de Lucinges, who is celebrated in the history of Savoy, was prior of the convent of the Voirons.

There was then no longer, in these regions, any pilgrimage which could rival that of which we trace the history. Although the mountain of the Voirons is very high, twenty-five processions, come from the Chablais and the Faucigny, sometimes met there in a single morning.

In 1717 Michel-Gabriel de Rossillon de Bernex, one of the greatest bishops of Geneva, turned aside from the course of his pastoral visits to come on pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Voirons, for the intention of King Victor-Amadeus II, and wrote there to this prince a letter of condolence on the loss he had just suffered of the kingdom of Sicily.

On 7 August 1769 a fire consumed the convent of Our Lady and her venerated chapel. The religious of Saint Dominic withdrew to their convent of Annecy, and the regions which had grown accustomed to the touching solemnities of their Patroness could no longer lift their eyes to the holy mountain without feeling them bathed in tears.

The faithful continued, however, to come to pray on the ruins of the ancient chapel; for it seemed to them that those walls and scattered stones which had been the mute witnesses of so many marvels must preserve a divine virtue, and the surrounding parishes still went there every year in procession.

On their side the Dominicans carried to Annecy the worship of Our Lady of the Voirons, raised her an altar in their church, and continued to celebrate every day a Mass in her honour.

The upheavals and terrors of the French Revolution did not succeed in making the powerful Lady of the Voirons wholly forgotten. The fugitive priests went to celebrate the holy mysteries on the mountain which was ever consecrated to her, to ask God, by the intercession of Mary, to shorten the trials of the Church.

The memory of Our Lady of the Voirons was preserved nowhere more lively than in the Burgnard family, many of whose members bore, alas! until these last times, visible signs of the malediction which their ancestor had merited.

Only a few years ago a member of this family had a hollow stone set up on the edge of a path which crosses the mountain of the Voirons and leads from Boëge to Saint-Cergues, and then, in the hollow of this stone, he deposited the image of the Mother of God. Poor, he could raise only a very poor monument, but She who looks far less at the value of our offerings than at our good will will take account of his intention. This rough stone, marked with the seal of hope and love, is worth a magnificent monument of expiation, which cannot fail to have its effect.

The statue of Our Lady of the Voirons was found again in a village of the parish of Boëge, on the first Sunday of the month of May 1802, and solemnly installed on the first Sunday of July in the parish church which had served it as shelter in the sixteenth century. Providence, in restoring this image to the valley of Boëge, doubtless wished to reward it for the zeal it had always shown for the worship of Mary.

In 1835, on the first Sunday of July, consecrated to Our Lady of the Voirons, the inhabitants of Boëge laid the first stone of a magnificent church which was to replace the old one, falling from decay; and two years later, on the same day, it was blessed under the title of Our Lady, whose image was borne there in triumph in the midst of an immense concourse of faithful who had run up from all sides.

Every year the feast of Our Lady of the Voirons is celebrated with solemnity, and in the midst of a very great concourse. What distinguishes it above all is a magnificent triumph decreed to Mary. The ancient statue is placed on a brilliant throne, and twenty or thirty young girls, clothed in white, carry it in procession in the midst of lilies and flowers. The streets of the borough of Boëge are adorned as for a royal reception. A numerous clergy and thousands of faithful accompany the pious cortege, to the chant of litanies and holy canticles, which the bronze accompanies with its great voices. Our Lady of the Voirons was not slow to show herself as liberal in the new sanctuary which had been consecrated to her as in that which she had inhabited on the mountain for so many centuries, and already numerous *ex-voto* offerings have been deposited there as a tribute of gratitude.

Two golden hearts are distinguished among these pious testimonies. One was sent to Our Lady of the Voirons, on 15 August 1859, by about a hundred young men of Savoy. It contains their names and a very touching act of consecration to the Mother of God. The other was given, no one knows by whom, in the first times of the re-establishment of the worship of Our Lady of the Voirons in the church of Boëge. It contains a note which we wish to reproduce here textually: “A mother was desolate at seeing that a child whom she loved very much did not walk, though he was already about four years old; the extraordinary weakness of his legs made the mother even fear that he would never walk well. She came with her child to the foot of the altar of Our Lady, and, while she prayed, he began to drag himself, climbing the steps of that altar. Nevertheless he did not yet walk. When she was back at her house, the happy mother found that her child was cured, and he has continued to walk from that moment.”

In 1853 the sovereign pontiff Pius IX deigned to grant two plenary indulgences to those who should visit the church in which the worship of Our Lady of the Voirons had just been re-established. The first can be gained on the day of the feast of the Visitation or the first ten days of July, and the second, on any day of the year, at

the choice of the pilgrim.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de Savoie*, by the abbé F. Gro'oel.

Our Lady of Vassivière,[2] at Besse, in the Diocese of Clermont

In the bosom of the basaltic cones which belong to the chain of Mont-Dore, and project their rings toward the Creuse, the Limousin and the Cantal, above those abrupt ravines hollowed by the tearing of the soil, between the peak of Sancy whose needle pierces the cloud, and Lake Pavin whose waters cover abysses, there is a place where the soul, wearied by the noises of the world, comes to taste the charms of prayer. Among the accidents of these Alpine sites, in this nature now smiling, now severe, men have raised to the Mother of God a sanctuary of which she has made the theatre of her marvels.

It is Our Lady of Vassivière, included in the parish of Besse.[1] The church, built of the lavas of the country, is of the eleventh century: it is under the title of Saint Andrew. Its apse and its spire dominate the landscape. In the interior, Romanesque naves, chapels arranged in regular order, a Gothic choir, capitals with subjects, such is the ensemble of the edifice. Behind the high altar is the chapel which receives the most homage: it keeps, during nine months, the statue of Our Lady of Vassivière.

The worship of the Blessed Virgin spread early at Besse. Numerous confraternities were established there, and flourished around the pilgrimage of Vassivière, as branches grow and develop around the trunk which nourishes them. There were counted the confraternities of Our Lady, of Our Lady of Bethlehem, of Our Lady of the Nativity, of Our Lady of the Rosary, of Our Lady of Carmel.

According to an authentic tradition, Vassivière formed formerly a parish, and had a church consecrated to Mary. The image of the Virgin was held there in great veneration: the inhabitants and travellers owed her many graces, of which a faithful remembrance was kept.

In 1369 the English, at war with France, devastated the town of Besse, and went up as far as Vassivière. They demolished the dwellings, overthrew the church, and left standing only a wall.

At the sight of their ruined cottages, their altars cast down, the inhabitants fled. A secret joy tempered their grief: they carried away the image of Mary which they had saved from pillage. When peace was re-established they returned to their plateau, raised a cross on the debris of the chapel, and made in the wall a niche in which was placed the statue of Our Lady of Vassivière. It was a black Virgin, holding the Child Jesus in her arms: she was said to be like Our Lady of Le Puy.

She remained there nearly two centuries. Although she was exposed to the injuries of the seasons, nothing damaged her, neither the rigour of the winters nor the abundance of the snows. This circumstance, joined to the graces already obtained at her feet, caused her to be regarded as miraculous. Thus travellers, resuming the habits of past ages, were accustomed to stop there and invoke Mary. The contempt which one of them showed for this devotion was the occasion of a miracle which made a stir.

In the month of June of the year 1547 an inhabitant of Besse, named Peter Get, was going to the town of La Tour with William de Chalus and some other merchants. When they were at Vassivière, William de Chalus and the others directed themselves toward the wall. Arrived at the foot of the holy Image, they kneel and make a prayer. Peter Get smiles at their devotion, despises it, and continues his road to the brook which flows at the foot of the mountain. There he was constrained to stop; a dizziness seized him, and he lost his sight.

Recognizing in this blow a chastisement from heaven: "My God," he cried, "what have I done? Blessed Virgin, help me." At this cry several times repeated, his companions run up; they see his misfortune. Persuaded that his impiety alone is the cause of it, they excite him to repentance, inspire him with sentiments of confidence in Mary, and lead him by the hand before her image. Peter Get prostrates himself at her feet, and utters deep sighs. He avows his fault, deplores it, and promises to expiate it. He makes a vow to

consecrate himself, if he recovers his sight, to the service of the Blessed Virgin, and engages to give five pounds of wax, at the next feast of the Visitation, to be burned on her altar in the church of Besse. His companions, uniting their prayers to his, entreat Mary to have pity on him, and to grant him the grace he implores. She yielded to these supplications, and saw with a favourable eye the repentance of the culprit. Peter Get recovered, in effect, his sight as suddenly as it had been taken from him. His happiness and that of his companions had no equal but their gratitude. Returned to Besse, they hasten to publish this double prodigy; they make declaration of it before the magistrates and the principal citizens, and a juridical act is drawn up of it, the first that was made of the miracles of Our Lady of Vassivière.

At this news the veneration of the peoples increased for the holy Image: they wished to render her greater honours. The inhabitants of Besse assemble in council, and decide, with the members of the collegiate church, that they will go in procession to Vassivière twice each year, on 25 March, the day of the Annunciation, and on 2 July, feast of the Visitation. They did more. As this plateau was inaccessible a part of the year on account of the snows, and as the image of the Virgin then received no worship, they decided that she should be transferred to Besse, so that more easy homage might be addressed to her without interruption.

On the day fixed for the translation, the clergy, the magistrates, the officers and almost all the inhabitants go processionally to Vassivière. The statue is taken from the place where it was, and carried, with triumphal gladness, into the church of Saint Andrew, where it was placed above the high altar. Now, the next day, says the legend confirmed by public voice, the statue had disappeared: it was learned that it had regained its beloved mountain. Twice they bring it back with the same ceremonies, twice it returns to its first abode. The desolate inhabitants employ prayer to retain it and engage to have said in perpetuity a Mass at the high altar every Wednesday of the year. Their vow pleased the Blessed Virgin, and her image remained among them. They invoked her with confidence. Whether a fire broke out in the town, or drought desolated the fields, near her they came to conjure all these scourges.

Meanwhile Mary testified by several signs that she wished to be honoured at Vassivière. The project was formed of building a chapel there. In spite of the difficulties of the enterprise, the inhabitants of Besse consented to every sacrifice, and their zeal smoothed all obstacles. They chose for the site of the church the place where the cross rose on the ruins of the ancient chapel. Everyone put his hand to the work: some dug the foundations, others tore blocks of lava from the flank of the mountains. As pilgrims flocked in great numbers, a provisional chapel was made of wood, beneath which a little oratory was built (1530). A spring gushed forth there whose fresh and limpid waters, though not abundant, never fail. The pilgrims wash their eyes and hands in it; many carry some away as a souvenir of their journey.

The chapel was scarcely out of its foundations when there took place, in 1551, a miracle which gave more celebrity to this pilgrimage. A possessed man having been brought to the oratory was delivered from the evil spirit, in the presence of a great number of persons, by the intercession of the Mother of God. The neighbouring populations, learning this prodigy, conceived toward Mary new sentiments of piety. From then her pilgrimage flourished: towns and boroughs came in procession: groups of pilgrims climbed the mountain on their knees or barefoot; confidence was in all hearts and drew the peoples of several provinces. New miracles favoured this impulse.

Meanwhile the works of the chapel advanced. The alms of the pilgrims, and above all the liberalities of the inhabitants of Besse, bore all the costs. As resources abounded, the choir of the church of Saint Andrew was rebuilt at the same time, and there was built, behind the high altar, the little chapel which exists in our days, and where the miraculous statue has since resided in the winter months.

According to the inscription seen above the entrance door, the chapel of Vassivière was finished in the month of June 1333. The altars were adorned, the walls covered themselves with the tokens of gratitude, and a reliquary, which was the first jewel of it, offered to veneration, under the name of Our Lady, hairs of the

blessed Virgin, and bones of several martyrs. On 2 July the holy Image was transferred to its new sanctuary.

The families of Besse were the first to invoke Mary on her dear mountain. The neighbouring parishes shared this happiness, and lavished on her, in rivalry, the names of Queen, Protectress and Patroness. From this plateau, conquered for public piety, she extended her sovereignty over the surrounding countries. Among the fiefs which, for three centuries, have paid her homage with a dependence that revolutions have not shaken, must be named Église-Neuve, formerly chief town of the barony of Entraigues, Valbeleix, an ancient seigneury, Murol, with its majestic ruins, Le Chambon, seated on the banks of its beautiful lake, Saint-Diéry, with its steep slopes, Saint-Victor, Espinchal, Compains, Collamine, Saint-Anastaise and a crowd of hamlets which, scattered in the midst of these gorges, merge in that unity of love which binds them to her worship.

The chapel is built of cut lava: it is sixteen metres long by eight wide. It is a Romanesque edifice, without other particular character. The pillars are surmounted by capitals which recall the style of the eleventh century, and the ribs of the vault have at their junction escutcheons, one of which bears the arms of the house of La Tour. At the beginning of the choir, on each side of the nave, there is a little chapel: in that on the left the miraculous statue was placed.

To the origins of Our Lady of Vassivière are attached two other customs which have always existed. The first was to engage oneself to be made king or queen of her devotion, and to give a certain quantity of wax to the chapel. This pious royalty conferred the privilege of walking, a candle in hand, behind the statue, at the procession of 2 July. The second custom consists in this, that the surrounding parishes come processionally to Vassivière during the sojourn of the august Image.

Among the pilgrimages of France, that of Our Lady of Vassivière was one of the most fertile in prodigies. To give more celebrity to the holy chapel, the inhabitants of Besse thought of having it consecrated and notified their intentions to Mgr Antoine de Saint-Nectaire, then bishop of Clermont. He hastened to answer them. On 2 July 1571 he came to Vassivière, and consecrated the chapel in the midst of an immense concourse of pilgrims. In 1633, the vault of the chapel threatening ruin in consequence of the rigour of the winters and the violence of the storms which had gravely damaged it, repairs became indispensable. It was decided that the necessary works should be done and that moreover the two chapels which still subsist in our days should be built. The generosity of the faithful facilitated the execution of this project. The works were finished in 1634, and the chapel was restored to the state in which it is seen today. It was at once enriched with numerous presents due to the piety of the faithful. Mgr Joachim d’Estaing, bishop of Clermont, not having forgotten what graces he had gathered from the pilgrimage he had made to the holy chapel in 1631, to obtain from the Blessed Virgin that his flock should be delivered from the contagious diseases which were decimating it, came with a numerous suite, on 17 November 1634, to render public homage to the Protectress of Auvergne.

In 1639 Pope Urban VIII granted to the pilgrimage of Vassivière abundant indulgences, which drew there as many as fifteen thousand pilgrims at the feasts of Pentecost, which that year were celebrated with the greatest pomp. The bishop of Clermont, who did not lose sight of this pilgrimage, which was one of the religious glories of his diocese, delegated, on two different occasions, in 1641 and in 1648, commissaries to collect, in official documents, the favours granted at these various times.

The populations surrounded with a growing veneration this sanctuary illustrated by multiplied prodigies. The year 1661 was one of the most fertile in blessings. Each month, so to speak, was signalized by new marvels. Thus in the mountains which neighbour Vassivière there was not a hamlet which had not the memory of some miracle wrought by the intercession of Mary. This was the historical groundwork of these peaceful populations: such memories maintained there, in all its fervour, the worship of Our Lady of Vassivière. Her benefits did not remain the sole patrimony of these regions, so happy in such a neighbourhood. Renown spread them over other lands, and won her hearts touched by these naive and glorious recitals. Thus gratitude multiplied the gifts destined to celebrate her patronage. Crosses, reliquaries, hearts of silver, necklaces,

chains of precious pearls, a thousand objects offered by faithful hands came successively to enrich her sanctuary.

Richer treasures adorned this notable chapel: we mean the relics which were the object of public veneration. Besides the reliquaries which had been placed there in 1533 and in 1371, there were those of Saint John the Baptist, of Saint Lucy, of Saint Blaise and of the holy Apostles. In the reliquary of Saint John the Baptist were seen relics of that Saint, of Saint John the Evangelist, of the saints Julian, Valentine, Valens, Hilarion, Leo and Athanasius.[2]

In the reliquary of Saint Lucy[3] there was a bone of that Saint, relics of Saint Romanus, of Saint Roch, of the saints Martha, Mary Magdalene, Barbara, Agnes, Ursula, and a part of the veil of Saint Catherine.

The reliquary of Saint Blaise contained relics of that Saint, and of the saints Laurence, Sebastian, Protasius, Anthony the Hermit, Anthony of Padua, Eligius, Felix, Valentine, Justus, Vincent, and of several other saints, martyrs and confessors. That of the Apostles enclosed relics of Saint Andrew, of Saint James, of Saint Paul, and of Saint Timothy, his disciple. It is seen that the chapel of Vassivière sheltered the worship and memory of a great number of Saints. But no name was pronounced there with more love than the name of Mary: there was none that the multitudes made heard with more enthusiasm to the echoes which the concerts of public piety awakened in the solitude.

This pilgrimage shone then with the purest brilliance. The concourse of the peoples, the abundance of the graces received there, the multiplicity of the vows paid there, made of it a corner of earth which one dared not tread without experiencing the sentiments of a profound veneration.

People loved to visit this chapel illustrated by a thousand prodigies, where innumerable conversions had been wrought, and where so many strayed souls had found again the road to heaven. Art had not there, doubtless, displayed its marvellous resources: it still preserved the character of simplicity which it had at its origin. Only the pilgrims had in each age enriched it with presents and *ex-voto* offerings, and it possessed numerous riches destined to heighten the honour of worship and the pomp of solemnities. Public piety had until then protected so many sacred objects against cupidity. But in the year 1669, in the night of the 4th to the 5th of September, a sacrilegious theft despoiled the chapel of Vassivière of a part of its riches. Malefactors entered it and carried off, with many other precious objects, a chalice, two ciboria, six silver lamps, crowns, silver candlesticks and several reliquaries of the same metal.

The consternation was great at Besse and in the neighbourhood when this misfortune was learned. People went in crowds to Vassivière, in order to address to Mary an amende honorable for the outrage done to her sanctuary. On its side justice made active pursuit. After two days of search, one of the thieves was arrested at the village of La Védrine, in the Cantal. About a third of the silverware was found: it was melted or broken. A crime so odious was not left unpunished: the culprit was hanged and burned at Saint-Flour. The poverty to which the chapel of Vassivière found itself suddenly reduced provoked the generosity of the faithful: people took to heart to make a solemn reparation for the sacrilege by which it had been profaned. The duchess of Noailles, Anne-Louise Boyer, gave the first example, and made a present of a great silver ciborium, which was borne to Vassivière by M. Garnier, official of the diocese. Soon after, on 16 September, a burgher of Clermont gave a lamp of silvered copper.

Gilbert de Veny d'Arbouze, who had succeeded, in 1664, Louis d'Estaing, learned with grief of the sacrilege which had been committed. On 29 October he wrote to the curés of the sixteen parishes nearest to Vassivière, and invited them to go there, some on the Sunday, others on the Monday, which were to follow the feast of All Saints, to take part in the expiatory ceremonies for the outrage done to the most holy Sacrament. The concourse was general; each wished to expiate by his regrets and tears the profanation of which Our Lady of Vassivière had been the object.

In the course of the following year there were made again, with the silverware that had been recovered, two great lamps, a censer and a reliquary, in the effigy of the Virgin, like the one that had been stolen. But the chapel was not at once restored to its ancient brilliance.

With the alms that were collected the vault of the chapel, which threatened ruin, was rebuilt, and its treasure was put back nearly in the state in which it was before the theft of 1669. During the years which followed, particular gifts were made.

Thus the pilgrimage of Vassivière repaired its disasters at the same time that it pursued the course of its benefits. The end of the seventeenth century was marked by several prodigies.

In the course of the eighteenth century the concourse of pilgrims continued. The priests of the collegiate church of Besse, to correspond to the zeal of the peoples, ceased not to go every year, from the first days of May until those of November, to pass each fifteen days on the mountain of Vassivière. Devoted to the salvation of souls and to the prosperity of a pilgrimage which was the honour and joy of their ministry, they wrought there every year admirable conversions and propagated by this means the reign and glory of Our Lady of Vassivière.

Touched by the good that was done in these places illustrated by so many miracles, Bochart de Saron, bishop of Clermont, implored for the chapel apostolic favours. Clement XI, who occupied the Holy See in the midst of the storms raised in France by Jansenism, granted, by a brief of 21 August 1713, a plenary indulgence for seven years to whoever should visit, fulfilling the required conditions, the holy chapel, from the first Vespers of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin until sunset of the day of the feast.

The pilgrimage of Vassivière had enjoyed these apostolic graces for three years when there came to it, from the same Pontiff, another favour. The priests of the collegiate church of Besse, who watched over its sanctuary with a zeal whose ardour time did not slacken, thought of erecting there a confraternity of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin. To give more importance to this pious institution, they had it asked of the sovereign Pontiff that he should deign to grant a plenary indulgence. Clement XI yielded to a desire so legitimate, and promulgated, on 3 January 1716, a brief by which he conceded the indulgence that had been solicited. It is one of the most precious documents concerning Our Lady of Vassivière.

When they had received the brief of Clement XI, the priests of the collegiate church and the officers of the town of Besse wrote to the diocesan authority to ask its publication. The see of Clermont was vacant. Bochart de Saron had died on 11 August 1715, and Massillon, his illustrious successor, was to be consecrated only on 31 December 1718. The petition was addressed to the vicars general. On 12 May, Chamtlour, vicar general, gave permission to publish the brief of Clement XI. He designated and approved as principal feast of the Confraternity the day of the Visitation, and for the other four days of the year mentioned in the brief he designated Whit Monday, the feast of Saint Louis, the Nativity of the blessed Virgin, and the Sunday which follows the feast of Saint Matthew.

A few days after, the Confraternity of the Visitation was regularly established. Every year pilgrims asked to enter it. Priests and faithful, families and individuals, lords and villagers inscribed their names in it. All wished to have part in the union of prayers and merits which rallied so many hearts in one same worship and one same love.

Pilgrims thronged ceaselessly around the chapel, and on feast days they covered with their pious multitudes the mountain whence the most abundant graces were shed on them without interruption. The bishops of Clermont included this sanctuary among the objects of their liveliest solicitude. Massillon visited it on 17 June 1727; Le Maistre de la Garlaye came to pay the tribute of a religious homage; François de Bonal wished to pray at the foot of its altars. The priests and magistrates of Besse, in concert with the people and the neighbouring populations, maintained this pilgrimage there in all its brilliance. The people, indifferent to the

sarcasms of the impious and the railleries of false sages, inundated with its waves the forecourt of the sanctuary, and made the echoes of the holy mountain resound with its canticles. The chapel of Vassivière remained the habitual rendezvous of piety and hope, in the midst of the peaceful mountains of the west; numerous *ex-voto* offerings, pledges of a generous gratitude, adorned its altars and its walls, and the miraculous Image, object for three centuries of public veneration, received there the most fervent homage.

But at the moment when the inhabitants of these mountains could believe that no human force would stop the impulse of their faith, and destroy the empire which their dear and venerated pilgrimage had conquered over their souls, a terrible revolution broke out in France. Blind in its fury, it confounded in its hatred heaven and earth, the sacred and the profane. It proscribed the worship of the ancestors, banished from the fatherland the faith which had held its cradle, overthrew the temples where the chants of our fathers had resounded, and demolished the sanctuaries where the people came in peace to seek in prayer a remedy for their sorrows.

The breath of impiety, stronger than that of tempests, circulated everywhere with unheard-of violence. The pilgrimage of Vassivière was delivered up to the profanations which, during the course of the French revolution, defiled the sanctuaries of Catholic worship. Altars, chalices, sacred ornaments, relics, *ex-voto* offerings, all disappeared in pillage or flames. The statue which had been venerated from time immemorial was broken in pieces and burned: some fragments were nevertheless saved, which have remained the object of a particular worship. The other statue, which was revered at the oratory, was preserved from the attacks of vandalism by an inhabitant of Besse, who kept it in his house, and left it at his death to his family, who still render it pious honours. The chapel, after having been devastated, was sold as national property, and given up, for several years, to vile uses. One cannot tell the consternation that reigned at Besse and among the neighbouring populations when such an attempt was learned. The faithful groaned in secret at being no longer able to have recourse to Our Lady of Vassivière, at a time when her intercession would have been so necessary to avert the ills which desolated France and Auvergne. But God had fixed a term to these insolent triumphs. Already in 1796 some pilgrims were taking again the road to Vassivière; soon the Concordat proclaimed the exercise of the Catholic worship free; the temples opened; pilgrimages were restored to public piety.

The town of Besse had not forgotten what graces Our Lady of Vassivière had shed upon it. Its inhabitants longed to regain her mountain, and to celebrate again her venerated feasts there. Although the chapel was still a private property, the pilgrimage flourished anew, thanks to the piety of the faithful, and through the care of M. Seronde, curé of Besse, who displayed a rare energy for the restoration of the worship of Our Lady of Vassivière. He re-established her processions and feasts, and restored to its former brilliance the Confraternity of the Visitation, into which numerous associates were seen to enter from the year 1805.

A new statue, in which were put fragments of the ancient one, received the homage which, as in past ages, was to ascend to Mary: it represents the Blessed Virgin holding the Child Jesus on her knees. The church of Besse, restored with decency, became its first abode. It could soon be replaced, in summer, in the chapel of Vassivière, bought back by Miss Marie Admirât, who gave it to the fabric of Besse.

When Our Lady of Vassivière had been restored to herself, fair days returned for her pilgrimage. The generosity of the faithful provided without delay for the upkeep and adornment of the chapel. While at Besse the choir of the church was being repaired (1816), at Vassivière the overthrown altars were raised, and the walls of the sanctuary were given back the decency and brilliance with which they formerly shone. What touched hearts above all, and what revived the glory of this pilgrimage, was the continuity of the favours which Mary distributed from the height of the holy mountain. Every year the pilgrims brought back from their journey graces which they kept with care.

The feast of the Visitation was, as in past centuries, the privileged feast of Vassivière. But the most imposing solemnity took place on the Sunday which follows 2 July. On that day the neighbouring parishes go

processionally to the chapel, and assist, at the foot of the same altars, at the celebration of the divine offices. In 1841, on 4 July, the presence of Mgr Féron gave to these feasts an unaccustomed brilliance. Fifteen to twenty thousand pilgrims, come from all parts of Auvergne and other dioceses, covered the plateau of Vassivière.

The following year the feast of 2 July was famous for the cure of a paralytic, the memory of which has remained in many minds. In 1831, a new prodigy, occurring on the day of the feast, increased the celebrity of this pilgrimage. The same year, on the Sunday of the feast of the Visitation, as many as twenty thousand pilgrims were counted, who had come from every corner of Auvergne and the Limousin, to take part in the blessings which Mary shed on that day, and to assist at the solemnities of Vassivière, to which the presence of the bishops of Clermont and of Saint-Flour gave a new lustre. The Blessed Virgin multiplied her favours there toward all ages. Childhood and youth in particular received pledges of her maternal goodness.

While these particular graces, granted by Mary, raised her pilgrimage to its ancient brilliance, the curés of Besse displayed great activity to restore or embellish her sanctuary. The high altar was decorated in the state in which it is seen, and on 9 July 1834, after having received authorization from Pope Pius IX, a Way of the Cross was erected, in the presence of a considerable crowd which this ceremony had attracted. These crosses are set on a stone pedestal, on which are engraved, on tablets of white marble, the names of the persons and parishes who gave them. The pilgrims are in the custom, in climbing the plateau, of making the Way of the Cross, an exercise which the Church has enriched with so many indulgences. In 1836 the fabric of Besse made the purchase of the mountain which surrounds the chapel.

In 1839, Pius IX enriched the chapel with a plenary indulgence which could be gained, on the seven principal feasts of Mary, and during their octaves, by persons who, having confessed and communicated, should pray, at the foot of her altars, for the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff. He granted besides three hundred days of indulgence to all who should visit the chapel of Vassivière and pray there for the same intentions.

The course of the graces granted by Mary never slackens. From the different parts of France, and often even from foreign countries, testimonies of gratitude are sent to her. Sometimes it is a soldier who, from the depths of Africa, sends her his homage: sometimes it is a pilot, lost on the waves, who addresses his vows to her. Today a mother commends her son to her; tomorrow a sister will send an offering for having obtained the recovery of her brother. There is no season in which there do not rise toward the holy mountain the prayers of a multitude of souls who have for Our Lady of Vassivière a worship which her benefits justify and spread. Today her pilgrimage has preserved its importance. The chapel has put on a modest elegance which rejoices the pilgrim. The principal altar, above which the image of the Blessed Virgin is seen, is adorned with a retable. The statue is surrounded by a garland at the top of which two angels hold a diadem suspended over her head. The two chapels have each an altar; one, on the right, is dedicated to the Sacred Heart; the other, on the left, to Saint Joseph. Numerous hearts, pledges of a filial love and enclosing names destined to immortalize gratitude, adorn the altar of the sanctuary. The walls are also enriched with *ex-voto* offerings, pictures and medallions which contain the account of extraordinary favours. There is remarked on the right a picture given by the monastery of the Ursulines of Clermont, which represents a flower-bed in which the most varied flowers grow. Around the chapel nature displays, as formerly, her rugged beauties, and the secular mountains still raise their peaks, which serve as eternal ramparts to this amiable solitude. In these latter years there has been raised, in the middle of the mountain, toward the south, a stone altar, so that on the great solemnities of Vassivière Mass could be celebrated there in the presence of the pilgrims, whom the chapel could not contain in their multitude. The church of Besse, where the statue of Our Lady of Vassivière resides nine months of the year, has been restored and embellished. A recent spire has dominated, for some years, the landscape around. The interior of the edifice has been in part clothed with polychromatic decorations which harmonize with the grave style of its architecture. The chapel where the miraculous Image is venerated has been ornamented. The altar is Romanesque and adorned with three bas-reliefs which

represent the Annunciation, the Birth of the Saviour and the Adoration of the Magi. The walls are decorated with paintings in which figure, in various medallions, the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, her Nativity, her Purification and her Visitation. This chapel is, at all times, the object of a special worship: the Blessed Sacrament reposes in it, Mass is celebrated in it every day, and every day the faithful of Besse or foreign pilgrims come to invoke Mary.

The feasts of Vassivière have a particular character. When the plateau has stripped itself of its mantle of snow, and the flowers begin to open under the warm breezes of summer, they prepare to transport the miraculous Image of the Virgin to her beloved mountain. The 2nd of July is the day of the translation, or, in the language of the country, the day of the Ascent [la Montée]. It is generally consecrated to rest and prayer. During the nine days which precede, a novena is made, whose exercises are followed with a lively piety. When the day arrives, all assemble: at seven o'clock the signal of departure is given. The ranks of the procession form: at half past seven they are on the march. They stop an instant on an esplanade, whence a blessing with the holy Image is given to the town as a sign of farewell. Then the procession resumes its course. Its long lines unroll in the finest order, following the graceful windings of the road which circles in the flanks of the mountain. Recollection and piety reign in all the ranks: mouths open only to the sacred chants which go, from echo to echo, to awaken in these mountains the name and memory of the most tender of Mothers. Sometimes it is the Magnificat which repeats, after nineteen centuries, the glories which she whose image is borne in triumph had foretold for her future greatness; sometimes it is the litanies of the Virgin, each invocation of which ends in an immense *Ora pro nobis* that the hills send up to heaven. At other times they are canticles consecrated to Mary, whose touching harmonies or joyous accents make one forget the length of the way. Meanwhile the procession, as it advances, opens its ranks to crowds of pilgrims who have come to await it at various points of the road. Thus swelled, it arrives at the foot of the holy mountain. There the chants in honour of Mary cease. Then the Way of the Cross is made. Arrived on the mountain, they stop before the oratory where the fountain is; the *Te Deum* is sung, and the prostrate crowd is solemnly blessed with the holy Image. The statue is carried into the great chapel and placed above the high altar. At eleven o'clock Mass is celebrated, ending with the benediction of the most holy Sacrament. On leaving the office they group by families, or by acquaintances, and, seated on the turf around the sanctuary of Mary, take a frugal meal, a sweet image of the Christian agapes which, after the holy Mysteries, gathered around a common table the faithful of the primitive Church united by the bonds of the tenderest charity. At three o'clock a particular ceremony takes place: the image of Mary is presented to the veneration of the pilgrims, and each of them kisses its feet with love. Toward evening the crowd flows away and returns processionally to Besse. All promise in the depth of their heart to return often to Vassivière, which henceforth the presence of the miraculous Image blesses.

During her three months' sojourn people come to visit her frequently from the neighbouring parishes, and especially from Besse. Many make there a novena of prayers, sometimes also a novena of communions. The pilgrims come not only from the neighbouring regions, they come from the cantons of Upper and Lower Auvergne, of the Marche, the Limousin and the Velay. Their concourse increases in a sensible manner on Sundays and feasts, and far more still at the four special feasts of Vassivière, which are the Sunday within the octave of 2 July, the Sunday after 25 August, or the feast of Saint Louis, 8 September, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and lastly the Sunday which follows 21 September. During this time the clergy of Besse divide themselves, as before the Revolution, between the town and the holy mountain. From the Sunday which precedes the arrival of the miraculous statue until that which follows her departure inclusively, Mass is said there every day at nine o'clock, and on Sundays at eleven o'clock. The ministry of the priests of Besse is not limited to that: they also hear the confessions of the pilgrims who would not think they had sanctified their journey if they did not confess and communicate in the church of Our Lady of Vassivière. The four feasts we have just enumerated attract a great number of pilgrims: the first and the last are the most remarkable. The Sunday within the octave of 2 July is called the Sunday of the processions.

Several neighbouring parishes in effect go there processionally. From the eve many pilgrims arrive at Vassivière: they receive with fervour the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament given in the evening, invade the tribunals of penance where the mysteries of their reconciliation with God are wrought, and pass the night at the foot of the altars of Mary. The next day one enjoys the most varied and edifying spectacles. The sun has scarcely gilded the mountains when the pilgrims, coming from all sides, from the Puy-de-Dôme, the Cantal, the Corrèze and other departments, animate with their groups the paths and roads.

Soon a new spectacle offers itself. In the distance, lines of pilgrims unroll in two ranks, under the banners of their parishes. These are the processions arriving. The young girls, clothed in white, advance under banners of the colours and the effigy of the Blessed Virgin. Men of every age come next, and mingle their grave voices with the sweet harmonies of a pious youth. The crowd, which already covers the plateau, presses forward to meet the processions, and welcomes them with a religious gladness. They have climbed the plateau; they stop successively before the oratory of the fountain, where they sing an antiphon in praise of Mary, and enter her chapel, where their chants expire in the midst of the prayers which each addresses to the Queen of the place.

At eleven o'clock the bell summons the faithful to the celebration of the holy Mysteries. An innumerable crowd presses around the altar set up in the open air. The clergy go there preceded by the crosses, standards and banners of each parish, in the midst of chants where the strophes of the *Veni Creator* are wedded with those of the canticles. The celebrant arrives at the foot of the altar, adorned with branches and foliage and surmounted by a dome of verdure. The Mass ended, the celebrant, preceded by the clergy, returns to the chapel. The people spread over the mountain and consecrate the following hours to prayer or to a pious gladness. The sanctuary of Mary is filled until evening with pilgrims who come to offer her their thanks and their vows. The processions regain their parishes successively; the pilgrims flow away, but not without casting a last look at the holy chapel, and without promising to visit it again.

Three months pass after the celebration of these feasts. For three months people come to Vassivière, from all points of Auvergne, to venerate the miraculous statue. Then, when autumn has succeeded the splendours of summer, when the end of September arrives, Our Lady of Vassivière leaves her mountain, to go again to Besse and fix her abode there. It is on the first Sunday after the feast of Saint Matthew that the ceremony takes place, vulgarly called the Descent [la Descente].

From the first gleams of day the faithful arrive and fill the chapel. Each assists at the Masses which are celebrated there, with a sentiment of fervour which is increased by the thought that, for the last time in the year, they come to venerate the statue of Mary in her sanctuary. While on the mountain the last vows are addressed to her, at Besse they prepare to receive her, making with a religious enthusiasm the preparations for a triumphal entry. The statue, borne on a rich litter, advances behind the clergy, to the chant of the Litanies of the Virgin and of the hymn *Salve, Regina*. The cortege unrolls among the scenes of this Alpine nature to which the pale fires of autumn give a more melancholy tint.

The chants reach as far as the first gates of the town, and announce the re-entry within its walls of Our Lady of Vassivière. Night has spread its veil: but illuminations soon restore to the town the brightness of day. Already the procession has arrived at the Notre-Dame gate: the statue is placed on an altar, and covered with a mantle of cloth of gold. Candles and torches shine around her with a vivid brilliance. They enter the town to the chant of the *Salve, Regina*. Suddenly volleys of musketry salute the arrival of the miraculous Virgin. A thousand transports burst forth on every side. Everywhere the Image passes, the houses are illuminated; garlands of flowers entwine from one window to the other: branches strew the ground and strip themselves, in honour of Mary, of their last foliage.

The statue is carried into the church, already invaded by the multitude, and the last chants are intoned which salute her return. She is laid in her chapel; the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament ends these joyous feasts,

consecrated to prayer and gratitude.

Extract from the *Life of the Saints and Holy Women of Auvergne*, by Branche, and from the *History of Our Lady of Vassivière*, by M. Taboé Chaix.

Our Lady of Verdelais, in the Diocese of Bordeaux

Our Lady of Verdelais, that is to say of the Bordelais, who have always venerated her; or better, according to others, of the Green forest, on account of that which covered the country, existed at the beginning of the twelfth century. The illustrious family of Peter of Bordeaux gave her birth on the confines of its vast possessions of Benauge. The religious of Grandmont were called to guard her cradle. This is already a proof that a single priest would not have sufficed for the throng of visitors. But the young foundation was not slow to see arise the storms which were to manifest its providential destinies. After each ruin God reserved a resurrection for it.

In 1203, it was reduced to the last extremity by the war of the king of England against the Gascon lords; and under the blow of hostilities ever renascent, in spite of the efforts of Assalhide of Bordeaux to raise it up, toward the end of the fourteenth century, the monastery was destroyed, the church given to the flames, the religious forced to flee, after having hidden in the earth, and under a stone which could enable it to be found again, the statue of the Blessed Virgin. Twelve years after, she came forth triumphant from her retreat. Isabella, countess of Foix, married for several years to Archambault de Grailly, had no children. In her sadness she had recourse to the Blessed Virgin, engaging herself by vow to build her a church, and to consecrate one of her children to the service of the altars, if heaven gave her four. Instead of four she had five, and the fourth became the celebrated cardinal Peter of Foix. One day, in 1390, she was crossing the woods of Verdelais, near the ruins of Our Lady of Le Luc, to go from her seigneury of Langon to the castle of Civrac in Benauge, and was thinking of the means of accomplishing her vow, when suddenly, say the ancient chronicles, “her mule stops, without being able either to advance or to go back, and sinks one of its feet, to the depth of four or five inches, into a very hard stone, where it imprints the figure of its foot.” The stone is lifted; and what is not the surprise of the countess and her suite at discovering a statue of the Blessed Virgin! It was Our Lady of Verdelais. The will of God is understood; the chapel is raised again, the Grandmontines are recalled, the statue resumes its place, and the memory of these facts is consecrated by two pictures: one in which the countess is seen offering her son, the future cardinal, to the Blessed Virgin; the other represents the discovery of the statue.

This new era of peace and piety was prolonged until 1582. On 28 June the Calvinist bands, driven from Saint-Macaire, rushed upon Verdelais. All was pillaged and burned there, convent, church, library, ornaments, and the Blessed Virgin herself thrown into the flames like all the rest. But, O prodigy! some days after, when the Calvinist army, beaten by Montluc, had withdrawn, and the reassured inhabitants came to visit the still smoking ruins of their church, they found, in the midst of the rubble, their Virgin, perfectly intact. At this sight, full of respect and joy, says the most ancient historian of Verdelais, “they carried her away and hid her in the trunk of an old tree, at the bottom of a hollow, not far from the chapel, that she might not be exposed afterwards to like outrages; but, not having taken the precaution of leaving a memorandum or any mark which could ascertain and bring to light the precious deposit, the persons who were in the secret exposed themselves to lose for ever this revered statue.”

God provided for it. About the year 1605 a man who led his flock every day to graze in that place remarked the singular insistence of one of his oxen in descending into the hollow, and bowing, lowing, as if it were prostrating itself before a human figure. This man descends following the animal. He discovers a statue: it is the Virgin of Verdelais! He takes it with respect, he presents it to the old men, who recognize it, though blackened by the flames; it is borne in triumph to the remnant of the chapel whose solidity had resisted the fire, and near which dwelt alone, to celebrate Mass there and receive the pilgrims, Father Antoine Dugarsies,

a remnant of the order of Grandmont.

Such was the state of ever-growing dilapidation, in the midst of brambles and thickets, in which Cardinal de Sourdis found, in 1609, the ancient sanctuary. To clean, pave, enclose and adorn it, to establish there religious who should serve night and day God and the Blessed Virgin; to construct the vault, the choir, the side chapels and the galleries which run around the sanctuary, were the solicitude of the pious prelate; he began, and Mgr de Béthune finished. The duke of Épernon, the duke of Foix, several illustrious families associated themselves in the good work by their largesses; the Blessed Virgin willed, says Father Salé, "that it should be by the liberalities and voluntary oblations of her servants that her holy chapel should be adorned, her altars decked, a monastery built, and that all these things should be numbered among her miracles, so that posterity should see in the establishment of her house nothing but the effects of her power." To render them still more sensible, a man whose life and writings breathe a tender piety toward Mary put the last hand to this restoration. Father Proust, one of the Celestines of the house of Verdelais, where he died in veneration in the year 1722, added to the edifice a portal, a façade, a bell-tower, a vast plateau planted with trees, which prolonged it, under a vault of foliage, for five or six thousand persons. He laboured to render the approaches to Verdelais easier; and with his own hands he cleared, levelled and planted. On both sides of the great avenue he made, in the thickness of the woods, winding paths which ended in grottoes; each of these grottoes enclosed the representation, in sculpture, of various mysteries, the Annunciation, the birth of Jesus Christ, His crucifixion and His burial. Shade and silence, everything favoured prayer and meditation.

The revolution of '93, which loved to fall upon all that is sacred, decreed the stripping and pillage of Verdelais. Its treasure, its sacred vessels, the gifts and offerings of the faithful, all was carried off. The ornaments were burned, after the galloons had been torn from them, which yielded more than four hundred marks' weight of gold or silver. The goods of the monastery were sold at a vile price; the grottoes built with so much care by Father Proust were ransacked. One thing remained: the miraculous statue. Indignant at seeing it still standing, the head of the local administration, followed by the municipal council, goes to the spot and orders the sacristan John Michel to throw it down. The young man, insensible to promises as to threats, answers the republican agent: "I should fear that God would crush me at that very moment! and besides, I prefer to obey God rather than men." A mason, an old soldier, named Stephen Gassies, resists no less boldly the same injunctions: "Do it yourself," he says, "citizen mayor, and climb up, if you dare: as for me, never!"

At these words, which redoubled his rage, the Jacobin himself applies the ladder and springs up; but scarcely has he cleared a few rungs when he is seized with dizziness, his knees give way; he falls, and without the help of the bystanders he would have been broken in his fall. The pious sacristan John Michel then hid the venerated image under a coarse tapestry; and, as long as the prohibition to enter the church lasted, which had been ordered closed, he introduced into it by night the pilgrims who still came to visit it.

It was reserved to Cardinal Donnet to raise this holy house again, and to give it worthy guardians. The Marist Fathers were installed there in 1838, and became there the signal of a new life. An association of ladies, with the aid of a vast subscription by three annuities of two francs, spread especially in the dioceses of Bordeaux and Agen, built the vault and the galleries of the nave, restored the sanctuary and the side chapels, rebuilt the church and the convent anew, opened a house of school and retreat to the sisters of the Presentation, and had made the graceful campanile which crowns this whole ensemble.

There remained still to revive the stations created by Father Proust; as Mount Gussol offered the most happy dispositions for the establishment of a Way of the Cross and a calvary, the lands were acquired; the abrupt slopes of the mountain softened; its summit surmounted by three crosses; the little chapels built on a uniform plan; the last, that of the Holy Sepulchre, much larger, with an altar and an admirable relief scene of the burial of Our Lord.

A place so manifestly chosen by the Mother of God could not fail to exercise a sweet attraction on all hearts. At all epochs there have been seen to run there all that there is of great in the world, as all that there is of little and unfortunate; after the kings of England and the kings of France, the illustrious families of Grailly, of Candale, of Foix, of Épernon, of Saluces; the duchess of Angoulême, who came to call down the blessings of God on the French army in Spain, commanded by the prince her husband. Like Cardinal de Sourdis, Mgr d'Aviau, of such holy memory, carried there frequently to the feet of Mary his pastoral solicitudes, and once among others, at the head of the pupils of his little seminary, he obtained there from heaven, in spite of a thousand obstacles, the translation of that house from Cadillac to Bazas, where the imperious needs of the diocese assigned it its place. In 1852 the bishops of Beauvais, of Périgueux, of Agen; Mgr Dupuch, first bishop of Algiers, and more than twelve hundred priests celebrated Mass at the privileged altar of Our Lady. One cannot tell the number of solemn pilgrimages which the parishes, colleges, schools and various congregations make to Verdelais. Thus the church and its treasury have not ceased to be enriched with gifts, now simple, now magnificent, but always precious by the motive which inspires them. People have been able to pillage and destroy, but piety has been more persistent than sacrilege; and today still it enriches the venerated sanctuary with ornaments, sacred vessels and other objects offered by love to the most holy Virgin.

But of all these homages none equals in value the privileges granted to Our Lady of Verdelais by the sovereign Pontiffs. Lucius III, Urban VIII, Alexander VII, Gregory XVI, at various times have drawn abundantly in her favour on the treasury of indulgences. His Holiness Pius IX has revived there the confraternity of Our Lady Consoler, founded by Cardinal de Sourdis. He crowned her venerable statue; and the day of this coronation is indeed one of the most solemn of her history. It was 2 July; around an altar set up in the open air, under a rich pavilion, an immense crowd pressed, in which figured, with the authorities of the department, five hundred priests and eight prelates: the cardinal-archbishop of Bordeaux, the archbishop of Avignon, the bishops of Gap, of Nevers, of Périgueux, of Agen, of Angoulême and of Saint-Flour. After the pontifical Mass and the reading of the apostolic brief, the statue crowned by the prelates made the tour of the surrounding square in procession, to the sound of instruments and songs of joy. The cardinal archbishop consecrated his diocese to the Blessed Virgin, and in the evening brilliant illuminations seemed to prolong the splendour of a day too soon ended.

While men thus honoured Our Lady of Verdelais by their prayers, Mary answered there by miracles. People prayed, honoured Mary, were heard; they prayed to her, loved her still more, she let fall still more graces; it was a continual prayer between incessant miracles.

It is not only at remote epochs, it is also in our time that prodigies are wrought at Verdelais. This glory is no less wanting to her today than formerly.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of Étang, in the Diocese of Dijon

In the year 1435 a shepherd of Velars, who habitually led his flock on the mountain of Étang, perceived that one of his oxen went each time to the steep ridge, on the side of Dijon, and there knelt to graze a tuft of ever-green grass which, from the next day, grew taller and fairer. He told other shepherds of it and resolved with them to probe the earth at that spot: it was the second day of July, feast of the Visitation. In digging they discovered, at three or four feet of depth, a little stone statue which represented the Blessed Virgin seated and holding on her knees the child Jesus; they revered it devoutly and brought it, singing canticles, to the village of Velars, to the house of the master butcher to whom the ox belonged.

The Blessed Virgin accepted the homage rendered to her in that house; she delivered there a possessed man, healed several sick persons and enlightened a child of twelve, born blind, in the village of Urc cy.

The news spread promptly; the abbot of Saint-Bénigne, Stephen de La Feuillette, hastened to claim the treasure found on his lands, and had it brought in great pomp into the abbey church, where all Dijon ran to see it; but, while the city rejoiced, the image disappeared from Saint-Bénigne and returned of itself to the mountain of Étang. At the sight of this new prodigy the pious abbot humbled himself for having thwarted the designs of heaven and had built, on the point of the mountain, at the spot where the miraculous statue had been discovered, a little chapel with a cell for a hermit charged to take care of it, and to satisfy the devotion of the faithful by letting them venerate the holy image. This chapel being of difficult access, the religious of Saint-Bénigne built another on the esplanade which widens at two-thirds of the mountain, before the path becomes too steep in entering the rocks, and on 25 March 1526 they transported the miraculous statue there, in the presence of an innumerable people run up from the surrounding villages. Three years after, this chapel was consecrated, under the title of the Assumption, by Philibert de Beaujeu, bishop of Bethlehem, the see of Langres being vacant. Our Lady, honoured in this new sanctuary with an admirable eagerness, lavished her richest favours there. The worship of Mary took a marvellous increase throughout the province. To render it still more glorious to the most holy Virgin and more salutary to the pilgrims, the abbot of Saint-Bénigne entrusted Our Lady of Étang to the zeal of the Minim religious, in 1633. His hope was not deceived: from 1638 it was necessary to enlarge the chapel, the inn and the monastery. The authorities of Dijon applauded this project, “as important to the service of God and the public”; the religious were permitted to collect in the town, and the Estates of Burgundy voted three hundred livres to help the expenses. Louis XIII took the establishment under his safeguard in 1640, and Pope Urban VIII approved it in eulogistic terms. The religious, with the aid of their collections, raised their convent and chapel; but unfortunately, by reason of the modesty of their resources, they built so little solidly that in 1685 it was necessary to rebuild the entire nave of the chapel. Peter Mathon, formerly falconer to the king, came to their help, and they were able to raise again the four altars which formerly decorated it. Soon after, an inhabitant of Dijon restored at his own expense the primitive chapel on the summit of the mountain, which was falling from decay. All these restorations made the worship of Mary flourish at Our Lady of Étang in an admirable manner; this holy place was much frequented, as much by the inhabitants as by the pilgrims who flocked there from all sides; a confraternity was established there, and it gathered in a very short time a multitude of members who every year visit the chapel and receive holy communion there, and, as devotion grows, the favours are more abundant: love, by increasing in the hearts of the children, draws the benefits of the mother of divine grace. Our Lady was the hope and refuge of our ancestors. When enemies threatened the duchy, when troubles agitated it, when the plague enveloped it or famine devoured it, they pressed at the foot of her miraculous statue, they carried it in procession to Dijon, to Saint-Seine…, and the enemies yielded, the troubles were appeased, the plague drew back and the rain fertilized the parched earth, the sun brought back life to it, the angel of wrath put his sword back in its scabbard, and the rainbow raised the cast-down courage. The faithful of Velars, Plombières and Fleurey, nearer to the mountain of Étang, regarded Our Lady as their patroness and singular protectress; “thus there are very few,” says Father Dejoux, “who are not very careful and very exact to come every year in procession to testify to her, by a respectful protestation, their love and fidelity. It was,” he adds, “a spectacle as pious as pleasing to see crossing the mountains, valleys, fields and countryside, and reaching from all sides this holy place the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, marching in fair order, under the banner and cross of their churches, followed by their curés, and making the air resound with chants in honour of Mary.” Those of Plombières obtained, in 1708, from the bishop of Langres, François de Clermont-Tonnerre, the ordinance to keep the feast of the Visitation as a Sunday, with permission to go on that day in procession to Our Lady of Étang.

It is known that Saint Chantal loved to make this pilgrimage, that she renewed her vows there several times and signed them with her blood on the altar. In 1604 she brought Saint Francis de Sales there. On his knees at the feet of Our Lady, the holy bishop poured out his soul, so tenderly devoted to the Mother of God, in a prayer which Father Dejoux has transcribed at length: “I salute you, most sweet Virgin Mary, queen of

solitudes… I conjure you, by the marvels which your goodness has deigned to work on this mountain which preserves your miraculous image, that, without regard to my sins, it may please you… to accept me for your son and servant…, to grant me all my just petitions, and all the petitions that Madame de Chantal makes to you…"

On 2 September 1604 Saint Chantal pronounced there, according to her own expressions, the "vow to the divine Majesty, in the presence of the glorious Virgin Mary, of perpetual chastity and obedience to the Lord of Geneva, whence it is true to say that the Order of the Visitation, which spreads in the Church so sweet a perfume, is like a plant whose first germ descends from the holy mountain of Étang."

In 1660 Louis XIV and Anne of Austria his mother went up there, then Maria Theresa and the Dauphin, accompanied by Bossuet, whom his mother had vowed twice to Our Lady of Étang. Louis de Bourbon, prince of Condé, came often to pray there and to hear holy Mass; he adorned the altar with his gifts and offered to the miraculous Virgin one of the flags which his valiant sword had conquered from the enemies of the State. A magnificent homage of the Christian hero to the Virgin, "terrible as an army set in array."

The Revolution sold and demolished the church and convent of the Minims, but the primitive chapel, restored several times, still keeps watch at the summit of the mountain where the statue was found, and the statue itself, claimed with equal ardour by the Christians of Plombières and of Velars, was granted to the latter and enriches their church.

The pilgrimage, interrupted during the evil days, continues on 2 July, like a chain whose rings a pious hand has drawn together; the confraternity receives new members, and the mountain hears the vows of the children of Mary, each year more eager.

Extract from the *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Dijon*, by the abbé Duplus. — Cf. *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice; *History of Our Lady of Étang*, by Father Dejoux.

Our Lady of Aix and of the Waters, at Aix-les-Bains, in the Diocese of Chambéry

After the Romans had conquered Allobrogia, and had come to found establishments near the waters which gave their name to Aix in Savoy, this city had a temple of Diana; but when it had been converted to Christianity, it was dedicated to the Queen of virgins. One would say that the august Mother of God, who helped the Apostles so powerfully to conquer paganism, showed herself particularly jealous to establish her worship on the ruins of the temples where the demon had succeeded in falsifying it.

Monuments are lacking to us to fix precisely the epoch when the church of Our Lady of Aix was built. This city must have had its Christian temple under the first kings of Burgundy and in the time of the pious Gontran, who, toward the middle of the sixth century, showed himself the protector of religion in these regions.

This church was served anciently by the regular canons of Saint Augustine, who were priests living in community, according to a rule, and after the example of the holy bishop of Hippo, who had established the common life among the ministers of the altars. They had several considerable houses in the ancient deanery of Savoy.

The lords of Aix always showed themselves very devoted to the church of Our Lady, and Claude de Seyssel, bishop of Turin, who played an important part at the beginning of the sixteenth century, had it erected into a notable collegiate church by Pope Leo X in 1515. The chapter of Aix was composed of a dean, an archdeacon, a precentor, a treasurer and nine canons. From the time of the first crusades the church of Our Lady of Aix was enriched with a considerable relic of the true cross, which a lord had brought it on returning from the holy war in which he had taken part. This precious relic was at first in great veneration, and the

miracles it wrought increased still further the concourse of the faithful. They came from all sides to prostrate themselves before it, and to recall, in its presence, the sufferings of the crucified God.

Time and revolutions had, alas! stripped the church of Aix of its titles and its ancient brilliance. The relics which made its wealth had disappeared, and the Virgin to whom it was dedicated received there only the worship which is rendered to her in all Catholic temples. This forgetfulness was the more regrettable in that the concourse of strangers who come every year to the waters of Aix, from all the countries of Europe, went ever increasing. It seems that Mary, Salvation of the infirm, ought nowhere to be more honoured than where all infirmities run, and that the holy solemnities of the most pure Virgin ought nowhere to be more numerous than in a meeting place where the world displays the pomp of its seductive feasts.

A pious Lyonnais, M. Jacques Orsel, of Lyons, and a holy Savoyard priest, M. the abbé Humbert Pillet, canon of the metropolitan church of Chambéry, who were at the waters of Aix in 1852, understood that there was something to be done, and they proposed to revive the worship of Mary in the church which had always been consecrated to her.

Their charitable hearts had besides been vividly touched at seeing the indigent who came to the waters, and whose misery made a painful contrast with the opulence of the privileged of fortune. They had therefore the happy thought of uniting the works of charity to those of piety, to honour the Mother of God under the title of Our Lady of the Waters.

The proposed end could not be more surely attained than by means of an association; it was created with the authorization of the Ordinary. “The patronal feast is fixed on 2 July, the day of the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin; the four other feasts of the Association are: Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 16 July; Our Lady of the Snows, 5 August; the Sunday in the octave of the Assumption, and the Nativity, 8 September.”During the whole thermal season a special Mass is celebrated every day in honour of Our Lady of the Waters, at the hour most convenient for the sick, in the chapel of the Work. This Mass is followed by the recitation of an *Ave Maria*, and of the double invocation: Mary, salvation of the infirm, pray for us! Mary, consoler of the afflicted, pray for us!

“Every Saturday evening the litanies of the Blessed Virgin and some canticles are sung in the same chapel; an instruction is given, and the benediction of the most holy Sacrament.

“The resources of the Work, to succour the indigent sick and for the upkeep of the chapel, consist in the voluntary offering made by the recipients on the day of their admission; in collections; in the proceeds of the box placed in the chapel of the Association; in particular gifts and legacies; in a deduction to be made on the stipend of the Masses asked at the altar of Our Lady of the Waters, which is fixed, for this purpose, at two francs.”[1]

From the year 1856 the marquis d’Aix had ceded his chapel for the Work of Our Lady, which was solemnly inaugurated on 27 July of that year.

An illustrious confessor of the faith, Mgr Marilley, bishop of Lausanne and Geneva, presided at the ceremony, and M. Duquesnay, canon of Notre-Dame of Paris, was the orator of this feast.

On 26 June 1857 the Association of Our Lady of the Waters received the highest approbation that can be given to a Catholic work. Pius IX blessed it and enriched it, by a special brief, with numerous indulgences. “Having received notice,” he says, “that there has been canonically established in the parish of Aix, diocese of Chambéry, a pious and charitable Association of the faithful of both sexes, in honour of the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, under the title of Our Lady of the Waters, and whose members propose to exercise the works of charity which shall be determined by a canonical regulation; desiring to see this Work take each day new increase; having placed our confidence in the mercy of Almighty God and in the authority of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, we grant for this purpose:

“1st, A plenary indulgence, on the first day of their admission, to all the faithful of both sexes who shall henceforth be enrolled ed in this Association;”2nd, A plenary indulgence, at the point of death, to all the associates present and future of the said confraternity; “3rd, A plenary indulgence to all the members of the said Association who shall devoutly visit the church, chapel or oratory of the Work, on the day of the annual patronal feast chosen by the associates and approved by the Ordinary;”4th, An indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to all the associates who, at least contrite, shall visit — praying according to the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff — the church, chapel or oratory of the Association on the four days of the year which shall have been chosen by the confreres and approved by the Ordinary.”

Pius IX, besides some other partial indulgences, grants the favours of the privileged altar for the chapel of Our Lady of the Waters, and all the indulgences are applicable to the souls in purgatory.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de Savoie*, by the abbé F. Grobel.

Our Lady of Torcé, in the Diocese of Le Mans

Our Lady of Torcé, in the canton of Montfort, is situated at the bottom of a pleasant valley. In the sixth century, solitaries having come to settle in this place, raised there a chapel to the Blessed Virgin under a great oak, beside a Druidic altar whose stone is still seen today. In 1063 a priory for two monks was founded there, and the parish church was given to the religious of Marmoutier with all the rights annexed to it, on condition of their maintaining there a curé for the parish service. From that epoch the devotion of the faithful toward Our Lady of Torcé grew every day. On the various feasts of the Virgin the crowd of visitors encumbered the pious pilgrimage. The donations to the holy chapel went ever increasing, and with the help of the lords of Montfort it was possible to rebuild and beautify this sanctuary of Mary. A confraternity was established there, with the double aim of honouring the Blessed Virgin by exercises and prayers in common, and of uniting the faithful among themselves by the bonds of a more intimate charity. The sovereign Pontiffs having enriched this confraternity with several indulgences, a great number of the faithful wished to be associated with it.

The pilgrims soon became so numerous that, to lodge them, it was necessary to build inns around the church. They came not only from the neighbourhood but from the Perche, from Normandy, and from the most distant confines of Brittany; and it was not only individuals, but often entire parishes that came there every year under the leadership of their curé. Before entering the church the pilgrims went to wash their feet and hands at a neighbouring fountain, named the fountain of the Miracle or the fountain of Our Lady; and, at their departure, they carried away water from it in a phial, full of confidence in its supernatural virtue. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the pilgrimage took new increase. The faithful servants of Mary made it a happiness to load the holy chapel with their rich alms, and to come and kneel there humbly and pray devoutly. The Dominicans of Le Mans enriched this pious sanctuary with something better than all the offerings of the great: they established there the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and this institution produced marvellous fruits there. Those who belonged to it tended the sick, assisted the poor, instructed the ignorant, and by the example of their holy life they brought sinners back to the practice of duty, and made religion blessed and admired. The name of Our Lady of Torcé figured beside the most celebrated pilgrimages of France.

From the fourteenth century a tower had been raised in front of the old portal, which is still standing, and there had been added, on the south side, an aisle from the foot of the nave to the apse; but at the end of the fifteenth century, to enlarge the church, which no longer sufficed for the number of pilgrims, a three-sided apse was built, and two rectangular chapels, of which one continued the aisle previously constructed, the other awaited the aisle which was built later: and these constructions, which could almost be called an entire rebuilding, were finished in the sixteenth century.

The venerated image of Our Lady, which is seen today at the high altar, was crowned on behalf of the Holy See on 2 July 1855. But besides this principal statue there was one over each outer door of the church, to revive the hope of the pious pilgrim even before he had crossed the threshold of the sanctuary; there were also several others in the windows.

This sanctuary was very flourishing when, in the sixteenth century, the Protestants spread like a torrent, traversing the country, day and night, in armed bands, murdering Catholics, devastating churches; but, a remarkable thing, which denotes a visible protection of heaven, the sanctuary of Torcé, in the midst of this general upheaval, not only remained standing and escaped profanation, but was visited every year, as in the most peaceful epochs, by an innumerable crowd of pilgrims and even by entire parishes. The 8th of September was the cherished day of the pilgrims: then from the evening before until the high Mass of the day, several priests were occupied, some in reciting Gospels over the faithful, others in receiving their offerings.

The Mother of God answered these testimonies of piety with signal favours: sometimes she made drought and sterility cease, healed the sick, turned aside the hail, stopped the plague; sometimes she brought back to the Church the most illustrious heretics, such as the lord de Lorme, gentleman in ordinary of the king's chamber in 1685, and Mlle Le Blond in 1693. Illustrious visitors, among whom were counted kings, bishops, lords, jealous to have the Blessed Virgin praised in her sanctuary even after their death, founded there, some the singing of the litanies of Loreto, others the singing of the *Stabat Mater*, of the *Sub tuum*, or of some other prayer, so that every day the voice of the living repeated, in the name of the dead, the love which the preceding generations had borne to the Blessed Virgin.

These daily concerts to the glory of Mary ceased only in '93; then the priests were exiled, the ornaments, the sacred vessels, the ex-votos dispersed, sold or pillaged, and the church which heresy had respected was devastated by impiety; the walls alone remained standing. The faithful came none the less to pray before its closed doors; and neither sarcasms, nor threats, nor even the stones that were hurled at the visitors could stop the faith of the peoples. Several parishes continued, even at the height of the terror, to accomplish there, at least by a deputation of the principal inhabitants, the vow of their ancestors, persuaded that without that the hail and storms would ravage their harvests. Rarely was the holy sacrifice interrupted there, thanks to the intrepidity of the priests who, deceiving their persecutors, came in secret to offer the inhabitants of the neighbourhood the consolation of assisting at the celebration of the holy mysteries.

As soon as liberty was restored to worship, the pious sanctuary was reopened, the damage of impiety was repaired as well as possible, the holy offices were celebrated there with all the pomp that a poor countryside allowed, and the processions of pilgrims began again. Still today a great number of parishes come there on pilgrimage, on fixed days; the others betake themselves there in detached bands, so that there are ordinarily counted there, on 2 July, from seven to eight thousand of the faithful, and an equal number at various other times of the year.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of Esquermes, in the Diocese of Cambrai

The pilgrimage of Esquermes, between Loos and Lille, is the most ancient of the whole country, since it goes back to the year 1014. According to a constant tradition gathered by all the historians, the first image venerated at Esquermes was discovered by the signs of respect which some sheep showed in passing near a bush where it was hidden. Then, says the legend, in spite of the dogs which pressed them, these sheep stopped, and fell with their knees to the ground, after the manner of suppliants. The shepherds, surprised at this marvellous fact, examined the bush and discovered the statue there. Full of respect for the new image of Mary, they prayed every day at her feet. The particular graces they obtained from it engaged others to come

and pray there as they did; and soon the bush became a place of pilgrimage. Baldwin, count of Flanders, who for seventeen years had suffered from a flux of blood, came, like his subjects, to prostrate himself before the holy image, and was healed there. In gratitude he built, on the very spot of the bush, the chapel which is still seen there today, and attached a chaplain to it, with charge to celebrate there, every week, a certain number of Masses, and to sing Vespers there on all Saturdays and solemn days.

The signal favours that Mary poured out in her chapel of Esquermes drew there every day a crowd of pilgrims, who came from the most distant places, often barefoot, in procession, singing the praises of God and of His holy Mother. People came especially to obtain the pacification of disputes or the reconciliation of enemies; and this pilgrimage was recommended by confessors as an excellent remedy against temptations of hatred, resentment or vengeance. There Mary took pleasure in spreading the spirit of peace and charity in embittered hearts, and admirably justified the title of Our Lady of Reconciliation under which she was invoked in this chapel.

Here are some examples: Saint Gregory VII, that intrepid defender of the oppressed, informed of the harshness with which Robert the Frisian treated several of his vassals, whom he had condemned to banishment and to the loss of all their goods, wrote to this prince, to invite him to mercy; and to ensure better the success of so delicate a message, he charged with it Saint Arnulf, bishop of Soissons, whose lofty prudence he specially esteemed. Saint Arnulf, who knew the violent and inflexible character of Count Robert, begins his mission with a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Esquermes. From there he betakes himself to the prince, and hands him the Pope’s letter. While the latter is reading it, behold, some of the disgraced vassals arrive unexpectedly, and fall at his knees as suppliants. At this sight he grows pale, and fury sparkles in his glance; people tremble, they expect that he will deal severely in a terrible manner; but, marvellous thing, suddenly his heart is changed; he pardons his vassals and restores them to possession of all their goods.

Another trait no less remarkable reveals again the speciality of this chapel: A private man, named Peter Borgne, had an implacable enemy called Baldwin Langlé: one day the latter, having learned that Peter had gone to the chapel of Esquermes, lies in ambush on the road, and at the moment when Peter was returning without mistrust, he rushes upon him in fury, brandishing his sword and burning to glut his hatred. But, O prodigy! his weapon escapes from his hands; he falls at the feet of him whom he wished to make his victim, and asks his pardon. Peter raises up this repentant enemy; both embrace, swear to each other an eternal friendship, and by common accord they have the fact of their reconciliation painted on the portal of the chapel, so that posterity may for ever know the miracle of grace wrought in their favour.

These facts, and other like ones which the historians relate, brought Our Lady of Esquermes more and more into vogue; and the crowd pressed there until the seventeenth century. About this epoch, the eagerness appearing to cool, the care of the chapel was entrusted to the Jesuits in 1636, with the mission of making the ancient pilgrimage flourish again. They, in order to attract the piety of the faithful, imagined presenting to them the life and death of the Blessed Virgin under a new form, which consisted in honouring the eight journeys of which her history is composed. Accordingly, on the road which led to the chapel, they raised, at intervals, little oratories, of which the first represented the journey of Mary to the temple, at the age of three years, to consecrate herself there to God; the second, her journey to her cousin Saint Elizabeth; the third, her journey to Bethlehem, during which the child Jesus was born; the fourth, her journey to Jerusalem, for the presentation of Jesus in the temple; the fifth, the flight into Egypt; the sixth, the second journey to Jerusalem, when the child Jesus was twelve years old, and the return to that city to seek Him there; the seventh, the journey to Calvary at the death of the Saviour. After these stations one arrived at the chapel; and there was found, above the portal, a picture representing the eighth journey of the Blessed Virgin, or her departure for heaven: there were seen the angels running to meet her and her Son coming to meet her, to invite her to share His glory, as she had shared His reproaches.

When all this fair work was finished, the Jesuits began by a pompous feast the taking possession of the chapel. On the evening of the Saturday after the Visitation, all the youth of their college of Lille came in procession to Esquermes to fetch the miraculous image, and brought it, by the light of torches and to the sound of the most delightful melodies, into the church of the college. The next day the feast was fairer still; there were, in this church, magnificent offices; the crowd pressed there from morning till evening, eager to contemplate and to pray to the Virgin of Esquermes; and, toward the end of the day, a new and splendid procession led the venerated statue back to its ancient chapel. This feast awakened the faith of the faithful, who took again the road to the sanctuary of Esquermes, and piety betook itself there as in the fairest days of its glory. So it was until ’93. Then the holy image disappeared, the seven oratories were demolished; there remained only the chapel which, after having served as parish church from the demolition of that of Esquermes by the revolutionaries until its recent rebuilding, is, as formerly, reserved solely for the worship of the Blessed Virgin; it has been magnificently repaired, and is today one of the most graceful sanctuaries of the region. A series of paintings along the walls reproduces there the principal facts of the pilgrimage, in particular the apparition to the shepherds, the vow of Baldwin, the reconciliation of two enemies at the sight of the chapel; and a great fresco at the end of the sanctuary represents the coronation of the Virgin in the heavens. The chapel, thus decorated, serves as annex to the parish church and as catechism room for the children; but obstacles which it is hoped to remove have not yet permitted the pilgrimage to be re-established there.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of the Oak, in the Diocese of Laval

Our Lady of the Oak, in the parish of Saint-Martin de Connée, goes back to the last years of the sixteenth century, and was built by the sire de Belin, a rich lord of the country, who, pursued by a furious ox, fell on his knees at the foot of an oak in which was embedded a statue of the Virgin, and made a vow, if he escaped the danger, to convert to a better life, and to build, in that very place, a chapel to Mary. The animal at once grows calm and becomes inoffensive. M. de Belin has the chapel raised, enclosing the oak between its walls; he endows it and establishes a chaplain there. Pilgrims run to it, and their concourse soon makes there spring up inns to receive them, merchants to sell them medals and other pious objects which they made touch the statue, finally a village, or rather an entire borough, to provide for all the needs and all the wishes of the travellers. For it was not only individuals who came to visit Our Lady of the Oak: corporations in a body came there in procession: sometimes they were religious, above all the Benedictines of Évron; sometimes entire parishes, and each year saw nearly thirty arrive, in the course of the month of July alone. Not content with praying themselves in this blessed sanctuary, the faithful frequently had the holy sacrifice celebrated there, sometimes for the dead, sometimes for particular intentions; and a great number of wills, several of which have been preserved, stipulated Masses to be said at the altar of Our Lady of the Oak.

These holy demonstrations of faith were necessarily suspended in the ill-omened days of ’93. The pious sanctuary was profaned, put up for sale and the holy statue broken. Happily a pious inhabitant bought the chapel, religiously gathered the pieces of the statue, hid them in the trunk of the old oak, and opened the holy place to the faithful, who continued to come and pray there every day, especially every Sunday. When peace was restored to the Church, the bishop of Le Mans authorized the exercise of worship in the holy chapel, the pastors brought their flocks back there, and the pilgrimages began again: yet one thing was wanting to the piety of all, it was the venerated statue: the pious purchaser of the chapel was dead, carrying to the tomb the secret of the place where he had hidden the broken pieces: at last in 1860 the curate of Saint-Martin discovered them, and entrusted them to a skilful artist who remade the statue. This holy image thus recomposed was borne in procession from Saint-Martin to the chapel, in the midst of an immense crowd all radiant with happiness, triumphal arches raised at intervals, and to the singing of canticles repeated by public

joy. Since that epoch the pilgrimages have become more numerous than ever; the parishes betake themselves there with eagerness, and the prodigies of the all-powerful goodness of the Blessed Virgin multiply there. Miracles at Our Lady of the Oak are frequent things from the origin of the chapel to our days: if the proofs for ancient times are not preserved in writing, because the revolution burned all the archives of this holy place, they are written in the memory of the peoples, and are expressed by the constant veneration, the boundless confidence and the prodigious concourse of the pilgrims. As for our days, innumerable witnesses are there to attest facts which cannot be explained without a supernatural intervention.

See *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of La Font-Sainte, in the Diocese of Saint-Flour

The pilgrimage of La Font-Sainte, east of Mauriac, was in the beginning only a common spring whose waters had the limpidity of crystal, and which religion dedicated to Mary, by raising above it a little chapel to the Blessed Virgin. A will found in the archives of the church of Apchon, and dated of the year 1555, contains a pious legacy of seventy livres to the chapel of La Font-Sainte: evident proof that this oratory existed before that date. In vain did the Protestants destroy the chapel; people came none the less on pilgrimage to the spring consecrated to the Virgin; and, in 1744, the oratory was rebuilt as it was formerly. In 1837 a chapel was added to it, spacious enough to contain a good number of pilgrims, and decent enough that confessions could be heard there and the holy mysteries celebrated there: two things impossible in the old oratory, so narrow and modest was it. The oratory offers to the veneration of the faithful the ancient group representing the Visitation, which is said to have been brought from the East in the time of the crusades; and the chapel possesses a little statue formerly given by the bishop of Clermont, which is called the miraculous statue of Our Lady of La Font-Sainte. The erection of this chapel has attracted a great number of pilgrims; and every year this number goes increasing. During the days of snow and frost, that is, during eight months and a half of the year, when access to the mountain is almost impossible, Our Lady of La Font-Sainte is honoured in the chapel consecrated to her in the parish church of Saint-Hippolyte, which preserves, during this time, the miraculous statue; but on 2 July, when the long and fair days have come, the pilgrimage takes place on the mountain, where on that day the statue is carried, amid an immense concourse of pilgrims. From the evening before, these arrive at Saint-Hippolyte; but, unable to lodge them all, they are left to pass the night in the church, where, like the first Christians of the catacombs, they pray without wearying. On the morrow, from dawn, all the bells announce the finest feast day of the mountain; from all the surrounding parishes people run to mingle with the strangers who came the day before; the church of Saint-Hippolyte is crowded. About half past five a first Mass is celebrated at which almost all communicate. About half past seven begins the procession to carry to the mountain, on a magnificent litter, the miraculous statue. All group themselves around the holy image, singing canticles or reciting prayers: arrived at the summit, one perceives on all sides only ranks of the faithful, so close that one would say they were so many processions advancing toward the chapel by the various roads which lead to it. At eleven o'clock the solemn Mass is celebrated in the open air, which is interrupted by a touching discourse on the Blessed Virgin; and in the evening, after a frugal meal taken on the grass, they come back to assist at Vespers, followed by the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

From the date of this ceremony each day is like a feast day by the affluence of the pilgrims who are found there; the Sundays above all, 26 July, 15 August and 8 September, are true solemnities, which have no equals but that of mid-October, when is celebrated the feast of the return of the miraculous statue to the church of Saint-Hippolyte.

Notre-Dame de France, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Our Lady of Hope, at Saint-Brieuc

The chapel of Saint Peter, at Saint-Brieuc, formerly possessed Our Lady of Hope. Founded toward the middle of the fourteenth century, enlarged afterwards, about 1375, this chapel was finally rebuilt in 1717 by a congregation of merchants and artisans, who had obtained it only on that condition. When the new edifice was finished, on 17 February 1719, it was blessed under the triple title of the Immaculate Conception, and of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and received, in the month of November following, two hundred members of the congregation for their annual retreat. In 1764 there was placed there, in a graceful niche, a little statue of Saint Peter with another of Saint Paul. One would hardly find a sanctuary which has undergone as many vicissitudes, in turn withdrawn from and restored to worship, converted from the sacred to the profane and from the profane to the sacred, and, in one of these alternations, serving as an ordination chapel, where Mgr de Quélen, afterwards archbishop of Paris, received the subdiaconate. In 1817, blessed anew, it was restored to the congregation of merchants and artisans, who prospered there. After 1848, in those days of uncertainty and terror, when society reeled like a drunken man, and when the ground trembled under the foot, a religious association was established there under the title of Our Lady of Hope, with the aim of obtaining, by the intercession of the Mother of God, the salvation of France, the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just, finally the grace of a good death for all the associates. This work, full of actuality, was relished by all, authorized by the bishop, erected by the Holy See into an archconfraternity and enriched with numerous indulgences on all the feasts of the Blessed Virgin. The sanctuary, centre of the pious association, became a place of pilgrimage. Novenas of Masses and prayers followed one another there, and communions were made there more and more numerous. The progress of the new archconfraternity was so rapid that, from the month of April 1847, more than thirty dioceses had furnished it with associates; soon they were counted in all the dioceses of France and even in the colonies. Most of the bishops of France themselves associated themselves with it; and numerous ex-votos, hearts of gold and silver, pictures and marble tablets covered with inscriptions came to attest the signal benefits of Our Lady of Hope and the gratitude of the faithful. Touched by so marvellous an extension, the director of the archconfraternity, with the approval of the bishop, instituted a Mass every day in the holy chapel for the associates living and dead; and in the month of July 1853 a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Hope, brought in procession from the cathedral, was placed at the summit of the spire of the venerated sanctuary, to the great joy of the whole city.

Extract from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

Saint Otto, Bishop of Bamberg in Bavaria, and Apostle of Pomerania (1139)

Saint Otto was from Swabia, a region of ancient Germany, situated to the west of Bavaria, and belonged, to all appearance, to the family of the counts of Andechs, otherwise called Heiligenberg. From his earliest youth he betrayed happy dispositions for the study of letters and sciences, and his gentleness, joined to his humility, drew to him the affection of all who knew him. He entered the clerical state, and the emperor Henry IV gave him as chaplain to the princess Judith, his sister, when she married Boleslaus III, duke of Poland. After the death of this princess, Otto returned to Germany and Henry made him his chancellor. This prince sold the vacant benefices, and the Popes, especially Gregory VII, having condemned this conduct as simoniacal, to avenge himself he caused to be elected antipope, in 1080, Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna. Otto strongly opposed this schism and made energetic remonstrances to the emperor, which did not prevent the latter from keeping his esteem and confidence for him: he proved it by naming him to the bishopric of Bamberg, in the year 1103. Otto had his nomination confirmed by Pope Paschal II, who gave him the pallium. The new bishop neglected nothing to extinguish the schism which desolated Christendom. Henry V, having succeeded his father in 1106, supported the party of the antipope Albert, successor of Guibert, which did not prevent him from giving great marks of consideration to Otto, who remained attached to the lawful Pope.

Saint Otto made several pious foundations which he called inns on the road of eternity. As he displayed the zeal of a missionary for the sanctification of his diocesans, Boleslaus IV, having made the conquest of

Pomerania, begged him to come and evangelize the idolaters who were still found in that province. The holy bishop, after providing for the administration of his diocese during his absence, set out at the head of a certain number of ecclesiastics, crossed Poland and Prussia, and penetrated into eastern Pomerania. He wrought there conversions so numerous, and established there the religion of Jesus Christ in so solid a manner, that he merited the surname of apostle of those regions.

In 1125 he returned to Bamberg; but the cities of Stettin and Julin having fallen back into pagan superstitions, he set out again, in 1128, for Pomerania, and, after re-establishing the profession of Christianity in these two cities, he went to labour at the conversion of other barbarous peoples, which occupied him several years. Returned to his diocese, he died there, very aged, on 30 June 1139. He was canonized by Clement III, in 1189. His relics were placed in a shrine which, since the Reformation, is kept in the treasury of the elector of Hanover.

He is represented: 1st, preaching the destruction of idols; 2nd, having arrowheads forged into nails. The Bollandists relate that an armourer had brought him a quantity of darts with which he wished to supply the buildings raised by the bishop. The man of God sent the whole to his monks that nails might be made of them destined for the roofing of the church. Saint Otto of Bamberg is invoked against the bite of mad dogs, and wine is blessed in his name against this peril. The Bollandists who relate the fact do not give the reason for it.

Surius and the Bollandists, volume I of July; — Cf. Godescard, Brussels edition.

Saint Oudocée or Oudothée, Third Bishop of Llandaff, in England (564)

Saint Oudocée had for father Budic, king of the Armorican Bretons, and for mother Anaumed, sister of Saint Teliau. His birth was a subject of joy for the Bretons; but this child was not destined to govern them. His father and mother had consecrated him to God, even before he was born, and gave him to Saint Teliau, who, when the yellow plague was entirely dissipated, returned to Great Britain and gathered together there his scattered flock. Under this master, skilled in the science of the Saints, the young prince had not only a careful education but was also formed to virtue, and profited perfectly by the lessons he received from him. He distinguished himself among his fellow pupils by his piety and talents. His eloquence above all was remarkable. Afterwards, Saint Teliau, seeing himself near his end, designated his nephew to be his successor, without any other consideration than that of the merit of Oudocée, and of the advantage of the peoples, having a part in the choice he made of his person.

Oudocée was consecrated by the primate of the church of Dorobern, today Canterbury, or, according to others, by the bishop of Menevia, primate of Cambria, and he was received at Llandaff with a general applause of all the world. Mouric, king of Glamorgan, the queen his wife, the princes their children, and generally all the great lords of the country, took a pleasure in giving the Saint, in this ceremony, testimonies of the esteem in which they held his person. The king himself, to mark by more effective deeds more friendship and honour to the new prelate, confirmed by new letters patent all the donations and all the privileges that his predecessors had granted to the church of Landuff.

This good understanding of the holy prelate and King Mouric did not last long. The generous zeal of the Saint could not bear the injustice of the prince; and the gratitude that Oudocée had for his benefits did not prevent him from treating him, when it was necessary, with all the rigour that his sin deserved. Oudocée judged that an extreme evil required a proportionate remedy, and that lenitives would only maintain, or even increase, the wound. He therefore assembled a synod of the abbots and of the secular clergy of his diocese, and by common advice he solemnly excommunicated the culprit, fearing neither his vengeance nor his power.

The prince was two entire years without thinking of humbling himself; but at last the firmness of Oudocée, who during all that time had him treated as a public excommunicate, triumphed over his insensibility. King

Mouric, who had sinned like David, became contrite like him, and satisfied by a canonical penance, whose rigorous laws were not yet abolished, for the public scandal he had given by his crime and by his hardening.

Saint Oudocée showed constantly the same character during the whole time of his episcopate. Always firm and rigid observer of ecclesiastical discipline, always gentle and charitable toward penitent persons, always austere and rigorous in his manner of life, retired in his monastery, where he satisfied in freedom his love of mortification, he consummated, in 564, a holy life by a holy death, which the English martyrology marks on the second day of July.

Extract from the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*, by Dom Lobineau.

Saint Lothaire or Loyer, Bishop of Séez[1]

The body of Saint Lothaire was buried in his oratory. Soon a pilgrimage was established at his tomb, on account of the numerous miracles wrought by the Saint in favour of the sick who came to claim his intercession. There was raised, near the chapel where his body reposed, a parish church which was dedicated under the name of Saint-Loyer. At the time of the invasion of the Normans, the greater part of the relics of the holy bishop was transported to the monastery of Tholey, in the diocese of Cologne; yet a small part was left in the ancient tomb, so as not to strip the diocese of Séez entirely of this precious treasure. This translation did not prevent the church and chapel of the Saint from continuing to be in great veneration in that diocese. A crowd of pilgrims was seen running thither: it was above all at the feast of the holy Bishop, celebrated on 15 June, that the greatest concourse of the faithful took place. On Easter Monday there also came many processions to visit the holy tomb, where numerous miracles were wrought. The invention of the relics of the Saint took place on 17 December 1673. As the tomb of the Saint was too near the altar, Mgr Forcoal, bishop of Séez, permitted the stone of the tomb to be transported to another place in the chapel. Here is, according to the *procès-verbal* drawn up on that occasion and preserved in the archives of the bishopric, what it contained: “The two bones of the lower jaw, with a part of their alveoli; a part of the innominate bone; a fragment of the humerus; the anchiroid apophysis which is attached to the shoulder-blade; one molar tooth; a great part of the right femur, with another fragment of the same bone; the upper part of the cubitus; a part of the *os petrus* of the left side; several fragments of ribs; and an entire bone of the metatarsus.” A part of these relics was enshrined in two reliquaries which were placed on both sides of the altar of Saint-Loyer; the other part was deposited in the sacristy, where it remained until 1702, but since that epoch it is not known what has become of it. The relics placed on the altar of the Saint were recognized as authentic in 1702 by Mgr d’Aquin; in 1721 by Mgr Barnabas Turgot; in 1741 and in 1771 by Mgr Néel de Christot.

At the epoch of the Revolution the holy relics, in danger of being profaned, were carried off by the family Le Got, of the parish of Saint-Loyer, which preserved this precious treasure in their house with profound respect, until the moment when the churches were restored to worship. The two reliquaries thus preserved were put back on the altar, on both sides of the tabernacle. These relics were again declared authentic by Mgr Rousselet, on 5 November 1864. The next day, the feast of the holy relics, one of the precious bones of the holy Bishop was borne to the cathedral of Séez and exposed, in a beautiful reliquary, to the veneration of the faithful. At that epoch some particles of the relics of Saint Lothaire were given to several ecclesiastics of that diocese. The devotion to this great Saint is very lively in the environs of Argentan, and a great number of pious faithful, having had recourse to him in their illnesses, have experienced that one never addresses the friends of God in vain. It is above all for little children and for persons attacked by fever that people come to implore his protection with success. After visiting the church where the precious relics are preserved, the pilgrims do not forget to visit the chapel built on the site of the ancient oratory of the Saint. At the end of this chapel is an altar surmounted by a little stone statue, very ancient, representing Saint Loyer. He wears a grey mantle, the hood and the staff of hermits, and holds in his right hand his book of prayers, on which he has his eyes fixed.

Extract from the *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Séez*, by the abbé Blin, curé of Durcel.

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[1] His head was brought to the cathedral of Évreux toward the end of the fourteenth century.

[2] See this day.

[3] See 16 September.

[4] See this day, and the note to the martyrology.

[5] Benedict XIV, *De Festis*.

[6] Two etymologies are given for the word Vassivière. According to some, it would come from the word *Vacca*, on account of the herds of cows which grazed on this mountain five or six months of the year. According to others, it would come from the words *Vas-y-veù-e*, language which the inhabitants of the country ordinarily held to those who refused to believe in the miracles wrought before the holy Image.

[7] Besse is a small town situated in the arrondissement of Issoire, at the western extremity of the department of Puy-de-Dôme. It belonged formerly to the duchy of Auvergne, and depended on the house of La Tour, one of the first families of France and of Europe.

[8] These relics had been given, in 1616, by Father Coyssard. Archives of the church of Besse.

[9] This reliquary was given to the chapel of Vassivière, in 1654, by the members of the confraternity of Saint Lucy, established at Besse.

[10] Extract from the Regulations of the Work of Our Lady of the Waters.

[11] See his Life, at 16 June, vol. VII, p. 61.