Mgr Paul Guérin

LES PETITS BOLLANDISTES: LIVES OF THE SAINTS, VOLUME X

18 August – 9 September

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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 X, which covers 18 August – 9 September.

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.

Where the printed text could not be read, the translation says [illegible].

18 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Palestrina, a town of the States of the Church, the birth into heaven of Saint AGAPITUS or AGAPETUS, martyr, who, being only fifteen years old and already all on fire with love for Jesus Christ, was arrested by order of the emperor Aurelian and first beaten for a very long time with thongs of ox-sinew; after which he suffered still crueller torments under the prefect Antiochus. He was then exposed, by order of the emperor, to the lions, from which he received no hurt; struck at last by the sword of the executioners, he obtained the immortal crown. About 274. — At Rome, the blessed John and Crispus, priests, who during the persecution of Diocletian carefully buried the bodies of many martyrs; and having joined themselves to their merits, they tasted the joys of eternal life. About 303. — In the same city, the holy martyrs Hermas, Serapion and Polyaenus, who were dragged violently through narrow, rough and stony passes, and gave up their souls to God in that torment. — In Illyricum, the holy martyrs Florus and Laurus, stone-cutters, who, after the martyrdom of Proculus and Maximus, their masters, were tormented in various ways and finally thrown into a very deep well, under the governor Lycion. Second century. — At Myra, in Lycia, Saint Leo and Saint Juliana, martyrs. — At Metz, Saint Firminus or Fremin, bishop and confessor.[1] Fourth century. — At Rome, on the Via Labicana, Saint HELENA, mother of Constantine the Great, a most pious emperor, who was the first to give other princes the example of defending and spreading the Church. 328. — At Montefalco, in Umbria, Saint CLARE, virgin, a nun of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine; her heart is venerated with very great devotion, for in it the mysteries of the Saviour’s Passion were found renewed. 1308.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Paris, the foundation by King Robert II (996– 1031) of a chapel in honour of Our Lady in the courtyard of the palace, on the very spot where the Sainte-Chapelle stands today. 1022. — At Antwerp, a solemn procession of the Virgin with the miraculous statue which is held to have given rise to her famous basilica. This procession dates from 1398. — At Troyes, the translation of part of the relics of Saint Eugenius, first bishop of Toledo and martyr, whose life we shall give on 15 November. — At Poitiers, Saint Agon, fourth known bishop of that see and successor of Tupianus. He is named in the ancient litanies of Poitiers; his name points to a Greek origin. A chapel under the title of Saint-Agon, in the cemetery of the church of

Sainte-Triaise at Poitiers, leaves no room to doubt the immemorial cult paid to him. His feast was formerly marked on 18 August, but his cult has fallen into disuse. The Church of Poitiers, so as not to let his memory perish, any more than that of several others of her saints who are as little known but still dear to her remembrance, makes a special commemoration of them in her office of 20 January, which is the Octave of Saint Hilary and the feast of all the holy bishops.[2] — In the diocese of Rouen, Saint Milo, monk at Fontenelle and recluse at Caudebecquet, a hamlet of Saint-Wandrille (arrondissement of Yvetot). He was the son of Saint Wisse or Wisle, abbess of the former monastery of Logium, founded in 654 by Bathildis, wife of Clovis II. At the entrance of the hamlet of Caudebecquet, by the side of the old high road, two abandoned caves can be seen; one of them is entirely filled in, while the other is still open. This cave, cut in the rock, is 2 metres high, 15 metres deep and 4 metres wide; it is called the grotto of Milo, and it is said that he lived in it. History states that the pious anchorite was buried before the door of the church of the nuns of the monastery of which his mother was abbess.[3] About 730. — At Évreux, the feast of all the holy bishops of that see. — In the diocese of Soissons, the anniversary of the crowning of Our Lady of Liesse, one of the oldest and most celebrated pilgrimages of France. 1857. — In the Limousin, Father Pierre de Labesse, doctor of theology, a Franciscan religious as devout as he was learned. 1603.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Rome, on the Via Labicana, Saint Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, a most pious emperor, who was the first to give princes the example by protecting the Church and spreading it. 328.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Hyacinth, confessor, whose feast falls on the 16th of this month.[4] 1257.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Hyacinth, confessor, etc.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — In Gallia Narbonensis, at Montpellier, the death of Saint Roch, confessor, who by the sign of the cross delivered several towns of Italy from the plague; his body was afterwards carried to Venice and very honourably buried in the church that bears his name.[5] 1327.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Rome, on the Via Labicana, Saint Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, a most pious emperor, who was the first to give princes the example by protecting the Church and spreading it. 328.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At Montefalco, in Umbria, Saint Clare, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, a nun of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine, in whose heart the emblem of the Holy Trinity and the mysteries of Our Lord’s Passion are venerated with devotion. 1308.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Montefalco, in Umbria, Saint Clare, etc.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — At Montefalco, in Umbria, Saint Clare, etc.

Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Vincent de Paul, whose feast is celebrated on 19 July.[6] 1660.

ADDITIONS FAITES D’APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Bergamo, a town of Lombardy, Saint Projectitius, martyr. Born of Christian parents who brought him up in the principles of religion and the study of sacred letters, he made such progress in a short time that he deserved to be raised to the dignity of archdeacon of the cathedral church. But the times were evil, and soon he fell victim to the edicts of persecution issued against all Christians by Diocletian and Maximian. He was in his fifty-sixth year. His body was discovered in 1290 in the church of Sant’Alessandro; in 1561 and in

1704 there were solemn translations of his precious relics. Beginning of the fourth century. — At Amasea, today Amasieh, a town of Asiatic Turkey in the pashalik of Sivas, Saint Pontemius, martyr, and Saints Pileucia, Tatiana, Marciana, Heliana, Laucia or Lauciana, virgins and martyrs. — At Constantinople, the holy patriarchs John and George, who laboured generously for the unity of the Catholic faith. 520 and 683. — In Ireland, Saint Dageus Maccayrill (that is, son of Cayrill), bishop of Inis-Coindègne and confessor. His parents took care to bring him up as a Christian, and when they saw his inclination to virtue they entrusted his education to a deacon of great holiness. One day, when the child was travelling with his tutor, the latter left him for a few moments in an inn to attend to important business. What was his surprise, on his return, to see the room where the child was all shining with light! A holy bishop explained the marvel to him, telling the deacon that his young pupil would one day be like a burning sun that would scatter the darkness of idolatry and stir the face of the world. Events confirmed this prediction: Dageus became a bishop, and Ireland owes it partly to him that she is Christian today. Our Saint reached an extreme old age and fell asleep in Our Lord at the age of a hundred and forty. 586. — In Scotland, Saint Inan or Evan, confessor. Ninth century. — At Ravenna, in Italy, Blessed Rainald or Raynaud, archbishop of that see and confessor. He was born at Milan, and as his virtues soon made him appear to all as a vessel of election, he was admitted early into the clergy of that city. Ordained priest, he was a generous, watchful and disinterested pastor to his flock. The see of Ravenna having fallen vacant, the clergy and people with one voice chose him to fill that important post. For a long time he refused the dignity, which seemed to him too heavy a burden; but the voice of God had made itself heard, and he accepted. His life was one unbroken series of good works, and after his precious death the miracles worked at his tomb bore witness to his great holiness. 1321.

Saint Agapitus or Agapetus of Rome, Martyr at Palestrina, in the States of the Church

274. — Pope: Saint Felix I. — Roman Emperor: Aurelian.

> *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and if you do not know how to do yourself violence, you will not reach it.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

Born at Rome of a noble family, Saint Agapitus had renounced the world to lead the ascetic life under the guidance of Porphyrius, in the town of Praeneste, today Palestrina, quite close to Rome. It was the time when the emperor Aurelian was persecuting the Christians. One of the ministers of his cruelty, Antiochus, gave orders to arrest the young Agapitus, who had dared to make just remonstrances to him in favour of the Christians. After a long examination he had him beaten with scorpions and with leaden balls. The young Martyr’s constancy, and a prayer he addressed to God, converted five hundred pagans: they declared themselves Christians and were executed at once. Agapitus was shut up in a horrible prison, where a heavenly vision strengthened him; then he was made to undergo a second examination; he was beaten with rods, then stretched on the rack, his body was torn with iron hooks, and he was dragged into the temple of Apollo. As he refused to sacrifice, those who were leading him struck his limbs with stones and lacerated his whole body with iron cords. It would take too long to list all the tortures with which the executioners tormented his innocent body: he endured the rack several times, prison, burning coals on his head, scourging, a thick smoke above which he was hung head downwards, and boiling water poured over his body. Agapitus showed a heroic, superhuman courage and gave the judges and executioners admirable answers; many pagans were converted. Amas, one of his judges, by a just judgment of God, fell half dead from his seat and shortly afterwards breathed his last. Then Antiochus had Agapitus exposed to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre. Two lions were let loose against him, their eyes sparkling with fury; but at the sight of Agapitus they grow calm, lie down at his feet, lick him gently and caress him in a thousand ways, until the holy child orders them to go back into their dens. At the sight of this prodigy the people cry out that the true God is the God of Agapitus. At last, by order of Antiochus, two executioners lead him out of the town of

Praeneste and, having placed him between two columns, cut off his head with the sword. The Christians took away his body and buried it by night a kilometre from the same town, in a field where they found a brand-new tomb, which seemed to have been prepared by miracle to make the burial of this child martyr more glorious.

His constancy in the midst of so many tortures moved a soldier who was leading him; his name was Anastasius. The Roman Martyrology gives him the honourable title of *cornicularius*, that is, lieutenant of the military tribune. He left paganism and embraced the Christian religion. He was seized very soon and put to death on the following 20 August.

The relics of Saint Agapitus have been kept to this day in the town of Palestrina, which is now an episcopal see held at the option of the senior cardinals; some bones were carried to the Benedictine abbey of Liesses or Liessies, near Avesnes, in the present diocese of Cambrai. Chelidonius, bishop of Besançon, brought the Martyr's head from Rome in 445 and placed it in the church of Saint-Étienne. It is today in the church of Saint-Jean, to which Hugh I translated it about the middle of the eleventh century. The Roman Martyrology mentions him, as do those of Bede, Usuard and Ado. Baronius also speaks of him in his Notes and in his Annals.

We have almost entirely rewritten the account of this martyrdom, which is inaccurate in Father Giry, with the help of the Bollandists.

Saint Helena, Widow, Empress of the West

328. — Pope: Saint Sylvester I. — Roman Emperor: Constantine.

> *Maria fecit ut Deus inter homines videretur, Helena ad remedium peccatorum divinum de ruinis elevavit vexillum.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose.*
>
> *For this Christian empress the crown of Jesus serves as diadem, the nails of Jesus serve as sceptre, the cross of Jesus serves as throne.*
>
> *Durand, Caractères des Saints.*

Saint Helena is very famous for having discovered the true cross to which Our Lord was fastened, and for having contributed powerfully to the establishment of Christianity. According to the most probable opinion, Great Britain was her native land: she was born at York, according to some, and according to others at Colchester in the county of Essex. She was the only daughter of King Coilus or Coel; she married the Roman general Constantius Chlorus, by whom she had a son who was later Constantine the Great.

The Roman world then had as emperors Diocletian and Maximian, who bore the name of Augustus. In 293 they took as associates two emperors of lower rank, with the title of Caesars: Diocletian gave this title to Galerius, and Maximian to Constantius Chlorus. But one of the articles of this association was that Constantius should put away Helena in order to marry Theodore, the stepdaughter of Maximian. Constantius died in 306, recommending Constantine, Helena's son, to the army as his successor. According to Eusebius, he declared that he believed in the true God. It is not known at what date Helena became a Christian; but Saint Paulinus tells us that she contributed to the conversion of Constantine.

Here is the occasion on which that prince publicly embraced the true religion. Maxentius, one of his colleagues in the empire, had declared war on him. Constantine marched against him and encamped opposite the Milvian Bridge (today Ponte Molle), two miles from Rome. His army was inferior in numbers, but he implored the protection of the true God. His prayer finished, as he was advancing with part of his troops a little after midday, he saw in the sky a luminous cross with this inscription: "By this sign you shall conquer." The following night he had a vision in which Jesus Christ ordered him to have this cross represented and to

use it as a standard in battle. He obeyed and made the famous standard known by the name of the Labarum. Maxentius was defeated, and the bridge of boats he had thrown across the Tiber having broken while he was fleeing, he was drowned in that river. The senate had a triumphal arch raised in honour of Constantine, which can still be seen at Rome. A statue was also erected to him in one of the squares of the city, in which he was shown holding a cross in his hand instead of a lance, and he ordered the following inscription to be engraved on the pedestal: “By this saving sign, the true mark of courage, I have delivered your city from the yoke of tyranny, and I have restored to the senate and people of Rome their ancient glory.”

Helena shared this triumph. Her son loved and respected her; he forgot that he was master of the world and seemed to have power only to anticipate her wishes. He had her proclaimed Augusta in all his armies and in all the provinces of the empire, and willed that medals should be struck in her honour on which she is called Flavia Julia Helena. Above all she shared with Constantine the glory of firmly establishing the reign of Christianity throughout the empire. Rufinus, speaking of her zeal and her faith, says that both were “incomparable”; and Saint Gregory the Great assures us that she kindled in the hearts of the Romans the fire with which she herself was aflame. Forgetting her rank, she loved to be mingled with the people in the churches, and her greatest pleasure was to be present at the divine office. Mistress of the treasures of the empire, she used them only for good works: every place she passed through felt the effects of her generosity; she was the mother of all the unfortunate. She had churches built and enriched them with ornaments and vessels of great price.

After the Council of Nicaea (325), Constantine sent men to Jerusalem to discover the sepulchre in which Our Lord had been laid and where He so gloriously triumphed over death. So they removed a mountain of rubbish that the pagans had heaped over it to blot out its memory entirely; and this tomb, which had been buried so long, seemed to rise again itself, to bear, by its resurrection, a striking witness to the resurrection of the Saviour. On hearing of this happy discovery, the emperor wrote to Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, to raise over this sepulchre a church that should vie in magnificence with the proudest buildings of the empire. Saint Helena, although eighty years of age, took charge of carrying out this pious work. At the same time she had an extreme desire to discover the cross on which the Saviour of the world had died; and her wishes were granted, as we have related in the history of the Invention of the Cross.[1]

She visited the holy places with extraordinary devotion and adorned them with sumptuous buildings; she recalled a number of exiles and set free those who were held in prison or worked in the mines; she gave presents to the communities and distributed considerable alms in all the places she honoured with her presence. The churches also felt the effects of her generosity. Before leaving Palestine she had the virgins consecrated to the Lord assembled and gave them a meal at which she served them with her own hands. Back in Rome, she felt that her last hour was approaching. When she saw herself on the point of leaving this world, she spoke to her son of the means of governing the empire in a manner conformable to the divine law. Constantine was holding her hand when she died; before breathing her last she gave her blessing to this dear son, in the year 328.

The funeral of the empress Helena was celebrated with the greatest pomp. To contain her body a brick mausoleum was made in the form of a round tower, inside which her tomb was placed, which is an urn of porphyry; and Constantine set up in the middle of the great square of Constantinople a cross with statues, one of which represented him and the other his blessed mother.[2]

She is represented with the cross, which she seems to raise aloft, holding it upright; this recalls that we owe to her the discovery of the true cross. So in certain countries people have recourse to the pious empress to find lost things. — The ancients, however, preferred to paint Saint Helena kneeling joyfully before the holy cross, after they had succeeded in recognising that sacred wood by the miracles it worked from the moment of its discovery.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The relics of Saint Helena were carried in 849 from Rome to the abbey of Hautvillers, in the diocese of Reims. Alman, a monk of the same abbey, wrote in 1095 the history of this translation, which was carried out with great pomp. He speaks of several miracles worked through the intercession of Saint Helena; he adds that he was an eyewitness of some of them, and that he had the others from the very persons on whom they had been worked.

The porphyry urn that contained the Saint's body was carried to the cloister of Saint John Lateran in 1627, under the pontificate of Urban VIII. The Chapter of that patriarchal church presented it to Pope Pius VI, who placed it in the Vatican museum. The two lions in relief on the lid, and the men on foot and on horseback carved round the urn, show no superstition, but rather the decline of art. These figures, much mutilated today, are in fact of a heavy and coarse workmanship.

The mausoleum of Saint Helena stood on the Via Labicana, now called the road to Palestrina, and more than half of it can still be seen, about a mile from Rome. The ashes of the holy Empress are today enclosed in a large antique bath of porphyry in the church of the Ara Coeli.

At the time of the destruction of the monasteries in France, some religious of the abbey of Hautvillers put the relics of Saint Helena in safety. In 1821 they gave them to the confraternity of the Holy Sepulchre, then established in Paris, and added all the documents attesting their authenticity. These relics, after being carefully examined, together with the documents attached to them, were placed in a shrine of gilded wood and laid in the lower chapel of the church of Saint-Leu in Paris, where they are still venerated. Some years later M. Tresvaux, vicar general of Paris, having been charged to take out a part of them for the diocese of Reims at the request of the archbishop, Cardinal de Latil, himself examined these holy relics with great attention, and acknowledged with the others present that they contained only the embalmed flesh wrapped in bands; that no bone was found in them, and that the head was missing, as were the arms and legs. This explains and confirms the assertion of the Italian authors, who state that the ashes of this Saint lie under an altar of the church of the Ara Coeli in Rome.

Acta Sanctorum; the Continuators of Godescard; Dom Mabillon.

Saint Clare of Montefalco, Virgin, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine

1308. — Pope: Clement V. — Emperor of Germany: Albert I.

> *Let us not cease to pray: He who is to hear us may delay, but He cannot disappoint our hope; sure of His promise, let us never give up prayer.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Clare was born at Montefalco, near Spoleto, in Italy, about the year 1275. Her father was called Damian and her mother Jacqueline; both walked in the observance of the Commandments of God, without giving anyone cause for displeasure or complaint. They had an elder daughter named Joan. As soon as she was able to practise devotion solidly, she withdrew, with her parents' consent, to a small place called San Leonardo, gathered there a company of virgins and lived with them, without yet becoming a religious of any Order, in an innocence, piety and fervour beyond belief. Clare was the youngest. From the age of five, much given to prayer, she afflicted her body with mortifications that the most robust men would have had difficulty in bearing. The devil used every kind of violence and artifice to stifle this budding devotion, but in vain: Clare always drove him away by the power of Jesus Christ, who appeared to her to encourage her; and, far from lessening her exercises of piety in any way, she did so much by her prayers and tears that at the age of six she was received into her sister's community. She felt such joy at this that, to thank God, she fasted eight days in succession, eating each day nothing but bread and an apple. The older she grew, the more she redoubled her

austerity and penances. Her abstinence was altogether beyond the strength of nature: a penny loaf and a little water were usually her whole food; she even quite often spent days without eating. If on feasts and Sundays, and above all on solemn days, she added some dish to this poor meal, it was only wild herbs or dried beans soaked in water. She was so detached from the pleasure of taste that, if hay or straw had been enough to nourish her, she would have been content with hay and straw. Her other mortifications matched so prodigious an abstinence: she had no other bed than the ground or a plank; she often drew blood from her body, and instead of fine linen she wore only rough shifts and sometimes even the hair shirt or the cilice. While she wasted her body by austerities so astonishing in a child, she fed her soul with the delicious banquet of prayer.

Her sister gave her a secret oratory where she could give herself to it without hindrance; and it happened several times that she remained there motionless, her mind and heart united to God, from Matins until Terce, and even until None. In one of these divine conversations the Blessed Virgin presented her Son to her in the form of a little child. Clare out of respect dared not approach; but the Virgin said to her: “Here, Clare, embrace your Spouse.” She came forward to embrace Him, and this divine Child, to inflame her heart the more and give her an insatiable desire to possess Him, then hid under His mother’s mantle and disappeared. What then was the ardour of this bride, and what did she not do to find this Beloved whose beauty she had glimpsed? He appeared to her again in the form of a lamb of incomparable whiteness, which came into her arms and lay down on her breast. It was because of these wonderful caresses that at times, at night in her cell, she shone like a star, and that in the morning, so that she should not be disturbed by the natural daylight, little clouds formed around her and hid the light of the sun from her. Many very secret things were revealed to her from that time. She knew the state of a woman who had died: she saw her in purgatory, sunk in a sea of sufferings beyond words.

When our Blessed was a little older, God inspired her sister Joan, superior of the community, to leave the house where they were, too small and inconvenient for the number of her daughters, and to build a convent on a neighbouring hill, at a spot where she would see a cross. All the sisters set themselves to pray for the fulfilment of this command, and in fact they saw, on the top of the hill of Santa Caterina, a cross of light which seemed to be followed in procession by several women. They did not doubt that this was the place divine Providence had destined for them. So they acquired it and built a small monastery there. Having moved into it after countless contradictions and obstacles raised against them by the malice of the devil, they begged the bishop of Spoleto, their diocesan, to give them the Rule of a congregation received and approved by the Church to be their own Rule, so that they might become true religious. The bishop gave them the Rule of Saint Augustine, which they received with unequalled joy and on which they shaped their whole conduct perfectly. Clare was the one who showed most zeal and ardour in the whole affair, and she also deserved to receive from her Spouse a crown of flowers, until He should crown her with thorns and give her a share in all the bitterness of His Passion.

Meanwhile, as the building of the convent had used up all the means of these poor women, they were reduced to begging for their living. Clare offered herself wholeheartedly for this act of humility, and carried it out for some time with wonderful edification. She never entered any house, for fear of breaking silence there or of being looked in the face. Even in the most violent rain she stayed in the street, content with whatever shelter she could find there. When she was given an alms she received it on her knees, to thank first the author of all good things and then her benefactors. She did not cease to keep her fast and her other austerities strictly; and so she was wasting away little by little, and it became necessary, to save her life, to take her off this work. But when the spirit of penance has once taken possession of a heart, nothing can stop it. Clare no longer had the fatigue of begging, but she replaced it with far harsher treatment. Her body was like a victim that she sacrificed every day for the sins committed in the world: the blood often flowed from it under the blows she gave herself. The horsehair she applied to her wounds kept the pain perpetually fresh; she allowed herself no

relief, either by quiet sleep or by sufficient food. Silence was the inseparable companion of her penance; and one day when she had broken it without need, she stood, as a punishment, barefoot in icy water for the space of a hundred Our Fathers, which she recited with unbelievable humility and fervour. She avoided the parlour as much as she could; and when obedience obliged her to go there she always kept herself well covered, neither seeing nor being seen, and spoke only very low and almost in monosyllables. Her sister complained that she kept up this strictness towards her own brother, who wished to see her; but she answered with great wisdom that, since one does not speak with the eyes but with the tongue, it was quite useless to see each other in these conversations, and that it was enough to hear each other.

There was no task in the house, however lowly, to which she did not apply herself with joy. She was the relief of all the other sisters, and when she saw one a little overloaded with work she set about helping her at once. When her sister the superior fell ill, she obtained her cure by her prayers, but in an altogether supernatural way: angels came down into her room and made such a charming concert that it dispelled all her sickness and restored her entirely to health. This was, however, only for a short time. She died at the end of eight years as superior of the monastery of the Holy Cross, and our Blessed, after having had a revelation of her glory, was elected superior and abbess in her place. Her humility made her resist her election strongly; but God willed that she should be superior, so as to give the final perfection to this young house, and she had, in spite of herself, to bend under this yoke and take charge of the guidance of her sisters. She did take it, but in a wholly holy way. Her example was a living rule that taught each one what she should do. She was always first, not only at the exercises of piety and devotion, but also at the most humbling tasks. She applied herself diligently to the spiritual progress and the relief of her daughters. She encouraged them in their troubles with words of fire. She corrected their faults with unbelievable gentleness; and if she was obliged to punish them, it was always with so much love that they thanked her for it. As for temporal things, she did all she could so that necessities should not be lacking to them, lest sorrow and anxiety should turn them away from prayer and make the religious life unbearable to them. It happened one day that the town of Montefalco, and then the monastery of Santa Caterina, were in extreme want, even to having no bread. These poor women were somewhat troubled by it; but their trouble did not last long, for the holy Mother, having implored the help of heaven, the angels appeared visibly, bringing in baskets a great quantity of loaves, which served for their sustenance for several days and did not run out until the famine was over. She gave them on this occasion an admirable exhortation, to lead them to confidence in God, to the mortification of their senses, to love of the cross and of penance, to humility of mind and heart, and to all the other religious virtues.

To advance them in perfection she gave them admirable regulations: among others, to bend the knee a thousand times a day to adore the sovereign majesty of God; to banish from their parlour those great talkers among ladies who bring the world into the cloister; to keep their enclosure inviolably, and to speak to men only when necessary, with the curtain drawn and never alone; to have the thought of the Passion of the Son of God continually before their eyes, and often to put themselves in the painful posture of this divine Redeemer stretched on the cross. She did not allow the nuns to have any money of their own, but had all presents and all alms put in common. She ordered that, after the needs of the community, whatever money remained should be distributed to the poor; that each time they baked, the twelve finest loaves should be given to the poor in honour of the twelve Apostles; and that, for the relief of the souls in purgatory, the office of the dead should be said every day after the canonical hours. As for herself, she was so inflamed with divine love that she could not weary of weeping and of chastising herself for the offences and ingratitude of sinners. She sometimes wished to have a hundred bodies, or a body as big as a mountain, so as to make herself suffer in a hundred different places at once, both for her own sins, which were always very slight, and for the sins of all men.

Her humility was so deep that she regarded and treated herself only as the most imperfect and most wretched of all creatures. She endured only with great difficulty the honours and deference that subordinates owe their superiors. It seemed to her that everyone ought to arm himself to persecute and crush her, and she was even astonished that she was suffered for a moment on earth and not loaded with contempt, insults and reproaches. After holding the first place in choir, chapter and refectory, by a necessity inseparable from her office, she took the last for washing the dishes, sweeping, making the beds of the sick and serving the least of the novices. She ran herself down as much as she could, believing that nothing she could say to her own disadvantage would fall far short of what her unworthiness deserved. The poorest furniture, the most tattered clothes, the coarsest veils were the most pleasing to her. Her charity and mercy, not only towards her daughters but towards every kind of unfortunate person, cannot be worthily expressed. Her dinner and supper were usually for them, because, content with bread and water or a few mouthfuls of vegetables, she consecrated the rest to Jesus Christ, suffering and hungry in His members. She took particular care of the sick and of those with ulcers. She prepared remedies, which she sent to them; and if they were women, she uncovered their sores, washed and dressed them with wonderful care and kindness. So far from the stench turning her away from these duties, she made them her dearest delight. One day an extremely foul ulcer, horrible to see, turned her stomach and almost made her faint; to overcome this natural repugnance, after recovering a little, she had the courage not only to look steadily at this hideous sore but also to put her mouth to it and kiss it with affection. When one conquers oneself in this way, nothing more is hard in the spiritual life, and one is capable of the strongest impressions of grace and of the most heroic acts of Christianity.

What did she not do to convert sinners, to obtain mercy for them from God, to reconcile families and towns armed and set against one another, and to restore peace to provinces? Her prayers, joined with humiliation and penance, were so effective that she won countless victories in this way. One day she undertook the conversion of an impious man who, sunk in every kind of crime, despaired of pardon and of his salvation. The matter was very difficult, and at first she met only with great refusals at the feet of her Spouse; but she did so much by her fasts, vigils, bloody disciplines, groans and tears that she at last bent His justice and obtained grace for this desperate man. Indeed he came to find her while she was still praying for him, but with a spirit so humbled and a heart so contrite that it was easy to see that the finger of God, which is the Holy Spirit, had worked great things in his soul. It was by the help of her prayer that the inhabitants of Montefalco, Florence, Arezzo, Perugia, Spoleto and Reate, today Rieti, who had taken the field to destroy one another in horrible massacres, laid down their arms and went back home. Let us add here, to show the charity of our Blessed, that she was a dove without gall: not only did she readily forgive injuries, but she also did every kind of good to those who had outraged her or offended her community. Witness a certain notary, who had made away with all the title-deeds of her convent, and two young men who had entered it under arms to carry off their sister: she used all the credit she had with God and with men to deliver them from the violent death their crimes had justly deserved.

Very violent illnesses often tried her patience and showed its eminence and perfection; but the slander and false witness of the wicked against her innocence were still harsher trials. In the midst of these crosses she was like a rock which, amid waves and storms, does not shake or lose anything of its firmness. She loved those who hated her and prayed for those who persecuted her. She was never more cheerful than when she knew that she had been decried; and she was seen overwhelmed on one side by very violent bodily pains and on the other by horrible calumnies, without any of it weakening her constancy or giving her a moment of sorrow or anxiety. Her purity was more angelic than human, and she lived in the flesh as if she had no flesh. When she was only eleven, she uncovered herself a little while asleep, by inadvertence and without any act of her will; her sister reproved her for it as for a great fault, and she did a long and hard penance for it, as for a very enormous sin. From that time on she arranged herself for sleep in such a way that she could not uncover herself and that none of her limbs could touch another bare. Nor would she allow anyone, not even her daughters, to touch her on the least part of her body. In short, it was for the preservation of a virtue so

dear to her that she was so harsh to her own body and loaded herself with so many austerities and penances.

She was, so to speak, always at prayer. Besides the canonical hours and the office of the dead, at which she assisted with wonderful attention and reverence, she had several other vocal prayers that she said very exactly. All the rest of her time, after the indispensable duties of her office, she spent in mental prayer and in uniting herself in mind and heart with her Beloved. The adorable mystery of the Most Holy Trinity was the most frequent subject of her meditation, and God one day granted her the grace of showing it to her with a wonderful clarity, though far below that of the beatific vision. Her tenderness for the mystery of the Holy Sacrament of the altar, where she found her Spouse hidden under the veils of bread and wine, was beyond belief. She received Him bodily as often as she could; but it may be said that she received Him always spiritually: her hunger for this divine food was never satisfied, and her understanding, memory, will and heart were always open to receive it. This is what twice earned her Communion from the hand of Our Lord: once when her sister, to mortify her, had forbidden her the holy table; and another time when, having forgotten her mantle, she dared not approach the grille, because she did not think herself decently dressed. Her sighs and tears on these two occasions were extreme; but her Spouse soon changed them into an unspeakable consolation, when He placed in her mouth Him whom her heart desired, so that she could say with the Bride: “I have found the Beloved of my heart; I hold Him and will never let Him go.”

The Passion of Our Lord was also one of the sweetest objects of her contemplation and affections. She could not think of it without her heart breaking with grief and her eyes melting into torrents of tears. She desired to see in spirit everything that had happened in the course of that bloody tragedy, so as to share in the sufferings her Spouse had endured there. She asked it and was heard. The whole Passion was shown to her as distinctly as if it had taken place before her eyes, and she felt all its pains one after the other, with sufferings beyond words. Her head felt sharp, piercing pricks, as if it had been crowned with long thorns. Her feet and hands were pierced with pain as sensibly as if great nails had been driven right through them with the violence of a hammer. Her saliva had no less sourness and bitterness than if it had been gall, wormwood or vinegar, and her body was as bruised as if four or five strong executioners had laid on her with all their might with whips and scourges until they were weary. The shame of nakedness, though she was clothed, the anguish of heart capable of making one sweat blood and water, the dread of death and the other distresses of the Passion were impressed on her, so that she became a living image of her suffering and crucified Saviour.

She invited all her daughters to practise these lovable devotions, from which she drew such great fruit; and when she spoke to them of them she did so with such unction that they were all sensibly moved. In one of her conferences, when she had dwelt a little on the sweetness one feels in meditating on the sufferings of Jesus Christ, a sister of the company replied that she meditated on them assiduously and yet felt none of the consolations she held out to them. This remark stirred our Saint and gave her some feeling, we know not what, of vanity or impatience. She did not consent to it, but she did not check it with all the promptness and care required by the fidelity of a well-beloved bride. Her Spouse was displeased, and by a terrible judgment, for a fault so slight and so imperceptible, He abandoned her to eleven years of dryness, languor, interior desolation, weariness, scruples, temptations and illnesses, without a continual redoubling of fasts, hair shirts, disciplines, sighs and tears, and countless humiliations and interior self-abasements being able to soften His justice. She had to go through it: no more visions or revelations for her, no more tender and loving colloquies with her Beloved, no more relish in the service of God, no more openness in prayer, no more devout and moral assurance of being in grace; nothing any more but coldness and rebuffs from Him whom she loved so tenderly, and, instead of the sweet thoughts of our holy Mysteries with which her soul used to be filled, nothing but impure imaginings, impulses to blasphemy, feelings of despair and a thousand other abominable impressions that hell can produce or suggest. That was Clare’s purgatory, in which, without her being aware of it, her passions and her least imperfections were destroyed, her virtues were perfected, her humility was consummated, and her love for God received a wonderful increase. For what is admirable in an abandonment

of such long duration is that this faithful Lover remained constant and unshaken in the service of her Saviour: so many temptations and evils could never tear from her heart either a half-consent to sin, or impatience at seeing herself so ill-treated, or discouragement in her exercises, or a lessening of fervour, or a moment of weariness and melancholy. She bore her pain with sorrow, lamented her state with unceasing tears, and asked for the prayers of all devout persons to bend the anger of her offended Lover. Like the Bride, she had Him told by the watchmen of the city, that is, by her confessors and directors, that she languished with love; but this was not by way of complaint: it was with an annihilated love and a loving annihilation that wounded the heart of Him whom she sought, though He gave her no sign of it.

At last, after this long time of abandonment, He returned to her and brought her back, with more sweetness and familiarity than ever, into His divine cellars. She was warned of this return by some visions, and was prepared for it by the beginnings of caresses, which seemed to her all the sweeter and more charming because for eleven years the delights of heaven, as well as those of earth, had been entirely unknown to her. After that there were nothing but ecstasies, raptures, visions and revelations, which were followed by great miracles and by a life already wholly heavenly and wholly like that of eternity. In the process of her canonisation there is a whole book that speaks of nothing but these extraordinary favours; but we should be too long if we tried to relate even the least part of them here. We will say only that one Christmas night she saw distinctly the whole mystery of the humble and glorious birth of the Son of God; and that, from the Epiphany until the Purification, she was in a continual ecstasy in which Jesus Christ showed Himself to her in the glory He has on the throne of His justice, with countless souls, of which very few went up to heaven without passing through the flames of purgatory. Some were plunged into them to pay the penalty of their slackness, and others were thrown by the devils into the pool of sulphur and fire, with so terrible a noise that it seemed as if the whole universe were falling in with them. She learned, in this rapture of twenty-seven days, that she had fifteen years still to live, and in fact she lived all that time. It was at this same time that Our Lord appeared to her again carrying His cross on His shoulders, and said to her: “For a long time, My daughter, I have been seeking on earth a firm and solid place where I can plant My cross, and I have found none more fitting than your heart; you must therefore receive it, and suffer it to take root there.” No more charming and lovable proposal could have been made to her. She opened her whole heart to receive so precious a plant, which can bear only fruits of salvation; and it is believed that from then on the marks of the Passion were imprinted there, as they were found after her death, as we shall tell at the end of this account. From that time Blessed Clare spent whole weeks and months without eating.

She was endowed with so excellent a gift of prophecy that she knew and foretold distinctly the things that were to happen. Thus she foretold to Cardinal James Colonna his deposition from the cardinalate and his restoration. This cardinal, after being restored, made her a present of a finger of Saint Anne, whose flesh was quite rosy. In the same way she foretold to the bishop of Spoleto, her diocesan, that he would be raised to a higher rank; and in fact he was promoted to the dignity of cardinal and bishop of Ostia. She also sometimes had the gift of tongues, speaking with foreigners in their mother tongue, although she had learned only Italian. The secrets of consciences were known to her, and she read in them the most hidden sins that sacrilegious persons had concealed in confession. She showed this clearly to one of her nuns who had held back a shameful crime and could not bring herself to declare it. In short, this excellent abbess had an infused knowledge that revealed to her the most sublime reasons of our mysteries and made her able to answer the strongest objections of the heretics.

By this knowledge she confounded and disarmed a heretical priest of the sect of the Fraticelli. Under a fine appearance of piety, which made him regarded as a saint and an apostle, he came to the grille of her monastery to corrupt her faith and that of all her daughters, persuading them that the liberty of the Gospel allowed them to do anything, and even to plunge into the most infamous vices. She attacked him with a vigour worthy of a doctor of the Church and refuted his blasphemies so learnedly that he was forced to

withdraw with the shame of having been beaten by a woman. She overcame with the same ease the devil, who appeared to her to inspire the same errors in her; but although she shed tears continually and did very great penances to obtain the destruction of this heresy, she did not have the consolation of seeing it, and it ended only some years after her death.

These admirable actions brought her great renown: everywhere people spoke only of the holiness of Clare of Montefalco. Her miracles raised this esteem still further, for she raised two dead persons to life and cured sufferers from fever, scrofula, epilepsy and other kinds of infirmity; she also drove the devil out of persons who were tormented by him. When the time of her death was near, Our Lord warned her that she would soon receive the reward of her labours; that she had committed no faults that had not been entirely wiped out by penance; and that her abandonment of eleven years had drawn a thousand persons from eternal damnation. From that moment she was filled with so many delights that she was already half in heaven. She was given the sacraments of the Eucharist and Extreme Unction, which she received with the ardour of a seraph. The angels, and the very Sovereign of the angels, visited her; and the devil, who had the effrontery to present himself before her, received from it only eternal confusion. She assured her daughters that the cross of Jesus was at the bottom of her heart and that they would find it engraved there. In a kind of rapture she cried out that the reward being prepared for her was too great. At last, after exhorting her community once more, she gave back her most pure spirit to Our Lord, to enjoy His presence for ever. At the same hour several persons saw her go up to heaven, all radiant with glory and accompanied by a band of blessed spirits. Her face remained as fresh and rosy as it had been during her life.

As she had told her daughters that they would find the cross of Jesus in her heart, they resolved to open it to witness this truth for themselves. It was a rather bold thing for women, whose natural tenderness hardly allows such operations. Nevertheless they carried it out, and, having opened her breast, they found there a heart almost as big as the head of a small child. Respect for this venerable heart made them deliberate whether they should cut it open; but a holy curiosity prevailed over that respect. They cut the heart through the middle into two equal parts, and then they saw on one side the figure of Jesus Christ crucified and pierced with a lance in the right side, with that of His crown of thorns, His nails, His lance and the sponge with which He was given vinegar to drink; on the other, the figure of the pillar and of the scourge, made of five thongs, which served for His scourging: all formed in a wonderful manner from the fibres and the small nerves of the heart. So surprising a marvel could not remain shut up in this convent: the nuns themselves informed their bishop of it, who, giving it little credence, sent his vicar general to them to examine its truth. The vicar general went only in a spirit of contradiction, persuaded that it was nothing but a nuns' fancy; and his haughty and contrary temper even led him, when he saw these marks of the Passion so clearly engraved, to cut them away with a razor so that no more would be thought of them. But he was greatly surprised to find them imprinted in the same way on the new surface his razor had made in so precious a heart. At this he gave in and acknowledged the miracle of the loving power of God. The nuns, who had also found our Saint's gall bladder extremely large and hard, begged the vicar general further to allow the physicians he had brought with him to open it. This was done, and three small balls appeared, as big as hazelnuts, ash-coloured and extremely hard. God inspired them to weigh them, and it was found that these balls, so alike that they could not be told apart, were also of equal weight; and yet each one weighed as much as the other two, and as all three put together, without anyone being able to tell where this equality came from. This was a wonderful figure of the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, which our Blessed had deeply imprinted in her mind. Finally, a third marvel: the blood that flowed from the incisions in the heart of this incomparable virgin has remained without corruption and in the form of blood; and it has even been seen since to boil when the Church was threatened with some great misfortune, as Bollandus testifies happened before the island of Cyprus was taken by the Turks. There can still be seen at Montefalco this heart enriched with the signs of the Passion; these three balls of equal weight, one of which, however, split down the middle in the year that heresy entered the kingdom of France; and this clotted blood, together with the whole body. Many miracles have been worked

through her intercession since her death; the account of them is found in the authors of her life, who are very numerous, both of the Order of Saint Augustine and of that of Saint Francis.

That death took place on 17 August 1308, under the pontificate of Clement V, successor of Boniface VIII. Eight years later Pope John XXII issued two bulls ordering the necessary inquiries to be made for her canonisation. These two Bulls state that the Saint was of the Order of Saint Augustine. Pope Urban VIII allowed all the religious, men and women, of that Order to celebrate her Mass and office. Abraham Bzovius speaks of her at length in his Annals.

Pope Clement X approved the proper lessons of her office and had her name entered in the Roman Martyrology. The cause of the Blessed was taken up again under Pope Clement XII. Finally, on 7 September 1850, the Sacred Congregation of Rites declared that the theological and cardinal virtues of Blessed Clare were established in the heroic degree. His Holiness Pope Pius IX confirmed this sentence on the 13th of the same month. The apostolic process on the miracles of Blessed Clare, begun on 22 October 1850, was completed on 21 November 1851 and approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on 25 September 1852. Pope Pius IX confirmed this decree on the 30th of the same month.

In her images Saint Clare holds in her hand a pair of scales, one pan of which holds one little ball and the other two. When she died, tradition relates, three small solid globes were found in her heart. This was regarded, as we have just seen, as an image of her devotion to the Holy Trinity; and indeed one of these globules, no matter which, placed in one pan of the scales, exactly balanced the other two.

We have completed Father Giry's account with the *Analecta Juris Pontificii*.

Our Lady of Liesse, in the Diocese of Soissons

This sanctuary of Mary was founded in the twelfth century by three knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, natives of the neighbourhood of Laon, in fulfilment of a vow they had made to the Mother of God after a signal favour of which she had been the dispenser to them. The crowd of pilgrims soon became so great that, towards the end of the fourteenth century, the original sanctuary, now too small, had to be pulled down. It was then that the chapter of Laon had the present church built, largely at its own expense, except for the elegant doorway in flamboyant Gothic style, which was built only a hundred years later.

From that time Our Lady of Liesse never ceased to see multitudes of pilgrims kneeling on her flagstones, not only from the diocese but from foreign lands. The kings of France did not let themselves be outdone by their peoples in devotion to the Mother of God. In 1146 Louis VII, before leaving for the crusade preached by Saint Bernard, came there on pilgrimage; from 1422 to 1461 Charles VII came there several times to commend to the Virgin his kingdom invaded by the English; from 1461 to 1483 Louis XI went there four times and founded a Mass there for every Saturday. René, king of Sicily, sent a considerable offering; from 1515 to 1547 Francis I made several pilgrimages there to thank Mary, both for his deliverance from the prison of Spain and for his victories over his enemies. Henry II and Queen Catherine de' Medici, Francis II, Charles IX and Henry III followed the example of their predecessors. On 14 October 1618 Anne of Austria and Louis XIII asked Mary there for an heir to the throne; for twenty-two years they continued to come there to solicit the same grace, and at last they were heard. They had a son, who was Louis XIV. The great king never forgot the Virgin to whom he owed his birth. He came himself to kneel at her feet in 1652, 1654, 1673 and 1680. The pious queen Marie Leszczy■ska in her turn had prayers offered to Our Lady of Liesse for the blessing of her marriage, and later for a happy delivery; and on 4 September 1729 she gave France a Dauphin.

During the troubles of the Revolution the pilgrimage was suspended for a time, but once peace had been restored to the Church it was not long in regaining favour. In 1821 the Duchess of Berry was seen there, and in 1826 the Duchess of Angoulême; in 1856 Napoleon III, in fulfilment of a private vow, gave five thousand

francs, which were used to buy a bell; and the number of pilgrims who go there each year is reckoned at fifty thousand. It was only right that so celebrated a Virgin should receive the honours of coronation. Pius IX was happy to grant them; and on 18 August 1857 the great ceremony took place in the presence of at least fifty thousand people, nine prelates, more than eight hundred priests and three hundred members of the conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Notre-Dame de France, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

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[1] Saint Firminus, eleventh bishop of the Church of Metz, a Greek by nation, succeeded Saint Adelphus. He was as remarkable for his learning as for his virtue. After giving great proofs of holiness, the account of which has not come down to us, he fell gently asleep in Our Lord and was buried in the crypt of Saint-Clément. Later his relics were taken out of that crypt and placed in the upper part of the building. They were kept there in a shrine with other holy relics until the end of the eighteenth century, when they were destroyed. — *Proper of Metz.*

[2] Cf. *Origines de l'Église de Poitiers*, by the abbé Auber. Poitiers, 1866.

[3] Cf. *La Seine-Inférieure historique et archéologique*, by the abbé Cochet. Paris, 1866.

[4] See his life on this day.

[5] See his life at 16 August.

[6] See his life at 19 July.

[7] See 3 May, vol. V, pp. 276–289.

[8] Constantine is not counted among the Saints by the compiler of the Roman Martyrology; but he is named in the synaxaries of the Greeks under 21 May. His name is also read in several calendars of England, Sicily, Calabria, Bohemia, Muscovy and Syria.

19 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, Saint Julius, senator[1] and martyr, who was handed over to the judge Vitellius and thrown by him into prison, and then, by order of the emperor Commodus, was beaten with clubs until he gave up his spirit. His body was buried in the cemetery of Calepodius, on the Aurelian Way. 192. — In Cilicia, the birth into heaven of Saint Andrew, tribune, and of many soldiers his companions, who, after winning over the Persians a victory due to a miracle, were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ; accused as Christians, they were massacred in the passes of Mount Taurus by the army of the governor Seleucus, under the emperor Maximian.[2] About 300. — In Palestine, Saint Timothy, martyr, who, after overcoming several tortures, was burned over a slow fire during the persecution of Diocletian, under the governor Urbanus. Saint Thecla and Saint Agapius suffered in the same country: Thecla was exposed to the beasts and, torn to pieces by their bites, went to join her heavenly Spouse; Agapius, after enduring several torments, was kept for greater combats.[3] 304. — At Anagni, Saint Magnus, bishop and martyr, put to death during the persecution of Decius. About 250. — At Brignoles, in Provence, the death of Saint LOUIS, bishop of Toulouse, of the Order of Friars Minor, famous for his holiness and his miracles. His body, carried to Marseilles, was honourably buried in the church of the Cordeliers. 1297. — In the diocese of Sisteron, Saint DONATUS, priest and confessor, who from his childhood received wonderful graces from God, led the anchorite's life for many years and, all shining with the glory of miracles, took his flight to Christ. 522. — In Berry, Saint Marianus, confessor.[4] — At Mantua, Saint Rufinus, confessor.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Le Mans, Saint Hadouin or Chadouin, bishop, named on the following day. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint ELAPHIUS, seventeenth bishop of that see and confessor. 587. — Near Tulle, in the church of La Guène, Saint CALMINIUS or Calmine, duke of Auvergne and confessor, founder of the abbey of Saint-Chaffre, in the diocese of Le Puy. Sixth century. — At Avignon, Saint Magnus, bishop of that see and

confessor. A native of Avignon, he was first governor of that city, which he left after the death of his wife Gondaltrude to go to the monastery of Lérins, near Agricola, his son; there he was ordained priest. Shortly afterwards, the see of Avignon having fallen vacant (656), he was promoted to that post on account of his virtues. His patience was admirable, as was his charity to the poor. He restored ecclesiastical discipline in his diocese, subscribed the council of Chalon-sur-Saône (650) and gave all his goods to his Church. His body was laid in the cathedral of Avignon; Pope John XXII translated it (1321) to the church of Saint-Agricol, where it still is today. 660. — At Coutances, the feast of Saint Joachim, husband of Saint Anne and father of the most holy Virgin, whose life we gave on 26 July. — In the diocese of Montpellier, Saint Venustus, bishop of Agde and martyr. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint Rusticus, bishop of that see and martyr. Born at Albi, he had Salvius for father and Archenefreda for mother, and was first chaplain to King Lothair, then archdeacon of Rodez. As he carried out his duties as bishop firmly and had no scruple about branding the wicked whenever the occasion arose, he made enemies, who hired criminals; they had him put to death and threw his body into the Lot. He had occupied the episcopal see of Cahors for seven years and some months. — At Algiers, Saint Alypius, bishop of Tagaste in Africa, whose life we gave on 15 August. 431. — At Orléans, the apparition of the holy Cross to the emperor Constantine. We spoke of it at length on 3 May. — In the diocese of Soissons, Saint Arnulf, bishop and confessor, whose life we gave on 15 August. 1087. — At Meaux, the memory of Saint Philomena, virgin at San Severino, in the March of Ancona, cited by the Roman Martyrology on 5 July. Sixth century. — In the diocese of Arles, Saint BERTULF or Bertoul, monk of Luxeuil and third abbot of Bobbio. 640. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Blessed Burchard or Burcard, archbishop of that see and confessor. He governed his flock in holiness, was remarkable for his great humility, and attended (1025) the council of Auch. Rudolf III, king of Burgundy, who loved him greatly, gave for his sake to the archbishops of Vienne the title of count, which Blessed Burchard was the first to bear and which passed to several of his successors. 1025. — At Vannes, Saint Guennin, also called Guinnin and Guin, bishop of that see and confessor, whose body was laid in the cathedral church beside that of Saint Vincent. About 622. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Igny (*Igniacum*), in the diocese of Châlons, Blessed GUERRIC, abbot. About 1157. — In the diocese of Laval, Saint Fraimbaud, confessor, whose life we gave on 16 August. 532. — In the diocese of Verdun, Saint Arnulf or Arnould, bishop of Metz and confessor, whose life we gave on 18 July. 641. — At Lyons, the memory of Saint Badulf or Badour, abbot of Ainay (*Athanacum*, Order of Saint Benedict) and confessor. About 900. — At Paris, Saint Crescentia, virgin, praised by Saint Gregory of Tours. — At Toulon, Saints Mandrianus and Flavian, martyrs. About the sixth century.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Basilians. — Near Messina, Saint Bartholomew, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil, founder of the great monastery of the Holy Saviour, famous for his admirable penance and his holiness. Twelfth century.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Among the Canons of the Lateran, Saint Rufinus, bishop of the Marsi, who received the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Maximian on the 11th of this month. About 286.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — At the monastery of the Most Holy Saviour of Acquapagana, in the diocese of Camerino, Blessed Angelus, confessor, a Camaldolese, who, worn out by a painful illness and by his austerities, died a death precious in the sight of the Lord.[5] 1313.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Brignoles, in Provence, Saint Louis, bishop of Toulouse, confessor, son of Charles II, king of Sicily and Jerusalem, of the Order of Friars Minor, famous for the holiness of his life and his miracles; his body was carried from there to Marseilles, and soon afterwards to Valencia, where it is honoured with great veneration in the metropolitan church. 1297. — The same day, the

Octave of Saint Clare, virgin.[6] 1308. — On the Saturday before the Sunday following the Octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the feast of the Sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At Brignoles, in Provence, Saint Louis, bishop, etc.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — At Brignoles, in Provence, Saint Louis, etc.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Camillus de Lellis, whose feast is on 18 July.[7] 1614.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Cracow, in Poland, Saint Hyacinth, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, placed among the Saints by Clement VIII. His death is marked on the 16th of this month.[8] 1257.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Near Nuremberg, in Bavaria, Saint Sebald, solitary, of whom nothing certain is known except that before the so-called Reformation he was held in great veneration by the inhabitants of Nuremberg, who regarded him as one of the first apostles of that region. The church of Saint Sebald in Nuremberg is very famous, and the Saint's tomb, which the artist Peter Fleischer represented in bronze, weighs, it is said, 157 hundredweight. There is a proper Mass in honour of Saint Sebald approved by Pope Martin V. Eighth century. — Near Monte-Corvo, in Portugal, the dedication of Our Lady of Jerusalem, a church built in imitation of that of Jerusalem, the plan of which the Blessed Virgin herself is said to have given. — At Amasea, today Amasieh, a town of Asiatic Turkey in the pashalik of Sivas, the holy martyrs Philo, Rufinus, Leontius, Theodulus, Cyril, Zelatus, Timothy, Gaddas or Gaddes, Romulus and Silvius, cited by Saint Jerome. — Among the Greeks, Saint Eutychian, soldier, and Saint Strategius, martyrs, who perished in the flames. — At the monastery of Sant Pere de Besalú (*Monasterium S. Petri Besaluensis*), in the diocese of Gerona, in Catalonia, Saint Marinus, bishop and confessor. — At Arezzo, a town of Tuscany, Saint Satyrus, bishop and martyr, and his companions, whose bodies rest in the cathedral church. About the middle of the fourth century. — In England, Saint Clinclance or Clitanée, king and martyr. A young woman, sought in marriage by lords of the country, answered their entreaties that she would marry no one but the most pious King Clinctance. Disappointed in their hopes, the lords resolved to rid themselves of a troublesome rival. So they hid in a forest through which the king was to pass on a hunting party, and murdered him. A church was built on the place of his martyrdom. About the fifth century. — In Ireland, Saint Mochta or Mochtée, bishop of Louth and confessor, a native of Great Britain. It is related that an angel taught him the first elements of learning; that he went to complete his studies in Rome, where he was consecrated bishop; and that he then returned to Ireland with twelve companions, who with him laid the foundations of a monastery. This house became very famous: Mochta gathered a considerable number of religious there and himself gave them a Rule. Our Saint reached a very great age: some hagiographers give him three hundred years of life; the Bollandists think it should be reduced to a hundred years, which he spent in the exercises of the most austere mortification. About 535. — At Bobbio, a town of the kingdom of Italy, on the Trebbia, Saint Bertulf or Bertoul, named in the Martyrology of France of this day. — In the March of Ancona, Blessed Peter of Gualdo, solitary, of the Third Order of Saint Francis. 1367.

Saint Calminius or Calmine, Duke of Aquitaine and Hermit, Founder of the Abbey of Saint-Chaffre, in the Diocese of Le Puy

Sixth century.

Flee the world: it brings forth nothing but darkness; seek the light in solitude: the true light shines in the desert.

Saint Peter Damian.

Saint Calminius or Calmelius, commonly Saint Calmine, patron of the church of La Guène, near Tulle, in Lower Limousin, came of a senatorial family of Auvergne. His father and mother, knowing that almost the whole course of life depends on the good or bad education received in youth, did not fail to give him excellent masters, who inspired him at once with a taste for letters and with a taste for virtue. He lost such religious parents too soon; yet he never forgot their salutary instructions, nor their good examples, which were even more effective than their instructions. So, though still very young, he made excellent use of the very considerable wealth of which their death had put him in possession. He used it much less to satisfy his own tastes or needs than to promote the glory of God, from whom he held it, and to relieve the needs of the poor, for whom he thought he had received it. Thus he passed, not only in innocence but in the practice of every kind of virtue and good work, the most critical age of life, which nearly always becomes the reef on which an improvident and thoughtless youth is wrecked. It was a happy omen for the rest of his life; and indeed he had hardly reached mature age when he was made duke or governor of a considerable part of Aquitaine, that is, it seems, of Auvergne and Velay, not by right of succession but by the free choice, based on his merit, of one of our kings of the first race. From then on he fixed his residence at Clermont, capital of the first of these provinces, and gave that city, or rather the whole of France, the rare example of a governor solely occupied with the good of the peoples placed under him; of a man full of religion and zeal for the glory of God; in short, of a rich man extremely sensitive to the misery of the poor and leaving nothing undone to relieve it. Calminius was indeed from that time, like the holy man Job of old, the eye of the blind, the foot of the lame, the father of the poor, the support of the widow and the orphan. Very far from setting his heart on his riches and making himself their slave, he used them, on the contrary, as a wise and prudent master who knows how to dispense them at the right moment to all who are in need, and to turn them to his own sanctification.

Yet, in spite of so many virtues and good works, this holy man found that he was not doing enough for God. His heart was not fully satisfied, and he secretly longed for a more retired and more perfect life. At last, as the attraction to solitude and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit grew from day to day, he no longer hesitated to leave his country and his kin to withdraw into the desert. The manuscript breviary of La Guène, which tells us this in the office of Saint Calminius, does not give the name of this desert. But the common tradition of the inhabitants of that parish, which formerly had the title of town, and of the peoples round about, a tradition that deserves all the less to be despised because it rests on monuments that still existed before the Revolution, tells us that our Saint came to lead the hermit's life in a very secluded and cramped grotto. It is hollowed out on the east side, half-way up a barren and steep mountain on the road from Tulle to La Guène, at about an equal distance from each, whose foot is watered on all sides by the Valouse and the Montane, two small streams that flow into the Corrèze not far from there. This grotto still bears the name of Saint-Calmine today, and an image of this great servant of God in a hermit's habit used to be seen there. In front of it was a chapel where Mass was said, above all on his feast day, when people came in crowds from La Guène and the surrounding country. This chapel had been built nearly two hundred years ago by M. Melon of Tulle, to whom the mountain belonged, on the ruins of another, older and smaller one, built as early as the year 1621 through the care of a priest named Léonard Lafon, called de Vincens, who was appointed its chaplain.

It was, to all appearances, in this grotto, which in the time of Saint Calminius must have been very solitary and far from the approach of men, that our Saint, who sought only to hide from their eyes, went to conceal himself, or rather to bury himself alive. There he began to lead a life as meritorious and as sweet to the man of grace as it must have seemed hard and painful to the man of nature. We say that he *began* to lead the hermit's life there, because it seems that, either to flee out of humility a country where the reputation of his holiness was beginning to spread, or to obey a new inspiration of grace, he left Lower Limousin and withdrew to the province of Velay, which he knew perfectly, having been its governor. That grace, after applying him wholly to the care of his own sanctification, was preparing him from afar, without his suspecting it, to work for the salvation of his neighbour. There he had as companion in his solitude a

venerable and wise old man, whose disciple he no doubt wished to become, to learn more perfectly the secrets of the interior life. Giving himself up without reserve to the attraction of grace, he fulfilled to the letter what the prophet Jeremiah says of the true solitary: that, keeping his soul in rest and silence, he will rise above himself by assiduous contemplation and an ardent love of heavenly things. After working for his own sanctification, he undertook to procure that of his brethren by holy foundations. With this in view, in the diocese of Le Puy, on land belonging to him, at the foot of a very high mountain called

Monsencius and near the place called Villars, he founded a very fine monastery, which he called Calminiac after his own name.[1] Not content with having built it with great magnificence, he enriched its church with ornaments for divine service and with precious relics of the Saints, and had it consecrated under the invocation of the apostle Saint Peter. Then, all on fire with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, he went through all the neighbouring places and drew into his monastery all the servants of God he could, to make fervent religious of them. So that they should not be forced to return to dealings with the world and the entanglement of business, he gave them great possessions to provide for all their needs. He even fixed his dwelling among them for a time, though without changing his dress or giving up the administration of his property.

But as the piety and fervour of Calminius grew daily in this peaceful dwelling, favoured by the recollection and regularity that reigned there, he felt urged by an ardent desire to go on pilgrimage to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles, and above all that of the apostle Saint Peter, for whom he had a very special devotion all his life. It is easier to imagine than to express all that so pure a soul, so on fire with love for God, felt in such a city and at the sight of the countless religious monuments it contains. On his return he visited the monastery of Lérins and obtained from the holy Abbot who governed it a number of fervent religious for his community of Calminiac, among others one named Eudo, who was destined to govern it as Abbot and who has deserved to be numbered among the Saints.

Saint Calminius, after enjoying for some time the innocent satisfaction of seeing his monastery prosper, resolved to do similar good elsewhere, and turned his eyes by preference to his native land, that is, to Auvergne, which he had governed as duke, as well as Velay; for he wished to provide for the spiritual good of these two provinces, as he had once worked for their temporal happiness. To this end he withdrew to Lower Auvergne, the most fertile and at the same time the most pleasant part of that province, and chose the town of Mozac, two leagues from Clermont and still nearer to Riom, to found his second monastery, which he had built nobly and at great cost. Having gathered there, as in the first, a considerable number of persons called to the religious state, he brought in, to train them in monastic life, old monks who had long practised its exercises, whether he took them from his first monastery, or from that of Saint-Cyricus, commonly Saint-Cirgue, which observed the statutes of Lérins, or from some other religious house of Auvergne; for there were already a good number of them in that province. And so that nothing should disturb the holy rest of these children of the cloister, he gave them many estates and assigned them ample revenues, which put them beyond want. He also adorned their church and furnished it with everything necessary for divine worship, without neglecting for all that the care and relief of the poor, his old friends: thus showing at once his zeal for the glory of God and his devotion to the service of his neighbour, that is, the twofold charity in which the fullness of the law consists.

Although our Saint had done so much for his monastery of Mozac, it seemed to him that something would always be lacking to his favourite work as long as he did not enrich this house with relics of the Saints. So he undertook the journey to Rome a second time to obtain some, and explained to Pope John III, who then governed the universal Church, that he intended to have the church of Mozac dedicated in honour of the prince of the Apostles. The Pope was as surprised as he was edified by the extraordinary zeal that had led a man of this rank, a simple layman, to undertake so long and painful a journey for the sole purpose of acquiring such treasures, whose value the world usually feels little; and, charmed by his candour and piety,

he willingly granted him holy relics. Provided with this treasure, which he valued a thousand times more than gold and precious stones, the Saint returned to France and passed through the Agenais, where he no doubt had some possessions. Learning in the capital of that province that the body of the illustrious Saint Caprasius was kept there, who had once suffered martyrdom there for the name of Jesus Christ, he showed so keen a desire to obtain some of his relics that his entreaties could not be refused. He was given a whole arm of the holy Martyr. Then, his wishes fulfilled, he set out in all haste for Mozac, where he was received with extreme joy by the people and the religious alike. At his request the bishop of Clermont consecrated the new church and dedicated the high altar under the invocation of Saint Peter and of Saint Caprasius.[2]

After such happy successes, nothing remained for Saint Calminius but to prepare himself closely for death, which, given his age, his austerities and the labours that had filled the whole course of his life, could not be very far off. And it was to this immediate preparation that he devoted the time he still lived. He never again left Mozac, and gave himself up entirely to prayer, contemplation and all the other exercises of Christian piety, begging earnestly for the grace of final perseverance. At last, when the moment marked by the Lord from all eternity for giving His servant the crown of justice had come, he fell dangerously ill and, soon brought to extremity, died on 19 August, full of merits and good works, after receiving the last sacraments with all the fervour that could be expected of a Saint who had shown so much of it since his childhood.

His body was buried behind the high altar of Mozac, where it remained for many years, during which the Saint often made those who invoked him with confidence and devotion feel the effect of his credit with God.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The shrine that held the body of Saint Calminius having been broken open and pillaged in 1126, to forestall fresh outrages to which it might be exposed in Auvergne in those times of war, it was carried, whole or in part, to the little town of La Guène, in whose parish lay the grotto that had served as the Saint's retreat when, giving himself entirely to God, he began to live as a hermit. It seems too that it was laid under the pavement of the church, in a crypt or kind of tomb. What is certain is that it was found there forty-six years later, that is, in 1172, as is shown by the following inscription, written on parchment and kept in the shrine of Saint Calminius, which stands beside the high altar of the church of La Guène: "Here is the body of blessed Calminius, confessor, which was found in his tomb, which is beneath the church of La Guène, near the high altar, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1172."

Two hundred and ninety years after the finding of his body just related, the crypt in which it had been put back needed repair; the precious deposit was taken out again and replaced almost at once with great pomp and solemnity. Later a rather fine shrine was made, covered with gilded copper, in which the Saint's relics were enclosed, and it was placed with honour behind the high altar. From there it used formerly to be taken down in times of extreme drought, to be carried in procession to a spring called the spring of Saint-Calmine, not very far from the Saint's grotto, into which the shrine was plunged. This drew a great concourse of people, who prayed fervently and sometimes succeeded in turning away the anger of heaven and obtaining rain. Since then it has been thought fit to stop this, and the shrine has been placed on the right side of the same altar, opposite a shrine containing other relics, which stands on the Gospel side.

Extracted from the *Saints du Limousin*, by Labiche de Reignefort.

Saint Donatus of Orléans, Priest and Solitary near Sisteron

522. — Pope: Hormisdas. — King of France: Childebert I.

> *Ama solitudinem, fuge multitudinem, ne comprehendaris in verbo, ne confundaris in facto.*
>
> *Love solitude and flee contact with men, lest you sin in word or in deed.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Donatus was born at Orléans towards the end of the fifth century. His intelligence was so precocious that when he was barely three years old his parents gave him a master to introduce him to human learning. He soon knew the psalter by heart, and at twelve, say the legend-writers, he could have recited the whole Bible, so prodigious was his memory.

This keen inclination and this wonderful ease in study, joined to the love of virtue, rapidly developed in him the fruitful seeds of holiness and learning. The bishop of Orléans, struck by the astonishing gifts of the young Donatus, and still more by the gentleness of his character, which had earned him the surname of Child of God, placed him among his clerics; then, in consideration of his rare merit, he conferred the diaconate on him before the canonical age, and shortly afterwards the order of priesthood. The holy young man showed himself worthy, by his maturity, of the high confidence his bishop then placed in him. But while he gave himself to the functions of the sacred ministry with the zeal and ardour that priestly charity puts in the heart of a holy priest, he heard in the depths of his soul the voice of the Lord saying to him, as once to Abraham: “Go forth out of your country, leave your kindred, and pass into the land that I shall show you.”

Donatus believed this word. After going to pray at the glorious tomb of Saint Martin of Tours, strengthened in his heroic resolution, he tore himself from the embraces of his family and from the fatherly affection of his bishop, bade farewell to the city of Orléans and went without anxiety or fear in search of that other homeland which the finger of God would show him: a magnificent example of total abandonment into the hands of Providence by a soul that pursues the kingdom of heaven through the tears of a tender mother and the embraces of a grieving father.

Donatus, called to the desert, took the road to it, and, plunging into the immense forests that covered the country, came at last to the mountain of Lure. The young solitary had found his Thebaid: it was a wild spot, surrounded by thick woods, where no human sound could interrupt the recollection of the contemplative soul. Happy and full of gratitude, he took possession of this deep solitude in the name of his God and pitched his tent there. But isolation does not spare a man temptations and trials: it is even when he is alone that he is exposed to the most terrible combats. The devil soon taught Donatus this. Hardly had he settled in the midst of this desert when a dragon of prodigious size came forward, giving horrible hisses and belching whirlwinds of smoke; around it rose a countless multitude of enormous serpents and hideous reptiles; the whole forest seemed to move. Before this strange spectacle the new Antony remained calm. He prostrated himself, raised his prayers to God and implored the help of heaven against the powers of hell; and the angel of darkness, overcome by the simple faith of the devout solitary, ceased to terrify him. The sinister phantoms that had beset him a moment before vanished, and he could enjoy in peace the calm and rest of his mysterious retreat, in the very den of the monster, which he made his cell.

Donatus divided his time between psalmody, reading, contemplation and acts of rigorous penance. He had the bare earth for a bed, a rough hair shirt for clothing, wild fruit to appease his hunger and the water of the torrent to quench his thirst. And so the good odour of this life and of the Saint’s virtues soon spread far and wide, like the sweet fragrance of the humble plants of the mountains.

But the voice that had called the young priest into the desert was for a time to send him back into the labours and dangers of the apostolic ministry. It made itself heard, bidding him leave the joys of his beloved solitude and hasten to the help of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He knew only how to obey. So he came out of his retreat; he showed himself with that recollected and mortified bearing which makes an impression, and he passed on to others the heavenly fire that consumed him. An abundant harvest offered itself to his zeal. Of the peoples of the neighbouring districts, some were still buried in the darkness of idolatry, others were Christians in name only and had fallen into an abject materialism or a deadly indifference. The young Apostle set to work. With a gentle and manly eloquence that carried conviction, repentance and love into hearts, he preached the truth of the cross, the falsehood of idolatry, the mercies of the Saviour, the mysteries of His sorrowful Passion, His sacred wounds, His outstretched arms, His bleeding feet, His head crowned

with thorns, His pierced heart. He recalled the beauty of virtue, the shortness of pleasures, the eternity of heavenly glory. And he spoke with such penetrating unction, and God gave such power to the efforts of his zeal, that the remains of idolatry disappeared and the vigour of Christianity flourished again on a dry and desolate land. These striking conversions roused the hatred of Celsus, proconsul of the Maritime Alps, who, indignant at the losses the worship of idols had suffered as a result of Donatus's preaching, had him beaten with rods and forbade him, on pain of death, ever again to leave his desert.

Happy to have been able to suffer persecution for the name of Jesus Christ, our Saint went back to his solitude. But hardly had he returned there when the daughter of Celsus suddenly lost her sight. In her cruel sufferings she called ceaselessly on Donatus for help, whether because of the report of his miracles or because she was inspired by God. Celsus, who loved his daughter, had the holy solitary sought, and sought for a long time without result, when a peasant, running after an ox that had strayed, caught sight of Donatus at the back of his grotto, singing the praises of God. He hastened to inform Celsus. The senator set out at once, accompanied by the mother of the blind girl. They engaged several persons of rank on their behalf, among others the bishop of Sisteron, to reconcile them with the man they believed to be angry with them. The prelate let himself be persuaded. He went to see the devout solitary and asked him to intercede with God for the cure of this girl and the salvation of the whole family of Celsus.

Donatus received these orders with joy. He followed Celsus to his house, gave the girl back her sight and brought about the conversion of the whole family. The news soon spread, and faith grew in souls. This miracle caused a multitude of sick people to throng around him; all found there their perfect and complete cure.

At last, by dint of entreaty, Donatus obtained from the bishop of Sisteron leave to go back to his hermitage. Alone in his deep retreat, the devout hermit could not for a long time join the sacrifice to prayer: no one was there to help him go up to the holy altar and offer the victim of praise. He suffered cruelly at being thus deprived of this immense consolation of the priest, when a young man of Embrun named Florentius came to put himself under his direction. Florentius had heard of the holy anchorite; taken with his virtues and his hidden and penitent life, he wished to follow him and live with him in the desert. So he mounted his horse, and such, popular tradition tells us, was the ardour that carried him towards Saint Donatus that he covered in four hours the fifteen leagues that separate Embrun from the mountain of Lure. He threw himself at the solitary's feet, told him of his devout desires and begged him to receive him and allow him to build a cell beside his own. The holy Confessor listened to him with admiration, raised him up kindly and embraced him tenderly; and having tested for some time his vocation, which proved able to resist the inconstancy of youth and the impetuosity of the passions, so violent at that age, he regarded him from then on as his son.

But Florentius's father had set out in pursuit of him. After much searching he arrived at last at the solitary's hermitage. Prayers, threats, promises, everything was used to touch the young novice's heart, and all was useless. Grace triumphed over nature, and the father, softened, insisted no further. Donatus, more certain than ever of his disciple's uprightness and fervour, allowed him to live a still closer life with him. Florentius well deserved this holy affection. He served Donatus at the altar with rapt recollection, prayed with him, worked at his side and learned, by seeing and hearing him, to serve God in the simplicity of a perfect heart.

Quite near their solitude, Donatus and Florentius had chosen a favourable piece of ground and planted a small vineyard there. They tended it carefully for the use of the sacrifice; at the time of ripening they pressed the grapes religiously and kept as a holy thing this wine that was to be changed each day into the blood of Jesus Christ.

Yet the angelic life of Donatus was once more to edify men. Saint Gallicanus I, then archbishop of Embrun, called him from his solitude to his episcopal city; and the devout hermit, a child of obedience, answered the voice of his superior and father with eagerness, went to him at Embrun and stayed there some time. There he

was surrounded by the respect and veneration of the people. The reputation of his holiness spread far, and the renown of his wonders won him such confidence that after his death a church bearing his name was built in his honour in that city, just as the desert of Lure is still called the Combe-de-Saint-Donat.

Our Saint then returned to his beloved solitude. It was there that, already in possession of the object of his love, he fell asleep in God in the sleep of peace, which for the just man is the end of his miseries and the beginning of eternal happiness. At once the sweet harmonies of the Angels were heard, accompanying with their joyful melodies this blessed soul as it flew up to heaven. It was 16 August in the year 522.

He was buried in the very place where he had just ended his innocent life; thus the cave Donatus had lived in served him as a tomb, for such was then the custom in burying solitaries.

A monastery was built shortly afterwards near the cell of Donatus, which was turned into a chapel; and the praises of God never ceased to resound in those wild places.

Later the body of Saint Donatus was carried to Sisteron. From there part of these precious relics was given to the Church of Avignon, which from then on celebrated the feast of Saint Donatus with the rite of a greater double; another part was given to the parish church of Saint-Donat at Embrun, where the Saint's feast has never ceased to be celebrated, to this day, on 18 August; several other particles were also granted to other churches of Provence.

Extracted from the *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Gap*, by Mgr Depéry.

Saint Bertulf or Bertoul, Monk of Luxeuil and Third Abbot of Bobbio, in Italy

640. — Popes: Severinus and John IV. — King of Austrasia: Sigebert II. — King of the Lombards: Rothari.

> *We must never take example from the wicked, even in the things of the world; the spring of virtue is always on the side of the good.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

Saint Bertulf[1] came of a noble Austrasian family and was a kinsman of Saint Arnulf, bishop of Metz and great-great-grandfather of

Charlemagne. He had had the misfortune to be born in paganism; but seeing his illustrious kinsman and friend, Saint Arnulf, renounce the world and a brilliant position to embrace the priesthood, he felt moved by the desire to imitate him. It is probable that he owed his conversion to that prelate's care. Arnulf had long been thinking of laying down his episcopal charge so as to seek God more freely in solitude. He was nevertheless still bishop when Bertulf went to find him. His example, his instructions and the austerities he practised under the episcopal habit completed in his pupil's soul the work that grace had begun. Bertulf hesitated no longer: the short time he had spent with the holy bishop of Metz had been enough to detach him from all earthly goods and to inspire him with the resolution to renounce everything to follow Jesus Christ. Yielding then to that holy surge of fervour which at that time often carried new converts, without transition or intermediate stage, to the summit of perfection, he left his father, his country, his property and the hope of honours and dignities, to cling to the God who was revealing Himself to him. As Saint Arnulf could not yet leave his charge at that moment, Bertulf did not wait for him, and set out for solitude.

His choice had fallen on Luxeuil, where the children of noble families came in rivalry to draw learning and virtue. Saint Eustasius was then its abbot. He received with open arms the new disciple Providence was sending him and, after sufficient trials, gave him the monastic habit. Bertulf soon showed himself worthy of his vocation. His natural qualities and his virtues made him dear to all. He made such great and rapid progress in perfection that he took a distinguished place among the members of that flourishing school, the most justly celebrated there then was in Gaul.

Indeed, when Saint Attala came from Bobbio to Luxeuil and asked Saint Eustasius for some of his monks, undertaking to give him some of his own in return, the abbot of Luxeuil thought he could make his friend no better present than to give him Bertulf. Exchanges of this kind became a bond of friendship between communities. And it took all the love Saint Eustasius bore his friend Attala to bring him to part, in his favour, with a religious who for several years had been a living model of every virtue within his monastery. Bertulf agreed out of obedience and followed the abbot Attala to Bobbio, shortly before the year 625. The design of Providence in this event was not slow to appear: for when Attala died some time afterwards, Bertulf was chosen with one voice to succeed him.

He knew how to rise to his dignity. A faithful imitator of his master Eustasius, he neglected nothing to maintain good discipline and to uphold the work of his two illustrious predecessors, Columban and Attala. He even had to defend the rights of the monastery against outsiders, and this was the occasion. The bishop of Tortona, Provus,[2] claimed jurisdiction over the abbey of Bobbio and used every means to assert his rights. He first tried to win over the neighbouring bishops and the lords of the court of Ariowald, king of the Lombards, with presents. Then he appealed to the prince himself. But the king wisely answered that it was for the ecclesiastical authority, and not the royal authority, to decide whether monasteries situated at a great distance from towns were or were not dependent on the bishops. One of the lords secretly let Bertulf know what was being plotted against him. The saint in his turn sent envoys to ask the king for justice. Ariowald, though half barbarian and tainted with Arianism, declared again that it was for a council, and not for him, to judge such matters. And when the envoys asked him whether he supported their adversaries, he answered that he would never lend his support to those who stirred up quarrels with the servants of God. Better still, when the envoys asked him to provide them with the means of going to Rome, he showed the greatest eagerness to further their wishes.

So Bertulf went to that capital of the Catholic world, towards which, from the beginning, all eyes had turned as towards the mistress of the Churches. Pope Honorius I then occupied the Holy See. He was, according to the biographer, a learned, prudent and zealous pontiff, remarkable for his knowledge, his gentleness and his humility.[3] He received the abbot of Bobbio favourably, inquired with tender interest about the state of the monastery and was delighted to learn how flourishing discipline was there and how the monastic virtues were honoured. As for the substance of the case, he judged that custom should be followed; but on Bertulf's explanations he gave him, on 11 January 628, a letter declaring the monastery of Bobbio exempt from all episcopal jurisdiction. He kept the saint with him for some time more, finding a particular charm in his conversation. He urged him to hold firm in the way on which he had entered, and above all to fight by every possible means the baneful Arian heresy, which was then infecting Italy. Happy to meet a man to whom he could open his heart, Honorius parted from Bertulf only with regret.

On the way back to the monastery the saint was seized with a burning fever, caused by the excessive heat that prevailed that year. The illness was so violent that his life was feared for. They were in the Apennines, in a wild spot; a tent had to be put up to shelter the sick man from the blazing sun. But on the eve of the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, when all Bertulf's companions were in the greatest anxiety, Saint Peter appeared to him and said: "Rise and go to rejoin your brethren." "Who are you?" asked the astonished saint. "I am the apostle Peter, whose feast the whole world celebrates tomorrow." Bertulf, moved, called Jonas, the very man who wrote his life, and asked him to explain what had just happened. But the monk, although he was in the tent at the time, had seen and heard nothing. The questions with which he pressed his spiritual father obliged him to reveal a miracle that his humility would have wished to hide.

Bertulf, restored to his monastery, continued to maintain there the integrity of the rule and the practice of the virtues, of which he was himself the model. The Lord favoured him with the gift of miracles. Being one day at Turin, and coming out from the office of Prime, he met a possessed man named Victorinus, whom he cured on the spot. Another time he delivered a child who was also possessed by the devil. A man afflicted

with a horrible leprosy came to him with confidence; the saint prayed and fasted two days; then, pouring oil on his limbs, which were already putrefying, he at once restored them to life and health. On another day, a monk named Bandachar, sent with thirty others to protect a vineyard against wild beasts and having for all food only a piece of bread, obtained by the saint's prayers a bird that miraculously sufficed to satisfy them all.

History gives no other details of the life of Saint Bertulf. He died in 640, three days after Saint Arnulf, his kinsman and his first master. His body was laid with those of Saint Columban and Saint Attala, and the three remained inseparably united. The cult of Saint Bertulf goes back to the remotest antiquity. Most martyrologies give him the title of saint.

Extracted from the *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*.

Saint Louis, Bishop of Toulouse, of the Order of Friars Minor

1297. — Pope: Boniface VIII. — King of France: Philip IV, the Fair.

> *Jesus Christ is my kingdom: possessing Him alone I shall have everything; if on the contrary I do not possess Him, I lose everything.*
>
> *Maxim of the Saint.*

This Saint was born in the purple; but he was born in it only to despise it and to give princes and kings a great example of how little they should value birth and power. His father was Charles II, king of Naples, Sicily, Jerusalem and Hungary, and nephew of Saint Louis, king of France; his mother was Mary, daughter of Stephen V, king of Hungary. He was named Louis at baptism because of that same Saint Louis, his great-uncle, who was not yet canonised. This child had nothing of the child about him but the weakness of his limbs and the smallness of his body. From his earliest years there shone in him a mature judgment, a solid piety, a generous contempt for the honours and refinements that were inseparable from his station, and a modest and seemly gravity that won him everyone's love and respect. Play, to which that age is so inclined, inspired him only with distaste, and he often stole away from the company of the young lords who were being brought up with him and thought only of amusing themselves, in order to follow the attraction of divine love that called him to retreat and solitude. The queen his mother testified that from the age of seven he used to get out of his bed at night, finding it too soft, to lie on the carpet of the room or on the floor. His greatest pleasure was to go to churches and monasteries, which are like schools of the Holy Spirit, and he gladly spent whole hours there reciting his prayers and pouring out his heart in the presence of God.

God tried him early with afflictions that completed the purification of his heart. At the age of thirteen or fourteen he was sent, with two of the princes his brothers, to Catalonia, to remain there as a hostage in place of the king his father, whom Alfonso III, king of Aragon, was holding prisoner there. Thus he was the cause of the freedom of the one from whom he had received life. His constancy during his imprisonment was admirable. He remained there seven years and received very bad treatment from his guards, who treated him not as a prince but as a common captive. Yet nothing could wear out his patience or draw from his mouth a word of anger or passion. On the contrary, he thought himself extremely happy to suffer something in imitation of Jesus Christ, his sovereign Master. He often told his brothers and the gentlemen who were with him that, according to the spirit of the Gospel, adversity being better than prosperity, they ought to cherish their state and rejoice that God gave them the means of showing Him their love by their sufferings. He increased still further the rigours of his captivity by voluntary penances: he ate little, fasted often, chastised his body to the point of blood with iron chains, girded his loins very tightly with a cord tied with many knots, and would wear only coarse shirts to subdue his flesh. This austerity greatly helped him to keep his chastity intact. His eyes were always seen lowered; he never spoke to women without a witness. He had made his room a cloister; he had with him two religious of Saint Francis of proven wisdom and integrity.

He made use of these seven years of confinement to give himself to the meditation of divine things and of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and to all the other exercises of piety. He went to confession almost every day before hearing Mass, so as to assist at that august sacrifice with greater purity of heart. He never failed to say the whole divine office, which he did with no less attention and respect than if he had seen God Himself before him. He also recited every day the office of the cross, with arms outstretched, and many other prayers in honour of the Blessed Virgin, to whom he was very devoted, and of several Saints. If he could obtain a little freedom, he used it to visit the poor sick and help them in their miseries. One day he even had all the lepers of Barcelona gathered together, to wash their feet and serve them a meal, which he did with unbelievable humility and fervour. There was one among them whose leprosy appeared so horrible that it turned the stomachs of the other princes; but he caressed him more than the others and applied himself particularly to washing and serving him. The next day this leper was sought in the town and could not be found, which led people to believe that it was Our Lord who had taken the form of a leper to receive these good offices from young Louis, His faithful servant. When he gave a little rest to his body, wearied by the labours of the day, he soaked his bed with his tears, preferring to be purified by this water rather than by fire. These practices of devotion did not prevent him from applying himself seriously to study. In this way, under the teaching of the religious of Saint Francis, he became so skilled in philosophy and sacred letters that at the end of his captivity he was able to discuss the subtlest points of theology and to preach publicly the highest truths of Christianity.

In a serious illness he vowed to enter the Order of Friars Minor if he recovered. This vow brought about his cure, and he ratified it in the chapel of the castle where he was a prisoner as soon as he saw himself restored to health. He was further confirmed in his design when, during an exercise on horseback which he was taking to please the princes his brothers, the horse he was riding threw him to the ground and rolled over him three times without hurting him. This accident made him see the misery and instability of all earthly satisfactions, and that his vocation was not for the profession of arms. At last, in 1291, matters were settled between the king of Sicily, his father, and the king of Aragon, James II, surnamed the Just, on condition that Blanche, daughter of the former and sister of our Saint, should marry this king of Aragon. The king of Sicily himself brought the princess his daughter to Catalonia to carry out this treaty, and so freed his imprisoned children. At the same time there was talk of marrying our Louis to the princess of Majorca, sister of the Aragonese king. But in spite of the entreaties of his father and of all the lords of the two courts, who pressed him to consent to this marriage, which was to seal the perfect reunion of the two States, he remained unshakeable in his resolution to keep perpetual chastity. Splendour and royalty were nothing to him. “Jesus Christ,” he said then, “is my kingdom: possessing Him alone I shall have everything; if on the contrary I do not possess Him, I lose everything.”

He wished to carry out his vow by entering the Franciscans of Montpellier; but they refused to receive him for fear of displeasing his family. So Louis was obliged to follow his father and brothers to Italy. But at Rome he renounced the crown of Naples absolutely, which thus passed to Prince Robert, his younger brother; then, with his father’s permission, he received sacred Orders in the city of Naples. He objected to being shown more honour at his ordinations than the other clerics. That is why he declined the offer of the Pope, who wished to confer the order of priesthood on him himself. Some time afterwards the sovereign Pontiff Boniface VIII appointed him to the bishopric of Toulouse in place of Hugues Mascaron, who had just died at Rome, and ordered him to accept it. He had to submit to this command; but before his consecration he nevertheless made the journey to Rome, and there, at the Friars Minor, in the convent of Ara Coeli, he pronounced the vows that bind one to that Order. It was Christmas Eve of the year 1296. To spare at first the feelings of his family and friends, he had hidden the religious habit under his clerical dress. But he could not long resist the desire to put on publicly the poverty of Jesus Christ. On the feast of Saint Agatha, dressed in a shabby Friar Minor’s habit and a cord, he walked barefoot through the streets of Rome, from the Capitol to the church of Saint Peter, where he was to preach; the crowd followed him with respect.

As soon as he had been consecrated bishop, he set out for Toulouse. Passing through Florence, he found that the religious of his Order had prepared for him a room hung with rich tapestries bearing the arms of France and Sicily impaled. “What is this, my brothers?” he said to them. “Is this how a poor Friar Minor is lodged? Do you not know that I have renounced the kingdoms of the earth, and that I have no other inheritance than the Cross of Jesus Christ?” So he had all this worldly display taken away, so as to be lodged like a simple religious. When one of the principal Fathers told him that he had greatly honoured their Order by being willing to enter it, he replied: “Do not speak so, my brother; on the contrary, your Order has done me great honour in giving me its habit.”

He was given a magnificent welcome on his entry into Toulouse; but his heart was so detached from it that he bore it only with great reluctance. Having learned the revenue of his bishopric, he used only the smallest part of it for the upkeep of his household and generously distributed the rest to the churches and the poor. Every day he fed twenty-five of them at his table, and he served them on his knees, with as much devotion and humility as if he had been rendering these services to Jesus Christ Himself. His vigilance for the salvation of his people was admirable; he devoted himself to it without respect of persons, and with a charity that no difficulty could stop. Passing one day along a street in Toulouse, he learned that a poor sick woman was asking for the sacrament of Penance; he got down from his mule at once and went to administer the Sacrament to her. When he came away from her bedside, those who were with him warned him that he was covered with vermin. “Those,” he answered without being disturbed, “are the pearls of the poor.”

A year before he was appointed to the bishopric of Toulouse, which was raised to an archbishopric only twenty years after his death, Pope Boniface VIII had detached from it the town and territory of Pamiers to make a new diocese. The church of the monastery of Canons Regular was taken to serve as the cathedral, and the canons remained there as before, under the Rule of Saint Augustine, to form its chapter. The abbot Bernard Saisset, whom the Pope esteemed, was intended to be its first bishop. But King Philip the Fair, displeased with this erection, opposed Bernard’s episcopate and wished Pamiers to remain under the bishop of Toulouse. The Pope found an expedient to reconcile everything: he appointed to the new bishopric Saint Louis, whom he had already made bishop of Toulouse, giving him the two dioceses to govern under two different titles, and reserving the abbot Bernard to succeed him in that of Pamiers, should he outlive him.

Louis preached everywhere with an apostolic zeal that touched sinners, enlightened heretics and even converted Jews. This zeal led him to make various journeys for the good of Christianity and the preaching of the Gospel; it is said that for this purpose he went to Paris, to Spain and to Italy, and that he even went back once to Rome. There he preached a sermon in which he showed very persuasively that the prosperities of the earth are mere vanities and that one should seek only the happiness of eternal life. Although he was a great prelate and a great prince, who could have inherited the crowns of the Two Sicilies, he was nevertheless in all his ways only a poor brother of the Order of Minors. He wore its habit, kept its austerities and observed its Rule as far as his prelacy allowed him. On his journeys he lodged nowhere but in their convents; he always had some of them with him, and in particular he took with him one to whom he had given the task of correcting his faults without any fear. This good Father did so one day rather freely in front of several persons, who took it very ill and were angry with him; but the bishop excused him, saying that he had done it at his request and to please him, because nothing was more harmful than flattery, and nothing, on the contrary, more profitable than correction given by friends.

The administration of this holy prelate was short, but very fruitful for the diocese of Toulouse. He provided it with good priests and wise parish priests for the guidance of souls; he banished from it many vices and disorders that the heretics had introduced; he spread there so pleasing an odour of holiness that many resolved to enter the narrow path of virtue. In short, people were so surprised to see the heir of two fine kingdoms and the successor of so many prelates despise everything the world finds pleasant, that everyone felt drawn to trample it underfoot and to set his heart on Jesus Christ alone. Yet our Saint, thinking he had

done nothing yet, formed the plan of renouncing all ecclesiastical dignity to hide himself in a cell where, unknown to men, he could think of God alone. But while he was preparing to go to Rome to make this resignation into the Pope's hands, Our Lord revealed to him that the end of his life was near, and that he would soon have the kingdom of heaven in exchange for that of earth, which he had given up to his brother.

He left nothing undone to prepare himself to die well. He was ceaselessly in contemplation and prayer, and listened with joy to the exhortations of the devout persons who attended him; every day he had Mass said in his room so as to share in the inestimable fruits of this divine sacrifice. On the day of the Assumption of Our Lady the Blessed Sacrament was brought to him as viaticum. Although his illness had worn him out and he had nothing left but skin clinging to his bones, he did not fail to get out of bed to go and meet Jesus Christ, to give Him the honour that all creatures owe Him. He received Him on his knees before the altar of his room, with a devotion that drew tears from the eyes of all present. He foretold the day of his death three days before it came. On the fifteenth day of his illness, having raised himself a little in his bed, with his eyes lifted to heaven, he often repeated this prayer: "We adore Thee, O Christ, and we give Thee thanks, because Thou hast been pleased to redeem the world by Thy holy cross." He also said this verse of Psalm XXIV: "Remember not, O Lord, the sins of my youth, nor those I have committed through ignorance." Finally, he recited the Angelic Salutation almost ceaselessly, and when he was asked why he recited it so often, he answered: "I am going to die, and the Blessed Virgin will assist me." As he finished these words he gave up his most pure spirit to God, on 19 August 1297, at the age of twenty-three. He was then at Brignoles, in Provence, where many believe he was born. His face after death appeared as beautiful as during his life, and he would sooner have been taken for a sleeping person than for a dead one. A religious saw his soul rise into heaven in the company of several blessed spirits, who sang: "Thus are those treated who have served God in innocence and purity." It is also said that a perfectly red rose came out of his mouth, to mark his incomparable chastity. His body was carried solemnly to the Cordeliers of Marseilles, where he had directed that he should be buried. On the way, rays of light were seen around his coffin, and the candles, which the wind put out, relit themselves by miracle. Some time afterwards, persons very worthy of credence declared that they had seen him on top of the high altar, in pontifical vestments and with a shining face, a sign of his eternal happiness.

Countless miracles were worked at his tomb; Henry Sedulius left an account of them in writing. More than ten dead persons were raised to life; the lame and crippled recovered the use of their limbs; the gouty were rid of their gout; the blind, the deaf and the dumb were delivered from their infirmities; the insane recovered their reason; persons suffering from the falling sickness were cured; and all kinds of other sick people received perfect health. All these wonders led Pope John XXII to canonise our Saint as early as the year 1317, only a few years after his death. Surius has transcribed this Pope's Bull, and MM. de Sainte-Marthe, speaking of the bishops of Toulouse, give, after Frison, the letter he wrote to the queen of Sicily, mother of the newly canonised Saint, to congratulate her on having given the world a son of such great merit.

On 11 November of the following year his body was raised from the middle of the choir of the Cordeliers of Marseilles to be placed in a silver shrine on the high altar. This was done in the presence of Robert, king of Naples and Sicily, to whom he had given up his right to the throne. Finally, in 1423, Alfonso the Magnanimous, king of Aragon and Naples, having taken Marseilles by force, carried off these precious relics on his galley and had them placed at Valencia, in Spain, where they are still held in very great veneration.

The museum of Versailles possesses a remarkable portrait of Saint Louis of Toulouse. The ornaments of this painting are in relief and heightened with gold. He is represented with a rose in his hand because, it is said, this flower came out of his mouth after his death.

Acta Sanctorum; Baillet; Godescard.

Saint Elaphius, Seventeenth Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne and Confessor (587)

Elaphius was born at Limoges, and his father's name was Leo. From his childhood he gave himself wholly to piety. He kept the divine laws with rare fidelity and conducted himself with such wisdom that nothing was ever noticed in his speech or his conduct that was unseemly or that smacked of youth. When he had mounted the episcopal throne of Châlons (572), he showed himself a perfect model of all the virtues, gave the example of every good work, and made himself beloved of princes by his learning and holiness. His fame spread far. On his father's death he had become master of his inheritance, and he wished to make a holy use of it. Together with his brother Lumier, already a deacon, he endowed the church of Saint-Étienne at Châlons with fourteen villages with all their rights and appurtenances. Giles, archbishop of Reims, subscribed this donation. On fire with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, Elaphius thought of raising a monument worthy of his episcopal city. He devoted large sums of money to building a cathedral near the Sibyls, on the spot where it now stands. But it was not given to him to crown his work. During the fourteen years or so that Elaphius was bishop of Châlons, he perfectly fulfilled the duties of a good shepherd. He preached by word and example, generously helped the poor out of his great wealth, even went in search of the sick to relieve them in their infirmities, consoled them with gentle words and administered the sacraments to them.

Saint Elaphius was honoured with a mission of trust, but it proved fatal to him. Queen Brunhild sent him to Spain to obtain relics of the virgin Saint Eulalia and bring them back to France. But a violent fever, caused by the fatigues of the journey and the great heat, seized him on the way and took him from the love of his people. His body was brought back to his city. His death is marked on 19 August in the year 587.

He was buried in the nave of the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, on the right side of the crucifix. But as miracles continued to attest his holiness, his relics were placed in a fine shrine, which was laid in the church of Saint-Pierre, where he was always revered as a saint. It was Guido II, fifty-second bishop, who carried out the translation in the year 1145. Since the destruction of the abbey of Saint-Pierre, these precious relics have been carried to the church of the holy Forerunner, and it is there that they are still presented for the veneration of the faithful. The feast of Saint Elaphius is celebrated on 19 August.

Extracted from the *Beautés de l'histoire de la Champagne*, by the abbé Boitel.

Blessed Guerric of Tournai, Abbot of Igny, in the Diocese of Châlons (about 1157)

Blessed Guerric was from Tournai, a fortified town of Belgium in Hainaut; he became a canon and master of the schools of that city. Hearing of Saint Bernard and the wonders of Clairvaux, he wished to see for himself what the truth was, and set out in 1131 for that monastery. His intention was to return afterwards to his own country. But the word of Saint Bernard had a wonderful effect on his heart. He embraced the monastic life and became one of the first disciples of the abbot of Clairvaux. When Humbert, abbot of Igny in the diocese of Châlons, resigned his office, it was Guerric who came to replace him, in 1138. The new abbot, following his master's example, applied himself above all to instructing his brethren by his words and edifying them by his example. He showed admirable patience in the long and cruel illnesses that assailed him. When he felt his end approaching, he had a collection of homilies he had composed brought to him and put it in the fire. He feared to transgress the rule that forbids publishing anything without the consent of the general chapter. But his disciples had copies of them, and these copies have been printed and have proved the talent of Blessed Guerric. His works offer a solid moral teaching, often fresh thoughts and sublime touches. Blessed Guerric died on 19 August 1157.

His Sermons have had several editions. Jean de Gaigny, chancellor of the Church and University of Paris, published one of these editions by order of Francis I, from a copy belonging to the abbey of Vauluisant, under this title: *Divi Guerrici abbatis Igniacensis sermones antiqui, eruditionis et consolationis pleni*, Paris,

1539, in-octavo; it was reprinted in 1547 and followed by a French translation by the same editor. Another edition of these Sermons, corrected from old manuscripts, appeared at Antwerp in 1546; a third was printed at Paris in 1563, and a fourth at Lyons in 1630. The text of the Antwerp edition was included in the great Libraries of the Fathers of Cologne and Lyons, and in the Library of Preachers of Father Combefis. Trithemius ascribes to Blessed Guerric a volume of Letters, Sanderus Commentaries on the Psalms, and Father Lelong a Commentary on Saint Matthew.

Cf. the Continuators of Godescard.

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[1] A senator who became a Christian was obliged to give up his seat in the senate. Augustus had passed a law obliging every senator, before taking his seat, to offer incense and wine at the altar of the god in whose temple the senate was assembled (Suetonius, *Life of Octavius*, ch. XXXV). Now the senate met only in temples; at the beginning of the sitting a sacrifice was offered, and divine things were discussed before human affairs were taken up. — Baronius.

[2] The Taurus (*Djebel-Kurin* in Turkish) is a mountain chain of Asia Minor which begins at about 38° North latitude, near the Euphrates, crosses the pashalik of Marash from east to west, then runs on westward parallel to the southern coast of Asia Minor, which it follows very closely, and ends by forking into two small branches which terminate at the gulfs of Satalieh and Cos. The name Anti-Taurus is given to another chain which also crosses Asia Minor from east to west in its central part. — Some relics of these athletes of Christ, brought long ago to Saint-Flour, were kept with great veneration in the cathedral until the ill-fated end of the eighteenth century. The church of Saint-Vincent at Brioude, formerly in the diocese of Saint-Flour, once kept a considerable quantity of the bones of the Martyrs of this holy legion. A great concourse of pilgrims, especially the sick and those suffering from fever, came every year to visit and honour them. — *Proper of Saint- Flour.*

[3] Here are those “greater combats” to which the Roman Martyrology alludes. After Saint Thecla had been torn to pieces in the amphitheatre, Agapius, spared by the beasts, was thrown into prison, where he remained two years more. At last the Caesar Maximin Daia gave orders that he should be put to death if he still refused to abjure Christianity. His long sufferings had in no way broken his courage, and by delaying his crown they had only increased his desire to join his companions in glory. He was exposed again in the amphitheatre, where a bear threw itself on him, without however taking his life; the next day he was thrown into the sea. — Godescard.

[4] Saint Marianus, also called Marein and Margeain, flourished in the sixth century and led a very austere life in solitude. He lived only on wild fruit and the honey he found in the woods. He allowed devout persons to visit him at certain times of the year; but at others he hid, and it was impossible to find him. As it happened that he was not seen at a time when he usually showed himself, he was sought everywhere, and at last he was found dead under a tree deep in a wood. His body was carried to the town of Évaux (Creuse, arrondissement of Aubusson), in the barony of Combrailles, a district of Lower Auvergne now included in the departments of the Creuse and the Puy-de-Dôme. The miracles worked at his tomb led to the institution of a feast in his honour. It is marked on 19 September in some old breviaries of Bourges. — Godescard.

[5] Blessed Angelus took the Camaldolese habit at the age of twenty-four in the monastery of the Holy Saviour. He spent some time there as a lay brother; then he obtained his prior’s permission to live in solitude. He chose as his retreat a cave not far from the monastery’s forest, and there he gave himself up to the harshest practices that a burning zeal for penance could inspire. His prayer was continual; and as he still lived in dependence on his superior, he went to the monastery at fixed hours to attend the divine office. His austerities brought on a grave illness, whose pains he bore with admirable patience. Having knelt before a crucifix, the only treasure he possessed in his hermitage, he died peacefully in that posture on 19 August 1313, the day on which his Order keeps his feast. His cult was approved by Pope Gregory XVI on 24 July 1845.

[6] See her life at 18 August.

[7] See his life at 18 July.

[8] See his life on this day.

[9] Later it was called Saint-Théofrède (shortened to Saint-Théoffre, and corrupted to Saint-Chaffre), after the name of its second abbot. He came, like the first, from the famous monastery of Lérins, and was put to death in 642 or 645 by the Gascons, during a raid they made into Aquitaine, which has earned him veneration in the Church as a Martyr. This monastery was also sometimes called Monestier. The abbey of Saint-Théofrède later became one of the most considerable abbeys of France. This was owing partly to the privileges it had received from the sovereign Pontiffs and from our kings (one of whom, Louis the Pious, had it rebuilt after the Saracens had pillaged and destroyed it about the year 732), and partly to its antiquity and to the abbey of Saint-Pierre at Le Puy, which it had under it, together with a fairly large number of provostships or priories spread through various provinces of France, and even in Savoy and Lombardy.

[10] The monastery of Mozac having been ruined in the eighth century, and its property pillaged or seized in consequence of the war of Pepin the Short against Waifar, duke of Aquitaine, that great prince restored it and gave back its possessions, to which he even added new ones out of his own generosity, in consideration of Saint Austremonius, apostle of Auvergne, whose body he had had translated in his presence from the monastery of Volvic to that of Mozac, which was not far from it. The monastery of Mozac was later given to the monks of Cluny.

[11] This name, according to country and period, has also been spelt: Bertou, Berton, Berthou, Berthoud, Berchtold, Bertaud.

[12] Pinus, Penus or Proculus, according to others. (*Italia sacra*, vol. IV.)

[13] *Erat Honorius… sagax animo, vigens consilio, doctrina clarens, dulcedine et humilitate pollens.* (*Vita S. Bert.*, VI.)

20 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

In the diocese of Langres, the death of Saint BERNARD, first abbot of Clairvaux, most illustrious for the holiness of his life, his learning and his miracles. The sovereign pontiff Pius VIII declared him Doctor of the universal Church and confirmed this title to him. 1153. — In Judaea, the holy prophet SAMUEL, whose sacred bones were carried, as Saint Jerome relates, to Constantinople through the care of the emperor Arcadius, and laid near the Hebdomon. 1043 B.C. — The same day, Saint Lucius, senator, who, having witnessed the constancy of Theodore, bishop of Cyrene, during his martyrdom, was converted to the Christian faith and also drew to it the governor Dignianus, with whom he went over to Cyprus. Seeing other Christians being put to death there for confessing the name of Jesus Christ, he presented himself of his own accord, and, being beheaded, also won the crown of martyrdom. Fourth century. — In Thrace, thirty-seven blessed Martyrs who, after having their hands and feet cut off for the faith of Jesus Christ under the governor Apellianus, were thrown into a blazing furnace. — Also the holy martyrs Severus and Memnon, centurion, who, after suffering the same tortures, entered heaven victorious. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Leovigild and Christopher, monks, who during the persecution of the Arabs were put in prison for the defence of the Christian faith, then beheaded and thrown into the fire, and so won the palm of martyrdom. 852. — At Rome, Saint Porphyrius, a man of God, who instructed the holy martyr Agapitus in the Christian faith. Third century. — On the island of Noirmoutier, Saint PHILIBERT, abbot. About 687. — At Chinon, Saint MAXIMUS or MAXE, confessor, disciple of Saint Martin, bishop of Tours. About 450. — On Monte Senario, in the diocese of Florence, Blessed Manettus, one of the seven founders of the Order of Servites, who died while reciting hymns in honour of the Blessed Virgin. 1268.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the dioceses of Autun, Bayeux and Viviers, Saint Filibert or Philibert, first abbot of Jumièges and Noirmoutier, cited in the Roman Martyrology of this day. About 687. — In the diocese of Saintes, Saint Saloine or Séroine (*Seronius*), martyr.[1] About 250. — At Cahors, Saint Amator or Amadour, who appears to be the same as Saint Zacchaeus of the Gospel, and of whom we shall speak on 26 August. — At Rodez, the memory of Saint Leontius I, the Elder, bishop of Bordeaux and confessor, whose life we shall give on 21 August, the day on which he is honoured at Bordeaux. — At Le Mans, Saint HADOUIN, bishop of that see and confessor. 654. — At Villers, in Brabant, the Venerable Gobert, of the Order of Cîteaux. Descended from the counts of Apremont in Lorraine (diocese of Verdun), he took part in the war against the Albigensians, accompanying Pierre de Castelnau (1204) and Louis VIII (1219) in their crusades against those sectaries, and the emperor Frederick II (1228) in the one he led against the infidels of the East. He fell ill on this last expedition. On recovering, he made the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, where he was confirmed in his resolution to give his goods to the poor and become a religious. 1263. — In the former abbey of Lobbes, in the Low Countries, and at Worms, a town of the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, Blessed Burchard, monk of that abbey and archbishop of that see. Born in Hesse of a rich and powerful family, he studied for some time at Coblenz, then went to the monastery of Lobbes, which then enjoyed a great reputation for regularity and learning. When Franco, bishop of Worms, died (1006), the emperor Otto, who knew Burchard’s virtue and learning, pressed him strongly and forced him to accept that important post, where he could render great services to the Church. The new prelate did in fact become the glory and

happiness of his diocese during the twenty years he administered it. His charity to the poor, his spirit of gentleness and moderation, his austerities and his extraordinary labours won him a just reputation for holiness. In the midst of the many cares and occupations of the episcopal ministry he compiled a vast collection of Canons and Decrees, which supposes in its author immense reading and much research. It is a moral and juridical theology in which everything holds together. All the Orders of the Church and of the Empire find in it their rights and duties, from the Pope down to the least cleric, from the emperor down to the least head of a family. This worthy prelate, after a laborious and holy life, died peacefully in his episcopal city of Worms. 1026.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — In the diocese of Langres, the death of Saint Bernard, first abbot of Clairvaux, illustrious for the holiness of his life, his learning and his miracles. The sovereign pontiff Pius VIII declared him Doctor of the universal Church and confirmed this title to him. 1153.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — In the diocese of Langres, the death of our Father, blessed Bernard, first abbot of Clairvaux, eloquent Doctor of the Church. Having upheld the apostolic Holy See against heretics and schismatics like a most firm pillar, and having had many monasteries of the Cistercian Order built in the different parts of the world, ennobled by many gifts of grace, glorious by his many miracles, abundantly filled with merits and virtues, he flew up to heaven. The sovereign Pontiff, etc. 1153.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — In the diocese of Langres, the death of Saint Bernard, etc., as in the Roman Martyrology. 1153.

Martyrology of the Order of Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — In the holy hermitage of Monte Senario, near Florence, Blessed Manettus, confessor, who was one of the seven blessed Founders of our Order. He shone by his brilliant virtues, above all by his prudence and his extraordinary devotion to the Mother of God, in whose honour he was singing hymns when he fell asleep holily in the Lord. 1268.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Great Britain, Saint Oswin, king of Deira and martyr. He was the son of Osric and first cousin of the devout king Osfric, whom Cadwallader and Penda left dead on the battlefield in 634. As a result of an unfortunate war, Oswin spent ten years in exile among the West Saxons. In 644 he recovered part of the kingdom of Deira. He showed himself zealous for religion, humble, charitable, full of gentleness and kindness towards all. However, Oswy, king of Bernicia, came to attack the kingdom of Deira. Too weak to resist him, Oswin withdrew with a soldier who was much attached to him to the house of the earl Hunwald, whom he regarded as his friend; but Hunwald was base enough to betray him and hand him over to Oswy, who had him murdered. He had reigned nine years. His death is placed at Gilling, near Richmond, in the county of York. A monastery was founded on the spot where he was murdered. His body was carried to Tynemouth, and many miracles were worked at his tomb. 651. — At Beinwil, in Switzerland, near Muri, a town of the canton of Aargau, Blessed Burchard, parish priest of that place. Many of the faithful went on pilgrimage to his tomb, which God glorified with a great number of miracles. In 1586 a confraternity was formed under the invocation of the blessed parish priest, and Pope Paul V granted an indulgence to this devotion in 1616. This example was followed in 1622 by Gregory XV, in 1629 by Urban VIII and in 1657 by Alexander VII. He is represented with a crane beside him, or a stork, or a jackdaw, or a jay. This is because he had brought back to life one of these birds, which one of his servants had killed to punish it for having, by its cries, revealed to the Saint the scandalous doings that went on in the presbytery through the fault of that wicked woman. Thirteenth or fourteenth century. — At Aquila or at Vicenza, in Italy, Saints Leontius and Carpophorus, martyrs. They were physicians, and cured many more sick people by simply invoking the name

of Jesus Christ than by the resources of their art. Diocletian and Maximian had them arrested, and they appeared before the governor Lysias, who urged them to sacrifice to the gods. When they refused, their hands and feet were broken and they were thrown into the sea; but an angel brought them back safe and sound to the shore. They were led back before the judge, who had them thrown into a dark dungeon and then onto a blazing pyre; but the flames respected them. Then the executioners fastened them to crosses, and the crowd was told to stone them; but the stones turned back on those who threw them. They tried to shoot them with arrows: the arrows wounded the archers and did no harm to our generous athletes, who were finally, the persecutors having given up, beheaded. Their bodies were carried to Vicenza. Fourth century. — At Synnada, a town of Phrygia, Saints Piricus, Arcus, Pamphilus, Diomedes, Agathicus and Zelus, martyrs; and Saints Maximus and Colonus, confessors. — At Alexandria, Saint Dioscorus, martyr. — In Lucania, a district of Italy (today part of Calabria Citeriore, the Principato Citeriore and the Basilicata), Saints Valentinian and Leontius, who are believed to have suffered martyrdom. — Among the Greeks, Saint Heliodorus and Saint Dosas, martyrs. They had their nostrils cut off and their heads burned under Constantine Copronymus. Eighth century. — At Constantinople, Saint Paul the Younger, archbishop of that see and confessor. 784. — At Conza (*Compsa*), a town of the former kingdom of Naples (Principato Ulteriore), Saint Herbert, archbishop of that see and confessor. His body rests in his cathedral church, under a marble tomb. About 1180.

Saint Samuel, Prophet, Fourteenth and Last Judge of Israel

1132–1043 before Jesus Christ. — King of Israel: David.

> *Tertia post denam Samuele excellet, ab ipsis Quem Domino cunis genitrix devota sacravit.*
>
> *When the thirteenth generation of the judges of Israel comes to an end, it bequeaths to us the illustrious Samuel, whom from the cradle a Christian mother vowed to the Lord.*
>
> *Wandelbert, in the Acta Sanctorum.*

In the land of Ephraim, in the town of Ramatha, there was a man of the priestly tribe named Elcana. This town of Ramatha is the same as the Arimathaea of the New Testament and the Ramla of modern times. Lying on the road from Joppa to Jerusalem, it saw passing beneath its walls the many pilgrims from the West who went to visit the tomb of Christ, and more than once it witnessed their courage. The churches they had built there have become mosques, and in place of the cross the minarets now rise above the groves of old olive trees and the palms among which Ramla seems to flourish.

Following the common custom of the Israelites, a custom founded rather on the example of the patriarchs than on the Mosaic law, which neither expressly forbids nor permits a plurality of wives, Elcana had two wives. The wife of the first rank was called Anna, that is, “she who possesses grace”; and she truly deserved this title by the spirit of faith and prayer that animated her. The wife of the second rank was called Phenenna. Anna was barren like Sara; Phenenna was fruitful and insolent like Agar.

Every year, at the feasts, Elcana went to Silo, a neighbouring town, where the ark and the tabernacle had rested since the time of Josue. It was there that all Israel came to offer its sacrifices and its prayer before the building of the temple of Jerusalem. Women and children were not obliged to make this pilgrimage, but in devout families they hardly ever excused themselves from it. Anna, sad and humiliated, and Phenenna, surrounded by her sons, followed their husband to Silo. The rites of these private sacrifices are known: the blood of the victim was poured out at the foot of the altar, and its flesh was partly burned and partly shared between the priests and the family that offered it. So Elcana gave Phenenna what fell to her from the sacrifice for herself and her children; Anna, who was alone, had only a smaller portion, which made her remember her barrenness painfully. Besides, her rival heaped insults on her. Phenenna forgot that she owed her title of secondary wife only to the infirmity of the wife of the first rank, and that the afflicted find a comforter in

heaven when the earth gives them nothing but disdain or insult.

One day Anna began to weep and would not eat. Elcana, who loved her, said to her: “Why do you weep, and why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten children would be?”

Anna took some food to please her husband. Then, her heart still full of anguish, she came to pray at the door of the temple; there she shed many tears and, in the fervour of her desire, made this vow to the Lord: “Lord of hosts, if You cast a glance on Your afflicted handmaid, if You deign to remember her and give her a son, I will devote him to You all the days of his life, and no razor shall pass over his head.”

At that time Heli held the office of high priest in Israel. His ministry had called him to the temple when Anna came there to pray. He saw her and, watching the movement of her lips without hearing any word, thought she had taken too much wine. No doubt Anna’s tearful face, her abrupt and troubled movements, like those that great passions wring from us, and the very fervour of her prayer, all lent colour to a false suspicion in the pontiff’s mind: he rebuked the poor woman. She was fleeing the storm at home, she was fleeing her own affliction, another tempest far harsher than a rival’s insults; and instead of a refuge and calm she found reproach and anger in the holy house. Anna answered the pontiff with moderation: “Pardon me, my lord; I am a very unhappy woman. I have drunk neither wine nor anything that can make one drunk; I have only poured out my soul before God. Do not treat your handmaid as an impious and corrupt woman, for it is only the excess of my grief and affliction that has made me speak until now.” “Go in peace,” replied the old man, “and may the God of Israel grant you the request you have made to Him.” Anna added: “May your handmaid find grace in your eyes!” Then she went away, took food from then on and, full of confidence in God, ceased to wear a sad and downcast face.

The next day, after worshipping the Lord, Elcana, his wives and his children returned to their house at Ramatha. God had heard Anna’s prayers and ratified the high priest’s blessing. Within the year that followed her prayer she gave birth to a son whom she called Samuel, to show that she had obtained him from the Lord. This name was to be for the parents the memorial of a long-desired grace, and for the young man a perpetual lesson in living well.

When Samuel was born, his father went to Silo with all his household to offer thanksgiving to God. Anna did not follow him then. “I will not go to the temple,” she said, “until the child is weaned and I take him to consecrate him to the Lord and leave him in His presence.” She wished to give him wholly and without return, an image of those generous hearts which, in the name of duty, sacrifice their dearest affections and finish without second thoughts what they began without selfishness. Elcana agreed to this wish: “Do what seems good to you, and stay until the child is weaned. I pray God to fulfil His word in us.” So Anna stayed at home. She nursed Samuel herself, like all mothers faithful to the designs of Providence and to the counsels of a true tenderness.

At last, when the time had come, Anna took Samuel to Silo and presented him to the high priest Heli. “It is I, my lord,” she said as she came up to him; “I am the woman whom you saw here praying to the Lord. I begged Him to give me this child, and He has granted the request I made to Him. That is why I come to give back to Him and leave with Him for ever the son I received from Him.” She worshipped; then, moved with gratitude and joy and seized by a prophetic spirit, she uttered this beautiful prayer: “My heart has rejoiced in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in my God; my mouth is opened wide against my enemies, because I have rejoiced, O God, in Your salvation. There is none holy as the Lord; none is equal to You or mighty as You, O our God. — Cease to boast and to speak proud words; let your mouth be silent from its former talk; for the Lord is a God of all knowledge, and all thoughts lie open before Him.”

They went back to Ramatha. The young Samuel remained at Silo to serve the Lord under the orders of the high priest. It was a great act of courage for Anna to leave in this way the only son who had cost her so many prayers and tears; the anguish of hope was now to give way to the anxieties born of a painful separation. It is

true that she kept for Samuel that tender love which rejoices even in absence and is fed by distance itself, as a fruitful vine, in spreading its branches, also spreads its nourishing sap to the clusters farthest from its root. Then too she visited the young child on feast days, when she came to Silo to offer the customary sacrifices; she brought him a tunic she had made with her own hands. The motherly tenderness of this woman was rewarded by heaven: the high priest blessed Anna and Elcana, wishing them a numerous posterity. And indeed three sons and two daughters were given to them, and their old age was crowned with glory, as the aged palm tree surrounds itself with shoots that grow green at its foot.

Samuel, wearing the robe of the Levites, was occupied with the service of the Temple. All the Fathers, on the faith of ancient traditions, have praised his childhood spent in the exercises of piety, his pure morals, his gentle character and his fine qualities. He grew in age and wisdom, pleasing alike to God and to men; for men's hearts are more just than their conduct is courageous, and while they sometimes banish virtue from their deeds, they still give it hospitality in their esteem. Meanwhile the sons of the high priest Heli, priests themselves, dishonoured the priesthood by their impious conduct and turned the people away from divine worship by their ignorance and their contempt for the law. It was a great crime; for who can resist scandals that come out of the sanctuary? And where will help come from when treachery sits at the family hearth? Heli knew of his sons' disorders; but instead of punishing them severely he addressed only a few reproaches to them, marked by a slack and excessive gentleness. There is no doubt a time for mercy; but there is never a time for weakness. So Heli's sons took no notice of his warnings, and, on the other hand, God, through the mouth of a prophet, accused him of guilty indulgence and foretold to him harsh afflictions and the death of his sons. These threats were confirmed through the ministry of Samuel, who, young as he still was, was about to enter upon the brilliance of his destiny.

He was then twelve years old. One night he was woken by a voice calling his name. Thinking that Heli wanted him, he went to the old man, who answered: "I did not call you; go back and sleep." Shortly afterwards the same voice was heard; Samuel ran to the high priest, who sent him back as before. The young Levite had not yet had direct and immediate dealings with the Lord, and he did not yet know by experience, as he learned later, by what sign divine inspiration is recognised. He was called again; this time the high priest said to him: "Go back and sleep, and if you are called again, you will answer: Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears." The voice called again: "Samuel, Samuel!" He answered: "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears." It was truly the Lord; and the voice added: "I am going to do a thing in Israel that no one will hear without amazement. In that day I will fulfil all I have said against Heli and his house; I will begin and I will finish. For I have threatened to take from his house a vengeance without remedy, because of his crime: because, knowing the unworthy conduct of his sons, he did not punish them. Therefore I have sworn that the iniquity of the house of Heli shall never be expiated, either by victims or by offerings." Such was the word of the Lord, who used a child and a Levite to instruct an old man and a pontiff; for there is a maturity better than that of age, and a priesthood that belongs to all men: the maturity and the priesthood of virtue.

After receiving the heavenly communication, Samuel did not go back to Heli; even the next day he dared not tell him of the terrible vision. But Heli called him: "What did the Lord say to you? Do not hide it, I beg you. May the Lord deal with you in all severity if you hide from me any of the words that were spoken to you." Samuel obeyed and told all he had heard. The high priest answered: "It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him." It may be believed that Heli in this way corrected, by resigned acceptance of his future punishment, the fault of his fatherly weakness; but the Lord's threats were nonetheless fulfilled. A little more than twenty years after Samuel's prophecy, the Israelites were twice defeated in a war against the Philistines, their implacable enemies, and lost thirty thousand men in the second battle. When the news of this disaster reached Silo, the town rang with lamentable cries. Heli asked the cause of the public uproar; he was told: "Israel has fled before the Philistines; a great part of the army has been cut to pieces; your two sons too are killed, and the ark of God is taken." On hearing the ark of God named, Heli fell backwards from his seat and

broke his head. Such was the death of this unhappy father, who seems to have had no other fault than a slack indulgence towards his sons.

These events, foretold in advance, and several other prophecies equally fulfilled, proved that Samuel was the faithful interpreter of the Lord. He was nearly forty years old; he was proclaimed judge of the people in place of Heli (1092 before Jesus Christ). So Samuel became the political head of Judaea, as Jephte, Samson and others had become. To civil authority he joined religious authority as a Levite, perhaps even as pontiff; for although he was not of the race of Aaron, several have thought that he exercised the functions of the high priesthood by an extraordinary mission. Invested with this twofold power, he defended the cause of God and of his country. He assembled the people in arms at Maspha, not far from Ramatha and Silo. He reassured his countrymen, urging them to defend their liberty, compromised by the victory of the Philistines; he made them see the public misfortunes as a punishment for the idolatry and crimes of the nation, and brought their minds back to the worship of the true God.

Great successes, in which the hand of God showed itself more than once, made the government of Samuel glorious: the ark was recovered, the boldness of the Philistines was broken in a bloody battle, and peace with all its advantages was won for the Israelites. When the danger had passed, Samuel nevertheless continued to govern his country. He had fixed his chief residence at Ramatha; from there he went to visit the surrounding towns to hear the people's complaints and do them justice. Galgala, Bethel and Maspha were the chief places where he exercised his peaceful functions.

Grown old, Samuel delegated part of his authority to his sons to judge Israel; but, by a fate that seems to weigh on most great men, he had the grief of seeing his sons unfaithful to his example and his reputation. Their sentences and their conduct were so full of iniquity that the elders of the people came to complain of them to Samuel and to ask him for a king. Samuel was hurt by this proposal, which tended to replace a wholly divine work with a work of human hands. He consulted God in prayer and made known to his fellow citizens the future in store for them. But the Israelites no doubt flattered themselves that they would be no more oppressed, and would be as brave, as the other nations. So they had a king: Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was chosen and anointed (1080 before Jesus Christ). But he was no wiser than his people; he turned away from the known will of the Lord, and the Lord rejected him as He had chosen him.

Samuel received the mission of announcing to Saul that his reign was over. "Obedience," he said to him, "is better than victims; since you have rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord rejects you from the kingship." He was about to withdraw after these words; but the prince tried to hold him back by seizing his cloak; the cloak tore. Samuel said: "Today the Lord tears the kingdom of Israel from your hands to give it to another who is better than you." From that day Samuel ceased to see Saul and to pay him public homage as his prince; but he always loved him, because of their long and old intimacy, and mourned him for the rest of his life. Yet he had to resign himself: at a heavenly command he chose David as the second king of Israel and gave him the holy anointing in secret. Various causes drew the fury of the old monarch upon the new; David escaped ever-recurring dangers only by flight. Samuel, who shared David's misfortunes, nevertheless kept a great influence over the public affairs of his country until the end of his life.

The illustrious prophet died at a great age (1043 before Jesus Christ). He was buried at Ramatha, in his family's tomb; all Israel mourned him. A child of prayer, consecrated to God even before his birth, he finished in piety a life begun under such religious auspices. A superior man, he showed himself modest without weakness and firm without harshness; kings listened to him with respect, and his voice kept its sway even over a people stirred by the spirit of innovation. A skilful statesman, he reformed the State and made religion, the first guarantee of order, flourish; an honest statesman, he sought a counterweight to licence only in virtue, and could challenge his fellow citizens to point to anything blameworthy in his life and judgments. Such was Samuel. And if he is to be called the model of princes because of his fine qualities, his mother is to be called the model of mothers because of her religious tenderness; for we will dare to say that there would

be more sons like Samuel if there were more mothers willing to imitate the piety of Anna.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

We have said that the body of the prophet Samuel was laid at Ramatha in his family's tomb. His tomb was preserved, in spite of the revolutions of the country and the calamities of the Jewish people, until the beginning of the fifth century of the Church. A kind of feast of mourning was instituted in the synagogue, at which the anniversary of his death was publicly kept with a fast, especially after the return from the captivity of Babylon. But the Christians gave him other honours, which all the better deserve the name of feast because they were the same as those the Church gives the Saints. This is what was seen established, especially after his relics had been carried from Judaea to Constantinople. This translation was made by order of the emperor Arcadius (19 May 406). They were deposited for some time in the great church. From there they were carried (20 June 407) to the basilica that had been built in his honour and under his name in the Hebdomon, which was the suburb of

Constantinople. This church of Saint Samuel was overthrown by an earthquake that shook the city twice (16 April and 19 October 557). Some authors have claimed that the emperor Justinian had the basilica of Saint Samuel rebuilt at once; but the Greek historian Procopius (500–565) says only that Justinian had a fountain basin or cistern made in the monastery of Saint Samuel in Palestine, apparently at the place from which his body had been taken. And indeed there has always continued to be shown at that place, until these last centuries, a monument called the Tomb of the prophet Samuel, with a large spring of very wholesome water a few paces from it. The Greeks and the other peoples who follow their rite keep the feast of the prophet Samuel on 20 August. This has since been observed among the Latins, who have put his name in their martyrologies, from that of the Venerable Bede at the beginning of the eighth century down to the modern Roman one. To Samuel are attributed the book of Judges, that of Ruth and the first twenty-four chapters of the first book of Kings.

We have taken the history of the life of Saint Samuel from the *Femmes de la Bible* by Mgr Darboy, and that of his cult from the *Vie des Saints de l'Ancien Testament* by Baillet. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, and Dom Ceillier.

Saint Maxe or Maximus, Solitary at Chinon, Abbot of the Île-Barbe, near Lyons

About 450. — Pope: Saint Leo I, the Great. — King of the Franks: Merovech.

> *Sanctorum quo majora merita, eo tutiora sunt patrocinia.*
>
> *The more sublime the merits of the saints, the surer their protection.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose, Epist. LXXXV, to his sister.*

Saint Maxe or Maximus lived at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth. We find in several records worthy of belief and venerable for their antiquity that he came from the province of Aquitaine, one of the four great regions of Gaul, and was born of distinguished parents. Before leaving the world to give himself wholly to God in solitude, he had been brought up amid the pomp and grandeur of the court, to which his family was attached; but in spite of the dangers he could not fail to meet there, he distinguished himself by his integrity, his innocence and his piety. Much more a lover of true wisdom than of the favour and applause of the great, he applied himself zealously to perfecting himself in the practice of the law of the Lord. He had often meditated on these words: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"; and soon he applied them to himself as if the Saviour had addressed them to him, or to him alone. They made such an impression on his mind that he resolved to put them into practice. Renouncing from then on all he possessed, he devoted himself entirely to the service

of God, left the court and withdrew to a hermitage, taking with him as his only treasure a copy of the divine Scriptures.

In this retreat, more beautiful in his eyes than the palace he was leaving, Saint Maxe, with hardly any clothing to cover himself, began to shed torrents of tears together with the solitary with whom he had joined himself. From that moment he applied himself unceasingly to leading an austere and retired life. His abstinence was so extraordinary that he never ate eggs, meat or fish, nor even fruit. For all food he was content with bread watered with tears, to which he sometimes added a little salt. He abstained from everything that could intoxicate; water alone was his drink, and he often went without even that by way of mortification. Prayer was his ordinary and cherished occupation; nothing could distract him from it, and if he sometimes tore himself away from this holy exercise, it was to spend part of his time visiting the sick. You would never have seen him lose heart in works of charity; the most repulsive ills revived his courage and fired him with zeal for the relief of the suffering members of Jesus Christ.

This holy solitary was also endowed with so deep a humility that his greatest care was not to be known for what he was; but so eminent a virtue could not remain in obscurity. God did not allow His servant to remain long unknown in his solitude, although he took care to cut himself off from dealings with men. So our Saint, fearing to grow vain from the praises addressed to him, left his country and went to a monastery near Lyons, famous for its regularity and its strict observance of all the monastic rules: *In insula Barbara prope Lugdunum*.[1] He had by then already been ordained priest. There his rare and solid virtues soon shone with new brilliance. And so, when Aigobert, abbot of that monastery, died some time afterwards, our Saint was elected in his place; all judged him worthy of the office; he alone felt a deep sorrow at it, inspired by his humility.

This circumstance, so contrary to his thoughts and tastes, led the Saint to take flight a second time and to return immediately to his own country, to seek there another place of retreat where he could remain hidden from the eyes of men. So he set out with this intention; but as he was crossing the Saône the boat sank, and the holy priest was swallowed up by the waters with the book and the chalice he used for offering the holy Mysteries. But God did not allow His servant to perish then; the moment of divine Providence for taking him from this world had not yet come, and the Saint was saved from the wreck, he and all he was carrying. Back in his own country, he at once sought the places farthest from men, to live there in the most obscure retreat; but his austerities and virtues soon made him known more than ever. Several persons of rank, drawn by his fine example and his solid virtues, resolved to imitate him, renouncing as he had done all that the world offered them of brilliance, and joining this holy man to devote their days with him to retreat and the service of God. Several even laid their possessions at his feet; with them, and with the help of divine Providence, he had a monastery built in the castle of Chinon, in the territory of the city of Tours.[2] He withdrew there with a great number of servants of God, of whom he was the father, having begotten them to Jesus Christ. With those whom he always regarded as his brothers, under the eyes and guidance of the great Saint Martin, then bishop of Tours, he led an angelic life. The illustrious metropolitan, so famous throughout Christendom, soon made our Saint his intimate friend. All the time the holy abbot was at the head of his monastery, he gave his brethren the greatest examples of virtue and holiness. Besides, he procured signal benefits for the peoples of that region. God favoured His faithful servant with the gift of miracles, and the wonders he worked became as famous as his virtues. At the word of the disciple, as at that of the master, sight was given back to the blind and health to the sick; the lame were made straight, the dead were raised; and more than once the country in danger was saved from the perils that threatened it.

Saint Gregory of Tours, a famous and trusted author for the history of those distant times, and one of the successors of Saint Martin in the see of that city, mentions our Saint with praise; he calls him great by his name, by his virtues and by the wonders of his life, as well as by the miracles worked after his death and through his intercession. This writer, worthy of belief, assures us that he read them in the book of his Life.

Among other things he relates that in 446, when the castle of Chinon was besieged by Aegidius, all the inhabitants had shut themselves up in the underground passages of the fortress. The enemy succeeded in filling up the only well that served the besieged. The Saint spent the night in prayer, asking God with confidence to have pity on his children, to put the enemy to flight and not to allow this people to perish of thirst. He was still praying when suddenly the sky was covered with thick clouds; an abundant rain, with lightning and thunder, fell on the castle, and the enemy, terrified by the prodigy, raised the siege. At the same time all the vessels set out in the rain were filled; the besieged were able to quench the thirst that was burning them and give thanks to God and to their deliverer. They recovered their freedom after the hasty flight of their enemies.

At that same time a barren woman turned to the Saint to obtain by his prayers the birth of a child, whom she would consecrate to God under his direction. Her prayers were granted; she became the mother of a son, whom our Saint baptised. One day, when he had grown up, as he was going to Chinon to hear the holy abbot preach, this young man, crossing a river in haste, was drowned in it. The mother ran to the church and begged the Saint to help her; he broke off his sermon and bade his hearers pray for this woman. Then he went to the bank of the river and, by a divine inspiration, ordered the waters to give back to him the body they had just swallowed up. They obeyed; but our Saint, seeing this lifeless body, cried out: “Ah, my son! What, have you had the misfortune to die without receiving the holy Viaticum?” He repeated these words three times with groans; the young man opened his eyes as if he had woken from a deep sleep, and said to him: “So it is you, holy priest, who obtained my birth and regenerated me in the saving waters of baptism; and it is you again who, by the power of your holy prayers, give me back to the tears of a tender and afflicted mother, who will glorify God for such a wonder!”

Our Saint, returning to the town, met a man blind from birth, who, after spending three months in fasting and prayer, came to meet him, begging for his help. The man of God asked him whether he wished to see the light; the sufferer answered that he would be happy to be able to admire what he had never seen and of which everyone said such marvellous things. Then the holy abbot washed his eyes with blessed oil and said, making the sign of the cross: “May your eyes be opened”; and at that instant they were opened, and he gave thanks to heaven.

During the rest of our Saint’s life God worked many other miracles through the intercession of His servant. At last, after many years of admirable exercises in the ways of perfection and after a great number of wonders witnessed by the peoples of the province of Aquitaine, our wonder-working solitary learned by revelation the moment of his death. Three days before it came he abstained from all food, wishing for no other than the holy Eucharist, meditating on the greatness of God and singing His praises. He spent the little time remaining to him in exhorting those who came near him to the love of Jesus, to humility and to the practice of all the other virtues.

When the hour of his death had come, as he had long desired, so as to be united to Jesus Christ, whom he had loved so much, he raised his eyes and hands to heaven, gave his blessing to his religious, who were dissolved in tears, and gave back his fine soul to God, dying on ashes and haircloth.

His body was buried with honour in the church of his monastery, which from that moment began to venerate him and to acknowledge him as its patron and protector with God. Under the reign of Charlemagne (771–814) this church was turned into a famous collegiate church. The place of his burial has always been held in singular veneration because of the great wonders that the goodness of God works there through the merits and intercession of its founder.

Saint Gregory of Tours says that in his time the tomb of Saint Maxe was famous for a prodigious number of very evident miracles. He relates, among others, that a young child of his diocese, brought to the last extremity, was carried to the Saint’s tomb and was instantly and perfectly cured; and the same happened to a

young girl. When these two facts came to the knowledge of the same bishop of Tours, he had the young man admitted to the monastery of Chinon and the young girl to a cloister of virgins, so that both might be consecrated to God in memory of and gratitude for such benefits.

The Church celebrates the feast of Saint Maxe on 20 August, and that of his translation on 28 October.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The town of Bar-le-Duc (Meuse) has had the happiness of possessing precious relics of Saint Maxe for more than eight hundred years. In the reign of Frederick, duke of Upper Lorraine, who had built the castle of Bar (950), Hézeb, a most noble lord, built at his own expense, within the precinct of this castle, an oratory in expiation of his sins. He had this church consecrated by Saint Gerard, bishop of Toul, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, of the first martyr Saint Stephen and of all the Saints. After its consecration he adorned it and enriched it with the precious relics of Saint Maxe, brought from the province of Touraine by a singular disposition of Providence, after they had been miraculously saved from the flames into which the malice of the heretics had thrown them.[3] Since then this castle and collegiate church has always borne, and glories in bearing, the name of its protector, the great Saint Maxe, and in keeping his relics enclosed in a shrine as a precious treasure.

In the last century the Chapter of Saint-Maxe at Bar, which had charge of them, was begged by that of Chinon to give it such part of them as it thought fit. This just request was granted, and a considerable portion of these holy bones was given to it; they were received with gratitude and held in great veneration in Touraine. The peoples of Bar and the surrounding country have often had recourse to Saint Maxe and have obtained through his intercession the effect of his protection in public calamities and needs. These wonders are too many to relate them all; we will cite only one. On 7 May 1679 a great drought had lasted for three months. The clergy and people of Bar called on the help of our Saint, accompanying his holy relics with devotion and confidence. A heretic took it upon himself to say in a mocking and impious tone: “Do these good people expect dry and withered bones to have the power to give them rain, with the sky so clear?” But he uttered this blasphemy to his confusion; for as the procession was going up from the lower town to the upper town, the rain came so suddenly and so abundantly that the shrine was set down in this heretic’s house until it was possible to finish the procession. This heretic was called Cuny, and his house still exists today on the Côte de l’Horloge, one of the streets of Bar. In memory of the miracle the shrine of Saint Maxe had been carved over the door; but the revolutionaries wished to efface these precious traces, and the axe-blows that destroyed this pious testimony could still be seen in recent years. At the time of the Revolution the silver shrine that contained the precious remains of Saint Maxe excited the greed of the plunderers of churches; the relics were taken out of it and profaned. However, a portion was saved, and since the Revolution it has been recognised as authentic by the competent authority and placed in a new shrine, which, though very different from the old one, is nevertheless fitting. From time to time, in public calamities, it has been carried in procession, with the authorities, the people of the surrounding country and the clergy of the three parishes taking part.

We have before us a request made in 1815 by the Mayor to the Curé of Bar, which was passed on to the bishop of Verdun, who gave leave for this general procession to be held. In 1829 the same request and the same leave. The registers of the fabric attest other similar ceremonies. In virtue of these public demonstrations, the relics exposed to the veneration of the faithful in the church of Saint-Étienne at Bar, also called Saint-Pierre and Saint-Maxe, are the object of great confidence and draw many visitors.

To compose this biography we have used the Office of Saint Maxe; the Historians of Gaul; the *Acta Sanctorum*; and local notes kindly supplied by the abbé Dubuisson, of the clergy of Saint-Étienne, at Bar.

Saint Philibert or Filibert, Confessor, First Abbot of Jumièges and of Noirmoutier

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

> *Sed pater egregius aram Filibertus habebit, Plurima construxit qui loca sancta Deo.*
>
> *For having raised so many altars to the living God, the illustrious Filibert shall have his own as well.*
>
> *Alcuin, Epigram. CXXXV.*

Saint Philibert was from Gascony and was born in 616 in the territory of the town of Eauze (*Elusa*, Gers), which then had an episcopal see, later transferred to Auch. His father, whose name was Philibaud, received sacred orders and became bishop of Vic-Fezensac, a see that was moved to Aire (Landes) shortly afterwards. Philibert was brought up at Vic under his father's eyes until, having finished his education, he was sent to court in the reign of Dagobert I. The example and instructions of Saint Ouen made the deepest impression on him; he grew so weary of the world that at the age of twenty he took the habit in the Benedictine abbey of Rebais (*Resbacense monasterium*), in the diocese of Meaux, which had been founded by Saint Ouen (638). He succeeded Saint Agilus in the government of this monastery; but, finding some of the monks unruly, he left Rebais. After visiting, in France and Italy, the most famous houses that lived under the Rule of Saint Columban, he withdrew into Neustria. King Clovis II and Queen Bathildis gave him a site in the forest of Jumièges (*Gemeticum*, Seine-Inférieure), and there in 654 he founded the Benedictine monastery of that name, not very far from that of Fontenelle, where Saint Wandrille had a large community under his direction. He set his religious to hard labour, having them grub up the brambles and drain the marshes that covered the country. The community of Jumièges grew considerably in a short time, and as many as nine hundred monks were counted there.

It was Saint Philibert who had a monastery for women built at Pavilly (*Pauliacum*, Seine-Inférieure) (647); the site was given to him by Amalbert, lord of the place, whose daughter, named Aurea, took the veil there. Saint Austreberta was the first abbess of this monastery.

In 674 necessity obliged Saint Philibert to make a journey to court; he had the courage to reproach Ebroin, mayor of the palace, with his ambition and his crimes. That minister, to avenge himself, stirred up a hidden persecution against him. He won over some clerics of the diocese of Rouen, who decried the servant of God and brought Saint Ouen, their bishop, round to their views. Things went so far that Saint Philibert was put in prison, in a place in the town that was afterwards called the Postern. Some time later Saint Ouen recognised his innocence and had him set free. But Philibert, not thinking himself safe in Neustria, left Jumièges. He withdrew to Poitiers, to Bishop Ansoald, who had just succeeded Dido, uncle of Saint Leodegar, bishop of Autun, victim of Ebroin's cruelty. Ansoald received him kindly and would have liked to attach him to his Church. But the love of the solitary life again prevailed in the monk's heart; and the bishop, no longer hoping to win him, generously gave him, on the borders of his diocese and of Brittany, a portion of the island called Her or Herio, to build a monastery there, which from then on took the name of Hermoutier (monastery of Her), later turned into Noirmoutier (677). To this first gift he added other benefactions, both from his own property and from that of the Church of Poitiers, so that the new house soon flourished. It was first peopled with some monks from Jumièges. At Ansoald's request Philibert also undertook to re-establish the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Benoît of Quinçay (*Quinciacum*), in the diocese of Poitiers, which had suffered from unfortunate events. He brought some religious from Jumièges there, and deserved to be regarded as the restorer of this monastery, which had begun in the time of Saint Hilary.

On the death of Ebroin, which took place in 681, Philibert wished to see Jumièges again. There he met Saint Ouen, who asked his pardon for having let himself be prejudiced against him and begged him to remain in Normandy. But Philibert preferred to return to Noirmoutier, and consented only to place at the head of the abbey of Jumièges Saint Achard, one of his most faithful disciples. Back on his island, he applied himself

more and more to the good government of his flock. At the same time he was also directing the progress of the monastery of Notre-Dame of Luçon (*Sancta Maria Lucionensis*), which had flourished since the fourth century, and the beginnings of that of Saint-Michel-en-l'Herm (*S. Michael in Eremo*), which Ansoald had just founded, in 681. Taken up with so many labours, he nonetheless kept the spirit of recollection and prayer; what he advised others to do, he was always seen to do first himself. When he spoke, one seemed to hear Jesus Christ; the Spirit seemed to breathe upon his heart and his thoughts. He died on 20 August, about 687, among his brethren of Noirmoutier.

Saint Philibert is represented: 1. seated, in the dress of an abbot, stroking a horse or an ass; this is probably the ass of Saint Austreberta, abbess of Pavilly, which carried to Jumièges the sacristy linen that the holy abbess took it upon herself to wash; 2. saving the monks of Jumièges from a hurricane that came on during the harvest.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The Saint's body, kept until 836 in the church of Noirmoutier, was taken from it on 14 February of that year as a precaution against the Northmen, who were threatening the island, and carried to the monastery of Déas, a small town in the county of Herbauges, in Lower Poitou. During this journey wonderful prodigies were seen by the people along the way, at Beauvoir-sur-Mer (*Ampennum*), at Bois-de-Céné (*Varinna*) and at Paux (*Paulus*), three stations where the devout procession stopped in turn. Later the religious were forced to seek another refuge at Cunault, in Anjou, where they brought the body of their holy Abbot about the year 857. From there they carried it to Messay, in Poitou, in 862, then to Saint-Pourçain, in Auvergne, towards the end of the year 871. At last this community, wandering for so long, came to settle at Tournus under the leadership of the abbot Geilo, in the year 875. A monastery existing in that town under the invocation of Saint Valerian was given up to them.

Towards the end of the tenth century, Gilbert, count of Chalon, having tried on his own authority to give the abbey of Tournus to a religious he favoured, the monks of Noirmoutier went back to Saint-Pourçain, taking with them the body of Saint Philibert and the other relics with which they had enriched the monastery of Tournus. They returned only after three years, at the invitation of the bishops of the province, and when the intruding abbot had been driven out.

Since that time the famous abbey has always kept the precious deposit of the relics of Saint Philibert. They have escaped all the dangers of wars and revolutions. When the Huguenots ravaged the abbey of Tournus in 1562, they unhappily discovered the place where the shrines of Saint Valerian, Saint Vitalis and some other Saints had been hidden. But the body of Saint Philibert escaped their fury. Saved also during the Revolution of 1793, it is still honoured today in the principal church of Tournus. On 20 August 1841 the bishop of Autun placed the relics of our Saint in a new reliquary, in the presence of a great concourse of priests and faithful. On examining the bones of Saint Philibert, the absence of some of them was noted; but it is known what became of them. A parchment document found in the old copper shrine attests that on 19 May 1493, at the request of Jacques d'Amboise, abbot of Cluny and of Jumièges, the shrine of Saint Philibert was opened and some relics were taken from it to be sent to Jumièges. In the seventeenth century the same gift was made to other great personages.

Besides the principal feast of Saint Philibert, which is celebrated today, others used to be celebrated at the abbey of Tournus on the occasion of his various translations, on 14 February, 7 June and 15 October. There was a fourth on 22 May at Charlieu, in the former diocese of Mâcon; but it was proper to that church.

To compose this biography we have used the Proper of Poitiers; Godescard; the *Vies des Saints de l'Église de Poitiers* by the abbé Auber; the Legendary of Autun; and the *Vie des Moines et des Évêques de Luçon* by the abbé Du Tressay, honorary canon of Luçon.

Saint Bernard, First Abbot of Clairvaux and Doctor of the Church

1153. — Pope: Anastasius IV. — King of France: Louis VII.

> *Nemo poterat resistere spiritui qui loquebatur in eo.*
>
> *Acts 6:10.*
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> *Saint Bernard is a solitary who makes his whole family religious; a Doctor who writes and speaks nothing but Holy Scripture; a virgin fed with the milk of the Mother of God; a penitent fastened to the cross by the very hand of Jesus Christ.*
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> *Durand, Caractères des Saints.*

Saint Bernard, the glory and the oracle of the twelfth century, was born in 1091 near Dijon, at the castle of Fontaines. This place, made famous by the birth of so great a man, was turned at the beginning of the seventeenth century into a monastery of Feuillants. That monastery is destroyed today, but a chapel still remains there, which people visit out of devotion.[1] Tescelin, lord of Fontaines, our Saint's father, joined remarkable piety to high nobility. Aleth or Alix, his mother, was the daughter of Bernard, lord of Montbard, and related to the dukes of Burgundy. This blessed woman spent her days in the most austere practices of Christian discipline. While she was carrying this child, a dream warned her that he would have a glorious destiny. When she brought him into the world, Aleth was not content to offer him to God, as she had done with her other children; imitating the zeal and piety of Anna, mother of Samuel, she dedicated him to the service of the Church.

As soon as he was old enough to learn letters, she took care to entrust him to the priests of the church of Châtillon-sur-Seine to be taught. He made rapid progress under their direction; and as he had a naturally quick and penetrating mind, he soon surpassed all his companions in study. In the things of the world, on the other hand, he was very simple. He avoided appearing in public; solitude had inconceivable charms for him; he never contradicted his father or his mother; he obeyed his masters exactly. Silence, retirement, modesty, humility and devotion were the ornaments of his childhood.

When he was still very young he had an extremely violent headache that kept him in bed. As the physicians could not relieve him, a woman who meddled in curing the sick by spells was brought to him (no doubt without his parents' knowledge). As soon as Bernard saw her, he was seized with a holy anger against her and drove her out of his room with indignation. God, to reward him for this act, at once gave him back perfect health. Shortly afterwards he received a signal favour from heaven. On Christmas night, while he was waiting with many others for the divine offices to begin, he was overcome by a light drowsiness; then the adorable Child Jesus showed Himself to him in a beauty without equal and in the state He was in at the moment of His birth. Ever afterwards he had a singular devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation, and how enlightened he was on this subject may be judged from his admirable sermons on the Gospel *Missus est*. Already at that time he was extremely charitable to the poor, and gave them in secret all the money he could get from his parents.

His studies finished, he left Châtillon to return to his father's house. He was then nineteen. Outwardly he shone with all the attractions of youth and talent; inwardly he no longer felt the beat of his former fervour. His piety, deprived of sensible consolations and weaned, so to speak, of all sweetness, seemed to have neither sap nor warmth left. The spring was over for him; the shadows of night wrapped his soul, and the voice of the turtle-dove was no longer heard there. This was the time when his trials began.

Until then the chastity of the young Bernard, protected by piety and modesty (two guardians that grace and nature give to this angelic virtue), had suffered no harm. But the seductions of the world, into which he had just entered, strongly solicited his artless heart and his too impressionable imagination. It happened one day, his biographer relates, that he let his eyes rest on a woman whose beauty had struck him. Bernard felt a

strange emotion; his alarmed conscience awoke with force; he feared the wound might be mortal. At once he fled without knowing where he was going, ran to a pond, plunged boldly into it and stayed stubbornly in the icy water until he was pulled out half dead. Such an act of vigour had salutary results for Bernard: his victorious virtue redoubled its energy, and from that moment it rose more and more above the concupiscence of nature.

At that time an immense affliction, the most piercing a son can feel, struck him to the heart and put an end to all the joys of home. Barely six months had passed since his return to Fontaines when his mother, like a fruit ripe for heaven, was taken from him. A prey to deep sadness, he could scarcely find in his faith and in the eternal promises a few thoughts of consolation. He was nearly twenty. It is the age when a son is only beginning to understand the worth of a mother. As long as he is a child, he loves her by instinct, he loves her as a child; but the young man loves her with reason and consciousness, and to his filial tenderness are joined a singular esteem, a confidence and a respect beyond words. Bernard, although surrounded by his brothers, his sister and his old father, thought himself alone in the world. His support was gone; his consolation was no longer here below; he no longer heard or saw his mother; he was in a manner separated from himself and deprived of the sweetest charms of his life.

But what increased his regrets and his weariness every day was his interior aridity, the dryness of his devotion and his prayers, the coldness of his soul, which seemed to him covered with ice.

In this state of darkness, through which souls destined to high sanctity inevitably pass, Bernard had to undergo all the trials of the purgative way; for, as Scripture testifies, the Lord tries His servants as silver is tried by fire and gold in the crucible.

Bernard had to struggle against the three kinds of temptation that attach in turn to the body, the mind and the soul: the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life. The first of these temptations was all the more violent because Bernard had already triumphed over it on another occasion. But the old and cunning serpent waited for the most critical moment to surprise Bernard’s youth and deliver fresh assaults upon him.

Bernard was remarkably handsome; everything about him breathed distinction. His eye, full of fire, lit up a manly and gentle face; his gait, his bearing, his gestures and the smile on his lips were always modest, simple and noble; his speech, naturally eloquent, was lively and persuasive. There was something so lovable and so attractive in his person that, in the words of his biographers, he was even more dangerous to the world than the world was to him. One can understand from this the perils that must have surrounded the young man, especially when one remembers how open, expansive and inclined to love his heart was. He had many terrible experiences of them.

Yet divine grace, which helps the humble and strengthens those who fight, covered Bernard with its shield and made him invulnerable to all the darts of the demon of the flesh.

The tempter then took a subtler form. Seeing that Bernard’s weak side was an excessive passion for learning, he tried to captivate his mind by the concupiscence of the eyes. Imprudent friends, and even his own brothers, to distract him from his musings, urged him to give himself to the curious sciences; and they put before him so vividly the interest attaching to studies of this kind that Bernard, already inclined of himself to the inquiries of the intellect, at first found no objection to their advice; but the voice of his conscience showed him the dangers. He understood that learning without a practical aim, and with no other result than the satisfaction of a vain curiosity, is not worthy of a Christian. For, as he said himself later (and we will quote his own words here): “There are men who wish to learn only in order to know, and this curiosity is blameworthy; others wish to learn only in order to be regarded as learned, and that is a ridiculous vanity; others learn only to traffic in their knowledge, and that traffic is base. When, then, is knowledge good and salutary? It is good, answers the Psalmist, when it is put into practice. And he is guilty, adds the apostle Saint

James, who, knowing the good he ought to do, does not do it."

Considerations such as these, grounded in the Christian faith, outweighed the specious suggestions of his friends.

Yet he had to embrace a career and settle on a field of activity; in short, he had to choose between God and the world. In this alternative, where the secret dictates of conscience inexorably fight every reflection and every calculation, Bernard went through painful perplexities. The tempter took advantage of the crisis to deliver a longer and more stubborn assault than the earlier ones: this time it was pride that he sought to inflame by treacherous whisperings. The world, indeed, opened attractive avenues to Bernard. The influence of his family and his father's personal services assured him rapid promotion and a distinguished rank in the army. On the other hand, his flexible genius and his varied knowledge called him to court, where he glimpsed the chance of brilliant success. The magistracy also offered him a position suited to his grave and studious habits; and finally he could aspire, both by his merit and by the nobility of his house, to the most eminent dignities of the Church.

But amid so many advantages Bernard remained undecided; and neither the pressing solicitations of his family, nor the persuasion of his friends, nor the weight of his own desires and his passion for great things could fix his will or wring his consent. Each time the world smiled on him, the memory of his mother brought him back to thoughts of the life to come; and all his plans seemed to vanish like a dream under the action of an invisible force, which was his torment or his joy according as he yielded to or resisted that mysterious impulse.

While he was thus a prey to an inner struggle, in which nature found it hard to give in to grace, he went to see his brothers, who were with the duke of Burgundy at the siege of the castle of Grancey. His perplexities having grown on the way, he went into a church, where he prayed God with many tears to make His will known to him and to give him the courage to follow it. His prayer finished, he felt a strong resolution to embrace the institute of Cîteaux. He pleaded his cause so well with his family that those who had disapproved of him followed his example. Such were his brothers Guy, Gerard, Bartholomew and Andrew, and Gauldry, his uncle, count of Touillon, near Autun, famous for his valour in war.

Andrew, who was engaged in the profession of arms, hesitated to follow his brother Bernard; but his mother, blessed Aleth, who, as we have said, was dead, appeared to him and decided him to leave the world. Guy was held back by several obstacles: he was married and had two daughters. His wife gave him back his freedom and herself entered the monastery of Jully, near Dijon. Gerard, the Saint's second brother, was little inclined to become a religious. He was a very distinguished officer and loved the world. He received a lance-thrust in the side, as Bernard had foretold him, and was taken prisoner. Then he promised to join his brothers, and at once obtained his cure. After some time in captivity, from which Bernard made useless efforts to free him, he heard in his sleep a voice saying to him: "You will be set free today." He took it for a dream; but at the hour of Vespers (it was in Lent), thinking over what he had heard, he touched the irons that held his feet, and they came loose on one side. He went to the door of the dungeon, and the lock fell into his hands. He went out without anyone stopping him. He went up to the church with the irons still on one foot; but either he was not recognised, or no one was able to seize him. So he came back to his brothers and joined them to embrace a nobler warfare than that of this world.

After these conquests at home Bernard made others outside his family; for he was so powerful in his exhortations that, when he gave them in public or in private, wives held back their husbands, mothers shut up their children and friends kept their friends occupied, for fear that if they went to hear him they would let themselves be persuaded to become religious. Nevertheless he won more than thirty persons, among them the lord Hugh of Mâcon, a most noble, virtuous and wealthy gentleman, who later became founder and first abbot of Pontigny and bishop of Auxerre. At first all conversation between him and Bernard was prevented;

but when Bernard went to find him in a field where he was, a great storm scattered everyone around him so well that he had the means of speaking to him alone. He did so in the middle of the open country without the rain falling on them; and this prodigy, joined to the unction of the Saint's words, decided Hugh to embrace the monastic life. This great number of persons whom he had won to God withdrew together into a house that one of them had at Châtillon; there, before becoming religious, they all carried out its exercises with unbelievable fervour.

Before withdrawing to Cîteaux, Bernard and his brothers went to the castle of Fontaines to say farewell to their father and ask his blessing. They left with him their young brother Nivard, who was to be the comfort of his old age. Seeing him, as they were leaving, playing with other children, Guy, the eldest of them all, said to him: "Farewell, my little brother Nivard; you alone will have our goods and our lands." "What!" answered the child with a wisdom beyond his years, "you take heaven for yourselves and leave me the earth? The share is too unequal." They went away, leaving Nivard with his father. But some time afterwards he left the world as they had done and followed them. So of the whole family there remained only the father, who was very old, and a daughter, of whom we shall speak later.

Saint Stephen was then abbot of Cîteaux, after Saint Robert and Saint Alberic, who had been its founders. Bernard, who was about twenty-three, came to throw himself at his feet with this illustrious company of postulants, to ask the favour of being admitted into his new institute. Stephen received them with all the more joy because a religious had been warned of their coming by a vision. Bernard began his novitiate with such fervour and so ardent a desire to advance in virtue that he would have been taken not for a beginner but for an old man already perfected in the practices of the interior life. He thought ceaselessly of the motives he had had in leaving the world, and so as not to grow slack he always had in his heart, and often on his lips, this saying: *Bernarde, Bernarde, ad quid venisti?* "Bernard, Bernard, what have you come here to do?" He submitted with perfect regularity to the humblest and most crucifying exercises of the discipline of Saint Benedict; and his virtue developed every day with such vigour that it astonished even the holy old man who governed this new school of prophets. He had formed the salutary habit of living within himself, united to God in the depths of his heart and always attentive to the voice of his conscience, which made his recollection easy and continual. And as the graces he drew from that mysterious source overflowed onto his outward bearing, he seemed always surrounded by a halo of heavenly joy; so that, says a contemporary, one would have taken him for a spirit rather than a mortal man. His whole bearing expressed the fine saying he often liked to repeat to the novices: "If you wish to live in this house, you must leave outside the bodies you bring from the world; for only souls are admitted here, and the flesh profits nothing."

The more he tasted the delights of the divine love that warmed him within, the more he brought his senses and his natural life into subjection, lest dealings with outward things should put some obstacle in the way of his enjoyment of those ineffable consolations. The constant practice of mortification ended by deadening his nature to such a degree that, living now only by the spirit, he saw without seeing, heard without hearing, ate without tasting, and scarcely kept any feeling for the things of the body. It is related that more than once he drank oil or some other liquid for water without noticing it; at the end of a year's novitiate he did not know whether the room used as a dormitory had a flat or a vaulted ceiling; he did not know whether there were windows at the end of the oratory where he prayed every day. The one thing necessary absorbed him wholly and concentrated all his thoughts. His conscience, grown more delicate as it was more purified, could no longer bear any imperfection, and the slightest fault caused the young novice anguish. He kept silence exactly and never spoke except when he saw that speaking was better than keeping quiet. Yet his company was no burden; he knew so well how to combine his reserve with a charitable condescension to the weakness of his brethren that no one left him dissatisfied. His pleasure was to have poor and worn clothes, without however being slovenly. He went to the refectory only as to a place of torment, so that the thought of having to eat sometimes took away all his appetite. He fled sleep as the image of death, and when necessity obliged

him to take rest he did so so lightly that it might almost be said that he did not sleep at all. He weakened his stomach so much by these fasts, vigils and other mortifications that he could no longer keep down any food.

After his profession (1114) he still kept exactly to the same exercises. He used to say that those who are holy and perfect might well allow themselves some relaxation, but that for himself, who was full of imperfections, he must always do himself violence and keep pace with beginners. When his brethren were busy with some manual work at which he could not labour, because he had not been trained in it, he made up for this lack by other tasks just as hard and less pleasant. One day at harvest time, when the religious were cutting the corn, he was told to sit down and rest, because he had neither the strength nor the experience needed for this work. He sat down out of obedience; but at the same time, lifting his heart to God, he begged Him with many tears to grant him the grace of being able to work like the brethren. His devout wish was granted, and from that day he was as skilful as anyone at this work. While working he was not subject to the distractions of which the most spiritual complain; wholly occupied with outward tasks, he was still wholly occupied with the contemplation of divine things.

In the intervals he prayed ceaselessly, or read, or meditated. He prayed in solitude as much as he could; but when he could not, he made a solitude of his heart, from which he sent cries and groans up to heaven. He read the text of Holy Scripture more often and with more pleasure straight through and without commentary than with explanations, saying that he never understood it better than by itself, and that all he discovered in it of mysteries and heavenly truths seemed clearer and more lovable to him in that first source than in the streams of the interpretations added to it. Yet he did not fail to turn over humbly the works of the Saints and Catholic authors who have explained the Scriptures, and profited by their lights, which he always preferred to his own. This assiduous reading of the sacred Text made its sentences and words so familiar to him that his sermons, his conferences and his letters are full of them. As for meditation, it may be said to have been his life, and he found such satisfaction and delight in it that he was often as if inebriated by it. It was by this exercise that he became so learned in the knowledge of Christian truths; for he had not studied sacred letters in the world, and in the cloister he had no other school than to draw near by prayer to the source of all light. So he sometimes told his friends, very pleasantly, that the beeches and the oaks had been his masters.

When Saint Bernard had lived at Cîteaux with this perfection for two years, that is, from the year 1113 to the year 1115, Saint Stephen, his abbot, was asked to establish a new monastery at Clairvaux, a wooded valley near the Aube, then in the diocese of Langres. It served as a retreat for many robbers, and for that reason was called the Valley of Wormwood, unless it had been given that name because wormwood grew there in abundance. For this undertaking he chose Bernard and his brothers, with some other religious whom he knew to be very fervent; and giving them his blessing at the moment of departure, he named as their superior Bernard, who was only twenty-one. The beginnings of this foundation were extremely hard. The poverty was extreme. Hunger, cold and nakedness were all the riches of these new inhabitants. They often made their soup with nothing but beech leaves. Their bread, like that of the Prophet, was only of barley, millet and vetch, and even of this they did not have enough to satisfy them. It was so black and so bad-tasting that a visiting religious to whom some was served could not look at it without shedding tears, and secretly carried off a piece to show everyone, as a subject of wonder and a silent exhortation to penance. At last they were reduced to such want that the cellarer, Gerard, the holy abbot's brother, was forced to tell him that he was unable to provide for the needs of the religious for the coming winter. Bernard asked him what sum he would need for it. He answered that he needed a good eleven pounds. "Let us pray to the goodness of God, then," he replied, "that He may send us this sum." He went to prayer that very hour, and hardly had he raised his pure hands to heaven when a woman of Châtillon asked for him and offered him twelve pounds, begging him to order prayers for her husband, who was at the point of death. The Saint thanked God for this alms and assured the woman that she would find her husband in perfect health. She did indeed find him up and perfectly cured; and the twelve pounds served for the support of the community and showed that in our needs

we must trust in the fatherly care of divine Providence. Saint Bernard received such extraordinary and miraculous help more than once, for the hand of God was with him, and it never failed to procure him, by unforeseen and unexpected ways, what was necessary for the upkeep of his monastery.

When Clairvaux had taken the form of a regular house, the bishopric of Langres, on which it depended, being then vacant by the death of Robert of Burgundy, this blessed superior received the abbatial blessing from William of Champeaux, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, a famous doctor and a man of great piety. This blessing, which also took place in 1115 or at the beginning of 1116, bound these two holy men closely together, and made the bishop take the interests of the new abbot and of his monastery as much to heart as his own. So he helped him with his advice and his means; and having recognised the eminence of his holiness and the rich talents with which the divine Goodness had favoured him, he made him widely renowned, not only throughout his own diocese but also in that of Reims and throughout France.

Bernard put all his care into leading his religious in the ways of perfection. But as he was accustomed to converse continually with God, and drew from this converse an innocence and purity like that of the angels, he found it very hard to come down to the level of those under him. He spoke to them only a heavenly language that they did not understand. Their least faults seemed intolerable to him; and when he heard them in confession and found them subject, as men, to the weaknesses and miseries of men, he was quite astonished and gave them severe rebukes capable of discouraging them. He did not believe that a religious ought still to feel the stirrings of sensuality, or to give way to various faults that those still living in a mortal body cannot entirely avoid. This way of acting somewhat astonished these holy religious; but they had so much respect for their blessed superior that they preferred to accuse themselves of cowardice and slackness rather than accuse him of excessive severity or imprudence. Such ravishing modesty and simplicity served as a lesson to our Saint. He recognised that, though he had some speculative knowledge of the ways of God, he did not yet have all the experience needed for government. He accused himself of indiscreet zeal; he condemned his own judgments, in which he did not weigh enough the weakness of nature or the difference of attractions and graces. In the end he came to such contempt and distrust of his own conduct that he imagined his sermons did his brethren more harm than good, since in the silence and retreat of their cells they could receive far more devout thoughts than those he tried to inspire in them by his discourses. So he resolved to say nothing more to them until God had made His will known to him on this point. Some time afterwards a child, all surrounded with divine light, appeared to him and commanded him with great authority to say boldly whatever came into his mind, because it would be the Holy Spirit Himself who would speak by his mouth. And at the same time God gave him a special grace to sympathise with the weaknesses of others and to adapt himself to the capacity of each one’s mind. Finding himself completely changed, he began to show an extraordinary gentleness and condescension towards his brethren, and to provide with motherly care for all their needs.

Moreover, this great gentleness of Saint Bernard, far from harming regular observance in his abbey, on the contrary renewed the fervour of his religious. For by a holy emulation, the more indulgent he showed himself towards them, the more severe and pitiless they became towards their own bodies; and the more he excused and consoled them in their falls, the harsher the punishments they demanded of themselves. It was his maxim to hold back correction when a religious did not seem disposed to receive it well; “for,” he said, “when the one who corrects and the one who is corrected both grow angry, it is no longer a salutary correction but a fight.” Yet he knew so well how to choose the time and the favourable occasion to say to each what charity inspired him to say that his word never returned empty, and he healed wounds without making painful incisions.

At this time, as he was walking one night round his monastery, he saw in spirit so great a number of persons of different dress and different conditions coming down from the surrounding mountains and pouring into the valley where he was, that it was not large enough to hold them all. He understood from this that God willed

to make him, like Abraham, the father of a great posterity, and that his children would be like the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea, whose number cannot be counted. Tescelin, his father, was one of the first who wished to share in this happiness. He had remained alone in his house since Nivard, his last son, had left him to follow his brothers' example; but, touched by the holiness of his children, he was not ashamed to become their brother, and even to become the spiritual son of Bernard, who was his son according to the flesh. Humbeline, his daughter and the holy abbot's sister, thus remained mistress of all his property. She had made a very advantageous marriage, and in the abundance of her wealth gave herself up to the luxury and amusements to which her age and birth inclined her. One day she came, very elegantly dressed and with a numerous train of servants, to see her brothers. Saint Bernard, regarding her in this state only as a snare of the devil for the ruin of souls, refused to speak to her; his other brothers did the same; and Andrew, who was at the gate when she arrived, called her "a well-dressed sack of filth". This refusal made her burst into tears. She sent word to these servants of God that she admitted she was a sinner and did not think herself worthy of their conversation; but since Our Lord had died for sinners, they ought not for that reason to repulse her. She came to them as a sick woman seeking a remedy for her ills; if they would not see her as her brothers according to the flesh, they ought at least to see her as her physicians according to the spirit; in a word, she was ready to do whatever they should order. At this promise Saint Bernard and all his brothers came out to speak to her. The fruit of this conversation was wonderful: Humbeline from then on renounced all the pomps and vanities of the world and ruled her life on that of blessed Aleth, her mother. Two years later, having obtained leave from her husband, she withdrew to the monastery of Billette, where she lived and died in great holiness.

The way in which God drew souls to this holy Congregation is most admirable; here is a fine example of it. Some young gentlemen came one day in carnival time to see the abbey of Clairvaux and the holy abbot, whose praises they heard everywhere. Having satisfied their curiosity, they wished to take leave of him to go and continue their games and tournaments. Bernard begged them to grant him, as a favour, that they would spend the rest of the carnival in restraint and abstain from those amusements, which could only corrupt the soul and fill it with criminal passions. They could never bring themselves to promise him this. So he called a religious and told him to offer them some beer to refresh them; at the same time he blessed it and begged them to drink it to the health of their souls. They all drank, firmly resolved to obey him in that alone. But hardly had they left the monastery when a wonderful change took place in their souls. They were touched by a grace so swift and so effective that they renounced on the spot all the vanities of the world and, retracing their steps to the Saint's feet, begged him to receive them among his disciples. They have since been great servants of God, and they died in the joy of having prepared themselves for death by an austere life full of good works.

The conversion of a very important cleric named Mascelin is no less admirable. The archbishop of Mainz sent him to Saint Bernard, when he went to Germany, to welcome him on his behalf and express his joy at his coming. Mascelin carried out his commission with honour; but the Saint, looking at him lovingly, said to him: "A greater Master than the archbishop has sent you to us." Mascelin saw well what this meant; but he assured him that he was very far from thinking of becoming a religious and had no inclination to do so. Yet, without Bernard pressing him further, he at once felt himself so urged by the movements of grace that, on that very journey, he joined Bernard together with several other persons illustrious by their nobility and learning.

The change in Henry of France, brother of King Louis VII and son of King Louis VI and of his wife Adelaide of Savoy, was still more striking. This prince, who was later made bishop of Beauvais and then archbishop of Reims, had gone to Clairvaux to discuss some important business with the holy Abbot. On the point of leaving, he asked to see all the religious, to assure them of his affection and commend himself to their prayers. Saint Bernard told him that he hoped he would not die in the state he was in, but that he would

see by experience how effective were the prayers of the religious to whom he had commended himself. This prediction, which seemed obscure, was made clear that very day by a most surprising event. Henry, forgetting, so to speak, that as the eldest of the king's brothers he stood next to the crown, wished to remain at Clairvaux, where he took the habit and made his profession. This resolution caused unbelievable distress to his officers, who loved him tenderly and rested on him the hope of their fortunes. They mourned him no less than if they had seen him dead before their eyes. Among others, one named Andrew, who was from Paris, poured out many insults against Saint Bernard and his monastery, and, attacking even the prince his master, told him again and again that he must be drunk or mad to do such things. Henry begged his abbot to calm him and above all to take care of his conversion. "Let him spit out all his fire now," Bernard said to him; "after that, be assured that he is yours." At the prince's renewed entreaties Bernard replied: "Did I not tell you that he is yours?" Those present heard these words, and Andrew too, who, more furious and obstinate than ever, shook his head and said to himself: "Now I see that you are a false prophet, because you say a thing that will not happen; and I shall not fail to reproach you with it before the king and in the assembly of all the princes, so that you may be known for the cheat you are." The next day he began his curses again and left the monastery in this evil frame of mind, which gave much to think about to those who had heard the servant of God's prediction. But the following night Andrew was so pressed by remorse of conscience and the desire to be converted that, without waiting for daylight, he got up very early and went back to Clairvaux to ask humbly to be received there.

To these three examples let us add that of a young German lord who was coming from his studies in Paris with a tutor and passed by the abbey of Clairvaux only to see the house. His tutor was so touched by the devotion of the religious that he resolved to stay with them, and did in fact enter the novitiate. At the same time he begged his pupil, who was only fourteen, to follow his example; but the young man rebuffed him and, unable even to bear the conversation of the brethren, left the monastery as soon as he could to continue his journey. But he did not go very far. He had two visions on the two following nights: in one he was told that if he went to Paris he would die before Pentecost, and in the other he saw Saint Bernard pulling him out of the bottom of a well into which he had thrown himself. He retraced his steps to put himself under the direction of the blessed Abbot. His tutor afterwards lost heart and tried to persuade him to leave together; but in vain: the pupil was wiser than the master, and let him go out alone. As for the young man, Our Lord filled him with so abundant a grace that he attained very eminent holiness and received great favours from God. All these things happened at different times, as did the conversion of several gentlemen of Champagne and Flanders who came to take the habit at Clairvaux and later founded the fine abbeys of the Order of Cîteaux in those countries; but we have put them together because of their likeness to one another. Let us now return to the course of our history.

If Saint Bernard had put on a spirit of tenderness towards others, he kept for himself only a spirit of pitiless severity. Far from lessening his austerities, he increased them every day; and, not believing that the fatigues of his office were a reason for treating himself more indulgently, he refused his body everything that could sustain it and made it suffer, on the contrary, everything that could break it down and entirely ruin its strength. This austerity brought on serious illnesses, and these illnesses, which he neglected, reduced him to such weakness that nothing was expected but his death, or a life more grievous than death itself.

The bishop of Châlons, who had blessed him, came to visit him and found him in this state. Unable to bear that the Church should so soon lose a great light, he went straight to Cîteaux, prostrated himself with astonishing humility at the feet of a small number of abbots who were assembled there, and begged them to give him Abbot Bernard under his direction for just one year, to govern him, assuring them that he would manage so well as to restore him to health. The abbots were careful to refuse nothing to so great a prelate, who showed such simplicity and charity. So this good bishop, coming back to Clairvaux with full powers, had the Saint lodged in a house apart, forbade him every kind of bodily mortification and put him in the

hands of a physician who boasted he could cure him in a short time. Never did Bernard's submission and patience appear with more brilliance than on this occasion. The place where he was lodged was so poor and so badly built that it might have been taken for a leper's hut. The physician to whom he was handed over was a boorish, presumptuous and extremely ignorant man, who had him given things altogether contrary to his cure. He was sometimes served fat for butter, and oil in a jug for water. But he took everything with complete indifference; and in this great humiliation and dependence he was filled with so much joy that he seemed already to taste the delights of paradise. Those who had the happiness of entering his room breathed there an air of holiness that left them all perfumed; and as they felt filled with consolation in the company of this heavenly man, they left only with regret and with an ardent desire to return as soon as possible. When the year the abbots had granted the bishop of Châlons had expired, Bernard came out of this honourable prison to resume the functions of his office and the common austerities of his Order (1118). He took no account of the fact that he was not cured. Like a torrent that has burst its banks, or a bow that has broken the string that held it bent, he let himself be carried away by all the impetuosity of his first fervour. Instead of sparing his body, he set out to break it down by new fasts, vigils and abstinences. He prayed standing day and night, and did not stop until his knees, weakened by fasting, and his feet, swollen by toil, could no longer hold him up. He wore the hair shirt for quite a long time, as long as he could hide it; but he gave it up as soon as it was noticed, for fear that his brethren would want to imitate this severity, which would have been too harmful to their health. His food was bread and water, or the juice of a few boiled herbs, and he could not or would not take anything else. If he sometimes took wine, which he did very rarely, it was in a very small quantity, because water, he said, was much better for him. He excused himself only with great difficulty from outdoor work, both in the house and in the fields, although he dragged himself to it rather than walked. In short, his severity towards himself was so great that his stomach, from weakness, was reduced to being unable to keep anything down and rejected all the food he took. He himself admitted, when he was older, that there had been excess in it, and he reproached himself for it as a fault; for after all one should weaken and chastise oneself, not destroy oneself or entirely ruin the strength God has given us for His service.

Yet it was by this holy severity towards himself that God prepared him to be the worthy instrument of countless wonders that He willed to work through him in the world. For He gave him back enough health for it when it pleased Him; and in spite of the great exhaustion he had brought on himself by his abstinences, He gave him the strength to preach His word before kings and peoples; to make journeys into very distant countries in defence of the Church; to found in his lifetime a hundred and sixty houses of his Order; to be the arbiter of all the great disputes of Christendom; to put an end to schisms, confound heresies, pacify kingdoms and stifle wars between sovereigns; to arm all Europe against the infidels; and to be on earth the terror of all the wicked and the powerful protector of justice and truth.

The first important service God willed to draw from him was the renewal of the monastic spirit and of the ancient fervour that had been seen in religious communities in earlier centuries. His example contributed more to this than his words, and it would have been difficult for him to make much progress in this design had he not himself been an excellent model of penance and mortification. But who could describe the innocence, recollection and holiness of life that he made flourish in his monastery? The buildings were without ornament, with a rustic simplicity that showed clearly that those who lived in them did not think they had a lasting dwelling on earth, but awaited an eternal one in heaven. The silence was so great that nothing was ever heard but the harmony of the psalms, when they were in choir, and the noise of manual work, when they were at work. In spite of the number of religious, which was usually six or seven hundred, each was as solitary as if he had been alone. The hours and actions were so well ordered that no one was ever found idle, and all were busy without confusion. They attended choir and the other community assemblies with angelic modesty. The fire of divine love was quickly kindled in their meditation, and they left the foot of the sanctuary only all aflame with this heavenly fire and resolved to work constantly for their perfection. The bread they ate seemed more like a lump of earth than bread kneaded from flour; and in fact nothing went into

it but the corn that the soil of this desert produced by their labour, poor, black and tasteless corn. Their other food was no more savoury: only hunger or the love of God could find any satisfaction in it. But, what is surprising, they nevertheless believed they were fed too delicately, because the unction of grace so sweetened these austerities for them that they felt no hardship in them. This threw them into a dangerous distrust of their state and a fear that their holy abbot was not leading them well and was treating them too indulgently. But they were soon relieved of this anxiety, both by his wise remonstrances and by those of the venerable bishop of Châlons, of whom we have already spoken. He showed them, by the example of the meal that sweetened the bitterness of the prophet Eliseus's pottage, that God sometimes tempers the rigour of His servants' austerity by the abundance of His grace, in which case they ought to thank His goodness and not draw from it reasons for fear and distrust.

When Saint Bernard had been confined for some time to the direction of his abbey, Our Lord willed to use him outside it for the conquest of souls and the ruin of the empire of the devil, as had been foretold to his mother while she was carrying him. So He began to make him famous by the working of many miracles. He restored to health a lord named Josbert, his kinsman, who was about to die without the Sacraments; but only after his son had given assurance that all the wrongs he had done to churches and to the poor during his life would be entirely made good, and after some of them that could be remedied at once had actually been made good. He gave the use of his arm and hand to a child who had been crippled in them from birth. He delivered a young man from an abscess on the foot that greatly troubled him. He restored to health Gauldry, his uncle, consumed by a violent fever of which it was thought he would die. He cured of the falling sickness Blessed Humbert, his monk, who later founded the abbey of Igny in the diocese of Reims. In a famine he so multiplied the corn of his monastery that what would not have lasted his community alone until Easter was enough until the harvest, not only for his community but also for a multitude of poor people who flocked continually to the gates of his abbey. A poor man of the neighbourhood had recourse to him in his sickness; the Saint had him rest his head against the holy ciborium in which the body of Our Lord was kept, and this restored him to health. His uncle Gauldry and Guy, his eldest brother, were at first startled by the working of these wonders; and fearing that they would become for him an occasion of presumption or vanity, they rebuked him sharply for them, and sometimes even with reproaches, sparing neither his modesty nor his gentleness. But when this same Gauldry had been cured by his prayers, they moderated their zeal and no longer set themselves so much to mortify him; especially because he never said anything in his own defence and, although he was their superior, received their rebukes with the humility, patience and simplicity of a novice.

At the same time, one of his religious and kinsmen named Robert, who was still very young, slipped away from his monastery to go over to that of Cluny at the persuasion of some monks of that abbey. To bring him back Bernard wrote him the admirable letter that has been placed at the head of all his letters, in which he speaks with holy freedom of the disorders that had crept into the Order of Cluny after the death of Saint Majolus. The secretary he used to write it was Geoffrey, who has stated that while Bernard was dictating it, a heavy shower suddenly came on, which should have soaked all the paper, since they were in the open country; but not a drop of water fell on it, God wishing to show by this miracle that it was by His Spirit, and solely from the desire of His glory, that Bernard was writing this letter. He deprived another of his religious of holy communion for a secret fault. This monk, fearing to be noticed, nevertheless came to the holy Table to receive this bread of Angels from his hand, and he did receive it, because the blessed Abbot knew well that the Eucharist must not be publicly refused to those whose crimes are still hidden. But by a just judgment of God, and through the Saint's prayer, he could never swallow it. So he was forced to come and throw himself at his feet to confess his sacrilege; and then, after he had received absolution, the sacred host went down without difficulty. The word, the touch and the kiss of the servant of God worked still other wonders. By his word and his excommunication he killed an unbelievable quantity of flies that were in his church at Foigny before it was dedicated, which gave rise to the proverb of "the curse of the flies of Foigny". By his touch and

the sign of the cross he made a lame child walk straight; and by his kiss he cured another who wept and cried perpetually without anything being able to quiet him. Finally, when Walter of Montmirail was brought to him at the age of three to receive his blessing, he was seen to stretch out his little hands to take and kiss the holy Abbot's hand. He did take it, carried it to his mouth and kissed it several times with a respect and affection that could not come from an instinct of nature, but from a movement of grace.

While so many wonders were carrying his reputation throughout France, he fell dangerously ill. His children and friends around his bed expected almost nothing but his last breath. Then he had a rapture in which it seemed to him that he was being brought before the judgment-seat of God, and that the devil, that cruel enemy of men, was putting forward several charges against him. He said then, without being frightened: "I confess that I am not worthy of eternal beatitude and that I cannot obtain it by my own actions. But my Lord and Master possesses it by a double title: first, by right of inheritance, as the Son of God the Father; second, by the merit of His Passion, as Saviour of the world. He is content with the first title, and He gives me a share in the second. So I have great reason for hope and confidence." Then he came to himself; and shortly afterwards, having learned by the vision of a ship on which it proved impossible for him to embark that his end was still far off, he was miraculously cured by the touch of the sacred hands of the glorious Virgin, of Saint Lawrence and of Saint Benedict, who appeared to him with a serenity of countenance worthy of the sovereign peace they possess in heaven. The abbot of Saint-Thierry of Reims, who wrote the life of our Saint, says that as Saint Bernard had received health through the favour of the Virgin and the Saints, so he himself, having fallen dangerously ill, was cured through the charity and prayers of Bernard. But he gained much more than this bodily cure; for his illness having given him occasion to come to Clairvaux, he long enjoyed there the wholly heavenly conversation of this great servant of God, and several times heard him explain the Song of Songs and unfold the whole economy God observes in guiding souls to bring them to perfection. He drew wonderful fruit from it for himself and for the religious of Saint-Thierry, of whom he was the superior.

Bernard became famous not only for his miracles but also for his preaching, which was full of the spirit of God. He began this exercise at Châlons-sur-Marne, and he was so successful in this first cast of the net of God's word that several noble and learned persons wished to follow him and become his brothers, his children and his disciples. He then preached in Flanders, and his word was no less effective there and made no less considerable conquests than at Châlons. He also came to Paris, preached twice in the schools of philosophy and won for God and for his Order a great number of young men, whom he took back with him to his abbey. At one time he had six hundred novices there; and as new ones kept arriving, the buildings had to be enlarged to receive them, they had to be lodged more closely, and finally swarms of them had to be sent out in all directions, according to the pressing requests of bishops and lords who wished to have some in the places under their jurisdiction. In fact the abbey of Clairvaux became in a short time the mother and source of a hundred and sixty other monasteries, in which shone the same spirit of silence and devotion, the same love of poverty, the same detachment from all earthly things, the same ardour for mortification and penance, and the same observance of the Rule of Saint Benedict in all its rigour. France was not the only kingdom that wished to share in this blessing: Savoy, Italy, Sicily, Spain, Portugal, England, Scotland and Germany hastened to give houses to Saint Bernard; and his name flew so far beyond the seas that even barbarous and infidel nations asked for his children, to receive through them the light of the faith and the instruction needed to live well. Moreover, when he sent some of them to make a new foundation, if he did not go with them in body he went with them in spirit; and God, by a miracle of His goodness, made known to him everything that happened among them and the good or ill that befell them. He sometimes sent them word to correct certain faults that he could know only by a supernatural light.

We must now see him appear on the great stage of the universal Church, to defend the rights of its head, attacked by an ambitious faction of schismatics. Innocent II, who had previously been called Gregory, had

been canonically elected Sovereign Pontiff; Cardinal Peter Leonis, of the title of Santa Maria in Trastevere, who had been legate with him in France in the time of Pope Callistus II, had himself raised, against the Canons, to the chair of Saint Peter under the name of Anacletus II. Justice was on the side of the first; but force was, at the beginning, on the side of the second: the people, won over by prodigious sums of money, were ready to shed their blood for his cause. Innocent was forced to leave Rome and take refuge first at Pisa, where he was received with great respect, and then in France, which has always been the refuge of persecuted Sovereign Pontiffs. Before he arrived, a council was held at Étampes to examine his right and see whether the procedure of his election had been canonical. King Louis VI and the principal bishops asked that Bernard be called to it; for they were so convinced of his wisdom and holiness that they did not doubt that he would know what ought to be done on this occasion, and would declare it with apostolic freedom. Nevertheless he came only with dread, fearing that the outcome would not be favourable to the Church. But God consoled him on the way by a vision. No sooner had he arrived than the king and the prelates, by common consent, entrusted the whole affair, after God, to his judgment. He accepted a commission of such importance only reluctantly; but he was obliged to submit to it.

After often consulting the oracle of the Holy Spirit in prayer, and maturely weighing all the arguments of Innocent and of Anacletus, he declared that the first was Pope and that all the faithful were bound to recognise him and obey him; and this was accepted not only by the whole Council but also by the whole kingdom of France. Our Saint then went to the king of England and persuaded him, against his first resolution, to render obedience to Innocent. He even brought him to Chartres, to His Holiness, who had just arrived there after being received most magnificently at Orléans by Louis VI and by the bishops who had attended the Synod of Étampes. From there Innocent went to Reims, where he held a new Council for the affairs of the Church, and to Liège, where he conferred with the emperor Lothair II. On all these occasions he could not bear that Saint Bernard should leave him for a moment, and he wished him to attend the Consistories with the cardinals. And indeed he received great services from him everywhere: for at Reims Bernard was the soul of the whole Council, where nothing was settled except by his judgment; and at Liège, when the emperor wished to take occasion of the schism to have the investitures of the Churches restored to him, he set himself like a wall against so unlawful a claim, and showed him that to recognise the Pope was not an arbitrary submission, to which he could attach conditions at his whim, but an indispensable obligation and a necessity for salvation.

On the return from Liège, His Holiness wished to visit the abbey of Clairvaux himself. The religious did not go out to meet him with hangings of purple and silk, nor with crosses, shrines, missals and sacred vessels of gold. Nor did they receive him with the sound of trumpets and musical instruments, or with acclamations and shouts of joy; but they were preceded by a roughly finished wooden cross; their poor and worn habits were all their adornment; and instead of tumultuous cries they sang, modestly, psalms and hymns in praise of Jesus Christ, poor and humble, whose vicar the Pope is. The restraint with which they walked, without raising their eyes or turning them this way and that out of curiosity to see the pomp of the Roman Church, drew tears from the eyes of His Holiness and of all the prelates of his suite. They could not sufficiently admire that men should be so dead to the things of the world that they took no trouble at all to look at so august a company, which they had never seen. The Pope dined in the monastery with his whole court. A fish was served for the Holy Father, but the others were served only vegetables. No special wines were offered, only the small wine of the house, with brown bread that had all the bran in it. So poor a meal, which showed the virtue of these excellent religious, satisfied this holy company more than the most magnificent feasts of great princes; and although it had seen at Clairvaux only bare walls, wooden furniture and altars without gold, it was obliged to admit on leaving that it was there that true riches were to be found. From Clairvaux the Pope returned to Rome, where he was restored to his see by the emperor himself, who had himself crowned by his hands. Saint Bernard was obliged to follow him there, and he laboured with all his strength, but in vain, together with Saint Norbert, to win over the antipope, who held the strongest and best-fortified places in the city.

Innocent II sent him to Genoa to keep the Genoese in his obedience and reconcile them with the Pisans, against whom they were waging continual hostilities; and he did this with wonderful success. He then sent him to Germany to reconcile the emperor with Conrad and

Frederick, nephews of Henry, his predecessor; and in this he succeeded no less happily. Meanwhile the Pope, not finding himself safe in Rome, where Anacletus was the stronger and where his soldiers often fell upon any true Catholics they met, took the road again to Pisa, which was perfectly loyal to him. When he had arrived there, he assembled a most celebrated council of the bishops of the West and of other learned and pious persons to remedy the evils of the Church. Our holy Abbot was summoned to it, and he took part in all the deliberations and decisions of that assembly. He was held in such veneration that the door of his lodging was continually besieged by churchmen waiting to speak to him. One would have said that he was called not merely to a share in the care of the Church, but to a universal solicitude and authority; and this took nothing away from the profound humility and admirable modesty with which his soul was so excellently adorned.

After the council the Pope sent him as legate to Milan, with Guy, bishop of Pisa, and Matthew, bishop of Albano, cardinals, to bring back to the obedience of his See that Church, which Anselm, its archbishop, had made schismatic. Bernard also took with him Geoffrey, bishop of Chartres, his intimate friend, whose prudence he knew, to give more weight to a negotiation of such importance. The honour with which he was received in that city cannot be expressed. The whole people went out to meet him. The nobility rode out in several companies of cavalry to give him a more magnificent welcome. People pressed forward to see and hear him; they prostrated themselves before him to kiss his feet. He did his utmost to prevent these marks of veneration, but his prohibitions, like his entreaties, were useless. They pulled threads from his clothes, and even cut pieces from them to make relics. His negotiation had all the success he could have hoped for. The inhabitants, previously violent and furious, yielded gently to all his wishes and entirely abandoned the antipope's party to be reconciled with Innocent. Saint Bernard cemented this peace with great miracles. He publicly delivered several possessed persons. He gave sight to several blind people and cured many sick people with blessed water or bread and by the power of the sign of the cross. He gave back to a young man the use of his hand, which had withered and become paralysed. Water put into a dish from which he had eaten drove away the fever with which the cardinal of Albano, one of his colleagues, was grievously tormented. Among the possessed persons he delivered was a lady of high rank who had for a long time been so stifled by the devil that she had lost the use of sight, hearing and speech, and who, thrusting out her tongue horribly, seemed more a monster than a woman. The Saint had her brought to him in the church of Sant'Ambrogio, and, having set everyone to prayer, went up to the altar to say Mass. A kick that the unhappy woman gave him did not move him, and only increased the compassion he had for her. During the ceremonies of the Mass, at each sign of the cross he made over the host, he turned round and made a similar one over the possessed woman, which tormented the devil exceedingly. At last, after the Lord's Prayer, taking the body of Our Lord on the paten, he carried it to the woman's head, and, holding it there firmly, said these words to the devil: "Wicked spirit, here is your Judge; here is He who has sovereign power over you. Resist now if you can. Here is He who, ready to suffer death for our salvation, said aloud: Now is the time when the prince of this world shall be cast out. The body I hold in my hands is that which was formed from the body of the Virgin, which was stretched on the tree of the Cross, which rested in the tomb, which rose from the dead and which ascended into heaven in the sight of His disciples. It is in the dread power of this majesty that I command you, malicious spirit, to come out of the body of His handmaid and never have the boldness to enter it again." The devil could not resist so terrible a command. Scarcely had the Saint returned to the altar to make the fraction of the host and give the peace to the deacon when the devil fled in shame and left the sufferer entirely cured of all her ills. So many wonders brought him into such high esteem in Milan that one does not read in the Lives of the Saints that greater honour was ever paid to a mortal man. His house was surrounded day and night by people. He could not go out without a countless number of persons going before and after him with public acclamations. The crowd was so great that, to avoid being crushed, he was

forced to keep himself shut in and to speak to the people from his window. He gave them his blessing, instructed them in the truths of salvation, and also blessed the bread and water they presented to him for the healing of the sick.

From Milan he went to Pavia. A peasant followed him with his possessed wife to obtain her deliverance from him, and the devil insulted the blessed Abbot: “This eater of leeks and cabbages,” he said, “will not drive me out of my little bitch.” His aim was to make him fall into some impatience; but he gained nothing. The Saint, without being moved, ordered the possessed woman to be taken to the church of Saint Syrus to be cured there, wishing to give the honour of this miracle to that illustrious bishop and martyr. Saint Syrus, on the contrary, sent her back to Saint Bernard. The devil, taking advantage of this, said mockingly: “Little Syrus won’t drive me out; little Bernard won’t put me out.” But our Saint confounded him, answering: “It will not be Syrus nor Bernard who will drive you out, but Jesus Christ Himself, whose servants they are.” And indeed, after praying, he forced him to come out. As this deliverance was only for a time, the same possessed woman was brought back to him at Cremona as he continued on his way. He spent the night in prayer for her and delivered her for good in the morning, having a note hung round her neck on which were written these words: “I forbid you, in the name of Jesus Christ Our Lord, ever to touch this woman.” In the same place he cured a man whom the devil made bark like a dog; and, passing through Milan again later, he granted the same grace to an old woman who spoke Italian and Spanish at the same time, as if she were two persons, and who outran horses.

That is a part of what Saint Bernard did beyond the Alps. But however surprising these things are, his humility was more admirable still. For in the midst of so much respect and applause, when he saw himself as it were above cardinals and bishops, and when the Pope himself deferred entirely to his advice and gave him the power of a legate for all Christendom, he was so small in his own eyes, and recognised so well that he had nothing of himself, that he never allowed himself a single thought of vanity. All the honours paid to him he faithfully returned to God, as to Him to whom they belonged, and kept for himself only a continual sense of his own wretchedness. In this spirit he refused three great archbishoprics and two bishoprics that were offered to him, namely the archbishoprics of Genoa, Milan and Reims and the bishoprics of Langres and Châlons-sur-Marne, preferring the cowl to the mitre, and the spade and the rake to the episcopal crozier.

On his return to Clairvaux he was received with a joy that cannot be expressed. He had the consolation of finding everything in the same state as he had left it, with neither the young complaining of the authority of the old nor the old reproaching the young with any slackness. They had all kept their first fervour and a perfect union of mind and heart, because their holy Abbot, who was not with them in body, was always with them in spirit and won for them, by the help of his prayers, the abundance of graces they needed to persevere in the observance. At this time the buildings were moved and the abbey was built on a more convenient site than the one it had occupied before. The Saint at first was somewhat reluctant to consent to it, but he finally yielded to the wish of his children. God blessed this plan through the great alms that Theobald, count of Champagne, and several other lords gave the servant of God to contribute to this new building, which was very necessary.

We should now relate here what Saint Bernard did next to extinguish in Guyenne and Poitou the schism of the antipope Anacletus, which Duke William and Gerard, bishop of Angoulême, his confidant, kept up there by every kind of violence and cruelty towards laymen as well as priests and bishops. Our Saint had four different conferences with this prince, who was then ambitious and given to pleasure. In the first two, before his journey to Italy, he gained nothing over his mind; but in the other two, after his return to France, at Parthenay, a town of Poitou, he so terrified him by the force of his words, and above all by presenting to him his sovereign Judge hidden under the veil of the Eucharist, that he forced him to renounce the schism entirely and to recognise Innocent II as the lawful successor of Saint Peter. Afterwards he completed his conversion by the abundance of tears he shed for him, and obtained for him so perfect a compunction that he made of

him one of the most excellent models of Christian penance. As for Gerard, bishop of Angoulême, who had inspired him with the spirit of rebellion against the true Pope, he died suddenly without viaticum or confession, and by his death ruined all that remained of the schismatic party in France, no one any longer daring to support the antipope once all the princes and all the bishops had submitted to Innocent. After this great affair our Saint returned to Clairvaux, laden with glory and merits; and finding himself somewhat at rest there, he shut himself up in a cell made of interwoven leaves, where, at the request of another Bernard, his intimate friend and prior of the Charterhouse of Portes, he began his admirable exposition of the Song of Songs, in which he showed clearly that he was himself one of the chaste brides called to the embraces, the kisses and the other most loving caresses of the Beloved.

Yet he did not enjoy the happiness that the Bridegroom wished to procure for His Bride when, speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem, He forbade them to wake her and make her rise before she herself wished it and had slept enough. For in the midst of this divine tranquillity, in which his soul was wholly flooded with the delights of heaven, the Pope, with all the cardinals in his suite, called him to Viterbo, so that he might finish destroying in Italy the schism we have spoken of, which was still kept up by the authority of the antipope's relatives and friends and above all by the power of Roger, prince of Naples and Sicily, who had made himself its protector. His religious could not see him leave without shedding torrents of tears. The devil, too, opposed his journey with all his strength, and it is even said that on the way he broke the wheel of the carriage in which Bernard was riding, to make him fall over a precipice; but just as Bernard overcame by his courage all the tenderness that the tears and groans of his children stirred in him, so he was delivered from the snares of the devil by a miraculous help of divine Providence. His arrival in Italy put an end to that great schism, which had lasted more than seven years. He was held up at Viterbo by the illness of Gerard, his brother, whom he had brought with him; but having obtained from God his cure, only until his return to Clairvaux, he went on to Rome, where he reunited the most important of the schismatics to the Church. From there he passed to Monte Cassino, where he procured the same happiness for the religious of that abbey, who had followed the party of Anacletus. He then went to Salerno, where he obtained for the army of the Holy See a signal victory over Prince Roger; and, entering into a conference with Peter of Pisa, an excellent orator and learned jurist whom Anacletus had made cardinal and his legate, he obliged him by the force of his arguments to give up his defence of the antipope, which showed in him either much ignorance or much malice. There too he worked a great miracle to confirm the right of Innocent.

At last, after God had taken from this world by a sudden death the man whose ambition and obstinacy troubled the whole Christian world, Bernard, having already returned to Rome, gave the division its final blow. For the schismatics at once elected a successor to Anacletus, whom they named Victor III; but he came by night to our Saint, who made him understand how abominable he would make himself before God and men if he upheld his election, which he knew very well to be null. Then he obliged him there and then to put off all the marks of his imaginary pontificate and brought him to the feet of the lawful Pope, who received him kindly and granted him pardon. Thus this deplorable schism, which had so long torn the robe of Jesus Christ, was entirely extinguished by the zeal, prudence and piety of our blessed Abbot. This so increased the esteem and veneration in which he was held that everywhere he was no longer regarded otherwise than as the Father of the faithful, the Pillar of the Church, the support of the Holy See, the guardian Angel of the people of God and the Author of all the good that was in Christendom. After this he could stay only five days in Rome, the praises and honours he received there being unbearable to him; and he returned as soon as possible to his beloved solitude, to continue there his sermons on the Song of Songs, which so long a journey and such pressing occupations had necessarily interrupted. He brought with him some very fine relics that the Pope gave him in gratitude for his labours, among others a tooth of Saint Caesarius, martyr, which came loose from the jaw at the Saint's prayer, although before that no one had been able to pull it out. But he left with the Templars of Rome one of his tunics, which afterwards worked great miracles.

When he had returned, he sent to Rome an abbot and twelve religious of his Order to take possession of a monastery that His Holiness had prepared for them near the Aquae Salviae, which was also called the abbey of Tre Fontane, and whose church was dedicated to Saint Anastasius, martyr. This building, one of the oldest in Christendom, occupies the spot where Saint Paul was beheaded. It was called Tre Fontane because the Apostle's head, rolling on the ground, made three bounds, from which sprang three springs that are still to be seen today. It was in 625 that the abbey rose again under the invocation of Saint Anastasius. It fell into ruin once more, and Innocent II had it rebuilt by the religious of Clairvaux in 1138. The abbot was Bernard of Pisa, formerly vicar-general and official of the cathedral church of Pisa and then a religious of Clairvaux, who, after the death of Innocent II and those of Celestine and Lucius, his successors, was raised to the chair of Saint Peter and took the name of Eugenius III. It was to him that Saint Bernard addressed his five books *On Consideration*, in which he instructed him in all the duties of a Sovereign Pontiff and warned him of all the abuses he ought to cut away in his court and in the government of the Church. It is an admirable work, which should serve as a lesson to the greatest prelates, both for their own persons and for the guidance of the flock entrusted to them.

Apart from the affair of the schism, there was no important affair in the Church in which our Saint was not employed. If the Popes let themselves be taken in by ill-founded complaints; if they tolerated in their court abuses harmful to the good and the honour of the Church; if they gave unjust judgments for want of being informed of the truth of things; if kings and princes strayed from their duty, abusing the sovereign authority God had given them in their States; if dangerous disputes arose between bishops and their people, or between abbots and religious; if men tried to raise unworthy persons to the episcopal see and to exclude from it some excellent and faithful subjects whose election had been canonical; if truth found itself overwhelmed by falsehood and justice by iniquity and perfidy; if the lawful rights of clerics were attacked and churchmen were unjustly oppressed; if secular or religious prelates lived scandalously and dishonoured their character by licentiousness and depravity of morals, Bernard was the general physician of all these ills and the man who worked most effectively to destroy them. He fought vice, upheld virtue, opposed disorder, maintained good order, settled disputes, reconciled parties inflamed against one another, strengthened good people and repelled the impious; by his exhortations, remonstrances, reprimands and urgent and repeated entreaties he made himself the wall and the counter-wall of the house of God.

It is well known with what freedom he wrote nearly eighty letters to Popes Innocent II, Celestine II and Eugenius III, to warn them now of the abuse of the appeals they had received, now of the deception practised in judgments they had given, now of how little necessary or useful were the dispensations they had granted, now of the evils the Church suffered through the negligence, indulgence, avarice or luxury of their officials. When King Louis the Fat drove the archbishop of Tours and the bishop of Paris from their sees because of some displeasure he had conceived against them, Saint Bernard not only rebuked him severely for it in his letters but threatened him in his own person with the judgments of God if he did not correct what he had done. He even took up the cause of these bishops with the Pope against His Majesty; and neither this holy boldness nor the fulfilment of his threats by the violent and sudden death of the prince's eldest son could bring him into disgrace or put him out of favour with the king, so far were the esteem and veneration of the greatest monarchs for this holy abbot above the ordinary changes of human caprice. It is also known how he acted towards Theobald, count of Champagne, a most pious prince and his great benefactor, when he learned that the count had stripped a gentleman of his property by too hasty a judgment. He wrote to him about it in his usual lively and pressing style, not once but two and three times, and did not stop writing to him until he had obliged him to repair the wrong he had done.

It was he who reconciled this count with King Louis the Young, who had already led a large army into Champagne to seize his lands. He was arbiter of their disputes; he judged them as with sovereign authority, and obliged the king to return to his own States and leave the count in peaceful possession of what belonged

to him, though as dependent on his royal power. It was he who converted Alcide, wife of the duke of Lorraine, by driving seven devils out of her body, and made of her, as of Magdalen, not only an illustrious penitent but also a very holy woman worthy of heavenly revelations. It was he who, together with Geoffrey, cardinal of Vendôme, reawakened by his counsels the former fervour of Ermengarde, countess of Brittany, who had grown slack in her former devotions. Finally, without repeating here what we have said of the reconciliation of the Pisans with the Genoese, and of the emperor Lothair with the nephews of his predecessor, fruits of his wisdom and skill, we see from his letters that there was no affair in the Church or in the States on which he was not consulted, and on which he was not obliged to give his opinion, and often a final decision.

He also made himself the invincible protector of the faith against all the errors that dared to appear in his time. The first were those of Peter Abelard and Arnold of Brescia, his disciple, who by false subtleties were reviving the doctrines of Arius, Nestorius and Pelagius. The Saint, who loved Abelard for his intelligence and for some appearances of piety that were seen in him, first warned him privately to correct his opinions and to remain inviolably attached to the doctrine of the holy Fathers. But as this presumptuous man despised his remonstrances and even had the boldness to challenge him to debate, he had him condemned first at Sens by a Council of three provinces (1140), and secondly at Rome by Pope Innocent II, to whom he wrote a letter refuting his fancies. The second errors he fought were those of Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers, a learned and subtle prelate, but one who, by trying to fit our mysteries to the principles of nature, destroyed the simplicity of God and put an infinite composition into His being, His attributes and the divine Persons. For he taught that the divinity by which God is God, and likewise the wisdom, power and goodness by which God is powerful, wise and good, are not God but only in God; and he said that the relations of the divine Persons were outside those Persons, just as in creatures the relations they have with one another are outside their substance and their proper constitution. Arnault and Calon, his two archdeacons, were the first to recognise the iniquity of his doctrine, which destroyed the divine nature. They warned him of it, and when he refused to give it up they went to Rome to lay their complaint before Pope Eugenius III, the disciple of our Saint. His Holiness referred the examination of this affair to the Council of Reims, which he was about to hold in person. He presided over it as head of the Church; several cardinals, ten archbishops and a great number of bishops attended it; but Bernard was the soul and the spirit that animated the whole assembly. He disputed against Gilbert; he made him bring out the venom he hid in the folds of his reasonings; he made him acknowledge his error; he obliged him to retract it, censure it and anathematise it, and to confess that the divine essence, the divine form, the divine goodness, power and virtue is God. He had a decree made of it; and whatever difficulty was raised by the cardinals, who wanted the affair suppressed to spare Gilbert’s honour, especially because he was submitting, he brought the Pope and the whole Council to condemn his opinions, without, however, doing harm to his person.

Finally, the principal heresy against which our blessed Abbot spent his zeal was that of an apostate monk named Henry, who was waging a cruel war on the Church in Languedoc, attacking the Sacraments, which are her treasures, and the priests, who are their ministers. And because this heresiarch was a great talker, he had so led people astray that, as our Saint says in his Letter CCXL and in Sermon LXV on the Song of Songs, one already found churches without people, people without priests, priests without the respect due to their character, and, in short, Christians without Christ. Baptism was refused to little children; people mocked at prayers and sacrifices for the dead, the invocation of the Saints, excommunications, pilgrimages, the building of churches, consecration, chrism and the holy oils, the cessation of work on feast days and the other ceremonies of the Church. The Pope, informed of these disorders, sent his legate to remedy them, and the legate took Bernard with him as the strongest rampart of the persecuted Church. The people of Toulouse received this angel of earth as an angel come from heaven. He preached to them with unbelievable zeal, and preached likewise in all the places the heresiarch had infected. His word was so effective that it healed all the wounds this public enemy had made; even those he had led astray pursued him, caught him and put him,

loaded with chains, into the hands of the bishop of Toulouse.

What contributed greatly to this success were the great miracles the Saint worked in all the places where he preached. He was at Sarlat, an episcopal town. After the sermon the people brought him a quantity of loaves to bless, according to his custom, by making the sign of the cross over them. He assured those present, as a sign of the truth of what he was telling them and of the falsity of the heretics' doctrine, that all the sick who ate of these loaves would be cured. The venerable Geoffrey, bishop of Chartres, who was close to the Saint, thinking this statement too general, wished to qualify it, adding that they would be cured provided they ate of them with firm faith. But the Saint, whose confidence in God had no limits, took up the word again and said: "I do not say that; I say absolutely that all the sick who eat of these loaves will be cured, so that it may be known by this great number of wonders that what we proclaim is true." So formal a promise was followed by its fulfilment: a vast number of sick people were cured by eating these loaves, and no one ate of them without receiving healing. This great event was a hammer-blow that crushed almost all the remains of the heresy; only a few sparks were left, which later became a great conflagration among the Albigensians. The honours afterwards paid everywhere to this humble religious cannot be described. The countryside through which he passed was full of people; at the entrance of towns and villages the press was so great that he could hardly move forward. He went once more to Toulouse, where he worked a signal miracle on a canon regular of the church of Saint-Sernin, who was paralysed and could not move. He asked God for his cure and obtained it, so that, after he had given him his blessing, as he was leaving the room so as not to appear the author of the miracle, the sick man leapt from his bed and threw himself at his feet; and, finding himself perfectly cured, he presented himself to the legate and to the bishop of Chartres, who had a canticle of praise and thanksgiving sung for it in the church. Afterwards this canon, who was also called Bernard, followed his benefactor and became a religious at Clairvaux, where he advanced so far in virtue that he was found worthy to be abbot of the monastery of Valdeau. After so many combats and victories, one will be obliged to admit that our Saint was the scourge and the persecutor of the wicked, just as, on the contrary, he was the friend and faithful fellow-worker of all the great prelates and holy persons in the Church of his time. The love, respect and joy with which he was received by Saint Hugh, bishop of Grenoble, and by the religious of the Grande-Chartreuse when he visited them cannot be expressed. That excellent prelate, who was later canonised at the council of Pisa, regarding him not as a man but as a living image of the holiness of God, did not hesitate, bishop and old man though he was, to prostrate himself on the ground to greet him. Bernard was greatly surprised at this act of humility and threw himself at the holy bishop's feet to receive his blessing. From then on these two children of light were but one heart and one soul, bound and united by a close charity in Jesus Christ. He had already written the Carthusians letters full of divine sweetness, which had united their souls to his; but this affection was kindled still more by their conversation together. The only thing that troubled Guigo, prior of the Chartreuse, was to see that he had come on a horse whose saddle and harness were too magnificent; but he was very surprised when he learned that the holy Abbot, who had used it throughout his journey, had not noticed it, his mind being so taken up with God, and his senses so dead even to the objects that were before his eyes at every moment, that he did not take them in. In the same way, having travelled one day along the shore of a lake, he did not know in the evening what his companions meant when they spoke of the lake they had skirted. Geoffrey, bishop of Chartres; Manasses of Meaux; William of Châlons; Gaudry of Dol; Hildebert of Le Mans; Aubry of Bourges; Josselin of Soissons; Hugh of Mâcon; Ouger of Antwerp; Milo of Thérouanne; Alvise of Arras; Albero of Trier; Samson of Reims; Geoffrey of Bordeaux; and Arnulf of Lisieux, some of whom are numbered among the Saints and who were the flower of the bishops of Christendom, were also his intimate friends. He respected them and served them as far as he could, and he was also singularly loved and revered by them. Nor must we leave out Saint Malachy, that great archbishop and apostle of Ireland, whose life he himself wrote, and who was the finest ornament of his century. This incomparable man, having come to Clairvaux on a journey he was making to Rome, was so delighted by the fervour of this blessed Abbot and his religious that he wished to be clothed in

their habit, and he pressed the Pope earnestly to be relieved of his bishopric so as to spend the rest of his days with them. But His Holiness, not wishing to deprive the Church of Ireland of a light so necessary to it, made him on the contrary his legate throughout that island; and instead of remaining at Clairvaux, he took Clairvaux, so to speak, with him, bringing religious of Saint Bernard over to his country to establish monasteries there.

Nine years later, knowing that the hour of his death was near, he came back to Clairvaux to die in the midst of that company of Saints. Bernard administered the sacraments to him and received his last breath; then, when his body was washed, he exchanged tunics with him. Finally, having begun Mass for the repose of his soul, he had a most manifest revelation of his glory: by an extraordinary movement of the Holy Spirit he stopped the Requiem Mass and finished the Mass of a holy confessor bishop.

We ought now to speak expressly of the prophecies, miracles, virtues, sufferings and writings of this beloved of God; but as these great subjects would take us too far, it will be enough to touch on something of them, in addition to what we have said so far. As for prophecies, his life furnishes us with countless examples. He saw what was happening in the most distant abbeys dependent on his own without being informed of it; and when it was some disorder, he sent word that it was to be corrected as soon as possible. He knew which of the postulants and novices would persevere and make profession, and which would return to the world and abuse the grace of their vocation. To some he foretold the time and place of their death, to others their happy return from some journey, to others the conversion of their relatives, and to others the punishment with which the justice of God would overwhelm them; and these predictions were always fulfilled. Among others, he foretold the death of the eldest son of Louis the Fat, as punishment for the ill-treatment his father had inflicted on some good bishops, as we have said, and that of the count of Anjou, as chastisement for his contempt of the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him. He also foretold the reconciliation of the count of Champagne with the king of France at the end of five months, a reconciliation impossible without an evident miracle; yet it came about exactly at the end of that time. As for his miracles, the author of the third book of his life, who was his secretary and later his successor in the abbey of Clairvaux, states that when he went to Germany to preach the crusade, he cured in a single day, at Doningen near Rheinfeld, nine blind people, ten deaf or dumb people and eighteen lame or paralysed people. He adds that he worked similar wonders at Constance, Basel and Speyer, in the presence of Conrad, king of the Romans. At Mainz the crowd of sick people who came to be touched by his hands was so great that the king, to rescue him from the press that was overwhelming him, had to take off his royal mantle and take him in his arms to carry him out of the church. He worked no lesser wonders at Cologne: in the space of four days that he stayed there he straightened twelve lame people, gave hearing to ten deaf people, sight to five blind people and speech to three dumb people, and finally cured two maimed people there. The inhabitants of Aachen shared in this blessing at the same time and received like favours and help. When the Saint was in his abbey, he was no less pressed and importuned by the sick. Pope Eugenius III, having come there unexpectedly while he was saying Mass, himself witnessed the multitude of these unfortunate people who flocked there to obtain their cure from him, so that he was almost stifled and had difficulty getting out of the press with the help of his officers. When the same Pope went to Cîteaux to attend the assembly of abbots as one of their brethren, the Saint, who had also come there, delivered from deafness a little child who had lost his hearing through a sudden fright. In short, whichever way this great Servant of God turned, he worked so many wonders that people no longer troubled to count them, or even to record them individually.

We should now have a fine field for speaking of his virtues, if we did not know that it is a history we are writing and not a panegyric. We shall say only a word about them. The greatness of his faith appears admirably in the continual war he waged against heretics to uphold it, in the excellent treatises he composed to explain and defend it, in his respect and devotion for our Mysteries, and above all in the desire he always had to shed his blood to seal the Catholic truths. We have seen his confidence in God, whether in the needs of

his abbey, or in the persecutions raised against his person and against his children, or in the public calamities of the Church, or finally in the particular miseries of his neighbour, for which he was asked to work, and did work, so many miracles. He showed his love for God by working perpetually for His glory, by winning Him new servants every day, by seeking to converse with Him in prayer, and by making Him at every moment pure sacrifices of his honour, his life and his whole self.

His devotion to Jesus Christ and to the Blessed Virgin was incomparable: one need only read the sermons and treatises he composed in their honour to see that his heart was wholly consumed by the ardour of his love for them. Being one day in the cathedral church of Speyer in Germany, in the midst of all the clergy and a great multitude of people, he knelt three separate times, saying at the first, *O clemens!*, at the second, *O pia!*, at the third, *O dulcis Virgo Maria!* And the Church has put these three salutations at the end of the famous antiphon *Salve Regina*. Some authors even say that Saint Bernard is the author of the whole antiphon. In that cathedral there are still to be seen three copper plates on which these three words, spoken by our Saint, are engraved, and for that reason the *Salve Regina* is also sung there every day to music. One would need to be animated by his spirit to represent worthily his affection, his zeal and his true and heartfelt love for his neighbour. He was the best and most grateful friend of his century, and his letters show us that he never spared anything to serve those who had done him any service. All the rest of mankind also had a place deep in his heart; he longed for them all in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and he spared neither his labours nor his vigils to secure their salvation and help their spiritual advancement in virtue. His constant refusal throughout his life of all ecclesiastical dignities is an evident mark of his modesty and humility; but it appears with still more brilliance in the aversion he had for praise and the esteem of men, and in the care he took to turn them aside.

Never was a Saint more praised, and nothing can be added to the eulogies given him, even in his lifetime, by the most distinguished and holiest persons in the Church. But one must see in his Letters XI, XVIII, LXXII, LXXXVII and CCLXV how he took occasion from this to humble himself, to declare his weaknesses, to lay bare the imperfections with which he believed himself filled, and to keep himself firmly in the knowledge and sense of his own nothingness. While everyone admired the strength, beauty and unction of his writings, he despised and found fault with them himself, being able to attribute to himself only ignorance and lack of discretion. His own advice was suspect to him, and, as he says himself in Letter LXXXVIII, he preferred that it should not be followed, because he feared it might be the effect of a blind light or of weakness of judgment. The devil did what he could to make him fall into pride or vanity, but always in vain. One day, while he was preaching before a select audience, that proud spirit suggested this thought to him: “How glorious you are, to be listened to and followed with so much applause!” The Saint said to him boldly: “I did not begin for you, and I shall not stop for you either.” To an incomparable gentleness, which earned him the title of *Doctor mellifluus*, “the Doctor sweet as honey,” he joined an apostolic freedom and courage that have scarcely any equal among the other Saints. We have already given examples of this in his way of dealing with princes, kings, emperors, bishops, cardinals and even Popes, to whom he knew how to speak and write truths that could not be naturally agreeable to them, and which in fact often displeased them. Those who take the trouble to read Letters XLVIII to Cardinal Haimeric, CLXXXII to Henry, archbishop of Sens, CLXXXV to Eustace, bishop of Valence in Dauphiné, CC to Ulger, bishop of Angers, and CCXXIII to Josselin, bishop of Soissons, will find there fresh marks of this firmness, worthy of a Basil, an Ambrose and a Chrysostom. What shall we say of his disinterestedness and of the generous contempt he had for all the favours and comforts of this world? Never could the friendship of the great make him give a recommendation against his duty. When the count of Champagne, to whom he owed so much, asked him to obtain benefices for his son William, who was still a child, he refused absolutely, both because he condemned the plurality of benefices without pressing necessity where the good of the Church was concerned, and because he did not approve of a child being charged with an office whose functions he could not perform. A considerable sum of money intended for a foundation was taken from him, and he was made to lose several monasteries, without his

being disturbed by it or bearing any ill will towards those who had done him this wrong. He often yielded his rights to the religious of other Orders; nothing pleased him but to be poor and to see his religious poor. Retreat and solitude were what he desired most on earth, and it was only with extreme violence that he was drawn from them; one sees that in those circumstances he was like a child taken from its nurse's breast. In short, Bernard was a masterpiece of which divine Wisdom was pleased to make, as it were, the summary of all the virtues.

But as he was a man, this did not prevent his being subject, for his testing, purifying and perfecting, to the insults, calumnies and persecutions of men. It was on these occasions that his virtue appeared in all its brilliance, and that he showed he had a patience and humility proof against every blow. Pope Innocent II, who owed him entirely the extinction of the schism of Anacletus, sometimes forgot these obligations and, prejudiced by evil tongues to whom Bernard's zeal and courage could not be agreeable, treated him on some occasions as importunate, indiscreet and even a traitor. One must see in his Letters CCXIII and CCXVIII with what wisdom and modesty he cleared himself of these accusations, and how well he managed, without offending the sovereign power of that Pontiff, to show him that his importunity was that which the Apostle requires of his disciple Timothy when he says to him: *Praedica verbum, insta opportune, importune*: "Preach the word; be instant in correction in season and out of season"; that his indiscretion was that which the same Apostle attributes to himself when he says: *Factus sum insipiens; vos me coegistis*: "I have spoken as a fool; you have compelled me"; and finally that treachery could not be imputed to him, since in the whole affair in question he had done nothing except by order of His Holiness. The cardinals and bishops also were sometimes jealous of him, seeing him settle all the causes of Christendom with such authority; and there were some, both in Rome and at the Council of Reims, who said that, being a religious, he ought to keep to his cloister and not meddle in ecclesiastical affairs. But far from taking offence at these complaints, contrary to all justice, he begged the bishops no longer to employ him in what was not his office, no longer to tear him from his retreat, to leave the frog in its marsh, the bird in its nest and the dove in the clefts of the rock, without further interrupting his rest for things that concerned their office, for which they, and not he, would render account at the judgment of God. Under calumny he knew admirably how to take the blame on himself and yet vigorously uphold the interests of God, without his humility hindering the ardour of his zeal, or his zeal prejudicing the true sentiments of his humility.

Finally, the hardest test of his constancy was the unhappy outcome of the Crusade that he had preached in a great part of Europe, and which he had led people to hope would be so successful. It was Pope Eugenius III who, by a public brief, obliged him to engage the Christian princes and peoples in this holy war; and he devoted himself to it with all the ardour that the love of Jesus Christ and the spirit of obedience could inspire in him. He worked countless wonders to confirm his preaching and to show that he spoke in the name of God. And so the emperor, the king of France, Louis the Young, and a great number of other princes and lords took the cross and passed into the East to fight the infidels. But the outcome did not answer to the hopes; for most of the Christian troops perished there, either by the sword of the enemy or by the ill-treatment of the Greeks and the Eastern Christians, so that there was hardly a family in France, Italy and Germany that had not reason to mourn the death of its members and the loss of much property that had been spent in equipping that army. This disaster let loose the impious and the libertines against the reputation of Saint Bernard. He was made out to be a false prophet; he was loaded with insults and reproaches; and neither the great wonders he had worked in publishing the indulgences of this Crusade, nor the express order he had received to publish them even against his will, could prevent his being called a deceiver, a seducer and a public plague of Christendom. This great reverse was needed to counterbalance the incomparable praises that had been given him, and to finish refining him like gold in the crucible and like the purest essences in the alembic. He received this most unexpected blow with wonderful constancy, without being disturbed; and what he wrote about it in Book II of *On Consideration* is so edifying that nothing more instructive can be read. He says, among other things: "If men must necessarily murmur on this occasion, it is better that it be against me than

against God. It is the greatest happiness to me that God should be willing to use me as a shield. I gladly receive the slanders of the tongues that attack me and the poisoned darts of the blasphemers that pierce me, so that they may not reach the divine Majesty. I shall willingly suffer to be dishonoured by them, since the honour of God remains covered by my dishonour." Moreover, several learned men of the same time showed the true origin of the Christians' disaster on this occasion: it was the flood of vice that entered the armies and made them unworthy of the help divine Providence had prepared for them. Besides, many who had gone there in a true spirit of compunction found there their eternal salvation, which they would not have found in Europe, where the abundance of goods and comforts of life made them soft and kept them wallowing in impenitence. Lastly, Saint Bernard, to justify those who had been the first authors of the Crusade, publicly cured a blind man; and God, so as not to make his preaching wholly useless even for temporal things, changed the face of affairs and made the Christians masters of the city of Ascalon, which was of great importance for the preservation of Jerusalem and which had been vainly attempted for fifty years; and this happened in the very week of the blessed Abbot's death.

We have said many things about Saint Bernard, but we have left out a far greater number, which would require a whole volume. It was he who constantly assisted the Popes during their stay in France; and it is said that when Eugenius celebrated Mass in the church of Montmartre, a quarter of a league from Paris, he had Bernard serve as deacon and the venerable Peter of Cluny as subdeacon. It was he who wrote terrible letters to the Roman people to remonstrate with them over the fault they were committing against the Roman Pontiff by forcing him with outrages to leave Rome and take refuge in France. It was he who gave a Rule to the Templars by order of the council of Troyes, and who formed the beginnings of Blessed Felix of Valois, who afterwards was the founder of the Order of the Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives. Finally, Cardinal Baronius does not hesitate to say that he was not only a truly apostolic man but also a true apostle, and that he was in no way inferior to the great Apostles.

After so many labours, exhausted by the extraordinary fatigues he had endured in them, in addition to his penances and his continual illnesses, he fell into such weakness that he could no longer stand (1152). His liver no longer did its work, his natural heat was almost extinguished, and his legs became swollen as in dropsy. He received all these infirmities as great favours from heaven and as warnings that his ship would soon reach port.

Nevertheless, always calm and smiling, his mind, full of vigour, mastered his weakened limbs and obliged them still to lend themselves to the sacred functions within the monastery. In spite of his exhaustion he made every effort to celebrate the holy sacrifice each day, telling those who assisted and supported him at the altar that no action was more effective in this last passage than to offer oneself as a holocaust, in union with the adorable Victim immolated for the salvation of men. His words, rarer but more piercing, seemed steeped in the gentle warmth that was consuming his soul; and often, after the celebration of the divine mysteries, the fire of heaven set him so ardently ablaze that no one could approach him without feeling surges of fervour within himself. The religious, his beloved children, sorrowfully shared his pains and held him back with all the vehemence of their prayers and all the bonds of their tenderness. Day and night the community on its knees begged God with tears to preserve so beloved a father; at every glimmer of improvement, hope burst out in thanksgiving.

But the Saint gathered his great family around him, and in a moving voice begged them to let him die. "Why," he said to them, "why do you keep a wretched man here below? Your entreaties prevail over my desires. Show me charity, I beg you, and let me go to God."

Overcoming his extreme weakness, he wished to write to one of his dearest friends; and with a failing hand he wrote a friendly letter to Arnault, abbot of Bonneval, of the Order of Saint Benedict, in which, after describing some of his ills and pains, for which there was no relief, he said to him: "Pray the Saviour, who wills not the death of the sinner, not to put off any longer the end of my life, but to guard it with His help. Do

me also the kindness of covering the nakedness of my last hour with your vows and prayers, so that my enemy, who lies in ambush to surprise me, may find no place to set his teeth and cause wounds."

Six weeks before his death Bernard received the painful news of the death of Pope Eugenius. The unexpected death of this Pope, whom Saint Bernard loved with so tender and devoted a love, tore his heart and made his tears flow. He would accept no consolation, and seemed to become day by day more a stranger to what was going on around him. Godfrey, the pious bishop of Langres, having come to see him to consult him on an important matter, was surprised at how little attention the servant of God paid him. Bernard guessed his thought: "Do not hold it against me," he said to him; "I am no longer of this world." And indeed he was intent only on untying the last threads that bound him to earthly life. All the rays of his soul were concentrated on God as on the drawing hearth of his love; and already, on the wings of the most fervent sighs, he was rising to the immortal regions.

Yet a wonder was to crown the life of this great man.

He was lying on his bed and preparing to close his earthly course manfully, when the archbishop of Trier came to him at Clairvaux, begging and beseeching him to help the province of Metz, where lamentable scenes were taking place. The burghers and the nobles, long at odds, were waging a bitter war on one another: blood was flowing in torrents; already more than two thousand insurgents had perished in the struggle, and anxiety was at its height. The archbishop of Trier, as metropolitan of the country of Metz, had hastened there with the warm solicitude of the good shepherd to separate the combatants and prevent greater evils. But his voice had been ignored and his mediation rejected; and the prelate, lamenting his own powerlessness, saw only one resource left: to call the abbot of Clairvaux to the field of battle.

At the account of these misfortunes, which the archbishop lamented with tears, Bernard was deeply moved; a supernatural zeal revived him, and his bones seemed to grow firm again within him; for God held this holy soul in His hands and did with it whatever He willed.

So he rose from his deathbed and set out for Metz!

The two armies were encamped on the two banks of the Moselle: on one side the burghers, breathing nothing but hatred and vengeance; on the other the lords and their soldiers, drunk with a first victory and ready to begin the fight again. Suddenly the man of peace, supported by a few venerable monks, appeared in the midst of the fray. He was weak; he could not make himself heard; he was not even listened to. But he went from one camp to the other, addressing different leaders in turn, trying to calm the seething passions, but without humanly glimpsing any chance of success. His presence had no other effect than to suspend the clash of arms for a time.

The Saint did not lose heart; he calmed the anxiety of the religious who accompanied him. "Do not be troubled," he said to them; "for, notwithstanding the difficulties that are piling up, you will see good order restored, by the grace of God."

And indeed, at daybreak he received a deputation of the principal inhabitants of the city, declaring that they accepted his mediation. Early in the morning he called the most important men of both parties to a small island in the river, where many little boats came to land, bringing the leaders of the various troops. Bernard listened to their grievances and appeased them; he triumphed over the most obstinate minds; the belligerents were moved and laid down their arms; hearts opened; and soon the kiss of peace was passing through all the ranks!

A miraculous cure marked this memorable day. It happened, by the order of Providence, that a poor woman, tormented for eight years by a cruel illness, came to prostrate herself before the servant of God to ask his blessing. This woman was constantly shaken by convulsive tremors, and her appearance caused as much horror as pity. Bernard recollected himself and made the sign of the cross; and at that very instant, before the

eyes of a multitude of onlookers, the poor woman's agitations disappeared and her health was restored to her.

The report of this miracle completed the winning of all hearts. The bystanders in crowds, even those who until then had shown themselves intractable, struck their breasts and blessed aloud the works of the power of God. This edifying scene went on for nearly an hour, during which, the historian adds, tears of compunction, tenderness and gratitude flowed without ceasing.

Now the man of God, surrounded by an immense concourse of people and visibly overwhelmed by the throng of those who threw themselves at his feet to show him their respect, came near to losing, as he had not long before in Germany, the little breath that animated his frail existence, so that the religious carried him away on their shoulders and, having laid him in a boat, left the shore in all haste. The lords and the magistrates soon caught up with him. "We must," they said to him, "listen with docility to the man we see to be loved and heard by God; and we shall observe his recommendations, since Jesus Christ, at his prayer, has done such great things in our presence." But Bernard, accepting no praise, answered them: "It is not for me, it is for you that God has done these things."

The Saint then went back into Metz, to the bishop's house, where, through his ascendancy and happy mediation, the treaty of peace was concluded and signed. That work was finished! As the boatman, returning from a laborious voyage, lowers and furls his sails at the sight of the port where he is going to cast anchor, so the disciple of Jesus, having finished his course, returned humbly to the holy refuge of Clairvaux, where, stretching himself on his bed of pain, the last station of the pilgrimage of earth, he waited calmly for the hour of rest. Bernard, like a ripe and perfect fruit, seemed to hold to the tree of earthly humanity only by a thread that the slightest shake would break. Yet his faculties were not weakened; his reason shone, firm, pure and clear. The finest gifts one can admire in a man, holiness, serenity, invincible mastery of himself, all these gifts remained in him. He had received the sacred anointings; he listened to the voice of God speaking to him in the solitude of his heart; or else, forgetting his own sufferings, he sympathised with those of his brethren, consoled them, warmed them and flooded them with sublime hopes. His disciples, ranged around his bed, their eyes bathed in tears, gazed with holy dread on the last gleams of that torch which had guided them on the road to heaven. Ranged around him, they looked at him anxiously and spoke to him without words; they prayed with tears; they still hoped; they hoped against all hope; for such is the blindness of love! Filial tenderness does not understand the possibility of certain separations: it blinds itself at the open grave of a father or mother, as the mother blinds herself at the cradle of a child. One would say that hearts entwined with one another by a pure affection can neither live nor die without one another.

So the pious cenobites kept, up to the last moment, a vain hope that hid from them the all too real fear of losing their father. He, moved with compassion to the depths of his heart, strove to moderate their grief and strengthen their courage. He lavished on them the sweetest consolations, exhorting them to abandon themselves with confidence to the divine goodness, to love the will of God and to persevere in heavenly charity. He promised them that even in leaving he would not forsake them, and that he would take care of them after his death. Then, with a sweetness no words could convey, he recommended them to love one another, to advance in the holy ways of perfection, and to remain faithful to their rule in the fear and love of God…

Finally, wholly filled with the apostolic spirit, he repeated to them the solemn words of Saint Paul: "Brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to live for God, as you have learned from us, so that the Lord may fill you more and more with His graces…; for this is the will of God, your sanctification." Then he had the superior general of the Order of Cîteaux, the venerable abbot Gozevin, come close to his bed, together with several other abbots and prelates who had come to Clairvaux to render him the last duties. Gozevin melted into tears; for although he was raised above Saint Bernard in the monastic hierarchy, he loved him with a filial love and openly acknowledged him as his master and father. The Saint thanked them all, and in a voice full of feeling bade them a last farewell…

This scene broke the hearts of the poor monks. “O charitable father, beloved father,” they cried out sobbing, “do you then wish to abandon your family? Have pity on us who are your children; have pity on those whom you have fed at your motherly breast, whom you have raised, formed and guided like a tender mother! What will become of the fruits of your labours? What will become of the children you have loved so much?…”

These cries moved the servant of God, and he wept… “I do not know,” he said to them, raising to heaven a gaze full of angelic sweetness, “I do not know to which of the two I must yield, the love of my children, which urges me to stay here below, or the love of my God, which draws me on high…” He spoke; and it was his last breath! The funeral chants, accompanied by the knell of death and intoned by seven hundred monks, broke the silence of the desert and announced to the world the death of Saint Bernard.

It was the twentieth day of the month of August 1153, about nine o’clock in the morning. The Saint was sixty-three years old. For forty years he had been consecrated to Jesus Christ in the cloister, and for thirty-eight years he had held the dignity of abbot. He left a hundred and sixty monasteries, which he had founded in various countries of Europe and Asia. And in the course of time, counting the houses destroyed in England and in the kingdoms of the North, there were as many as eight hundred abbeys sprung from and dependent on Clairvaux! This fruitful spring has never run dry: it still flows in our own day. The Cistercians, the Bernardines and the Trappists perpetuate under various forms the life of their Patriarch, and make the fields of the Church fertile with their manly virtues.

There is now almost nothing left at Clairvaux to recall the memory of its illustrious founder. After visiting the prisoners’ chapel, formerly the monks’ refectory, and the present refectory, formerly the monastery’s cellar, one goes into the forest to the Fountain of Saint Bernard. It was there that every year, on the Tuesday after Low Sunday, the religious went in procession, sang a responsory to Saint Bernard and the *Regina Caeli*, planted around a large cross near the spring several little wooden crosses that they made themselves, and drank the water of the fountain from their hands. “The water comes out of the ground through five openings under the boundary wall of the house; it fills a small basin and forms a stream that runs down into the valley and flows into the Aube. The fountain is sheltered by a small building set against the hillside, which at this spot is covered with moss and young coppice. The front of the monument, erected in 1854 by the prisoners in honour of Saint Bernard, has a round-arched niche of dressed stone courses, covered with a moulded stone roof and surmounted by a stone cross. In the niche is the statue of Saint Bernard; at the foot of the cross is his shield: azure, a chevron argent, accompanied in chief by two crescents also argent and in base by a lion of the same. The crest is an abbatial mitre and crozier, the mitre to dexter and the crozier to sinister.”

There was in his face a wonderful grace and gentleness, which came from the unction with which his soul was perpetually penetrated rather than from the constitution of his body. In his eyes one saw a mark of angelic purity and of the simplicity of a dove. His austerities had so wasted him that he was nothing but skin and bone and was obliged to sit almost all the time. He was of middle height, but rather tall than short.

He was buried in the tunic of Saint Malachy, which he had always worn on solemn days when he celebrated the holy mysteries at the altar. Before he was laid in the ground, one of his religious, who for several years had suffered from the falling sickness, approached him with firm faith and was so thoroughly cured that he never felt it again. The Saint’s body was placed in a stone sepulchre before the altar of the Blessed Virgin at Clairvaux. On his breast was placed a box containing relics of Saint Thaddeus, apostle, which had been sent to him from Jerusalem in the very year of his death and which he had ordered to be buried with him, so that he might be joined to that great Apostle on the day of the general resurrection. There were several revelations of his glory, and so many miracles were worked through his intercession that twenty-one years later, in the year 1174, Pope Alexander III numbered him among the Saints and gave him the title of Doctor. Pope Pius VIII solemnly confirmed that title and willed that the office of the feast of Saint Bernard should be that of the Doctors of the Church. In the church of Ville-sous-la-Ferté (Aube) there is a full-length portrait of Saint Bernard on canvas. The Saint is standing, his head inclined slightly towards the left shoulder; with his left

hand he holds up the church of Clairvaux; in his right he holds a Gothic cross of exquisite workmanship. In the background a wide window opens, near which two monks seem to be conversing, and one sees the harmonious lines and bluish tints of the Clear Valley receding to the horizon. — He is represented not only with the cross but with the various instruments of the Passion, to recall his continual mortification, carried to real excess. — He is also sometimes seen with a devil under his feet, to mark the triumphs he won over the enemy of salvation, whether by overcoming his temptations, or by overthrowing his empire in the hearts of men by his apostolic labours, or also by the deliverance of many possessed persons.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — SES ÉCRITS.

The children of Saint Bernard reverently kept his body, laid beside Saint Malachy in their conventual church. They would not even raise it from the ground, so as to be entitled to refuse the countless requests addressed to them from all sides for his relics. In 1178 Henry of Hautecombe, abbot of Clairvaux, sent the king of England a finger of the Saint, who had been canonised four years before; after that the charters mention no further removal until the seventeenth century.

In 1625 the Genoese, who had chosen Saint Bernard as their patron, asked for one of his bones. Their deputies were the first able to contemplate his mortal remains, and they went home carrying one of his ribs. The abbot who had made them this present, Dom Largentier, sent Anne of Austria in 1643 some fragments of the head, which Dom Jean d'Aizanville had enclosed in a magnificent bust of silver-gilt, as he had that of Saint Malachy. That, according to the abbey's catalogues, is all that was taken from the holy body up to the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, it is to be believed that some less important gifts were not recorded; for in Spain the Escorial possessed a fragment of rib and some lesser relics; in France the cathedral of Langres displays some bones; the church of Notre-Dame of Saint-Dizier still shows today a bone of the arm of Saint Bernard, which came to it from the former abbey of Saint-Pantaléon; and the churches of Chaumont, Saint-Mammès and Saint-Martin of Langres possess relics of him.

The last abbot of Clairvaux, Dom Rocourt (died at Bar-sur-Aube in 1824), at the invitation of the government sent to the Paris mint all the gold and silver objects that made up the treasury of the sacristy; he kept only the silver-gilt busts containing the heads of Saint Bernard and Saint Malachy. A year later, in 1790, he had to give them up; but he kept the most precious part, the two heads, and put his seal inside to guarantee their authenticity. When the storm had passed, he handed them over to M. Caffarelli, prefect of the Aube, who gave them to the cathedral of Troyes. They can still be seen there under the high altar, in reliquaries of silvered wood; the certificate bears the signature and seal of Mgr de Boulogne. On 25 December 1862 Mgr Ravinet blessed a magnificent reliquary in the Romanesque style, entirely covered with plates of gilded copper, and placed in it, beside other relics, on white silk cushions, the head of Saint Bernard, which is exposed for the veneration of the faithful.

In 1793 the remains of the holy bodies were protected by the surrounding people against the fury of the revolutionary agents, who wanted to throw them into the common cemetery. They were carried to the commune of Ville-sous-la-Ferté, three kilometres south-east of Clairvaux, and they are still there, but unworthily jumbled together in a wretched chest in the sacristy. The bones of Saint Bernard are easy to tell from the others: inside and out they are of a fairly marked brown colour, and there is not an inhabitant of Ville who does not agree on this point. Let us hope that it will not be long before the certificate is renewed and these precious remains are restored to the veneration of the faithful.

Some families of Ville-sous-la-Ferté (Aube) possess bones of their glorious patron which were stolen at the time of the translation made in 1794.

A great number of parishes of the diocese of Troyes take pride in possessing some relics of the illustrious abbot of Clairvaux. Jully-sur-Sarce keeps in a silver medallion some particles of the ribs of Saint Bernard and a fragment of his rush mat. Ramerupt and Celles expose to the homage of the faithful a portion of his

venerated head; the church of Saint-Remi at Troyes, a fragment of bone of the skull; Bourguignons, a portion of rib and a fragment of the shroud; Bar-sur-Aube, la Maison-des-Champs, Dampierre-de-l'Aube and others have enclosed in precious reliquaries the venerable remains of this great Saint, the glory of our region. Outside the diocese, the cathedral of Châlons-sur-Marne possesses a considerable part of the mat on which the abbot of Clairvaux died. The Bible Saint Bernard used every day is in the library of Troyes; it is noticeable that the leaves containing the Song of Songs are particularly worn.

The church of Fontaines, in the diocese of Dijon, possesses a particle of his head and part of his belt, which seems to have come from the monastery of the Feuillants; this belt is placed in a terracotta bust, very fine and a very good likeness. The museum of Dijon has his boxwood cup or bowl: *Cyathus sancti Bernardi abbatis Clarevallis*.

From the beginning of the fourteenth century a confraternity under the patronage of Saint Bernard had been set up at Fontaines, and the room where he was born had been turned into a chapel. In 1614 the Feuillants, protected by Louis XIII, established themselves in the castle, and in 1619 they built a church in honour of the holy patriarch. Anne of Austria, who had made a vow to Saint Bernard to obtain a son from God, met the expenses. Louis XIV asked the bishop of Langres to oblige his diocesans to keep the feast of Saint Bernard, "protector of his crown", as a feast of obligation, and he had himself enrolled, with his brother and the queen mother, at the head of the confraternity set up anew in the church of the Feuillants by Mgr Sébastien Zamet, bishop of Langres, and enriched with indulgences by Pope Leo X.

This confraternity was re-established in 1823 by Mgr de Boisville, bishop of Dijon, and transferred to the parish church of Fontaines.

What the Revolution left of the church of the Feuillants has been piously restored by priestly hands and opened to the devotion of pilgrims.

A subscription headed by the bishop had a magnificent bronze statue of the illustrious abbot of Clairvaux erected at Dijon on 7 November 1847. Another, in stone, adorns the main courtyard of the minor seminary of Plombières. At Châtillon his image adorns the chapel of the hospital, and the altar of Our Lady of the castle is now dedicated to him.

We shall follow the chronological order, as far as possible, in listing the works of the holy doctor.

The Treatise on the Twelve Degrees of Humility, which are spoken of in the Rule of Saint Benedict. This is the first work the Saint published. It is written in a very moving way and contains excellent things.

The Homilies on the Gospel Missus est, which date from the year 1120. The author composed them to satisfy his own devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation and to the Blessed Virgin.

His Apology. The congregation of Cluny, which was a reform of the Order of Saint Benedict, had then fallen far from the regularity and fervour that had made it so famous for two hundred years. Some of its members, moved by a secret jealousy, which easily disguises itself under the name of zeal, loudly blamed the austerities of Cîteaux and even made them the subject of their declamations. William, abbot of Saint-Thierry near Reims, who belonged to that congregation but was at the same time full of esteem for the new Order, asked Saint Bernard to take up his pen in its defence. The Saint composed his Apology. In it he justifies his monks and declares that if any of them took it upon themselves to speak ill of others, their fasts, vigils and labours would profit them nothing; they would be, he says, the most wretched of men, losing through distraction the fruit of all their penance. They would be very foolish to give themselves so much trouble in order to be damned, when they could go to hell by an easier road, more in keeping with nature. After showing that spiritual exercises are infinitely more useful than bodily ones, he grants that the Order of Cluny is the work of Saints, even though in his time mitigations had been admitted in it out of consideration for the weak. But so that no one should imagine he approved the essential abuses that had crept into some monasteries, he rebukes them in the strongest manner. Among certain monks, he says, one sees several vices sanctioned, which even take the name of virtue: extravagance is called liberality; the itch to talk, politeness; immoderate laughter, necessary cheerfulness; superfluity and affectation in clothing and retinue are adorned with the specious title of good manners. With the weapons of mockery he attacks the excess

and fastidiousness of these monks in eating and drinking, their love of finery, of sumptuous buildings and of rich furnishings. How, he says, can all these things be allowed to men who profess to be no longer of the world, who have renounced for Jesus Christ the pleasures and goods of this life, who have trampled underfoot all that dazzles the eyes of worldly people, and who have fled all that flatters the senses or can lead to vanity? He complains that some abbots, who should have been models of recollection, humility and penance for their monks, on the contrary inspired in them a taste for worldly vanities by the magnificence of their retinues, the constancy of their dissipation, the delicacy of their table and their dealings with outsiders. To excuse such disorders, he goes on, or to see them without raising one's voice, would be to sanction and encourage them. According to Dom Rivet, the slackening of monastic discipline in the Order of Cluny began after the death of Saint Hugh, and chiefly under Abbot Pons; but Peter the Venerable restored the original regularity for a time.

The Book on the Conversion of Clerics, composed at Paris in 1122 and addressed to the young churchmen of the university of that city. It is an exhortation to penance and an invective against clerics who are slack, ambitious and disorderly in their morals.

The Exhortation to the Knights of the Temple, addressed to Hugh de Paganis, first grand master and prior of Jerusalem, was written in 1129. It is a eulogy of that military Order, which had been instituted in 1118, and an exhortation to the knights to bear themselves with courage in the various posts entrusted to them. Whereas, he says, other wars usually begin from anger, ambition or avarice, those you undertake have no other motive than justice and the cause of Jesus Christ; and whatever the outcome of your arms, you have nothing but gain. He describes their way of life thus. They follow the command of their prior in everything and have only what he gives them. Their clothing has nothing elaborate or superfluous about it. They observe their rule exactly and have neither wife nor children. They lay claim to nothing as their own and desire no more than they have. All profane amusements are unknown to them. They do not seek to make a name for themselves and expect victory only from the Lord. Such was the original institute of the Templars. But when, later on, that Order had grown rich, it became corrupt, aroused the greed of worldly people and fell victim to it.

The Treatise on the Love of God. It says that the measure of loving God is to love Him without measure; that, far from setting limits to our love, we must work unceasingly to increase it; that the reason for loving God is that He is God and that He loves us; that the reward of love is love itself, which makes us happy in time and in eternity; and that its principle is the charity and grace God pours into our souls. The holy Doctor counts several degrees of love. "We can," he says, "love God for our own happiness, for Him and for ourselves at once, and solely for Himself. The supreme purity of this love will be found only in heaven. The pure love of God is called charity, and differs from the love of desire, which is self-interested and refers to ourselves, but which is nevertheless good, though less perfect than charity."

The Book of Precepts and Dispensations, written in 1131, contains answers to several questions on certain points of the Rule of Saint Benedict from which an abbot can or cannot dispense. The Book of Grace and Free Will, in which the Catholic doctrine on these two subjects is proved from the principles of Saint Augustine.

The Letter or Treatise addressed to Hugh of Saint- Victor contains the explanation of several difficulties concerning the Incarnation and various other points of theology.

His Treatise on the Works of Abelard and his five Books of Consideration, addressed to Pope Eugenius III, are a masterpiece.

The Book on the Duties of Bishops, written in 1127 and addressed to Henry, archbishop of Sens. It treats of chastity, humility, pastoral solicitude and the various obligations of bishops. The Saint condemns in it the abbots who sought to exempt themselves from episcopal jurisdiction.

The Sermons on Psalm XC, Qui habitat, etc., were composed about the year 1145.

The Sermons on the Song of Songs, eighty-six in number. Saint Bernard explains in them, however, only the first two chapters and the first verse of the third chapter of that sacred book. But by means of the mystical and allegorical interpretations to which he gives himself up, he treats in the most interesting way a great number of points of morals and spirituality. One cannot read without admiration what he says of humility and compunction, of divine love and of the inner ways of contemplation. William, abbot of Saint-Thierry, made an abridgement of the first fifty-one sermons. Gilbert, a monk of Hoiland, of the Cistercian abbey in England that depended on the bishop of Lincoln, continued Saint Bernard's work on the Song of Songs and produced forty-eight discourses of the same kind, about the year 1176. He goes as far as the tenth verse of the fifth chapter.

The Sermons for the Whole Year contain excellent maxims and are very well suited to inspire piety. In them the author shows the greatest devotion to the mystery of Jesus suffering and to His holy Mother. The style of these discourses shows that they were ordinarily delivered in Latin, a language the monks understood. But they were translated into French for the lay brothers, who did not understand Latin, as Mabillon has proved, vol. I, p. 706, n. 8. It is probable that Saint Bernard made the translation himself. In the library of the Feuillants in Paris there was a collection of these sermons, which were put into French at that time, or at least shortly afterwards. Mabillon, Praef. in Serm. sancti Bernardi, p. 716, has given a specimen of it.

The style of Saint Bernard's sermons and other writings is full of gentleness and elegance, and is nevertheless considered very florid; but this fault, if it is one, pleases the reader instead of offending him, so much naturalness, beauty and fire is there in the figures and images the holy Doctor uses. His funeral oration for his brother Gerard, who had been his assistant in the government of Clairvaux, is a masterpiece of eloquence and feeling. He consoles himself with the hope that his brother enjoys the happiness of heaven; and the tender way in which he expresses his grief at the loss of one who was his counsel and support shows that sensibility is compatible with eminent holiness. Gerard died in 1138. Ten years later the Saint gave the funeral oration of Saint Malachy. He delivered a second on the anniversary of that Saint. The authors of the *Histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. X, *Praef.*, observe that these three funeral orations are the best things that have appeared in Latin since the age of Saint Augustine.

The Letters, numbering 440 in Mabillon's edition. Most of them are addressed to Popes, kings, bishops, abbots and so on. They will be an eternal monument of Saint Bernard's learning, prudence and tireless zeal.

The Treatise addressed to Hugh of Saint-Victor is an answer to various questions of theology.

We shall now give the list of the principal works wrongly attributed to Saint Bernard: (1) *The Ladder of the Cloister*, which is by Guigo, first prior of the Grande-Chartreuse and author of several spiritual letters; (2) the *Meditations*, which were composed by a pious person whose name is unknown but who seems to have lived later than the holy Abbot of Clairvaux; (3) the treatise *On the Building of the Inner House*, written by some monk of Cîteaux who seems to have been a contemporary of Saint Bernard; (4) the *Treatise on the Virtues*, whose author is some Benedictine monk; it is an instruction for novices; (5) the book *To the Brethren of Mont-Dieu* and that *On the Contemplation of God*, though often cited under the name of Saint Bernard, are certainly by the author of the first book of the Saint's life. This is William, abbot of Saint-Thierry near Reims, who afterwards entered the Order of Cîteaux at Signy, where he died about the year 1150.

In his writings Saint Bernard is at once persuasive, affectionate and vehement; his style is lively, sublime and pleasing. Charity so seasons his reproaches that one sees that his aim in making them is to correct, not to insult. Even when he uses the strongest expressions he wins the heart and inspires respect together with love: the guilty man he admonishes is angry only with himself; he is annoyed neither with the reprimand nor with the one who gives it. He knew Scripture so perfectly that he carried its language into almost all his sentences; and, if one may put it so, he poured into all his writings the marrow of the sacred text with which his heart was filled. He had read the ancient Fathers a great deal, especially Saint Ambrose and Saint Augustine; he often borrows their thoughts, but he knows how to make them his own by the new turn he gives them. Although he lived after Saint Anselm, the first of the scholastics (and his contemporaries are placed in the same class), he treated theological matters in the manner of the ancients. This reason, together with the excellence of his writings, has caused him to be counted among the Fathers of the Church. All his works bear the stamp of humility, devotion and charity; since he always spoke the language of the heart, he touches his readers in a singular way. The learned Father Mabillon owed the foundation of the high reputation he enjoyed in the literary world to the complete edition of the *Works of Saint Bernard* that he published in 1667, 2 vols. folio or 9 vols. octavo. In 1690 he produced a second, enriched with prefaces and very curious notes that were not in the first. He had prepared a third when he died in 1707; it was published in 1719. The second is the most sought after. These editions have been reproduced by M. Migne, by M. Périsse and by MM. Gaume. M. L. Guérin, at Bar-le-Duc (Meuse), has published an excellent translation of the *Complete Works*

of Saint Bernard. This translation is preceded by the life of the Saint by Father Ratisbonne, a masterpiece serving as the portico to other masterpieces; 5 vols. octavo. To compose this biography we have used the life of Saint Bernard written in five books by three different abbots: the first is William, abbot of Saint-Thierry of Reims, of the Order of Saint Benedict; the second, Bernard, abbot of Bonneval, of the Order of Cîteaux, in the diocese of Vienne; and the third, Geoffrey, the Saint's secretary, afterwards abbot of Igny and fourth abbot of Clairvaux; the last composed the last three books, and the other two the first two. We have completed it with Godescard, the *Annals of Cîteaux*, and above all with the *History of Saint Bernard and His Century* by Father Ratisbonne, Guérin edition, Bar-le-Duc (Meuse); the *Lives of the Saints of Troyes* by the abbé Defer; local notes supplied by M. A. Fourot; and the *Saints of Dijon* by the abbé Duplus.

Notice on the Life and Writings of Bossuet

We think it right to place after the life of Saint Bernard, one of the greatest glories of the Church of France, a notice on Bossuet, one of the most illustrious men of whom our country is proud, and who, by his genius and his labours, holds so distinguished a rank after the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.

Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet was born at Dijon on 27 September 1627, of a family distinguished in the law. He began his studies at the Jesuit college, and was then sent by his parents to Paris to finish them. He already belonged to the Church on more than one title: he had been tonsured in 1635, and in 1640, at the age of thirteen, named a canon of the cathedral of Metz. It was in 1642 that he arrived in Paris. He was placed in the college of Navarre, whose grand master was Nicolas Cornet, a doctor famous for his learning and piety. Bossuet was sixteen when, in 1643, he defended his first thesis in philosophy; it made such a stir that soon the young student was spoken of in Paris only as a prodigy. People wished to see him at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and there he was invited to compose a sermon on the spot. The young orator withdrew, and after a few hours of recollection and reflection reappeared in the midst of the gathering, which was made up of the finest minds in the kingdom; and he astonished that formidable audience with a sermon that was covered with applause and roused general admiration. He received the subdiaconate at Langres and came back to Paris towards the end of 1648. The following year he returned to Metz and received the diaconate there. Bossuet came back to Paris once more in 1650. During the two years of his licentiate he made a thorough study of every part of theology. His learning and his reputation grew with extreme rapidity; but far from letting himself be dazzled by his successes, he seemed not to notice them or even to think of them, loving religion, retirement and work more and more, and he gave himself without respite to the studies he judged indispensable in the career he had embraced. Holy Scripture and the Fathers were the substance of his meditations and his labours.

Scarcely had he finished his licentiate (in 1652) when he was named archdeacon of Metz, with the title of archdeacon of Sarrebourg; two years later his merit alone raised him to the grand archdeaconry of the same Church.

In 1652 he also received the doctor's cap and the order of priesthood. To prepare for the priesthood he wished to spend some time in retreat at Saint-Lazare. There he became known to Saint Vincent de Paul, founder of that house, and won his friendship. All his life he gloried in calling him his master, and he was happy to pay his memory the tribute of praise and veneration he owed it when, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the beatification of that holy priest was taken up in Rome.

His theological studies finished, Bossuet returned to Metz, and there, in the silence of retirement, he took up his work again with new energy. Holy Scripture was still the chief object of his studies; not a day passed without his loading his Bible with some brief note on doctrine or morals. He also went on reading the Fathers very assiduously. The Protestants of Metz who sincerely wished to be enlightened went to see Bossuet, who received them kindly and helped them to shake off the yoke of error. Their chief minister at that time was Paul Ferry, a man much esteemed for his learning, his talents and his affability. In 1654 this minister

published a catechism that seemed very dangerous because of the propositions it contained. Bossuet, at the request of the bishop of Augusta, vicar-general of the bishop of Metz, undertook the refutation of this catechism and acquitted himself of it with the most complete success. What must seem most astonishing is that this refutation only increased the esteem and friendship Paul Ferry already had for his formidable adversary, so well had Bossuet known how to spare the person while fighting the error! The *Refutation of the Catechism of Paul Ferry* had so great an effect that the Protestants flocked to Bossuet in crowds, with the intention of being instructed. Bossuet's father, left a widower, had entered the ecclesiastical state and had taken sacred orders up to the diaconate. Bossuet resigned to him the grand archdeaconry of Metz, which he held, when he himself was named dean of that Church. Father and son were then seen exercising themselves in the practice of the same virtues and showing equal assiduity and the same zeal in fulfilling the same duties.

Towards the end of 1666 Bossuet found himself obliged to leave Metz and come to Paris to pay to the memory of the queen mother, who had died at the beginning of that year, a tribute that gratitude seemed to make his duty. He delivered the funeral oration of that princess on 20 January 1667. He was not long in returning to Metz, where he was soon to have a more painful loss to mourn: he lost his father on the following 15 August.

In the following years Bossuet appeared with still greater brilliance than had been seen until then. It was above all from 1660 to 1669 that his virtue, his genius, his rare learning and his apostolic labours raised him to the high rank he held in the Church. He brought back to the Catholic religion the marquis de Dangeau and his brother, who afterwards took the ecclesiastical habit and made known to the public the method Bossuet had followed to free him from his errors. A more brilliant conquest was that of Marshal Turenne, whose example was bound to influence a great number of other persons brought up in the same principles. It was while working for the conversion of that great man that Bossuet composed the book of the *Exposition of Catholic Doctrine*: a justly famous book, simple, full of learning, strong in proofs and reasons, which vindicates religion against those who slander it or insult it without knowing it. Three Protestant ministers tried to refute it. To the first two Bossuet made a reply that remained unanswered; as for the third, who was Brueys, Bossuet did better than answer him: he converted him.

People wondered at not seeing Bossuet raised to the episcopate, of which he had seemed worthy for so long, when at last he was named bishop of Condom on 13 September 1669; but he was not consecrated until more than a year later.

In 1670 the king named him tutor to the Dauphin, in place of the Président de Périgny, who had just died after holding that important post for two years. The duc de Montausier was the young prince's governor. Bossuet hesitated to accept a place that did not seem to him compatible with the duties of the episcopate, especially with the obligation of residence, from which in his eyes nothing could dispense; he resigned his bishopric and accepted in compensation only a modest benefice.

For his pupil Bossuet composed the *Treatise on the Knowledge of God and of Oneself*, an important book that may pass for a complete treatise of metaphysics. He wished to crown the Dauphin's education with three works no less important: (1) the *Discourse on Universal History*; (2) *Politics Drawn from Holy Scripture*; and (3) the *State of the Kingdom of France and of All Europe*. Nothing of this last work has been found among Bossuet's papers; it is a precious work whose loss can only be regretted. In the *Politics of Holy Scripture* Bossuet preaches moderation to kings, obedience to peoples, and to both submission to the divine will. As for the *Discourse on Universal History*, it is a masterpiece that alone would have sufficed to carry Bossuet's name to immortality. One cannot regret enough that he did not have the leisure to complete this immortal work, that is, to give its continuation from the times of Charlemagne to those of Louis XIV.

When the Dauphin's education was finished, Bossuet would gladly have left Versailles; but he had been named almoner to Madame the Dauphine in 1680, and these new functions kept him at court in spite of

himself. In 1681 the king named him bishop of Meaux. Louis XIV had thought fit to convoke at that moment a general assembly of the clergy of France, to support himself with its authority against Pope Innocent XI, who was threatening to curb the abusive extension of the *régale*. The bishops, slaves of the king, seemed ready to formulate the so-called liberties of the Gallican Church in a schismatic manner. Bossuet preached the opening sermon; it is his famous sermon *On the Unity of the Church*. In it he showed his attachment to the apostolic Holy See and his desire to inspire the same feeling in all the members of his audience. He represented the Roman Church with all the marks a divine institution has stamped on it, and ended by exhorting the bishops of the assembly to remain invariably united to it. Nevertheless Bossuet is reproached with having drafted the four articles of the declaration of the clergy of France; he is excused on the ground that another would have produced a more erroneous, more violent draft, more hostile to the Holy See. People also blame the Latin work he wrote to defend that declaration, although it was the illustrious author's intention to complete and correct it before publishing it. Our readers will find the answer to these historical questions in the editors' notices that precede the *Works of Bossuet* (Bar-le-Duc edition); they will also see there what Bossuet did to combat Jansenism.

When the assembly of 1682 had broken up, Bossuet gave himself wholly to the government and care of his diocese. To prepare for it he carried out a long-formed plan of a retreat at La Trappe. There, in conversation with his old friend the abbé de Rancé, and through the example of the many religious who lived there in the most austere penance, he revived his piety and gave it, so to speak, a new temper. Bossuet loved that holy solitude; he made eight journeys there at different times during his episcopate, and he used to say that La Trappe was the place he liked best after his diocese.

The first object of his care, when he was installed at Meaux, was his episcopal seminary. He restored discipline, order and the love of study there, and through his constant supervision no less than through wise regulations, everything in that house breathed fervour, piety and the love of the most austere virtues, of which he himself gave the example.

He established missions for the conversion of Protestants and the instruction of the people; he revived and perfected the practice of ecclesiastical conferences. He regularly attended those held at Meaux, and often those of the other principal districts of his diocese. He visited even the smallest parishes and the oratories of the tiniest hamlets, and everywhere he spoke to the people words of peace and consolation. His bearing inspired respect and confidence; he left in the souls of his diocesans a lasting impression of attachment and veneration. Long after his death old men loved to speak to their children of their good and worthy bishop and of the pleasure they had had in seeing and hearing him. Bossuet not only often visited the general hospital of Meaux but gave it abundant alms every year. In a year of dearth he increased his liberality to that house and to the poor so lavishly that his alarmed steward thought he ought to urge him to moderate it. Bossuet's answer was: "As for reducing them, I shall do nothing of the kind; and to raise money on this occasion, I shall sell everything I have."

Bossuet was extremely sober, an enemy of all profusion, of all luxury at his meals and of all refinement in the dishes served to him. A scrupulous observer of the laws of the Church, he was a model of austerity and abstinence on the days the Church has consecrated to penance and the mortification of the senses. At the age of seventy-two he had erysipelas, which obliged him to modify the habitual severity of his regimen; and that was the first time he allowed himself to relax a little of the austerity of Lent. As soon as he felt himself recovered, he resumed his usual way of life. At home, with his family and his friends, he was the simplest of men. His servants found in him a father rather than a master, and served him out of affection as much as out of duty. He made them love work and virtue; in his house they lost their bad habits and took on good ones, for he did not disdain to watch over their conduct and instruct them. Every day he gathered them for prayer, and every evening he blessed them with his own hand. Ever taken up with the triumphs of the Church, Bossuet never ceased to devote all his vigils to them until the last moment of his life. It was in 1688 that he

was composing his *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*, one of the most astonishing works of the man who most excites astonishment and admiration. Nothing truer or stronger has ever been said to bring Protestants back. Of all Bossuet's works, none shows more learning, frankness and firmness. One sees in it a certainty of conscience and a simple and imposing authority that astonish and subdue; no book admits less of a reply. Nevertheless a reply was made: Jacques Basnage de Beauval, a minister at Rotterdam, showed himself one of the most eager to contend with Bossuet. This attack produced the *Defence of the History of the Variations*, a work in which Bossuet victoriously repels the objections and allegations of the Protestant doctor, in a tone of decency and moderation of which his adversaries were far from giving him the example. After Basnage came the minister Jurieu, a fanatical visionary disowned by the most reasonable of his sect. Bossuet answered him with six *Warnings to the Protestants*. The fifth is particularly remarkable for the substance of the question discussed in it: that of the sovereignty of the people, examined in the same terms in which it has been examined since, together with the theory of the social contract. Bossuet supports all his reasoning with facts; he proves by the authority of history that when peoples have been well enlightened about their true interests, they have held in horror anarchy, which would be the real state of what is called a sovereign people.

Jurieu took it upon himself to prophesy: he announced the approaching ruin of Catholicism, fixed the date of the destruction of the Holy See, and had it printed that the Pope was truly the Antichrist foretold in the Apocalypse. Bossuet, indignant at this profanation of a sacred text, published in 1689 his *Explanation of the Apocalypse*. His aim in this work is not to go deeply into the different senses of that famous prophecy, but to show that it was fulfilled in one of its important parts by the fall of the Roman Empire. His conjectures keep within the just bounds that the Church has always intended to be respected, and that so wise a genius was incapable of overstepping.

The great scandal caused throughout the Church by the errors of Molinos, recently condemned by the Holy See, had not yet been effaced when the works of Madame Guyon were submitted to Bossuet's examination.

Accustomed to the simple and severe language of the Scriptures and to the precision of sound theology, he could not fail to find dangerous a doctrine that counted as nothing conduct and even positive sentiments. Several bishops, by ordinances and pastoral instructions, censured and forbade in their dioceses the writings of Madame Guyon; and Bossuet, in his *Treatise on the States of Prayer*, undertook a complete and direct refutation of the doctrine of the new mystics. He wished this book to have the approval of the archbishop of Cambrai. Fénelon refused it after some delays.

Once the struggle had begun between such men, strong in their purity and their conscience, it was bound to be sharp, and nowhere perhaps did their souls show themselves more powerful. While Bossuet was composing his book against the mystics, Fénelon believed himself obliged to support them and published his *Maxims of the Saints*, which were denounced and which he himself submitted to the judgment of the Holy See. Scarcely had the Pope named examiners to pronounce on this affair when there arose between the archbishop of Cambrai and the bishop of Meaux a war of the pen that lasted without respite for eighteen months. As soon as Bossuet published one writing, Fénelon answered with another.

The *Account of Quietism*, which Bossuet published in this interval, made the greatest sensation among the public and had a prodigious success. Unfortunately Fénelon was treated with little consideration in it; this is the most distressing period of the quietist controversy. It was also the one in which Fénelon showed the greatest character. Rome, after long deliberations, pronounced on the book of the *Maxims of the Saints*: Pope Innocent XII condemned it by a brief of 12 March 1699. It is well known with what humility and resignation Fénelon submitted to that condemnation. The assembly of the clergy of 1700 had the whole affair of quietism reported to it. Bossuet was charged with making the report, and this choice was fully justified by the moderation and impartiality he showed in it. He declared with the noblest frankness before all the assembled bishops that the vehemence with which he had fought his colleague's errors had never altered his feelings for

his person.

When, about 1690, there was question of the reunion of the Protestants of Germany with the Catholic Church, Bossuet seemed charged by Providence to conduct that important negotiation. Proposals had already been made by the bishop of Neustadt and by Molanus, abbot of Loccum, a wise and able doctor. The court of Brunswick, which was occupied with this project, engaged Leibniz to enter into correspondence with Bossuet. This negotiation, pursued with a good faith very rare in affairs of this kind, gave hope of the happiest results, and failed only through circumstances independent of the substance of the discussions, among which must be counted the new political situation in which the elector of Hanover, to whom Leibniz was wholly devoted, found himself placed in 1701. Bossuet foresaw the danger that threatened all political and religious institutions; he foresaw all the evils that fell upon France at the end of the eighteenth century, and he spoke of them openly enough several times; and his zeal for religion received fresh ardour from the very thought of how few days were left to him to fight for it.

In the midst of all the cares and activities to which his zeal and pastoral solicitude gave him up, Bossuet was already feeling the onset of the illness that was to put an end to his glorious career. From 1696 he had felt pains that might indicate he was threatened with the stone; but he was then far from foreseeing so grave a trouble. He had not waited for old age and infirmity to prepare himself seriously for his end. At the synod he held in 1702 he spoke in the most moving terms of his death, which his infirmities made him regard as very near. Soon, indeed, his illness took a more serious turn and was no longer a secret; his pains became sharper, and towards the end of 1703 a fever was added to them that never left him until 12 April 1704, which was his last day. His death was most edifying. He received Extreme Unction and the holy Viaticum from the hands of the curate of Saint-Roch, answering everything firmly and without ostentation, docile as the humblest sheep of the Church's flock. Full of resignation to the will of God and of hope in His mercy, he died without agony, aged seventy-six years, six months and sixteen days. A start was made on collecting Bossuet's works in an edition published in 1743, 17 vols. quarto; 13 volumes of another were published about 1780, but as the spirit of sect had distorted and interpolated certain works of the great bishop in it, it was publicly censured and rejected by the assembly of the clergy of France. Burigny produced a life of Bossuet in 1761, a weak and incomplete work. Cardinal de Bausset, the faithful and elegant historian of Fénelon, published another in 1814, 4 vols. octavo. This life was added to the edition that the bookseller Lebel of Versailles produced in 1819, in 45 vols. octavo. Since then an edition has been published in Paris in 63 vols. duodecimo, two others at Besançon in 52 vols. octavo and 48 vols. duodecimo, and two others in 12 vols. large octavo in two columns (one in Paris, Lefebvre; the other, Chalandre, Gaume, Leroux and Jouby, and Lefort). An edition in 31 vols. octavo appeared a few years ago from Vivès in Paris. M. Poujoulat published a very remarkable study of Bossuet, Paris, 1855, 1 vol. octavo. A new edition of the *Complete Works of Bossuet*, in 12 vols. large octavo, is on sale at the Imprimerie des Célestins at Bar-le-Duc. In the analysis that follows we shall follow the order given in this last edition.

Notes and Commentaries on Holy Scripture.

(1) *Liber Psalmorum*. The dissertation or preface that Bossuet placed at the head of his Commentary on the Psalms may be regarded as one of his finest works. (2) *Veteris et Novi Testamenti Cantica*. (3) *Supplenda in Psalmos*. (4) *Explanation of the Prophecy of Isaias on the Childbearing of the Blessed Virgin*. (5) *Literal Explanation of Psalm XXI on the Passion and Abandonment of Our Lord*. (6) *Libri Salomonis, Proverbia, Ecclesiastes, Canticum Canticorum, Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus*. (7) *The Apocalypse with an Explanation*, followed by an *Abridgement of the Apocalypse* and a *Warning to the Protestants on the Alleged Fulfilment of the Prophecies*. (8) *De excidio Babylonis apud S. Joannem demonstrationes tres adversus S. Verensfelsium*. (9) *Meditations on the Gospel*.

Controversy: Protestantism.

(1) *Exposition of Catholic Doctrine on Matters of Controversy*. (2) *Fragments on Various Matters of Controversy*: on the worship due to God; on the veneration of images; on the satisfaction of Jesus Christ; on the Eucharist; on tradition. (3) *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*, with Preface. (4) *Six Warnings to the Protestants on the Letters of the Minister Jurieu against the History of the Variations*. (5) *Defence of the History of the Variations*, followed by a *Clarification on the Charge of Idolatry and on the Error of the Pagans, in which the Calumny of the Ministers is Refuted by Themselves*. (6) *Refutation of the Catechism of Paul Ferry, Minister of the So-called Reformed Religion*. (7) *Conference with M. Claude, Minister of Charenton, on the Subject of the Church*. (8) *Thirteen Reflections on a Writing of M. Claude*. (9) *Two Pastoral Instructions on the Promises of the Church*. (10) *Treatise on Communion under Both Kinds*. (11) *Tradition Defended on the Subject of Communion under One Kind*. (12) *Pastoral Letter to the New Catholics of the Diocese, Exhorting Them to Make Their Easter Duties*. (13) *Explanation of Some Difficulties in the Prayers of the Mass, to a New Catholic*. (14) *Letter on the Adoration of the Cross, to Brother N., Novice of the Abbey of N. (La Trappe), Converted from the Protestant Religion to the Catholic Religion*. (15) *Documents concerning a Project for the Reunion of the Protestants of France and Germany with the Catholic Church*. First part: *Regulae circa christianorum omnium ecclesiasticam reunionem*; *Cogitationes privatae de methodo reunionis Ecclesiae protestantium cum Ecclesia Romana catholica*; *Project of Reunion of Molanus*, translated by Bossuet; *De scripto cui titulus: Cogitationes privatae, ejusdem episcopi Meldensis sententia*; *Reflections of the abbé Molanus*; *De professoribus confessionis Augustanae ad repetendam unitatem catholicam disponendis*; *Explicatio ulterior methodi reunionis ecclesiasticae*; *Summa controversiae de Eucharistia, inter quosdam religiosos et Molanum*; *Judicium Meldensis episcopi de summa controversiae de Eucharistia*; *Executoria dominorum legatorum super compactatis data Bohemis*; *Annotationes Leibnitzii in pacta cum Bohemis*. Second part: *Forty- four Letters of Bossuet, Leibniz and Madame de Brinon concerning the Project of Reunion*. (16) *Memorandum of What Needs Correcting in the New Library of Ecclesiastical Authors of M. Dupin*. (17) *Remarks on the History of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, by M. Dupin*.

Controversy: Criticism. — Jansenism. — Quietism.

(1) *Letters, Ordinance and Instructions on the Trévoux Version of the New Testament*. (2) *Defence of Tradition and of the Holy Fathers, against Richard Simon*. (3) *Warning on the Book of Moral Reflections*. (4) *Letters on Jansenism*. (5) *On the Authority of Ecclesiastical Judgments, in which the Authors of Schisms and Heresies are Noted*. (6) *Ordinance and Pastoral Instruction on the States of Prayer*. (7) *Instruction on the States of Prayer, in which the Errors of the False Mystics of Our Day are Set Out*. (8) *Acts of the Condemnation of the Quietists: Bull of Innocent XI and Decree of the Inquisition of Rome*. (9) *Tradition of the New Mystics*. (10) *Reply to the Difficulties of Madame de la Maisonfort*. (11) *Reply to a Letter of Mgr the Archbishop of Cambrai*. (12) *Declaration of the Sentiments of Mgrs de Noailles, Bossuet and Godet des Marais on the Book Entitled: Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints*, etc. (13) *Summary of the Doctrine of the Book: Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints*, etc., *of the Consequences that Follow from It, and of the Defences and Explanations that Have Been Given of It*. (14) *Memoranda to M. de Cambrai on the Explanation of the Maxims*. (15) *Preface on the Pastoral Instruction Given at Cambrai on 15 September 1697*. (16) *Reply of Bossuet to Four Letters of the Archbishop of Cambrai*. (17) *De nova quaestione tractatus tres: Mystici in tuto; Schola in tuto; Quietismus redivivus*. (18) *Account of Quietism*. (19) *Remarks on the Reply of Mgr the Archbishop of Cambrai to the Account of Quietism*. (20) *Reply of a Theologian to the First Letter of Mgr the Archbishop of Cambrai to Mgr the Bishop of Chartres*. (21) *Reply to the "Decisive Prejudices" of Mgr the Archbishop of Cambrai*. (22) *The Passages Clarified, or Reply to the Book Entitled: The Principal Propositions of the Book of the Maxims of the Saints Justified by Stronger Expressions of the Holy Authors*. (23) *Account of the Acts of the Clergy Condemning the Maxims of the Saints*. (24) *Mandate of Mgr the Bishop of Meaux for the Publication of the Constitution of Pope Innocent XII against the Book of the Maxims*. (25) *Letters relating to the Affair of Quietism*. (26) *Last Clarification on the Reply of Mgr the*

Archbishop of Cambrai to the Remarks of Mgr de Meaux. (27) *De Quietismo in Galliis refutato*.

Sermons, Panegyrics, Funeral Orations. (1) *Sermons*. A few hours before going up into the pulpit, Bossuet would meditate on his text and jot down on paper a few words and a few passages of the Fathers to guide his course; then he gave himself up to the inspiration of the moment and to the impression he was making on his hearers. What has been collected of his sermons cannot therefore pass for the faithful expression of what he delivered; yet his genius is to be found in them. His sermon *On the Vocation of the Gentiles* was the one that made the greatest sensation, and the one *On the Unity of the Church* is, in the judgment of Cardinal Maury, the most magnificent work of its kind ever composed in any language. (2) *Sermons for Clothings and Professions*. The most remarkable is the sermon for the profession of Madame de La Vallière. (3) *Panegyrics of the Saints*. (4) *Funeral Orations*. Those for Henrietta Maria of France, queen of England, for Madame, duchess of Orléans, and for Louis de Bourbon, prince of Condé, are masterpieces. In these discourses Bossuet rises to a perfection of eloquence that had had no model in antiquity and that nothing has equalled since.

Works of Piety and Morals.

(1) *Elevations to God on the Mysteries of the Christian Religion*. (2) *Moral and Christian Thoughts on Various Subjects*. (3) *Detached Thoughts*. (4) *Exhortations to the Ursulines of Meaux*; *Ordinances*; *Conference and Instruction*. (5) *Little Works of Piety*. (6) *Sacred Poems* and *Discourse of Reception at the Académie française*.

Education of the Dauphin.

(1) *De Institutione Ludovici Delphini ad Innocentium XI*; *Brief of Innocent XI to Bossuet*. (2) *Introduction to Philosophy, or On the Knowledge of God and of Oneself*. (3) *Logic*; *Free Will*. (4) *Politics Drawn from the Very Words of Holy Scripture*. (5) *Discourse on Universal History*. (6) *Treatise on Causes*. (7) *Instruction to Mgr the Dauphin for His First Communion*. (8) *De Existentia Dei, serenissimo Delphino*. (9) *De Incogitantia, serenissimo Delphino*. (10) *Extracts from the Ethics of Aristotle*. (11) *Sentences for Mgr the Dauphin*. (12) *Latin Grammar and Maxims of Caesar*. (13) *Latin Fable Composed for Mgr the Dauphin*. (14) *Abridgement of the History of France*.

Pastoral Works.

(1) *Catechism of the Diocese of Meaux*. (2) *Church Prayers for Sundays and Feast Days*. (3) *Meditations for the Time of the Jubilee*. (4) *Synodal Statutes and Ordinances*. (5) *Ordinance to Repress the Abuses that Had Crept in on the Occasion of the Feast of the Monastery of Cerfroid*. (6) *Documents concerning the State of the Abbey of Jouarre*. (7) *Rule of the Seminary of the Daughters of the Propagation of the Faith, Established in the City of Metz*. (8) *Mandatum illustrissimi ac reverendissimi Episcopi Meldensis, ad Censuram ac declarationem conventus cleri Gallicani anni 1700 promulgandam in synodo dioecesana die 1 sept. an. 1701*. (9) *Extract from the Minutes of the Assembly of the Clergy Held at Saint-Germain-en- Laye*. (10) *Extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Clergy of France of 1700*. (11) *Decretum de morali disciplina*. (12) *De doctrina concilii Tridentini circa dilectionem in sacramento poenitentiae requisitam*. (13) *Memoranda on the Printing of the Works of Bishops*.

Correspondence.

(1) *Various Letters*. (2) *Letters of Piety and Direction*.

Theological Opuscula.

(1) *Plan of a Theology*. (2) *Treatise on Concupiscence, or Exposition of These Words of Saint John: "Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world"*. (3) *Treatise on Usury*. (4) *Dissertatiunculae IV adversus probabilitatem*.

Gallicanism.

(1) *Cleri Gallicani de ecclesiastica potestate declaratio*. (2) *Gallia orthodoxa, sive vindiciae scholae Parisiensis totiusque cleri Gallicani adversus nonnullos*; *De causis et fundamentis hujus operis praevia et theologica dissertatio*. (3) *Appendix ad Galliam orthodoxam, seu Defensio declarationis cleri Gallicani de ecclesiastica potestate anni 1682*. (4) *Epistola cleri Gallicani Parisiis congregati, anno 1682, ad SS. DD. N. Innocentium papam XI*. (5) *Innocentii XI ad clerum Gallicanum responsa*. (6) *Epistola cleri Gallicani, anno 1682, in comitiis generalibus congregati, ad omnes praelatos per Gallias consistentes et universum clerum*. (7) *Epistola conventus cleri Gallicani anni 1682, ad universos praelatos Ecclesiae Gallicanae*. (8) *Censura et Declaratio conventus generalis cleri Gallicani, congregati anno 1700, in materia fidei et morum*. (9) *Censura propositionum*. (10) *Declaratio de dilectione Dei in poenitentiae sacramento requisita, et de probabilium opinionum usu*. (11) *Epistola conventus cleri Gallicani anni 1700, ad cardinales, archiepiscopos, episcopos et universum clerum per Gallias consistentem*. (12) *Memorandum of Bossuet to the King against the Book of Roccaberti Entitled: De Romani Pontificis auctoritate*.

Saint Hadouin, Bishop of Le Mans (654)[1]

Hadouin, of illustrious blood, belonged by his origin both to the Gallic race and to that of the Franks. His virtue and his talents, joined to his high birth, caused him to be chosen to govern the Church of Le Mans after the death of Saint Bertrand. Clotaire II willingly confirmed this election, and Hadouin was not slow to take possession of his see, so that the vacancy was not long. Eighteen or twenty months after his ordination, in the year 625, he attended the first council of Reims, where twenty-five canons or regulations concerning discipline were made. Hadouin applied himself with all his strength to making piety flourish in his diocese. Recognising that learning and study must be the portion of the clergy, he showed himself jealous to maintain that glory in his Church. To preserve for posterity the great examples of the virtues that had shone in the Church of Le Mans, he had a cleric of his diocese write the life of Saint Domnolus. Legends and lives of the Saints were the dominant taste of that period, which was the age of the Saints. In applying himself to collecting them, Hadouin was walking in a path in which other heads of the Gallic Churches were also distinguishing themselves. We may therefore believe that it is to his zeal that we owe the preservation of a great number of histories of the holy persons who have made the Church of Le Mans illustrious among all others.

The holy Bishop had a basilica and a monastery built in honour of the Blessed Virgin in a place called Aurion, today Évron. He brought monks from the abbeys of Saint-Vincent and of Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul at Le Mans and established them in this cloister consecrated to the Mother of God, to carry out the divine service there under the Rule of Saint Benedict. By his will, dated 6 February 642, he made magnificent gifts to his monastery of Notre-Dame d'Évron, and gave his whole fortune to the mother Church and to the monasteries of his diocese.

A council having been held at Châlons-sur-Marne in 644, he was represented at it by the abbot Chagnoaldus. The diocese of Le Mans, having been for several years the theatre of the hostilities between the Franks and the Bretons (632–636), suffered greatly from that war, in which churches and monasteries were pillaged. Hadouin showed on this occasion all the zeal that animated him. He repaired so many ruins as far as he was able; but he applied himself above all to the restoration of the monasteries, and for this he has earned the highest praise from historians. In the last years of his life a great famine laid Gaul waste (in 651), and soon a contagious disease was added to this scourge, with terrible effects. Saint Hadouin died about the year 654, on the twelfth day before the calends of September, the day on which his memory is honoured in the Church of Le Mans. He was buried, according to his wish, in the basilica of Saint-Victorius. Saint Aldric, two hundred and fifty years later, found the body of Saint Hadouin still whole, fresh and ruddy, and translated it to the cathedral. The pontifical vestments in which he had been buried were still whole and incorrupt.

Taken from the History of the Church of Le Mans, by Dom Piolin.

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[1] The sanctuary of Saint Saloine once stood on a hillside very close to the one on which the church of Saint-Vivien was later built. It stood on the site of a Roman building which must have been magnificent and of great importance, to judge by the extent of its ruins and the beauty of the marbles sometimes taken from it. If a tradition is to be believed, Charlemagne, returning from his victorious expedition against Aigoland, chief of the Muslims, who had invaded Aquitaine, stopped at Saintes with his army. Visiting the holy places of that ancient city, he came to pray at the relics of Saint Saloine; after which he read the acts of his martyrdom and recognised the truth of what was told of this Saint's virtues and miracles. — The abbé Grasiller.

[2] The Île-Barbe, in the Saône, to the north of Lyons.

[3] This monastery still exists today, but it was long ago turned into a collegiate church.

[4] This opinion, that the relics of Saint Maxe were brought to Bar in the tenth century, is that of the compilers of the Saint's office. However, it is hardly probable, and relying on the historical documents of the sixteenth century one may even say that it is more than rash; for it is certain that the relics of our Saint were kept at Chinon until 1563, when the Calvinists tried to burn them. How they were snatched from their fury is not known, add the annotators of Gregory of Tours; but it is a fact that the Chapter of Saint-Maxe claims that these precious bones, saved from the flames, were brought to Bar-le-Duc, and that from then on it took him as its patron.

[5] It is now the town of Fontaines-lès-Dijon, at the gates of that departmental capital.

[6] Also called Hadoin, Chadouin, Hardouin, Audoin, and in Latin *Hadouindus*, *Chadaenus*, *Caduindus*, *Hardouinus*, *Hadwinus*, *Clodaenus*.

21 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Annecy in Savoy, the feast of Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, foundress of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary, who is mentioned on 13 December.[1] 1641. — At Rome, in the field of Veranus, Saint Cyriaca, widow, who during the persecution of Valerian, having devoted her person and her goods to the service of the Saints, at last underwent martyrdom and freely gave her life for Jesus Christ.[2] Third century. — At Salona, Saint Anastasius or Attalus, chief clerk, who, having been touched by the constancy of Saint Agapitus in his torments, was converted to the faith, and having confessed the name of Jesus Christ was martyred by order of Aurelian, and flew to the Lord. Third century. — In Sardinia, the birthday in heaven of the holy martyrs Luxorius, Cisellus and Camerinus, who in the persecution of Diocletian perished by the sword under the governor Delphius. 303. — In the Gévaudan, Saint PRIVATUS, bishop and martyr, in the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus. 262. — The same day, the holy martyrs Bonosus and Maximian.[3] 363. — At Fondi in Latium, Saint Paternus, martyr, who, having come from Alexandria to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles, withdrew from there into the territory of Fondi, and, as he was burying the bodies of the martyrs, was arrested by a tribune and died in chains under the emperor Decius. — At Edessa in Syria, Saint Bassa, martyr, and Saints Theogonius, Agapius and Fidelis, her children, whom this holy mother sent to martyrdom before her by her exhortations, in the persecution of Maximian; she herself was beheaded and, full of joy at this victory, followed her children. — At Verona, Saint Euprepius, bishop and confessor. First or second century. — Also Saint Quadratus, bishop. — At Siena in Tuscany, Blessed BERNARD PTOLOMEI, abbot, founder of the Order of the Olivetans. 1348.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Sées, Saint Adalhelm, also called Adahelin and Adelin, monk of Saint-Calais and bishop of Sées after Hildebrand III. 880. Adalhelm did not long enjoy his bishopric in peace: surprised by a band of Northmen, he was led into exile by these pirates; but the days of captivity did not make his zeal fruitless or his talents useless to the Church. At the request of Franco, archbishop of Rouen, he composed a Benedictional for the use of bishops. This work exists in manuscript in the Imperial Library. Adalhelm probably died amid the misfortunes that laid waste the regions of central France in the first years of the tenth

century. — In the diocese of Soissons, the memory of Saint Privatus, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — At the Benedictine monastery of Glanfeuil or Saint-Maur-sur-Loire (*Glannafoliense, S. Maurus ad Ligerim*, founded about 543), in the diocese of Angers, Blessed Florus, religious, who gave in that abbey proofs of the most heroic virtue. After twelve years spent in the practice of all the duties of the monastic profession, above all of an admirable humility, he fell asleep gently in the peace of the Lord. 560. — At Valenciennes, in the monastery of Saint-Jean-Baptiste (Order of Saint Augustine), Blessed Gilbert, second abbot of that house. His father was called Osbert and his mother Godvine. He was first a monk of Saint-Crespin-en-Chaie at Soissons; then, on the death of Clarembaud (1141), he was called to succeed him in the dignity of abbot of Saint-Jean. He had much to suffer from the exactions of Baldwin IV, count of Hainaut, who wanted to seize his monastery in order to build a castle there. After bearing this unjust persecution for a long time with angelic patience, our Blessed fell asleep peacefully in Our Lord. 1185. — In the diocese of Nevers, Saint Renobert, bishop of Bayeux, and Saint Zeno, deacon. Nothing is known of their lives. Towards the end of the ninth century the body of Saint Renobert was carried from Saint-Exupère at Bayeux to Varzy (Nièvre, arrondissement of Clamecy) to save it from profanation by the Northmen. Corbeil-sur-Seine and Besançon obtained a portion of the relics. The parish church of Saint-Renobert at Auxerre was enriched with a bone of the Saint's leg on 19 April 1643. Another portion was asked for by the cathedral of Bayeux, which obtained it in 1711, under the episcopate of Charles de Caylus. Seventh century. — At Utrecht, a city of the kingdom of Holland, Saint Albric, bishop of that see and confessor. Raised to this dignity as the result of a divine revelation, he perfectly fulfilled God's designs in his promotion; and after governing his people holily and sending apostolic preachers to various places, he died peacefully, laden with merits and victorious over the devil, the world and idolatry. 794. — At Rodez and at Bordeaux, Saint LEONTIUS I, THE ELDER, archbishop of the latter see and confessor. 542. — In the original diocese of Uzès, Saint Veredemus, hermit, who trained the great Saint Giles in the exercises of the monastic life, and whose body is kept at Uzès. About 547. — At Clairvaux, a village of the department of the Aube, in the diocese of Troyes, Saint HUMBELINA or EMBELINE, first abbess of Jully-sur-Sarce (Aube, arrondissement and canton of Bar-sur-Seine). 1141. — At Tarbes, Saint Julian, first known bishop of Lescar or Béarn (*Beneharnum*), whose life we gave on 16 March. About 400. — At Rodez, the memory of Saint Severus, founder and first abbot of the monastery of Agde (*Agatha*), in the diocese of Montpellier.[4] Fifth century. — At Clermont in Auvergne, Saint Avitus, bishop of that see and confessor, also named on 20 September. 594.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — In the island of Aegina (Aegean Sea), Saint Athanasia, widow, of the Order of Saint Basil, famous for her fidelity in monastic observance and for the gift of miracles.[5] 860.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — At Siena in Tuscany, Blessed Bernard Ptolomei, founder of the Congregation of the Olivetans under the rule of our Father Saint Benedict. 1348.

Martyrology of the Order of the Camaldolese. — At Siena in Tuscany, Blessed Bernard Ptolomei, etc. 1348.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — At Siena in Tuscany, Blessed Bernard Ptolomei, etc. 1348.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — At Siena in Tuscany, Blessed Bernard Ptolomei, etc. 1348.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Moulins in France, Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, foundress of the Religious of the Visitation of Holy Mary, famous for the nobility of her birth and the holiness of her life, which she spent with constancy in four different states. 1641.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — Saint Hyacinth, confessor, whose memory is honoured on the 16th of this month.[6] 1257.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin of Saint Francis. — Saint Hyacinth, confessor, etc. 1257.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Casale (*Bodincomagus*), a fortified town of the Sardinian States on the right bank of the Po, Saint Natalis or Noël, priest and confessor. He was born at Benevento, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, and was brought up in the exercises of piety by Saint Evasius or Vas (1 December), bishop of Casale, who later suffered martyrdom. His life was a long series of journeys, in which he applied himself zealously to the confession of the infidels. After winning many souls for Jesus Christ he fell asleep in a precious death and went to receive the crown due to useful servants. About the third century. — At Cividale del Friuli (*Forum Julii*), in Friuli, Saints Donatus, Romulus, Silvanus, Venustus and Hermogenes, martyrs. Romulus was a priest, Donatus and Silvanus deacons, Hermogenes a lector, and Venustus the brother of Donatus. They died victims of the persecution of Diocletian and Maximian: for boldly confessing the name of Jesus Christ the prefect Victorianus had them beheaded. Fourth century. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Pristus, Severus, Quadratus, bishop, Sundophagus, Astusius, Diomedes, Zoticus, Zatamgelus and Moyses, cited by the apographs of Saint Jerome. — In Spain, the holy martyrs Julius, Julian, Vincent, Augurius and Eulodius. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Hippolytus, Trajan, Quadratus and Primus, cited by the apographs of Saint Jerome. — Among the Greeks, Saint Theocleta the Wonderworker. Her parents, illustrious persons, were called Constantine and Anastasia; they brought her up as a Christian. She married a very virtuous young man named Zachary, with whom she lived in continence and the practice of works of charity. The care of the poor, widows and orphans took up all their moments. A few days before her blessed death Theocleta gathered the people of her household and foretold that she would soon leave them to enjoy the presence of Him whom she had loved so much on earth. On the day she had fixed she flew to heaven. She was given a magnificent funeral; everyone mourned her. The many miracles that came to make her tomb famous earned her her surname. Ninth century. — At Rieti (*Reate*), a town of the kingdom of Italy on the Velino, Blessed Baldwin (*Balduinus*), prior of the monastery of San Pastore of the Cistercian Order. He had first been a monk of Clairvaux under Saint Bernard. His body rests in the cathedral church of Rieti, under the altar of the chapel *delle Grazie*, dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. He is named on 15 July in the Cistercian martyrology. 1140. — At Alzira, in the diocese of Valencia in Spain, Saint Bernard and his sisters Saint Grace and Saint Mary, martyrs, cited in the Cistercian martyrology on 1 June. Their father was called Almanzor and was an idolater. Bernard owed his conversion to his association with Portuguese monks. He then changed his name from Amet to Bernard, in memory of the founder of the Order he embraced after renouncing the worship of idols. 1180.

Saint Privatus, Bishop of Mende and Martyr

262. — Pope: Saint Dionysius. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.

> *Vita pastoris omnibus prodesse debet.*
>
> *The life of a shepherd must be useful to everyone.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

This holy Bishop was one of the most illustrious prelates of the Church of Gaul in the time of the rule of the pagan emperors. Between Saint Severian, first bishop of Mende, and Saint Privatus, the most illustrious of his successors, a space of about a hundred and fifty years elapsed.[1] The names of the bishops who governed the church of the Gévaudan during that long interval are completely unknown; but what is certain is that Saint Privatus had several predecessors, as can be seen from his Acts.[2] It was about the middle of the third century that God visited the church of Mende in the fullness of His mercies by sending it Saint Privatus as its shepherd. An office of the twelfth century makes him born of a noble family of Auvergne, and certain other

documents go so far as to name, as his birthplace, the village of Coudes, which lies between Issoire and Clermont-Ferrand on the river Allier and is linked to the railway by a suspension bridge.

From the same sources we see that in the breadth of his knowledge he showed himself equal to the rank he held; that he was the scourge of usurers; that he used the treasures of the church to build storehouses for the sustenance of the poor and to maintain plenty in the diocese, letting go at a low price what he had bought dear; and finally that throughout his episcopate he was remarkable for the ardour and liveliness of his faith, the gentleness of his administration and his exemplary piety.

The author of his Acts adds that, in his love of retirement, the holy Prelate had made himself a grotto at the top of the mountain that overlooks Mende, with all possible skill and elegance, to make it habitable, and that he lived there most of the time, coming down only on solemn feasts and when the needs of his people required it.

So full a life could end only in a death more beautiful still in the eyes of God; and that is the grace God granted the holy Pontiff in letting him die a martyr of pastoral charity and of the Christian faith.

Here are the principal circumstances of that sacrifice of sweet savour, which has made the church of Mende fruitful for ever.

In the time of the emperors Valerian and Gallienus, the Alemanni, whose strength lies more in numbers than in warlike valour, crossed the Rhine to lay Gaul waste. A tribe of these barbarians, led by a prince named Chrocus, advanced towards the Gévaudan. At the news of their approach and of their countless excesses, the inhabitants of the country, and even several notable persons from the neighbouring regions, took refuge on the mountain of Grèzes. The enemy were not long in arriving, and after ravaging everything they came and laid siege to that natural fortress; but they could never take it. They had already been at the foot of that mountain for two years when they learned that the bishop of the country was not with the besieged, but was living in retirement in a grotto three leagues away. So they went there at once, seized the holy Prelate and took him away with them. On the way down they stopped on the hill at the foot of Mont Mincat and proposed to him, through an interpreter, that he urge his people to surrender.

Saint Privatus answered them: “I shall never do what you demand of me; it is not fitting for a bishop to give his people such advice. Besides, since those who are subject to me are in a very safe place, I shall take good care not to make them believe that it is in their interest to surrender. In any case, I am ready to undergo whatever may happen to me rather than consent to commit the crime you propose to me.”

This noble answer threw the barbarians into a fury. They began to beat him with sticks and led him as far as the village of Mende, maltreating him in this way. They thought that by dint of ill-treatment they would make him change his resolution; but the good shepherd remained steadfastly firm, answering their insults and violence only with these words: “What I told you in the first place should be enough for you, if you have the least intelligence and reason: I absolutely cannot do what you demand of me.”

At this the barbarians, indignant and as if beside themselves, tormented the holy old man still more atrociously, and, adding impiety to cruelty, proposed to him that he worship the idols. “You will sacrifice to our gods,” they said to him, “or else you will die in torments.” The Saint replied without hesitation: “I am astonished that you dare to propose so execrable an impiety to a bishop. If you had a little intelligence, you would understand of yourselves that a man of my rank must undergo the cruellest death rather than be the cause of his people’s perdition by losing himself.”

At these words the barbarians, seeing that they had nothing to gain from him by severity, put on an air of moderation and said to him: “Are we proposing things that are unlawful and fit only for barbarians? All your emperors and their ministers, as you know, worship the idols and oblige all Christians to sacrifice to the gods.” “What you say is true,” replied the holy Prelate. “I grant that the master of the Romans heaps crime

upon crime, and that is most grievous. If it were not so, you barbarians would not have the power to shake the empire. All that you make us suffer is less an effect of your valour than a punishment for the cruelty of the emperors. But the Lord our God, whom you do not know, is so powerful and so merciful that in a short space of time He can enlighten the minds of the princes you speak of, overthrow your idols, and, after chastising us by the present tribulations, make us feel again the effects of His kindly protection. As for me, in the hope of eternal goods, I despise all the torments you can inflict on me."

"Sacrifice at once," the barbarians went on, "or else know that we shall put you to death amid every kind of torment, so that your death, as a terrible and unheard-of example, may terrify all who do not share your opinions."

The generous Confessor answered these last threats by saying: "Make me suffer whatever you will. I protest to you, in the name of the Lord my God, that I can only be what I am; it is better for me to endure your torments; for if I committed the signal folly of obeying you and sacrificing to your demons, I could not escape eternal torments."

Scarcely had he finished speaking thus when the barbarians gave free rein to all their rage, scourged him with redoubled blows and burned his body with flaming torches; finally, after trying all sorts of new torments on him, they left him on the spot, thinking they had taken his life.

After this, seeing themselves disappointed in their hope of obtaining the surrender of the besieged by means of their shepherd, the barbarians came back to the mountain of Grèzes with the intention of treating with them. So they made them presents, and the besieged in their turn supplied them with provisions, but on condition that they leave the country immediately. As soon as the besieged were able to leave their place of refuge, they hastened in crowds to their beloved shepherd. They found him still alive, but they had only time to show him their grief and gratitude, to listen to his last counsels and to receive his final blessing. When he had given back his soul to God, his precious remains were buried in an underground place which is today the crypt of the cathedral church.

His death took place, according to Baronius, on 21 August 262. Indeed, all the martyrologies and all the ecclesiastical histories agree in placing his death under Valerian and Gallienus; and this is confirmed by a tradition current in the church of Mende in the twelfth century and long before, namely that Saint Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine, came to pray at the tomb of Saint Privatus and presented the church of Mende with a great number of relics. Likewise, at the same period and according to a custom of long standing, every year on Easter Day the purse of Saint Helena was exposed for the veneration of the faithful.

He is represented being beaten to death by the pagan invaders while he was living in retirement in a grotto.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

In the seventh century King Dagobert had carried off the relics of Saint Privatus, like so many others, to place them in the church of the monastery of Saint-Denis near Paris. After that prince's death the people managed to have them returned; and for fear that they might be carried off again by trickery or by force, they were hidden in a crypt of a chapel dedicated to Saint Thecla. In time this chapel fell into ruins, and those who held the secret ended by dying without having been able to hand it on. Various secular buildings had been put up on part of the site of the old chapel of Saint Thecla, and the other part had been turned into a garden. Now in 1170 Bishop Aldebert III ordered a well to be dug in this garden. The work was to be carried out during the prelate's journey to the court of the king of France. No sooner had he arrived at Clermont than a messenger came to join him there to tell him that in digging the well they had discovered a crypt, and in this crypt the body of Saint Privatus. Aldebert III, being quite unable to retrace his steps, charged the messenger to tell his clergy that nothing more should be touched until his return. And so, when he came back to his episcopal city, he examined everything carefully, and it was established that the body found was really that

of Saint Privatus. He then wrote to all his secular and regular clergy and to all the faithful to announce the good news to them canonically and invite them to come to Mende for the ceremony of the translation. It took place on 15 September of the same year with unequalled solemnity, and that very day God manifested the glory of His martyr by the deliverance of a possessed man. The finding of the relics of Saint Privatus also won the whole diocese a most signal grace: the whole country, which had been a prey to the horrors of civil war for seven years, became calm at that time as if by enchantment.

The body of Saint Privatus, except for the head, was laid in the crypt beneath the cathedral, a crypt built on the very spot where the holy martyr had been buried immediately after his martyrdom. Later these precious remains were taken from that underground place to be put in a silver reliquary on the high altar. Only a very small part of them is possessed today, as a result of the disasters the church of Mende suffered in the second half of the sixteenth century, that is, during the wars of religion.

In the year 1036 Stephen, bishop of Le Puy, having called together in that town the principal lords of the country to agree with them on the means of restoring peace in his diocese, asked all the neighbouring prelates to come to Le Puy with the relics of their saints. Raymond, bishop of Mende, hastened to answer this invitation, and, having the statue of Saint Privatus carried before him, went to Le Puy with several members of his clergy and a number of the faithful. At the news of their approach all the inhabitants of Le Puy, who had often heard of the credit of Saint Privatus with God, came out in crowds to meet his image. On the other side, the bishop of Le Puy and those of Clermont, Valence and Viviers came out of the town in their sacred vestments, preceded by all the clergy of the place and all carrying the relics of their saints. The two processions having met not far from the town, they halted. Then, while on one side the clergy sang the praises of God and on the other the people inwardly and fervently invoked the holy martyr, a father of a family arrived carrying in his arms his son, crippled in all his limbs. On seeing him, people congratulated him on his good idea and urged him to present himself quickly and confidently to a saint who had already worked so many other wonders. At last, since because of the crowd, which was growing ever denser, he called out loudly to be allowed to reach the statue of Saint Privatus, the bishops, and above all Saint Odilo, abbot of Cluny, noticed him and had a passage opened for him. So he came forward, holding his child up in the air and inviting everyone to pray for him; and scarcely had the young child touched the image of the holy martyr when his sinews stretched, the blood filled his withered veins again, a slight cracking was heard, and he himself gave a little sigh each time the miracle worked on one of his limbs. Finally, while all present were in admiration at the sight of these wonderful effects, the child felt a sudden start, and, finding himself perfectly restored, began to walk, blessing God and his deliverer. It would be impossible for us to say, adds Aldebert the Venerable, what was the joy of the two peoples, or to describe the happy influence this miracle of the holy martyr had on the decisions of the assembly, which took place soon afterwards.

Taken from the History of the Church of Mende by the abbé Charbonnel; from Venantius Fortunatus; from Saint Gregory of Tours; from Surius; and from Baronius. — Cf. Acts of the Martyrs.

Saint Humbelina or Embeline, First Abbess of Jully-sur-Sarce

1141. — Pope: Innocent II. — King of France: Louis VII, the Young.

> *Dixi ego in corde meo: Affluam deliciis et fruar bonis. Et vidi quod hoc quoque esset vanitas.*
>
> *I said in my heart: I will go and abound with delights and enjoy good things. And I saw that this also was vanity. Ecclesiastes II, 1.*

Humbelina was the daughter of Tescelin and Aleth, and the only sister of six brothers, the most illustrious of whom is Saint Bernard. She came into the world at the castle of Fontaines, near Dijon, in the year 1092, and was offered to God from her birth. She bore the tenderest affection for her brothers; and so, when Bernard had drawn five of them with him into solitude, she could not hide her grief. She accused the future abbot of

Clairvaux of being the author of the ruin of her house and her future, and in a tone in which discouragement, affection, vexation, respect and hope all showed at once, she begged him to suspend his plans; she implored him to have regard for the white hair of a father, for the abandonment in which he was leaving the youngest of his brothers, and so to take pity on a weak sister whom he had loved so much and who would soon find herself alone and without support. She could not shake him; she herself was one day to feel the influence of Bernard's virtue.

Left alone with her father and her young brother, Humbelina soon accepted marriage with a noble lord, a kinsman of the duchess of Lorraine. Although she had kept in her heart the religious sentiments her pious mother had developed there, she let herself be ruled by love of the world and its comforts. She swam in luxury and plenty, refused herself nothing her slightest desires asked, and lived in the world amid pleasures and festivities.

God, however, inspired her with the wish to go to Clairvaux to visit her brother. She travelled with a large retinue and a brilliant equipage; no doubt she wished by this splendid display to uphold the dignity of her rank and do honour to Bernard's reputation. But the thoughts of the Saints are very different from those of the world. Bernard, learning of the proud pomp his sister had displayed, could not bring himself to see her. He regarded this show as a snare laid by the devil to ruin her soul and those of his brothers. They, following Bernard's example, likewise refused to speak to her; and one of them, Andrew, who could not avoid meeting her, opened his mouth only to address stern words to her. Humbelina, touched by grace, burst into tears. "I know," she cried, "that I am only an unworthy sinner; but did not Jesus Christ die for those who are like me? If my brother despises my body, let the servant of God not despise my soul. Let him come, let him order, let him command, and I will obey him, and I will do what he says." Bernard could resist no longer, and, accompanied by his brothers, he received the noble lady, now become humble and repentant. He had a serious conversation with her, reconciled her with God, and gave her as her rule of life the one her mother herself had kept in marriage: flight from the vanities of the world, the cutting off of luxury in dress, inner silence, and the practice of good works. Humbelina went home, and her conversion was a subject of astonishment and edification to everyone. People admired in her the power of grace and blessed God, who, in the midst of the world, made a person of her rank lead a life so opposed to the spirit of the world. She lived thus for two years with her husband, who then released her from the yoke of marriage, according to the discipline of the Church, and allowed her to give herself wholly to the service of God.

Once free, Humbelina withdrew to the monastery of Billette (this is the name the monastery of Jully-sur-Sarce long bore), and there embraced the Rule of Saint Benedict under the eyes of the abbot of Clairvaux. She spent the rest of her days there in penance, was chosen to direct her companions, and showed herself in every way worthy of Saint Bernard and his brothers. She often spent the night reciting psalms and meditating on the Passion of Jesus Christ; she scarcely allowed herself a few moments of sleep, and even then took that rest only on the boards of her bed. First at all the exercises, she preferred the most toilsome and humiliating tasks, wishing thus to expiate the show and pride she had so loved in the world.

Humbelina lived sixteen or seventeen years under the discipline of the monastery; and when her soul had been purified by the austerities of her life, the tears of her penance and the fire of her love for Jesus Christ, she went to receive in heaven the eternal reward of her labours. She had the consolation of being assisted in her last moments by the illustrious abbot of Clairvaux. In spite of the exhaustion to which illness had reduced her, she found strength and freedom of mind enough to talk at length with her brothers of divine things and of God's infinite mercy towards her. She thanked Bernard in particular for his charity to her, attributing her conversion to him after God; then she died gently in his arms and in those of Blessed Peter, prior of the monastery and her confessor. It was the year 1141, and Humbelina was entering the fiftieth year of her age.

Her death is recorded in the necrology of Cîteaux and in the Martyrology of France on 21 August, the day after the feast of Saint Bernard, no doubt in order to join the cult of the sister to that of the brother. But she is

not mentioned in the Roman Martyrology.

Her authentic relics are in the church of Jully-sur-Sarce.

Extracted from the Lives of the Saints of Troyes, by the abbé Defer.

Saint Leontius I, Called the Elder, Archbishop of Bordeaux (about 542)

As illustrious by his birth as by the uprightness of his conduct, Leontius enjoyed great influence both with the people and with the great. His consecration took place about 520. Scarcely had he been installed in the metropolitan see of Bordeaux when he gave all his goods to his Church and to the poor. Seeing that the church built by his predecessor Amelius was becoming too small to hold all the faithful, for the population of Bordeaux was beginning to grow considerably, he had another built on larger lines. According to the most general opinion, it was he, and not Leontius his successor, who presided in 541 over the fourth council of Orléans. He died very shortly afterwards. Fortunatus, in a very long epitaph he devoted to him, which is found in the fourth book of his poems, gives the most magnificent praise of the virtues of Leontius. Here is that epitaph:

“Beneath this stone rest the ashes of the venerable Leontius, who bore the pontifical mitre high. His people, by their groans and confused murmurs, tell us the whole greatness of their loss; child, young man and old man vie with one another in giving him their tears. Leontius yielded to no one in birth; purity itself had formed his morals. No other titles were sought, and could more precious ones have been desired to raise him to his place? The more he was distinguished by his rank and his virtues, the more he sought to abase himself by deep humility. His mere presence put discord to flight; it gave way, trembling; love and respect delivered all hearts to him. In losing him, every age has lost its defender. What need is there to say it? Their tears tell us only too eloquently. Does anyone speak of his death without being moved? People find consolation only in raising in their hearts a temple to his memory. Shall we pass over in silence the immense charity of this generous shepherd? For the love of Christ he lavished even the inheritance of his fathers. The poor man had recourse to him with confidence, the captive asked him for the price of his ransom, and the needy had acquired the right to dispose of his riches. Let us not doubt that so beautiful a soul has flown from earth to heaven. Leontius lived less for himself than for God; he never ceased to study and follow the designs of Providence for those entrusted to him. The prince himself did justice to his merit. In short, to sum it all up in a word, he had become the idol of his people, because his whole ambition had been to reign over souls. He lived in power five lustres and seven years, and at the end of the day was taken from this world.”

After a life devoted to extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ, Leontius came to end his days in the diocese of Rodez. It was at Saint-Léons, not far from Millau, then famous for a monastery of Benedictine religious, that he gently gave back his soul to God, about 542.

Taken from the France Pontificale and from notes communicated by M. l’abbé Bousquet of Rodez.

Saint Avitus I, Eighteenth Bishop of Clermont and Confessor (594)

Saint Avitus, of a noble family of Auvergne, was elected bishop of Clermont after the death of Cautinus and was consecrated in the city of Metz in the presence of King Sigebert, contrary to the canons, which required a bishop to be ordained by his metropolitan and in his own province. A zealous shepherd, he was the father of the poor, the guardian of orphans, the host of strangers, and the consolation of the widow and of all the unfortunate. He converted to the faith a great number of the Jews who lived in the city of Arverna (the original name of Clermont), and in a single night baptised more than five hundred of them. He wished himself to purify them in the regenerating water, anoint them with holy chrism and admit them into the bosom of the Church. The brightness of a thousand torches and the dazzling whiteness of the robes of innocence in which the new proselytes were clothed gave the whole city an air of festival, and filled it with

no less joy than Jerusalem felt at the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. At the prayer of Saint Avitus the prisons opened more than once, and the chains of the captives broke like fragile glass. King Childebert, out of regard for him, freed the churches from all tribute.

Loved as much as revered by all the famous men of his time, Avitus persuaded Saint Gregory of Tours, who was then serving as deacon with him, to write the history that this learned writer has left us. He repaired several churches or built them anew. About 575 he had the church of Thiers built in honour of Saint Genesius, martyr; this church, enriched and endowed with a Chapter by Guy II of Thiers in 1016 and restored in 1107, was burned by the Calvinists in 1578. But the finest monument of his glory is the building of the basilica of Notre-Dame du Port, so called because the place where it was built had previously been a kind of depot into which all the provisions and goods the inhabitants needed were brought. It is a church of the sixth century, reworked in the ninth, but with a delicacy that respected and maintained the work of Saint Avitus in its most important parts as well as in its architectural whole. The church is in the form of a Latin cross, with two aisles and a choir surrounded by several chapels, rising above a crypt that contains the altar on which stands a miraculous statue of Mary. Notre-Dame du Port is a much-frequented place of pilgrimage; people go there in crowds above all for the great feast of 15 May. On 20 December 1851 Pius IX granted a plenary indulgence: (1) for the novena celebrated from 15 May to the 24th, provided one has followed the exercises five times; (2) for a visit to the sanctuary on the feasts of Christmas and the Epiphany, and on the solemnities of the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Purification, the Assumption and Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows (third Sunday of September).

The precious remains of Saint Avitus were laid in this basilica of Notre-Dame du Port and were long held there in great veneration.

Taken from the Proper of Clermont, the Chronology of the Bishops of Clermont, and Notre-Dame de France.

Saint Bernard Ptolomei, Founder of the Olivetans (1348)

Saint Bernard, of one of the first houses of Siena, was born in 1272. At baptism he received the name of John, but he afterwards changed it to Bernard. He was brought up by Christopher Ptolomei, his kinsman, a Dominican religious of great learning and rare piety, who later became a bishop. While Bernard was making rapid progress in learning, he exercised himself with fervour in the practice of all the Christian virtues. He was distinguished among the most edifying members of the confraternity of Saint Ansanus, martyr of Siena, and filled the first offices of his native city with all possible zeal and integrity. But the danger of vainglory inspired him with the plan of leaving the world entirely. He sold his goods, the price of which was distributed to the poor, and withdrew to a wilderness ten miles from Siena and very hard of access. There he practised incredible austerities and sustained with heroic constancy the violent assaults made on him by the enemies of salvation. Some persons having joined him, the Pope, who was then residing at Avignon, advised him to choose the way of life of some religious Order approved in the Church. He adopted the Rule of Saint Benedict and the white habit. Guy, bishop of Arezzo, in whose diocese he was, confirmed his choice and his institutions in 1319, and his Order was known under the name of the Congregation of the Virgin Mary of Mount Olivet. It was successively approved by Popes John XXII, Clement VI and Gregory XI. The holy founder possessed the spirit of prayer in an eminent degree; he had a great devotion to Jesus suffering and to His holy Mother. He died on 20 August in the year of Jesus Christ 1348, the seventy-sixth of his age, the thirty-fifth of his retreat and the twenty-ninth of his religious profession.

The Congregation of the Olivetans is very numerous in Italy. Their principal house is that of Santa Francesca in Rome. There are also nuns of this Order, who likewise wear the white habit and follow the same constitutions.

In 1644 the Congregation of Rites declared that Blessed Bernard Ptolomei was duly venerated among the Saints. Innocent XII approved, in 1692, an office and a Mass for his feast in the Order of the Olivetans. His name has been inserted in the Roman Martyrology under 21 August.

Godescard, Baillet, Acta Sanctorum.

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[1] See her life on that day.

[2] The whole world knows the name of Saint Cyriaca and reveres her Catacomb. The origin of this quarter, one of the largest of underground Rome, goes back to the year 260, under the reign of Valerian. Sprung from one of the noblest families of the empire, Cyriaca had lived eleven years with her husband. Left a Christian widow, she consecrated her person and her goods to the Lord's poor. In spite of the violence of the persecution, she gave her house on the Caelian Hill for the assemblies of the faithful and the celebration of the holy Mysteries. It was there that Saint Lawrence, on the eve of his glorious combat, distributed the treasures of the Church to the sick, the widows and the orphans. After his death the illustrious archdeacon was laid with great pomp in the field of Nero, given by Saint Cyriaca for the burial of Christians and situated on the Via Tiburtina. She herself was not long in joining him there. Without regard for her high birth or her great age, the emperor had the illustrious matron arrested and subjected her to the most frightful tortures. Her body was bruised, her flesh torn, and finally her bones were broken with thongs loaded with lead and sharp points. The Christians reverently gathered up her sacred body and laid it in the western part of her catacomb, not far from Saint Lawrence. — Mgr Gaume, *Les trois Rome*.

[3] Julian the Apostate had given orders that the cross and the name of Jesus Christ should be removed from the labarum, where Constantine had had them put, and that the standards of the pagan emperors, on which the false divinities were represented, should be taken up again. Bonosus and Maximian, two officers of the corps of the Old Herculians, refused to obey these impious orders. In a fury Julian had them scourged with leaded whips and then beheaded. They were the last victims of the Apostate, who shortly afterwards died the frightful death that is well known. — Godescard, Ruinart, Tillemont, Ceillier.

[4] Severus, sprung from a family of royal blood in the city of Tyre (today Sur, in Phoenicia), studied letters from his childhood. Having lost his parents, he went aboard a ship that carried him to Septimania (part of southern Gaul). Received with honour by Beric, bishop of Agde (Hérault), he distributed to the poor, on that bishop's advice, the immense treasures he had brought with him, freed his slaves, and, to give himself more wholly to God, went to the Araurique gorge, two miles from the town of Agde, where he lived in a hut of reeds built with his own hands. He led a very austere life, ate only one barley loaf a week, and imitated the life of the ancient anchorites by the constant contemplation of God. His relatives and servants, after searching for him for a long time, discovered his retreat and begged him to return to his country to live there in the same splendour as before; but he constantly refused, saying that he preferred God to all the goods of the world. So he remained in his solitude; and as a great number of devout visitors kept coming to converse with him, a church and a monastery were built on the spot, and the humble anchorite soon saw himself the father of more than three hundred monks. It is related that, to feed them, he renewed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves; he worked other miracles too, and had the gift of prophecy. At last he fell asleep, full of days, in the bosom of Our Lord. — *Proper of Rodez.*

[5] We have given her life on 14 August.

[6] See his life on 16 August.

[7] The episcopal see of the Gévaudan was never at Javoux, as Father Giry says. In digging among the ruins of that ancient capital, a mass of pagan objects has been found and not a single mark of Christianity. On the other hand, the Acts of Saint Privatus say expressly that the predecessors of this holy Bishop, and he himself, always resided at Mende; and these Acts are wholly worthy of belief.

[8] Tillemont, one of the most renowned critics, did not fear to say of the Acts of Saint Privatus that he regarded them as fabricated in the fifteenth century; and after this writer many people, little versed in such matters, believed in their turn that this was so. But the Acts of this holy Patron are far from being of such recent manufacture. They existed in the twelfth century, since Aldebert the Venerable quotes them in his manuscript, using the very words of the text when he quotes them. — At that period, too, the antiphons and responsories of the Saint's office were nothing but so many short verbatim extracts from the document in question. M. l'abbé Arbellot, honorary canon of Limoges and parish priest and archpriest of Rochechouart, wrote to us not long ago that he himself had found these Acts in the Imperial Library, in a manuscript of the tenth century. This learned defender of the apostolate of Saint Martial maintains, moreover, that the Acts of Saint Privatus go back at least to the first half of the sixth century. And in this he is of the same opinion as the Jesuit Fathers who are continuing the work of the Bollandists at Brussels.

There is indeed a great family likeness between our Acts of Saint Privatus and the article that Saint Gregory of Tours, a writer of the second half of the sixth century, devoted to the account of the martyrdom of this holy Patron.

We do not hesitate to believe, with Canon Arbellot, that priority in time belongs to the Acts of Saint Privatus. — What proves to us, in fact, that Saint Gregory of Tours composed his history with the help of documents that came to him from the various Churches of France is that, concerning the Martyrs who suffered during the second half of the second century, he tells us: *In Galliis multi pro Christi nomine sunt per martyrium gemmis coelestibus coronati, quorum Passionum historiae apud nos fideliter usque hodie retinentur* (*Hist. Franc.*, book I, chap. XXVI). — In book II, no. 3, he says: "We have read the passions of these Martyrs, and we shall reproduce something of them." In book I, chapter XXVIII, speaking of the seven bishops whom he believed to have been sent into Gaul in the time of Decius, he says: *Tempore Decii septem viri episcopi ordinati ad praedicandum in Gallias missi sunt, sicut historia passionis Saturnini denarrat* (S. Martyris). In the same place he gives a legend of Saint Hilary of Poitiers which he declares he himself made use of. — In the prologue of book II he says that, "having come so far by means of the histories he has cited, he is going to relate,

with God's help, the events that have happened since". In book II, again no. 3, concerning the Christians martyred by the Vandals in Africa, he seems to have no other data than those furnished him by the passions, that is, by the Acts of these Martyrs, Acts that he himself cites. — Dom Ruinart, the most celebrated of the editors of Saint Gregory, recognised in a Merovingian manuscript a life of Saint Servatius, bishop of Tongres, containing the whole narrative of Saint Gregory of Tours, but at greater length. — As for Saint Aignan of Orléans, our historian himself tells us that the Acts of that holy man are faithfully preserved in his memory. Most of what we have just said about Saint Gregory of Tours we have borrowed from an excellent critical study of that holy historian by M. Lecoy, a pupil of the École des Chartes and archivist at Annecy (Haute-Savoie). That author himself says: "It is known that before Clovis most of the lives of the Saints were already written."

22 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[1] — At Rome, on the Ostian Way, the birthday in heaven of Saint Timothy, martyr, who was arrested by Tarquinius, prefect of the city, remained a long time in prison, and, having refused to sacrifice to idols, was put to the torture as many as three times, underwent the most atrocious torments, and finally had his head cut off.[2] 4th c. — At Porto, Saint HIPPOLYTUS, bishop, most celebrated for his learning, who, for having confessed the faith in a striking manner under the Emperor Alexander, was thrown, bound hand and foot, into a deep pit full of water, and thereby won the palm of martyrdom. His body was buried in the same place by the Christians. 225. — At Autun, Saint SYMPHORIAN, martyr, who, for having refused to sacrifice to idols, was first beaten with rods, then shut up in a dungeon, and finally beheaded under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.[3] 180. — At Rome, Saint Antony or Antoninus, martyr, who, declaring himself openly a Christian, was beheaded by sentence of the judge Vitellius and buried on the Aurelian Way. 2nd c. — Also at Porto, the holy martyrs Martial, Saturninus, Epictetus, Maprilis, Felix and their companions. 3rd c. — At Nicomedia, Saints Agathonicus, Zoticus and their companions, martyred under the Emperor Maximian and the governor Eutholomius.[4] — At Tarsus in Cilicia, Saint Athanasius, bishop and martyr, and Saint Anthusa, a noblewoman whom he had baptised together with two of her slaves; they suffered under the Emperor Valerian.[5] — At Reims, the holy martyrs Maurus and his companions.[6] — In Spain, the holy martyrs Fabrician and Philibert. — At Pavia, Saint Guniforte, martyr. Probably under Maximian.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Autun, commemoration of the holy martyrs Timothy and Hippolytus, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Nevers, dedication of the church of Saint-Benin d'Azy (Nièvre, arrondissement of Nevers). Benin is the same as Benignus, apostle of Dijon and martyr. The consecrating prelate, Mgr Paul Naudo, placed in the sepulchre of the high altar relics of Saint Solange, virgin and martyr, patroness of Berry, of Saint Cyr, and of Saint Frances de Chantal. 1836. — In the diocese of Belley, Saint LAMBERT, founder of the abbey of Chézery or Chissery (*Cisseriacum*), not far from Nantua. 1154. — At Soissons, the blessed death of the venerable mother Marguerite André, better known by the name of Gante, and in religion by that of Claire of Saint-Ignace. Born at Mattaincourt (Vosges) in the time of Blessed Peter Fourier, she was superior of the monastery of Saint-Mihiel, of which we spoke on 7 July in the life of the blessed parish priest of Mattaincourt. 1645. — At Paris, the precious death of Father Jean Bagot, of the Society of Jesus. He was born at Rennes according to some, at Saint-Brieuc according to others, and entered the Jesuits at the age of nineteen. He was in turn professor of philosophy, professor of theology, censor of books at Rome, superior of the college of Louis-le-Grand at Paris, and confessor of Louis XIV. He ended his virtuous career at the age of seventy-four. 1664. — Notre-Dame de Marquette (*Reclinatorium* or *Bona Requies B. M.*), in the diocese of Cambrai, began on this day, in the year 1622, to work miracles. This abbey owed its origin to the liberality of Joan of Constantinople, who founded a convent of Bernardine nuns there

in 1230. She chose it as her burial place. — At Paris, in the former church of the Recollects, translation of the body of Saint Jocundus. He held the office of lector in the city of Reims when he was put to death (453) with Saint Nicasius, his bishop, by the barbarians who ravaged Gaul in the fifth century. The principal feast of Saint Jocundus and Saint Nicasius is celebrated on 14 December, to which we refer for more details. 1683. — At Bordeaux, commemoration of the vow of Louis XIII. By this name is known a vow made by that prince, by which, placing his person and his kingdom under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, he undertook to hold every year a solemn procession in her honour at Paris on the day of her feast, 15 August. The cause given for this vow is the joy the king felt on learning of the pregnancy of Anne of Austria, his wife. This procession took place until the Revolution; it was re-established under the Restoration. 1637.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The Octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, principal and particular patroness of the whole Order of Cîteaux. — On the Saturday before the Sunday following the Octave of the Assumption, feast of the most sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Neocaesarea, today Niksar, an ancient city of Asia Minor on the Iris, Saint Nectavus or Nectarius and Saint Sevus, named in the ancient martyrologies without further details. — In Northumberland, a county of the kingdom of England, Saint Sigfrid or Sigefroi (*Sigifridus, Sigfridus*), third abbot of the monastery of Saint Peter at Wearmouth (*Coenobium Wirense*), confessor. He is celebrated for the purity of his morals, his great love of chastity and his invincible patience. He governed his community for only three years and fell asleep peacefully in Our Lord. 689. — At Faesulae, today Fiesole, a town of ancient Etruria, Saint Andrew the Scot, archdeacon and confessor. Born of noble and virtuous parents, he spent his youth in the study of letters and the exercises of piety. He then followed the lessons of a Christian philosopher named Donatus: they both soon left Scotland, their homeland, to go to Italy. Donatus was elected bishop of Faesulae, and his virtues made his ministry pleasing to God. As for Andrew, he became archdeacon of that Church and made himself illustrious by the numerous miracles he worked in Faesulae. His body was laid in a chapel of the basilica of Saint Martin, which he had raised from its ruins. In 1285 it was taken up from the ground and placed in front of the high altar. Towards the end of the 9th c. — At Bagnorea (*Balneoregium, Balneum Regis*), in ancient Etruria, Saint Aldrovand, also called Androvand and Aldebrand, bishop and confessor. His head is kept at Bagnorea and is carried in procession through the town in times of calamity, to obtain from God, through the intercession of His servant, the ending of the scourge. About 869. — At Hohenwart, on the Paar, in Bavaria, Blessed Richilde, recluse. In 1074 she took the veil in the monastery of that name; then, aspiring to a higher perfection, she shut herself up in a narrow cell where, cut off for several years from all human society, she served God by the severest practices of penance, by prayer and by meditation. She received the reward of her fidelity on 22 August and was buried under the altar of the holy apostles Peter and Paul. 1100.

Saint Symphorian, Martyr at Autun

180. — Pope: Saint Eleutherius. — Roman Emperor: Marcus Aurelius.

Ait adolescens: Non obedio praecepto regis, sed praecepto legis quae data est nobis.

I Machab., VII, 30.

Saint Symphorian suffered a threefold martyrdom: (1) he suffers in being separated from his mother; (2) he suffers under his mother's eyes; (3) he dies at his mother's command.

Latour (Orateurs sacrés, Migne collection).

Among the first faithful of Autun who longed ardently for the arrival of some ministers of religion, there was one remarkable above all for his virtues and for the high rank he held in the city. This happy Christian was called Faustus. Head of a very noble senatorial family and adorned with the dignity of praetor, he enjoyed in the city that high regard which accompanies merit, rank, the exercise of public authority, the great magistracies, nobility and wealth. But God, who had His designs in choosing him in a high position to call him to the knowledge of the Gospel, was reserving him for quite another distinction. Distinguished before men, he was still more distinguished before God by his virtue and by that ancient faith which made martyrs; and so God Himself was to take it upon Himself to reward him one day, even here below, by surrounding his name and his family with a new glory, until then unknown at Autun, which men can neither give nor take away.

Faustus had a wife worthy of him, a Christian like him, pious and strong in the faith, longing with an ardour equal to his for those she called angels of God, and like him only too happy to receive them. Her name was Augusta. She had given her husband a son, the only pledge of their pious love, the only object on earth of their affections as of their hopes; he was named Symphorian. The noble Aeduan matron joined to gravity of morals and dignity of conduct an easy and gracious modesty; to a lovable gentleness, strength of character; to all the fervour of the first faithful, the delicate attentions of conjugal love and the tender cares of maternal love. She was a Christian, she was a wife, she was a mother, before all else. Knowing that happiness, any more than virtue, is not found in noisy pleasures, in feasts and worldly society; wholly given to her pure affections and her duties; shut up in that family life which is tedious only to selfish, frivolous souls, without affection as without conscience, but so full of charm, so sweet for serious and loving souls who know how to keep within the circle of their quiet daily occupations instead of rushing in pursuit of frivolous enjoyments, she was content, she found herself happy enough, to adorn and sanctify the domestic hearth, that private sanctuary where God also dwells. She placed all her joy in being the joy of her husband, and in smiling, an angel herself, at the first smiles of the angel who was her son.

Faustus and Augusta did not yet know the full value of the treasure they possessed in

Symphorian, nor the sublime destiny God was reserving for this lovable child. But as truly and solidly Christian parents, as people knew how to be then, they were well aware that he was a gift from heaven; and they brought him up for heaven before bringing him up for earth. Very different from those commonplace parents who are content to love their children without troubling themselves about how they ought to love them, or who perhaps love them only for themselves, thus turning everything, even the most sacred love, paternal love, into disguised selfishness, Faustus and his noble companion not only loved their son with all the affection nature puts into the hearts of a father and mother, but also knew how to love him with all the disinterested tenderness and all the strength of a devotion that forgets itself. They loved him for himself, they loved him for God, the source of all fatherhood in heaven and on earth, and they offered him to Him each day as a good of which they themselves were only the trustees. All their hopes rested on Symphorian; and yet they had no greater ambition than to hand on faithfully to this only and dear child the heavenly inheritance of the faith, the most precious of their goods. Convinced that first impressions are ineffaceable, they applied themselves to his religious education from his tenderest years and prepared him early for holy baptism.

As soon, then, as his young soul seemed to open to the first glimmers of reason, they hastened to bring into it at the same time the first glimmers of the truth come down from heaven, of that admirable Gospel teaching which has softened and gracious tints, childlike and winning aspects for little children, just as it keeps immense horizons and floods of bright light for the greatest geniuses. Not wishing anything to come before the knowledge and love of Jesus in his heart, they taught him from the first awakening of his reason, from his first smile, to lisp that sweet and holy name together with that of Mary, telling him no doubt that he had a father and a mother in heaven as well as on earth. So Symphorian learned the love of God at the same time as the love of his parents, and these two holy loves grew and strengthened together. As they saw his soul

develop little by little under the gentle influence of this family teaching inspired by love and faith, like a tender lily under the daily growing warmth of a spring sun, and receive a new ray of intelligence, Faustus and Augusta, ever watchful and attentive, hastened to slip into it also a new ray of the truth of which the incarnate divine Word was, in the eyes of men, the shining hearth. And at the same time the angels, who surrounded this young brother with respectful affection and delighted to cover him with their wings, poured into his heart each day new drops of that dew and that perfume of heaven which is called grace, thus preparing him on God's behalf for the great future that awaited him and rewarding in him the faith of his pious parents.

And so the blessed child, after the example of the divine Child who was constantly set before him as a friend and a model, grew in wisdom and age before God, who saw his beautiful soul preparing itself so well, by the good use of present favours, for still more signal ones; and before men, who already thought they saw dawning, like the first fires of a brilliant daybreak, the first traces of greatness of soul, of strength and elevation of character, of all the qualities of mind and heart, joined to the sweet and pure attractions of innocence and to the graces and artless charms with which the most privileged childhood is adorned without knowing it, at the moment when heart and reason open. Faustus and his pious wife, delighted to find early in their son, with all the charms of his age and all the gifts of nature and grace, this perfect response to their care and wishes, this pious and spontaneous docility, this submission marked by respect and love that makes the happiness of parents as well as the blessing of children in this world and the next, never ceased to thank heaven for the gift they had received from it.

Guarded by innocence, together with his body and his heart, the mind of the young Symphorian, like that of Jesus, grew and grew stronger every day. Precocious in all the virtues of his age, the lovable and pious child was no less so in human knowledge. As enlightened as they were tender, his worthy parents were anxious that he should study the elements of secular letters early, at the same time as the elements of religious knowledge. Both understood that to make their son a complete man they must make him an enlightened as well as a solid Christian; both wished him to be worthy of their high position in the city and of their faith before God. Human lessons addressed to the mind and divine teachings that form the heart therefore went side by side: the former under the more particular direction of Faustus, the latter under the more special inspiration of Augusta. The child's progress in both studies was remarkable; it answered to the double intention of his noble and venerable parents. But faith above all grew and strengthened in his soul, like a young oak full of sap and vigour which, finding a rich and well-prepared soil, develops there and rises towards heaven with wonderful speed, putting down roots deep and strong enough to resist all storms one day. Piety had grown and strengthened with faith. It was in him a deep feeling, ever present, become almost natural and inherent in the soul, at once sweet as the love of a good God and as the love of the tender mother who had inspired it, and strong as the most stubborn convictions, or as those first habits of childhood which, having only developed more and more, seem identified with existence itself. And these are not idle conjectures or gratuitous assertions: *Religionis Christi mox mysteriis imbutus*. Must not Christian faith and piety have been long and carefully nourished in Symphorian's soul to have been able to rise to the height at which we shall soon see them? For great virtues are no more improvised than great vices: they announce themselves, they are prepared from afar.

While Faustus and Augusta, wholly taken up with the Christian education of their beloved son, more by their example than by their lessons, were preparing him for baptism and, without knowing it, for martyrdom, the holy missionaries from Smyrna, Benignus, Andochius and Thyrsus, arrived at Autun. Faustus welcomed them eagerly and was happy to receive them into his house. The missionaries' arrival was a feast for that holy house: to celebrate it Faustus called together all the members of his family and all his friends who, already Christians by desire, were waiting only for baptism. Our holy missionaries soon prepared them for the faith by that charity, that lovable gentleness and all those devices of apostolic zeal which know so well how to find the way to hearts. They won them first by the sympathy that attracts, then mastered them by the

holy power attached to the preaching of the Gospel word, and also by that supernatural ascendancy of holiness which commands respect and confidence, admiration and love, which strikes and subdues. Having thus opened hearts and made themselves masters of souls, they easily brought truth and faith into them with the help of grace. And already around the good shepherds there gathered a flock that grew more numerous day by day.

In this fold there was one sheep more interesting, more cherished and more worthy to be so than all the others: the young son of Faustus and Augusta. With what eager and affectionate care the ministers of Jesus Christ worked to complete his Christian instruction! With what happiness, too, they placed the holy word in that innocent and privileged soul, where not a particle of the heavenly gift, in the expression of Scripture, was lost; where all their lessons found a precocious intelligence to grasp them, a sure and upright judgment to appreciate them, a pious heart to relish them, and all their exhortations an echo! Thus Providence was preparing the son of Faustus, unknown to men and unknown to himself, for the glory of consecrating that Aeduan land for ever to Jesus Christ by the shedding of the first Christian blood. Meanwhile the lovable child, taught to walk in the right way, began to seek God and grew under the blessings of heaven. The Holy Spirit already showed that He was with him; his faith grew stronger to give glory to the Lord one day, and one could say of him what is said of Saint Nazarius, one of the first apostles of Gaul: *Nondum sacramentorum conscius et in sacrificium jam praeelectus*: he had not yet received the sacrament that makes Christians, and already he was chosen in advance as a pure victim destined for the immolation of martyrdom.

Soon Symphorian's will seemed strong enough, his mind nourished enough with truth, his heart full enough of faith, hope, desire and love, for it to be allowed to fix at a very near date the solemnity of his baptism and his sharing in the sacred mysteries. In the young catechumen, piety, outstripping his age, was at once so enlightened and so lively, so solid and so affectionate, that Saint Benignus thought it was time to fulfil his desires. He remembered too the request of Faustus and thought himself only too happy to be able, in granting it, to repay the hospitality of the noble citizen of Autun. Meanwhile a small secret oratory had been prepared, probably in Faustus's own house. In it there was an altar, one of the first, if not perhaps the very first, at Autun, on which the spotless victim, already immolated from the setting of the sun to its rising, came down from the heights of heaven. The holy missionaries dedicated it to the prince of the Apostles, thus setting the infant Aeduan Church on that foundation stone chosen and designated by the divine architect Himself. This place rich in memories, which recalls Symphorian, his family, his cradle, his baptism and the apostles of Autun, our forefathers took care to consecrate by building a church in honour of Saint Peter and an abbey under the patronage of Saint Andochius.

After baptism, which gives life and makes a Christian, the minister of God called down upon Symphorian all the gifts of the creating Spirit, which increase that heavenly life, enlighten, strengthen and make a perfect Christian. He imprinted on his forehead the indelible seal which confirms all engagements and transforms one who is as yet only a simple disciple of Jesus Christ into a soldier armed for the fight and prepared for victory. That young forehead, so noble and so pure, will always keep intact the glorious sign of his enrolment in the Christian army. He will never have to blush; nor will he know how to bow beneath the threats of a tyrant, or to grow pale in the face of death. Here then is the son of Faustus anointed like an athlete to fight the battles of the Lord, or rather marked like a chosen victim destined for sacrifice.

After he had received the great sacrament that opens the doors of the Church and of heaven, the veil of the sanctuary was raised; the altar appeared to his eyes resplendent with light, and for the first time he was able to attend the celebration of the august mysteries, the completion of Christian initiation. Symphorian soon came forward with a respect mingled with love and held out his pure hands. The flesh of the holy victim, sacrificed and yet living, was placed in them by the deacon; and the angel of earth, after adoring with the angels of heaven who accompanied him to the Eucharistic table, took the heavenly bread, source of life, seed of immortality, foretaste of eternal delights, ineffable means of union and almost of deification, invented by

infinite love aided by omnipotence, and which even now, if the veil were to fall, would be the beatific union. He was able also to dip his holy, eager lips in the chalice of salvation and draw from it a drop fallen from that torrent of unspeakable delights which is the eternal inebriation of the blessed. For heaven is a first communion that lasts for ever, here under the shadows of faith.

Would that it were given us to know what was passing in the soul of the future martyr in that blessed hour, during which time seemed to have become motionless like eternity; what he said in that intimate conversation with the heavenly friend who for the first time rested on his heart! Then no doubt was kindled that hero's courage which was one day to defy the horror of torments as well as the flattering seduction of promises; that love strong enough to bid death break the bonds of life rather than fail. After pouring out all the sentiments of his gratitude to God in a sweet and fervent thanksgiving, he hastened to go and thank those who had just been for him the instruments of the divine goodness and his fathers in the faith. Then, all thrilling with the holy joys of baptism and communion, he ran to throw himself into his parents' arms. They too were coming from the Eucharistic banquet; they were happy with their own happiness and the happiness of their son. With what pious embrace did those hearts press one another, into which the God who is all charity had just come down! With what respectful tenderness were those lips pressed together, still red with the blood of the divine Lamb! Fortunate, beautiful and radiant above all other days is the one on which, for the first time, the sacrament of the Eucharist completes in the young Christian the fullest possession of Christ: a day of heaven rather than of earth, on which the child, coming back from the temple, brings back his God in his own body, become a tabernacle, and transforms into a true sanctuary that consecrated hearth where the whole family loves and adores the divine Saviour, who comes back with him from the mysterious feast.

The lovable and holy child had just entered early adolescence. Growing up in the bosom of his family as in a protecting sanctuary, under the double shield of religion and paternal love, he had kept in his ever pure heart the ever dear, ever living memory of his baptism and his first communion. A fervent and solid Christian, a loving son, a distinguished and serious mind, raised by his feelings as by his tastes above common hearts and minds, he knew only the joys of piety joined to those of the domestic hearth and of the study of letters, that need and noble pleasure of choice minds. What a joy for Faustus and for Augusta to continue, by a strong religious and literary instruction, the education of that young soul, where the true, the good, the great and the beautiful received so eager and sympathetic a welcome, and where nothing was lost! Yet we may believe that they did not wish to occupy themselves alone with so important a work. Parents as enlightened as they were good, they did not entirely abdicate, as one sees all too often today, in order to entrust them to strange and sometimes shamefully mercenary hands, the sacred functions of first educators of their son; but as soon as they saw that his faculties were sufficiently developed and strong, they joined with others to have him take, under their direction and supervision, the lessons of the wisest and most distinguished masters. They had no need to go far to find them: Autun was then one of the most brilliant hearths of light and one of the greatest centres of study in the whole of Gaul. The Maenian schools, which were later to shine with a bright last brilliance under the famous rhetor Eumenius, had already existed for a long time and attracted a prodigious number of pupils. Roman policy, which used every means to reach its ends, had not failed to establish in several great Gallic cities, such as Marseilles, Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Bordeaux and Autun, schools intended to spread in Gaul the knowledge and taste of Roman literature and law. From these schools came most of the men who made a name for themselves in those first centuries of decline.

We know that Symphorian made remarkable progress in the study of the Greek and Roman poets, orators and historians; for his Acts do not fail to point out that the holy young man was instructed in the secular letters that had formed his mind as well as in the sacred letters that had formed his heart, lighted his steps and directed his conduct. His father, convinced that religion is like the aromatic that keeps human learning from swelling and becoming corrupt, applied himself above all at that time to making him study Christianity and

the sacred books in a more serious and thorough way. That faith and piety which Symphorian had sucked in with his mother's milk, and which during the years of childhood were still an inner feeling rather than a reasoned belief, Faustus now set himself to strengthen by a more solid teaching and to consolidate by reflection, which brings a more intense light and a deeper conviction. His venerable wife made it a duty and a happiness to help him in this daily work of religious education, which she considered above all from the point of view of the heart. Such indeed is the special work of mothers: God has given them the power of the heart, as He has given men the power of the mind. Just as the sun pours out warmth in pouring out its light, and illuminates and makes nature fruitful, so true education, complete education, the only one capable of illuminating and making man fruitful too, is that which teaches love together with truth. The religious education the holy martyr received from his parents must have been well followed, well tended and very strong to have raised his young soul, with the help of grace, to the height it reached. It is to this education that history attributes the preservation of his innocence, and first his virtue and then the courage to defy death. The persecution was already beginning to rage. Saint Faustus and Saint Augusta therefore had to raise their son's mind not only above the vices and superstitions of paganism, but also above the fear of death. When we hear his mother exhorting him at the moment of his execution, let us not think that it was the first time she had given this illustrious son such lessons.

How holy, sweet and fruitful was that family education! From his earliest childhood Symphorian had always seen in his mother's smile the most powerful encouragement and the dearest reward. He loved that worthy and tender mother with a love full of reverent respect, accompanied by the persistent desire to please her, to imitate her, to obey her with affectionate eagerness, and so to walk in the footsteps of the Child God, his model. His actions had what so many grown men, and so many philosophers even, lack: an incontestable principle, a lofty, unchanging, divine motive; and it was his mother who, by her example joined to her lessons, taught him that knowledge, at once so simple and so sublime. It is said of the mother of Saint Nazarius that she was his mother still more by the spirit than by nature; such too was Augusta for Symphorian. Every day, then, to nourish her son's faith and virtue, she had him read the divine Scriptures under her eyes, never failing to stress the passages that particularly suit youth, as she had earlier taken care to draw his attention to those that more specially concern and interest childhood. "Happy the man," this good and pious mother would often say to him with the Prophet, "who has borne the yoke of the Lord from his youth!" "God," she would add, "wants the first-fruits of all things: give Him gladly, my dear child, the first-fruits of your life."

Another time Augusta summed up for Symphorian the various teachings thus: "My son, be happy to let yourself be guided. He who loves to be taught while he is young will gain a wisdom that will go with him to the age of white hair. How can one find in old age what one has not gathered in the years of youth? He who delights in receiving lessons is truly wise. He, on the contrary, who rejects them and will not be guided, because he always thinks he is on the right road and has a presumptuous confidence in himself, is a fool. The child left to his own will brings shame on his mother instead of being the charm of her life and the delight of her soul. The proud and unteachable young man is an abomination in the eyes of God. The soul of the just man loves obedience, because it does not forget these words of the divine Model: Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest. But know too, my dear child, that whoever would serve God must be strong and prepared for trial. Besides, is not death better than a life poisoned by the bitterness of remorse? Watch carefully over your heart, for out of it comes life. Love God in heaven and your parents on earth. A wise son always listens to his father. So follow his lessons and his example, and do not despise your mother's counsel. Remember that you cost her many groans and pains." While Augusta spoke, her son, eager and happy to hear her, listened with devout attention and kept his heart open. He saw in her the most lovable personification of virtue, and kept his eyes fixed with a love mingled with sweet respect on that mother's face, marked with majesty and tenderness.

Realising in her person that magnificent ideal of the mother of a family and of the valiant woman that Holy Scripture offers us, Augusta did not forget to remind Symphorian of that simple but heroic teaching of the Gospel which has produced so many martyrs: “Fear not them that kill the body only; fear rather him that can destroy both body and soul. Whosoever shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father. He that keeps his life shall lose it, and he that loses it for my sake shall save it.” The influence these words had on the great soul of the young man must have been immense, to judge by the magnificent results it produced.

To watch over her son, to pray for him, to give him religious instruction and lessons in virtue was for her a joy as much as the fulfilment of a duty. These sublime daily teachings, passing from the sacred books into the heart and onto the lips of this good and pious mother, reached the innermost part of Symphorian’s soul with the double consecration of divine inspiration and maternal love. And what sweet and deep impressions they left there! During these daily instructions, which charmed and sanctified one hour of the day, Augusta saw in her child the very child of God entrusted to her care; and Symphorian listened, with a veneration mingled with filial tenderness, to her who was in his eyes the image of the angel charged with the guardianship of his life. Admirable family life, which calls down all the divine blessings! Does not the angelic child, receiving thus the lessons of the best of mothers, bring back to us that delightful picture painted with such freshness by the Holy Spirit Himself in one of the pages of the book of Proverbs: “I was a little and tender child, the only son of my mother; I stood before her, and she taught me. She said to me: Receive my words into your heart and do not forget them. I will show you the way of wisdom, I will lead you by the paths of justice, and so you will become great”?

How pleasant it is to see those blessed families in which religion and maternal love reveal the art of bringing up children according to the heart of God and the wish of nature! The angel of the Lord truly seems to cover them with his sacred wings. There one seems to breathe happiness, the peace of innocence and all the perfumes of heaven. There a noble and candid modesty, all the more lovable for being unaware of itself, gives a new value and an ineffable charm to everything that is done and said. There one finds young souls pure and transparent as crystal, in which God Himself sometimes makes lights of astonishing splendour shine; one catches on graceful, childlike lips sublime artless sayings that seem inspired from on high; one meets friends, brothers, angels, children truly beautiful, beautiful as a reflection of the original endowment of our nature, beautiful as hope. Such was the house of Faustus; such was his son. So passed, quiet and innocent, under the guard of Christian piety, under the wholesome influence of the lessons and examples of home, under the happy direction of a father and mother truly worthy to bear those sacred names, the early adolescence of Symphorian. Religion and family, keeping his young soul in the shadow of their wings like a delicate flower, prevented it from opening too soon, and, prolonging the holy ignorance of the heart, seemed to add to innocence itself a new and still more beautiful innocence.

Meanwhile the end of his first studies had come, and his instruction had to be given its necessary completion by a more serious and higher teaching. He was therefore obliged to attend those brilliant exercises in speaking called declamations, and to frequent those famous public schools where the higher studies of Greek and Latin letters, eloquence and law then flourished; where the Gallo-Roman youth flocked in crowds; where skilful professors came from afar to teach, preferring the brilliance of Augustodunum to the applause of Rome and Athens. There everything combined to attack Symphorian’s faith and virtue: the unavoidable contact with numerous fellow-students left to themselves, without rule or restraint, at the critical age when the passions awaken, all pagans, all corrupted by a corrupting cult; the pull of talk; the still more irresistible pull of example; the sensual, voluptuous, lascivious poets, in whom paganism and the vices were presented under the most seductive images; and all those intoxicating and licentious festivals, so frequent in a city where riches and pleasures flowed in together. How, at that time of life when there is as yet nothing but dazzlement and weakness, could one resist so many different assaults? But our generous youth knew, when it

was needed, how to claim a noble independence for his virtue, to surround himself with a glorious singularity, to flee the occasions of danger and to close his ears, his eyes and his heart at the right moment. Piety and faith, ever lively in his soul, kept up in it that sublime taste for virtue, that love of the sovereign good which finds the things of earth insufficient and pleasures insipid; that courage which uplifts, that strength which resists, that evangelical energy which does not shrink from violence against oneself, so necessary and yet so rare at an age too inclined to blind and easy surrender, and usually hostile to wise and vigorous reaction. Around him there were always ranged, like a guard that knows neither how to sleep nor how to betray, humble distrust of self sustained by prayer, restrained and calm circumspection, attentive vigilance and chaste modesty. So he was able to tread the way of the just with a firm foot, because he walked, according to the Apostle's counsel, with continual caution; to pass unharmed through all the perils of life and all the scandals; to avoid false shame and defy the cowardly terrors of human respect; to escape every blow, dodge every snare, and escape at last the shipwreck into which the foolish and lying illusions, the veiled or shameless seductions, the flattering and treacherous baits of the world draw so many poor young people, often more blind than criminal, more unhappy than wicked.

While the young Celts whom the famous schools of Autun then drew in such numbers to that city were throwing themselves into every pleasure, rushing with all the thoughtless ardour of their age and all the blindness of unchained passions into the vain noise, the deafening whirl, the flower-covered mire of a society and civilisation as corrupt as it was brilliant, he, calm and reserved without affectation, serious without sadness, liked to keep company with wise people formed like himself by the lessons of the Gospel. Above all he loved to come and shelter under his father's roof, to refresh himself, while resting, in the spirit of the family, in the lessons and tenderness of his mother, and to refresh his heart with the joys of the domestic hearth, the sweetest and truest there are on earth; for the joys of conscience and piety come from heaven. He hardly knew any other places than the little oratory of the Christians, his father's palace and the building of the schools. So that one could say of him, as of the pious patriarch of the captivity: He never strayed from the true road; and while all ran after the golden calves, the idols of riches and sensuality, he alone knew how to keep apart to adore and serve the Lord his God and to renew to Him the offering of the first-fruits of his life. "The wicked," he could say with the Psalmist, "have waited for me to destroy me; but I have understood and relished Thy word, O Lord. They have told me their fables; but what are they compared with Thy law?" Never did a thoughtless step escape him; never did the least of his actions or words savour of heedlessness. And so, though still very young, he never did anything childish; and all his conduct was directed by a wisdom so remarkably precocious that history does not fail to point it out as one of the most characteristic features of this admirable figure. "Outstripping his years," his Acts tell us, "Symphorian joined the maturity of an old man to the lovable candour of a child." Still in the age of flowers, he was already bearing the finest fruits of virtue, like him whose graceful portrait Scripture draws for us in the following words: "When I was yet young, I sought wisdom openly in my prayer; and wisdom flourished in me as a grape soon ripe, and my heart rejoiced in it." People admired in him a harmonious blend of wisdom and simplicity, of childlike reserve and greatness of soul, of innocence and gravity, of gentleness and strength. All Symphorian's fine qualities and talents were set off by humble modesty, that happy ignorance of self which adds to all charms the most touching charm and always embellishes the most precious gifts.

Among the spiritual pearls that adorned his crown there is one above all which by its soft lustre captivated the eye and delighted the heart, and which we like to detach for a moment to present it to Christian youth: timid and delicate modesty. Does not a great and holy pontiff, Saint Lawrence Justinian, who later praised it, seem to have had before his eyes the beautiful figure of Saint Symphorian when he lovingly traced the following lines, an immortal sketch of a virtue one would think a flower of heaven fallen upon earth: "Modesty, or the watchful fear inspired by every dishonourable act, is the glory of youth. What indeed is more lovable than a chaste and modest young man? Oh, what a shining pearl modesty is! Where can one find a more evident and surer pledge of a good nature, a more certain sign of happy hopes? This virtue, sister of

continence, puts to flight all that can defile the soul. There is no more manifest indication of virginal purity, no more faithful witness of inner innocence. It is the torch of chastity, constantly lighting the sanctuary of the soul and not allowing anything defiled to take up its dwelling there. Holy modesty is of inestimable price; it is the glory of conscience, the safeguard of reputation, the honour of life, the foundation of virtue, the first-fruits of the other spiritual gifts, the triumph of human nature, the principle of all that is honourable."

Meanwhile the Church founded by Benignus, Andochius and Thyrsus had grown up peacefully, adorned with all the virtues that beautified the first ages of the faith. But now suddenly the days of devout calm were followed by the struggle unto blood. At the news that his estate at Saulieu had just been sanctified by the blood of the Apostles, his friends, his guests, his benefactors, Faustus hurried there the following night to bury these dead so venerated and so loved. His son Symphorian wished to go with him; and from that moment the holy young man never ceased to go and pray in that sacred place, dear to his heart and to his faith. "He spent," say the Acts of our saints, "days and nights on their tomb, and he could scarcely be drawn away from it." Who could tell the thoughts and deep emotions of his soul at the moment when he was rendering so touching a duty to these heroes who had died for God? No doubt he meditated on their sublime words and invoked their souls, for ever blessed; but above all he contemplated in heaven and envied their immortal palms; he dreamed of like trophies for himself; he longed to seize the crown of martyrdom too, and as he kissed with the respect of filial piety the remains of Andochius, the holy priest who had presented him for baptism, did he not say to him: "O you who made me a Christian and enrolled me in the holy army, obtain for me the favour of walking in your footsteps! May I be, like you, an apostle and a martyr!" He would not wait long for the answer to his prayer. Soon he would be seen following into combat and triumph his blessed fathers Andochius and Benignus, who were waiting for him in the bosom of God to offer him the prize of victory, the object of his desires.

Symphorian, in the bosom of his happy family, continued to prepare in his person a model for the young men of every century by cultivating those heavenly flowers called respectful obedience, filial love, humility, gentleness, charity, modesty and reserve, which are the glory of youth; by the faith that enlarges the soul and makes it supernatural; by the spiritual struggle and the evangelical courage that test it while exercising it and strengthen it in the holy obstinacy of a conscience firmly attached to duty; by the generous ardour of youth joined to that fixity of resolution, that unshakable manliness of character, those settled convictions of mature age, and those calm thoughts and that measured conduct of old age which the habits of practical Christianity give: *senum anticipans vitam*. And so he was more and more the admiration and delight not only of his father and mother but of all the Aeduan Christian community, in those days of the primitive faith that were yet so rich in saints. Far from belying himself for a single moment, he only grew more perfect, and the Acts of his martyrdom, which follow him to his last moment, could say even then that the faithful regarded him as an almost supernatural being, "living in familiarity with the pure spirits," of whom he offered here below, in anticipation, the delightful image.

We have seen that Symphorian, destined for the bloody struggles of the faith, received from God, together with a precocious wisdom and lovable innocence, the intrepid constancy of the soul most firmly anchored in the depths of the faith. Now the moment is approaching when we shall see how necessary this virtue that makes the heroes of the Gospel was to him, and in what degree he possessed it. Meanwhile he was preluding each day the great triumph of martyrdom by his peaceful but glorious victories over evil passions, over himself, over the seductions of a corrupt and corrupting world. While the young men of his age ran to the licentious festivals, he never ceased to the end to escape, by courageous flight and by all the precautions of modesty, the dangers that threaten purity, that lily of heavenly whiteness, the most beautiful but also the most delicate ornament of the most beautiful age. Here he is, then, hardened for harsher trials by these daily combats of the Christian life against every attack that threatened in him the love of God which his heart clasped with energy. But there is already more: have we not seen him practise even defying death, by going

with Faustus to Saulieu to gather the precious remains of Andochius, Thyrsus and Felix on the scene of their martyrdom, and render to his spiritual fathers the honours of burial with a courage equal to his affectionate veneration? Thanks to that supernatural elevation of view and thought that faith and hope give, the horizon of his soul was larger than the earth: he saw only heaven and feared nothing from men. Born of a heroic race, the heroic youth had thus shown in several ways that invincible strength he bore in his heart, that lofty independence which is the character and, so to speak, the genius of our holy religion, the school and homeland of the only true liberty, the liberty of the soul, that of the children of God. At eighteen or twenty years of age he showed all the firmness of a Christian brow hardened by the cross, not only against false shame and cowardly terrors, but also against the threats and fears of death.

The hour of the supreme glory of martyrdom had come. The holy young man had long been prepared for it by his courage and his virtue. He had conquered the world, the enemy of his innocence; he would conquer in the same way the enemy of his faith, the enemy of his God. It is with this new enemy that we are now to see him at grips. The persecution which had just raged at Lyons, Tournus, Chalon, Dijon, Langres and as far as Saulieu hung threateningly over Autun, waiting for and seeking victims. Heraclius, a man of consular rank, had not lagged behind the other Roman magistrates. Armed with the imperial edict, he had had it publicly announced that Christianity was proscribed, and that whoever should be convicted of not adoring the gods of the empire would pay with his head for an audacity regarded as rebellion and sacrilege. By his order the most thorough searches were made, directed with the most skilful sagacity. Infernal zeal seemed to wish to challenge apostolic zeal. The Christians therefore found themselves obliged to hide their devout meetings with more care than ever, and to bury the august ceremonies of worship in secrecy and darkness. Knowing well that the pagans, who fled the idea and image of death, seldom visited the tombs, they went stealthily and by night to the vast burial-ground of the *via strata*, and celebrated the sacred mysteries there in the midst of their brethren's tombs, no doubt in one of the great funeral monuments which pride had raised there. It was turned for the moment into an oratory placed under the invocation of Saint Peter and Saint Stephen, the first of the Apostles and the first of the martyrs, to obtain the strength and humble submission of the faith that makes one obey God, together with the strength and courageous perseverance of the charity that does not fear death. It was modestly decorated with a few torches and a few images of the Mother of God and the Saints; a cross was set there, and a portable altar with the relics of a martyr; and then everything disappeared before daybreak. Thus the dwelling of the dead served as a refuge for the persecuted living and for the true God, proscribed like His worshippers. A cemetery was at Autun, as the catacombs were at Rome, the funereal and only refuge of the first faithful; and in the capital of the Aedui, as in the capital of the world, the cradle of infant Christianity rested among the tombs. This did not prevent the faith from growing there, at first unnoticed and without noise; then, when it was allowed to show itself in broad daylight, those who had pursued it to the utmost and had flattered themselves that they had destroyed it were astonished to see it suddenly come out of the earth, after several centuries of persecution, full of strength and life. They thought it dead; and there it was, appearing all radiant with youth and heavenly beauty, all resplendent with the glory of its long combats and many triumphs.

The young Symphorian came assiduously with his family to nourish his piety and strengthen his faith in those nocturnal and so fervent assemblies of the first Christians. Slipping like the others through the tombs of the dead and the shadows of the night, he trod with furtive and silent foot that historic ground, that sacred ground which we ought to tread only with religious respect, and which, after receiving the print of his steps, has earned the right to bear his name, dear and blessed by all generations for seventeen centuries. But each time he went to that place the young Christian felt his ardent and generous soul revolt at the thought that truth and virtue were obliged to hide themselves like the shames of falsehood and crime, and that the living God did not even have the right of citizenship in his blind homeland. Yet they had to keep out of the searching eyes of the enemy, for every day the storm rumbled louder and came nearer. Frequent tidings of death reached the faithful of Autun. Some time after the fine letter of the Christians of Lugdunum announcing the

great battle and the great victory, they had learned in quick succession of the courageous struggle of Marcellus and Valerian, and then of that of Benignus. Soon afterwards another message had arrived, like the earlier ones at once glorious and sad: it told of the martyrdom of the holy apostle's two companions and of Felix, their generous host. Symphorian was not content to give them vain tears, like those who have no hope in their hearts and no strength in their souls. His first thought was to invoke them, and his first feeling a desire, or rather a magnanimous impulse, which raised him in a sudden and sublime bound to the height of martyrdom. At once he longed for a like and speedy death, so as to go the sooner and rejoin in heaven the fathers of his faith. Meanwhile, without fearing the edicts, the spies, the threats or the prospect of torments, he hurried at once to Saulieu with his father to gather the blood of the martyrs, press his trembling lips respectfully to their wounds, bathe them with devout tears and bury the holy and beloved remains of these victims immolated to God, whom the sacrifice had just consecrated. It seemed as though their spirit had come down into him and had stirred all the fibres of his heart and made them throb with the supernatural ambition of equalling them. While Faustus, worthy father of such a son, was writing with his own hand, for the consolation and edification of the Church, the history of the last combat of Andochius and Thyrsus, Symphorian, worthy son of such a father, could not tear himself away from the tomb of these holy apostles who had given him Christian instruction and supernatural life, never ceasing to ask through their intercession for the grace to imitate their courage and share their happiness. Was there ever seen gratitude so touching and so lively, affection so filial and so tender, joined to a faith so strong and so courageous, a heart so loving and so heroic? He did not know, the admirable young man, that his prayer was already granted; and Faustus did not know either that in bringing his son back to Autun, after paying the last duties to the martyrs, he was leading a victim to the altar of sacrifice.

Scarcely had he re-entered the city on his return from Saulieu when he learned that new Christians had just given their blood for Jesus Christ. This time the blow had struck in his own family; the sword was coming near his heart. He almost thought he felt its chill, and he trembled with Augusta as he looked at Symphorian, whose intrepid brow, noble and pure, seemed to be waiting for yet another crown than that of virtue, wisdom and innocence. But the two holy spouses, at once raising their eyes to heaven, renewed the offering they had more than once made in advance, and held themselves ready in case God should come to ask of their love the sacrifice of Abraham.

Meanwhile great thoughts kept rising in Symphorian's soul. Already the glorious death of our holy apostles, the fathers of his faith, had given birth to or increased in his heart the desire to die like them. The new example of Christian heroism given by his young cousins was like a holy contagion which struck him and penetrated to the innermost part of his being. From then on this generous emulation of martyrdom seemed to pursue him and obsess him at every moment.

Although Augusta had long been ready to make generously, if need be, the sacrifice of what was dearest to her in the world, and had foreseen since the beginning of the persecution that the moment when she might be called upon to consummate this great sacrifice would no doubt not be long in coming, yet she felt at this hour, with sorrowful apprehension and piercing keenness, how bitter it would be for her to pay for its sublime glory with all her happiness here below, and to gather its merits at the price of the agony of her mother's heart. And this agony seemed already to be beginning, with the terrible presentiment of a near future.

Symphorian, in silently and humbly calling for martyrdom, had no thought of the high and magnificent destiny that awaited him. He did not suspect that his name was to pass to posterity, that it would be great and immortal on earth as in heaven, that he would be everywhere venerated and everywhere invoked, inscribed in all the martyrologies, celebrated in the liturgy of the universal Church, his name given to a superb basilica and a famous abbey raised over his tomb, as well as to a multitude of churches and altars. He could not suspect that the place where his body would rest would be filled with the finest part of the history of the

Aeduan Church; that the loftiest ideal conceived by the imagination would be offered as a faint sketch of his angelic figure; that his noble and holy memory would still inspire, after so many centuries, the genius of the greatest artists, and that a skilful brush, surpassing itself, would create a masterpiece reproducing, on a canvas admired by all Europe, the history of his martyrdom, more admired still and more admirable. He thought only of fulfilling a duty. He was quite simply a young and modest Christian, with a great and pure soul and an upright and generous heart, who considered it a quite natural thing to obey God rather than men and to give back to his Creator, when it was asked of him, the life he had received from Him; who had read in the Gospel that one must not betray one's faith or be ashamed of Jesus Christ. He did not even dream that there was the least heroism in an action that seemed to him so just and that, besides, only led to a better life and to eternal happiness.

Not a year had passed since that day when the time marked by Providence arrived. The son of Faustus must have been nearing his twentieth year. He was the type of the young Christian, with lofty feelings, strong convictions and unshakable faith, full of courage and modesty, honour and innocence, distinction and piety. He had only gone from progress to progress; he had grown in age, wisdom and grace before God and men. Now, then, the victim was ready: it was crowned with all the flowers of youth, learning, talent and virtue. There it was, as it should be: it would be more worthy of God, and the sacrifice would be greater, finer, more meritorious. Until then precious but foreign blood had watered the Aeduan soil. Neither the old Celtic race nor the Gallo-Roman race of Autun had yet bought the honour of being Christian. They must, it was time they should, pay for it: their noblest, most generous, purest blood, the blood of Symphorian, was to be its price. Thus would be washed from this so important part of the soil of Gaul the foul stain with which paganism had defiled it.

The course of the year 180 had just brought round the month of August, and the whole city was rejoicing; for the return of this season was always the signal for pompous festivals celebrated in honour of Cybele or Berecynthia, the dearest divinity of the people of Autun, together with Minerva and the two children of Leda. The cult of this goddess, which was nothing other than the cult of the passions, of gross enjoyments and of the unclean spirit, was bound, in a city at once licentious, opulent and lettered, to mingle with the cult of letters and the arts. The festival of the so-called mother of the gods therefore naturally found keen and deep sympathy in all those pagan hearts which it flattered and confirmed in their most cherished vices. It agreed so well with the false and corrupt civilisation, with the morals of a city full of superstitions, treasures and pleasures! And so an immense crowd, in the delirium of orgy, drunk with pleasure, debauchery and fanaticism, filled the streets and made a worthy escort for the image of the goddess carried in triumph on a pompous chariot. Symphorian groaned at these senseless joys, these hideous and sacrilegious follies, recalling then, as he blessed God who had preserved him from such blindness, these words of Wisdom: "They know how to rejoice only by losing their reason: *Dum laetantur, insaniunt*." The holy young man fled these wretched festivals and did not allow even the mere sight of the sad spectacle he deplored to defile his eyes from afar. That day chance, or rather Providence, allowed him to meet the profane and impure procession. At once the blush rose to his brow, and zeal and indignation to his heart. Faith, which had become a second nature in him, which had in some way identified itself with his moral being, or rather had transformed it into itself, betrayed its liveliness on the instant by a generous impulse, by a sublime instinct. At once the delirious multitude riots, stirs and cries rebellion and sacrilege; it insults, it threatens, it demands vengeance, and already words of death are heard. He, calm, as inaccessible to fear as to human respect, defying this blind fury without effort as without ostentation, and looking with pity on these poor people from the height of his faith, his charity and his great soul, presents to the riot and the anger that serene face, that fine brow, intelligent and noble as well as candid, that heavenly air which everyone admired. Master of his soul, which he keeps raised towards God, motionless and without gall in his heart, he keeps not the proud silence of stoic disdain but the silence, at once dignified, kindly and humble, of the Christian who respects himself, who forgives and who is resigned in advance, after the example of the divine Master; or he allows

his mouth to utter only strong but gentle words. Ever unshakable, he never ceases to set against the ever-growing threats the modest intrepidity of a quiet courage, the firmness of a deep conviction, the assurance given by the inner sense of duty done, the majesty of virtue and the peace of conscience. Meanwhile people run up from every side: the crowd grows, stirs and roars like the waves of an angry sea. Some recognise the son of Faustus and are astonished. But the vile mob, which in its rages respects nothing, neither merit nor rank nor birth, rushes on him in tumult: they hem him in, they press upon him. “You have insulted the mother of the gods!” a thousand frenzied voices then cry to him. “You must make amends for your crime by adoring the goddess.” And they seemed to be preparing to drag him towards the idol. “Never,” answered Symphorian, with a bearing full of dignity and resolution, and in a grave but strongly emphatic tone. At this answer the populace redoubled its shouts and these words were heard: “He apparently belongs to that wretched, impious and rebellious sect that despises the gods and the laws of the empire. He is a Christian! He is a Christian!” “Well, yes, I am,” the intrepid young man replied, “and I respect that name, that honourable title, too much in myself to bend the knee before a vain and impure idol which indeed, as you say, I despise and abhor.” Incapable of concealing his faith and only too happy to be able to give it this first public witness, Symphorian understood that the occasion he had called for with all his desires had at last come, that God’s designs for him were being made manifest, and that he was bound to tear aside every veil.

He was arrested on the spot and led tumultuously before the proconsul as impious and seditious. “Your name and condition?” said Heraclius, seated on his tribunal, addressing the accused. “My name is Symphorian and I am a Christian.” “You are a Christian!… You must have known well how to hide, it seems; for it was hardly likely that there were many of those people here. Why did you refuse with insulting contempt to adore the mother of the gods?” “I have just told you: I am a Christian and I adore only the true God who reigns in heaven. As for that image of the devil, not only will I never adore it, but this very moment, if you allow me, I will reduce it to dust.” “He makes a show of sacrilegious impiety joined to rebellion… Clerk, is he a citizen of this town?” The clerk answered that the accused was indeed of Autun, and even of one of the first families of the city.

At this moment the proconsul, who had at first been delighted to find an opportunity of making an example, seemed to feel some hesitation. One would almost say that he would not have been sorry to escape from this embarrassment, and that he wished to save the young patrician so awkwardly brought before his tribunal. So, without however letting anything show, he resumed the interrogation in these terms: “It seems, Symphorian, that you make it a game and a glory to parade a certain independence of character. No doubt it is your birth that inspires this presumption in you. Perhaps too it was the mere desire to make a stir that threw you into an accursed sect and drove you today to this scandal? But you are probably unaware of the prince’s edict. Let the clerk read it.”

After this reading the judge went on: “Well, Symphorian, what have you to answer to that? Do you think we can go against such formal orders? Now there are precisely against you the two counts of accusation that fall under the imperial edict: you are convicted of sacrilege for your contempt of the gods, and of rebellion for your disobedience to the laws. If then you do not submit, death must expiate this double crime: the outraged gods and the violated laws demand your blood.” “No, never,” answered Symphorian, “will I regard that statue as anything but a vile image, a baneful instrument of diabolical worship, an execrable image of the devil, a public pestilence, a means invented by hell for the ruin of men. How then could I prostitute my homage to it? I know too that every Christian who has the misfortune to turn back, to give himself up to criminal and infamous passions, walks straight to the abyss. In drawing back he leaves the right way, falls at once into the snares of the enemy of mankind and loses the reward that awaits him. For our God has prizes for virtue as He has punishments for crime: He gives life to those who obey Him and death to those who rebel against Him. Is it not infinitely better for me to persevere with unshakable firmness in the confession of my faith, and so reach the harbour where the eternal King awaits me, than to suffer a mortal and irreparable

shipwreck by following the devil, who wants only my misfortune?" "Since Symphorian refuses to obey and adds obstinacy to his fault, lictors, beat him with rods and take him to prison," said the proconsul, hoping no doubt that a painful and shameful flogging, solitude, darkness, the tedium of the dungeon, time and reflection would triumph over what he called a moment's whim, a piece of ostentation, a young man's bravado. He did not yet know what a Christian was: he was beginning to learn it; he would soon know.

Heraclius's order was carried out at once. The noble son of Faustus was beaten with rods like a vile slave and thrown, loaded with chains, into a horrible and dark prison. But the God who knows how to give His faithful servants a consolation for every sorrow did not leave him alone there: He went down with him, in the expression of Scripture, and lightened the weight of his irons. And so, far from feeling the least failing of courage amid his sufferings and in this abandonment by men, the young martyr seemed not to feel the anguish which, at that dreadful moment, seizes common souls, holds them in despair under its cruel blows, wrings them, casts them down and crushes them. Accustomed to live with the best part of himself in heaven rather than on earth, he rested calmly in devout and sweet resignation; he expanded his heart in the heroic joy of having been judged worthy to undergo, after the example and for the love of the divine Master, the pain and ignominy of scourging; he raised himself up by prayer, that sublime conversation with God, that infallible resource, that supreme consolation which never fails the Christian when all others have failed him on earth. He offered Jesus Christ his first sufferings, the first-fruits of his martyrdom; thanked Him for having sustained him in this first struggle; asked Him to be pleased to sustain him still and to inspire in him, for the glory of the Gospel, the vigorous words he would have to fling publicly in the faces of the pagans against their cult and the shameful passions deified by that abominable cult; promising Him, with the help of His grace, not to keep his words captive, but to speak always and to his last breath, as a Christian ought to speak, of idolatry and its criminal turpitudes. We shall soon see how he kept his promise.

Meanwhile several days had passed. The proconsul, hoping that the young and proud patrician, his prisoner, had had time enough to reflect seriously and to appreciate the rashness of his conduct as well as the gravity of the danger that threatened him, ordered him to appear again. So they go, say the martyr's Acts, to take from the darkness of a horrible and gloomy den him whose soul is soon to return, like a pure ray, to the hearth of the divine light, its origin and source. He comes out of the narrow and dark depths of a cruel dungeon to go and dwell in the palace of the King of glory, the abode of immense happiness and eternal brightness. Here he is, the history continues, pale and emaciated. The knots formed by the bonds that bind him now grip only feebly his exhausted, bruised and livid limbs. He has already begun to die under the blows of the rods, under the weight of the chains and in the horror of a murderous prison: slow tortures, repeated deaths, to which the shedding of blood, which is the last, only puts an end. But while in this long agony of suffering his life was thus ebbing away drop by drop, his soul had found in the solitary and sublime joy of his conscience, in the supernatural courage that animates the Christian, in the grace that strengthens and consoles him, a new vigour and a new impulse: it seemed to dwell in heaven in advance and to forget the pains of the body in the anticipated enjoyment of eternal bliss. Heraclius, to triumph more surely this time, neglected nothing and prepared new weapons. "Adore the immortal gods," he said, "and I promise you an eminent post in the army with a rich bounty from the public treasury. It seems to me that you would do much better, instead of obstinately wishing to die, to accept the proposals I am making you at this moment. You have only to bend the knee before the venerable statue of the mother of the gods and pay your homage to Apollo and Diana. If you wish, speak, and I will have the altars of these three great divinities adorned with garlands this very moment. Incense and perfumes will be presented to you, and you will offer a solemn sacrifice." "Such words," answered Symphorian, "ill become you. A magistrate ought not to waste in frivolous talk a time that belongs entirely to public affairs, nor put off the sentence by needlessly prolonging the proceedings. I have said it already: I will never adore wretched idols; for I know too well that if it is dangerous to remain a single day without advancing in the right way that leads to salvation, it is far more dangerous still to leave the road and go and be shattered on the reefs of vice where sinners perish." The proconsul, astonished to see his

calculations foiled, nevertheless continued to use the same tactics that had just failed so completely; and, whether he wished to be able to save the noble accused, or rather was ashamed to admit himself already beaten, he made a new attempt, making still more seductive offers than the first time, and resumed with apparent calm: “Sacrifice to the gods, Symphorian, and you will be loaded with honours in the prince’s very palace, where you will hold a place worthy of your birth.” Symphorian answered him: “A judge defiles the tribunal on which he sits, debases his dignity, and devotes his life to cursing and shame and his soul to eternal death, when he dares to use the authority with which he is invested for punishing crime to seduce or strike down innocence. Besides, as for me, I do not fear death; for we must all die, Heraclius. Why then should we not offer to Jesus Christ as a gift of our love what we shall have to pay Him one day as a debt? Nor will I let myself be won over by deceitful promises. I know what all the favours you offer me are worth: your presents are only poisons hidden under the appearance of deceptive honey. Woe to those who let themselves be caught by these lying outward shows! For us Christians, our riches are in Jesus Christ. Incorruptible and imperishable, they escape the destructive action of time: death itself cannot rob us of them. Whereas greed, a baneful passion inspired by the devil and seduced by the bait of wretched gain, while seeming to possess everything possesses nothing, because your riches and your joys slip away from you at every moment. They have the brilliance of glass, but they have its fragility too. All earthly things pass quickly: the least accident makes us lose them, or else the years and days soon come to take them from us. In heaven, in God alone, is true and constant beatitude found. The most distant antiquity did not see the beginning of His glory, and all the course of future ages will not bring its end.” “I have had the patience to hear you hold forth about some Christ or other long enough and too long, Symphorian. Sacrifice to the mother of the gods; or else this very day, torture and death.” “I fear only the almighty God who created me: Him alone I adore, Him alone I serve. You have power over my body for a moment; but my soul is out of your reach. As for the cult of that idol, do you not see that it is only a monstrous superstition that is your shame, your disgrace and your crime? Impure young men offer their infamy to the goddess as a homage; sacrilegious priests, honouring vice under the veil of religion, dare to call an execrable abomination a sacrifice; and, to fill up the measure, while all these horrors are being performed, frightful raving Corybants perform dances and songs in frantic concerts to celebrate and applaud them!”

Heraclius, deceived and beaten, beside himself with secret vexation, full of gloomy fury and unable to bear it any longer, abruptly interrupted the martyr with these words of death, the last argument of persecutors: “Symphorian, by publicly refusing to sacrifice to the gods of the empire and by openly insulting their worship and their altars, is convicted of the crime of sacrilege and rebellion, of treason against divine and human majesty. Let his head be cut off. So let the crime disappear with the criminal; so let the injury done to religion and the laws be avenged.” Symphorian heard the fatal sentence with the same humble, calm and dignified courage we have already seen in him, which excludes ostentation as well as weakness and is the distinctive character of truly great hearts and of souls strong in a Christian way. He was expecting it, and his sacrifice had been made in advance; but at this decisive instant he offered his life to God anew, and from then on his thoughts were no longer on earth. Yet he was leaving here below a beloved father and mother. Does he forget them? No, certainly, and his heart speaks very loudly; for faith does not stifle nature, of which it is only the perfecting. On the contrary, it comes to its help in difficult hours to console it, sustain it and transform it by raising it to its own height. The Christian soul formed by the religion of Him who calls Himself love itself is more open than any other to all legitimate affections. For Symphorian, so pious and therefore so loving, the separation is thus very sad and keenly felt. It makes him feel in his son’s heart the sharp pain of the tearing apart of three hearts; it would be intolerable, despairing, if faith did not tell him at once that it is only momentary, and like that of travellers who, leaving a foreign land one after another, a little sooner or a little later, are sure of seeing one another again soon in their homeland. For him, at this moment when the world already seems to be slipping from under his feet, filial love, like all his other feelings, has become heavenly, because his conversation, in the Apostle’s magnificent expression, is wholly

in heaven.

Meanwhile everything was being prepared for the immolation of the young and innocent victim who had just been devoted to death; or rather everything was being made ready in heaven and on earth for the triumph of the valiant soldier of Jesus Christ who, already victorious in the first combats, was going to receive the palm as he marched to a new and final victory.

Here, then, the great scene of the sacrifice begins. Facing an immense crowd, greedy for spectacles and above all for bloody spectacles, Symphorian stands calm and recollected in prayer. One would say he sees and hears nothing. At this solemn hour the young hero's brow shines more than ever with that indefinable something that delights the earth and seems to belong to the angel rather than the man. Soon the lictors, raising their axes and their fasces, signs of power, take their places at his sides, some to the right, others to the left. In front and behind are seen soldiers and officers of Heraclius. The proconsul himself is on horseback, ready to command the march: they await only his order to set out for the place of execution, by the great street that runs from the praetorium to that gate which still raises its superb arches today and has received from the Christian centuries the name of Saint-André. At the signal everything moves off, and the packed waves of the multitude open, quivering. Beyond the gate and near it, under the walls of the city, the public field stretches along the Langres road. It is there that the martyr's head is to fall; for by Roman law capital executions do not take place within the circuit of the ramparts.

Meanwhile they approach the fatal end. Here are the ramparts with the great gate that dominates them. Symphorian has already been able to see, through the wide arches, the place appointed for his execution; but he has not trembled. Suddenly a woman comes running. It is Augusta, it is his mother. Faustus perhaps, and a few friends, are with her. Like the mother of Jesus, she has wished to be present at her son's passion. But what is she going to do? Has nature prevailed over faith in her mother's heart? Is she coming to soften with her tears this beloved son who has courageously persisted in wishing to die? The pagans who see her and say, "There is the Christian's mother!" no doubt think so. But no: she will know how to understand and fulfil to the end her great duties, her truly supernatural role; to the end she will be such as we have always seen her, a truly valiant woman, a tender and devoted mother, a heroically Christian mother; or rather she is going to surpass herself. Armed with all the courage of her great soul and of her still greater faith; tearing herself away from her house, from her family, from her grief, which, like all great griefs, would have wished to remain mute and solitary and feed upon itself; renouncing even the inner consolations of a prayer poured out secretly into the bosom of the only Consoler, far from eyes and far from noise, she has come to see Symphorian a last time and follow him to death. She is not afraid to pass through the crowd of the curious and the indifferent; she defies the pitiless and insolent populace, the lictors, the sight of weapons, the presence and the stern, hard, threatening air of the persecutor of the Christians, her son's executioner. What are dangers and quivering hatreds to her? She does not even think of them. She has said to herself: "Symphorian, in his last moments, facing death, may need a consolation, an encouragement, a holy word. Alone, among the executioners and the apparatus of execution, he will be glad to hear a friendly voice speaking to him of God. And when he has seen me, his mother, exhort him one last time to die for Jesus Christ, he will go with a still firmer and more joyful step to consummate his sacrifice; and I shall be surer that I brought him into the world only for heaven."

That is why she hurries; cleaving the astonished crowd, which opens out of an instinctive respect for her grief, she approaches that same rampart whose eloquent ruins, consecrated for ever by so great a spectacle, are still before our eyes today. Suddenly, at the moment when Symphorian has just passed through the gate, a voice rises and silences the clamour of the multitude, which looks on and stands struck and amazed, waiting for the outcome of this moving scene. The martyr's mother has leaned over the parapet; and there, a new mother of the Maccabees, she addresses to him, with an indescribable accent and with the strength and sweetness of a heavenly enthusiasm, these words which the Church has made twice holy and twice immortal

by adopting them into her liturgy: “My son! my son! Symphorian! think of the living God. Courage, dear child, courage! Can we fear death, death which leads without any doubt to life? Lift up your heart, my son; look upon Him who reigns in heaven. No, your life is not being taken from you: on the contrary, today it is being changed for you into a better life; today, my son, by a happy exchange, you are going to receive for this perishable life the eternal life of heaven!”

Symphorian recognised his mother’s voice. He turned and raised towards her and towards heaven, with an expression that seemed already to be that of the beatific vision, his eyes and his hands, one of which then came down to rest on his heart, and so told his mother more than his mouth could have told her. That was indeed his only but eloquent answer. Augusta understood it; she saw her child’s soul, already almost detached from the body, pass wholly into that sublime gesture of faith, gratitude and filial piety, into that look at once tender and lit with a divine brightness, onto that angelic brow all radiant with hope and love, onto that transfigured face of the Christian hero who was her son. It seemed to her that she already saw shining round his head the aureole of the martyrs joined to that of the virgins, and his arm reaching out to seize the palm and the crown which his brothers in heaven were bringing him. She had given and she had received the supreme consolation; her last duty and the last wish of her heart were fulfilled, her sacrifice consummated. Resigned, submissive to the divine will, but moved, trembling and all shaken by the shock of the two strongest feelings that can clash in a human soul; a mother at once most happy and most afflicted, and all throbbing, she cast one more long look full of tears on her son from the top of the walls, renewed to God the offering of that dear head which was about to fall beneath the sword of the Romans, and withdrew, thanking Him for having chosen her to give birth to a martyr. After this superhuman effort of faith against nature, holily proud but broken, still a Christian but also still a mother, she went to hide herself in the secret of the Lord’s face and pour out into the hearts of Jesus and Mary, who too had known great sorrows along with great self-giving, her resigned sighs and her tears, that blood of her mother’s heart which she mingled with the blood of her son; while Faustus, animated by the faith of Abraham, was also making, in the most secret depths of his soul as a Christian and a father, with an effort generous and spontaneous, it is true, but beyond measuring, the heart-rending sacrifice of the only and dear object of his hopes, which God had just asked of him. Soon they reached the place of execution. Full of his own courage and of his mother’s courage, Symphorian threw himself on his knees, joined his hands and prayed, awaiting the fatal stroke that was to break his mortal covering. His heart gave not one regret to the enjoyments of this earthly life, to the hopes that gild the horizon of youth. The Christians, their souls full of tender emotion and religious respect, breathless and voiceless, their eyes fixed on the martyr, joined their prayers to his. Already they thought they saw shining on his brow a crown coming down from heaven, and God seemed to smile on him. At last he offered his life one last time; he was able to say once more: “Lord, into Thy hands I commend my soul; O Jesus, receive it!” Then he gently bowed his head and fell with sublime simplicity, under the eyes of that crowd, perhaps less stirred at this supreme and solemn moment by hatred and anger than throbbing with pity and admiration; almost under the eyes of his mother, weeping supernatural tears of love and joy, holily proud of the young victor to whom she had given birth, already contemplating him and invoking him as her guardian angel in the abode of glory. It is done, then; the victim is immolated: his head has just been cut off by the sword, and his soul, which hovered above the earth and of which the earth was not worthy, is already in heaven. It flew there with his last prayer mingled with his last sigh, on 22 August, about the year 180. Symphorian is no longer of this world; to use a common term, he is dead, but with the death of heroes, the death of saints, the death that makes immortal.

Saint Symphorian has been represented by artists in five circumstances: his baptism, his trial, the moment when he is exhorted by his mother, that of his death, and finally his beatitude in heaven. The famous abbey of Saint-Bénigne at Dijon possessed a group of great antiquity, placed in the chapel of Saint Gregory, a few steps from the altar of Saint Irenaeus. In it one saw the young son of Faustus receiving baptism from Saint Benignus by immersion and infusion together. This figure was very instructive: it showed how baptism used

to be given. Saint Symphorian was represented in a vessel (a baptismal tub), stripped of his clothes to the waist. On the edge of this vessel there was a cloth, apparently put there to cover the saint as he came out of the sacred pool. Beside him Saint Benignus, vested in his priestly garments as if to say Mass, held a ewer from which he poured water on the child. He was assisted by another priest (Saint Andochius), dressed like him, his head shaved with a small circle of hair such as most religious wore. Unfortunately this group, which served as a voice for history, for the traditions of Burgundy and for the ancient liturgy, no longer exists. It was destroyed by the Revolution. The chapel of Saint Symphorian in the cathedral of Autun is adorned with a painting that also represents the interesting inauguration of the apostolate of the disciples of Saint Polycarp in these regions by the baptism of our young and illustrious martyr. The child is on the edge of the regenerating fountain, and Saint Benignus, in priestly vestments, calls down upon him the heavenly blessings that were to be so abundant.

Above the high altar in the church of Saint-Jean-d'Angle (diocese of La Rochelle), a painting represents the Saint in that very remarkable circumstance in which his Acts show him displaying before his judge a pride as modest as it was indomitable, an eloquent and firm frankness, a sublime magnanimity. One sees the young martyr before Heraclius, surrounded by lictors, and his mother encouraging him to persevere by pointing him to heaven.

In the cathedral of Autun there is a painting representing the martyrdom of Saint Symphorian. In the centre of the picture the saint is in an attitude expressing energy and self-devotion, and at the same time the calm of faith; his face is turned towards his mother, who from the top of the ramparts, surrounded by her husband and her household, ardently exhorts her son to persevere in his heroic resolution; behind him the proconsul, clad in purple, points with his hand to the place where the sacrifice is to be accomplished; to the proconsul's left walks a priest clad in white, having before him a little girl, her head crowned with flowers, holding in her hands the box of perfumes; a little in front of the martyr are the lictors, of athletic build, carrying the fasces and the insignia of authority; one of them, turned towards his master, seems at once to take his orders and to listen to the words Symphorian's mother is uttering; the other, who obeys only reluctantly, shows by the drooping of his arm and the moral pain that saddens his face the sympathy he feels for the Christian hero in whose death he is about to take part; round these principal figures the crowd presses, moved by various convictions and intentions: to the Saint's left a young boy picks up a stone and looks at the heroic mother, as though he wished to make her the target of his anger; behind the proconsul a young patrician on horseback, in an arrogant attitude, fixes his eyes on Augusta as if to defy her faith; on the other side a centurion pushes back the troublesome mob with his pike; here and there a few heads show that brutal curiosity which the spectacle of an execution never fails to arouse; but it is easy to see that almost all the witnesses of this grandiose scene feel themselves won over by the courage and fervour of this young Christian whose pale head is about to roll before their eyes; they instinctively admire a religion that gives strength enough to leave everything, mother and family, the smiling promises of a fortunate life and of youth in its flower. We will cite, as expressing this proselytism more particularly, the figure placed in the left corner of the picture: his hair and beard are unkempt; he is clothed in coarse garments; his hand clutches at his breast; faith is violently taking possession of his soul. Beside him a beautiful naked child shows at once his pity for the martyr and his hatred for the executioners. Behind them a young woman fixes on Symphorian her eyes full of anguish; she seems to be saying to herself in terror, as she sounds the future, that the child she is still nursing at her breast and holding in her arms may also, when he is old enough to think and to struggle for his beliefs, be torn from her and led to execution.

Three pictures represent the executioner consummating the sacrifice of the holy victim by cutting off his head and allowing his beautiful soul to fly away to heaven. One is in the cathedral of Saint-Flour. The second is a painting on glass that can still be seen in the famous abbey church of Saint-Denis near Paris. The window in which it is found adorns the chapel dedicated to Saint Hippolytus, the third on the north side. In it one

notices a kind of small square medallion about thirty centimetres across. On the left is a turret: the artist probably wished to represent one of the gates of the city, to recall what history says of Saint Symphorian's mother exhorting her son to martyrdom from the top of that gate. On the right are two trees; in the middle ground, the executioner armed with a sword, and the Saint offering his head to the executioner, one knee on the ground and both hands crossed and resting on the other knee. The fourth picture representing the beheading of our Saint is in the church of Saint-Symphorien-de-Lay. The young martyr is seen kneeling, his neck bare and his eyes fixed on an angel holding a crown in his hand. Facing him is the proconsul, pointing to the statue of Cybele; behind, the executioner, his arm armed with the sword and already raised to strike.

Two paintings represent him in heaven. One is a picture adorning the high altar of the church of Maraussan. The other is a mural painting on a gold ground which decorates the apsidal vault of the chapel recently built in the grounds of the country house of the major seminary of Autun, on the very spot where the basilica of the abbey of Saint-Martin once stood, and before it the ancient temple of Saron, changed by the pontiff-apostle into a Christian church. The skilful artist has represented, amid the splendours of eternal glory, Our Lord having beside Him, on one side the young martyr of Autun, and on the other the great bishop of Tours. Both are praying for the young Levites whom they contemplate with interest from the height of the heavenly homeland, as they prepare to enter the sacred battalion of the Church militant so as to merit crowns in the Church triumphant too.

The church of Crissey, a parish under the patronage of Saint Symphorian and formerly in the collation of the Chapter of Saint-Vincent of Chalon, possesses a remarkable stained-glass window which sums up almost the whole iconography of the martyr. This window bears the date 1525. It fills the end of the apse of the choir. Though partly mutilated, it still offers four very interesting panels. The first represents the baptism of Saint Symphorian. One reads in Gothic characters of the period: *Symphorianus baptizatur*. The young son of Faustus is clad in a white robe and plunged into a baptismal tub. In the second, the Saint, clad in a red robe, is led before the statue of Venus placed on a column: *Ducitur Veneri libare*. In the third, Saint Symphorian is beaten with rods: *In flagellis atteritur*. In the fourth, he is led to death and exhorted by his mother: *Ad decollationem ducitur, a matre animatur*. Beneath the panels one sees the martyr's soul presented to Our Lord crucified and clad in a tunic.

As for other painted representations of Saint Symphorian, there are none, at least that we know of, that deserve mention; and his statues come down almost all to a single type supplied by history, that of a youth holding a palm in his hand. The Saint has also been represented as beheaded martyrs were often represented in former times, that is, carrying their heads in their hands. At Trévoux, by a unique and curious singularity, Saint Symphorian is represented as a knight on the *méreaux* (tokens) of the former Chapter. Finally, there exists at Autun a small engraving in which one sees at the Saint's feet the axe with which he is said to have wished to break the image of Cybele, and the overturned vessel holding the burning coals on which he refused to throw, in honour of the goddess, the grain of incense the proconsul demanded. His eyes are raised on high, and already an angel is coming from heaven to bring him the crown.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The body of our illustrious Martyr was laid in a small cell near a spring close to the place where he had been beheaded. There the faithful, and even the pagans, witnesses of the numerous wonders that took place, venerated him immediately after his death. Towards the end of the fourth century Saint Simplicius, bishop of Autun, built over the miraculous tomb a chapel which he consecrated with the assistance of Saint Amator, bishop of Auxerre. In the first half of the fifth century the great bishop Saint Euphronius built close by, under the patronage of the holy Martyr, a famous abbey and a superb basilica in which he placed the sacred relics. In the last half of the seventh century Saint Leger had a new tomb built for the glorious Martyr in the same basilica. There was then a translation. The young son of Saint Faustus and Saint Augusta, who had

apparently been placed at first in the *atrium* of the basilica built by Saint Euphronius, was laid in the crypt with his father and his admirable mother, as in a family burial-place. Cardinal Rolin, bishop of Autun, having the church repaired about 1467, did indeed find in the underground chapel three sandstone tombs and a tablet bearing the following inscription:

Faustus et Augusta jacent inter haec duo busta; Integer et sanus medius jacet Symphorianus.

"Faustus and Augusta rest in two of these tombs; the whole and intact body of Symphorian rests in the one in the middle."

The cardinal then took part of these relics and enshrined them preciously in a silver reliquary weighing fifty marks, which was placed in the upper church. In 1570 Admiral de Coligny, having pillaged and burned the monastery, had the relics thrown into the fire. But it was possible to recover from the ashes some fragments, which have been preserved to our own day and still bear the marks of the flames that damaged them. After the rebuilding of the church at the beginning of the following century, the three sandstone tombs, carried from the crypt into the upper church, were put in a raised place, so as to draw the eyes of the faithful more and satisfy their piety. Later, that is in the eighteenth century, the religious of Saint-Symphorien placed the three sandstone tombs inside a magnificent altar they had just had built. In 1803 this altar was carried, with the three tombs, into the church of Notre-Dame at Autun, and the greater part of the relics from those same tombs were taken to the cathedral. Juridical inquiries made at that time established the preservation of part of the relics thrown into the fire in 1570 and afterwards dispersed during the Revolution. These precious remains are today in the shrines of the cathedral. A recent procedure has come to corroborate the first. The head of Saint Symphorian, which was not in the great basilica burned by Admiral de Coligny but in the small church of Saint-Pantaléon-lès-Autun, built, it appears, on the site of the old primitive oratory we have spoken of, escaped the fury of the Huguenots. It was solemnly translated during the seventeenth century to the abbey of Saint-Martin-lès-Autun; but this precious relic is unfortunately lost. The feast of Saint Symphorian has always been celebrated solemnly. In the ages of faith a great number of pilgrims went to his tomb, which was in the keeping of the Canons Regular who occupied his abbey and served his church until the Revolution. Like the most illustrious Martyrs, Saint Symphorian has the signal honour of being mentioned in the Roman liturgy.

His cult is at this moment taking on a new extension. Mgr the bishop of Autun has issued a pastoral letter by which he gives the young Martyr as patron to the schools of the diocese, and establishes a new annual and special feast for this purpose.

Near the place where the Saint was martyred and first buried, a church has been built which will serve to revive the cult so dear to the people of Autun.

In the diocese of Autun and in most of the dioceses of France, a great number of churches are under the title or patronage of Saint Symphorian.

We have taken this biography from the remarkable work of M. l'abbé Dinet, canon of the cathedral of Autun: *Saint Symphorien et son culte*. — Cf. *Hagiologie Nivernaise*, by Mgr Crosnier; the *Légendaire d'Autun*, by the abbé Pequegnot; *les Saints de Troyes*, by the abbé Defer; *les Saints de Dijon*, by the abbé Duplus; Dom Ceillier.

Saint Hippolytus, Bishop, Doctor of the Church and Martyr (251)

This illustrious doctor of the Church flourished at the beginning of the third century. Saint Jerome says that he had been unable to learn of what city he was bishop; but Gelasius, in his book on the two natures of Jesus Christ, calls him metropolitan of Arabia. According to Photius he was a disciple of Saint Irenaeus, as also of Clement of Alexandria, and the master of Origen. We learn from Eusebius and Saint Jerome that he wrote commentaries on several parts of Scripture, and that it was his example which later stirred Origen to do the

same. A collection of his homilies existed in the time of Theodoret, who quotes several of them; there was also a letter of his to the Empress Severa, wife of Philip, in which he treated of the mystery of the Incarnation and of the resurrection of the dead. In his work against Noetus, of which a considerable part remains to us, he clearly proves the distinction of the persons in the Trinity, the divinity of the Son of God and the distinction of the natures in Jesus Christ; and his authority was afterwards used to great advantage against the Eutychians. He composed a chronicle which ended at the year 222, but which has not yet been found in any of the known Greek manuscripts. His Paschal cycle, which fixes the time when the feast of Easter is to be celebrated for a period of sixteen years, beginning with the first year of Alexander Severus, is the oldest work of its kind that we have. We still have fragments of his commentaries on Scripture, and his homily on the Theophany or Epiphany, in which he speaks chiefly of the baptism of Jesus Christ and of the wonderful effects of the Sacrament of regeneration. We regret the loss of his treatise on the Saturday fast; of the one entitled *Whether a Christian should receive communion every day*; of his hymns on Holy Scripture; of his books *On the Origin of Good and Evil*; and of those he had composed against Marcion, against the heresies, etc. In this last work he refuted thirty-two sects, from the Dositheans down to Noetus, who confused the persons in the Trinity and was teaching his doctrine at Smyrna in 245.

In 1661 there was discovered and published the book *On Antichrist*, composed by Saint Hippolytus, which Eusebius, Saint Jerome and others mention. There can be no doubt that it is the same work as the one Photius speaks of. In it the holy Doctor gives, following Daniel and the other Prophets, the marks by which the Antichrist who is to come at the end of the world will be recognised. Saint Jerome calls Saint Hippolytus a most holy and most eloquent man. Saint Chrysostom and other ecclesiastical writers give him the honourable epithets of source of light, faithful witness, most holy doctor, man full of gentleness and charity. Theodoret places him in the same class as Saint Irenaeus, and calls them both the spiritual fountains of the Church.

The martyrologies of the eighth century, George Syncellus, Zonaras and Anastasius say that Saint Hippolytus was bishop of Porto in Italy. But they confused that city with Aden in Arabia, which was also anciently called the Roman Port. It appears at least that there was a bishopric of that name in Arabia. Those who placed him in Italy must no doubt have taken our Saint for the one Saint Prudentius speaks of.

The best edition we have of the works of Saint Hippolytus is the one Fabricius published at Hamburg in 1716, with dissertations, 2 vols. folio.

Taken from Godescard.

Saint Lambert, Founder of the Abbey of Chézery, in the Diocese of Belley (1154)

Saint Lambert was born in the town of Saint-Maurice in Dauphiné, of parents of little distinction in the eyes of the world but very worthy of esteem for their virtues. His father sent him to school, and intended his brother, Peter of Tarentaise,[1] to carry on his small trade and above all to look after a farm he had near his village. Peter, feeling no taste for country life and still less for the world, worked on his parents so well that they sent him to school with his brother Lambert. Both were gifted with penetrating minds and made great progress; but, more eager still to perfect themselves in piety than in learning, they spurred each other on to virtue. The religious of Bonnevaux, a monastery three leagues from Saint-Maurice, frequented their parents' house; John, abbot of that community, inspired these young men with a taste for the cenobitic life and drew them to Bonnevaux.

Meanwhile Amadeus III had just founded the abbey of Tamié in Savoy, and Peter, who shone by his learning and his eminent piety, was asked for as the first abbot of this new monastery. Lambert, who had gone with him, rivalled his brother on the difficult road of holiness. Never was there seen a more exact religious, a more scrupulous observer of the rule; he set no limits to his prayers or his austerities, and the most fervent regarded

him as their model. Amadeus III, knowing the merit of this man of God, thought that no one could better carry out the plan he had formed of building a religious house in the valley of Chézery (Ain), and above all that no one was better fitted to govern it well.

Lambert set out in 1140 for his new post. The building of the new monastery was pushed on actively. Nothing was more edifying than the life of these fervent solitaries: all the time not given to prayer was spent in tilling the land and clearing the forests the prince had granted them; part of the night, far from being given to rest, was spent in the church; their food was coarse, and even so they ate only once a day; in short, they seemed to have bodies only to mortify them by penance. Lambert was their guide and model, and if he surpassed the others in learning and rank, he surpassed them also in the fervour of his charity, his love of penance and his humility. The time had come when Lambert was to go to heaven to receive the reward of so many labours. God visited him with an illness, during which the virtues he had drawn from the foot of the cross were seen to shine with a still brighter lustre. At length this Saint, burning with an ardent love for Jesus Christ and a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, to whom he had dedicated his monastery when he founded it, gave up his soul to God on 22 August 1154.

Taken from the *Histoire hagiologique de Belley*, by Mgr Depéry.

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[2] This feast was instituted in 847 by Pope Leo IV, on the occasion of a serpent which, after causing the death of many people, was crushed by the sign of the cross which this Pope made on the day of the octave of the Assumption.

[3] Saint Timothy was from Antioch in Syria, where he was distinguished by his zeal for the glory of God and by his singular learning. Having come to Rome in the time of Pope Saint Melchiades, he lodged in the house of the priest Saint Sylvester, who later succeeded that holy Pontiff. Timothy could not remain idle; he used his rich talents to preach the Gospel and increase the flock of Jesus Christ by the conversion of a great number of Gentiles. His zeal cost him his life. Saint Sylvester secretly took away his body and carried it to his house; a Christian lady named Theodora had it buried in a garden on the Ostian road, near the tomb of Saint Paul, whence it has since been translated with great honour to the church of that Apostle.

[4] We have thought it right to correct the statement of the Roman Martyrology which makes Saint Symphorian die under the Emperor Aurelian. It is established by history that our Martyr won his palm in the year 180, and therefore under the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180). Aurelian belongs to the third century (212–275).

[5] Here is the Bollandists' version: "In Bithynia and in Thrace, the holy martyrs Agathonicus, Zoticus, Theoprepius, Acindynus, Severian, Zeno and Princeps."

[6] Anthusa was born at Seleucia in Cilicia, today Selefkeh, on the Calycadnus, of rich but idolatrous parents. Wishing to become a Christian, she made her way to Tarsus, to the bishop Athanasius, who by a divine inspiration came out to meet her and baptised her together with two of her slaves, Charisius or Carissimus and Neophytus. Anthusa then returned to her mother at Seleucia: she was turned away, and from then on embraced the solitary life, in whose exercises she peacefully ended her days. As for Athanasius, Charisius and Neophytus, they were beheaded. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[7] The Bollandists give more details: "At Reims, Saint Maurus or Moret, priest and martyr, and his forty-nine companions. They were put to death by order of the prefect Rictiovarus during the persecution of Diocletian. In the seventeenth century their bodies were found at Reims, near the church of Saint-Nicaise; however, in 1012 part of the relics of Saint Maurus had been carried to Florennes (*Florina*), a small town in Hainaut, in the diocese of Liège. About 287."

[1] See his life on 8 May.

23 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Vigil of Saint Bartholomew, apostle. — At Todi, Saint PHILIP BENIZI, a native of Florence, confessor, propagator of the Order of Servites, a man of admirable humility, canonised by Clement X. 1285. — At Antioch, the birthday in heaven of the holy martyrs Restitutus, Donatus, Valerian and Fructuosus, and twelve others, who received the crown of glory for having generously confessed the faith. 4th c. — At Ostia, the holy martyrs Quiriacus, bishop, Maximus, priest, Archelaus, deacon, and their companions, who suffered death in the time of Alexander, under the prefect Ulpian. 3rd c. — At Aegae in Cilicia, the holy martyrs

Claudius, Asterius and Neon, brothers, who, having been denounced as Christians by their stepmother in the time of the Emperor Diocletian, endured cruel torments under the governor Dysias, were crucified, and went to triumph with Jesus Christ. After them Saints Donvina and Theonilla also suffered death. 285. — At Reims, the birthday in heaven of Saints TIMOTHY and APOLLINARIS, who, having consummated their martyrdom near that city, merited to reach the heavenly kingdom. 3rd c. — At Lyons, the holy martyrs Minerva and Eleazar, with their eight sons. — Also Saint Luppus, martyr, who, having passed from the condition of a slave to the freedom of Jesus Christ, was honoured with the crown of martyrdom. — At Jerusalem, Saint Zacchaeus, bishop, the fourth to govern that Church after Saint James the apostle. About 116. — At Alexandria, Saint Theonas or Teunas, bishop and confessor.[1] 300. — At Utica in Africa, Saint Victor, bishop and confessor.[2] About 498. — At Autun, Saint Flavian, bishop. About 610. — At Clermont in Auvergne, Saint SIDONIUS, bishop, celebrated for his learning and his holiness.[3] 482.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Aix in Provence, Saint Sidonius or Celidonius, disciple of Saint Maximinus, second archbishop of that see, confessor.[4] About 403. — In the diocese of Troyes, Blessed Asceline, virgin, daughter of Saint Humbelina (21 August) and niece of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (20 August). From her tenderest years she was formed in piety and virtue by the care of her uncle, who entrusted her education to a holy priest. When she grew up she would have no other Spouse than Jesus Christ, and shut herself up in a monastery, probably that of Jully-sur-Sarce, where her holy mother had taken the habit and of which we spoke on 21 August. 1195. — At Troyes, Saint Longinus, a soldier martyred at Caesarea in Cappadocia, whose life we gave on 15 March, the day on which he is named in the Roman Martyrology. 1st c. — In the diocese of Rouen, Saint Flavius or Filleul, sixteenth archbishop of that see, confessor. His name indicates a Roman origin. He attended in 533, 538 and 541 the second, third and fourth councils of Orléans, summoned by Childebert. During his episcopate Clotaire I, who reigned at Soissons and whose *argentier* or steward of finances he had been, founded at Rouen an abbey which, first known under the name of Saint-Pierre, afterwards became very famous under that of Saint-Ouen. The fountain of Saint-Filleul, which still exists in a suburb of Rouen, may be regarded as a proof of his zeal in baptising unbelievers. It was no doubt one of those last strongholds in which paganism had entrenched itself with the worship of waters and springs, and which our pious bishop must have made into a baptistery. About 548. — At Saint-Seine (Côte-d'Or), in the diocese of Dijon, Saint Alligieu and Saint Hilarin, monks, martyred by the Saracens. 731. — In the diocese of Saint-Flour, Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, bishop of Clermont, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Lyons, vigil of Saints Minerva and Eleazar, named today in the same Martyrology. — In the former Benedictine monastery of Saint-Vincent at Laon (*Sanctus Vincentius Londunensis*), the blessed death of Saint Cagnoald, also called Chagnoald, Chagnon, Canoald, Cagnon, monk of Luxeuil and bishop of Laon, whose life we shall give on 6 September. 7th c. — In the diocese of Saint-Claude, the holy martyrs Amor and Viator, already named in the Martyrology of France for 9 August. — On this day in 1328 Philip of Valois (1293–1350), on the point of being surrounded by the Flemings at the battle of Cassel (Nord), had recourse to the Blessed Virgin, who at once delivered him from this danger. In thanksgiving for this service, when he made his entry into Paris he went straight to Notre-Dame and, riding into the basilica on horseback, advanced the whole length of the nave to the crucifix, where he laid down his arms. The figure of this monarch on horseback was long to be seen in that church, to which he assigned a hundred livres of rent, to be taken from his domain of the Gâtinais (*Vastiniensis pagus*, an old district of France, now included in the departments of Seine-et-Marne, Loiret, Nièvre and Yonne). — Formerly, at Soissons, the feast of the miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[5]

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Basilians. — At Hieracium, today Gerace (Calabria Ulteriore Prima), Saint Antony, monk, of the Order of Saint Basil.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — At Bevagna in Umbria, the birthday in heaven of Blessed James, of the Order of Friars Preachers; he uprooted the heresy of the Nicolaitans, which was reviving in Umbria, and shone by numerous miracles. 1301. — Also the Octave of Saint Hyacinth.[6] 1257. *Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine.* — At Carthage in Africa, the holy martyrs Liberatus, abbot, Boniface, deacon, Servus and Rusticus, subdeacons, Rogatus and Septimus, monks, and Maximus, a child, of our Order, who in the persecution of the Vandals under King Huneric endured various and unheard-of torments for the confession of the Catholic faith and the defence of one baptism. At last they were crucified on the wood that was to serve to burn them, and as the fire, lit several times, was put out by divine grace, they were beaten to death and so finished their glorious combat, meriting the crown of the Lord.[7] 483.

Martyrology of the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — The Vigil of Saint Bartholomew, apostle. — At Todi, our Father Saint Philip Benizi, confessor, propagator of the Order, placed among the Saints by Clement X. Humble beyond all expression, he refused the supreme tiara of the Church, which was offered to him. 1285.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Anniversary of the day on which the glorious pontificate of Pius IX passed the twenty-five years, two months and seven days of that of Saint Peter. 1871. — At Boppard (*Bodobriga*), a small town of Germany in the archdiocese of Trier, the finding of the relics of several anonymous holy Martyrs. The chapel of Saint Martin, outside the walls of Boppard, having been completely ruined, work was begun in 1200 to remove the foundations so as to lay new ones. The excavations required by this work led to the discovery of several sarcophagi containing bones and instruments of torture, with inscriptions bearing the date 142. The sarcophagi were sixteen in number. These Martyrs of the first centuries enjoyed an immemorial cult, which this finding of their precious remains only increased. 1200. — At Aquileia and at Rome, the holy martyrs Fortunatus, Hermon, Xystus, Martial, Hermogerates, Lawrence; also three young children, Abundius, Innocent and Merendinus. Under Diocletian and Maximian. — In Thrace, the holy martyrs Silvanus, Sabinus and

Pantherius, who, after suffering scourging, hunger, thirst and the horrors of a foul dungeon, were flayed alive and beheaded. Under Diocletian. — At Verona in Venetia, Saint Moderatus, bishop and confessor, whose body rests in the church of Saint Stephen in that city. 5th c. — At Londonderry, a town and port of Ireland, Saint Eugene of Magner, also called Eogain, first bishop of Ardstraw, confessor. After being carried off by pirates to Britain and Gaul, he returned to his homeland, founded several monasteries there with his companion Saint Tigernach, and died after a life full of virtues, made illustrious by miracles and the gift of prophecy. 6th c. — On the island of Ramsey (*Lemeneia insula*), off the south coast of Wales, Saint Justinian, solitary and martyr. The devil, jealous at being unable, despite his efforts, to succeed in tempting him, persuaded three of his disciples to make an attempt on their master's life. These wretches, driven by the spirit of evil, fell upon Justinian and cut off his head. On the place of martyrdom there suddenly sprang up a fountain whose miraculous water healed the sick who drank it in a spirit of faith. 530 or 540. — At Constantinople, Saint Callinicus I, patriarch and confessor. Beginning of the 8th c. — At Hohenwart in Bavaria, Blessed Richilde, recluse, of whom we spoke yesterday in the same martyrology. 1100. — At Brescia in Italy, Blessed Bartholomew of Forest, lay brother of the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. His relics, enclosed in a wooden shrine, are held in great veneration by the people of Brescia, who have obtained many miraculous cures through his intercession. 1489.

Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Clermont in Auvergne

489. — Pope: Saint Felix III. — King of France: Clovis I.

Sacratissimam doctrinam habet qui docet quod sapit, qui instruit quod sentit, qui docet non modo cognoscere verum, sed apprehendere bonum et amare justum.

He possesses holy doctrine who teaches what he knows well, who imparts what he feels, who teaches not only to know the true but also to lay hold of the good and to love justice.

Saint Hilary.

Sidonius Apollinaris, bishop of the city of Auvergne, was born in Gaul of an illustrious family. His ancestors, who shone in the first rank of the senators, had been in turn prefects of Rome and of the praetorium, masters of the offices and commanders of armies. The city of Lyons was their principal residence. They had rich villas in its neighbourhood. They also possessed great estates in Auvergne, to which various interests and noble alliances often called them.

Sidonius, who was to be a new glory of this family, was born on 5 November, about the year 430, in the reign of Theodosius the Younger and Valentinian III, and under the pontificate of Celestine I. He received the names Caius Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius. The name Apollinaris came to him from his grandfather; Sidonius was properly his own. Sometimes he was called simply Sollius. It is under this name that Saint Ruricius of Limoges and Saint Avitus of Vienne refer to him in their letters. In the history of the Church and in that of French letters he is known as Sidonius Apollinaris. Authors do not agree on the place of his birth. Father Sirmond affirms that he was a native of the city of Auvergne. It is more commonly held that Lyons was his homeland.

It was in that city that Sidonius spent his childhood: there in his youth he was formed in the study of letters, for which he kept so marked a taste. He went through the various branches of Gallo-Roman teaching, from grammar and eloquence, which were its first stages, to geometry, dialectic, astronomy and music, which completed a strong literary education. Sidonius Apollinaris also gave himself ardently to the study of the masterpieces of Greece and Italy: one need only glance through his works to see that these first labours contributed not a little to enrich his mind with a vast treasure of erudition and knowledge. In his letters and verses he cites many writers, philosophers and poets; and the details into which he enters when he judges their character and works show clearly enough that he studied them with particular care.

The love of letters, which came to Sidonius from the first years of his education, followed him all his life. Later they filled the leisure his occupations left him and disputed with him even his hours of rest. And so, though he candidly admits that he loves idlers, he takes care to add that idleness never prevents him from reading and studying. This taste for letters led him to see that they were kept up in Gaul by a noble emulation; it made him eagerly seek the company of persons commended by their learning. For if the society of unlettered men was a dreadful solitude to him, that of eloquent men seemed to him an intercourse that could not be valued too highly. Sidonius Apollinaris loved above all the company of Claudianus, a learned priest round whom a studious and select youth pressed, eager to hear him. Claudianus was the brother of Saint Mamertus, bishop of Vienne. Given from his youth, in the solitudes of Grigny, to the study of sacred and profane letters, he became so skilled in Christian learning and in the philosophy of the Greeks that he passed for the finest mind of his century and the greatest genius of his time. It was no doubt then that Sidonius began to know Claudianus's brother, Saint Mamertus, that pontiff so commendable in the see of Vienne for his holiness and his vigilance; Sapaudus, whose teaching was the glory of the letters of Vienne; and Salvian, the worthy friend of Claudianus, whose eloquent genius retraced in the style of a prophet the triumphs of Providence amid the funeral of the Roman world.

While Sidonius was giving himself to these labours of the mind, which were to complete a brilliant literary education in him, he formed a solid and virtuous friendship with several young Gallo-Romans. Among them must be counted Avitus, Probus, Faustinus and Aquilinus, young lords sprung from the first patrician families of Roman Gaul. Studies were not the only bond that drew this union tight. Together they found diversion from the exercises of the school in running, dice, hunting and the baths. Their favourite game was

ball, a game well known in the schools, whose innocent triumphs the young Augustine sought before the glory of letters and that of eloquence.

Sidonius, brought up in the Christian religion, no doubt took part in its feasts with happiness, yet not without mingling with the rejoicings they brought the recreations of the wit and the man of the world. But he was still young, and belonged to that pleiad of youths who followed the exercises of the forum. We shall see him bring later to the see of the city of Auvergne those great and manly virtues which made the episcopate the support of failing societies; but who can be surprised that in his youth he gave himself to those public festivities in which former prefects, senators, patricians and consular personages themselves took part! He had reached the age when life presents itself with its glories and its illusions. It was given him to measure at a glance those vast administrations of Gaul in which his ancestors had appeared, and to consider those high offices in which young patricians could display their talents and the lustre of their birth. The sight of these grandeurs dazzled the eyes of Sidonius Apollinaris for a moment; for he formed the plan of embracing the career of public office, to find glory in it, and with it the means of adding to the esteem attached for several centuries to the name his fathers had borne. These are thoughts that will escape him at certain hours amid the vicissitudes and revolutions of the world. Faith will be able to combat them and experience to modify them; they will disappear for good only at that time of his life when, giving himself to God without reserve, he will sacrifice to Him, in the humility of the priesthood, the honours of the world and the rest of his days.

Sidonius Apollinaris had just finished the studies to which the Gallo-Roman youth of his century devoted itself. The successes he had won in the course of his literary education, the inheritance of honours in his family, a budding ambition which he admits in his letters: everything inspired in him the desire to equal or surpass his ancestors. As eloquence and poetry often opened the road to public office, and as it had not been rare in the fourth and fifth centuries for grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers and poets to reach the first offices of the empire, Sidonius continued to cultivate letters, to find in them, besides the charms they procure, a means of reaching his ends more quickly.

From his entry into political life Sidonius Apollinaris belonged to that cultivated class in which, together with the most glorious traditions of the past, the hopes of independence and national life were preserved. An honourable marriage came to second his hopes at the moment when he was thinking of following in the footsteps of his forebears in some post of the praetorium or some command of the armies. He married Papianilla, daughter of the senator Flavius Eparchius Avitus, who rose to the empire by his skill and talents. If this alliance was an honour for him, it was soon recognised that he was worthy of it, for the purity of his morals and the brilliance of his talents.

The spectacle of the revolutions of the West, where emperors succeeded one another amid the most tragic events, gave Sidonius Apollinaris striking lessons on the instability of human greatness: it cost him less to break with his plans of advancement. He withdrew to the estates the Apollinares possessed in Auvergne and in the Lyonnais. There he found a charm until then unknown: these places made him forget the reverses of fortune and gave him the means of escaping the blows the revolutions were striking at the Empire, whose weakness and misfortunes he saw at such close quarters. No retreat smiled on him more than the villa of Avitacum, believed today to be the village of Aydat (*Avitac*, *Avitacus*, *Avitacum*), a few leagues south-west of Clermont. Not that this villa had more smiling prospects, a greater number of tenants or more extensive acres of land. What gave it value and beauty in the eyes of Sidonius Apollinaris was that it came from his wife Papianilla. There his longest hours were spent: one sees from the care he took to describe it that he passed there, amid the joys of family and letters, his sweetest moments. What above all gave this villa an added charm for Sidonius Apollinaris was the presence of his own: he spent days full of calm with Papianilla, Ecdicius, Agricola and his young children, Apollinaris, Alcima, Roscia and Severiana.

Sidonius Apollinaris included also in his family and in his care the *coloni* and the tributaries in charge of his estates. The lot of the *coloni* in the fifth century had something of that of slaves. Bound to the soil on the

farms of the great lords of Gaul, they were subject to the conditions of the land. Although they had a shadow of freedom, the master could sell them with the soil. In this precarious state they must have longed for enfranchisement, which was a real advantage for them and their families. Sidonius did everything to soften the misfortune of the *coloni* of Avitacum and his other lands: he watched over the safety of some and the honour of others. One day he learned that the slave of one of his friends, named Pudens, had carried off the daughter of one of his *coloni*: his indignation was extreme. Pudens, who knew his feelings, guessed how far he would be revolted by this injustice: he wrote at once to assure him that he had not known of the abductor's design, and added to his excuses entreaties to obtain his slave's pardon. Sidonius granted it only on condition that he free him, so that the girl he had carried off might become his lawful wife and find in liberty a compensation for her dishonour. Apart from business and the cares of his family, Sidonius Apollinaris remained, for some years of his retirement, wholly given to letters, friendship and correspondence. An exquisite sensibility marked the social manners of Sidonius: in ages one would call barbarous, he corrected Greek and Roman politeness with that mixture of kindness and gentleness which Christianity was substituting for the stoic pride and guilty liberties of pagan relations. Yet in his friendships he did not seek only the delicate joys of the heart; he regarded them as of little substance when they did not rest on virtue and mutual esteem. He knew how to choose; his choice always fell on merit. His friendships did not shut themselves up in the secrets of the heart. Like a spring that does not keep its waters for itself, they overflowed in services and kindnesses. By himself or through his friends he protected the weak, appeased divisions, stopped lawsuits: he multiplied himself to oblige and to help. When one goes through his letters of friendship, literature, politics and business, one remains convinced that kindness entered largely into his character and into the habits of his moral life. Amid the variety of his existence, one care, that of literature, always held him. When he thought of Gaul, his homeland, he dreamed of it as learned and polished like Italy and Greece; sometimes he regretted for it the fine ages of literature.

Christianity, whose maxims he followed, taught him the nothingness of human things, and when he saw the experience of his time confirm its oracles, he gave himself to this reflection, so profound and so true that one would think it taken from one of the finest pages of Christian philosophy: "I do not know whether it is a happiness to aspire to the condition of the great and of princes; at any rate it is a misfortune to attain it." Yet the offices of the high magistracy were united in him with the honours of the *laticlave*. Prefect of Rome and of the senate, he was as it were the first citizen of the eternal city and of that famous body which carefully preserved, with the remnants of the greatest families, the most precious memories of the Consulate, the Republic and the empire. Confidant of Anthemius, he was for a time the arbiter of the imperial will; and, as though everything was to contribute to his renown, eloquence and poetry mingled their laurels with the senator's *trabea* and the praetorian *palmata*, to surround him with public esteem and commend him to the regard of his contemporaries.

The dreams of his youth were fulfilled. Honours at least did not corrupt his virtue; he discharged his duties in such a way as to win the praise of the most virtuous men of his century. All acknowledged that it was less his pomp than his dignities that raised him above others. One of the most celebrated bishops of Gaul, Lupus of Troyes, congratulated himself on seeing him reach the highest offices of the court, and, though there was reason to fear that these grandeurs might be a reef for him, he admired how his prudence sheltered him from the seductions that abound at the foot of thrones. But Sidonius Apollinaris did not run these perils of a new kind for long. Satisfied with the distinctions he had received, he left the court (469), bade farewell to the city of the Caesars, which he was never to see again, and hastened to return to Gaul, which he found infested with Barbarians and under the weight of the terrors spread by Euric, the new king of the Visigoths.

But what is most striking in Sidonius Apollinaris at this time is the passage from a somewhat elegant and worldly life to a life on which the ideas of faith exercise a deeper influence. His letters and the poems that escape him reveal to us the inner work that was going on in the soul of the patrician and poet. The lofty

reflections to which Christianity raised the cultivated minds of the time become more familiar to him. The descendant of praetorian prefects follows with an attentive eye, amid the social revolutions that were sweeping away the whole past of public institutions and manners, the progress and development of those Christian ideas which were bringing the world new destinies and more real pledges of salvation. If he is seen on the threshold of patrician villas, he is seen also in the Catholic basilicas, mingled with the crowd that believes and prays. Visits to the holy bishops of Gaul, such as those of Bordeaux, Narbonne, Lyons and Riez, figure no less in his private relations than visits to the great personages of the praetorium and of the West. Christ is more often invoked in his prose and verse.

When his son, the young Apollinaris, reached an age at which his mind and morals had to be seriously attended to, Sidonius wished to initiate him himself into the secrets of literature. He began to prepare him to understand the writers of Rome and Athens, pointed out to him the beauties of their writings, and inspired in him a particular taste for the masterpieces of those two literatures. This education was carried on under the auspices of Christ and under the influence of that Gospel morality whose maxims were penetrating on every side into the homes of plebeian and consular families. Sidonius, who attached no less importance to Apollinaris's morals than to the cultivation of his mind, taught him early the principles of true wisdom; and to make them more vivid to him he set before him as models the virtuous citizens whose actions could serve as examples, and forbade him the company of dissolute persons whose talk might have corrupted him.

Sidonius Apollinaris then offered in his person an image of the influence Christianity exercised on souls penetrated with its maxims. The world no longer had for him the seductions that had tempted his youth; and, more than satisfied with having equalled his ancestors in dignities, he thought only of surpassing them in merit before God. Not without some admiration did the clergy and faithful of Auvergne see the son-in-law of Avitus, the prefect of Rome, the patrician poet, practise with constancy the austerities of the Gospel, so opposed to the habits of softness and elegance of the Roman patriciate. And so, on the death of Eparchius in 471, all eyes turned to him, and with one voice he was named as his successor. Auvergne was then in difficult circumstances. The Barbarians hemmed in its frontiers on every side, and the Visigoths, roused by the Arianism of Euric, threatened it in its faith, dearer to it than its liberties. It could not count on help from Rome, on energetic resolutions of the *curia*, nor on the alliance of the Burgundians, always full of uncertainty. When so many other provinces had found their salvation in the courage and holiness of their bishops, was it not a wise course to put the interests of the faith and of the commonwealth into the hands of Sidonius Apollinaris by calling him to the episcopate? Everything reassured it in such a choice: the virtue and learning of Sidonius, the personal esteem he had won in Roman Gaul, the ascendancy he had at times had over the minds of the Barbarians, and above all his known devotion to the cause of religion and of his country.

It is known that the clergy and faithful then saw without too much reluctance the direction of churches sometimes entrusted to men hitherto engaged in the bonds of family and the movement of civil affairs, provided they joined to a proven virtue the knowledge required for so high a charge. Such men, for their part, at once abandoned the honours of the praetorium or the labours of the forum, to devote their existence henceforth only to the salvation of the spiritual flock of which they became the heads and guardians.

Scarcely had Sidonius learned of this decision of the clergy and faithful than he gave himself up to feelings of deep humility. He could not think of the burden that had just been laid on him without being seized with a holy fear. His alarm shows through in the confidences of that period. "Despite my unworthiness," he writes to his dear Apollinaris of Voroangus, "the burden of a sublime profession has been laid on me, wretched as I am, who, forced to teach before I have learned and daring to preach the good before practising it, am like a barren tree which, having no works for fruit, gives only words for leaves." In a letter to Avitus, his kinsman and friend, he declares that he did not deserve to be placed at the head of the church of Auvergne. Elsewhere he commends himself to Fonteius, bishop of Vaison, who had always been a powerful patron in Christ for his

family, and asks the support of his prayers, because the title and duties of bishop have been laid on him, though he is unworthy to bear and fulfil them. He laments, writing to Lupus of Troyes, that his crimes have earned him the episcopate as their punishment, and that they compel him to pray for the sins of the people, he for whom the supplications of an innocent people would scarcely obtain mercy.

Sidonius Apollinaris accepted the spiritual government of the Arvernian church with great humility, and bowed his head beneath the yoke of the priesthood, full of confidence in Him who had snatched him from the preoccupations of the world to give him a signal share in the inheritance of His pontiffs. If he knew his spiritual poverty, he knew also, with Paulinus of Nola, that God, who gives wisdom to the simplest, would know how to glorify in him the high functions with which He had invested him, and make him worthy of his duties despite his unworthiness. He was raised to the see of the city of Auvergne in the year 472. The precise date of his election is known because he himself says that Lupus of Troyes had then been bishop for forty-five years. Now it is known with certainty that Saint Lupus was named bishop of Troyes in 427. But history has handed down to us nothing particular about the circumstances of this election.

Scarcely had the news of his election spread through Christian Gaul than it caused great joy there. The church of Auvergne expected much of this eminent personage, whose birth and the dignities he had held in the world would give added lustre to his spiritual administration, while his riches would feed the source of public almsgiving. It could hope, besides, that his virtue and courage would preserve it from the misfortunes with which the Barbarians threatened it, and that the high influence he had acquired in the direction of Western affairs would be a strong barrier to set against Visigothic Arianism. The other churches applauded this choice, and the principal bishops of Gaul, who knew Sidonius Apollinaris personally or by the fame his qualities had spread far and wide, drew the best auguries from his episcopate. Patiens, Euphronius of Autun, Fonteius of Vaison, Faustus of Riez, Mamertus of Vienne and all the learned priests he had known joined the Christian families of the Gallo-Roman patriciate in surrounding with their prayers and good wishes the first steps of the new Pontiff in that sacred army in which he would henceforth have to defend the holiest of causes, that of God and His Church.

But among the bishops who wrote to him to show the joy they felt at his promotion and to exhort him to fulfil worthily the functions to which he had been called, no testimony can have touched him more deeply than that of Lupus of Troyes, then regarded as the father of the bishops, less on account of his age than by reason of the virtues that made him so venerable in the eyes of Christian Gaul. A friendship begun in the world united him to Sidonius Apollinaris. He followed him with a father’s eye through the vicissitudes of his political life. When he learned that he had embraced the priesthood, he could not contain his joy, and wrote him at once a letter which is one of the finest monuments of his charity and eloquence. It breathes the liveliest tenderness and the deepest faith. He saw in Sidonius’s accession to the episcopate a motive of consolation for the Church amid her woes, and for Sidonius himself an occasion of rising by humility to a greatness unknown to men, but the only one that was solid in the eyes of God. To this he added counsels which he confirmed by the authority of his great age, and he seemed to designate him as heir of his apostolic labours in that church of Gaul, all full of his virtues and his name.

Sidonius Apollinaris understood that the moral virtues he had practised in the world were no longer worthy of his new state, and he laboured to obtain that holiness of life which alone seemed to him in keeping with his ministry. His soul was seized with sorrow and regret at the memory of his faults and of those years spent in a delicate and worldly existence. From then on penance became his refuge, and more than once his repentance betrayed itself in abundant tears.

Wholly occupied with changing what he called “the perversity of his morals,” he entered into the depths of that religious life which awakened new feelings in his soul. A deep faith made him above all fear the judgments of God. When he saw more closely, in the light of the Gospel, how much holiness a Christian and a bishop needed, and when he understood that those years he had spent in the cares of profane poetry and the

pursuit of honours would perhaps weigh lightly in the balance of his eternal destiny, he began to tremble. “My conscience is burdened,” he wrote to Euphronius, “and if I am a new cleric, I am an old sinner.”

The hope that God would look upon his repentance reassured him in the troubles of his soul. He was confident, he wrote to Polemius, of finding a remedy for his ills in Christ by laying bare to that heavenly physician the whole depth and all the corruption of his conscience. Elsewhere, in a letter to Principius of Soissons, he declared that his only desire was to receive the pardon of his faults on the sacred day of judgement. His humility led him to see in himself only an abyss of iniquities. In the sense of his powerlessness he would not believe in the efficacy of his own prayers; he liked to have recourse to those of others. “Ask God,” he wrote to one of his colleagues in the episcopate, “to deliver me, by a desirable and holy death, from the anguish and burden of the present life.” Then, in a letter to Fonteius of Vaison: “I am obliged,” he told him, “to call for the support of your prayers when I think of the functions with which I, the most unworthy of mortals, am invested, so that they may close the gaping scars of my ulcerated conscience. That is why, in commending myself to you, I earnestly entreat you to sustain by your intercession, whose strength is so powerful, the feeble remnants of our sacred ministry.” Such did Sidonius Apollinaris appear from the first days of his episcopate. He also had new duties to observe in his family relations. If he was allowed to continue his care as a father towards his children, the Church forbade him his relations as a husband with Papianilla; for, by virtue of a discipline going back to apostolic times, she imposed continence on those who entered the priesthood. It was a positive law that no one could be bishop, priest or deacon unless he was a virgin or a widower, or bound himself to perpetual continence. This discipline of celibacy, established to raise the priesthood to that high sphere of purity which the divine mysteries require, was often recalled by councils and Popes. The Church of the West made it one of the most inviolable maxims of her legislation, and Christian Gaul revered this discipline to such a degree that it seemed in her eyes to belong to the very substance of the priesthood. Sidonius Apollinaris, once engaged in the priesthood, lived with Papianilla as with a sister. It is known that she left him the care of her temporal affairs; but nowhere is it seen that the daughter of Avitus broke completely with the world to embrace that monastic life which offered a sure haven to every age and condition. It is more probable that, living in retirement in the city of Auvergne, she divided her existence between the care she owed her children and the habits of piety which became still more familiar to her. There, in the curial and consular families that were the ornament of the city, she saw rich widows stripping themselves of their goods for the benefit of the poor and the churches, and matrons of great virtue; and in the intercourse of this holy friendship, at the sight of Sidonius Apollinaris becoming each day a more perfect model, she joined in all Christian works and placed her happiness and her love in religion.

Sidonius Apollinaris turned his ambition and his desires in that direction alone. It was no longer enough for him to have left the world and its goods: he wished to attain a higher perfection, so as to merit a more honourable reward elsewhere than on earth. He knew that the athlete’s triumph is not assured merely because he has stripped off his clothes to begin the contest, but that the crown awaits him only after a glorious fight.

As soon as Sidonius Apollinaris was in the episcopal see of Auvergne, he omitted nothing to rise to the height of his new ministry. Convinced that the most effective means of edifying souls was to sanctify himself, he undertook this hard and fine task without delay. He liked to say to himself, like Paulinus of Nola in the first days of his priesthood: “Now that we are freed from the weight of things that are not ours, we must consecrate to God all that is truly ours, that is, offer Him in sacrifice, as it is written, our heart, our soul, our body, and make of ourselves a holy temple. For we do not possess only money, lands and other outward goods: we have other goods, which are our habits and the desires of our heart. To sell these goods by mortification is truly to strip oneself.” Yet the bishop’s mission was not limited solely to striving towards the summit of Christian perfection. Charged with leading the peoples in the direction of their moral and religious ways, he had at every moment to extend his solicitude to their needs, enlighten them with his counsels, and pour from the depths of his heart, as from an inexhaustible spring, the most touching consolations upon the

deepest miseries. Thus the Church measured the extent of his duties by the very height of his dignity. She committed to him the care of all the Christian institutions, the abbeys, monasteries and religious associations of the diocese; and moreover, in the relations he was to have with the various members of his flock, she made him the father of the poor, the support of widows and orphans, the hope of the afflicted and the refuge of the unfortunate.

Sidonius Apollinaris knew the nature and extent of these obligations when he was called to the government of the Church of Auvergne. It was to fulfilling them that he henceforth gave all his care. Embracing with a sure and rapid glance the spiritual and civil interests of his dear Arverni, he wished to be their father and support in the difficult circumstances in which they found themselves. Nothing discouraged his zeal and courage: neither the vast extent of his diocese, nor the efforts that Polytheism and Druidism were making to revive, nor the threatening clamour raised by the Visigoths posted behind the Cévennes.

He owed himself first to his Church. As religion was beginning to flourish there, he had to maintain and develop the seeds of the faith, watch over the fervour of the monasteries, which were true hearths of moral and literary culture, found new Christian communities, direct the clerics according to the rules of consummate prudence, and spread the light of the Gospel into the corners of land still left to idolatry. To know the needs of his people and to remedy them better, he went through the different parts of his diocese, winning the people by the charm of his virtues and his benefactions, instructing them by solid sermons, and forearming them, by the exposition of true doctrine, against the seductions of Arianism, which had already perverted many minds, above all in the provinces that depended on the Visigoths and the Burgundians. Auvergne counted no less on Sidonius Apollinaris for the defence of her liberty, threatened daily by cruel and terrible neighbours.

One could indeed expect every day an attack by the Visigoths, or feel the repercussion of the most unforeseen events that might take place within the imperial government. Italy no longer enjoyed any rest, and the shadow of civil war never ceased to hover round the ramparts of Rome. Soon Anthemius was massacred by the orders of Ricimer, and Rome laid waste. Gaul felt the effects of this revolution. Euric, finding the field free for his conquests, listened only to his ambition and fanaticism, and weighed with all the weight of his severity and threats on the provinces that had accepted his rule only with reluctance. The situation of southern Gaul was most deplorable under this violent and bloodthirsty prince. He pursued with his hatred all who remained attached to the Roman cause, and marked his victories and raids above all by the devastation of churches. Convinced that he owed the success of his designs and enterprises to his zeal for Arianism, he persecuted the Catholics of his States without respite. In his fury he attacked the bishops by preference, as the source of the priesthood, and condemned them to exile or death. Novempopulana and the two Aquitaines were above all the scene of this persecution. The bishops Crocus and Simplicius were violently torn from their sees and cast far from their dioceses. Those of Bordeaux, Périgueux, Rodez, Limoges, Gabales, Eauze, Bazas, Comminges and Auch were massacred with many others, among whom must be counted Valerius of Antibes, Gratian of Toulon, Deuterius of Nice and Leontius of Fréjus.

What increased the evil every day was that it was not permitted to fill the gap caused by the death of the pontiffs and replace them by new bishops who could confer the ministries of the lower orders. And so desolation and mourning reigned everywhere in dioceses and parishes. The roofs of the churches threatened to fall in; the fury of the Visigoths had been let loose even on the doors, which they had carried off, so that brambles and thorns grew on the thresholds of the basilicas and closed their entrance. Cattle themselves came and lay down in the half-open porches, or went into the sanctuary to graze the grass that carpeted the sides of the sacred altars. Solitude reigned not only in the country parishes but also in the city churches, where gatherings became very rare. A mortal blow was struck at discipline. The very memory of public prayers was fading, and as the clerics who died received no successor from the episcopal blessing, priesthood and religion, sacraments and Catholic worship, everything in these unhappy churches was mingled in a common

ruin. Nothing was so mournful as the picture of this spiritual desolation. At the sight of it the peoples despaired at the loss of the faith, and fell into such desolation that the heretics themselves would have been moved by it.

Sidonius Apollinaris, a witness of this persecution, felt deep affliction when he saw the Visigoths establishing themselves amid the blood of the faithful and on the ruins of the Catholic faith. The bishop now saw only the misfortunes of the Church, and in the blows Euric was striking at the Church of Gaul he feared less those that struck the walls of the Romans than those that reached the Christian laws. The thought that Auvergne would escape these calamities sustained him amid the terror that had invaded men's minds. But how far could the shadow of liberty that still remained reassure anyone, when it was known that the Visigoths, impatient within the bounds of their Septimania, were waiting only for a favourable moment to occupy that corner of land which excited their greed?

Berry, already ravaged by the armies of Euric, still enjoyed its independence like Auvergne. It was in the shade of this short-lived liberty that the Bituriges hastened to provide for the spiritual needs of their Church, where the death of Eulodius had just left the episcopal see vacant. As terror was at the gates of all the dioceses of central Gaul, it was important to name a successor to Elodius at once, for fear that, if the enemy came to invade the country, he might reduce the Church of Bourges to the last extremities by condemning her to a long widowhood. The clergy and faithful were of one mind, and there was no longer any question but of electing the metropolitan of the First Aquitaine.

Sidonius Apollinaris was naturally the first arbiter of this election, being the first suffragan of the metropolis. He went alone to Bourges; but his sorrow was great when, on reaching the city of the Bituriges, he found it full of factions. The people were divided into several parties: there was such a crowd of competitors that two benches could not have held the numerous candidates for a single see. As each thought himself alone worthy of the episcopate, they stirred up discord, thinking to secure an easier and quicker success for their intrigues. Far from fleeing a charge the mere thought of which made the worthiest tremble, they sought it with sacrilegious eagerness; and when they ought to have brought those dispositions of faith and piety which alone befitted deliberations concerning the dearest interests of the Church of Bourges, they showed only levity, impudence and hypocrisy. Several did not blush to offer money to obtain this dignity. Sidonius Apollinaris was indignant at the sight of such a spectacle. With the idea he had formed of the holiness of the episcopate, he did not suppose that one could reach it by any means other than regularity of morals and great humility joined to uncommon learning. Without letting himself be won over by any of the parties in agitation, he resolved to choose as bishop the worthiest subject, the one who could govern with the prudence the difficulty of the times demanded. He brought to it the zeal and discernment such circumstances required. He wished first to know the subjects proposed and to judge for himself the true dispositions of men's minds. After taking the measures prudence counselled, Sidonius Apollinaris used every means to bring down the intrigues and calm the factions. He succeeded in obtaining from the people that they would renounce their own judgement and leave the matter to the episcopal decision. His conduct and wisdom inspired complete confidence in the greater number. He declared that, after mature examination of his person and life, he pronounced in favour of Simplicius as the man most capable of governing the metropolis of the First Aquitaine. His decision was accepted by the clergy and people, and Simplicius was named bishop. His consecration took place a few days later through the care of Agroecius and Sidonius Apollinaris. His mission finished, Sidonius returned to his diocese, where his people were waiting for him, impatient to enjoy the benefits of his administration and the sight of his private virtues.

Back in his Church, Sidonius Apollinaris devoted himself wholly to his duties and to the salvation of his flock. If on the one hand he laboured to preserve the faithful from the contagion of error, on the other he never ceased to raise their courage, often shaken by the alarming progress of the Barbarians. Auvergne rested on his vigilance; and he would have secured her rest and liberty, had holiness and devotion been enough to

bring about such a result. A marked change took place in his mind. As much as he had given himself to profane learning, so much, once engaged in the priesthood, did he give himself to Christian learning, the science of God. He now saw in the charms of human eloquence only brilliant dreams capable of seducing young minds; it seemed to him that, admitted to the school of true wisdom, he ought now to read and compose only serious writings. Sidonius devoted the first studies of his episcopate to the Holy Scriptures, and owed to his meditation on them his grasp of their sense and spirit. He did not wish to venture alone along the paths of interpretation, which he had not yet explored; he took with him Origen and Jerome, who were held to be the most esteemed and fullest commentators. He studied their works, and soon himself acquired such a reputation in the knowledge of the Scriptures that the oldest bishops of Gaul and persons high in dignity consulted him on the most difficult passages and begged him to send them commentaries. He knew that the Holy Scriptures contained the true doctrine of heaven, and it was from this source that he drew abundantly the waters of truth and grace, so as to pour them in wider streams on the hearts of others. And so in this kind of learning his knowledge became very wide; he even passed for one of the ablest interpreters Christian Gaul possessed. A great advantage he gained from it was that very science of Christianity with which the doctors of the Church had filled their writings, and for which his political life and profane studies had hardly prepared him. But as dogmatic theology was to have a large place in a bishop's knowledge, he perfected himself in it by studying those masterpieces in which the Fathers of the first centuries dug the wide furrow from which theology brought forth those magnificent *Summae* which contain in an admirable whole the entire doctrine of Catholicism.

The Gallo-Roman churches, evangelised for the most part by Eastern bishops such as Irenaeus, Pothinus, Saturninus, Crescens and Trophimus, had adopted the liturgies of the East, though no doubt not without some alterations. The need of greater unity was felt from the fifth century: at least the necessity was understood of gathering into one and the same body all the prayers of the liturgy, so as to fix them more surely by means of writing; and in many dioceses this task was entrusted to the most learned men. At Vienne, Claudianus Mamertus often stole away from his philosophical labours to regulate the divine office and to mark the lessons to be read on the principal feasts of the year. At Marseilles, Musaeus, one of the most distinguished priests of that city, devoted himself to the same studies. For the Church of Auvergne it was Sidonius Apollinaris himself who undertook this work. He collected all the monuments of the liturgy, arranged in order the lessons from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostles, and, joining them to the apostolic canon with the prayers he had composed, made for the use of his Church a Missal or Sacramentary, which Gregory of Tours used and enriched with a preface.

As for profane poetry, which had so often occupied his leisure, he renounced it from the beginning of his new ministry. His profession as bishop seemed to him too grave for him still to allow himself those exercises of the imagination in which the fire, movement and lightness of poetry are not always reconciled with the serious occupations of the priesthood. The glory of verse touched him less than the thought of eternity; and though he acknowledged that poetry could be a useful and pleasant recreation in the world, he no longer thought it worthy to occupy his mind. It was the time, in his view, to think of eternal life rather than of lasting fame, and to remember that after death it is not our writings but our works that will be weighed. And so he thought of some of the productions of his youth only to express his regret at having composed them. But while abandoning profane poetry, he reserved the right to take up his songs again to celebrate the Saints and Martyrs.

Sidonius Apollinaris, who knew how to appreciate the virtues of others, also practised solid virtues himself in the episcopal see. He applied himself above all to leading there a life in keeping with his vocation. Gregory of Tours tells us a particular that does honour to the generous bishop. He had in his house rich silver plate which had once adorned his table as senator and prefect. He found these goods superfluous for a bishop who had embraced Gospel poverty; and as there were many poor in the city of Auvergne lacking food and

clothing, he thought he would make better use of these treasures of the world by spreading them in alms on the needy members of his Church. He was often seen secretly carrying his silver vessels out of the house and distributing them to the poor. Papianilla, who remained the steward and manager of his house, did not share these tastes for disinterestedness and charity with Sidonius, and more than once she blamed him for liberalities she found indiscreet. Sidonius loved peace; he found a way to reconcile everything: he bought the goods back and put them in their place to please Papianilla, but he left the price to the poor, the better to serve his interests and theirs.

Fortune, so praised by men, no longer stirred his desires. Far from wishing for goods he did not possess, he counted it a gain not to lose those that belonged to him. In his contempt for riches he believed that it was a false wisdom that had given them the name of goods. His table became very frugal, and he practised mortification to the point of fasting every other day. His soul sought by preference the divine nourishment, and he preferred to quench his thirst at the springs of truth and grace.

His fervour equalled his austerity. Though he was always amiable in the intercourse of life and regarded as useless the tears shed outside prayer, he shed abundant ones before the altars at the memory of his faults and at the sight of the ingratitude with which so many men of the world answered the goodness of God. In the ardour of his piety and zeal he thought of appeasing the divine anger. And so this testimony was given him, that heaven, touched by his prayers, became more favourable not only to his friends but also to those he did not know. His charity knew no bounds; he gave hospitality to everyone. Generous and affable, he treated his guests well; and so he said in one of his moments of good humour that no one had ever shuddered before his table as before the cave of Polyphemus. His kindness and gentleness appeared more than ever in his relations and habits. His servants and slaves felt the benefit of it. His clemency towards them even prevailed over the rights of justice. He preferred that they should not be punished for every fault they might commit, rather than that they should always be chastised as they deserved. Study and reading took up the moments he did not give to his ministry, without the love of rest ever making him abandon his dear occupations.

Such was Sidonius Apollinaris in his private life. If he did not reproduce the person of a religious, at least everything in his conduct presented a faithful image of one. His desire to advance in virtue led him to imitate those in whom he discovered superior qualities. He did not choose his models only in the ranks of the episcopate; if he found honourable and virtuous citizens in civil life, he liked to reproduce in his conduct what he found estimable in them.

The regret Sidonius Apollinaris felt at having spent part of his life in the frivolities of the world, the austerities he practised, the violence he did to his nature, the weight of his conscience joined to the burden of his new ministry, impaired his strength, and he was seized by a fever that brought him to the gates of the tomb. He recovered from this grave illness; but scarcely restored, he resolved to use the days God left him in effacing even the last traces of his crimes, as he said, for fear that the life that had been given back to him might rather be the death of his soul.

In the episcopate Sidonius Apollinaris continued his relations with Euphronius of Autun, Perpetuus of Tours and Lupus of Troyes, his masters and models. They were then the veterans of the episcopate, and formed, with Patiens of Lyons, Mamertus of Vienne, Auspicius of Toul, Fonteius of Vaison, Leontius of Arles and Faustus of Riez, a senate of pontiffs who owed to a consummate practice of Christian affairs and to the authority of their virtues a wide influence in guiding the moral and religious spirit of their contemporaries. Various motives of charity or religion, justice or friendship, also put him in touch with other bishops whose lives have left less lasting traces. Just as in the world Sidonius Apollinaris had used his credit and that of his friends to support innocence and protect weakness, so in the episcopate he had recourse to the authority of his colleagues, that they might use in favour of orphans and widows, the oppressed and the weak, the noble privilege they had of judging and settling the disputes brought before their tribunal.

As at that time the bishops had become the supports and saviours of society, and effectively protected the political safety and liberties of the peoples, the Arverni turned to Sidonius Apollinaris when, as the year 474 approached, they saw the Visigoths determined to cross the limits that halted the course of their fury at the foot of the Cévennes, and heard the cries of threat they uttered against the last people that had remained faithful to the Roman homeland. Then the citizen-bishop was seen to strengthen the courage of his people and devote his courage and his life to the defence of their religion and liberty. He measured the extent of the danger run by the independence and faith of Auvergne; he at once made himself the man of the city, and united his people in a common idea of devotion and resistance, so as to set against violence and heresy the rampart of conscience and right.

A truce having been concluded at the end of the year 474, the Visigoths were to keep within the bounds of their Septimania,[1] and the Arverni could enjoy in safety, within their old boundaries, their rights as Roman citizens. However uncertain this peace with a nation as quick to violate treaties as to conclude them, Sidonius Apollinaris took advantage of it to raise his people's courage, hastily repair the ills of the Church and the country, and extend his kindness to all who had suffered from these last wars. Like the shepherd who carefully seeks out the sheep scattered by terror or the storm, Sidonius Apollinaris asked everywhere after his dear Arverni whom fear of the Visigoths had put to flight, and sent them pledges of his tenderness wherever they were.

While Auvergne was breathing again after her terrors, at the end of the year 474, Sidonius Apollinaris undertook the journey to the Lyonnais. Ecdicius had already gone to those parts: he was often called there by his family, who lived in the Viennois, and by his relations with the Burgundian princes, with whom he lived on terms of a certain familiarity. Sidonius Apollinaris was certainly drawn to Lyons by the desire to see again his mother and sisters, anxious since the last war; the interests of his diocese were not foreign to this decision either. He wished to see the Burgundian princes, to keep their alliance and strengthen it, for fear of new hostilities. He knew besides that this court corresponded with the high officials of the West; by penetrating the secrets of this policy he would know better what in it was contrary or favourable to Auvergne. Chilperic II, since the forced exile of Gundobad, reigned as sovereign over these regions. This prince was not unwilling to enter into views favourable to Auvergne. Master of the militia of the Gauls and already famous for several victories, he watched with secret envy the growing power of the Visigoths; and as he was a Catholic, according to Gregory of Tours, he had one more reason to support the cause of the Arverni, which was also that of Gallo-Roman Catholicism. The virtues of his wife and the counsels of Patiens exercised a useful influence on his mind. The bishop of Lyons was indeed admitted to the intimacy of the royal couple, whom he edified by his virtue; the queen above all could not help admiring his austerities. Had Chilperic never had other counsellors, the Lyonnese Germania would have enjoyed the benefits of his reign more fully. But in these political troubles a race of adventurers and informers had arisen who exploited the misery of the times and sold themselves now to the Romans, now to the Barbarians, to betray one side or the other and so reach public office and fortune.

Sidonius Apollinaris, whose sentiments were so lofty, could not see without indignation this rabble of flatterers whose base trade was to sell honest souls and ruin virtuous citizens. He observed them closely, and drew a picture of them fit to shed one more ray of light amid the obscurity that often surrounds the social manners of his time. In a very interesting letter he holds up to public indignation these degraded men whose consciences are bought, and who sell for their weight in gold denunciations, calumnies and the lives of good men. Christian Lyonnais offered in its families and its clergy the spectacle of different manners, contrasting by the beauty of the virtues practised there with the deformity of the vices that swarmed on the surface of a barbarous and corrupt society. Noble examples of charity and disinterestedness touched Sidonius Apollinaris: he saw characters that had stood firm amid all the troubles, and manly virtues that neither the corruption of vice nor the power of the wicked could shake. He saw again with renewed pleasure

Constantius, whose friendship he had cultivated during his last stay in the Lyonnais, confided to him his fears for his people, and promised himself to have recourse to his intervention should greater misfortunes come to lay Auvergne waste.

After a short stay in his native city, Sidonius Apollinaris went to Vienne, where he wished to see several of his friends again. His conversations with Mamertus strengthened him in his resolve to devote himself to the happiness of his people, and inspired in him the idea of establishing in his diocese the custom of the public processions or Rogations, which had turned away from Vienne the scourges by which she had been overwhelmed. He received useful counsels from this veteran of the episcopate, and drew from contact with his experience light to guide him in the spiritual government of his people and in the course to follow in the difficult situation in which events had placed his province.

Sidonius then went to the court of Chilperic and obtained from him a promise of help: it was agreed that Chilperic would send a garrison into Auvergne to protect the capital of that province against the attacks of the enemy; for the Visigoths were beginning to utter new threats. Euric wished to have done with the Arverni. The check he had suffered beneath the walls of the city of Auvergne irritated his pride: he spoke of attempting a new siege as spring approached. The treaties concluded had become a subject of discord because of certain ambiguous conditions; each side began to suspect the other. The high roads were guarded by sentries; men watched one another as though on the eve of renewed hostilities. Sidonius Apollinaris could not contemplate the fate awaiting his people without bitter sorrow. For a moment even the energy of his soul gave way under the weight of his anguish; he thought at once of the ills of his native city, occupied by the Barbarians, and of the calamities that might from one day to the next weigh on his episcopal city; for despite the truce that had been concluded, it was expected that the Visigoths would come out of their lines and invade the Roman provinces. It was well known that Auvergne was the chief object of their greed, and that, in their impatience to extend their frontiers from the Ocean to the Rhône and the Loire, they burned to break, by occupying this province, the only obstacle delaying their conquests. Sidonius Apollinaris understood the extent of the dangers his diocese was running. These trials awakened his faith. Far from murmuring against the severity of Providence, which refused his people the sweetness of peace, he blessed it for the way it treated him, who on account of his iniquities deserved the greatest punishments and needed to wash in continual tears the stains of his conscience. But he knew that heaven, despite the apparent triumphs of injustice, never disdains the prayers of the oppressed and the tears of repentance. He placed his support in God alone, and to make Him more propitious he resolved to establish in the church of Auvergne the public prayers or Rogations already established at Vienne by Mamertus. It was the spring of the year 475. The Visigoths, roused from their apparent inaction by the first suns that had dispelled the frosts of winter, had entered Roman territory. The Arverni could not doubt that they would be the first targets of this new irruption. Sidonius Apollinaris saw the danger and made his people understand that the surest means of averting it was to address fervent prayers to God. He reminded them what wonders had taken place among the people of Vienne after the Rogations, and urged them to receive this institution among themselves. He showed them how faith strengthens courage, and how trials undergone for God draw down His mercy and obtain His pardon. The Arverni fell in with their bishop’s wishes: they prepared themselves by fasting and tears for the celebration of these expiatory feasts. Sidonius saw his people’s eagerness with happiness. The day of the public prayers drew near. He himself invited to it his friends who were not in the city, or whom fear of the wars had scattered to various places in the province.

The Rogations were celebrated amid a considerable concourse of citizens. It was a touching spectacle for public piety to see the processions wind round the ramparts of the city and stretch their suppliant lines out into the plain. Eyes filled with tears at the sight of the ruins made by the Barbarians, sadly lit by the first fires of dawn. Heaven was implored to turn away from the city the misfortunes that were feared, or at least to grant special help against the enemies whose vengeance was dreaded. Having placed their hope in God, the

Arverni, arming themselves with a heroic resolution, determined to drive back the enemy valiantly or to bury themselves in a memorable defeat. They organised the urban militias, rallied under the common banner and prepared a vigorous defence. Meanwhile it was learned that the Roman emperor was sending negotiators to treat for peace with the king of the Visigoths. The latter would consent to it only in return for the cession of Auvergne, which took place on 28 August 475. Sidonius Apollinaris would gladly have gone to some land where, far from the Barbarians, he could enjoy full liberty in the exercise of his ministry. His character, the circumstances, the grief of the Arverni, the fear of seeing them fall into the snares of Arianism, all imposed another course on him. Duty wanted him in the midst of his people: he stayed there to share their privations, and resolved not to leave them until he was torn from them by force. His presence in Auvergne aroused the suspicion of his new masters. Euric saw with uneasiness the sway he held over the Catholic populations, and, thinking he would be an obstacle to his designs, resolved, in the interest of his policy, to tear from his people the man who was its support and father.

The faithful of Auvergne, on learning of the cruel order that took from the diocese the man who was its support, and in circumstances when they would have had the greatest need of his direction, conceived deep grief at it. They were now to be delivered to the violence of the Visigoths and exposed to the seductions of Arianism without finding in their bishop the support and light that such pressing dangers required. His departure indeed moved every heart, and the tears of his people told him, in a sorrowful farewell, how much attachment to him there was at the heart of that city of Auvergne. He could not leave it without bitter regret, thinking of its misfortunes and its dangers.

He was taken out of his diocese and confined in a fortress on the borders of Narbonensis, twelve miles from Carcassonne; it was called Livia, and later bore the name of Campendu. The days of exile were bitter for Sidonius Apollinaris. Shut up in a dark cell, watched by guards whose task was to observe his least movements, he felt all the ills of adversity. The sun, lighting up the walls of his dwelling, made more keen and more cruel the memory of that adopted homeland which constantly occupied his thoughts. The nights were spent in long sighs wrung from him by fear of the ills with which his people were perhaps being crushed. Faith and resignation made them less hard; they were softened by literature, whose company follows its devotees everywhere.

Whether Euric was considering the interests of his glory, which might suffer from the persecution of Sidonius, or whether he regarded it as a better means of winning the peoples of Auvergne to give back to them a bishop whose deliverance they called for with all their prayers, he had the gates of the tower of Livia opened. His return was greeted with unanimous transports: by the joy they felt, the Arverni understood that they had found again a saviour and a father. His first care was to make sure for himself that his peoples had not suffered too much in his absence from the severity of barbarian rule, and that their faith had not been shaken by the attacks of certain false teachers who were working to unsettle the Catholic faith in souls. His bishop’s heart expanded when he saw that these errors had made no progress in his diocese, and that the zeal of the innovators had failed before the attachment of the faithful to their beliefs. He understood nonetheless that the religious situation of Auvergne was full of uncertainty, and that the duty of a bishop in such circumstances was to contribute by every possible means to the calming of minds and the strengthening of the truth. To fulfil such a mission there were struggles to sustain, difficulties to overcome, trials to bear. Sidonius had a heart great enough not to give way beneath the weight of this task; he did not have it firm or hard enough not to feel the pains that came to him from so delicate a position.

He visited the abbeys, the towns and the Christian families, and secured, by the various means his zeal suggested, the progress of that spiritual life which he regarded as alone capable of remedying public misfortunes and private calamities. This life, with its habits of order, modesty, devotion and austere dignity, had penetrated, as is known, into every class of Arvernian society, and had disciplined in the unity of exemplary conduct families of the people, young patricians, virgins sprung from the best blood of the

province, and several of those Arverni who bore the finest names of the Gallic aristocracy.

Sidonius Apollinaris's care extended to the youth of his episcopal city; and if he found young minds eager for knowledge, young hearts nobly in love with the good and the beautiful, he stooped down to them to form and develop these generous instincts. He knew what dangers this age runs; he knew too what hand must be held out to it to turn it from the paths into which vice and softness seek to draw it, and to lead it into those where virtue and study, forming heart and mind, make men better and happier.

At the time of the greatest power of the Visigoths, Sidonius Apollinaris showed the greatest discretion with regard to Euric. His gentle and obliging character, more inclined to peace than to firm and sustained resistance, marked out for him, within the limits of wise prudence, a line of conduct in which moderation had the largest share. He accommodated himself to the misfortunes of his time and of the Church, yet not by a kind of indifference that would have closed his eyes to the extent of these evils and sheltered his heart from the anguish caused by such spectacles. His dispositions of mind were commanded by nobler and more Christian views. With the experience he had of men and things, he thought that there are hours in public life when resignation is a duty, and that, to avoid greater evils, it is better to set a calm and invincible virtue against tyrannies that are too powerful. He was persuaded besides that life is the season of contradictions and struggles, that God wills to try the just here below so as to ripen them for heaven, and that, in remembrance of one's crimes, one must accept sufferings as deserved crosses. Nor was he deceived about the triumphs of iniquity; he believed them short-lived; he knew, as we have observed, that God sets up in posterity a tribunal at which He confounds the prosperous wicked in shame and raises the oppressed just in honour. Religion and letters, those gentle companions of lofty souls, offered Sidonius Apollinaris besides a sure haven against the storms that convulsed the last years of the fifth century. Occupied in revising his letters, in which there reappeared before his eyes, in the charm of friendship, those he had known in the various circumstances of his life, and adding other intellectual labours to this task, he procured for himself by these means a pleasant and useful diversion from the cares of his ministry and the misfortunes of his time.

About the year 483 he made the visitation of his diocese. This visitation was most urgent. Was it not necessary to keep up the zeal of the faith in the souls of the many faithful of his province, to forewarn minds against the errors of Arianism, to raise the courage of some and kindle the ardour of others? Had not the young abbeys, the recently founded monasteries and the churches of the towns suffered too much from the rule of the Visigoths? The ruins of the churches needed repairing and new ones had to be built. The presence of Sidonius Apollinaris among these peoples brought about all these goods. Seeing him full of confidence and courage, humility and devotion, men conceived better hopes of the stability of the Catholic institutions. They learned from him that if God tries and humbles, He also strengthens and raises up, and that in the guidance of His Church He is pleased to place the triumph of His works at the hours when all seems desperate, the better to show the nothingness of human enterprises and to make the strength of His arm shine out more visibly.

Sidonius Apollinaris, more concerned with his salvation than with human glory, washed away in tears the stains of his youth, and, regretting that he had sought from men the fragile esteem they sometimes grant to merit and learning, he now thought only of that solid glory with which God crowns justice and repentance. In return, the peoples of Auvergne and the most influential personages of Gaul surrounded him with their love and esteem. Perpetuus of Tours, growing old, never felt his admiration for him grow old; Remigius at Reims drew inspiration from his example; Ruricius venerated him as a father; and among the young admirers whom his talents and virtues won him, one noticed Avitus, who would later let show, in his correspondence with Apollinaris, the feelings of veneration that had touched his adolescence.

For the years from 484 to that of his death he has given us less insight into the details of his life. What we know of him comes to us indirectly from various testimonies gathered in tradition and in a few almost contemporary authors. His "magnificent holiness," in the expression of Gregory of Tours, never failed, and

from it came the cult that Christian France was one day to pay him. Above all he needed consummate prudence and complete devotion to his church in those years when the various peoples of Gaul, roused against one another by fierce jealousies, waged those continual wars that ended in blood this last period of the fifth century.

It was amid these clashes of States, whose repercussions the Church of Gaul felt, that the last days of Sidonius Apollinaris were spent in keen and legitimate preoccupations. With the understanding he had of men and things, with the secret horror barbarism inspired in him, and the deep desire he had to secure the peace of the Church and of his country, one can understand what various emotions this situation, full of uncertainty and dangers, caused him.

Sidonius Apollinaris did not live long enough to witness the political and religious outcome of his century. Preoccupations as grave and more intimate besieged his mind. Thinking of his approaching end, he meditated less on the great lessons of history and on human revolutions than on those eternal years which had long held his attention. And so he devoted the last period of his life to prayer; and, to make the judgements of God more propitious to him, he washed away in tears and repentance the faults whose memory troubled his conscience. It would seem that after an administration as gentle and prudent as his, he ought to have ended his days in peace. God, who loves to try His servants so as to make them more worthy of His rewards, allowed him to meet with oppositions whose bitterness saddened the end of his episcopate.

Two priests of his clergy, supported no doubt by the Arian party he had so vigorously fought, rose against him and subjected him to the most shameful treatment. Their names were Honorius and Hermanchius. Not content with having taken from him the government of his Church, in contempt of discipline and the canon laws, they squandered his goods and left him only the most meagre resources to live on. Sidonius Apollinaris accepted this wrong with resignation, and showed that if, in the holiest of states, there are men unhappy enough to dishonour it by their vices, there are always men worthy enough to raise it by their merits. The injustice of which he was the victim did not last long; the divine clemency shortened its course. A punishment that could have come only from heaven struck one of the guilty men and avenged Sidonius, who thought only of suffering and forgiving. Honorius, not satisfied with having despoiled his bishop, pushed his audacity to the point of wishing to drive him out of the church. Having once fixed on this plan, he told it to some of his partisans on the eve of the day on which he intended to carry it out.

Now the next day having come, and the signal for Matins having been given, people were going to the church of Saint Mary to sing the divine praises there in choir. Honorius had risen with gall in his soul, determined to carry out the sacrilegious plot he had hatched the day before. God stopped him at the moment when, on his way to the church, he was turning over these dark thoughts. Having gone into a privy, he breathed his last there. His servant was waiting, a light in his hand, for him to come out; day was beginning to break, and Hermanchius his accomplice had, in his impatience, sent a messenger with orders to tell him: “Come without further delay, so that we may carry out what we agreed yesterday.” The lifeless body gave no answer. The servant opened the door and found his master dead. The report of so strange a death spread at once; and as it had taken place in the same circumstances as that of Arius, people did not hesitate to say that God had willed to punish the same crime with the same chastisement. One cannot indeed doubt, says Gregory of Tours, that there is the crime of heresy where, in the Church, the priest of God to whom the guidance of the flock has been entrusted is not obeyed, and where men intrude into a power they have received neither from God nor from men.

The persecution Sidonius had suffered ceased, and the schismatic priest who remained, Hermanchius, was forced to hide his crime and his shame before the great number of those who proclaimed the innocence of their bishop. Sidonius resumed the course of his administration in peace, amid the general satisfaction of his diocese, where all the faithful without distinction wished him a long and happy old age.

Auvergne, so long agitated by continual fears, had found a little calm in the last years of his pontificate. The Church there pursued her civilising mission without hindrance; basilicas were built in greater numbers in the cities and towns; the monasteries received a greater number of cenobites under their peaceful cloisters; and Arianism, troubled in its zeal for propaganda by the vigilance of the shepherd, now cast beside Gallic Druidism and Roman Polytheism only pale gleams that foretold its approaching decline. Men loved religion seeing it honoured by the brilliant qualities of Sidonius, and his fatherly authority, in imposing it, made its practice gentler and easier. His activity, despite the weight of years that was beginning to make itself felt, answered the needs of his vast diocese. If at times illness or the multiplicity of business checked the ardour of his zeal, he laid part of his cares on Aprunculus, who, brought to Auvergne by persecution and exile, generously paid his debt of hospitality there by devoting himself to her.

One could therefore still expect better days: it was no illusion to believe that, thanks to the light and wisdom of Sidonius, religion would continue to spread and flourish. But God was reserving a cruel trial for the church of Auvergne by shortening that life on which such dear hopes rested. Sidonius Apollinaris was seized with a grave illness, and the fever, redoubling in violence, soon put his life in danger. He did not hide from himself the seriousness of his illness, and, fearing the consequences of death more than its horrors, he used the last moments of his life to die well. His faith awoke with new ardour, and as the fear of the eternal judgements seized his soul with a salutary dread, he resolved to forestall them by a new expiation. Prepared for this departure from life by those Christian ideas which had so often shown him its brevity and nothingness, he rejoiced, like the Saints, to see that his chains were about to break and his exile to end. The desire to enter soon into the heavenly homeland made him conceive the desire to die at the foot of the holy altars, where the thought of God, made more familiar, would tear him the sooner from earth and make more vivid to him the glory and rewards he hoped to enjoy.

According to the wishes he had expressed to his own, who surrounded him with their care and devotion, Sidonius Apollinaris was carried to the church of Saint Mary. Scarcely had he been laid on a bed set up near the altar than a multitude of men, women and children went there to pay the venerable sick man the duties of their piety and gratitude. Seeing stretched out on the floor of the church him who had been the support of the weak and the poor, and seeing those eyes failing from which flashes of love and truth had shone upon them, they could not contain the emotion that pressed upon them. Their sobs betrayed their grief, and they interrupted them only to utter heart-rending farewells. There, in that enclosure where after fourteen centuries we still seem to see and hear them, they said: “Why do you abandon us, good shepherd? To whom do you leave us, like orphans? What will our life be after your passing? Will there be anyone henceforth to dispense to us so carefully the salt of wisdom? Who will bring us back with the same prudence to the fear of the name of the Lord?”

These words and others summed up that edifying and useful life which in the episcopate knew only how to devote itself to the happiness of others. It was already a funeral oration, pronounced amid the tears of a stricken people over a tomb about to open; but stronger and more eloquent than a studied discourse, it also made better known the loss the city and Church of Auvergne would soon have to mourn.

Touched by the regret that the sight of his approaching death wrung from his flock, Sidonius Apollinaris wished even in his last moments to provide for its salvation by leaving it a shepherd capable of continuing his work. He had noticed in Aprunculus a blend of firmness and prudence such as was needed to govern the Church of Auvergne in the difficult times through which Christian Gaul was passing. Now, while, deeply moved by the sobs and farewells of his people, he was seeking in his mind who could best administer their spiritual interests, he turned to the crowd around him, and, as though the Holy Spirit had touched his heart and lips, he interrupted their sobs, saying: “Fear nothing, my people; my brother Aprunculus is still alive; he will be your bishop.” The people, who had held back their cries and tears the better to catch the last words of so tenderly loved a father, did not at first understand what he was saying and thought he was speaking in

ecstasy. This prophecy was nevertheless to be fulfilled, since after the death of Sidonius Aprunculus was chosen to succeed him.

The church remained filled by the multitude, which could not be torn away from that deathbed beside which it came to pour out its laments and grief. So much love ought to have kept in life the man who was its object. Sidonius Apollinaris could not resist the violence of his illness. He mingled a last prayer with his last sigh, and breathed forth amid his people and his family, for a better life, this earthly life which he had filled with merits and devotion. He died in the reign of Zeno, about the year 489, on the 23rd day of August, the day on which his feast is celebrated and on which he appears in the Roman Martyrology.

Scarcely had the news of this death spread through the city of Auvergne than everyone hurried to the basilica of Saint Mary to see and kiss for the last time the remains of the holy bishop. Already, under the sway of a veneration as legitimate as it was general, they were being ranked among those precious remains of Saint Lawrence, Saint Austremonius and Saints Agricola and Vitalis which formed the sacred wealth of the altars and the church. Tears did not dry at the memory of one consecrated by so many virtues, whose story passed from mouth to mouth amid the consternation of the faithful. If some wept for a friend, others mourned a father; the afflicted lost a support, the poor lamented the death of a benefactor.

Throughout the city the virtues of the bishop and the qualities of the citizen were recalled with one voice. All repeated how much wisdom there had been in his conduct, how much gentleness and vigilance in his administration, how much intelligence and devotion in the spiritual and civil direction of the country. Counting his years, men found his life too short; thinking of his merits, they found it long and holily filled.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — SES ÉCRITS.

The church of Saint-Saturnin, where the remains of Sidonius Apollinaris were kept, was in the neighbourhood of Clermont, to the south of that city, beyond the gardens of Rabenesse and the hospital cemetery, on the left of the road leading to Beaumont, in the middle of the district of Les Plats, and near the rocks known by the name of Saint-Amandin. The church of Saint-Saturnin was still standing in the tenth century. When later it had been destroyed by the misfortunes of war, the relics of Sidonius Apollinaris were transferred to the basilica of Saint Genesius. The memory of this translation was kept on 11 July. His bones were enclosed in a shrine that could be seen to the right of the high altar. Several other churches disputed the honour of possessing some remains of Sidonius Apollinaris. The cathedral church kept some preciously among its rich and sacred jewels, in which it venerated the immortal dust of its first pontiffs. His cult has continued so constantly in the parish of Aydat that some historians have believed he was buried there. The churches of Orcival and Vertaizon had the same privilege.

Time and revolutions have not respected the remains of Sidonius Apollinaris. The churches that protected his cult and were in turn the keepers of his ashes have disappeared from the soil. For many centuries the church of Saint-Saturnin has no longer existed: only the rocks of Saint-Amandin perpetuate its memory. The basilica of Saint-Genès no longer exists; only a square that has kept its name can be seen. At the Revolution the shrine of Saint Sidonius disappeared. The church of Auvergne can doubtless no longer venerate the relics of the holy Pontiff, but she has not ceased to include them in the public homage she pays to her martyrs and saints. For a long time she celebrated his feast on 23 August with the rite of a double minor; today she celebrates it on 11 July with the rite of a double.

We have from Saint Sidonius Apollinaris a collection of poems containing twenty-four poems on various subjects, and nine books of letters. The principal poems are the panegyrics of the emperors Avitus, Majorian and Anthemius. His verses show that he had facility and talent for poetry. He took less trouble to polish them after he became a bishop. His thoughts are ingenious and delicate; his style is compact, lively and pleasant; but at times affectation and bombast are to be noticed in it. He uses expressions that show that in his time the Latin language had degenerated from its original purity. His imagination is brilliant, and he excels in

descriptions.

In 1609 Savaron published his works with learned commentaries, in one quarto volume, at Paris. In 1652 Father Sirmond produced another, much more complete edition, which he enriched with new notes, in one quarto volume; this edition was included in the collection of the works of Father Sirmond, printed in 1696.

We have taken this biography from the *Histoire de saint Sidoine Apollinaire et de son siècle* by M. l'abbé Chaix, and from the *Histoire littéraire de la France* by Dom Rivet. — Cf. Tillemont; Godescard; the *Histoire de l'Église* by the abbé Darras; Dom Ceillier.

Saint Philip Benizi of Florence, Propagator of the Order of the Servites

1285. — Pope: Honorius IV. — Emperor of Germany: Rudolf I.

> *Nil placitum sine pace Deo, non munus ad aram Cum cupias offerre probat, si turbida fratrem Mens impacati sub pectoris oderit antro.*
>
> *Without peace nothing is pleasing to God; He does not accept your gifts at the altar if your troubled soul bears, deep in your heart, hatred for your brother.*
>
> *Prudentius. — Maxim of the Saint.*

Saint Philip Benizi was a Florentine, the son of a noble burgher of that city named James Benizi and of a very pious woman called Albanda. He was only a year old when, some of the Servite religious having come to beg in Florence, he cried out with other children of the same age: "Those are the servants of the Virgin." This caused his mother to give them a generous alms. The good upbringing he received from his parents kept him in innocence, chastity and piety suited to his age. He did his humanities in his own country. Then he came to Paris, where he studied medicine, and from there he went to continue the same study at the University of Padua, which honoured him with the doctor's cap. Having returned home, as he was at Mass in the chapel of the Servites near Florence on the Thursday in the octave of Easter, he was rapt in ecstasy, and heaven made known to him that he was to enter the Congregation of the Servites. He obeyed, but he said nothing of his studies, not wishing to be a choir religious but only a lay brother, the better to keep himself constantly in religious humility and simplicity. After his reception he was sent to the house of Monte Senario, or Asenai, three or four leagues from Florence, where the first seven Servites, all rich merchants of that city, had begun their institute in honour of the Blessed Virgin. There, according to his state, he applied himself to the outdoor offices and to manual labour, and always discharged them with admirable diligence and exactness; but he still found time to meditate on the mysteries of our faith, above all the passion of Our Lord and the sorrows of His holy Mother on Calvary.

For this he would withdraw into a cave near the church, where the fire of divine love sometimes carried him so far out of himself that he entirely forgot his body. At other times he chastised himself with pitiless severity and shed torrents of tears to expiate the offences he believed he had committed in his youth and in his life in the world. This was so pleasing to God that in his favour He made a spring rise in the middle of his cave, which still pours out water in abundance and is called the Fountain of Saint Philip.

Two religious of Saint Dominic, travelling with him one day, recognised the great talents, the wisdom and the learning that he kept hidden under his humble condition of lay brother. They were grieved to see so brilliant a light buried in darkness, and betrayed his humility by informing his superiors; he was obliged to receive the priesthood. When he said his first Mass, at the elevation of the Host heavenly voices were heard singing alternately: *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*; which removed the doubts he had had about his vocation to the priesthood. He then passed through all the degrees of his Order; for he was definitor, then assistant general, and finally his great merits caused him to be elected and confirmed as general. He strongly resisted this last election, judging himself incapable of governing his brethren; but he was ordered by heaven to submit to it, because it came from the Holy Spirit and God wished to make use of him in this office for great things.

One day he met a leper who asked him for alms. He had at that moment neither gold nor silver; but, his charity urging him to help Jesus Christ in His member, he went aside, took off his undertunic and gave it to him. The leper, who was almost naked, put it on, and at that very hour he was healed of his leprosy, thus receiving a double grace by a single alms.

His modesty appeared with brilliance when, after the death of Clement IV, the cardinals assembled at Viterbo cast their eyes on him to raise him to the see of Saint Peter. He was so terrified at this plan that he fled secretly into the mountains of Siena with only one or two of his religious, and kept himself hidden there in holes in the ground until the conclave had given the Church another shepherd.

Philip, during the whole time of this solitude, was continually occupied in prayer and tears. Fasting was his food; vigils his relief and rest; converse with God his recreation and diversion. He ate no bread, but only wild and tasteless herbs. He drank only water, and when it failed him amid the sands and rocks, he struck the rock three times with his staff, and water at once came forth in such abundance that it formed a sort of pool, which has been called the Baths of Saint Philip. Some authors, however, say that these waters were already there, and that he only gave them a medicinal virtue by his blessing. They are on the mountain called Montaniata. God made known to him in that place that he was to carry His name and devotion to the Blessed Virgin into the other provinces and into foreign kingdoms. Therefore, having had a general chapter assembled, he set up a vicar in his place for Italy and departed with two companions to proclaim on all sides the greatness and merits of that glorious Queen of the angels. He came first to France, where he preached at Avignon, Toulouse and Paris with great success. From there he passed to the Low Countries and to the duchy of Saxony in Germany. He established houses of his Order in many places.

He spent two years on this mission; returning to Italy, he crossed forests and deserts where provisions failed him. As his companions could no longer hold up, he implored the help of the Blessed Virgin, and at that very hour he saw before him bread and water, which served to appease their hunger and renew their strength. On his return he made fresh efforts at his general chapter of Borgo to be relieved of the insupportable burden of his office; but, far from listening to him, they confirmed him in it for the rest of his life. This is what obliged him to attend the second general council of Lyons, which Pope Gregory X assembled in 1274 for the reunion of the Greeks and the recovery of the Holy Land. He asked the council to approve and confirm his Order, which was very willingly granted, since the assembly could not doubt the usefulness of a Company that had a head of such great merit. It is for this reason that the Roman Martyrology used to call him Institutor or Founder of this Order, although in fact he entered it only fifteen years after its establishment and was only its fifth general; but today it gives him only the name of Propagator.

Besides the graces we have already noted in him, he had a particular talent for reconciling enemies, appeasing rebellions and procuring peace for towns and provinces in turmoil. At Pistoia he settled the cruel dissensions of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, who were bitterly set against one another. He did the same at Florence in the company of Cardinal Orsini, legate of the Holy See. He also went to Forlì to bring the inhabitants back to obedience to Pope Martin II, against whom they had revolted; but if he did not have the consolation of converting them, he had at least the joy and happiness of suffering ignominy for the cause of the vicar of Jesus Christ; for these perverse men, unable to bear the vehemence of his fiery preaching, threw themselves on him, stripped him shamefully and scourged him through the crossroads of the town; after which they drove him out of their walls, so as no longer to hear the just reproof of their crimes. His patience, however, was not fruitless, for it converted one of those who had struck him, who, touched with repentance, wished to do penance for his sacrilege in his Order, and lived in it thereafter in very great holiness.

At last Philip, foreseeing that the end of his life was near, assembled his general chapter for the last time at Florence; there, having declared to his religious that the time of his departure would soon come, he exhorted them to union among themselves and to the constant and inviolable observance of regular discipline. His own tears and the groans of his children prevented him from delivering his discourse. He therefore ended it by

saying: “Love, love, love.” Then he went to Siena, and from there to Perugia, to kiss the feet of Pope Honorius IV and ask his blessing; he obtained fine privileges from him for his Order. On leaving Perugia he took the road to Todi, in the March of Ancona. The inhabitants of that town, who knew his merit, came out in crowds to meet him with olive branches to receive him. But the humble servant of Mary, to whom honours and praise were unbearable, skilfully turned off the approach road to avoid this ovation. On the detour he took, he met two women of evil life, who mocked him and insulted him. He gently rebuked them for their impudence, and, having put them to shame, offered them money on condition that they would refrain for three days from falling back into their sin; they bound themselves to this by oath, and kept it with such fruit that they renounced their infamous trade for ever and entered among the penitent women, where they lived with much edification and holiness. When he entered the church of his Order, he prostrated himself before the altar of the Blessed Virgin and uttered these words of the Royal Prophet: “This is my rest for ever and ever.” And, not wishing to take any rest, he spent the whole night in prayer and penance. The next day he went up into the pulpit early in the morning and gave an admirable sermon on the glory of the Saints, by which his audience was quite transported. As the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady drew near, he was seized with fever, which he regarded as the happy instrument that would detach his soul from the bonds holding it to his body. To prepare himself for death he made a very devout prayer in the form of a paraphrase of the psalm *Miserere*, applying all the words of that psalm to himself as to a very great sinner. Then he made his confession very devoutly and spent the rest of the octave in sentiments of compunction and penance. Towards the end he had the Viaticum brought to him, which he received with great transports of love, saying to Jesus Christ: “It is You, my Lord, in whom I have believed; it is You whom I have preached, whom I have sought and whom I have loved.” While saying the Litanies he fainted at the words *Peccatores, te rogamus, audi nos*, and was thought dead for three hours. But having come to himself, he said to his religious: “I have just sustained, my Brothers, a great combat; for the devil, full of rage and malice, setting before me all the sins of my life and maintaining that for them I must be condemned to hell, strove to make me fall into despair; but Jesus Christ my Saviour and Mary His most holy Mother repelled the arrows of this cruel and pernicious enemy, and favoured me so much by their goodness that, after driving him from my presence, they showed me the eternal kingdom prepared for me. Take care, then, my Brothers, not to let yourselves be deceived by this impostor, who does nothing but work for the ruin of men; and use the weapons Our Lord puts into your hands, which are abstinence, humility, patience, and above all charity, which is the queen of the virtues.” He ended this discourse by asking for his book; no one knew what book he wanted: but this book was his Crucifix, which he had studied all his life and in whose embrace he wished to die. He kissed it several times and told his children of the inestimable goods he had received by its means. After that he recited the canticle *Benedictus* and the psalm *In te, Domine, speravi*; at the words *In manus tuas, Domine*, etc., he did indeed give up his spirit into the hands of his sovereign Lord. At his death these words were heard in the air: “Courage, good and faithful servant; because you have well governed the family of the Virgin, whose government was given you, enter into the joy of your Lord.” This precious moment came in the year 1285, on 22 August, which is the Octave day of Our Lady, although his memory is kept only on the 23rd.

The place where he died was at once filled with a very pleasant fragrance that came supernaturally from his body, and his face sent out rays that lit up the whole room during the night. His religious were seized with an extraordinary joy that calmed all their sadness. He could not be buried for three days because of the crowds who flocked to see him and the miracles worked by touching his limbs. Two dead persons were raised to life, one of them a child whom a wolf had strangled. A woman crippled in her arms and legs was healed, and a blind man recovered his sight. Another woman, who mocked these wonders, suddenly lost her speech, and could recover it only through the merits of him whom she had despised. His habits, which were kept with great honour at Todi, also served afterwards to heal a great number of sick people. His hair shirt, kept at Florence in the house of the Annunziata, has above all a particular virtue for putting out fires. In 1317 there

was a translation of his relics, at which his first miracles were renewed. In 1516 Pope Leo X allowed the Servite religious to celebrate his feast, which Pope Paul V extended to all the churches of Florence in 1615. Finally Pope Clement X solemnly canonised him in 1671; but the bull of his canonisation was published only in 1724, by Benedict XIII.

Saint Philip Benizi is sometimes painted with three crowns held above his head by two angels. He is also shown striking the ground with his staff and making a spring come out of it.

His life was written by Arcangelo Giani, a Florentine. It is also found in the Chronicles of his Order, and in part in the continuations of the Annals of Cardinal Baronius by Spondanus, Bzovius and Raynaldus. These are the authors who have served us in composing this abridgment.

Saint James of Bevagna, Religious of the Order of Saint Dominic

1301. — Pope: Boniface VIII. — Emperor of Germany: Albert I of Austria.

> *Qui amat patrem aut matrem plus quam me, non est me dignus.*
>
> *He who loves his father or his mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.*
>
> *Matt. x, 37. — Maxim of the Saint.*

We have already noted, in the life of Saint Ambrose of Siena, that Saint James of Mevania, a town of Italy now called Bevagna, was born in 1220, in the same year and on the same day as Saint Thomas Aquinas and the same Saint Ambrose, and that their birth was represented in the sky by three stars, in each of which there appeared a religious clothed in the habit of Saint Dominic. This child was of the house of the Bianchi, one of the most illustrious of that province. His mother, his brother and another person of great virtue also had, at the time of his birth, prophetic visions of what he would one day be. He spent his childhood in singular innocence and piety. He was sent to school and made considerable progress there. At the age of sixteen he fulfilled what had been foretold of him by so many signs; for, being on the one hand powerfully moved by these words of Psalm cxviii, *Legem pone mihi, Domine, viam justificationum tuarum*: “Lord, give me for law the way of Thy justifications”; and on the other being encouraged by Saint Dominic, who appeared to him full of kindness, he asked for the habit of his Order and received it at Spoleto, which is not far from Bevagna. His parents opposed his vocation in vain: he answered them courageously that when it was a question of following Jesus Christ and making his soul safe, he no longer knew them. In the novitiate he showed an already consummate virtue. His silence was exact, his recollection continual, his obedience blind, his prayer attentive and fervent and his mortification universal. At his profession he made a perfect holocaust of himself, consecrating entirely to God his mind, his heart, his appetites, his senses, and all that he might have claimed of riches, honours and pleasures in the world.

Having been set to sacred studies, he acquired in a short time all that was needed to discharge worthily the obligations of a preacher of the Gospel. Then he went up into the pulpit with marvellous success; for not only did he confirm good people in the love of virtue and convert a great number of sinners, but he also checked the detestable heresy of the Nicolaitans, which, as a fatal consequence of the corruption of morals, was beginning to revive in Umbria. Ortinellus was its renewer; but our Saint, having entered into disputation with him, convinced him so evidently by the texts of Scripture and the authority of the holy Fathers that he finally obliged him to retract his errors and pronounce anathema against his own doctrine. His zeal to multiply the number of gospel labourers led him to undertake the foundation of a convent of his Order in the town of Bevagna, of which he was a native. At first he took only a very small house, and bought it with a sum of money that his mother and relatives provided. But shortly afterwards he was given a church and several adjoining houses to build a monastery. At the same time he induced a holy widow to build in the same town a convent of nuns, who embraced the Rule of Saint Benedict. He was often superior in various convents of his province, and always discharged the obligations of his office with much prudence, gentleness and firmness.

If his words were all-powerful in moving the religious to virtue and the exercises of the regular life, the examples of his life were incomparably more so. He scarcely slept at all; every night he tore his body three times with very harsh disciplines, after the example of his Father Saint Dominic. He bound his loins so tightly with an iron chain that it entered his skin and could afterwards not be torn out. His fasts were frequent and rigorous; on Fridays he fasted on bread and water; on other days his food was always the poorest and meanest in the whole monastery. No tongue can express the excellence of his purity, which was more than virginal. God set off so many virtues by very signal miracles. Bread and wine were supernaturally multiplied in his hands for the sustenance of the workmen labouring on his buildings. He freed prisoners from their irons by the efficacy of his prayers. The oil and water he had blessed healed several kinds of diseases. Recourse was had to him above all, with much success, in falls, from whatever height and into whatever precipice one fell. For the rest, neither this perfect innocence, nor this angelic purity, nor these divine communications, nor this great number of miracles, nor the gift of prophecy with which he was also endowed, kept him from living in continual fear of eternal damnation; and it was at times so great that his soul was quite filled with sadness and dread. Praying one day with extraordinary fervour at the feet of the crucifix, he earnestly pressed Our Lord to raise his hope a little and give him some assurance that he would not be among the number of the unhappy reprobate. Then this divine Master made a stream of blood flow from His precious side, which bathed his face and his habit and filled him with an inestimable sweetness. At the same time the crucifix spoke and said to him: “Let this blood, My servant, be the sign and pledge of your salvation!” From that hour James no longer had any fear, but on the contrary was flooded with so many delights that he was obliged to say his prayers in private so as to receive them with greater freedom.

The end of his life being near, Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, Saint Dominic and Saint George, for whom he had a quite particular affection, visited him and invited him to come with them, at the end of eight days, to receive the prize of eternal beatitude. Having fallen ill, he had the Sacraments administered to him, which he received with a devotion proportioned to his love. He then changed a vessel full of water into wine, which he had already done twice before. At last the same company that had invited him to the banquet of eternity came to tell him that all was ready and that he should not delay to honour the assembly of the Saints with his presence. He departed at once, and the religious changed the prayers of the commendation into those said for a soul that has just been separated from its body. Then a voice was heard saying: “Do not pray for him, but pray to him himself to be your intercessor with God.”

His body, in the space of three hundred years, was uncovered three times to be moved to more fitting places, and was always found incorrupt. There have been several revelations of his blessedness; but the countless miracles he has worked since his death and still works at present are more indubitable signs of it. His death took place on 15 August, the day of the Assumption of Our Lady, in 1301. His life is found among those of the Saints of the Order of Saint Dominic. Pope Boniface IX granted indulgences to those who would visit his relics on the first three days of May; and Pope Clement X allowed the whole Order of Friars Preachers to celebrate his feast solemnly on 23 August.

Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*.

Saint Timothy and Saint Apollinaris, Martyrs near Reims (3rd century)

Timothy, having come from the East into Gaul, began to preach the Gospel at Reims in spite of the persecution. Arrested by order of Lampadius, governor of the town, he was summoned to sacrifice to the idols. On his refusal, he was first beaten with sticks, after which vinegar and quicklime were poured on his wounds. His admirable constancy amid these torments was sustained by the visit of angels and by the vision of Our Lord, whom he saw high in heaven holding in His hand a crown of precious stones which He promised him. A witness of these wonders, Apollinaris, one of his guards, threw himself at his feet and received the faith. Lampadius, informed of the conversion of Apollinaris, seized him and had molten lead

poured into his mouth; as the sufferer felt no harm from it, he was thrown into prison with Timothy. At the same time a great multitude was put in irons who, having seen the miracle of the molten lead, had been converted to Jesus Christ and baptised by the priest Maurus. Apollinaris heard a heavenly voice announcing to him that all who had been baptised that night would be received into heaven the following day; and the event confirmed it, for the next day fifty persons were beheaded by order of Lampadius. Three days later Timothy and Apollinaris were led out of the town by Caesar's road to a place called *Buxitus*, where they were struck with the sword, not without first learning of the horrible punishment of the governor, whom a bolt of fire hurled from heaven struck on the shoulder in sight of all, and whom a demon then seized and stifled in its claws.

The bodies of the blessed Martyrs of Christ were reverently gathered up and buried by the Christians on 24 August. A certain Eusebius, converted by their death, built a church in their memory in which sight was restored to the blind, the use of their legs to the lame, freedom to those possessed by the devil, and health to every kind of sick person. This basilica also received the remains of many other Martyrs, among whom Saint Remigius desired to be buried. Tilpin, archbishop of Reims, used gold and silver to adorn fittingly the tomb of these generous athletes of the faith. Another archbishop of Reims, Arthald, gave King Otto the relics of Saint Timothy, which were translated into Saxony, not without many miracles. Some relics of Saint Apollinaris were translated to the monastery of Orbay, in the diocese of Sens.

Acta Sanctorum.

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[1] Saint Theonas succeeded Saint Maximus in the patriarchal see of Alexandria in 282 and held it for nearly nineteen years. By his learning and holiness he was the finest ornament of his Church. He composed an instruction in the form of a letter, in which he laid down rules of conduct for Christians living at the court of the emperors. He died in 300 and had Saint Peter as his successor. Saint Alexander built a church at Alexandria under the invocation of Saint Thomas. — Godescard.

[2] Saint Victor was not bishop of Utica, as the Roman Martyrology seems to suggest and as many hagiographers have believed, but of Vita in Byzacena (present-day State of Tunis). — Baillet, *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] He is already named in the Martyrology of France under 11 July, which is the true day of his feast in the diocese of Clermont.

[4] The historical documents of his episcopate having perished, the details of his actions are entirely unknown, as is the number of years he held the pastoral staff; it is known only that he increased the flock of Jesus Christ by his labours. Some authors have written that Saint Sidonius was the man born blind to whom Our Lord Jesus Christ gave sight. His feast is marked on 23 August in the most ancient martyrologies; several churches in Provence have been dedicated in his honour. His body, buried first at Aix in a marble tomb beside those of Saint Maximinus and Saint Mary Magdalen, was saved from the fury of the Saracens and finally found again in the town of Saint-Maximin. The lower jaw of Saint Sidonius, which the metropolitan church of Saint-Sauveur possessed before the French Revolution, was saved from destruction at that disastrous time by the foresight of the faithful, and since then (1820) Pierre Ferdinand, archbishop of Aix, has restored it to the veneration of the faithful.

[5] For several centuries (from the ninth to the seventeenth) the Blessed Virgin Mary seemed to have chosen the royal abbey of Notre-Dame at Soissons to show her goodness and power there in a special way. Numerous pilgrims flocked there from the most distant countries: from Lorraine, Burgundy, the Low Countries, Italy, and so on. The abbey kept several precious objects which had been used by the Blessed Virgin and of whose authenticity there was then no doubt: a shoe in the form of a half-boot, and a girdle. An image of this divine Mother holding the Child Jesus was also venerated there. The miracles worked through prayer before these sacred objects were so certain and so often renewed that, to show God and His holy Mother all its gratitude, Joslein, bishop of Soissons, at the request of the clergy and people, instituted a commemorative feast called *The Declaration of the Miracles of Our Lady*; and Pope Alexander IV ordered in 1254 that it be celebrated throughout the diocese with a proper office. In the Soissons breviary of 1675 this feast is placed in October, on the Saturday before or after the feast of the holy relics. Inside the abbey it was kept on 6 October, the anniversary of a considerable number of cures. M. de Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons, in the breviary he gave his clergy in 1742, moved it to the day of the Octave of the Assumption. The office of the solemnity of the miracles of the Blessed Virgin formed part of the Soissons breviary until 1851, when that diocese returned to the Roman liturgy. One cannot understand how a commemorative feast of so many benefits of the Virgin Mary towards the people of Soissons, a feast confirmed by a sovereign Pontiff, could, after being constantly celebrated for six hundred years and down to our own day, have been struck out of the calendar by those who were charged with drawing up the new Soissons Proper. — Henri Congnet, dean of the Chapter of Soissons.

[6] We gave the life of Saint Hyacinth on 16 August.

[7] On these Martyrs see note 1 to the Roman Martyrology of 17 August, vol. IX, p. 624.

[8] By the name Septimania must be understood the former domain of the Visigoths in Gaul. It comprised, in the Second Aquitaine, the Bordelais, Poitou, Saintonge, Angoumois, Périgord and Agenais, and in the First Narbonensis, the city or diocese of Toulouse.

24 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Saint BARTHOLOMEW, apostle, who preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Indies, and returned from there into Greater Armenia, where, after making many conversions, he was flayed alive by the barbarians, and, having been beheaded by order of King Astyages, completed his martyrdom. His holy body was carried first to the island of Lipari, then to Benevento, and finally to Rome, to the island in the Tiber, where it is honoured by the devout veneration of the faithful. About the year 71. — At Carthage, three hundred blessed Martyrs, in the time of Valerian and Gallienus. After several other tortures, the governor ordered a lime kiln to be lit, had coals and incense brought, and said to them: Choose one or the other: either offer incense to Jupiter on these coals, or be plunged into this lime. Then, armed with their faith and confessing that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, they all threw themselves together into the fire and were reduced to powder in the fumes of the lime; whence this white army of the blessed merited to be called the White Mass (*Massa Candida*).[1] 258. — At Nepi, Saint Ptolemy, bishop, a disciple of the apostle Saint Peter, by whom he was sent into Tuscany to preach the Gospel; he died in that town a glorious martyr of Jesus Christ. 1st c. — Also at Nepi, Saint Romanus, bishop of the same town, who, being a disciple of Saint Ptolemy, was also the companion of his martyrdom. 1st c. — At Ostia, Saint Aurea, virgin and martyr, who was thrown into the sea with a stone round her neck; her holy body, which the waves had cast back on the shore, was buried by Saint Nonnus. 3rd c. — In Isauria, Saint Tatio, martyr, who, having been beheaded during the persecution of Diocletian under the governor Urbanus, received the crown of martyrdom. About 304. — On the same day, Saint Eutyches, a disciple of Saint John the Evangelist, who, having suffered prison, the scourge and fire in various countries for preaching the Gospel, died at last a peaceful death. End of the 1st or beginning of the 2nd c. — Also Saint George Limniotes, monk, who, having rebuked the impious emperor Leo for breaking the images and burning the relics of the Saints, had his hands cut off and his head burned by his order, and flew to the Lord with the honour of martyrdom. 8th c. — At Rouen, Saint OUEN, bishop and confessor. 684. — At Nevers, Saint Parize or Patrick,[2] abbot. About 700.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Desvres (Pas-de-Calais, arrondissement of Boulogne-sur-Mer), in the diocese of Arras, Saint Avia or Aurea, one of the companions of Saint Ursula. The boat carrying her from England to France was cast on the coast: Aurea escaped the shipwreck and went to settle in the forest of Desvres. An irruption of barbarians having reached her humble cabin, the young virgin first had her eyes torn out and then her head cut off, while defending her chastity. Many pilgrims used to visit the ancient dwelling of the virgin martyr, where a small chapel had been built in her honour, with a dwelling for a solitary. Since the Revolution the cult and the name of this saint have fallen into complete oblivion. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint EPTADIUS, solitary at Cervon, near Corbigny, in the diocese of Nevers. 525. — In the diocese of Le Mans, Saint RIGOMER and Saint TENESTINA, solitaries. 6th c. — In the diocese of Cologne, Blessed SAUDRADE, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Gladebach (*Gladbacense monasterium*), and confessor. 985. — In the diocese of Évreux, the memory of Saint Agofroi or Godfrey, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of La Croix-Saint-Leufroi (*Crux sancti Leufridi, Crux sancti Audomi, Crux sancti Heltonis, Madriacum*), in the same diocese.[3] 8th c. — At Clermont in Auvergne, Saint Supporina, whose body was long honoured in the church of Saint-Artème in that city. She is already mentioned in the additions of the Bollandists for 24 January. After 395. — At Saint-Hubert, a town of Belgian Luxembourg in the forest of the Ardennes, Blessed THEODORIC or THIERRY, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of that place (*Andainum, Andaginum sancti Petri*). 1087. — In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Evergisilus or Evergistus, archdeacon of

Saint Severinus and then his successor in the archiepiscopal see of that city. He is also mentioned on 14 September. 5th c. — In the former monastery of Maubeuge (*Melbodiensis parthenon*), in the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Ansoalde, virgin and nun. Her gentleness, her humility and her spirit of recollection edified all her companions. A painful illness slowly consumed her and led her at last to the rest of the Lord. — In the diocese of Verdun, two leagues from Saint-Mihiel (Meuse), the dedication of Notre-Dame de Benoîtevaux (*Benedicta Vallis*). This chapel keeps an image of the Blessed Virgin which numerous miracles have made very famous, and there is in this place a miraculous fountain whose water cures several infirmities. 1138 or 1140. — At Frayssinet (arrondissement of Briançon), in the diocese of Gap, Notre-Dame de Monthabor, a sanctuary built on the highest of the mountains bordering Piedmont and Savoy, in a place where the harshness of the climate allows no trace of vegetation to appear, and which can be reached only by almost impassable paths. Every year on this day, and on the following Sunday, the parish of Frayssinet goes there in procession, and along the way a considerable number of pilgrims join it.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — Saint Hyacinth, confessor, whose feast is celebrated on the 16th of this month.[4] 1257.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — The translation of the body of Saint Angelus, martyr, of our Order.[5] 1225.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Bartholomew, apostle.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Among the Canons of Vienne: When the feast of Saint Bartholomew is celebrated on the 25th, the first reading is: *The Vigil of Saint Bartholomew, apostle*; then: *At Tagaste in Africa*, etc., as on the 16th of this month; then: *At Carthage*, etc. When it is celebrated on the 24th, then on the 26th the first reading is: *At Tagaste*, etc.; then: *At Rome*, etc.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — In places where the feast of Saint Bartholomew is celebrated on the 25th of this month: The Vigil of Saint Bartholomew, apostle. — On the same day, Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, widow, of whom mention is made on 21 August.[6] 1641. Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of Cîteaux. — The same as among the Benedictines and the Camaldolese.

Martyrology of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Todi, Saint Philip Benizi of Florence, propagator of the Order of the Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom Clement X placed among the number of the Saints. His feast is celebrated on the 23rd of this month, and is kept today in our Order.[7] 1285.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the diocese of Pistoia, in Tuscany, the Venerable Maria of Popiglio, virgin. From childhood she led a pure and pious life, grew up like a humble flower of the valleys, practised virtue simply and without affectation, and was humble without hypocrisy, devout without ostentation, obedient without answering back, strict without harshness, serious with an outward air of the gentlest gaiety. At about the age of thirty she joined the Third Order of Saint

Dominic, and was a perfect tertiary, fulfilling the rule of penance she had adopted with the simplicity and candour of a child. God granted her to foretell future things many times, to read consciences, and to work miracles during her life and after her death. 1547. — At Ostia, a village and small port of the Papal States, together with Saint Aurea, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, the holy martyrs Censorinus, Felix, Maximus, Herculanus, Venerius, Styracius, Cene, Commodus, Hermes, Maurus, Eusebius, Rusticus, Monagrius, Amandinus, Olympius, Cyprus, Theodore the Tribune, and Sabinus, victims of the persecution of the emperor Claudius. About the middle of the 3rd c. — At Antioch, the holy martyrs Zenobius, Capitulinus,

Emeritus, Italicus, Jovian and Julius, mentioned in the apographs of Saint Jerome. — In the island of Cephalonia (*Cephalonia, Melaena*), one of the Ionian Islands, at the entrance to the Gulf of Lepanto, Saints Gregory, Theodore and Leo, confessors. About 360. — In Scotland, Saint Irchard, bishop and confessor, also called Erthad and Erchad. He was born of idolatrous parents; but God gave him the grace of discovering to him the falsehood of the religion of his fathers. From his youth he held in horror the detestable sacrifices of paganism and applied himself to following the precepts of Jesus Christ. Assiduous in prayer, he chastised his body with bloody disciplines. Saint Ternan, bishop of the Picts (about 450), struck by such happy dispositions, ordained him priest and made him his coadjutor. He filled this office for some time with much fruit, then went to Rome to visit the tomb of the holy Apostles. His reputation for holiness followed him there, and Pope Saint Gregory the Great (590–604), who then governed the Church, gave him episcopal consecration. Irchard then returned to Scotland, where he busied himself with preaching, seeking to win for Jesus Christ the souls led astray by idolatry. Having reached a great old age, he fell asleep gently in the Lord, after foretelling the day of his death. 6th or 7th c.

Saint Bartholomew, Apostle, Martyr in Greater Armenia

About the year 71. — Pope: Saint Linus. — Roman Emperor: Vespasian.

> *Ambigitur regali an sis in murice natus, Sed te purpureum nullus obisse negat.*
>
> *The question is debated whether you were born in the royal purple; but what no one is unaware of is that you died empurpled with your own blood.*
>
> *Fasti sacri.*

Saint Bartholomew was a Galilean by origin, like the other Apostles. Some ancient and modern authors have imagined that he was the same as Nathanael, who was brought to Our Lord by Saint Philip the Apostle, and of whom this divine Master gave this excellent praise: “Behold a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile.” This, however, is not confirmed, in the opinion of Saint Ambrose, Saint John Chrysostom, Theodoret and several other Fathers, who say that the Son of God did not choose for His Apostles Doctors of the law, as Nathanael was, but unlettered men and poor ignorant people. Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory openly reject this opinion in their Commentaries on the story of the calling of Nathanael. Other writers have asserted that Saint Bartholomew was a Syrian and of the race of the Ptolemy kings; that he went about clothed in a garment bordered with purple and adorned with several precious stones; and that it was on his account that the Apostles disputed among themselves which of their company was the greatest, because they feared that his nobility would cause him to be preferred to the others in the seats of the kingdom of heaven. But none of these things has any likelihood; for, first, we learn from the book of the Acts that all the Apostles were Galileans and not from Syria, unless perhaps in so far as Galilee formed part of the government of Syria. Moreover, it is certain that the Ptolemies never reigned in that Asiatic province, but only in Egypt, where the kings, having given up the name of Pharaoh which they had borne for several centuries, took that of Ptolemy. Besides, if Our Lord did not take for His Apostles the Wise of the World or Doctors of the law, neither did He take men considerable for their wealth, their nobility and their alliances; “but,” as Saint Paul says, “He chose what was weakest to confound what was strongest; and what was contemptible, or rather what was not at all, to crush and destroy what seemed to be something.” Finally, it is a mistake to believe that the name Bartholomew takes its etymology from *Bar*, that is, son, and from Ptolemy, as though Bartholomew were the same thing as son of Ptolemy; it takes it from *Bar* and from *Tholmai*, which is a fairly common name among the Hebrews, and properly means son of Tholmai, as Baronius has remarked in his Notes on the Martyrology.

Saint Bartholomew, in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, is placed sixth in the list of the Apostles. Like them, he was a witness of the glorious resurrection and of the principal actions of Jesus Christ on earth. He is named among the hundred and twenty Disciples gathered to pray after the Ascension. The Holy Spirit, for whose descent he had prepared himself with such fervour, filled him with zeal, charity and every virtue. Clothed,

like the other Apostles, with a supernatural strength, he thought of nothing more than making Jesus Christ known and carrying His name to the ends of the world.

After preparing himself worthily for the exercise of the functions of the apostolate, Saint Bartholomew began by going to carry the Gospel into Arabia Felix, into the land of Hus; then, going up towards northern India this side of the Ganges, he advanced towards the most distant East and travelled through central Asia, which is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. He spent several years there, and after converting a great number of people, he left them a copy of the Gospel composed by Saint Matthew. When he had founded Churches in various places, he took his way back towards the west of Asia, and visited Persia, Babylonia, Lesser Armenia and Asia Minor.

“Saint Bartholomew,” says Nicetas the Paphlagonian, “carried to the Indians and the eastern Ethiopians the light of true knowledge and the doctrine of eternal life, and proclaimed Jesus Christ to them clearly and in their own languages. His preaching was accompanied by miracles. He put to flight the demons who attacked men, and healed every kind of sickness and infirmity by the mere invocation of the name of Jesus. By the power of the same name he restored several dead persons to life. Every day new believers came at his word to swell the countless multitude of the faithful; he instructed them, purified them by the bath of regeneration, and finally inflamed their hearts by communicating to them the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those among them who were most worthy and most filled with heavenly grace he consecrated bishops or priests. An admirable pontiff, he taught them the sacred rites that those who have received this consecration must know. He taught them the holy Scriptures, the science of the gospel mysteries and the perfect doctrine of salvation. New and spotless churches rose through his care in the various provinces and towns through which he passed.” Such are the deeds of Saint Bartholomew in the Indies.

He had grown old in the fulfilment of this apostolic ministry. His limbs and his whole body were at last worn out. He longed to receive from Jesus Christ, as the reward of his laborious journeys, possession of the glorious rest of His kingdom. Wishing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, his master and model, who he knew had entered into His glory by the way of suffering, he desired, after having been like Him during his life, to crown it by a like end, by martyrdom. The Son of God, who sees the thoughts of hearts, was not slow to furnish him with the occasion of bearing witness to the truth by the shedding of his blood. Saint Bartholomew came back towards western Asia after performing a great number of wonders and conversions in the vast regions of the East. Would to God that the memory of so many fine deeds had been preserved for us! But there was no one to write them down. We know a little better those he did in Asia Minor and in Armenia, because they were reported and partly written down by the first faithful of that country, who were much more lettered than those of the other peoples of the East.

He preached for some time in Asia Minor, and notably in Mysia, Lydia and Phrygia; it was then that Jesus Christ told him to go to the help of the apostle Saint Philip, who was strenuously combating idolatry in the city of Hierapolis in Phrygia. By his presence and his preaching he contributed to the ruin of the impious cult rooted in the hearts of that people. After the death of Saint Philip he restored order in the church of Hierapolis; and when he had strengthened the faithful of Lycaonia, he set out for Greater Armenia, where he was to consummate his martyrdom.

As soon as he had entered the temple of the capital, where King Polymius lived with his whole court, the demon who gave oracles there through the mouth of an idol named Astaroth, and who also healed many sick people brought to him, became entirely dumb and unable to perform any cure. The Armenians, astonished at his silence, consulted another idol, called Berith or Beireth, to learn the cause. He answered that it was the presence of Bartholomew, Apostle of the true God, that forced his companion to be silent; that he would never be able to speak as long as so holy a man was in their city, because he bent his knees a hundred times by day and a hundred times by night to pray; that he was always accompanied by a troop of angels; and that he proclaimed the truth by preaching that divine honours were due only to the Creator of heaven and earth.

On this answer the priests of Astaroth searched everywhere for the holy Apostle, not to honour his virtue or to receive his instructions with respect, but to vent on him the rage they felt at seeing themselves deprived, by his presence, of the sacrilegious gain the impious cult of their idol brought them. All their diligence would have been in vain had Bartholomew not shown himself of his own accord; but he did so only by delivering the possessed, healing the sick and working other wonders that filled the unbelievers with admiration and took from these priests the power to ill-treat him as they intended. The king himself, whose daughter was tormented by a furious demon that had taken possession of her body, on being informed of these marvels, had him brought to his palace and begged him to help the afflicted girl by delivering her from so evil a guest. Bartholomew did so on the spot with sovereign authority, which so delighted the prince that, to acknowledge so great a benefit, he sent him shortly afterwards camels laden with gold, silver, precious stones and rich garments.

The Saint, having learned by revelation what the king was going to do, kept himself so well hidden until the presents had been carried back to the palace that it was impossible to find him. Then he came and presented himself before Polymius in his chamber, without the doors having been opened, and told him that it was neither gold nor silver that had brought him into his country, but zeal for the salvation of souls; that he asked him, not to give him riches, but to make himself worthy of eternal treasures by abandoning the abominable superstition of idolatry and acknowledging the true God, who is the sole author of our life and the sovereign Lord of all things. He added that, to convince him of the truth of his doctrine, he offered to make the demon that had deceived him until then confess his wickedness and his impostures. And indeed, when Polymius had led him to the temple, Astaroth, who usually spoke in the idol, admitted that he was not God but a wretched spirit condemned to eternal flames; that the oracles he had pronounced had been nothing but deceptions, because he foretold only the evil he meant to do, or the good he did not wish to prevent, so as to bind men more firmly to believing him; and that the cures he had worked had been nothing but illusions, because it was he himself who caused the diseases by his malice, so that, when he ceased to cause them, people would believe he was working miracles and would continue to pay him the divine honours that were not his due. On this confession the Apostle commanded him to break all the idols of the temple and to withdraw for ever to a place where he could harm no one. He was forced to obey, and the ruin of all these idols made so great an impression on the mind of Polymius and of all his people that they were converted to Jesus Christ and earnestly asked for holy Baptism. Twelve cities of the same kingdom followed the example of their prince: they received the Gospel of salvation from the mouth of Saint Bartholomew, believed in Jesus Christ and submitted to the laws of Christianity; and, most of the inhabitants having been baptised, the holy Apostle chose a small number of them to make priests, deacons and ministers of the Church. Meanwhile the princes of darkness, unable to bear the ruin of their empire and the establishment of the Saviour's, stirred up the sacrificers of the idols against Bartholomew. These, not hoping to corrupt the mind of King Polymius, whom they saw too firmly established in the faith and love of Jesus Christ, addressed themselves to his elder brother, named Astyages, who also reigned in a part of Armenia, and represented to him that he must put this new preacher to death if he did not wish soon to see the general ruin of the religion of his ancestors. Astyages, moved by these representations, sent to seize Bartholomew, whether he had come of his own accord to preach in his States or whether the king had drawn him there by some hope of conversion. When he was before him, he asked him whether it was not he who had perverted Polymius and destroyed the gods of his nation. "There is no other God of all the nations," answered the Apostle, "than the sovereign Creator who reigns in the heavens with His only Son Jesus Christ. All those you worship are only demons who do not deserve divine honours. So I have destroyed the worship of no God, but only the vain superstition of idolatry and the adoration of demons. As for King Polymius, I have not perverted him; I have shown him the way of eternal life, outside which no one can be saved." Astyages, embittered by these words, and because at the same moment an idol he worshipped fell to the ground, had the holy Preacher cruelly scourged; then, by a barbarity surpassing everything cruel that men have ever invented, he had him flayed alive from head to foot,

so that, having no more skin, nothing could be seen in him but blood-soaked flesh horribly pierced by his bones. Finally, as he was still breathing after this torment, the very account of which makes one shudder, he had his head cut off. Peter de Natalibus says that he was flayed on 24 August and beheaded on the 25th, and that this is why in some Churches his feast is celebrated on the 24th and in others on the 25th. This execution of the just man was punished in the persons of those who had been its instigators; for the demons seized Astyages and the priests who were accomplices in his crime, and after tormenting them for thirty days, strangled them, so as to go on tormenting them for ever in hell. As for Polymius, it is said that he was the first bishop of Armenia, and that he laboured for twenty years with untiring zeal to maintain what the Apostle had done there and to increase Christianity by the continual conversion of unbelievers. The flayed body of the Martyr and his blood-soaked skin were buried with great honour in Albana, a town of Upper Armenia that is now destroyed.

Saint Bartholomew is found represented carrying his skin on a stick; but most often he is simply given in his hand the knife that served for his cruel torment, or else a triumphal cross.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Some time after his death, a new persecution having arisen against the Church of Jesus Christ, the pagans took these holy relics, shut them up in a lead chest and threw them into the sea, saying to the Saint: “You shall deceive the people no more”; but (it is said) this chest, floating on the water, happily came to land on the island of Lipari, near Sicily; the Christians, by divine revelation, received the relics there with great devotion, and in course of time a great church was built over his tomb. In 838, the Saracens having seized that island, this rich treasure was carried to Benevento (839) by a religious, to whom Saint Bartholomew appeared to reveal to him what these unbelievers had done with it. Otto of Freising asserts that in 983 the emperor Otto II, having made himself master of Benevento, deprived it of this blessing by having the body of the holy Apostle carried to Rome. His intention was to enrich Germany; but, dying the same year, he could not carry out this plan, so that the porphyry shrine he had had made for it, with the treasure it contained, remained at Rome, in the island of the Tiber, where a church was built in honour of the holy Apostle. Robert du Mont, in the continuation of Sigebert, adds that in the year 1157 this coffin was uncovered by a flood of the Tiber, and that the whole body, except the skin, which had remained at Benevento, was found there with a copper plate that attested, in Greek and Latin characters, its translation by the emperor Otto. Since that time devotion to Saint Bartholomew has greatly increased in Rome. His church has been enlarged, and every year, during the octave of his feast, a great concourse of people can be seen going to honour so illustrious a defender of the Gospel. Cardinal Baronius believes that this translation to Rome took place on 25 August, and that this is why the feast is kept on that day there, whereas in other countries, such as France, it is celebrated on the 24th. Pope Innocent III ordered that each diocese should observe its ancient custom in this matter. The Greeks place his feast on 11 June.

Saint Dionysius the Areopagite speaks very honourably of Saint Bartholomew in his book of the *Mystical Theology*, and attributes to him this fine saying: “that theology is of great and of small extent, and that the Gospel is very ample and very concise.” In the first centuries there circulated a Gospel under the name of Saint Bartholomew, as others did under the names of most of the other Apostles; but Pope Gelasius rejected them all as apocryphal, except the four celebrated Gospels according to Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luke and Saint John. The historian Nicephorus, following Theodore the Reader, mentions some relics of the same Apostle found by the emperor Anastasius in the fortress of Dara, on the borders of Armenia and Persia, after an apparition of the Apostle himself to that emperor, in which he declared that this fortress was under his particular protection and that he guarded its walls. Procopius says that Justinian had a church built in the same place to house them more fittingly. France was not deprived of a share in so great a good: the head of Saint Bartholomew was brought to Toulouse, to the church of Saint-Sernin, where it has been enclosed in a bust of gilded wood in the upper crypt of the church; and to the abbey of Gersi, in the diocese of Paris, one of

his arms still covered with its flesh but stripped of its skin. The cathedral of Versailles possesses one of the arms of Saint Bartholomew, coming from one of the abbeys of the neighbourhood destroyed in 1790. The city of Paris has always been very devoted to Saint Bartholomew, and no sooner had it known Jesus Christ than it honoured this faithful labourer of His Gospel by building a church under his name. This is the parish of Saint-Barthélemy, which is believed to be the oldest church in the Cité. There are also relics of the holy Apostle at the monastery of Charmes, a town on the Moselle; at Naples in Italy; in a Benedictine monastery at Bordeaux; and in other churches in Belgium, Germany and Spain. Some distance from Nakhichevan, a town of Russian Armenia, three leagues from Mount Ararat and seven from the river Araxes, on the frontiers of Persia and Turkey, there is a fairly large village named *Kisoux*, which is very famous among the Armenians; for the tradition of those countries holds that Saint Bartholomew was martyred in that place, and the Armenian Christians say that they still possess some relics of the holy Apostle. So many and such striking cures have taken place in that spot through the intercession of the glorious Bartholomew that even the Mohammedans come there in devotion, chiefly those who have fevers and other illnesses. There are in this village three establishments or convents, served by religious, for the charitable reception of Christians coming from Europe. Most of the Armenians of those regions are Roman Catholics; when the archbishop of Nakhichevan is elected, he goes to Rome, where the Pope confirms his election.

To complete this biography we have used the *Histoire des Apôtres* by the abbé Maistre, the *Hagiologie nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier, and local notes.

Saint Eptadius of Autun, Solitary at Cervon, in the Diocese of Nevers

525. — Pope: John I. — Kings of the Franks: Chlodomer; Theuderic I.

> *Virtus charitatis quam sit nobilissima, quantis praeconiis honoranda, quantis laudibus praedicanda, nulla potest exprimi lingua.*
>
> *What tongue will tell us how noble charity is, how much it deserves to be celebrated with hymns and praises!*
>
> *S. Bonaventure, Sermons.*

Eptadius was born at Autun in about the latter half of the fifth century, of parents distinguished by nobility, inherited wealth, high offices, and above all by virtue. He spent the first years of his life in the country, in a castle that history calls *castrum Maternense* or *Elobremense*: Marnay, near Lormes, now in the diocese of Nevers. The young child, faithful to the traditions and good examples of his family and to the inspirations of grace, showed an extraordinarily precocious piety, and at an age when frivolity prevails delighted to live face to face with eternal truths. And so, at the age of twelve, he slipped away by a secret flight from a beloved family whose delight he was, to put his childhood under the direction of a master skilled in the human sciences and still more in the science of God. Where did he find this precious treasure? Doubtless among the religious who guarded the relics of Saint Symphorian, in the cloister recently raised by Saint Euphronius, the most celebrated and perhaps the only great school that the Aeduan country then offered to souls eager for light and virtue. It was there, in recollection and under the discipline of the religious life, that he received that solid education which makes strong wills, large and generous hearts and enlightened minds, and which produces great characters, great men and great saints. Full of admiration for Saint Symphorian, he always had a special cult for him, one might even say a remarkably heartfelt one, and early chose him as his model. He often went to pray at the tomb of the young martyr of his own age and draw from it those noble inspirations of gospel charity, sacrifice and devotion which we shall soon see dominating his whole conduct and directing all his acts. Instead of plucking to pieces, like so many others, with deplorable frivolity and foolish heedlessness, that flower of life called youth, he never ceased to cultivate his mind by serious studies and to nourish his heart with Christian piety. And so he made such astonishingly rapid progress in profane letters, in sacred letters and in virtue that at fifteen he had not only caught up with but outstripped all his fellow pupils. The angelic child, enriched with the gifts of nature and of grace and adorned with the double

crown of talent and piety, joined to the simplicity and artless charms of early youth an extraordinary wisdom that was called divine: *Illustrabatur divina sapientia*. After so pious, so pure and so well-filled an adolescence, formed by an eminently serious and profoundly Christian education, he did not let himself be caught by the deceitful seductions of the age of passions. At twenty he was an accomplished young man, and never was so much virtue, so many qualities of mind and heart, seen joined with such beauty. Everyone admired him, everyone loved him: he seemed to be the favourite of earth and of heaven.

Then his many friends, his neighbours and his relatives, whose glory and joy he was, urged him to think of a marriage, and all set about looking for a bride worthy to be joined to him and to enter his family. A suitable match was soon found: the wedding day had even been fixed. But Providence had views very different from those of men. Suddenly Eptadius was seized by a violent fever. The illness rapidly reached a frightening intensity, and all human remedies seemed powerless, when one day, struck by the holiness of some virgins consecrated to God who had come to visit him on his sickbed, the sick man vowed to consecrate himself like them to the divine Spouse of souls and to devote himself to the relief of human miseries if his health were restored. He was soon cured, and we shall see how he kept his word. Sprung from a noble and wealthy family, formed by excellent studies and enriched with all the knowledge that the most careful liberal education procures, Eptadius saw a brilliant career opening before him. It is even believed that he had already been judged worthy to hold at Autun the important office of moneyer. But renouncing all business as well as all the pomps of the world, he opened his soul from then on only to heavenly thoughts, occupied himself only with good works, and used his fortune to relieve the poor. More than that, making himself poor and embracing the humility and the cross of Jesus Christ, instead of fine linen he wore a rough hair shirt on his skin, and lived on barley bread with a few vegetables seasoned with a little salt or vinegar; and even this meagre food he took only after sunset. He was often seen to go two, three and even four days without eating. Rich, he deprived himself to give more to the needy; innocent, he did penance for others. He could be seen remaining long hours prostrate before God, mingling with the holy groans of prayer abundant tears that bathed his emaciated cheeks.

So extraordinary a life in this young man, so rich and so distinguished, attracted general attention. Soon people flocked to him from all sides to gather a few words of edification from his lips, to consult his lofty wisdom, which was regarded as almost inspired, and to implore his help and ask his succour in their spiritual and bodily needs. The young venerated him as the best of fathers; the old cherished him as the tenderest and most loving of sons; all had for him an affection mingled with respect. No one could resist the gentle and strong ascendancy exercised by his amiability, his gentleness and his winning speech. Flavichon, bishop of Autun, loved the pious young man with a fatherly tenderness, and, doubtless to prepare in him a worthy successor, wished to raise him to orders. But neither the wishes of the people nor the entreaties of the pontiff could overcome Eptadius’s resistance; for his humility was greater still than his merit. The pontiff was obliged to give way, at least for the moment, before so persistent and firm a refusal. It seems, however, that later, probably under Pragmatius, Flavichon’s successor, fresh entreaties succeeded in overcoming the stubborn fear that the consciousness of his unworthiness had inspired in our Saint at the sight of the height at which the priesthood is placed. Several ancient manuscripts or martyrologies do in fact give him the title of priest of Autun, priest and confessor.

Raised to the priesthood after long refusing it, Eptadius was soon called to a still more eminent dignity, the episcopate. Clovis, informed not only by report but also by his own eyes of all the good that the immense charity of the man of God was doing, thought of him at once as soon as the great see of Auxerre became vacant by the death of the holy bishop Censurius (502). But as the illustrious citizen of Autun was not his subject, he asked for him himself from Gundobad at a meeting on the banks of the Cure, where the two princes at last signed peace after a fierce war. The king of the Burgundians, understanding the whole loss his States were about to suffer, would, history says, have given up a province or an entire army with less pain; he

was even almost tempted to refuse the king of the Franks. However, so as not to break with his powerful conqueror, he consented at last, though not without difficulty, to the sacrifice demanded, and granted Eptadius. The king of the Franks, delighted with the precious acquisition he had just made in the person of Eptadius, hastened to present him to the church of Auxerre. The election did not hesitate; for besides the fact that the monarch's wish could be regarded as an order, it anticipated every desire. The clergy, the nobility, the people of the town and the people of the countryside, applauding the royal choice, ratified it with happiness and enthusiasm by the most unanimous and spontaneous acclamation (the year 500). Only the consent of Eptadius was now lacking, for everything had been done without his knowledge. People perhaps thought that this would make it impossible for him to refuse; but they had reckoned without his humility, which this time was to be intractable. He received the news of his election with the most vigorous refusal. "No," he cried in a loud, firm voice, "no, I will not be a bishop. What! a miserable sinner like me accept so eminent a dignity, take upon himself the crushing burden of such a charge! Never." And at once, leaving his cell, he ran to hide himself in the solitude among the mountains and in the depths of the forests of the Morvan, so as to escape the entreaties of the king and the pressing of the envoys from Auxerre. Never did an ambitious man do as much to attain honours as he did to escape them. The fear of the episcopate had made him flee far from the town and the world: he never returned thereafter except at the call of charity or piety, and settled for good with a few disciples in a desert place called Cervon (*Cervidunum*, mountain of the stags), not far from Corbigny, passing nights and days in fasting, holy psalmody and prayer, and begging the Lord to fulfil for ever in his favour the words of the Prophet: "Lo, I have gone far off flying away, and I abode in the wilderness."

His prayer was heard. Clovis, seeing that nothing could draw him from his remote and deep retreat, was obliged to give way. Yet he did not surrender unconditionally: terms were agreed. The king bound himself by oath never again to speak to him of the episcopate; Eptadius for his part promised to pray for the monarch and his people, to concern himself as before with the care and ransom of captives, Roman, Burgundian or other, of whatever race they might be, and to be the distributor of the royal alms to prisoners, widows, orphans and all the needy. Clovis's good works were to pass through his hands. Eptadius hastened to exercise his functions, which had now become in a way official, for the king sent him a considerable sum which he placed at the disposal of his charity. Nothing less than this solemn promise was needed to reassure his humility, so deeply alarmed, and to induce him to come out of his pious solitude at least from time to time. For the rest, the conditions Clovis had laid on him, far from costing him anything, anticipated his wishes. It was a happiness for him to be able to resume in complete freedom the works of mercy that had always been, and always remained afterwards, the occupation of his life. Yet he left his beloved cell only when zeal or charity required it. And so he returned to it as soon as possible, to rest his soul in pious calm amid his brethren and to steep it anew in prayer before flying once more to the help of some misery.

It was then that, for the spiritual good of so many unfortunates whose visible providence he was, Eptadius bowed humbly beneath the burden of the admirable dignity of the priesthood. Uniting the apostolate of faith with the apostolate of charity, at the same time as he relieved every misery and fed bodies with material bread, he fed souls with the divine word, regenerated them, and strengthened them by the power of the sacraments.

Meanwhile Burgundian bands set out for Italy, ravaged a province and brought back numerous prisoners from their raids. At this news Eptadius hastened up. The savage warriors, subdued by his words, sent back all these unfortunates, who soon could see their desolate homeland again and console so many weeping families by their return. Shortly afterwards the Saint had a fresh occasion to exercise his tireless charity. By order of the king of Burgundy, a stronghold of the Limousin named *Idunum* was taken by storm, and its whole population was reduced to slavery and carried off captive. Eptadius learned of this frightful calamity. At once, falling on his knees with his face to the ground, he set himself to pray and shed abundant tears before

God; then, rising full of divine strength, he wrote to Sigismund, son and successor of Gundobad. In the name of God he demanded the release of all the captives of free condition. The king was at first astonished at this holy boldness, but did not dare resist. Eptadius's request seemed to him an order from heaven: he obeyed, and three thousand of these poor people of every age and both sexes, lately plunged in the most extreme grief, now restored to freedom and protected by a suitable escort, returned joyfully to their own country, blessing God and their admirable deliverer (516).

The great war that ended to the glory of Clovis with the defeat and death of Alaric, king of the Visigoths, also gave our Saint occasion to exercise his charity. The Franks after their victory had carried off a countless multitude of captives, and everywhere these unfortunates were to be found, torn from their homeland, alone amid their victorious enemies, without help, without consolation, deprived of liberty and deprived even of hope. But Eptadius was there: he was their providence. Going from town to town and province to province, he paid the ransom of the greater number of them, broke their chains and restored them to the places that had seen them born. God willed to honour by miracles so lofty a virtue, which was already itself a wonder. — A young girl possessed by the devil had frightful fits of fury. It was impossible to restrain her: she broke every bond. Recourse was had to Eptadius. The Saint went to her, and while he was at prayer the evil spirit suddenly cried out through the mouth of the possessed girl: "One of your friends has just been murdered during the night in the neighbouring forest." The man of God, after delivering the poor girl, went to the place indicated, where he did indeed find the body of his friend; he had it carried to the cemetery and gave it pious burial with many prayers and many tears. — As he was returning one day from the monastery of Saint-Pourçain, a young woman who was dumb was brought to him. He blessed some oil, poured a few drops into her mouth and sent her away cured. — Another time a priest named Paul, burning with a high fever, also had recourse to Eptadius, knelt before him and begged him in piteous tones to be so good as to heal him. The Saint, moved with compassion, at once raised his eyes and his heart to heaven, and by the power of the same Spirit who had once quenched the flames around the three young Hebrews thrown into the burning furnace, he quenched the inner fire by which the poor sick man was consumed. — Some time later a venerable archpriest, the father of this same Paul of whom we have just spoken, was struck like his son by a serious illness. At once he sent one of his friends to Eptadius. The Saint simply wrote to him, and the mere application of this letter to the sick man's body was enough to bring about his cure. Several other people were afterwards healed in the same way.

Our Saint celebrated all the feasts of the Church with a piety equal to the zeal and charity we know he had; but there were nevertheless two solemnities that seemed dear to him above all others: Christmas and the feast of Saint Symphorian. Each time the turning year brought back the anniversary of the Saviour's birth, he set out from the chapel of his little monastery in the middle of the night with all his religious and a joyful band of captives whom he had just ransomed and taken into his house, where he always had some. All, bearing torches in their hands and singing sacred hymns, went to another church about two leagues away. The clergy of that church came with the same ceremonies and the same chants to meet the devout band. Then, when the two processions together had entered the church, Matins were sung and holy Mass was celebrated with great pomp, amid a numerous clergy surrounded by the captives restored to freedom and the multitude of the faithful people. After the celebration of the holy mysteries, Eptadius gathered the whole assembly at a fraternal agape where they joyfully broke the fast of the holy vigil.

The solemnity of Saint Symphorian was doubtless not greater and more august in his eyes than that of Christmas; but it seemed to have for him a still livelier interest and a more tangible charm, that of a family feast. Besides his beloved solitude of Cervon near Corbigny, there was another place very dear to his heart: the abbey that possessed the body of Saint Symphorian. There he had probably formed his young years in learning and virtue; and he always loved to go there often to revive and gladden his old age and to stir up more and more the sacred fire of good works that consumed him. Every year the feast of the holy martyr saw

him prostrate on the flagstones of the basilica before the eloquent remains of the one he had chosen as patron and model. Then no doubt he thought he heard his admirable fellow countryman saying to him by a secret inspiration: “If God does not ask you, as He asked me, to sacrifice your life under the edge of the sword, sacrifice your time, sacrifice your whole person by a continual devotion to procuring the salvation and relieving the miseries of your neighbour. You are not to be the martyr of the faith; be at least the martyr, be the hero, of zeal and charity.” Every year without exception he could be seen setting out from his monastery, fifty miles away (more than fifteen leagues), with three of his clerics and making his way towards Autun, so arranging matters as to reach the goal of his pilgrimage three days before the great feast to which his piety called him, so as to have more time to pray and satisfy his devotion. And so he spent these days entirely with his forehead bowed to the ground before the martyr’s tomb, which he watered with his tears during the night; and the clerics coming to sing Matins found him still at prayer. At daybreak he withdrew to go and pay his homage of veneration to all the other Saints whose remains rested in the famous cemetery near the abbey, and came back to spend the following night in the basilica of Saint-Symphorien. When after the feast he returned with his disciples to his monastery, bands of captives ransomed by him came to meet him, and the solemnity ended in the joy of a modest banquet. For his piety was as gentle and amiable as it was solid and deep; and everywhere around him charity made its kindly influence felt in various forms.

Meanwhile the territory of Autun had just passed under the rule of the Franks, in the year 525; and it was, as is believed, about this time that the servant of God ended his course. Let us see him in his last moments. Having suddenly felt the first attacks of illness, he was obliged to take to his bed. The illness soon made alarming progress that left no hope, and the mourning became general. Everyone wanted to see the holy sick man; everyone wept. Days and nights were spent in prayer to obtain from heaven, by a holy violence, the prolonging of a life so precious, so helpful to all the unfortunate, so dear to all. But so many pious and earnest entreaties were to be in vain: the tireless labourer who had for so long worked in the Lord’s vineyard had reached the end of his day and was irrevocably called to receive his reward. On the seventh day of the illness, as the religious, his brethren or rather his beloved sons, came back after Matins to surround his sickbed, he dozed for a few moments in the sleep of ecstasy and said on waking: “My children, they are coming to take me to heaven. I saw a band of angels coming down from it, borne on a cloud white as snow and all shining with light. Then, beating their wings at the moment of touching the earth, they stopped here near me and said to me: ‘Come with us, and let us set out together for the heavenly homeland.’ At these words they rose again into the air to alight on the basilica where the Saviour Jesus dwells. Then, making me a sign to follow, they resumed their flight towards heaven.” The Saint wished to be carried at once to the church on a pallet. It was from there, surrounded by a devout and moved crowd that had hastened to see how the just man dies and was shedding tears with its prayers, that he went to receive the reward of all the good that had marked each of his steps on earth.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Among the martyrologies, some have Eptadius die at Monthelon near Autun, others at Cervon near Corbigny. All that is known is that there was in the former place, at least from the tenth century, a church going back to an unknown date and bearing the name of the holy priest. It is likewise certain that on 15 April a feast was celebrated in memory of the solemn translation of his relics; but there are no details of this translation. However that may be, the holiness of Eptadius was so well recognised, his name so great and so dear throughout the region, and the memory of his immense charity so alive in every heart, that the Church, in agreement with the gratitude and piety of the faithful, has always granted him the honours of public cult. Besides the sanctuary which at Monthelon recalled his name and consecrated his memory, or even perhaps marked the place that witnessed the last moments of that life devoted entirely to the love of God and to works of mercy, the church of Viry-en-Charollais was also dedicated to him in the tenth century. Moreover, the community the Saint had created in his solitude in the Morvan made it a point of honour to keep his name

and recognise him as patron: it was always afterwards called Saint-Eptade de Cervon, and thus consecrated the memory of the religious veneration of which he was the object. As the cult of Saint Eptadius had, to all appearances, been substituted for the cult of Vulcan in certain places where that divinity was formerly honoured, in order to destroy the remains of that idolatrous superstition, the holy priest was invoked as a powerful mediator against lightning and storms. For the same reason the blacksmiths put themselves under his patronage. In the territory of the parish of Quarré-les-Tombes, three leagues from Avallon, there was still in 1490 a chapel dedicated to Saint Eptadius, whom the people call Saint Tata. It contained stone tombs that attest the devotion of the great to this sanctuary of our Saint.

To bind the monastery of Cervon more closely to the Church of Autun, of which the holy priest is one of the glories, Charles the Bald, by a charter of the year 843, placed it under the dependence of the cathedral of Saint-Nazaire. The monastery was afterwards secularised like so many others and changed into a Chapter of ten canons headed by a dignitary bearing the title of abbot.

Taken from *Saint Symphorien et son culte* by M. l'abbé Dinet.

Saint Ouen,[1] Archbishop of Rouen and Chancellor of France

684. — Pope: Saint Leo II. — King of France: Theuderic III.

> *Nothing is more honourable, nothing more glorious than the service of Christ; His service is indeed preferable to the pomp of emperors, to royal dignity, to all the glories of the world.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

In the time of Chlothar II, king of France, son of Chilperic, there lived at Sancy, near Soissons, a lord named Authaire, who had married a lady named Aiga, both very illustrious by their birth and still more by their virtues. They used all their goods to help the poor, strangers and religious, and, thus following the precept of the Apostle, spread their charities over everyone, but particularly over the faithful. Their faith was pure, their hope firm and their charity fervent. They never wearied of hearing the word of God, and engraved it on their hearts after hearing it. Feasts, pleasures and amusements were banished from their house to make room for virtuous deeds, and their greatest satisfaction was to receive and entertain people capable of instructing them in piety. Indeed, their merit was so great that they were judged worthy to be honoured as Saints after their death in their village of Ussy-sur-Marne, near La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which even has Saint Authaire as patron.

They had three sons, Ado, Dado and Rado, who were like three pillars and three firm supports of their house. During their childhood Saint Columban, the Irishman, founder of the monasteries of Luxeuil in Burgundy and of Bobbio in Italy, who had left his country, his parents and all he had in the world to come and serve God in France, passed through the village of Ussy, where Authaire then was with his whole family. This lord and his wife received him with extraordinary joy and presented their three sons to him for his blessing. He gave it them, and foretold that they would be three excellent men who would become very considerable at court and in the Church. This prediction came true; for Ado, the eldest, after receiving great honours and fine gifts from Chlothar and Dagobert, renounced the world and himself to consecrate himself entirely to God in the religious life, and built near Meaux, in the forest of Brie, the monastery of Jouarre (*Jotrum*), where he embraced the Rule of Saint Columban. Rado, the youngest, was superintendent of finances, and exercised that office with such probity that his virtue could not be sufficiently esteemed and admired. It is believed that the priory of Reuil-sur-Marne (*Radolium*), in the same district, was founded with his gifts.

As for Dado, the second of the three brothers, who is our Saint Ouen, he was chancellor of France, loved by the kings, revered by the great and pleasing to all, because he was not only well made in body but full of wit, eloquent, judicious, wise, far-sighted, just, and a true servant of Jesus Christ. As he gave no counsel that was not useful to the king and the people, all business passed through his hands, and his advice was always

received by King Dagobert and the other ministers of State as oracles. He continually exhorted that prince to regard Jesus Christ as his Creator and Saviour, without whose help he could not govern his kingdom justly; to fear Him, love Him and obey Him in all things; to remember that he must be no less the father than the master of his subjects; to pardon those who humbled themselves and to tame the pride of the haughty; to defend the frontiers courageously against the raids of the enemies of his State; to drive out the wicked from it; to take particular care of everything concerning the Church; to build new monasteries and repair the old; to be the protector of the poor, orphans and strangers, and to provide for the relief of every kind of afflicted person, because, being raised above all, he ought to have compassion on the needs of all. Dagobert at first let himself be carried away by the passions of youth; but, thanks to the counsels of Saint Ouen, he ended by ordering himself perfectly and set his kingdom in very good order.

Saint Eligius was at the court of Dagobert at the same time as our Saint: God united them so closely that they were but one heart and one soul. Although they were still only laymen, they behaved like two bishops, or rather like two fervent religious. They did not blush to speak before princes and the greatest lords of the care one must take of one's salvation. They fought for the Church against the impiety of the heretics. They pursued vice and upheld virtue. Saint Ouen wore a rough hair shirt under his silk garments; he never wearied of praying, watching, fasting, reading holy Scripture, performing the duties of hospitality to strangers and helping the poor and the sick. He regarded the earth as the place of his exile and heaven as his true homeland. He built in the forest of Brie the monastery of Resbac or Rebais. He gathered there several religious whom he put under the direction of a holy abbot named Agile, a disciple of Saint Columban. He already intended to leave the world to serve God more peacefully in the cloister; but the king and all the great opposed it, saying that he must prefer the public good to his own personal satisfaction.

After the death of Dagobert, Clovis II, his son, who succeeded him, kept so excellent a minister in charge of the seals and the office of chancellor. Shortly afterwards there appeared at Autun a Monothelite heretic from the East, who tried to corrupt the faith of the faithful of that city and to sow his error throughout France. Our Saint, being informed of it, strongly urged the king, together with Saint Eligius his intimate friend, to have a Council assembled at Orléans to remedy so great an evil promptly. He attended it himself and had the consolation of seeing the heretic confounded and unable to defend himself. He testifies in the life of Saint Eligius that the glory of this victory must be attributed to Saint Salvius, bishop and martyr, who was at this Council; but there can be no doubt that it was also due in part to him, since, layman though he was, he disputed vigorously against the heretic and took the weapons out of his hands. At the same time he contributed to a decree against simony, which had been extremely widespread in France since the impious Brunhild had begun to establish it there. Father Sirmond places this council in 645, a year before the promotion of our holy ministers of State to the episcopate. When it was over, several persons of remarkable piety took steps to make Saint Ouen leave the lay state and embrace the ecclesiastical state. King Clovis, however much he needed his counsel and however great his affection for him, nevertheless willingly deprived himself of him to give him to the needs of the Church. He therefore received the clerical tonsure and passed through all the degrees of minor Orders. At this time Saint Romanus, archbishop of Rouen, died, and the clergy had to put another prelate in his place. The great reputation of our holy Chancellor caused eyes to be turned on him for that see. He resisted this election for some time, but in vain; the king, the great lords and the people all united to oblige him to submit to it. He yielded at last, so as not to oppose the will of God; but knowing what Saint Paul says to his disciple Timothy, "Impose not hands lightly upon any man," he took care not to have himself consecrated at the same time. First he renounced all secular business and all the engagements of his ministry. Then he went to preach the word of God beyond the Seine and the Loire, where he appeared like a star sent from heaven to enlighten those peoples with the pure light of the Gospel. He taught some the principles of the faith; he strengthened others in the doctrine they had already received; he brought back to the Church others whom heresy had made abandon it. He even went as far as Spain, and finding it afflicted for seven years by so great a drought that not a drop of water had fallen there, he delivered

it by his prayer from this scourge, which threatened the whole country with universal famine and inevitable ruin. The fruit of his intercession was temporal and spiritual; for rain fell in abundance, which restored fertility to the land and made it bear a rich harvest; and the people, touched by this miracle, promised to renounce the vices that had drawn the divine curse upon them.

Saint Ouen, after confirming these peoples in these good resolutions, returned to France to receive episcopal consecration. Passing through Anjou, he healed by the sign of the cross a miller who had become paralysed in one hand for having violated the holiness of Sunday by working without necessity. When he had arrived at Rouen, Saint Eligius, who had lately been elected bishop of Noyon, went to join him there, and on Rogation Sunday of the year 646 they were consecrated together, as he himself writes in the life of that holy Prelate. No one can worthily describe how this admirable archbishop conducted himself in the guidance of his people. He always kept the same modesty and gravity as before. His humility, far from diminishing, on the contrary grew further. His clothes were simple, his furniture poor, his household without pomp or show. He mortified his flesh by continual fasts and vigils. His abstinence was so rigorous that the hunger he almost always suffered made his face quite pale and made it difficult for him to stand. For bed and mattress he had only a wicker hurdle, better able to torment him than to give him rest. His neck, arms and loins were girded with iron rings that pricked his skin at every moment and made him the image of Jesus Christ crucified and of the Martyrs. Tears flowed constantly from his eyes, sometimes for his own sins, at other times for those of his flock, which he lamented no less bitterly than his own. The honours of the world seemed to him mere wind, and to escape them he avoided the company of the great and the respects people wished to pay to his dignity and merit, so as to go and visit the needy and the prisoners. Never did a prelate have more tenderness and kindness for his people. He took care to instruct them by his sermons, to correct them by his remonstrances, to relieve them by his charities, to keep them in unity by his efforts at reconciliation, and to purge them of the admixture of the impious by the justice and severity of his judgements. He used rigour, however, only when necessary, and first tried to win over the most savage minds by an incomparable gentleness. The poor and strangers were his dear children, and the help he gave them in their straitened circumstances is a prodigious thing. Nor did he forget the dead, and it is noted that he had a particular devotion to praying for the repose of their souls.

He had besides a very great zeal for building churches and monasteries, and he did in fact build several, particularly in his diocese. His clergy were the principal object of all his care; he established among them an admirable discipline and a most edifying manner of life, and he also did very great good to his metropolitan church. He founded hospitals to receive the poor, pilgrims and the sick, and churches in places where there were none. He was so diligent in his visitations that he went not only to the towns, market towns, castles and villages, but even to the remotest farms and hamlets, in order to know all his people, to show the most ignorant the ways of salvation, to draw the greatest sinners out of disorder, to hear the confessions of those who wished to be converted, and to help, even bodily, those who were in need. If he had any time left after discharging all the duties of his office, he spent it in tears and in the contemplation of heavenly things. A man illustrious by birth and great wealth, named Waneng, being sick to the point of death, had a terrible vision in which a great part of the pains of the damned was shown to him. The horror and fear he felt obliged him to have recourse to the holy Archbishop, who, after praying for him, gave him his blessing and by this means restored him to perfect health; and this was the reason he founded the abbey of Fécamp. The Acts of Saint Wandrille also attribute the same miracle to him; but it may well be that the prayers and blessing of these two Saints both contributed to the same work. It caused such a stir in France, because of the rank of the man who had been healed, that it drew to Fécamp King Chlothar III, son of Clovis II, and his whole court, to have the consolation of seeing Saint Ouen.

This holy Prelate, no longer able to ride on horseback to visit his diocese because of his great age, still went by carriage to perform this duty to his people. One day, as he was in the open country quite near Louviers,

the mules drawing him stopped short and could not be made to go on. Astonished at this occurrence, he raised his eyes to heaven to learn its cause, and he then saw high in the air a cross so resplendent that it spread its light on all sides. God made known to him at the same time that He had destined that place for His service and wished to be honoured there. He therefore traced the figure of a cross on the ground and placed some relics on it. After which he continued on his way, without the mules offering any further resistance. That very evening and throughout the night there appeared in that place a column of fire brighter than the sun. All the inhabitants of the region saw it. A vast number of people came there to offer their vows to God, and several were miraculously healed there of all kinds of illnesses. Saint Leufroy afterwards built in that same place a church and a monastery in honour of the holy Cross and of Saint Ouen.

Our blessed Archbishop had another vision at Batignolles, an island in the Seine. For weariness having forced him to take a little rest there, angels visited him in his sleep and ordered him, on God's behalf, to have a chapel built there in honour of Saint Stephen. He undertook this at once at his own expense, giving Saint Ansbert, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Wandrille, whom he entrusted with the building, the sum needed to complete it. He added to it a hospital for the help of the poor, and endowed it with a rich inheritance he had in the county of Dun in Beauce. He carried out the translation of the relics of Saint Marculf. When he intended to carry off the head to his metropolitan city, with the consent of the abbot of Nanteuil, he received a warning from heaven to take whatever other member he wished, but not to take the head. This warning did not come by an articulate voice, as we had believed on the faith of some authors, but by a letter that fell miraculously into his hands, as the Acts of these two Saints inform us. Saint Ouen having formed the pious plan of making a journey to Rome to honour the relics of the Princes of the Apostles, as soon as it became known devout people came from all sides to bring him gold and silver for the costs of his journey and for the gifts he would make to Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Some holy persons also joined him, among others Saint Sidonius, an Irishman, a priest at Rouen, who afterwards served as master to Saint Leufroy. It is impossible to express the piety with which our excellent pilgrim went round all the stations of that city, the capital of Christendom. He prostrated himself before the tombs of the Martyrs, spent whole hours in prayer, and prayed there for those who had entrusted him with their offerings with such fervour that his eyes shed more tears than his mouth uttered words. The very floor was watered by them. One day, being before the Confession of Saint Peter, he began the verse *Exultabunt Sancti in gloria*; the angels then acted as chaplains, for a heavenly voice was heard answering: *Laetabuntur in cubilibus suis*. He was not content to distribute faithfully to the churches and the poor the gifts that had been put into his hands; he also made them great liberalities from his own goods, so that the whole city received very considerable help and relief from them. Pope Adeodatus and all who were illustrious among the clergy paid him extraordinary honours, and, in gratitude for the temporal blessings he had brought, he was given several relics of the Saints, with which he held himself much richer than if he had been given the whole empire of the world. He returned to France with these sacred remains, and the joy of his people at his happy return was so great that the inhabitants of the towns and villages came in crowds to meet him with crosses and lighted candles to receive him. The priests and religious gave solemn thanks to God for it, and the king himself and his whole court showed extreme gladness, regarding him as the protector of the kingdom.

On his departure he had left the royal house in great unity; but on his return he found it greatly divided, which caused him extraordinary affliction. He had recourse to his usual means: vigils, prayers and fasts. By them he obtained from God the reconciliation of these princes, whom discord would have driven to open war. So signal a service earned him the favour of King Theuderic: this prince, convinced of his incomparable wisdom and piety, ordered that no bishop, abbot, abbess, count or judge, ecclesiastical or secular, should be elected and installed in the whole of Neustria without his advice and consent. Disunion having arisen between Neustria and Austrasia, the king asked him to make yet another journey to Cologne to negotiate peace and prevent their coming to blows. His great age could well have excused him from so great a fatigue, but he could not refuse this last service to his country. At Cologne he restored speech to a dumb man who

had not spoken for eleven years, and he handled the business on which he had been sent so wisely that he established a good peace between these two kingdoms and between the princes and ministers who governed them. On his return, passing through Verdun, he delivered there a possessed woman whom the devil was cruelly tormenting. From there he came to the castle of Clichy, two leagues from Paris, to report to the king on the success of his negotiation. But God had brought him there to make that place famous by his death and by the great number of his miracles. He fell ill there, then, at the age of ninety, and, knowing that Our Lord wished to deliver him from the miseries of this life to reward him for his labours, he prepared for death with all the piety that could be expected of a man who had spent his life in such eminent innocence and holiness. He earnestly begged God to be pleased to grant his people of Rouen a shepherd after His own heart, not content to have given them for forty-four years every sign of a truly pastoral charity, but wishing also to extend his kindness to them beyond his death. His prayer was heard, and it was made known to him that Saint Ansbert, abbot of Saint-Wandrille, had been designated in heaven as his successor. He spoke of it to the king, who came to see him in his illness, and he had no difficulty in getting him to accept so prudent a choice, so advantageous to Neustria.

At last, after praying for all the Orders of the Church and for the kingdom, which was about to be deprived of his counsels, he peacefully gave back his soul to God, and it was carried to heaven by the hands of the angels, in 684. His body was carried to Rouen with extraordinary pomp and magnificence. The king, the queen, the mayor of the palace and the whole court escorted it as far as Pontoise and laid it in a chapel that has since become a parish bearing his name. There the bishops and abbots, the priests and religious of the province of Neustria, with a vast number of noblemen and other people of every condition, came to take it in procession, and carried it in turn on their shoulders to the city of Rouen. The place of his burial was the church of Saint-Pierre, built by King Chlothar I, which became the celebrated abbey of Saint-Ouen.

He is represented with a dragon at his feet, to signify that he rooted out idolatry in the country of Rouen.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

God made the glory of his soul appear by very great miracles worked at his invocation, not only at his tomb but also in several other places where his memory is celebrated. Three years later Saint Ansbert had him raised from the ground to place him in a more honourable spot, and he was found still as fresh as at the time of his death. The city of Rouen gave him a precious shrine and chose him as one of its principal protectors. The same Saint Ansbert, on touching the shroud in which he had been buried, was healed of a slow fever that had so undermined him that he was beyond hope of recovery. During the wars of the Northmen this shrine was brought to Paris, for fear it might fall into the hands of those unbelievers; but when Neustria had been ceded to them and they had embraced the Catholic faith, Rollo, their duke, earnestly asked that this great treasure be restored to the city of Rouen. His request having been granted, the principal Norman churchmen and lords came to fetch it from Paris and carried it solemnly as far as the market town of Darnétal, a league from Rouen. They wished to continue their procession; but the body became so heavy that they could not lift it (918). The duke, on being informed, came himself to meet it, barefoot and bareheaded and clad in a simple garment of coarse wool; and throwing himself at the Saint’s feet, he begged him, with tears in his eyes and his hands raised to heaven, not to deprive his city of the consolation of his presence. To merit this favour he also gave his Church all the land between Darnétal and Rouen. His prayer was indeed heard, and the shrine returned to its natural state. He took it up himself with other lords and carried it back to its former place amid the singing of psalms, canticles and hymns, which caused the whole of that road to be called Long-Paon (*Longum Penanum*), which means *long praise*. But this inestimable relic, for which kings and princes had had such respect, found none in the year 1562 in the impious and cruel fury of the Calvinists, who pillaged his shrine with all the other reliquaries and sacred vessels of the abbey of Saint-Ouen; they profaned, broke, burned and scattered the bones they found there, as they had done in all the other churches of France that had been in their power. The royal castle of Clichy having been destroyed, a church was built in his honour on

the place of Saint Ouen's death, near Saint-Denis, in which one of his fingers is venerated. The former church of the abbey of Saint-Ouen, which has become a parish church, today possesses some particles of his relics.

His life is found in Surius under 24 August, and in the *Histoire chrétienne de Normandie*. To complete this biography we have used the *Annales du diocèse de Soissons* by the abbé Pécheur, and local notes supplied by M. Langlois, honorary canon at Rouen.

Blessed Saudrade, Abbot of Gladbach, in the Diocese of Cologne

985. — Pope: John XIV. — Emperor of Germany: Otto III.

> *Where discipline is well kept, the grace of heaven abounds, devotion flourishes, reading has its charm, meditation is full of sweetness, prayer is always fervent.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

Blessed Saudrade was a contemporary of the emperor Otto the Great, who employed him in restoring discipline in the monasteries of the empire. His vast learning, his deep piety and the lustre of his virtues had powerfully recommended him in the eyes of the whole court, and by Otto's order he went to work at the reform of the celebrated abbey of Saint Gall in Switzerland; but he met with strong opposition from the religious. They spread the most atrocious calumnies against him and succeeded in turning against the holy man not only the pious empress Adelaide but even the emperor himself. Not content with having blackened his reputation, they went so far as to ill-treat him in the most horrible manner.

Gero, archbishop of Cologne, having learned of all the persecutions of which Saudrade was the victim, called him to entrust him with the execution of a project he had long been meditating. It concerned the founding of a monastery of which the Lord is said to have spoken to him in a vision. He travelled with Saudrade through the whole region indicated by the vision, and together they reached a place called Ligelingen, on the Weser. They believed they had found the suitable spot, and enclosed with a ditch the site they intended for the monastery and the church; but they met with many obstacles that prevented them from carrying out the work begun. This took place towards the end of the reign of Otto the Great. They therefore retraced their steps, recrossed the Rhine, and found on the borders of the diocese of Cologne, in the country later called the duchy of Jülich, a mountain covered with a thick wood, on which they still saw the remains of an old church built in the time of Charlemagne by a certain Balderich, an officer of that prince. The Huns had destroyed this church, as well as the buildings around it. This mountain, which overlooked a charming valley watered by a stream, greatly pleased Saudrade; it was therefore decided to build the monastery on that very spot, and it was given the name of Gladebach because of the stream that flows nearby.

When the buildings were finished, Saudrade ordered a fast of three days and prayers, in order to discover the place containing the relics of the Saints that had formerly been deposited in the church and were known to have been enclosed in a stone at the time of the barbarian invasion. The Lord heard the prayers of His servants, and the stone containing these sacred objects was discovered. It was a rich treasure for this infant community, and they were not a little surprised to find relics of the holy martyrs Stephen, Vitus, George, Gengulf, Cornelius, Cyprian and Chrysanthus, and of Saint Barbara. The archbishop consecrated the church in honour of Jesus Christ, His holy Mother, and the holy martyrs whose relics had just been found. Saudrade was entrusted with the direction of the monastery.

After the death of Archbishop Gero, which occurred in 974, the holy abbot had much to suffer from his successor Warin. Men jealous of his merit denounced him to the new prelate as being too devoted to the bishop of Liège and forgetful of the ties that bound him to the archbishopric of Cologne. Warin lent an ear to the suggestions of Saudrade's enemies and deposed him from his office.

Saudrade bore this trial with heroic patience. He left the monastery and went to the empress Adelaide, whose confessor he was. That princess was then living at Seltz in Lower Alsace, and, the better to profit by the wise counsels of this man, she named him abbot of Wissembourg. As this abbey was only a few leagues from Seltz, Adelaide had leisure to enjoy often the devout conversation of Saudrade, for whom she now professed the highest esteem. The holy abbot did not find in his new monastery the same opposition he had met at Gladbach; this community still felt the effect of the fine examples that Saint Adalbert, lately transferred to the archbishopric of Magdeburg, had just given it. But his absence had the saddest consequences at Gladbach; for, as the new abbot of that house lacked the abilities needed to govern so important an establishment, the monks left the monastery and its properties and rights were alienated. Struck by these disorders, Archbishop Warin recognised his mistake and decided to recall Saudrade, who was then edifying Wissembourg by all the priestly and Christian virtues. The picture painted for him of the decline of discipline at Gladbach filled him with the deepest veneration for Saudrade, and he used every means to recall the holy man there. Saudrade for his part yielded, not without regret, to the archbishop's entreaties, and returned to the house he had helped to raise from its ruins some time before and of which he was now once again to be the restorer. All his zeal and all his courage were needed to undertake so difficult a work. But of what are the Saints not capable when the interests of God and His Church are at stake? And what obstacles do they not overcome to root out evil and make virtue reign? Saudrade joined to the force of his examples prayers and mortifications of every kind, and his zeal was not fruitless. He succeeded in gathering the religious together again and in restoring discipline little by little. But the Lord was preparing rewards for him in a better life and called him to Himself in the year 985. He died in the odour of sanctity in his abbey on 24 August, wept and mourned by his religious, who recognised too late their injustices towards him and changed their prejudices against him into a profound veneration for his memory.

Taken from the *Saints d'Alsace* by the abbé Hunckler.

Saint Rigomer and Saint Tenestina, Solitaries, in the Diocese of Le Mans (6th century)

Rigomer was born in the diocese of Le Mans, in the part known as the Sonnois, where there is today a village bearing his name (Saint-Rigomer-des-Bois, near the forest of Perseigne). His parents belonged to the class of free persons, and, to give their son an education in keeping with his pious inclinations, they entrusted him from childhood to a holy priest named Launillus, under whom he made rapid progress in piety and letters. Raised to the priesthood by Saint Innocent, bishop of Le Mans (532–543), he was charged with proclaiming the word of God. Rigomer therefore set himself with tireless zeal to preach the Christian truths in his own family and throughout the region of the Sonnois, and to exhort the people to give up the superstitious customs of paganism. His sermons, full of eloquent simplicity and supported by the brilliance of miracles, brought about numerous conversions; a multitude of unbelievers renounced the worship of idols and embraced the religion of Jesus Christ. Having learned during one of his apostolic journeys that there was in the region a temple dedicated to the god Mars, he hastened to go and preach in that place. His word was so effective that the inhabitants destroyed the temple and raised on its ruins a church where the true God was worshipped. Such was the origin of the town of Mamers. Rigomer's reputation for holiness was such that people came from all sides to commend themselves to his prayers; a crowd of the sick and infirm begged him to intercede for them with God; he made the sign of the cross over them and anointed them with blessed oil, and they recovered their health. He healed in the same way a lady of illustrious birth named Truda, and then addressed pressing exhortations to piety to her. These made the liveliest impression on a young girl of the household named Tenestina. Renouncing from then on all the advantages of the world, she followed Rigomer into solitude and went to live in a cell near his, to perfect herself in the spiritual life under his direction. Calumny pursued these two pure souls even into the desert; but God took up the cause of His servants and Himself undertook to vindicate them. Tenestina had an oratory built with a small monastery near the Sarthe,

at the place where the parish church of Gourdaine afterwards stood. As for Rigomer, he withdrew three and a half leagues from Le Mans to a solitary, wooded place where the parish of Souligné-sous-Vallon (Sarthe, arrondissement of Le Mans, canton of La Suze) is now to be seen. That parish owes to his miraculous intervention a spring whose very clear water serves the needs of the inhabitants and bears the name of Saint-Rigomer; it has never run dry, even in the greatest droughts. Saint Rigomer died in his solitude on 24 August. His body was carried to Le Mans and a basilica was built in his honour; but it was later demolished, and today even the place where it stood is unknown. Later his body, together with that of Saint Tenestina, was carried to the abbey of Maillezais in Poitou, where for a long time they were honoured as patrons. The parish of Souligné-sous-Vallon is under the patronage of Saint Rigomer, as are those of Saint-Rigomer-des-Bois and Saint-Rémi-du-Plain. The church of Souligné has a statue of the Saint, but it has none of his relics.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. l'abbé Leguicheux, parish priest of Souligné-sous-Vallon.

Blessed Theodoric or Thierry, Abbot of Saint-Hubert, in Belgian Luxembourg (1087)

Thierry was born in 1007 near Thuin, a town of Hainaut. Gouzo, his father, long opposed the desire of his virtuous wife, who wished to consecrate their son to the Lord; but at last he gave way. His parents then entrusted him to their daughter Ansclade, who since her childhood had been living in piety at the convent of Maubeuge (*Malbodium*, Nord), so that she might instruct him in religion. He received from her the first elements of piety, and some time later went to complete his religious education with the monks of Lobbes, where he made such great progress in learning and in the ways of sanctification that, while still a child, he was made lector and acolyte by the archbishop of Cambrai, and admitted to the subdiaconate at the age of seventeen. At nineteen he pronounced his religious vows and received the other Orders in succession. His virtues had just raised him to the office of scholasticus at the abbey of Fulda (Hesse-Cassel) when death overtook Adelard, abbot of Saint-Hubert (*Andaginum S. Petri*, in Belgian Luxembourg). Thierry was elected to succeed him: he alone seemed capable of restoring there the monastic discipline that Adelard's excessive kindness and indulgence had allowed to decline. His virtue did indeed triumph over the ill will of the monks, and the abbey recovered its former splendour. Theodoric's extraordinary piety won him the esteem of his contemporaries: a rich lord gave him the church of Saint-Sulpice on the estate of Piros, where he placed monks from the convent of Saint-Hubert. The diocese of Liège owed to him the building and repair of a great number of churches and chapels. His deep devotion to the holy Apostles led him to make the pilgrimage to Rome seven times.

Worn out by years and infirmities, and feeling the hour of his deliverance approach, Thierry summoned all the brethren of the community to him, and, clothed in the insignia of his dignity, asked pardon of them all and exhorted them to remain faithfully in the way of piety. Then he sank down and gently gave back his soul to God. It was 24 August 1087.

Henry, bishop of Liège, celebrated his funeral, and on 27 August buried the body of the Blessed One in the convent of Saint-Hubert, before the altar of the Blessed Virgin.

Acta Sanctorum, 24 August. — Cf. the Continuators of Godescard; Mabillon, *Acta Sanctorum ord. S. Benedicti*; and the *Chronique de l'abbaye de Saint-Hubert*, translated by de Robaulx, Brussels, 1847.

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[1] At Utica there was a church in honour of these Martyrs, called the basilica of the White Mass. Saint Augustine preached there one of the sermons we have from him on the Psalms (Ps. cxliv), in which he alludes to the torment of these generous athletes of the faith. — They also enjoyed a particular cult at Carthage, either because the bones of several of them had been carried there, or because Saint Cyprian, before his death, had had them adopted by his Church in consideration of those of them who were from the episcopal city or its diocese. — Baillet.

[2] Saint Patrick was born in Auvergne of rich parents of the highest distinction; he withdrew from the world and took refuge in the monastery that Saint Porcian had just founded in the place that still keeps his name (Saint-Pourçain, Allier), in order to be trained under his direction in the practice of all the virtues. After twenty years of profession he still delighted to mingle with the novices, taking on himself everything that might have caused them some repugnance. His charity went so far that he rose in the middle of the night to relieve them of part of their labours, which he carried out himself at the expense of his sleep. God willed to reward him, even in this life, for so much self-denial, by reserving for him the glory of converting to Jesus Christ the inhabitants of the part of the Nivernais lying between the Loire and the Allier.

Before 1793 his precious remains still rested in the curious crypt beneath the sanctuary of the church that has kept his name, though altered (Saint-Parize, diocese of Nevers), but they were scattered in that period of folly and impiety. — Mgr Crosnier, *Hagiologie nivernaise*.

[3] Agofroi was, it is said, the brother of Saint Leufroi, abbot of the monastery of La Croix near Évreux. He was a man illustrious for his merits and his holiness. When Gondbert, bishop of Évreux, raised the body of Saint Leufroi, which had been hidden underground at the time of the first incursion of the Northmen, in order to expose it anew to the veneration of the people, he did the same for the remains of Saint Agofroi. Later, in the time of Rollo, duke of the Normans (932), the monks of La Croix, abandoning their monastery at the approach of the barbarians, fled to Paris with the relics of their patrons. Robert, count of Paris, who was abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, gave these holy relics refuge in his monastery: namely those of Saint Ouen, Saint Leufroi, Saint Agofroi, and Saint Thuriaf, bishop of Dol. When, after the conversion of Rollo, the monks of La Croix wished to set out for their own country again, it was agreed between them and the monks of Saint-Germain that, in memory of the hospitality they had received, they would leave at Paris the bodies of Saint Leufroi and Saint Thuriaf and would take back only the relics of Saint Ouen and Saint Agofroi. — *Propre d'Évreux*.

[4] See that day.

[5] See the martyrology of the Carmelites for 8 May, and the life we gave on that day.

[6] We shall give her life on 13 December.

[7] We have given his life on 23 August.

[8] Alias: Ouln, Ouein, Oyen, Dado, Odoenus.

25 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Paris, Saint LOUIS, confessor, king of France, illustrious for the holiness of his life and the glory of his miracles. 1270. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Eusebius, Pontian, Vincent and Peregrinus, who under the emperor Commodus endured in turn the torments of the rack, the stocks and the cudgel; then, as they went on praising Jesus Christ with inviolable fidelity, they were beaten with whips loaded with lead until they gave up their souls.[1] 2nd c. — Again at Rome, Saint Genesius, martyr, who in the paganism in which he had been born had taken up the profession of actor. As he was playing the mysteries of the Christian religion on the stage in the presence of the emperor Diocletian, he was touched by a divine inspiration, was suddenly converted and received Baptism. At once the emperor had him cruelly beaten with cudgels, stretched on the rack, slowly torn with iron hooks and burned with flaming torches; but seeing that he persisted in the Christian faith and said, "There is no other king but Jesus Christ, and though you killed me a thousand times you could never take Him from my mouth or tear Him from my heart," he made him win the palm of martyrdom by ordering his head to be cut off.[2] 297 or 303.

At Italica (*Divi Trajani civitas*, Old Seville or Santiponce), in Spain, Saint Gerontius, bishop, who preached the Gospel in that province in the time of the Apostles, and after a multitude of labours died in prison. 1st c. — At Arles in Gaul, Saint Genesius or Genies, who, serving as a clerk of the court, refused to record the edicts ordering the persecution of the Christians, and even threw down his registers in public, declaring that he was a Christian; seized and beheaded, he was baptised in his own blood and obtained the glory of martyrdom.[3] 308. — In Syria, Saint Julian, martyr.[4] — At Tarragona, Saint Maginus or Maximus, martyr under Maximin. — At Constantinople, Saint Mennas, patriarch. 552. — At Utrecht, Saint Gregory, bishop.[5] About 786. — At Naples, Saint Patricia, virgin.[6] 365.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Molhaing, near Mariembourg, in Belgium, in the province of Namur, Saint Elmer or Elmère, confessor, patron of the collegiate church of Molhaing. Some hagiographers cite him on 27 August. — At Apt, Saint MARCIAN of Saignon, abbot of Saint-Eusèbe, in the diocese of Avignon. 1010. — On the small island of Maguelone (*Magalona*), in the diocese of Montpellier, Saint Severus, founder and first abbot of the monastery of Agde (*Agatha*), of whom we spoke on 21 August, the day on which the Church of Rodez celebrates his feast. 5th c. — At Déols or Bourg-Dieu (Indre), in the diocese of Bourges, Saint Romaize, confessor, also called Romadouze, Rome, Romard, Promaise, Promâse. — In the Limousin, Saint AREDIUS or Yrieix of Limoges, abbot of the monastery of Atane and confessor. 591. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Homblières (*Humolariæ*), founded by Saint Eligius, in the diocese of Soissons, Saint HUNEGUND, virgin and abbess. 690. — In Périgord (Dordogne), Saint Ribère or Rabier, confessor. — At Quimperlé (Finistère), in the diocese of Quimper, Saint Gurloès or Gurloèse, at first prior of the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Sauveur of Redon (*Reginodum*, Ille-et-Vilaine), then first abbot of the monastery of Sainte-Croix of Quimperlé (founded in 1029 by Alain Cagnart, count of Cornouaille). Gurloès governed his abbey peacefully for twenty-five years. His cult became established in Brittany and still survives there. His tomb is to be seen in a lower chapel of the church of Sainte-Croix at Quimperlé. His relics, enclosed in shrines, were honoured in that same church until the Revolution; but since that time they have been lost. At Landugen (Côtes-du-Nord) there is a chapel under the invocation of Saint Gurloès, whom the people call by corruption Gurlo and Durlo: pilgrims come to it from nearly ten leagues around on the last Sunday of July. 1057. — In the diocese of Blois, Saint Louis, king of France, patron of the cathedral and of the whole diocese. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Saint-Ghislain (*S. Sigisleni cœnobium*), in Hainaut, Blessed Egeric, abbot of that monastery and confessor. Special and very affectionate relations existed between him and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. 1161. — At the monastery of Mount Saint Agnes (Canons Regular of the Order of Saint Augustine), near Zwolle in Holland, Blessed THOMAS À KEMPIS, canon regular. 1471.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Utrecht, Saint Gregory, confessor; he embraced the institute of the Clerks Regular under the discipline of Saint Boniface, martyr, and was his successor in the episcopate of that same city. He converted the Saxons to the Christian faith. 776.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Paris, Saint Louis, king of France, confessor of the Third Order of our Father Saint Francis, illustrious for the holiness of his life and the glory of his miracles; the sovereign pontiff Boniface VIII placed him among the number of the Saints, and the members of the Third Order honour him as their principal patron. 1270.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as among the Franciscans.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Louis, confessor, whose feast is celebrated among us on the day after this.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — The same as among the Franciscans.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — The same as in the Roman martyrology.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Rossano (*Roscianum*), a town of Italy in Calabria Citeriore, Our Lady of Rossano. A pious and respectable tradition relates that when the Saracens were trying to take this town by surprise, and had already set up ladders against its walls, the Blessed Virgin appeared to them clad in a purple robe and holding a lighted torch in her hand: the terrified Barbarians withdrew in disorder without doing any harm to the

besieged. — At Albanopolis in Armenia, Saint Bartholomew, apostle and martyr, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 71. — Saint Rufina and Saint Eutychia, martyrs; and Saints Julian, Julius, Hermes, Justus and eighteen soldiers, their companions, martyrs, cited by the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology without further details. — In the diocese of Trivento, in the Abruzzi, Saint John of Rousel (*J. de Rusello*), solitary and wonder-worker. — At Constantinople, Saint Gennadius, patriarch. He died after a pontificate that was unhappily too short, in which he gave the example of the most brilliant virtues. His words, full of gentleness and unction, captivated souls. One of his first conquests was a Novatian priest named Marcianus, who made his abjuration in his hands and was appointed steward of the church. At the very beginning of his ministry Gennadius obtained that the emperor Leo the Thracian (457–474) should sanction by decree the obligation to abstain from all servile work on Sunday. He also had the civil power accept the principle that clerics summoned before the courts should be subject exclusively to the jurisdiction of the praetorian prefect: this was a first step towards the absolute principle of ecclesiastical immunities. For the rest, Gennadius required of his clergy a life that forestalled the scandal of judicial accusations. Under his influence the most distinguished personages of the empire gave the example of Christian charity and mortification: the patrician Studius raised a basilica in honour of Saint John the Baptist and founded beside it a monastery of Acoemetae, while the grand chamberlain Gratissimus made a foundation of the same kind in honour of Saint Cyriacus. In a word, Gennadius went about doing good and left precious traces of his wise government. 471. — Again at Constantinople, Saint Epiphanius, patriarch and confessor. 535. — In England, Saint Ebba, abbess, commonly called by the English Saint Tabbs. She was the sister of Saint Oswald and of Oswy, king of the Northumbrians. Helped by the pious liberality of the second of these princes, she founded a monastery on the Darwent, in the diocese of Durham (*Dunelmum*), which was afterwards known as Ebchester. She founded another, a double one for men and for women, at Coldingham, below Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland). She governed this house until her blessed death. 683.

Saint Louis, King of France, Member and Principal Patron of the Third Order of Saint Francis

1215–1270. — Popes: Innocent III; Clement IV. — Emperors: Frederick II; Conrad V.

> *Every historical epoch has a man who represents it: Louis IX is the model man of the Middle Ages: he is a lawgiver, a hero and a saint… Marcus Aurelius showed power united with philosophy; Louis IX, power united with holiness: the advantage remains with the Christian.*
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> *Chateaubriand, Études historiques.*

It is no very surprising thing that a man withdrawn into a cloister and separated from all occasions of sin should overcome the disordered inclinations of nature and advance in the practice of the finest virtues of Christianity. But that a prince, whom no one is free to reprove or contradict, who has no other necessity to do good than that which he imposes on himself, who lives amid honours and the most dangerous pleasures, and whose condition involves him in countless affairs in which interest and conscience can be reconciled only with great difficulty, should nevertheless master his passions, keep himself in innocence and purity of heart, observe inviolably the commandments of God and of the Church, and make himself perfect in the exercise of Christian piety: this is altogether admirable, and may be called a prodigy in the order of grace. Yet what is impossible to the strength of man is in no way impossible to God; and if the history of the Old Testament furnishes us with several crowned heads who knew how to unite holiness with sovereign authority, and the quality of prophet with those of chiefs, judges and kings, that of the New Testament furnishes a far greater number in almost all the Christian kingdoms. Today the Church sets before us a prince whom we may call the pearl of sovereigns, the glory of the crown of France, the model of all Christian princes, and, to say it all in three phrases, a monarch truly after the heart of God, after the heart of the Church, and after the heart of the people.

This is the incomparable Saint Louis, the fortieth king of France counting from the beginning of the monarchy, and the ninth of the third dynasty, of which Hugh Capet was the stock. His father was King Louis VIII, son of Philip Augustus, and his mother the princess Blanche, to whom our historians attribute the glory of having been daughter, niece, wife, sister, mother and aunt of kings. And in fact she was the daughter of Alfonso IX, king of Castile, who won over the Moors the celebrated victory of Las Navas de Tolosa, where more than two hundred thousand unbelievers were left on the field; niece of Richard and John, kings of England; wife of Louis VIII, king of France; sister of Henry, king of Castile; mother of the Saint whose life we are writing, and of Charles, king of Naples and Sicily; and aunt, through her sisters Urraca and Berengaria, of Sancho, king of Portugal, and of Saint Ferdinand III, king of León. Saint Louis was born of the blessed marriage of this prince and princess on 25 April 1215, while the solemn processions of Saint Mark's day were being held throughout Christendom, in the lifetime of Philip Augustus, his grandfather, who had just won the celebrated battle of Bouvines, and eight years before his father came to the crown. The castle of Poissy, on the Seine, five leagues below Paris, was the place of his birth, and he was born on the very spot where, according to tradition, the high altar of the abbey, which no longer exists, once stood. He was afterwards baptised in the parish church of that place; this is why the holy King showed a particular affection for the town of Poissy: when writing to his closest friends he usually signed himself Louis of Poissy, or lord of Poissy. Indeed, being one day in that town, he told those who were with His Majesty that this was the place where he had received the greatest honour and the most considerable good of his life, because the grace of baptism, which makes us children of God and heirs of His kingdom, is infinitely above all the advantages of this world. King Philip the Fair, his grandson, later founded and built there the monastery of the Dominican nuns.

The childhood of this great prince was a mirror of uprightness and wisdom. His father, who joined eminent holiness and ardent zeal for religion to that martial bravery which earned him the surname of the Lion, took particular care over his education. He gave him good tutors and a wise governor: Matthew II of Montmorency, first Christian baron; William des Barres, count of Rochefort, surnamed the French Achilles; and Clement of Metz, marshal of France; who instilled in him the sentiments that a most Christian king and eldest son of the Church ought to have. Blanche his mother likewise spared nothing to make him a great king and a great Saint: above all after the death of Philip, his elder brother; and to imprint on him more strongly the hatred of sin and the love of virtue, she often said to him these fine words: "My son, I would much rather see you in the tomb than stained with a single mortal sin." Death having carried off his father at the age of only forty, on his return from the war against the Albigensians, in the town of Montpellier, in the year 1226, which was only the fourth of his reign, our Saint, then only twelve, ascended the throne of his ancestors under the guardianship of Queen Blanche his mother. This was on 30 November; the next day, the first Sunday of Advent, he was anointed and crowned at Reims by Jacques de Bazoches, bishop of Soissons, the archiepiscopal see of Reims being then vacant.

His minority was troubled by several civil wars caused by the ambition and jealousy of the princes, who could not bear that the queen should have the regency and absolute government of the kingdom, and who wished to profit by the king's youth to advance their own affairs; but God dispersed all their factions by a visible protection over the sacred person of this young monarch. For, first, Raymond, count of Toulouse, one of the confederate princes and a great abettor of the Albigensian heretics, having begun hostilities in Languedoc and around Toulouse, where King Louis VIII had forced him to shut himself up, was so hard pressed by Robert de Beaujeu, general of the royal army, that he was forced to ask for peace and accept whatever conditions the king pleased to impose on him. The treaty was signed at Paris in April 1228, and it provided: 1° that the count would repay the king five thousand marks of silver for the costs of the war; 2° that he would at once give up to him all the lands he held beyond the Rhône; 3° that he would no longer protect the heretics in his county, and that he himself would publicly abjure heresy, as indeed he did abjure it on his knees before the high altar of Notre-Dame, with head, arms and feet bare; 4° that he would give his daughter

Jeanne in marriage to Alphonse, the king's brother, and that in favour of this union he would cede to that prince his county of Toulouse, reserving for himself only the usufruct; 5° that if this countess should die without children, the same county would be united to the crown, never to be separated from it; 6° that he would pay every year a sum to indemnify the churchmen he had ruined, and would have the walls of thirty towns of his State that had taken part in his rebellion demolished. Thus this great war against the Albigensians, which Philip Augustus had seemingly not dared to touch and which King Louis VIII had only skimmed, was happily brought to an end in less than a year by the prudence of the queen regent.

The other confederate lords, among whom Peter Mauclerc was prominent, more irritated by this success than before, resolved to seize the king's person in order then to extract from him by force whatever they pleased. The stroke was to take place at a hunting meet a few leagues from Paris, between Étampes and Corbeil, and everything had been prepared for it, when Theobald, count of Champagne, having learned of Peter

Mauclerc's new treachery, arrived at the head of three hundred knights, put the conspirators to flight, took the grandson of Philip Augustus to Montlhéry, and threw himself with him into a fortress whose high tower can still be seen today; it dates from the year 1005 and rises on an imposing hill overlooking a forest all strewn with granite rocks. Theobald File-Étoupe, forester of King Robert, built it; it can be seen from seven leagues away. Philip I became the owner of this fortress at the marriage of Louis the Fat.

The queen regent, having learned of the danger the king had run, had set out in great haste from Paris and a few hours later arrived at Montlhéry. Neither the strength of this castle nor the valour of the knights who had prevented her son from falling into the hands of Peter Mauclerc and Hugh of Lusignan could reassure her maternal love; she went down with him into the depths of an immense underground passage, at the end of which a door opened on to the countryside, far from the crenellated walls. If among the great vassals and high barons Blanche of Castile and the young Louis IX had enemies raised up against them by the ambition of these powerful men, it was not so among the burghers and people of Paris; there the pious and valiant regent and the royal youth were loved and adored. And so, at the first news of the odious attempt of the counts of Brittany and Poitou, the whole population of the great city rose: great and small, rich and poor, nobles and artisans went out together from the fortified enclosure built by Philip Augustus to go to Montlhéry to fetch his grandson and bring him back to the capital. Never before had so touching an enthusiasm for the monarchy broken out in France. The impulse of the Parisians was felt spontaneously in the countryside; between Paris and Montlhéry there was not a small town, not a market town, not a village, not a hamlet, not a farm where an inhabitant remained; everything was left empty: young men, old men, women and children had all wished to run to meet the young king. In this popular, improvised army the scythe and the pitchfork could be seen beside the pikes, halberds and lances, and the banners of the churches beside the pennons and standards of the men-at-arms.

The confederate princes next fell upon Champagne, where they did great damage. The king followed them there at the head of his army with intrepid courage, and so frightened them by his presence alone that, no longer daring to fight against him, although they were much stronger, they withdrew to various places. This retreat was the cause of their separation, and their separation of their submission; for, no longer seeing themselves strong enough to resist the royal power, they were delighted to make their peace on honourable terms.

Only Peter, duke of Brittany, relying on the alliance and protection of the king of England, had the boldness to continue the war against the king and to go on committing acts of hostility against his subjects. The king, although it was winter and the cold was very severe, nevertheless marched against this rebel before foreign help could reach him. He went first straight to Angers, which Louis VIII his father had wrested from the hands of the English and given to this traitor: it at once opened its gates to him, with almost all the other towns of the Angoumois. Bellême, which was thought impregnable, withstood a few assaults, but could not resist the courage of our young warrior. At last, with all help failing him, the duke was forced to ask for a

truce, and after three years of troubles and continual agitation he had no other means of keeping his rank than to implore the king's clemency, ask his pardon, acknowledge himself his vassal and do him homage for his duchy. His revolt, so little excusable, above all in a man who had made himself very skilled in philosophy and theology at the University of Paris, and other actions of the same kind, were the reason he was commonly called Mauclerc, which means bad cleric or bad doctor.

The king's minority having passed in these troubles, which served only to display his prudence, his valour, his goodness and his other royal virtues, he himself took the government of his kingdom at the beginning of his twentieth year, according to the custom of the time, without ever, however, excluding from affairs the queen his mother, who had governed them so wisely during his youth. On 27 May 1235 he married Margaret, eldest daughter of Raymond Berengar, count of Provence and Forcalquier, and of Beatrice of Savoy his wife. She was a princess whom grace and nature had endowed with every kind of perfection. She was related to the king in a prohibited degree, but the Pope granted a dispensation from this impediment. The marriage was celebrated at Sens in the church of Notre-Dame by Anselm of Saint-Médard, bishop and count of Noyon, in the presence of Gautier Cornut, archbishop of that city, who gave the couple the nuptial blessing and also crowned the queen with a magnificence worthy of the rank to which she was raised. Her dowry was only ten thousand livres; but she by herself was worth a whole world, and Louis believed he had found a great treasure in finding a wife of her merit. She had the same inclinations as he towards piety and the relief of the unfortunate. She never meddled in any business unless she was called to it, or unless it concerned the relief of the poor and the pardon of criminals. She followed the king everywhere, and even had the courage to go with him on his first voyage overseas, as we shall relate later. Finally, after his death, she retired to the monastery of the Poor Clares she had founded in the suburb of Saint-Marcel-lès-Paris, where, after a holy life, she died very Christianly at the age of about seventy, on 20 December in the year 1285; and her body, preceded and followed by the poor, who called her their mother, was carried to Saint-Denis. The rejoicings for this marriage were followed by a dangerous war on the part of Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche, who, so as not to be obliged to do fealty and homage to Alphonse, the king's brother, to whom His Majesty had given the county of Poitou, had the temerity to take up arms against his sovereign. He was urged on chiefly by his wife, the widow of John Lackland, father of Henry III, king of England, who would recognise no princess above her except the queen mother and the queen, the king's wife. The count's insolence even went so far as to surround the king and his whole court in Poitiers, when he went there to put his brother in possession. Louis, who then had no army, was obliged to extricate himself from his hands by skill; but he soon showed that he had no less justice than piety, and that, if he knew how to pardon those who implored his clemency and submitted to his just rule, he also knew how to crush the proud and humble the audacity of rebels. Indeed, putting himself at the head of his troops, he took in a short time the best-fortified towns and castles of the county, and, learning that the king of England was coming with a powerful army to the help of the traitor, he went to meet him, gave him battle at Taillebourg, put him to complete rout, killed part of his men and took as many as four thousand prisoners. It was on this occasion that, assisted by only eight horsemen, he crossed the bridge over the Charente through a cloud of darts, arrows and lances to go and attack the main body of the enemy, and held out for a long time, almost alone, against the shock of a thousand men-at-arms, until his troops, encouraged by his example, had crossed the same bridge and thrown themselves like lions on the English and the rebels to rescue him from danger. The slaughter would have been without measure but for the invincible clemency of Louis, who ordered quarter to be given to those who laid down their arms. The English fled after this defeat, and the count of La Marche, deprived of all help, was left at the mercy of his conqueror. He deserved no pardon, any more than did the queen and countess his wife, who during this war had several times suborned people, now to poison the king, now to stab him; but this good prince had regard to the great services this lord had rendered to France and granted him the pardon he was forced to ask of him, contenting himself with taking from him part of his county and a pension of ten thousand livres that his earlier deeds had earned him when he behaved as a good Frenchman. This holy king further showed the

strength of his mind and the greatness of his courage: in the disputes between the Popes and the emperors, into which attempts were made to draw him, but in which he intervened only to restore agreement; in the wars between the count of Provence, his father-in-law, and the count of Toulouse, father-in-law of Prince Alphonse his brother, which he happily ended without allowing either party to encroach on the other; in the trap the emperor Frederick laid for him, in order, it is believed, to seize his person during a conference they were to hold together at Vaucouleurs, which he made useless by appearing at the appointed place with forces that astonished that perfidious prince and put him to flight; and finally when the bishops of France who were going to Rome for a council were imprisoned by order of the same emperor: Saint Louis compelled him by his threats to release them and make amends for the injury he had done them.

As his first care was to render to God the service and honour he owed Him, that divine Goodness assisted him in all his needs, counselled him in all his undertakings, protected him against all his enemies and gave a happy outcome to everything he handled. God gave him a large number of sons, whose posterity reigned so long. The eldest was named Louis; he was born on 15 February 1244, ten years after the king's marriage. We have told, in the life of Saint Theobald, abbot of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, how the queen, who was barren, was made fruitful by the prayers of that holy abbot. Philip the Bold was the second, and became the first through the death of that young prince; he afterwards succeeded his father, and his descendants were kings down to Henry III. John Tristan was the third; he was given this name because he was born at Damietta, in the East, during the imprisonment of the king his father and the affliction of the queen his mother; he died before them without children. The fourth was Peter, count of Chartres, Blois and Alençon, who likewise left no line. The fifth was Robert of Bourbon, whose descendants, after nine generations, afterwards ascended the throne for the happiness of France and of all Christendom. Besides these sons, Saint Louis also had five daughters, who, except the eldest, who died in infancy, all married sovereigns. For the rest, he was not like most other princes, who neglect the education of their children and leave it entirely to the care of the governors they give them, without even examining whether these discharge their duties and strive to imprint early in their souls the hatred of vice and the love of virtue. He took the trouble to instruct them himself and to lead them to despise the pleasures and vanities of the world and to love their sovereign Creator. This he usually did in the evening, after Compline, in his chamber, where he had them come to receive his excellent lessons from his own lips. He took them with him to sermons; he taught them to recite the Little Office of Our Lady every day; he obliged them to attend the high Masses and divine offices sung to music on every feast day; he wished them to become accustomed from childhood to mortification and penance, and with this in view he did not allow them to wear any ornament on their heads on Fridays, because it was on that day that Our Lord was crowned with thorns. Finally, we still have the instructions he wrote in his own hand to his daughter Isabella when she was queen of Navarre; they are so holy and so full of the spirit of Jesus Christ that there is no director, however enlightened, who could give better.

If he knew so well how to govern his children, he was still more admirable in the government of his State. Never was so much peace and prosperity seen in France as during his reign. All the other nations, to the East, West, South and North, were in turmoil; but the French, whom he governed, enjoyed a happy tranquillity that he procured for them by his wisdom. He took care to banish from his State by holy laws all the disorders he could detect in it. The first was blasphemy and impious, execrable oaths. Against this crime he made ordinances too severe, which Pope Clement IV had him moderate. For himself, he had no other oath than to say "By my name"; but a religious of Saint Francis having warned him that it belonged to God alone to swear in that way, he at once ceased to do so and contented himself with saying *yes* and *no*, according to the teaching of the Son of God in the Gospel. The other disorders he strove to root out were duels, games of chance, the frequenting of houses of debauchery, the luxury of women and chicanery in lawsuits. He was the first to forbid duels in France: for before him the kings tolerated them and sometimes even ordered them to ascertain the rights of the parties, a means as deceptive as it was contrary to the laws of justice and humanity. In his time the inhabitants of a place would not have dared to be found in its taverns: this public convenience

was permitted only to travellers and to those who had no home. As judicial offices were not yet venal, he filled them with persons of known wisdom and probity, which he did only after taking the advice of the most virtuous and able men of his kingdom.

When he sent bailiffs, judges and officers into the provinces to administer justice there for a time, he forbade them to acquire property there or to establish their children there, lest they take occasion from it to commit injustices. He required that on leaving their offices they render an exact account of their administration and satisfy the complaints of the towns and provinces where they had been commissioners. He often sent extraordinary judges over them to examine their conduct and review their judgements, after the example of God, who declares that He will judge justices. If it was found that they had acted badly in their offices, he imposed a severe penance on himself, as if he had been guilty of their excesses, and he also punished them very rigorously, obliging them above all to restore what they had taken from the people and to compensate those whom they had condemned unjustly or whose affairs they had prolonged too much. On the contrary, when he learned that these officers had worthily discharged their duty, he rewarded them magnificently, either with good salaries or by raising them to more honourable posts. In his own affairs he was the first to condemn himself, and he even made himself the advocate of those who disputed some right with him. His ears were always ready to receive the complaints and hear the causes of his subjects, and no one dared prevent them from approaching him. Even on his walks, whether in his garden in Paris or in the wood of Vincennes, he would sit in the shade of a tree to judge their disputes without legal formalities. Often he settled them amicably; at other times he ended them by a decisive ruling; but always with such equity that no one could find fault with his sentences. Never did nobility or great wealth prevent him from being impartial; on the contrary he felt more inclined to favour people of modest condition who had no other support than the merits of their cases. We have in his history such illustrious examples of the protection he gave the poor against the tyranny and violence of the great, and of the rigour with which he punished the injustice of the latter, that there is nothing comparable in the histories of the severest judges of antiquity. He also had a marvellous skill in discovering the truth that people tried to obscure by forged letters or by suborning false witnesses. A great lord, unable to get a poor widow to sell him her inheritance, which he wished to enclose in his park, forged a contract of sale, by virtue of which he took possession of it as of property he had lawfully acquired. The widow had recourse to the king, who, touched by her complaints, at once summoned this lord to defend himself against the accusation brought against him. He came with two witnesses whom he had bribed with money to testify that the contract was genuine and that no fraud had entered into it. The king, having heard them, saw clearly that they were speaking against their conscience and had been corrupted. To discover the truth, he questioned them separately, and thus obtained from each of them in turn the admission that the contract the lord had had drawn up was false. They also declared all the circumstances of this deed and the amount of money they had received. Louis, learning by this means the wickedness of the nobleman and his wretched accomplices, sent them before the ordinary judges to receive their punishment, and restored the despoiled widow to the peaceful enjoyment of her inheritance.

Saint Louis’s application to the conduct of his family and his State did not prevent him from practising all the exercises of a perfect Christian. As he knew that chastity is easily lost amid delights, that humility is in great danger amid the praises and honours of the world, and that true devotion hardly agrees with the anxieties that immense riches bring with them, he took only those pleasures that necessity and propriety obliged him to take. Flattery was never welcome with him. He humbled himself as much as possible in the state of greatness and authority in which God had placed him. His treasures belonged more to the poor than to himself, and he had no greater satisfaction than in stripping himself of them to enrich the unfortunate. His custom was to fast strictly on every Friday of the year, and during Our Lord’s Advent, from All Saints to Christmas, and on all the vigils of the feasts of the Virgin; as for the fasts commanded by the Church, he dispensed himself from them in his illnesses only out of obedience to his confessors. On the Fridays of Advent and Lent he ate neither fruit, nor meat, nor fish, but only bread and vegetables. There were also days on which he fasted on

bread and water, such as Christmas Eve, Good Friday and the vigils of Our Lady. He slept very little, so as to have time to devote himself to prayer and the contemplation of divine truths. The hair shirt was his ordinary garment, and when his confessor forbade him to wear it, he made up for this mortification by a special alms of forty sous a day, which was at that time a considerable sum, enough to feed forty people. He sometimes went barefoot in his shoes, without anyone being able to notice it, because he had had hose made with the feet cut away, which made this austerity easier for him. Although he watched over himself perpetually so as to let slip no action contrary to perfection, yet he always walked in holy fear before the majesty of God and regarded himself only as the vilest of all creatures.

Every Saturday he never failed to gather a band of poor people in a private place, where he humbly washed, dried and kissed their feet. He also washed their hands, and never sent them away without giving them a large alms. He usually entertained a hundred and twenty of them in his palace at dinner and supper, and often served them himself with his royal hands, making them eat before he sat down to table. On vigils and feast days he increased the number to two hundred, and also made himself their cupbearer and steward. He took no meal without having three poor old men at his side as well, to whom he offered the best there was on his table; and sometimes he had the dishes they had eaten from brought back, thinking himself very happy to feed on the leavings of the poor. He wore no precious garments enhanced with gold and embroidery, but contented himself with the most ordinary clothes, especially after his return from the Holy Land, except on ceremonial occasions, when he knew how to uphold the splendour of his crown with a magnificence worthy of the greatness of the first monarch in the world. Every day, very early in the morning, he said the Hours of Our Lady and devoutly attended Mass. On feast days he was in church early for Matins, and heard them right through with great respect and a devotion capable of inspiring it in all his courtiers. In short, his piety was so pure and so perfect that it could put to shame the most austere religious and the hermits most withdrawn from the world.

What shall we say of his zeal for the destruction of heresy and licentiousness and for the establishment of the faith and of Christian discipline throughout his States? He made very severe regulations to this end; the same motive gave him great affection for the religious of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis, whom he regarded as sacred instruments that divine Providence wished to use for the salvation of countless souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. He sometimes even invited them to dine with him, especially Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Bonaventure, two of the most excellent lights of the Church, whose devout and learned conversation gave him marvellous joy and consolation. He founded on all sides collegiate churches, parishes, monasteries, chapels, hospitals, leper houses and other places of devotion and charity. The religion of this great prince appeared again in an admirable manner in the zeal he showed to bring into his kingdom the crown of thorns of Our Lord. He sent Brother James and Father Andrew of Longjumeau, of the Order of Saint Dominic, to fetch it from Constantinople, and had it brought as far as Venice, because it had been pledged to the Venetians for a very considerable loan of money. Then he redeemed it from their hands by paying them the amount of the pledge.

At that time the Catholic spirit was so fervent in France that there was great national joy throughout the kingdom when it was learned that the Saviour’s crown of thorns had become French property. Having received official notice, Louis IX set out from Vincennes in the first days of August 1239 with Queens Blanche and Margaret; the counts of Artois, Poitiers and Anjou, his brothers; the archbishop of Sens; Bernard, bishop of Le Puy; several other prelates and a crowd of princes and high barons.

At Villeneuve-l’Archevêque, five leagues from Sens, this noble and brilliant procession met the religious and their numerous following; for the people, knowing what they were bringing with them into France, had hastened to follow them, resolved not to return home until they had seen and adored the sacred relics of the passion of the God-Man. It was 10 August, the feast of Saint Lawrence. Father Andrew and Brother James presented to the monarch, to the queen his wife, to the queen his mother and to the son of France who

accompanied them, the triple case covered with the seals of the French lords and of the doge of Venice, Giacomo Tiepolo.

Everything was done in order and with great recollection. First the seals were examined and recognised; then they were broken. When the cedar case had been opened, the silver shrine was taken out of it with the same ceremonial; the lid of this shrine was lifted, and finally a kneeling prelate drew from it the golden vessel containing the holy crown. At that moment king, queens, princes, knights, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, soldiers, burghers and people prostrated themselves, melting into tears and hardly daring to raise their heads to look at that branch of thorns which the executioners of Jerusalem had twisted to make a mock crown for their divine victim. Oh, how this diadem of mockery has become a diadem of glory, and how all that is great, all that is strong, all that is humble, all that is small, all that is happy, all that is in tears, venerates it today! The day and the night were spent in prayers and songs of joy; and only on the next day did the devout son of Blanche of Castile and his three brothers, Robert, Alphonse and Charles, bareheaded, barefoot and clad in a simple tunic of white wool, carry the crown of Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews, into the sanctuary of the metropolitan church of Sens, where Louis IX had taken Margaret of Provence as his wife. All these ceremonies were beautiful and produced a great effect. They were closed by the day of 20 August. On that day the holy crown was offered to the veneration of the Parisians in the church of Notre-Dame. All the monks and religious of the royal monastery of Saint-Denis and of the two abbeys of Saint-Germain went to meet the crown of thorns as far as the entrance to the wood of Vincennes; and it was a striking and magnificent spectacle to see all that Christian crowd following the crosses and floating banners of the communities, convents and parishes of the great city, plunging beneath the shade of the age-old oaks to go and prostrate themselves before so holy a relic, one that recalled the great immolation of Golgotha. In this eager multitude shone all the notables of the camps, all the great ones of the palaces, all the glories of the sanctuary. At the entrance to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, through the care of the king’s officers, a vast platform had been set up, hung with silk and gold, which was reached by treading on the richest carpets of the crown spread on the ground. The silver shrine was carried up on to the platform by several bishops in cope and mitre. One of the prelates then uncovered the diadem of the Passion and showed it to the immense multitude. Suddenly the immense multitude, as one man, fell prostrate, uttering cries of gladness which must have risen to heaven and been heard by Him who reigns there; for they came from sincere and believing hearts.

Louis IX and his three brothers, still barefoot and bareheaded, shut the golden vessel in the silver reliquary and carried it to the high altar of Notre-Dame. After the ceremony of thanksgiving the precious relic was deposited in the chapel of Saint-Nicolas, built by Louis the Fat.

In the ages of faith and piety, great personages always had in their dwelling, or near their residence, a chapel called holy. Near the enclosure of the palace of the Cité, the dukes of France and counts of Paris had the chapel of Saint-Barthélemy, which for some time bore the name of Saint-Magloire, and in addition the chapels of Saint-Georges, Saint-Michel and Saint-Nicolas, which Louis VII had built and placed under the invocation of Notre-Dame de l’Étoile. Louis IX found nothing among the chapels then existing worthy to receive within its walls the crown reddened with the Redeemer’s blood; and he charged Pierre de Montereau to build for it that magnificent reliquary of stone which we still admire today, a monument as delicately carved as the shrines of gold and silver once to be seen in the treasuries of our old churches.

Saint Louis had raised the Sainte-Chapelle so that the most sacred things might be religiously kept there for ever. There he had laid on velvet and kept in caskets of silver-gilt the crown that had torn the brow of the God-Man, the reed that had served Him as a sceptre, and the iron of the lance that had pierced His side.

In the saturnalia of 1793, as is well known, relics were thrown to the winds to get the gold of the reliquaries; beneath the vaults built by Pierre de Montereau all the papers of the court registry had been carried; and we have seen all the judgements of human justice, dusty files, piled up where the sacred ornaments of the

Church once shone. Today, we must say, the monument of Louis IX's piety has been restored out of love of art, until it may be out of love of God, and we are about to see this chapel again as beautiful and as brilliant as in the time of the holy king. May the repainted and regilded walls of the royal oratory one day see again a faith like that which was manifested there in the thirteenth century! Louis IX also obtained from Baldwin II, emperor of Constantinople, a quantity of other relics of inestimable value, namely: the swaddling clothes of the Child Jesus, a large part of His cross, the iron chain with which He was bound, the iron of the lance with which His side was pierced, the reed and the purple robe that the soldiers gave Him for sceptre and royal mantle, the sponge with which gall and vinegar were offered Him, the towel with which He girded Himself to wash the feet of His Apostles, a winding sheet and part of the shroud in which He was buried, and some other relics of the Saints specified in the authentic act of that emperor, given at Saint-Germain-en-Laye in June 1247. Thus, through the wise foresight of our incomparable monarch, Greece was despoiled and France enriched, and with these holy remains we received a sure pledge of God's goodwill and perpetual protection towards this kingdom.

It is time to speak of the most memorable part of the life of Saint Louis, his journey to the East to deliver the holy places from the tyrannical power of the Saracens and other Barbarians. From his youth he had had a great inclination for this expedition, which he considered most worthy of a most Christian king and eldest son of the Church; but the great affairs of his State had always prevented him from carrying it out. At last, in the year 1245, at Pontoise, he fell so gravely ill with a continuous fever and dysentery that his recovery was altogether despaired of. He was even held for dead for nearly a day, having no feeling or perceptible movement left. In this extremity all the French, who loved him as their father, earnestly raised their hands to heaven. The precious shrines of Saint Denis, Saint Rusticus and Saint Eleutherius, patrons of Paris, were also carried in procession at Saint-Denis, and vows were made on all sides for the recovery of so good a prince. At last, having come out of this long lethargy, he vowed to go himself to Palestine to help the Christians oppressed by the unbelievers. This vow was followed by his convalescence. So he did not doubt that it was God's will that he should leave his kingdom for a time and cross with an army to the Holy Land. He was further urged to make this journey by the grievous news that came from the East: that Barbakan, king of the Khwarezmians, Persian peoples, having been driven from his States by the great khan of Tartary, had taken refuge with the sultan of Egypt, and with his troops had retaken Jerusalem, sacked Palestine, and reduced the affairs of the Christians to a worse state than they had ever been in. Moreover, Pope Innocent IV, who had come to Lyons both to escape the persecutions of the emperor Frederick Barbarossa and to hold a general council to remedy the evils with which the Church was overwhelmed, strongly exhorted the king to this heroic act of Christian piety and generosity. Finally, several prodigies, and above all crosses of light that appeared in various places, showed that this plan of a new crusade came from God.

Meanwhile the queen mother and the bishop of Paris, considering the dangers of this crusade and the poor success of earlier ones, and above all the great good that the king's presence brought about in France, did what they could to dissuade him, and represented to him that his vow need not trouble him, because when he made it, being overwhelmed by illness and not having his mind sufficiently free, he was in no state to contract so important and difficult an obligation. But this holy king, to whom God had given an unshakeable strength and constancy when His service was in question, could not yield to their entreaties; and, to take from them all means of pressing him further, having given his cross back to the bishop, he said to him: "You cannot now doubt, my father, that I am in full use of my reason, enjoying, by the grace of Jesus Christ, perfect health. It is therefore in this condition that I renew the vow I made to go myself to Palestine, and that I ask you for the cross: give it back to me as I gave it to you; for if my first vow had any defects that could cast doubt on its validity, this second has none, and it obliges me absolutely to do what I have promised." These words closed the mouths of those most opposed to the crusade. The princes and the greatest lords of France took the cross with the king: among others Robert, count of Artois, Alphonse, count of Poitiers, and Charles, count of Anjou, his brothers; the archbishops of Reims and Bourges, and the bishops of Laon,

Beauvais and Orléans. Blanche, the king's mother, was left as regent. Margaret his wife wished to accompany him, despite the dangers and unavoidable discomforts of so long a journey. Her three sisters-in-law, the wives of his three brothers, imitated the courage of this great queen. The French swore to keep faith with the king's children should misfortune befall him outside France. At last His Majesty took the road to Lyons, where he visited Pope Innocent IV for the second time and received his apostolic blessing. From there he went to Aigues-Mortes, where the fleet was, and the meeting place of his whole army. On 25 August in the year 1248 this great king embarked with his whole suite and with Odo, bishop of Tusculum (Frascati), whom the Pope made his legate on this expedition. The voyage went well as far as the island of Cyprus, where he landed on 20 September. He was received at Limassol with all possible honour and magnificence by King Henry, son of Amalric and grandson of Guy of Lusignan, who by his order had laid up incredible stores of corn, wine, arms and siege engines. Had he consulted only his zeal, he would have left at once for Egypt; but he was obliged to remain the whole winter on that island, first because of the plague that broke out in his camp and carried off more than a sixth of his troops, and then because his brother Alphonse, delayed by the death of the count of Toulouse his father-in-law, had not yet arrived with the rest of his army. Yet he lost no time; for, first, by the example of his courage he led the king of Cyprus to take the cross and undertake the rest of the journey with him. Secondly, by his prudence he put an end to the quarrels of the two archbishops of the island, who had thrown it entirely into confusion by their factions and their encroachments on one another.

Thus in Cyprus as in France, under the tent as under the oak of Vincennes, the grandson of Philip Augustus showed himself an angel of peace and conciliation. So much wisdom and virtue united to so much skill and courage, so much glory, in a word, was bound to cast its reflection far afield.

He had at last the consolation of receiving the ambassadors of a Tartar prince named Eljigidei, who, having lately conquered the Persians and having become a disciple of Jesus Christ and a child of the Church by Baptism, sent to offer to join his army with the king's to destroy the power of the Egyptian and deliver the holy places from the tyrannical rule of the unbelievers. The superscription of the letter these envoys presented read: "To the great king of many provinces, the invincible defender of the world, the sword of the Christians, the protector of the Gospel, Louis, my son, king of France." The king gave them all the welcome so solemn an embassy deserved, without, however, trusting their word too far or letting them see too clearly what was happening at his court.

Some of our historians have written that their promises were not sincere. Others have held quite the opposite opinion. However that may be, it is certain that Saint Louis afterwards received no help from that quarter. While he was wintering in the island of Cyprus, the Saracen princes, informed of his preparations, for the most part laid aside their private quarrels to unite against him, and the chief of the Assassins, called the Old Man of the Mountain, sent several of his men to kill him; but they were all discovered and justly condemned to death. At last, on Friday 13 May 1249, before Pentecost, he put to sea again with eighteen hundred ships great and small. Of this great number more than half were scattered by storm at the very outset, so that the king, holding a review at the point of Limassol, found with him only seven hundred knights out of the two thousand eight hundred of which his army was composed. He nevertheless continued the voyage, and on the way the duke of Burgundy, William of Salisbury and William of Villehardouin, prince of Achaia, joined him. With this reinforcement he sailed towards Damietta, where he found the Saracens drawn up in great numbers on the shore. Everything seemed to favour their arms: the difficulty we had in landing, the height of the place where they stood, from which it was easy for them to shoot a hail of missiles on our men, and a tower behind them from which they could further seriously harass any ships bold enough to approach. But the valour of Saint Louis made all these advantages useless. He had the signal for battle given by the sound of horns and trumpets, and at the same moment, the bearer of the banner of Saint-Denis having leapt ashore, Saint Louis threw himself into the water up to his armpits, cutlass in hand and shield hung round his neck.

His men followed him at once, and the Saracens' missiles could not prevent them from getting up on to the shore, so that he was able to form them into a close battalion to withstand the shock of the unbelievers. Six thousand horsemen came down on the French at the same time; but they were repulsed with such vigour and such great slaughter that they would not return to the charge. So they set fire to Damietta in several places, massacred all the Franks within its walls, and, loading themselves with the most precious things they found there, fled shamefully, leaving the town open and exposed to the arms of our holy Monarch. So great a cowardice was at first taken for a mere stratagem; but when the truth was known, His Majesty ordered a procession with the cross and burning torches to make a solemn entry into this first conquest. He took part in it barefoot and bareheaded, with the Pope's legate, the patriarch of Jerusalem and the other prelates and lords in his suite. The mosque was purified and blessed and made into a church for celebrating the holy mysteries, after being dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. After so happy a victory, which had cost almost no blood, Saint Louis put it to deliberation whether he should take the field at once to pursue the unbelievers. The advice of his council was that they should wait for the ships the storm had scattered, and for Alphonse, count of Poitiers, his brother, who was coming from France with the rearguard. This was hardly the king's view; he thought they ought to fall on the enemy while they were in terror; but he would undertake nothing against the judgement of so many old captains. Meanwhile the abundance of the country and the idleness of our soldiers soon brought dissoluteness and debauchery into the army. The soldiers and even several of the lords gave themselves up to the crimes and abominations of the barbarians they had come to exterminate. They squandered in continual gaming and feasting what was meant to keep them alive in so distant a country. Saint Louis did what he could by his remonstrances and his laws to prevent these disorders, but in vain. He even withdrew his army from the town for this reason and settled it in a vast, well-guarded camp, whose tents were pitched on both banks of the Nile and in the island of Maalé (the Delta); but debauchery followed them there. It is no wonder after this that God's justice punished these libertines by several defeats, of which we shall now speak.

As soon as the army was assembled, our holy Monarch marched on Grand Cairo, then the capital of Egypt and the seat of its sovereigns. The Sultan Nejm-ed-Din had just died, leaving only a son who was absent; but Sécédin (or Fakhr-ed-Din) took the regency of the kingdom and gathered strong forces to dispute every crossing with the French. The first he disputed was that of the Rexi, an arm of the Nile, where an attempt was made in vain to throw a bridge of boats across; but at last a ford was found, by which our whole army crossed and fell furiously on the Saracens. The battle was all the fiercer because the unbelievers were six to one and, fighting on their own ground, had advantages and facilities that we lacked. The valour our holy King displayed that day cannot be expressed. He could be seen, clad in gilded armour and scimitar in hand, flashing like lightning and striking like thunder. "And I promise you," says the sire de Joinville, an eyewitness, "that never did I see so fine an armed man." He surpassed all the others by his gigantic stature, and, as though his strength had been divinely doubled, he dealt so many blows with sword and mace that he drove back or overthrew all who came near him. He seemed to be in three or four different places at once, so quick and ardent was he to help his men. Six enemy horsemen having surrounded him as he was going to free one of his captains who was being led away prisoner, he defended himself so courageously that he laid some of them on the ground and skilfully escaped the others. His prodigious deeds sustained and raised the courage of the Christians, and there was not one who did not feel his vigour renewed by his example, despite the excessive heat, the weariness and the assault of the enemy. At last, Sécédin having been killed, the unbelievers fled in disorder and left their camp to our men, who slept in it and gathered their spoils. So brilliant a victory nevertheless cost us blood: Robert, the king's brother, and three hundred knights of the Temple pursued the enemy through the town of Mansourah, which they found open. As they tried to return in triumph through the same town, they were shut in there and killed by arrows, stones and tiles. Shortly afterwards the Saracens, having elected another general named Baibars Bundukdari, a man of great experience, he offered the French a second battle. It was more regular than the first, but no less favourable to

us; for when the honour of the field had been disputed for three hours, the unbelievers turned their backs, and the Christians, pursuing them, made a horrible slaughter of them as long as the sun gave them light. It was on this occasion that Alphonse, count of Poitiers and brother of the king, being in extreme danger, this generous monarch ran to his aid with such valour that he happily delivered him from the hands of those surrounding him.

The French, all proud of these two victories, instead of raising their eyes to heaven, whence this help had come to them, attributed the cause of their good fortune to the strength of their swords, and plunged back into vice more than ever. The good king, unable to bear their vanity or their debauchery, often said to them: “Let us acknowledge, lords, that so many benefits come to us from God; let us give Him thanks for them and pray Him to preserve them to us; and if we desire this favour, let us ourselves preserve His grace and our innocence, without which all our advances would only hasten our ruin.” All promised not to fail in this; but almost all failed continually. And so the prosperity did not last long, and soon turned into very great adversity. For the stench of the dead bodies, both of our men and of the enemy, having kindled a raging plague in our camp, a great part of the army was consumed by it; and as the king saw himself too weak, with the few men left him, to resist the forces of the Saracens, whose number kept growing, especially after the arrival of the Sultan, he was obliged to take the road back to Damietta. It was in this retreat that, having sent his vanguard and main body ahead, he placed himself with the rearguard to support it by his presence and courage against the attacks of the Saracens. And indeed on this occasion, sick and languishing though he was, he performed feats of bravery almost without example; but God, wishing to consummate his holiness by a heroic patience more glorious than all his deeds of war, allowed him to be taken prisoner by the unbelievers, with Alphonse and Charles his two brothers and a number of other lords whose weakness had made them unable to escape. Saint Louis had for his prison the house of Fakhr-ed-Din ibn Lokman, the sultan’s secretary;[1] he was entrusted to the custody of Sabih. At first he was treated fairly well, because the Sultan, fearing to lose a considerable ransom by his death, took particular care to have him cured; but once he was in health he was made to suffer the most barbarous treatment, and the tyrant even threatened to have him put in the *bernicles*, a kind of torture like the rack, for dislocating and wrenching apart all the bones, if he did not accept his proposals. Louis’s constancy appeared admirably in so astonishing a reverse. Far from grieving over the pains he endured, he felt and showed joy in them; the Saracen’s threats did not shake him, and he was no less calm in his prison and loaded with irons than if he had been on his throne amid the homage of his subjects. So extraordinary a strength surprised the Sultan: he proposed to set him free with all his people if he would give him back Damietta and pay him five hundred thousand livres. The king would never put a price in gold and silver on his own person; indeed it was beyond price; but he agreed to these conditions for the deliverance of his brothers and the other Christian prisoners. The Sultan, still more astonished at his frankness, remitted a hundred thousand livres of this sum, asking only four hundred thousand. During this negotiation the queen, who was at Damietta, gave birth to a son who was called Tristan, because he was born during his father’s captivity. Meanwhile the emirs, the chief officers of Egypt, being discontented with their Sultan because he had removed them from his court to advance new favourites, stirred up the Mamelukes against him, and they murdered him with their daggers. One of his murderers came at once to the king, his hands all bloody, to tell him that he had killed his enemy; but this great prince, in whom so execrable a crime could arouse only horror, turned his face away without even wishing to look at him. There was reason to fear that the emirs would not keep to the conditions the dead man had granted him; nevertheless his patience, his modesty, his courage and the holiness of all his actions made such an impression on their minds, barbarous and cruel as they were, that they even deliberated among themselves for a long time whether they should not elect him as their Sultan. Unable to agree on this, they granted him a truce for ten years, swearing to observe this treaty by the most terrible oaths of their law. They wished to oblige him to take similar oaths according to his law, such as to deny Jesus Christ if he did not keep his word; but although he fully intended to keep it, and he was told that with this intention he could take the oath, he

had such a horror of the words “deny the faith” and “deny Jesus Christ” that he would never consent to it. Alphonse his brother was left as a hostage, and he with all the lords made his way towards Damietta, from where he sent the emirs two hundred thousand livres; and from there he went to Acre. The queen was waiting for him there with her treasure, from which he had the other two hundred thousand livres paid, as had been agreed, and recovered his brother. He showed himself so scrupulous in keeping his word that, when one of his treasurers reported to him that the emirs had made a mistake of ten thousand livres in the payment, he sent the sum back to them at once, although on their side they had failed in many things, both by putting to death the sick Christians at Damietta and by not sending back all the prisoners.

For the rest, amid so many afflictions capable of shaking the most constant souls, the holy king never let himself be carried away by any movement of impatience; he continually blessed God, and thanked Him no less for these crosses and adversities than for the greatest prosperity. His intention was to return at once to France with the queen, his children and the princes; but, seeing that the Saracens had broken the truce and violated their oaths, he would not yet abandon the East, for fear of leaving the Christians exposed to the rage of the unbelievers. He therefore remained for some time at Acre, where his usual occupations were to console the Christians of the country, to supply them generously with all they lacked, to ransom those who were prisoners in the hands of the Mohammedans, to have the churches rebuilt, to gather the relics of the martyrs, and, after the example of Jesus Christ his Master, to preach the true faith effectively, not by studied sermons but by vigorous deeds. Our Lord blessed his zeal and labours admirably; for he made a great number of conversions, and was the joy and consolation of the whole East. He also became by this means more glorious and illustrious than he had been before his defeat and imprisonment, and he won such high esteem among all the princes of the East that everywhere people spoke only of his royal virtues and heroic deeds. At this time he received the ambassadors of the emperor of Germany, who pretended to have come to negotiate his release; but he did not trust them, because their master was suspected of an understanding with the Saracens. The sultan of Damascus also sent him envoys to enter into a league with him against the emirs of Egypt; but this had no other effect than to oblige the emirs to keep the treaty they had made with the Christians and to repair the damage they had caused by breaking it. The prince of the Bedouins or Assassins, who was dreaded by all the other princes under the name of the Old Man of the Mountain, because he had under him soldiers devoted to murdering those he pointed out to them, was obliged to honour his virtue and revere his power; he sent him rich presents, with his shirt and his ring, begging him to leave him in peace and not come and trouble him in the castles he had in the mountains around Tyre.

The king was not content to make himself useful to the Christians in Acre; he bought new troops and rebuilt his army; then, having taken the field again, he entered Palestine, where he visited the holy places of the province of Galilee, such as Mount Tabor and the town of Nazareth. He fortified some towns there, among others Caesarea Philippi, which was called Belinas, and Joppa, besides Tyre and Sidon in Phoenicia. He wished to visit the holy City as well, and the Saracens would not have refused him entry with a few men had he asked them; but his council dissuaded him from it. He showed incredible charity to the faithful on all sides. It is recorded that one day, having found in the countryside a great number of them who had died in a battle against the Saracens, he got down from his horse to bury them, and began himself to carry them on his shoulders into the grave, saying to those with him: “Help me, my brothers, to bury the martyrs of Jesus Christ.”

He was meditating still greater things, and neither the dangers he ran nor the difficulties that arose at every moment could slacken the fervour of his zeal. But just when he was promising himself a happy outcome to his undertakings, Queen Blanche his mother, whom he had left regent of the kingdom, and who had governed it during his absence with all the wisdom and firmness that could have been expected of the greatest princes, died at Melun at the age of sixty-five, in 1252. This sad news was brought to him in the city of Sidon by the Pope’s legate, accompanied by the archbishop of Tyre and by Geoffrey of Beaulieu, of the Order of Saint

Dominic, his confessor. Then he knelt before the altar of his chapel, where he was, and, joining his hands, said with abundant tears: “I give You thanks, my Lord and my God, that it has pleased You to lend me my most honoured lady and mother until now. I loved her assuredly above all mortal creatures, as she well deserved that I should have that affection and tenderness for her; but since You have judged fit to take her to Yourself, may Your holy name be praised and blessed for ever!” He recited for her at once the whole Office of the Dead, with as much attention and calm of mind as if it had been for a stranger, and he had many Masses said for her, especially in religious houses.

This loss did not prevent him from remaining some time in the Holy Land to finish the fortifications of the towns he had undertaken to put in a state of defence; but, having received letters advising him that his kingdom was in danger from the Germans and the English unless he returned as soon as possible, he took the road back to France on 25 April, Saint Mark’s day, in 1254, with the queen and his children. When he went on board his ship, he had an altar and a tabernacle set up, very magnificently adorned, in which, by permission of the apostolic legate, he had the Blessed Sacrament of the altar placed. All the hours of the divine office were said there, and even all the prayers of the Mass except the Canon; the sacred Host was also taken from there to carry as Viaticum to the sick. On the third day of the voyage a furious storm arose at sea, which, driving the ship His Majesty was in against a tongue of land, put it in danger of breaking up and sinking. Everyone despaired of his life; but the holy king, prostrating himself before the Blessed Sacrament and before the relics of the Saints, did so much by his prayers and tears that he saved his ship from this peril. Moreover, he performed on this occasion an act of incomparable generosity: the sailors advised him to transfer to another ship with the queen and his children, because the sand had broken three fathoms of the keel of his own; he absolutely refused, for fear of discouraging the other lords who were with him and giving them a distaste for the voyage. At last he reached Hyères on 19 July, crossed the Rhône at Beaucaire, travelled through Languedoc and arrived at the castle of Vincennes on 5 September. The next day he made his solemn entry into Paris.

Everyone showed signs of gladness at his happy return. Pope Clement IV sent to congratulate him on it, assuring him in his apostolic brief that during his absence he had taken his kingdom under his protection, having forbidden every Christian, under pain of excommunication, to make any attempt on his lands. Henry III, king of England, also came from Bordeaux to Paris to pay him his respects and show him the share he took in the public and universal joy at his happy arrival in his States. He had other designs as well, which he easily accomplished through the sovereign goodness of the Saint, who would refuse him nothing, in order to establish a stable and lasting peace between the French and the English. It was on this occasion that, when Louis out of courtesy offered precedence to Henry, as one always offers it to one’s guests in one’s own house, that prince steadfastly refused it, saying: “No, great king, this honour belongs to you; you are my lord, and you always will be.”

One of the first occupations of this holy monarch after his return was to make peace among all the princes and great lords of Europe. He reconciled the count of Burgundy with the count of Chalon, his father; he reconciled them both with Theobald, count of Champagne and king of Navarre. He made peace between the counts of Bar and Luxembourg. He ended the disputes between the children of the two marriages of Margaret, countess of Flanders. In short, there was no State or sovereign that did not wish to have him as arbiter of the quarrels that arose between them and their neighbours. The men of his council sometimes represented to him that he would do better to leave these princes at war with one another, because, by weakening themselves in money and soldiers, they gave him the opportunity to profit by their dissensions; but he rebuked them for this advice as very bad counsel, “because,” he said, “if I leave my neighbours at war so as to take advantage of their weakness, besides failing in Christian charity, which makes me worthy of the scourges of God’s anger, I also incur the blame of men, and I deserve that, forgetting their own quarrels, they should join together to attack me and take from me what belongs to me.”

Never was a prince more magnificent than he in building churches, monasteries and hospitals. He founded the abbey of Royaumont, in the diocese of Beauvais, for Cistercian monks; that of Le Lys, in the diocese of Sens, for monks of the same Order; and that of Longchamp, in the diocese of Paris, for Poor Clare nuns. He completed that of Maubuisson near Pontoise, and granted very fine privileges to that of Saint-Antoine, in one of the suburbs of Paris. He established the Carthusians near the same city, in the place called Vauvert, which had been the palace of King Robert. He contributed much to the convents of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers, whom the kings his predecessors had already received there. The abbey of Sainte-Catherine-du-Val-des-Écoliers and the hospital of the Quinze-Vingts also acknowledge him as their founder. He founded the latter to maintain there in perpetuity three hundred blind men, in memory of three hundred knights of his suite whose eyes the unbelievers had cruelly put out when he was in the Holy Land. He also had great repairs made at Saint-Denis in France, gave it several shrines for keeping the holy relics, and restored most of the tombs of the kings his predecessors. But of all his foundations the most remarkable is that of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, which he endowed with very fine revenues to honour by a perpetual cult the sacred relics of our redemption, as we have already noted. We say nothing of the monastery of the Emmurées of the Order of Saint Dominic near Rouen, nor of the Maisons-Dieu of

Pontoise, Compiègne, Saumur, Orléans, Reims, Fontainebleau, Villemande, Saint-Denis and Vernon, which acknowledge him as their founder. His charity had no bounds, and he would have spread its effects over the whole earth had his finances been able to match the greatness of his desire to do good to all. When he knew that some province had been afflicted by hail and barrenness and was suffering from scarcity, he at once sent considerable sums there to preserve the poor from extreme want. He also took charge of a great number of young girls whom the poverty of their parents made unable to marry; for, lest this misery should lead them into some action contrary to purity, he gave them dowries from his own funds and found them matches suited to their condition.

He was not content to spend his money on relieving the poor and the sick; he visited them himself and rendered them the lowliest services. The Bull of his canonisation relates two examples of this. This holy Monarch, being one day in the abbey of Royaumont, learned that a religious of that monastery named Léger was so covered with leprosy that his eyes, nose and lips were already entirely eaten away, so that almost no form of a face could be seen in him. He wished to see him, and, taking only the abbot with him, went to his cell, which was separated from those of the other brethren. He found him at table, eating with great difficulty the poor dinner that had been brought him. He knelt before him as before one who represented to him Jesus Christ covered with our sins, and, taking with his royal hands the food that was in his dish, carried it himself to his mouth; he also sent for the dishes that were being prepared for his own dinner and served them to him with an altogether surprising humility and devotion; finally, before leaving this sick man, who horrified all who saw him, he embraced and kissed him, not judging unworthy of a kiss from his lips one who was the figure of his crucified Saviour.

The other example took place in the Maison-Dieu of Compiègne. Our Saint met there a man afflicted with the disease that the Bull calls Saint Eligius's disease; he insisted on rendering him the same services he had rendered the former. His hand was at once covered with the pus flowing from the sick man's sores; but he was not dismayed: he had it washed without emotion and continued these admirable offices of charity. His devotion and clemency were incomparable. Having one day been warned that assassins had been sent to take his life, he had them sought with great care and was fortunate enough to discover them. He pardoned them and sent them back free to their master. The Annals of Scotland say that this conspiracy was discovered by the Scottish lords whom their king Alexander III had given to Saint Louis to assist and serve him in the holy war, and that in gratitude for this fidelity Saint Louis entrusted them with his first guard, as it long remained with soldiers of that country. The captain of the Scots guards bore the title of first captain of the king's bodyguard. Another time a poor woman whose lawsuit, through some misunderstanding, was not being

settled as quickly as she wished went herself to our holy Monarch and heaped insults on him, reproaching him that he was not worthy to bear the sceptre and that on the contrary he deserved to be stripped of the purple and shamefully driven from his States. Far from conceiving indignation against her, he thanked her on the contrary for telling him his truths so well. “You are right, my good woman,” he said to her; “I am unworthy to be king, and if I were treated according to my deserts, I should be driven not only out of France but out of the whole earth.” After which he had a considerable alms given her.

We have said that before his departure for the Holy Land Saint Louis had made wise ordinances to regulate his kingdom and banish all disorder from it. On his return he made new ones that completed this great work. His singular modesty, whether at table, in his clothes, or in the liveries of his household, was a visible condemnation of the luxury of the princes and lords; but he also condemned and forbade it in his edicts.

As the rights of *régale* and patronage gave him the nomination to several benefices,[2] he took very exact care to nominate to them only wise, prudent and virtuous persons capable of filling the places on which the lamps of the Church were to be raised, having them first examined by doctors or by religious of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis, whose piety and learning he knew particularly well. But, fearing to burden his conscience too heavily with nominations of this kind, he would never extend his rights in this respect; he left to the prelates, chapters and communities the provisions and elections that belonged to them according to the Canons. Pope Alexander IV, wishing to acknowledge in some way the benefits the Church had received from his zeal and magnificence, sent him a Bull granting him the nomination to the prelacies of his kingdom; but this favour, far from being agreeable to him, displeased him extremely, and he refused it with incredible firmness, saying that he would be hard put to give God an account of the administration of his kingdom without meddling in that of the Church as well; then, lest his successors should wish to use the favour he refused, he burned the Bull so that it should not remain among the papers of the crown. He could not bear the plurality of benefices, and when he was asked to nominate someone to a prebend, he never did so without being sure that the man held no other or would resign the one he held. His respect for the Pope and the Holy See was extreme; he showed himself on every occasion the protector of its rights and its invincible defender.

There would be countless things to say about his piety towards Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin and the holy patrons of his kingdom; about his prayers, his penances, his delicacy of conscience and his devotion in receiving the most holy Sacrament of the altar. His zeal and religion increased continually, and, far from cutting down his spiritual exercises, he constantly added new ones and always performed the old ones with fresh fervour. The reputation of his holiness became so great that even religious had recourse to him in their troubles and begged him to instruct them, reform them and settle their domestic disputes. This good king was in no way scandalised to see various imperfections in them, but tried to remedy them by his wisdom, which had no equal in all his States. There were some lords who could not stomach his practices and sometimes even mocked them; but God showed in this great prince that Christian modesty is infinitely more powerful than the arrogance and pride of the spirit of the world, since there has never been another king who preserved his State in such peace, had such influence over the great men of his kingdom, and was so feared by the princes his neighbours. It is said that one day the count of Guelders, having sent one of his officers to Paris on some business concerning his service, asked him on his return whether he had seen the king. This officer, who was a buffoon, wishing to make him laugh at the expense of our holy Monarch, mimicked his posture, which was to incline his head a little to one side, and said: “Yes, I saw him, that bigot, that poor king who wears his hood on his shoulder.” But his impudence did not go unpunished; for at that very hour his neck was twisted and his head bent and turned, and so it remained for the rest of his life. We have not said of our Saint that he refused to go and see a beautiful child, all shining with light, who appeared in the sacred Host when the Blessed Sacrament was elevated at Mass, saying that his faith in the presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist was firm and did not need to be strengthened by sight; for our best historians agree that this act belongs to the great Simon, count of Montfort, and not to Saint Louis, although he often cited it and spoke of

it with much esteem and admiration.

Meanwhile this incomparable prince always carried in his mind a bitter regret at the ill success of French arms in the East and at the oppression in which he had left the Christians there. His pain grew still greater when he learned that the new Sultan of Egypt had taken and ruined the city of Antioch and was threatening the rest of Syria and Palestine. In this wretched state the Christians of Palestine continually implored the help of his arms, and their complaints resounded more loudly in his heart than in his ears. He always thought of a second crusade, and at last he resolved on it. His three sons and a great number of princes and lords took the cross with him, as well as Richard, king of England, who wished to accompany him and gathered very fine troops for the purpose. His council was not in favour of this journey; but the love of God and zeal for religion prevailed in his mind over all the reasons of policy. His first intention was to go straight to Syria, where he was asked for so urgently; but because the king of Tunis sent to promise him that he would become a Christian if he would land in Africa; because his brother the king of Sicily greatly desired that the audacity of the Africans be checked for the safety of his coasts; and finally because it seemed likely that, if the Sultan of Egypt no longer drew forces from the Mohammedans of Africa, it would be easier to subdue him, he resolved to sail for Tunis. On his departure he gave the government of the State to Matthew of Vendôme, abbot of Saint-Denis, and to Simon de Clermont, lord of Nesle, and, failing them, to Philip, bishop of Évreux, and to John, count of Ponthieu. He also made his will, dated at Paris in the month of February 1269, which contains several pious legacies to churches and monasteries, with assignments of pensions to the newly baptised whom he had brought from overseas. It will be found in full in Du Chesne, Ménard and Du Cange, who have reported what concerns the history of Saint Louis.

Before leaving the fair kingdom of France, the devout son of Blanche of Castile went on pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Vauvert and to other places then renowned for their holiness; thus the noble Son of France wished to carry with him from his native land all the confidence and all the hopes that are drawn nowhere so abundantly as from the springs of religion.

When the day of departure had come, the king summoned his three sons, and when they had entered the royal pavilion he said to them in a voice full of emotion: “You see how, already old, I am undertaking the voyage overseas for the second time; how I am leaving your mother advanced in years, and my kingdom full of prosperity.

“You see how, for the cause of Christ, I do not spare my old age, and how I have resisted the prayers and the grief of all those dear to me who wished to hold me back.

“I sacrifice for God rest, riches, honours and pleasures; and in doing so I am only fulfilling my duty as a Christian king… I am taking you with me, my dear sons, and your elder sister too; I would also have taken with us, soldiers of Jesus Christ, my fourth son, had he been older…”

Then, turning to the eldest of his children, Philip, who was to reign after him, he added: “I have wished to tell you these things so that after my death, when you have ascended my throne, you may spare nothing for Christ and for the defence of His Church. Heaven grant that neither your wife, nor your children, nor your kingdom may ever hold you back on the way of salvation! I have wished to give this last example to you and your brothers, and I hope you will follow it if circumstances require.” Deeply moved by this touching address, the three sons of France fell at their father’s knees, and he, stretching out his hands over their young bowed heads, blessed them tenderly in the name of the God for whom they were all going to fight.

The fleet set sail on 4 July 1270. A great storm soon scattered the ships and put several of them out of condition to sail; but almost all were refitted and came together again, and they all reached Tunis. Saint Louis expected to enter the port without any difficulty after the advantageous promises of the king of that city; but he experienced the truth of the old proverb: “Punic faith.” This barbarian, traitorous and faithless, who had himself called him to his aid, opposed his landing; they had to fight him on sea and on land to secure a place

of safety. God blessed these beginnings. Part of the enemy ships were sunk and the others captured. Near the ruins of ancient Carthage there was an island defended by a strong tower built on a rock. The French besieged it, took it and put a strong garrison in it. The king of Tunis afterwards made various attacks on them, but he was always beaten, especially in a bloody encounter in which he lost ten thousand of his men. Thus his capital was seriously besieged. However, as it was strong and well supplied with fighting men, it was difficult to take it except by famine. Our troops, to achieve this, did great damage in the surrounding country and ruined all the places from which provisions could be brought to it. By this means they caused it much hardship; but the hardships they themselves suffered from it were incomparably greater. Scarcity of provisions soon came into the camp, and this, joined to the bad air and the stifling heat of the climate, brought in at the same time dysentery and burning fevers, and put almost all the soldiers out of action. Saint Louis would gladly have given battle to the Africans; but they contented themselves with a few light skirmishes and at once withdrew to advantageous places where it was impossible to besiege them. At last, as the sickness spread, the leaders and princes could not escape it. The Pope's legate was carried off by it; Philip, the king's eldest son, had attacks of it, besides a quartan fever that tormented him; and his brother John Tristan felt its violence by a fairly swift death. The king their father, deeply affected by these evils, was himself struck by a flux of blood and a burning, pestilential fever, which soon made his life despaired of.

This blow, which would have terrified any other prince, neither troubled nor frightened him at all. He adored God's dealings with him; he thanked Him for these adversities, which he regarded as instruments of his predestination, and abandoned himself into His hands for all the dispositions of His Providence. At the height of his illness he often repeated this prayer: "Grant us the grace, Lord, so to despise the prosperity of this world that we may not fear its adversities." He also said: "Be, O Lord, the sanctifier and guardian of Your people." He received the Viaticum with admirable piety and fervour, his heart all on fire with love and his eyes bathed in tears. The priest asked him whether he did not firmly believe that He whom he was presenting to him was Jesus Christ, Son of the living God. "I believe it as firmly," he answered, "as if I saw Him with my own eyes and in the same form He had when He ascended into heaven." Having thus fortified himself with the Sacraments of the Church, he summoned the chief officers of his army, told them of his joy at dying in the service of his divine Master and at seeing them all full of zeal for the defence and propagation of the Christian religion, and exhorted them to behave as true servants of Jesus Christ. "Since you are His soldiers," he said to them, "not only by Baptism but also by the cross you have taken so generously, do not live as His enemies; do not make war on Him by impiety, avarice, gluttony and impurity, while you uphold His name by the strength of your arms; do not be Mohammedans in your morals while you make so authentic a profession of being Christians by exposing your lives for His Church." He then spoke to Philip, his eldest son, the heir to his crown, and gave him these fine instructions, written in his own hand: "I recommend to you, my dear son, before all things, to apply yourself with all your heart to loving God; for he who does not love Him cannot be saved. Beware of doing anything that displeases Him, of committing any mortal sin, and rather suffer every kind of pain and misery than fall into that misfortune. If God sends you adversities, receive them with humility and endure them with patience, being persuaded that you have well deserved them and that they will be to your advantage. If He fills you with prosperity, do not take occasion of pride from it, but acknowledge the helping hand of your Benefactor and render Him most humble thanks for it; for it would be great ingratitude to use the gifts of God to make war on Him. Confess often, and for this choose wise and experienced confessors who have light and vigour to lead you to good and turn you from evil. Behave towards them and towards the upright persons who come near you in such a way that they are free to reprove you. Hear the divine service devoutly, without chatting or looking this way and that. Pray to God with heart and lips with great fervour, especially at Mass, and after Mass, and after the consecration. Be devout and kindly towards the poor and the afflicted, and help them according to your power. If anything weighs on your heart, reveal it at once to your confessor or to some other faithful counsellor who knows how to give you good advice." He then exhorts him not to suffer the impious and libertines near him, but always to seek the

company of good men; to listen willingly to the sermons of the most zealous preachers, both in public and in private; to gain the indulgences granted by the Church; to banish mockers and slanderers from his court; to keep equity inviolably in all things, never swerving to right or left; to restore faithfully any goods he knew did not belong to him, and, if he was in doubt, to clear up the doubt promptly so as to have nothing that belonged to another; to preserve, as far as he could, peace and charity among his subjects; to defend and protect the goods of the Church; to cherish and help religious and preachers of the Gospel; to distribute benefices holily, without giving several to one man; to settle the quarrels of his neighbours; to root out heresies; to regulate well the expenses of his household; and finally to love all he knew to be right and equitable and to detest all he knew to be contrary to the rules of piety and justice. He ended this admirable exhortation with these words: “I also beg you, my dear son, that when I am dead you will have me helped by Masses, prayers and alms throughout France, and that you will give me a share in the good works you will do. In this expectation I give you all the blessings a good father can give his son, praying the Holy Trinity to keep you from all evils and to pour out on you the fullness of Its graces.” We also have other very holy and spiritual instructions that he gave to his daughter Isabella, queen of Navarre; they may be seen in the *Notes sur Joinville* by Ménard. He had written them, like the preceding ones, while he was in France; but it seems likely that he recited them aloud, at least in part, on his deathbed. At last he entered his agony, and, uttering these words of the Royal Prophet, “I will enter into Thy house, O Lord, and I will bless Thy name,” and these others, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,” he gave back his soul to God on 25 August in the year 1270, at the age of fifty-six, in the forty-fourth year of his reign.

The king’s death made the weapons fall from the hands of his whole army, and so swelled the hearts of the barbarians that they all felt sure of winning a complete and perfect victory. But Philip his son, worthy heir of his valour as of his crown, which earned him the surname of the Bold, raised the courage of his men, and, strengthened by the new army of the king of Sicily, his uncle, who arrived on the very day of Saint Louis’s death, he fought two battles with the unbelievers in which he defeated them completely. Thus the king of Tunis was forced to ask him for peace. Philip granted it on condition that he pay an annual tribute to Charles his uncle; that he indemnify Philip himself for the costs of the war; that he let the Christians live in peace and in the free exercise of their religion in the places they inhabited in Africa; that he allow the Friars Preachers, the Friars Minor and the other religious to preach the word of God everywhere there; that he not prevent those who were converted from receiving Baptism and attending the churches; and finally that he demand nothing of Christian merchants who came to bring goods into Africa. This happy success was attributed to the prayers Saint Louis was offering in heaven for his army at the foot of God’s throne.

Saint Louis was a king after the heart of God, by the innocence of his life, the purity of his love and the ardour of his zeal; a king after the heart of the Church, by his respect for her ordinances, his promptness in defending her against her enemies and his continual application to extending and enlarging her; a king after the heart of the people, by his compassion and generosity towards the poor and the wretched, by the care he took to keep them in peace and preserve them from every kind of hardship and evil, and by the care he had for their instruction and salvation. The Bull of his canonisation mentions a great number of miracles he worked after his death; for through his intercession the blind have been given light, the deaf have recovered their hearing, the lame have begun to walk straight, and paralytics, some of whom were so bent that they almost touched the ground with their foreheads, and other sick people have been healed. Saint Louis is sometimes represented holding a small church, to recall the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris; but this is not the usual way of representing him. He is often represented: 1° seated on his throne holding a sceptre; 2° holding a discipline, as a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis; 3° holding a sceptre and a hand of justice, clad in a blue mantle strewn with fleurs-de-lis, his head surrounded by a circular nimbus.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The relics of Saint Louis were brought from Tunis to France by Philip III his son, with the exception of the entrails, which were sent to the abbey of Monreale in Sicily at the request of Charles, king of that country and brother of the Saint, and deposited in the church that is today the cathedral. They are kept in a marble urn placed beneath the altar dedicated to him. The archbishop of that city inspected them and sealed them afresh on 1 July 1813. The rest of the body was laid in the abbey of Saint-Denis. In every place it passed through, the people flocked to show it marks of veneration. The cult of Saint Louis, already consecrated by the voice of the people, was juridically examined and approved by Pope Boniface VIII. Pope Paul V, at the request of Louis XIII, called the Just, ordered that his feast be celebrated with the rite of a double throughout France. Philip the Fair had one of the holy king's ribs given to the church of Paris, and his head to the Sainte-Chapelle of the same city. King John, one of his descendants and successors, gave the upper jaw of this holy monarch to the royal monastery of the Dominican nuns of Passy (1351).

The fine shrine containing his relics was taken from Saint-Denis on 11 November 1793, and his bones were scattered and profaned. His lower jaw, kept at Saint-Denis but in a separate reliquary, was saved, and is still kept at Notre-Dame de Paris, together with the rib given by Philip the Fair, one of his shirts and his discipline. The church of Lamontjoie, in the diocese of Agen, possesses very notable relics of Saint Louis. The church of Poissy possesses a remnant of the baptismal stone at which Saint Louis was baptised: we say a remnant, for the greater part has been scraped away by the faithful to cure themselves of fever or protect themselves from it. Today there may be seen on the soil of Tunis, on the very spot where the holy monarch gave back his beautiful soul to God, a monument that the French raised in 1830 to the memory of Saint Louis.

To revise and complete Father Giry we have used the *Histoire de saint Louis* by the vicomte Walsh, Godescard, and local notes kindly supplied by M. Fourneaux, parish priest of Poissy.

Saint Aredius or Yrieix,[3] Abbot, Founder of the Monastery of Atane, in the Diocese of Limoges (591)

Saint Yrieix was born at Limoges about the year 511; he was the son of Jocundus and Pelagia, both notable for their nobility and their virtue. He received a Christian education and made great progress in learning. Having been sent to the court of Austrasia, he won the esteem and affection of King Theudebert, and, if certain authors are to be believed, became that prince's chancellor. Saint Nicetius, bishop of Trier, who had noticed something divine in his face, made him leave the world and admitted him to the ranks of his clergy. It was at this time that God showed his holiness by a miraculous sign related by Saint Gregory of Tours. One day, while the clerics were chanting the psalms in the church, a dove of dazzling whiteness was seen to come down; after fluttering round Aredius, it alighted on his head, as if to show that he was already entirely filled with the Holy Spirit. As he was already embarrassed and wished to drive it away, it fluttered about a little more and again alighted on his head and on his scapular; it even accompanied him, as though playing around him, as far as the bishop's house. His father and his brother having died, Aredius returned to Limoges to console his mother. But he changed nothing in the plan of life he had laid down for himself. Some time afterwards he founded the monastery of Atane in the Limousin and was its first abbot. The religious he had at first under his direction were of his own family. The rule he gave them was composed of the institutes of Cassian, those of Saint Basil, and the maxims of the ancient Fathers. Pelagia his mother provided what was needed for the upkeep of the community.

Saint Gregory of Tours says that he could not count all the sick whom Saint Yrieix healed by the sign of the cross. Once he made an abundant spring gush from dry ground by planting in it a rod he held in his hand. Another time, as he was building an oratory in honour of Saint Julian the martyr, he stopped by his prayers a torrential rain that was hindering the work. After instituting Saint Hilary and Saint Martin as his heirs by his will, he was taken from this world by dysentery in the year 591, on 25 August.

Saint Ferreolus, bishop of Limoges, attended his funeral. Two women possessed by the devil were healed there. The body of Saint Aredius was raised from the tomb by Sebrand, bishop of Limoges, on the Sunday after the Rogations, 17 May in the year 1181.

Propre de Limoges.

Saint Hunegund, Virgin, Abbess of Homblières, in the Diocese of Soissons (690)

Saint Hunegund, of a noble family, was born in the village of Lambay in the Vermandois; she was held at the font by Saint Eligius, bishop of Noyon. After the death of that holy bishop (659), who had supported her in the pious resolution she had taken to remain a virgin all her life, her parents wished her to enter the married state. Knowing that Eudaldus, who was proposed to her as husband, was a devout man, she obtained his agreement that they would make a pilgrimage to Rome together before the celebration of their wedding. But when she had arrived in that city, she received the veil from the hands of Pope Martin I. Eudaldus, angered by such conduct, set off again for France. As for the Saint, she spent some time in Rome in the practice of the greatest mortifications.

She then returned to the Vermandois and went to shut herself up in the Benedictine monastery of Homblières (*Humolariæ*), situated a league from the town of Saint-Quentin (Aisne), in the diocese of Soissons. Eudaldus, filled with admiration for Hunegund's virtues, devoted himself to the service of the church of Homblières. He even left all his property to the monastery. When Hunegund had become abbess, he took charge of the business the nuns had outside, and was as it were their agent. After his death he was buried in the cloister. Hunegund was at prayer when she was struck by the illness of which she died. Feeling her last hour near, she had herself given Extreme Unction and the holy Viaticum. She died on ashes on 25 August, about the year 690. Her body was raised from the ground on account of the miracles worked at her tomb, on 6 October 946. Since then there have been several translations of her relics.

Saint Hunegund is represented carrying a church on her hand. This image recalls that she spent her whole fortune building a monastery. In other images she is seen kneeling at the feet of a Pope, to recall that, being in Rome with the man they wished her to marry, she begged the sovereign Pontiff to give her the veil of a nun. She is, with Saint Stephen and Saint Eligius, patron of Homblières.

Godescard and Propre de Soissons.

Saint Marcian of Saignon, Founder and Abbot of Saint-Eusèbe, in the Diocese of Avignon (1010)

Marcian was born at Saignon (Vaucluse, arrondissement and canton of Apt), in the diocese of Avignon, and was granted by God to the prayers of his devout parents, who at once gave him back to the Lord by consecrating him to Him. Having lost his father and mother while still very young, he sold his rich patrimony, distributed the money to the poor, and gave himself up entirely to the contemplation of heavenly things. He built, largely with his own hands, on the territory of Saignon, a monastery which he placed under the invocation of Saint Eusebius; then, having gathered some companions, he embraced the Rule of Saint Benedict. The church of Saint-Eusèbe was consecrated by Pope Urban II in 1096, and the monastery was granted to the abbot and monks of Saint-Gilles in 1132. Marcian was accustomed to go every week to the basilica of Apt, where he assisted at the holy Sacrifice with a mind so entirely applied to God that he seemed rapt out of himself. He himself begged from door to door for food for the religious of his monastery. One day, as he was going thus from house to house in the suburb of Apt, he raised to life, by the power of the sign of the cross, a young man who had just died, and gave him back to his mother, who was a widow.

Another time, after going through the whole town and the country houses scattered far around it, as he was returning in excessive heat, laden with abundant provisions, the fruit of the alms he had collected, he was

suddenly seized by a total exhaustion of his strength and very nearly died on the spot in the middle of the high road. He withdrew under a hollow rock that is still called today the Rock of Saint Marcian, and there fell asleep in the Lord, deprived of all human help. His precious death was suddenly announced by the sound of the bells, which rang of themselves for three miles around. The inhabitants of

Saignon wished to have Saint Marcian's body, but it resisted all their efforts to carry it to his monastery; and so it was carried to the basilica of Apt, where it is still surrounded today with great veneration.

Propre d'Avignon.

Blessed Thomas à Kempis, Augustinian Religious at the Monastery of Mount Saint Agnes, near Zwolle, in Holland (1471)

Thomas Haermmerlein or Haermmerchen, in Latin *Malleolus*, was born about the year 1380 at Kempen, a small town in the diocese of Cologne. From it came the name Thomas à Kempis, by which he has been known ever since.

His father was called John and his mother Gertrude, both poor, earning each day's bread by each day's work. Poor in goods, they were nevertheless very rich in virtues and loaded with the favours of heaven. One of the most precious, doubtless, was that of giving them such a son as Thomas.

Until he was thirteen he did not leave his father's house. Soon afterwards, however, though without means, he was sent to Deventer, the Athens of the North in those days, to study there. The charity that came to his aid, and the devotion of one of his brothers, already attached to the Canons Regular of Windesheim, enabled him to follow the learned lessons of Master Florent Radewijns, disciple of the celebrated Gerard Groote and rector of the congregation of the Brethren of the Common Life. Thomas was his pupil for six years, and under such a master such a pupil made immense progress; for he was gifted with the rarest qualities of mind and the most angelic piety. At the end of these six years he deserved to be admitted to the house of the student Clerks. There he profited by the advice and conversation of the learned and virtuous friends in whom he was able to inspire the most touching interest, and applied himself above all to copying books, which was then one of the most important occupations of monks.

In 1399 the Deventer schoolboy entered the monastery of Mount Saint Agnes near Zwolle, of which his brother had just been appointed prior. They vied with each other in zeal for the prosperity of that house. Here begins Thomas's brilliant literary career. To found a library in the monastery, which had none yet, he applied himself with new ardour to transcribing and composing books. This was his only occupation after the sweet hours spent at the foot of the Crucifix or of the altar.

This hard novitiate had lasted seven years when he took the habit in 1406, and he made profession in 1407. He was raised to the priesthood; he grew still more every day in piety and in skill at calligraphic and literary work, so that he was raised to the rank of subprior. It was then that he worked at the composition of those works so delightful for knowledge and for the mystical life, among which is the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*. It is said that he led a very austere life and that heaven favoured him with the gift of miracles. He died as a Saint, as he had lived, on 25 August 1471. After the *Imitation*, the following treatises are generally regarded as his masterpieces: 1° *The Garden of Roses*, so called because it treats of several virtues that grow like so many beautiful roses in the garden of Jesus Christ; 2° *The Valley of Lilies*, which speaks of several other virtues that the Saviour has planted like so many lilies of dazzling whiteness in the valley of humility, where they are watered and made fruitful by the inward infusion of the Holy Spirit; 3° *The Three Tabernacles* (poverty, humility, patience); 4° the *Soliloquies of the Soul*; 5° the *Meditations*. His works were collected for the first time about 1475 (the *Imitation* is not found in this first edition), and since then in 1600, 1607, etc., at Antwerp (with the *Imitation*).

The *Imitation of Jesus Christ* has gone through more than a thousand different editions. It has been translated into every language, notably into French by Marillac, Sacy, Gonnelieu, Lamennais, Genoude and Darboy. Pierre Corneille put it into verse.

Some authors attribute the *Imitation* to the chancellor of the University of Paris, Jean Gerson. Others attribute it to Jean Gesen or Gersen or Gerson, a Benedictine, native of Cavaglia (in Piedmont) and abbot of Santo Stefano at Vercelli.

On 28 October 1874 a monument was inaugurated with great pomp in honour of this devout man in his native town. According to a recent opinion (1874), based on a manuscript in the Bibliothèque nationale unknown until then, it would be an anachronism to attribute the *Imitation* to any one of these three authors.

Esprit des Saints, by the abbé Grimes.

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[1] A relic of Saint Vincent, which came from Rome in 1840, rests near those of Saint Clement, pope, and Saint Fort, first bishop of Bordeaux, in the church of Saint-Seurin in that city. — Abbé Cirot de la Ville, *Origines chrétiennes de Bordeaux*.

[2] Saint Genesius of Rome (also called Genest or Genêt) is patron of the parish church of Caunes (Aude, arrondissement of Carcassonne, canton of Peyriac-Minervois), which possesses relics of the holy Martyr: they are enclosed in a bust that is exposed for the veneration of the faithful throughout the Octave of his feast. At the back of the choir of the same parish there is a painting showing Saint Genesius at the moment when, on the stage to ridicule the ceremonies of Catholic worship and of Baptism in particular, he is touched by the grace of heaven, is converted to the true faith and suffers martyrdom for it. — Everyone in Nevers knows the church of Saint-Genès, of which there are remains, admired by connoisseurs, in the street that bears the same name: it dates from the last years of the twelfth century. — There is a chapel dedicated to Saint Genesius between Azy-le-Vif and Neuville-lès-Decize (Nièvre): it is the goal of a well-attended pilgrimage. — Some of his relics are also kept in the church of Proverville (Aube, arrondissement and canton of Bar-sur-Aube), of which he is patron. — *Hagiologie nivernaise*; notes from M. the parish priest of Caunes; *Saints de Troyes*, by the abbé Defer.

[3] The executioners came upon him as he was crossing the Rhône to escape their cruelty. As soon as he reached the other bank, one of the assassins cut off his head and procured him the glory of martyrdom. The faithful, to put both banks of the Rhône under the protection of Saint Genesius, built a town on each side; and, leaving the traces of his precious blood at the place of his execution, they carried his sacred relics to the other side of the river, so that he might be present on both banks: on the one by his blood, on the other by his body. — Saint Hilary of Arles relates that one feast day of Saint Genesius, as the people, who had come in crowds to the celebration, were passing from one town to the other to honour the place of his martyrdom, the arches of the bridge between them broke and threw all the faithful into the water. They then began to pray, and Saint Genesius obtained from heaven that the multitude came out from under the water without having suffered any harm. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[4] Saint Julian of Syria is already cited in the Roman martyrology for 12 August.

[5] Ludger, who wrote his life, Mabillon, the Bollandists and Father Antoine Pagi (*Crit. in Ann. Baron.*) give him only the title of administrator of the diocese of Utrecht. Born in the territory of Trier, he was descended from the royal blood of France through Adela, his grandmother, daughter of Dagobert I, king of Austrasia. The Church of Utrecht, which he governed for twenty-two years, became through his vigilance and preaching the most flourishing in the whole country. His relics, which were reverently kept at Utrecht, were examined in two episcopal visitations held in 1421 and 1597. — Godescard.

[6] Patricia was the daughter of the emperor Constans I (337–350), third son of Constantine the Great. When her father had been murdered by Magnentius (350), she asked refuge of her uncle Constantius II, emperor of the East, who received her with honour. Patricia edified the court by the brilliance of all the virtues; when her uncle wished to marry her, she fled from Constantinople and landed at Naples. After the death of Constantius (361) she begged Pope Liberius to admit her to the rank of Virgins, which was done to her great satisfaction. Patricia spent the rest of her life at Naples and died there on 25 August 365. Her body was buried in the church of the holy Martyrs Nicander and Marcian; a monastery under the name of Santa Patrizia was soon joined to that church. Heaven honoured her tomb with several miracles. — Chapia.

[7] This house looks on to the Nile; it is at the end of the town, towards the canal.

[8] "A church endowed with some revenue for performing divine service in it: it (the word *benefice*) is used not only of the function but also of the revenue attached to it…" — Trévoux.

[9] Alias: Eréie, Ysary, Ysère, Ysery, Iriéix, Yrlel.

26 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, Saint ZEPHYRINUS, pope and martyr. 219. — In the same place, the holy martyrs Irenaeus and Abundius.[1] During the persecution of Valerian they took up the body of Saint Concordia from a sewer into which it had been thrown, and for this they were themselves thrown into it and drowned. Their bodies were drawn out by the priest Justin and buried in a crypt near that of Saint Lawrence. 3rd c. — At Ventimiglia, a city of Liguria, Saint Secundus, martyr, a man of distinction, one of the leaders of the Theban legion. 3rd c. — At Bergamo, a city of Lombardy, Saint Alexander, martyr, of the same legion, who confessed the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ with great constancy, was beheaded and so completed his martyrdom. 3rd c. — Among the Marsi, Saint Simplicius and his sons Saint Constantius and Saint Victorinus, who, after being subjected to various tortures under the emperor Antoninus, were beheaded and so won the crown of martyrdom. — At Nicomedia, the martyrdom of Saint Adrian, son of the emperor Probus, who reproached Licinius for the persecution he had raised against the Christians and was killed by his order. Domitius, bishop of Byzantium, the holy Martyr's uncle, buried his body at Argyropolis. 4th c. — In Spain, Saint Victor of Ceresano, martyr, slain by the Moors for the Christian faith. 950. — At Capua, Saint Rufinus, bishop and confessor. — At Pistoia, Saint Felix, priest and confessor. About the 10th c. — At Lima, in the kingdom of Peru, Saint Rose of Saint Mary, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic; her feast is celebrated on 30 August.[2] 1617.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Sens, Saint Eleutherius, bishop of Auxerre and confessor, successor of Saint Droctoaldus. He is cited in the Roman martyrology for 16 August, and we said a word about him on that day. 561. — In the diocese of Nevers, Saint EULADIUS or Eulail, first bishop of that see and confessor. About 516. — In the diocese of Rodez, Saint Privatus, whose life we gave on 21 August. 262. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Aredius or Yrieix, abbot, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 591. — In the diocese of Pamiers, Saint Lycerius, regionary bishop of the Couserans and confessor, of whom we shall speak on the following day. 6th c. — In the diocese of Périgueux, Saints Menne and Galle, sisters, virgins and martyrs, who are believed to have come from Marsac (Dordogne, arrondissement and canton of Périgueux). Their precious relics are kept in the Benedictine abbey of Brantôme (*Brantosmum*), founded about 769 by Charlemagne. — In the diocese of Soissons, Saint Caesarius, archbishop of Arles and confessor, whose life we shall give on the following day. 542. — At Toul, in the present diocese of Nancy, Saint Alchas, third bishop of that ancient see, the finding of whose body is noted in the Martyrology of France for 2 August. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Fleury or Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire (*Floriacum ad Ligerim, S. Benedictus in pago Aurelianensi*), in the diocese of Orléans, Saint Tenestina, virgin, whose life we gave together with that of Saint Rigomer on 24 August. Her body, buried first at Le Mans, was afterwards translated to the abbey of Fleury. About 620. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint AMATOR or Roc-Amadour, solitary. 1st c. — At Poitiers, Saint Justin, sixth known bishop of that see. For a long time the old prayers of the Church of Poitiers made his name resound in the churches of the city and in the solemn processions; today his memory is fading from men's minds. About 320. — At Saint-Martory (Haute-Garonne, arrondissement of Saint-Gaudens), in the diocese of Toulouse, Saint Martyri, a monk from the East. Going one evening to visit a monastery in his neighbourhood, he found on the road a poor leper whom fatigue and his cruel disease had forced to stop at the roadside. The hospice the leper wished to reach lay in the same direction as the monastery Martyri was hurrying to. The holy man, touched with compassion, spread his cloak on the ground, laid the leper on it, wrapped him carefully, took him on his shoulders and went on his way. When he was about to reach the end of his journey, the superior of the monastery, seeing him coming, began to cry out: "Hurry, my brothers, here comes Martyri carrying the Lord." And at once the leper got down from his shoulders and, taking the form in which we picture the Saviour, spoke these words to the good monk, who watched Him rise towards heaven: "Martyri, you had pity on me on earth; I will glorify you in heaven."[3] — At Vielle (Hautes-Pyrénées), in the

diocese of Tarbes, Saint Mercurial, a Spanish soldier and martyr. About 1003. — At Poitiers, Saint Gelasius, bishop of that see and confessor. 5th c. — At Pontigny, a village in the department of Yonne, in the diocese of Auxerre, Blessed Vycvane, archbishop of York and confessor. 1285. — In the dioceses of Laval and Le Mans, Saint VICTOR I, bishop of the latter see and confessor.[4] 422. — In the diocese of Besançon, Blessed JOHN BASSAND, a native of that city and a religious of the Order of Celestines. 1445. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Pelagia, widow, mother of Saint Aredius or Yrieix, whose life we gave on the preceding day. Her chief attraction was to found religious houses where piety, exiled from the world, might find a refuge. She devoted part of her property to building, outside the walls of Limoges, the monasteries of Saint-Paul and of Saint-Michel de Pistorie. 6th c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Naples in Campania, Saint Patricia, virgin of the Order of Saint Basil, illustrious for her miracles. A few drops of her blood are kept in a glass phial and still liquefy from time to time.[5] 365.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — In places where the feast of Saint Bartholomew is celebrated on 24 August: Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, widow, who is mentioned on 21 August.[6] 1641.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, widow, etc.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — Saint Louis, confessor, king of France, whose memory in heaven is honoured on the eve of this day.[7] 1270.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Todi, Saint Philip Benizi of Florence, propagator of the Order of the Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was distinguished by a great humility, which made him refuse by flight the pontifical tiara that was offered to him. The day of his birth into heaven is 10 September.[8] 1282.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — The same as among the Cistercians.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as among the Cistercians.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Louis, confessor. — At Rome, Saint Zephyrinus, pope and martyr, whose feast is celebrated on 29 October. 219.

Martyrology of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The same as among the Friars Preachers.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — At Annecy in Savoy, Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, foundress of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary, who is mentioned on 13 December. 1641.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — The same as among the Cistercians.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Santa Maria del Sagittario, in the diocese of Anglona, in the Basilicata, Blessed John of Caramola (*Joannes de Calamula*), a native of Toulouse and a lay brother of the Cistercian Order. 1338. — At Lecce (*Aletium, Lupia*), a fortified town of Italy, chief town of the Terra d'Otranto, Saints Justus, Orontius and Fortunatus, martyrs. This is what a pious tradition and the archives of the Church of Lecce relate. Saint Paul, being at Corinth, sent Justus, one of his disciples, to the regions of Italy. Justus landed at Lecce and was given hospitality there by a devout inhabitant named Orontius, whom he converted to the Christian faith and baptised, together with Fortunatus and several others. Justus and Orontius then went to Corinth to become auxiliaries of Saint Paul: the Apostle appointed Orontius bishop of Lecce and gave him Justus as coadjutor. Both laboured to win souls for Jesus Christ, and died victims of their zeal during the persecution of Nero.

Fortunatus was their successor in the divine ministry and, like them, won the palm of martyrdom.[9] 1st c. — At Brescia, a city of Lombardy, Saint Alexander, martyr. He left Italy, his native land, during the persecution of Claudius, and came to take refuge with Saint Lazarus, bishop of Marseilles. Lazarus strengthened his courage and spoke to him of the glory of martyrdom. Alexander no longer feared it from then on and openly declared himself a Christian. Seized by the priests of the false gods, he was brought before the prefect Felician, who had him quartered. Under Nero. — Among the Greeks, Saint Ibistion, confessor; and Saints Atticus and Sisinnius, martyrs. — At Rome and in several other cities, Saint Basilla, martyr; and Saints Peclan or Heclan, Mercurius, Maximilian, Quintus or Quintinus, Sevus, Victor, Primus, another Victor, and twenty-five soldiers, their companions, all martyrs, cited by the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology. — At Marsico Nuovo, a town of the kingdom of Italy, in the Principato Citeriore, Saint Januarius, bishop and martyr, and the deacons Saint Felix and Saint Honoratus, also martyrs. Saint Januarius is patron of Marsico; a great part of his relics are kept in the church of Santo Stefano in that town. In 1502 the Spaniards laid siege to the place, took it by storm, and carried off to their own country, where it is greatly venerated, a silver shrine containing the arm of Saint Januarius. — At Sion (*Sedunum*), in the Valais, Saint Theodore I, bishop of that see and confessor. He attended the Council of Aquileia against the Arian heresy in 381, and spent his whole episcopal life defending the orthodox faith and making it flourish in his diocese. Towards the end of the 4th c. — In the Thebaid, a region of southern Egypt (today the Said and the southern part of the Ouestanieh), Saint Tithoës, solitary, second superior of the Religious of Saint Pachomius. About 365. — At Syracuse, Saint Elias, archdeacon, then bishop of that see and confessor. 664. — At Canterbury (*Durovernum, Cantuaria*), chief town of the county of Kent, in England, Saint Bregwin, bishop and confessor. 762. — In the March of Ancona, in Italy, the Venerable Humilis of Bisignano, lay brother of the Order of the Reformed Franciscans. His cause, for some time before the Sacred Congregation of Rites, is now far enough advanced for his beatification to be hoped for at no distant date. 13th c. — In the same place, Blessed Pacificus and Liberatus of Loro, of the Order of Friars Minor. 13th c. — At Florence, Blessed Margaret of Faventina, virgin and abbess, of the Order of Vallombrosa, famous for her love of Jesus and Mary and for the visions with which she was favoured. 1330. — Again at Florence, Blessed Villana de' Botti, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, whose life we gave on 28 February, the day on which she is cited in the martyrology of the Friars Preachers. 1360.

Saint Zephyrinus, Pope and Martyr

217. — Roman Emperor: Caracalla.

> *In persecution it is the struggle, and in peace it is virtue, that God crowns.*
>
> *Saint Cyprian.*

Saint Zephyrinus, who in some provinces of France is called Saphorin, was a Roman and the son of Abundius. He succeeded in the pontificate Saint Victor I, who had received the crown of martyrdom through the cruelty of Plautianus. Plautianus continued the persecution of the Christians, although there was no express edict of the emperor Severus ordering it. During the fury of this barbarian, so thirsty for the blood of the faithful, who by his power and his ferocity had made himself the most dreaded man in the empire, our holy Pope had kept himself hidden, preferring the salvation of his people to his desire to die for Jesus Christ. But as soon as he could breathe a little more freely, after the death of this cruel persecutor, who was killed in the palace by order of Antoninus Augustus, he resumed the public exercise of his functions.

It was under his pontificate that the admirable conversion of the famous Natalis took place. He had been among the confessors of Jesus Christ and had upheld his faith before the tribunals; but, letting himself be carried away by avarice and vanity, he had fallen into the heresy of the Theodotians, who had made him their bishop. God, not wishing to leave him in this blindness, warned him by several apparitions to return to the Church; and as he still wavered, he was roughly scourged by angels during the night. This correction finally

opened his eyes completely; he came and threw himself at the feet of Zephyrinus, with a hair shirt on his back and ashes on his head, and humbly asked pardon for his revolt. The Pope was reluctant to grant it; but, seeing his perseverance and his penance, he at last relaxed something of the Church's severity and received him into the communion of the Roman Church.

It is true that Tertullian could not bear the indulgence Zephyrinus showed on this occasion, and on others, towards the converts he received to public penance; but it was only the natural austerity of his mind and the pride his learning gave him that prevented him from approving this conduct. For this holy Pope, as a wise and merciful father careful of his children's salvation, used rigour when he thought it necessary to cure them or to keep them from falling sick, and relaxed it and used gentle remedies when he judged that the more bitter ones were either dangerous or useless. He forbade consecration in wooden chalices, as was done at that time because of the extreme poverty of the faithful, and ordered that in future glass vessels should be used. This has since been changed again by several Councils, which decided that chalices should no longer be of that material, because of its excessive fragility, but should be of gold or silver, or at least of tin. He also ordered that all Christians should communicate on Easter Day; that a bishop could be condemned only by the sovereign Pontiff or by his authority; that the priests and deacons should be present when the bishop celebrated, as Pope Evaristus had already ordered; and that priests should be ordained publicly, in the presence of the clergy and the people, so that, their innocence and good conduct being beyond reproach, they might serve the Church usefully by the exercise of their virtues as well as by the functions of their ministry. He made several other decrees on ecclesiastical discipline which it would take too long to relate here. At last, after governing the Church holily for nineteen years, two months and ten days, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*, he went to receive the reward of his labours in the exercise of his office by a glorious martyrdom, which he suffered on 26 August in the year of Our Lord 217, under the empire of Antoninus Caracalla. In four ordinations, held in the month of December, he consecrated nine priests, seven deacons and eight bishops for various Churches. His body was buried in the cemetery he had founded, near the catacomb of Callistus, on the Appian Way.

Acta Sanctorum; Histoire de l'Église, by the abbé Darras; and Histoire des souverains Pontifes romains, by Artaud de Montor.

Saint Victor I, Bishop of Le Mans and Confessor

422. — Pope: Saint Celestine I. — King of the Franks: Pharamond.

> *Oportet episcopum angelum esse, nullæ humanæ perturbationi vitiove subjectum. A bishop must be an angel, free of all the vices and all the troubles of human life.*
>
> *S. John Chrysostom, Hom. x on 1 Timothy.*

When Saint Martin came to Le Mans, in consequence of a revelation he had received, to assist Saint Liborius in his last moments, he prayed God as he continued his journey to give that church a worthy successor to the bishop it was soon to lose. As he drew near the city, still occupied with the same thought, he was travelling on his donkey as usual, with some of his disciples. At some distance from the road he saw a man working in his vineyard, and a supernatural light made known to him that this man was the successor chosen by heaven to take the place of Liborius.

He was a disciple of the bishop, and his name was Victor. Liborius had raised him to the subdiaconate, whose functions he performed in the church. For the rest, he lived holily with his wife, the devout Maura, and a son ten years old, the only fruit of their marriage. Apart from the functions of his order, he applied himself to cultivating a little patch of land, an occupation that suited his humility and the simplicity of clerical life in those days. But in the midst of his outward labours his mind was occupied with the things of God, and the historians have noted that at the moment Saint Martin saw him he was accompanying his work

with the chanting of the psalms, as the most devout Christians commonly did.

The bishop of Tours, having felt inwardly that heaven had chosen this humble subdeacon to succeed his friend, sent at once to fetch him from his vineyard. He obeyed without delay; he arrived still holding his spade in his hand, his head covered with dust and his clothes in disorder. Saint Martin for his part hastened to get down from his donkey, greeted him respectfully and said to him: “Bless me, lord Victor.” At these words the subdeacon bowed to the ground and said, prostrating himself before the man of God: “Blessed be you, my lord, and blessed be your words, since you deign to address such flattering words to a poor man like me.” “I am going to astonish you with words much more surprising,” Martin went on; “a great favour is reserved for you, the honour of the episcopal office.”

Victor, who probably did not recognise the holy bishop of Tours, thought that this stranger was not speaking seriously and was enjoying making fun of him. “I see very well,” he said to him, “that you like to joke; for my part, that is not my business; I am going back to my work. However, if it pleases you, I will follow you and go with you as far as the city.” The man of God made him put down his spade and put his own staff in his hand; then they walked on together and soon reached the city.[1]

On entering Le Mans, Saint Martin found Saint Liborius dying. After some conversations with him, and after carrying out the funeral, he called an assembly of the clergy and all the faithful in order to have their wishes on the choice of the pastor who was to succeed Liborius. But the clergy and people declined to express a wish in Martin’s presence; they all begged him with one voice to choose himself the man he judged worthy to be the father of this large family. “Do what you judge fitting,” they said to him, “for the Lord is with you.” Saint Martin then declared what the Holy Spirit had revealed to him: that the subdeacon Victor was the one heaven destined for the dignity of bishop. The whole assembly applauded this choice with one voice; but it was not easy to persuade Victor to accept the burden of the episcopate. Even if his humility had not exaggerated the reasons he put forward to excuse himself, it seemed at first sight that the grounds on which he could rest his refusal were of the gravest, and many in the assembly must have thought nothing could overcome them. But God’s choice was to be accomplished. Victor pleaded his incapacity and his state as a married man. His incapacity, however, was only apparent, and his rustic manner covered superior qualities. A more powerful obstacle was the marriage in which Victor was bound. The discipline imposing continence on all orders above the subdiaconate was universally received; in no case could it suffer any breach. But heaven, which had inspired the election, confirmed its work by placing in the hearts of Victor and Maura the desire for perfect continence. Victor made no difficulty in admitting that this was his wish. Then the bishop of Tours sent word to Maura to come to him in the midst of the assembly. She hurried there at once, and on arriving prostrated herself, according to the constant custom of those centuries, at the feet of the assembled bishops and of Saint Martin, who presided over them. “Woman,” Martin said to her, “do you consent that your husband should become bishop of Le Mans?” “My lord,” she answered in astonishment, “I am unworthy to see such a marvel of the goodness of God.” “But,” said Martin, “if it happens, what will you find to object or to say?” “If I may see this marvel of the right hand of God,” she then said, “I desire that my husband should henceforth be to me as a brother, that I should be a sister to him, and that we should both be occupied solely in serving God.”

These words fulfilled the desires of the assembly. The bishops, the clergy and the people urged Saint Martin to complete what all hearts so ardently desired. The man of God, who shared the joy of the multitude, laid hands on Victor and seated him in the chair of Saint Julian.

Meanwhile divine grace continued to act with great force in the soul of the devout Maura. Not content with the sacrifice she had just offered to God, she begged Saint Martin to give her the veil of continence without further delay, thereby contracting a closer bond with the Church and new obligations. Martin, who had made himself the apostle of the religious life in all the forms the Spirit of God could inspire, applauded this resolution, and gave Maura with his own hand the veil and the blessing of widows.

Only one wish remained for Victor and Maura to fulfil. The son they had had of their marriage was ten years old and had not yet received baptism; the devout parents wished him to receive it from the hands of Saint Martin. Before the man of God left the city of Le Mans, Maura, with her usual simplicity and candour, told him of her desire to see him confer on her son the character of a Christian, and the bishop of Tours received the proposal kindly. He therefore conferred the sacrament of baptism on the child and gave him the name Victorius. At last, when he had entirely fulfilled the purpose of his journey and the other bishops of the province had already returned to their churches, the bishop of Tours and the bishop of Le Mans exchanged pledges of communion, embraced and took a touching leave of each other. Martin took with him the young Victorius, his spiritual son. Heaven, which destined this child for great things, wished to entrust his education to so skilful a master. This had also been Maura's wish.

The new bishop of Le Mans laboured long to sanctify his flock, for his episcopate lasted many years (390–422). At last he fell asleep in the Lord, probably on the seventh of the calends of September, and was buried in the basilica of the holy Apostles, beside Saint Liborius his master and his other predecessors. The many miracles worked at his tomb drew crowds of the faithful there, and this was the beginning of the cult that the church of Le Mans has paid him from time immemorial.

The church of Le Mans celebrates the feast of Saint Victor on 26 August, which gives grounds for thinking that he died on that day.

Taken from the Histoire de l'Église du Mans, by the R. P. Dom Paul Piolin.

Saint Euladius, Bishop of Nevers

About 516. — Pope: Hormisdas. — King of France: Childebert I.

> *Apply yourself with great reverence to serving God in the joy of your heart, like the holy angels in heaven.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

Saint Eulade (*Euladius*) was the first bishop of Nevers. His family, the first years of his life, what he did at the beginning of his episcopate: all this is unknown to us. We would have been reduced to merely mentioning him, had not the historian of Saint Severinus left us some very precious details of his illness and his miraculous cure. We owe them to Faustus, disciple and friend of the holy abbot of Agaune. The reputation of Severinus's holiness had reached Clovis, who in 505 was laid low by a stubborn fever from which the skill of the ablest physicians had been unable to free him. The prince had recourse to the abbot of Agaune, hoping that his prayers would not be without effect, and so begged him to come and visit him.

Severinus set out in order to fulfil the king's wishes. Arriving at Nevers, he went into the church to pray there. Surprised not to find the bishop in the holy temple, he asked the keepers the reason. "Brothers," he said to them, "where is your Pontiff?" "Our Pontiff," the keepers of the church answered him, "was struck last year by a cruel illness that has deprived him of the use of hearing and speech; since that time he has lain on his bed, overwhelmed with dreadful pains and expecting death at every moment. He has no longer been able to go up to the altar to offer the divine sacrifice and to bless his people as he used to do. Our hearts are broken with grief at seeing our common father reduced to being unable to leave his bed, for at every moment those who attend him think him dead rather than alive." The holy abbot, touched with compassion, asked them whether he might be taken to him to visit him and speak to him some words of consolation and salvation. "Come, venerable father," they said to him, "go in, since you wish it."

Severinus, brought into the sick man's room, went eagerly to the bed where he lay. He first looked at him with concern and showed him by his gestures how much he shared in his sufferings. Then he began to pray, earnestly beseeching the Lord to restore the Pontiff's health. After remaining a long time prostrate with his face to the ground, he rose and, turning to Eulade, said to him: "Pontiff of the Lord, talk with me." And at

once Eulade, recovering the use of hearing and speech, cried out: “Man of God, holy man, grant me your blessing. Sent by the Saviour Jesus Christ to restore my health, you have come to deliver me from the infirmities that overwhelmed me. Blessed be the name of the Lord throughout all ages! Yes, blessed for ever be He who has deigned to choose you to show His mercy towards me!”

Then the devout servant of God, holding out his hand to him, raised him from his bed and said to him: “Rise in the name of Jesus Christ our sovereign Master, and put on your clothes. Give thanks to the Lord for the chastisements He has inflicted on you; yes, show Him all your gratitude, for He has chastised you to save you; He has struck you to crown you. This very day you are going with me to the altar of God, to pay this tribute of gratitude and to bless the people entrusted to you.”

Severinus was still speaking when Eulade suddenly rose from his bed, blessing God, who through the prayers of His servant had drawn him back from the gates of the tomb. The same day, cured of all his infirmities, he went to his church to celebrate the holy sacrifice there and to bless his people. The holy bishop devoted the rest of his life to the service of Him who had shown him His mercy, working with still more zeal than before at the sanctification of the flock he had to guide. He fell asleep in the Lord on 26 August 516 or 517.

It was under the episcopate of Saint Eulade that Saint Eptadius, seeing that they wished to raise him to the see of Auxerre, took refuge in the forests of the Morvan and laid the first foundations of the abbey of Cervon.

It is not known what became of his holy relics, any more than of those of Saint Æolade.

Taken from the Hagiologie Nivernaise, by Mgr Crosnier.

Blessed John Bassand of Besançon, of the Order of Celestines

1445. — Pope: Eugene IV. — King of France: Charles VII, the Victorious.

> *The Order of Celestines lost in Blessed Bassand one of its purest lights; but his precious death gained it one more protector in heaven.*
>
> *Eulogy of the Saint.*

Blessed John Bassand was born at Besançon in the year 1360, under the pontificate of Innocent VI, of a family counted among the most considerable in the city. His father, a devout man and a good Catholic, was named among the best citizens. He had a great many children, among whom John was distinguished, like another David, by his piety and precocious virtue. Their mother was one of those women who know how to understand and embrace the duties of their state in all their extent. As active as she was tender, she would not entrust to others the care of forming her son in piety. She taught him early to fear God, to abstain from all sin and to keep the Lord’s commandments faithfully. This motherly care bore fruit, and people admired in the young Bassand an amiable character, great purity of morals and that wise modesty which is a young man’s first recommendation. From the days of his adolescence he showed all the maturity of riper years, and a prudent reserve kept him on his guard against the dangers of the world in which he lived.

At the age of eighteen John Bassand felt inspired to seek in the cloister a surer shelter against the dangers of the world. Besançon then possessed a great number of religious houses. One of the most celebrated was the abbey of Saint-Paul, founded in the seventh century by Saint Donatus and restored in the eleventh through the care of Blessed Hugh the Great. From the year 1252 the canons of Saint-Paul had embraced the Rule of Saint Augustine, and the dean at their head had been replaced by an abbot. The one then governing the abbey was named Thiébaud de Nans. John Bassand asked him to be admitted among the novices of Saint-Paul. This abbey seems moreover to have had the affection of the Bassand family, for two other persons of that name embraced the religious life there at about the same time. It was about the year 1378 that John Bassand entered the Augustinians of Saint-Paul. He brought there a pure heart, a soul already enlightened in the ways of God, and a great desire to acquire by the practice of virtue those spiritual goods that were to take the place

of the fortune he gave up in leaving the world.

His life at Saint-Paul was that of an accomplished monk. From the first days of his stay among the religious he became the model of the most fervent by his regularity, his obedience and his devotion. When Henri de Fallerans was appointed abbot of Saint-Paul in 1387, John Bassand, who had grown in age and wisdom, was elected prior of one of the monasteries dependent on the abbey. He filled this office honourably, and was able to make it at once meritorious for himself and beneficial to others. The talent he had shown in the functions of prior raised the highest hopes of him, and he seemed worthy to be raised one day to the dignity of abbot of Saint-Paul. But these expectations were not to be fulfilled.

The great memories of Saint Donatus and of Hugh I, whose remains still rested in the church of Saint-Paul, were always alive in that monastery and maintained regular observance there. However, the austere virtues of early times no longer flourished there with the same purity. John therefore thought of leaving this community, because he wished to keep in a more austere way the vows his lips had pronounced at the foot of the altar. For a century the Order of Celestines, established in Italy by Saint Peter Celestine, had been producing marvellous fruits there. From the year 1300 the religious of this congregation had been called into France by Philip the Fair and had founded several flourishing communities there. The most celebrated of all was that of Paris, established in 1318 by Pierre Martel, a burgher of that city. Because of its importance and its position, this monastery was regarded as the head of the Order of Celestines in the kingdom. It was there that John went to embrace, in all its primitive rigour, the Rule of Saint Benedict, whose severity answered to the austerity of his character and his desire for perfection. He was then thirty (1390) and had spent twelve years in the abbey of Saint-Paul.

Under the habit of Saint Benedict, John Bassand soon showed all the treasures of virtue in his soul. Placed at first among the novices, he seemed less a disciple than a master in the spiritual life, so holy was his conduct, so deep his humility and so exemplary his regularity. He had as spiritual father one of his fellow countrymen named Pierre Pocquet, a native of the county of Burgundy, who had perhaps helped by his counsels to draw the young religious into the Order of Celestines. He was a man as devout as he was learned, very versed in civil law, whose opinions carried authority before the courts and the parlement of Paris. After following the career of the bar, he had left the world and hidden himself under the Celestine habit in the monastery of Paris, where he held the office of prior.

Under the guidance of such a master, John Bassand made rapid progress. His time was divided between reading, meditation and prayer, and he was careful to gather everything that could contribute to his perfection. The memory of the great men who had made his Order illustrious was a continual spur to emulation for him, and what he coveted in their lives was less the glory with which they had shone before men than the virtues by which they had won heaven. Such was the life of John Bassand during the first years he spent in the congregation of the Celestines. His eminent qualities had not escaped his superiors. He was judged worthy to govern with authority the brethren he had till then edified by his example, and he was appointed subprior of the monastery of Paris. This office required as much devotion as intelligence. But John’s heart was filled with an active and tireless charity. And so everyone had recourse to him with confidence, and he welcomed all with the kindness of a father and the authority of a master as zealous as he was prudent. People praised his vigilance in administration, his discretion in counsel, and the sureness of his eye in grasping both the whole and the details of an affair. The community of the Celestines of Paris was then very numerous. When the prior was absent or prevented, John Bassand took his place successfully with the novices or the pupils being trained in the monastery, and one did not know which to admire most in him, the extent of his learning or the kindliness of his manners. About this time some noble persons of Picardy founded at Amiens a monastery that was to depend on the Celestines of Paris. The merit with which John Bassand had filled his office naturally marked him out to his superiors to govern this new community. He was therefore appointed prior of the monastery of Amiens and left at once for that city, to direct the building

works himself according to the needs and customs of the Order. When all the arrangements of the new abbey had been suitably settled, John Bassand was solemnly installed in his office, and he showed himself equal to his dignity. In governing this community he was as zealous in leading the religious along the way of perfection as he was attentive to keeping to it himself.

It was during his stay at Amiens that John Bassand came to know Saint Colette. This devout girl, long uncertain about her vocation, ardently desired to bury herself in solitude, which had always had great attraction for her. She had been told of the fervour and prudence of the prior of the Celestines recently established at Amiens. She went to that city, addressed herself to John Bassand and told him all her anxieties about the state she ought to embrace, promising to abandon herself to his guidance with a child's docility. The prior, already informed by report of Colette's holiness, had no difficulty in recognising that she was no ordinary soul and that God destined her for great things. He directed her with prudent charity, laid down rules to help her in the practice of prayer, and assured her that God would not fail to enlighten her if she persevered in prayer. When he had tested her sufficiently, he did not hesitate to tell her that she was called to the religious life, and, so that she might make herself still more worthy of the favours of heaven, he urged her to make a vow of virginity. The humble servant of God welcomed with joy a proposal that answered so well to the purity of her soul, and after a preparation of a few days she made in John Bassand's hands a vow so dear to her heart. Some time afterwards Colette returned to Corbie. But she always kept the highest opinion of her director and the deepest respect for his advice. Later the holy religious wrote her several spiritual letters, and when he learned that the Saint had gone to Besançon to establish the reform of the Poor Clares there, he wrote to his relatives asking them to show Colette the greatest consideration and to support her in her foundations.

John Bassand spent several years in the monastery of Amiens. The proofs he gave there of his talent and virtue next had him called to a still more eminent post. He was appointed prior of the abbey of Paris, and came back to take up his post in the midst of that community where he had left such good memories. In this new office he showed an ardent zeal for monastic discipline and became the model of the flock he had to lead. His example kept up among the religious a noble emulation in virtue, and it was universally said that one who walked with so sure a step in the way followed by the Saints could not fail to be associated one day in their glory.

Prudence was one of his habitual virtues. He never took an important step without having weighed all its consequences. And so the Fathers of his Order, full of admiration for the wisdom of his conduct, believed that no one could fill the important functions of provincial better than he. He was therefore unanimously raised to that dignity in the general Chapter of the Order held in 1411. This office lasted three years, and John Bassand acquitted himself of it so well that the Chapter invested him with it five times (from the year 1411 to the year 1441), thus paying solemn homage to his virtue and his talents.

John Bassand visited the monasteries of his province carefully, sometimes travelling on horseback, and always showing a tireless courage in bearing fatigue. One day he arrived during the night near a convent he was to visit. Although he was exhausted with hunger and weariness, he would not have the officers of the monastery woken; he took a light meal and threw himself on a bed to rest for a few moments. At the hour of Matins he was in the church before all the others, and the monks, astonished to find him seated in choir, admired this ardour in giving everyone the example of punctuality and regularity.

Often after the night office, when all the others went back to the dormitory to take a few more moments of sleep, the provincial stayed in choir to meditate and pray until the hour of Prime. In his dealings with the monks he visited, he was able to combine firmness happily with gentleness, and always to make his reprimands salutary by seasoning them with the oil of charity. He especially urged the priors and the elders not to let their zeal grow cold and always to strive for a higher perfection. People admired his skill in discerning characters, sounding consciences and recognising each man's inclinations. Without ever showing

favouritism, he congratulated the young brothers he saw animated by a holy zeal for the rules and constitutions. In a word, he knew how to mix encouragement with threats and to show, as need required, the severity of a master and the kindness of a father.

During the many years of his provincialate John Bassand travelled through many countries, either to found new monasteries or to visit the old ones. He was seen in turn in England, in Italy and in Aragon, everywhere showing the same zeal for the growth of his Order. Jealous to procure the glory of God, he always refused the honours that seemed to be directed to his own person, because he knew that humility must be the foundation of religious perfection.

The affairs of the Order called John Bassand to Rome about the year 1418, under the pontificate of Martin V. He appeared before the Pope, who had already been informed of his merit and wished to appoint him superior of the Celestines of France for life. John Bassand hastened to thank the Pontiff. “Most holy Father,” he said to him, “it was against my will that I accepted the office of provincial for three years only, and I am ready to lay it down at the feet of Your Holiness, for it is less an honour than a very heavy weight that has been laid on my shoulders.”

The many and unceasing occupations of the provincialate had not prevented Blessed Bassand from still finding time to cultivate sacred letters. He was the intimate friend of the celebrated chancellor of the University, Jean Gerson, with whom he conversed on the highest questions of theology. He asked him one day to compose a little Treatise on the holy Humanity of Jesus Christ, which would be a kind of commentary on these words of the sacred Books: “He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy.” Gerson hastened to meet his friend’s wish and composed the book we still have among his works under the title *De Susceptione humanitatis Christi*. It is addressed to John Bassand, whom Gerson calls a man full of penetration, to whom he liked to communicate his works and from whom he willingly received advice on what he ought to correct. He ends this Treatise with these words, which are wholly to the praise of our Blessed: “These, O Father filled with consummate piety and prudence, these are the things I have written in haste as an expression of my ardent friendship for you. It is to answer your request that I have committed them to this sheet, in the year of the Lord 1426. I began this explanation of the holy canticle on the day I received in the chapel the visit of your goodness, for which I shall always keep a sincere respect. Farewell.”

John Bassand for his part composed literary works, which he communicated to Jean Gerson. He once sent him a Treatise divided into four parts, for which Gerson thanked him in these terms: “Reverend Father, I have received from your beloved and devout person the Treatise you sent and offered me, which is divided into four parts. The second contains about fifty considerations, set out with force, brevity and order.” This close friendship between these two great men proves at once the piety of Gerson and the learning of John Bassand. If the latter has not bequeathed us important works like those of the celebrated chancellor, it is because his many occupations left him no time for them, or because his humility made him prefer that fine maxim of a devout writer of the period: “Love to be unknown and to be counted as nothing.” The holy old man ended his functions as provincial in 1441. He was then nearly eighty-one, and he could rest from his long labours with some confidence of not having been an unprofitable servant in the house of God. But the Christian’s life is an unceasing combat that begins in the cradle and ends only in the tomb, and John Bassand ceased his toilsome journeys only to recollect himself in retirement and work still further at the sanctification of his soul. Become, so to speak, a simple religious again, he gave everyone the example of obedience, piety and perfect devotion. He kept the rule scrupulously, took part in all the exercises of the community, and avoided all irregularity and all slackness. The shorter the time he still had to spend on earth, the more precious it seemed to him. When the sound of the board[1] called the community to some exercise, he left everything, even a work begun, to obey the voice of God calling him; for he was accustomed to repeat this saying of the sacred Books: “Obedience is better than sacrifice.”

The Order of Celestines, so fervent at its origin, had already lost the spirit of its holy founder in some monasteries of Italy. The monastery of Collemaggio, built near Aquila in the kingdom of Naples, was inhabited by religious who no longer kept regular observance. John Bassand, despite his great age, was charged with going to Italy and reforming this monastery by gathering there a community of brothers who would undertake to keep regular observance. He arrived at Aquila in 1443. But the inhabitants of that city, won over by the suggestions of the lax monks who lived in the monastery, showed no eagerness to welcome the devout reformer. John Bassand, disconcerted by this coldness, returned to Rome, gave the Pope an account of the failure of his mission and asked his permission to return to France. But Eugene IV had too much at heart the revival of the monastic spirit at Collemaggio to abandon the undertaking. He kept John with him. Meanwhile there arrived in Rome a Benedictine religious named John of Messina, full of zeal for regular observance and a great friend of the Blessed. When he learned that the monks of Aquila had refused the reform, he went to the Pope and urged him strongly to attempt this important work again. Eugene IV then associated two eminent men with the Celestine and gave them full powers to treat with the citizens of Aquila on all questions relating to the reform of their monastery. The new envoys went at once to that city, and this time the success of the work was complete. The government of the monastery was entrusted to John Bassand, who took up residence there in the month of March 1444 with some French religious and those of the old monks who agreed to embrace the reform. As for those who refused, suitable provision was made for them. This was a fine triumph for the old age of our Blessed. The joy of reviving the spirit of Saint Celestine in the very places he had sanctified by his presence gave the devout reformer new strength. He provided for everything with a zeal all the more admirable because, when he took possession of it, the monastery lacked everything a religious community needs.

But poverty was not the hardest trial he had to undergo in this new position. Those of the old monks who had remained at Collemaggio had submitted to John Bassand only in spite of themselves. Their words and conduct showed clearly enough that they detested the reform and meant to try to shake off its yoke. In Lent they secretly agreed to leave the monastery all together one day, to the great scandal of the people and the shame of the newcomers, who, being thus too few, would be unable to carry out the religious service of the community. They carried out their plan on the fourth Sunday of Lent; but by an admirable providence, at the very moment they were leaving the monastery, seven new brothers arrived from France at Collemaggio and entered it by the church door. The reformer welcomed them with joy, and the people of Aquila, marvelling at this happy coincidence, had only words of blame and contempt for the unfaithful monks who had fled. From then on the community of Collemaggio was most edifying. John Bassand, despite his great age, gave there the example of the most austere virtues. He lived there about a year, surrounded by the respect of the faithful and the clergy, who regarded him as a Saint.

However, the moral energy he had shown, while doubling the strength of his body, had worn it out the more quickly. On the eve of the Assumption he fell ill and felt that life would soon slip away from him. In spite of his weakness he nevertheless wished to attend the office that day, celebrate holy Mass and eat with the community. As his illness grew worse, he took to his bed and never ceased reciting hymns and prayers to prepare himself for death. When he saw his end approaching, he called all the brothers round his bed and, amid their sighs, tried to reassure them against the persecutions they seemed to fear for the future, when they would no longer have their father and pastor to protect them. “Do not fear,” he said to them, “as long as you remain faithful to holy obedience. Stand firm, so that the work we have undertaken may not remain unfinished.” He spoke to them for a long time and with the most touching unction; for despite the pains of his illness he had kept the fullness of his intelligence and all the ardour of his soul.

When it was learned in Aquila that John Bassand was nearing the end of his life, the bishop of the city, the count of Monteri and the chief magistrates of the city hurried to the monastery to pay a last visit to the blessed Father and receive his blessing. He humbly declined to bless them himself, asking the bishop to do so

in his place. All shed tears and watched with grief the last moments of this good Father, whom they regarded as a Saint. Among the witnesses of this touching scene was the celebrated preacher Saint John Capistran. He was one of the friends of the Blessed and one of the most sincere admirers of his virtues. He spoke a few more affectionate words to him and sustained the outpourings of his piety while the sacraments of the Church were administered to the devout dying man. John Bassand was worthy to die in the arms of a Saint, who showed him with ardent faith the immortal crown of the elect that he was himself soon to share. The blessed Father held the crucifix in one hand and a candle in the other; he seemed to recollect himself for a moment, murmured with his dying lips the psalm *Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus*, and died peacefully on 26 August 1445.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

His disciples paid the greatest honours to his sacred remains. The body of the deceased, clothed in priestly vestments, was laid out with the face uncovered in the church of the monastery, and the people came in crowds to look one last time on the blessed features of one they were already invoking as a Saint. John Capistran delivered in an eloquent voice the funeral oration of one who had been his friend and whom he regarded from that day as his protector. Before an immense audience he related his life, so full of edification, and his death, so glorious.

God showed the holiness of His servant from that day. The people rushed in crowds around the coffin to touch the body of the Blessed, and the throng was so great that guards had to be posted round it to hold back the multitude. It was then carried into the chapel of Saint John the Baptist, and several sick and infirm persons were miraculously healed by contact with this virginal body. The inhabitants of Aquila above all had flocked, following the bishop and the clergy, to honour the funeral of one who had edified them all by the holiness of his last days. All thought themselves happy to kiss his feet and hands devoutly, and to look once more on his face, so full of grace, which resembled that of a man resting in peaceful sleep.

The body of the glorious servant of God remained exposed to the veneration of the faithful in the church of Collemaggio. Striking miracles, related in detail by the contemporary author of his Life, attested his holiness. The account of these marvellous graces, passing from mouth to mouth, soon drew numerous pilgrims around his tomb. The religious covered the body of the Blessed with quicklime, and it remained thus exposed, in a wooden shrine, on the altar of Saint John the Baptist, because the inhabitants of Aquila would not allow it to be taken down into the vault intended for the ordinary burial of the Celestine religious. It remained eighteen years on this altar, and every year, on the anniversary of his death, the magistrates and citizens of Aquila came solemnly to offer two candles before his relics and to assist at the holy sacrifice. In 1463 the shrine was opened in the presence of a great number of witnesses, and the body of the Saint was found intact, despite the quicklime with which it had been surrounded. The devotion of the faithful to Blessed Bassand has continued to our own day. His venerated remains are still to be seen in the church at Aquila, where they rest in a glazed shrine placed on the altar of Saint John the Baptist. It is there that devout Christians have so often gone to implore the protection of this Blessed. The epitaph placed on his tomb relates the chief circumstances of his life, and shows clearly that since his death he has been honoured with the title of Blessed and publicly invoked as a Saint.

Taken from the Vies des Saints de Franche-Comté, by the professors of the Collège Saint-François-Xavier. — Telera gives the Life of Blessed John Bassand in his History of the holy persons of the Order of Celestines, written in Italian. The Bollandists have given it more completely, with learned remarks, on 26 August.

Saint Amator or Roc-Amadour, Solitary in Quercy, in the Diocese of Cahors (1st century)

According to a very ancient tradition, confirmed by the authority of Pope Martin V (Bull of 1427) and by the recent hagiographical discoveries that have made the name of M. l'abbé Damourette immortal, Saint Amator is the same person as Zacchaeus, of whom the Gospel speaks, and who is believed to have been the husband of Saint Veronica. Having landed on the soil of Gaul with his holy friends Lazarus, Martha and Mary, Zacchaeus left them to seek far away a solitude where he could settle. He found it in the labyrinth of rocks that, in the middle of Quercy (Lot), raise their frowning brows above the narrow ravine deeply hollowed out by the torrential waters of the Lauzon. This valley, which today bears the name of Rocamadour, was then called the Val-Ténébreux (the Dark Valley) and was peopled with wild beasts. This stern and grandiose landscape, which recalls the Thebaid, could not fail to please a man occupied with lofty and austere thoughts. He built a humble cell with his own hands on one of the highest points of the mountain, and hollowed out of the rock, at the level of the eagles' eyrie, an oratory in honour of the Mother of God. The peoples of the fair valleys of Figeac and Saint-Céré greeted the devout hermit with the name *Amator rupis* (Lover of the rock); later this name changed into Amadour or Roc-Amadour, more in keeping with the genius of the southern dialect.

The little statue of the Virgin that Zacchaeus had carved worked many miracles for the faithful who came to invoke her in her sanctuary in the rocks. This pilgrimage, eighteen centuries old, is still today one of the most celebrated in France; we shall speak of it in its place (8 September).

Zacchaeus was buried first in the vestibule of the chapel of Notre-Dame de Roc-Amadour, which he had founded, and remained hidden there until 1166. At that time an inhabitant of the district, at the point of death, ordered his family, perhaps by a divine inspiration, to bury his earthly remains at the entrance of the oratory. Hardly had the earth been dug when the body of Blessed Amator was found entire. It was placed in the church near the altar and shown to the devotion of the pilgrims. Then such numerous and unheard-of miracles took place in that spot, through the power of the most holy Virgin, that King Henry II, who was at Castelnau-de-Bretenoux (Lot), came himself to satisfy his devotion there.

These precious remains stayed incorrupt for several centuries, so that it was said in a proverb: "This is as whole as the body of Saint Amadour," or: "He is in flesh and bone like Saint Amadour." In 1562 the Huguenots, having seized the town, pillaged the chapel and gave these blessed relics to the flames. The fire respected them; then Captain Bessouie took a blacksmith's hammer to break them, adding to this impious act words more impious still. Father Odo de Gissey asserts that he spoke to a man who had witnessed this horrible spectacle and who testified that the hairs of the beard could still be seen on the Saint's face at that time. However, part of these precious relics was snatched from the flames. The same author had himself seen an arm of the Blessed with part of his hand; in it a broken finger could be seen, where blood appeared as red as it could be in a freshly cut body.

The remains of Blessed Amadour were attacked and profaned again in 1793. Now there remain only two reliquaries. In one of them may be seen bones half consumed by fire and mixed with a dust like black ash. In the other there are several bones that the fire has not even damaged; the taffeta that wrapped the liver is still marked with bloodstains, and the liver itself, far from having decayed, has kept the elasticity of living flesh. Thus Saint Amadour, conqueror of hell during his life, has conquered it again after his death.

There is a relic of the Saint at Davenescourt, with the Ladies of Saint-Maur.

Propre de Cahors; Année Dominicaine, vol. IV; Notre- Dame de Roc-Amadour, by M. Caillau, canon of Le Mans.

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[1] Alias: Avon…, And.

[2] See her life on that day.

[3] *Breviary of Comminges*, 26 August. — It is not known to what circumstance the church of Saint-Martory owes this precious deposit, the possession of which changed its old name of Calagorgis into that of Saint-Martory. The bones of this servant of God, like those of

many others, were probably carried away by Christians of the East fleeing the Mohammedan persecution. — Cf. *Histoire de saint Bertrand de Comminges*, by L. de Fiancette d'Agos; Saint-Gaudens, 1854.

[4] He must not be confused with Saint Victorius I (422– 490), also bishop of Le Mans, whose life we shall give on 1 September.

[5] She is named in the Roman martyrology for 25 August, the day on which we gave some details of her life in a note.

[6] We shall give her life on 23 December.

[7] We gave his life on 25 August.

[8] We gave his life on 23 August.

[9] Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, 26 August: *Commentarius historicus de SS. Justo, Orontio et Fortunato, martyribus*.

[10] According to tradition, the vineyard Saint Victor cultivated may still be seen a short distance from the village of Rouillon and from the house of La Batizière or Baptizière. There is also a small garden said to have belonged likewise to Saint Victor. In this garden there is a bed of rose bushes whose origin, according to the inhabitants of the place, goes back to our holy Bishop; these rose bushes have not been destroyed to this day, although the plough tears them up every year. Finally, a small house is still shown, between the village of Rouillon and the rue de Baugé, which is held to have been the place where Saint Victor, Maura and Saint Victorius lived. — *Polyptiques de l'Église du Mans*, vol. I, p. 262; M. Guillois, *Vies des Saints du Maine*, vol. II, p. 538.

[11] In monasteries a wooden board was struck to wake the monks or to call them to some exercise.

27 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, the deposition of Saint JOSEPH, a confessor illustrious for the innocence of his life and for his miracles, who, to instruct youth in piety and letters, founded the Order of the Poor Clerks Regular of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools. 1648. — At Capua in Campania, the birthday into heaven of Saint Rufus, bishop and martyr; he was of a patrician family and was baptised with his whole household by Saint Apollinaris, disciple of Saint Peter. Towards the end of the 1st c. — In the same place, the holy martyrs Rufus and Carpophorus, who suffered under Diocletian and Maximian.[1] — At Tomi in Pontus, the holy martyrs Marcellinus, tribune; Mannea, his wife; and their children John, Serapion and Peter. About 303. — At Lentini in Sicily, Saint Euthalia, virgin, who, because she was a Christian, was killed with a sword stroke by her brother Sermilianus, and flew away to her heavenly Spouse. About 256. — On the same day, the martyrdom of Saint Anthusa the Younger, who was drowned in a well for the Christian faith. — At Bergamo, Saint Narnus, baptised by Saint Barnabas, who afterwards ordained him first bishop of that city.[2] About 75. — At Arles, Saint CAESARIUS, bishop, a man of admirable holiness and piety. 542. — At Autun, Saint SYAGRIUS, bishop and confessor. 600. — At Pavia, Saint John, bishop.[3] 813. — At Lérida in Tarraconensian Spain, Saint Lycerius, bishop. — In the Thebaid, Saint POEMEN or Pastor, anchorite. 451. — At San Severino in the March of Ancona, Saint Margaret, widow. 1395.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In Lorraine, Blessed MARGARET OF BAVARIA, duchess of Lorraine. 1434. — In the dioceses of Saint-Flour and Le Puy, Saint Caesarius the Great, archbishop of that see and confessor, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Sens, Saint EBBO or Ebbes, twenty-ninth bishop of that see and confessor. 740. — At Saint-Lizier (Ariège), in the diocese of Pamiers, Saint Licerius or Lizier (also called Sizier, Lézer, Liger, Léger, Glicère, Licère), regionary bishop of the Couserans (a small province of Gascony that is now part of the department of Ariège). We gave his notice on 7 August, the day of his first feast. The feast of 27 August is more solemn; it is of the rite of the first class, with an octave. 548. — At Chalon-sur-Saône, the translation of the relics of Saint Lupus, commonly Saint Leu, bishop of that see and confessor. His death is noted in the Martyrology of France for 27 January, and we gave his legend on 19 February, the day on which he is honoured in the Church of Autun. 610. — At Soissons, Saints Timothy and Apollinaris, martyrs, cited in the Roman martyrology for 23 August, the day under which we gave their notice. 3rd c. — At Toulouse,

the memory of Saint VIDIAN of Martres, martyr. Under Charlemagne. — At Montpellier, Saint Severus, founder and first abbot of the monastery of Agde (*Agatha*), of whom we spoke on 21 August, the day on which the Church of Rodez celebrates his feast. 5th c. — At Rodez, the holy death of the Venerable Father Gilbert Nicolaï, better known by the name of Gabriel-Marie, a Cordelier religious, confessor of the queen Saint Jane of Valois and her fellow worker in founding the Order of the Annunciade or of the Ten Virtues of the most holy Virgin (1500). The body of this devout servant of God and of Mary was buried in the convent of the Annonciades of Rodez. It is said that wonderful lights were often seen over his tomb, and the strains of a heavenly harmony heard there.[4] 1525 or 1532. — In the former Benedictine monastery of Saint-Pierre d'Hasnon (*Hasmoniense monasterium*), in the diocese of Cambrai, between the towns of Marchiennes and Saint-Amand-les-Eaux, Blessed Liébert II, abbot and confessor. He succeeded Blessed Roland, who had likewise been distinguished by eminent virtue. The odour of holiness breathed around him caused him to be called the model of the religious life. 1091. — In the diocese of Bourges, the translation of the relics of Saint Sulpicius the Pious or the Debonair, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 17 January. 27 August is the day chosen for the solemnity of the feast of Saint Sulpicius by the parishes of the diocese of Nevers placed under the patronage of the holy archbishop of Bourges. These are Saint-Sulpice-le-Châtel, Fours, Entrains, Marcy, Saincaize, La Coloncelle, Planchez, Authion, Varennes-lès-Nevers and Cigogne. 644. — At Quézac (Cantal, arrondissement of Aurillac, canton of Maurs), in the diocese of Saint-Flour, Notre-Dame de Quézac, a pilgrimage going back beyond the fourteenth century. If it fell perforce during the Revolution of '93, it rose again promptly when liberty was restored to France. This happy sanctuary possesses not only a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin, but also a particle of the mantle of the Mother of God, of the true Cross and of the Manger of Our Lord, a fragment of a garment of Saint Francis de Sales, and bones of Saint Roch, Saint Peter, Saint Julian and other Saints. Many miracles take place in this chapel every year.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — The Vigil of our father Saint Augustine. — Among the Canons of Vienne, Saint Gregory of Utrecht, confessor, disciple of Blessed Boniface, martyr, in the Institute of Clerks Regular, and his successor in the episcopate of Utrecht. He converted the Saxons to the faith of Jesus Christ. 776.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The Octave of our father Blessed Bernard, abbot and doctor of the universal Church.[5] 1153.

Martyrology of the Order of the Discalced of the Holy Trinity. — The same as among the Cistercians.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — The Transverberation of the Heart of Saint Teresa, virgin, of the Order of Carmelites.[6] 1582. — Also Saint Joseph Calasanz, confessor, founder of the Congregation of the Poor of the Mother of God, whose feast is celebrated on 3 September. 1648.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The same as among the Canons Regular.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — The Transverberation of the Heart of Saint Teresa, virgin, our Mother. — At Rome, the death of Saint Joseph, confessor, illustrious for the innocence of his life and his miracles. To bring up youth in piety and letters, he founded the Order of the Clerks Regular of the Poor of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools. His feast is celebrated on 3 September; in the States of the Church it is kept on the 6th of the same month, and likewise in Tuscany. 1648.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Constance, a city of the grand duchy of Baden on the Rhine, Saint Gebhard II, also called Gébhard, Gébard and Gébehard, bishop of that see and confessor. He was the youngest son of the devout Huozo, count of Bregenz, and was born on 7 August 949 at Pfannenberg near Bregenz. He studied letters with the Canons of Constance, who, seeing his progress and his virtues, soon received him into their ranks. On the death of Bishop Germenolphe or Gaminolf (979), who had immediately succeeded Saint Conrad, Gebhard ascended the episcopal see of Constance. He spent his patrimony on founding the monastery of Petershausen, near Constance and the bridge over the Rhine; Gregory V dedicated it and placed it under the special protection of the Holy See. The emperors of Germany and other lords granted this monastery numerous donations and great privileges. The devout bishop placed in it monks from Meinradszell or Maria-Einsiedeln, which then enjoyed a great reputation for holiness. Gebhard further proved his generosity by the numerous and considerable donations he made in particular to several churches of the Black Forest, and after holding the see for about sixteen years he fell asleep in the Lord. 995 or 996. — In Scotland, Saint Maelrubha, hermit and martyr. He was occupied solely with the practices of penance and the exercise of contemplation when the incursions of the Norwegians, still plunged in the darkness of idolatry, brought him out of his desert. His aim was to go and console his fellow countrymen in their misfortune and, if possible, to soften the fury of the barbarians. Out of zeal for their salvation he began to preach the Gospel to them; but death was the reward of his charity. The Norwegians massacred him in the province of Mernis. He must not be confused with another Saint of the same name who is honoured on 21 April. 1040. — Among the Greeks, the memory of the eunuch of Queen Candace, baptised by the deacon Saint Philip. 34 or 35. — In Egypt (at Tomi, according to the Roman martyrology), with the holy martyrs Marcellinus, Mannea, John, Serapion and Peter, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saints Chiron, Ammon, Serapion, John, Babylas, Meletius, Atheogenes, Ariston, Festus, Victor, Susanna, Zoilus, Domninus and Memnon, martyrs. 303. — At Constantinople, Saints Olle and Stephen, martyrs. — At Potenza, a town of the kingdom of Italy in the Basilicata, the holy martyrs Felix, Arontius and Sabinian, whose relics were carried (760) to the basilica of Santa Sofia at Benevento. Under Maximian. — At Antioch, Saint Emerita, martyr. — In the same place, Saints Sebastus and Alexander, martyrs. — In the county of Somerset in England, Saint Decuman, hermit and martyr. — At Sion (*Octodurum, Sedunum*) in the Valais, Saint Theodore II, bishop of that see and confessor, one of the founders of the monastery of Benedictines and Augustinians of Agaune, or Saint-Maurice in Valais. About 516. — On Monte Senario, in the diocese of Florence, Blessed John Manetto, confessor, one of the seven founders of the Order of the Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He is cited in the Roman martyrology for 20 August. 1268.

Saint Poemen or Pastor, Abbot of Scete and of Terenuthis, in Egypt

451. — Pope: Saint Leo I, the Great. — Emperors of the East: Pulcheria and Marcian.

Restraint, discretion and watchfulness over oneself: these are the three guides the soul must faithfully follow.

Spirit of Saint Poemen.

Perhaps the least known of the illustrious Saints of his time, Saint Poemen or Pastor was nevertheless very famous in antiquity. Baronius and Tillemont say that there is no name more surrounded with glory in the history of the Desert Fathers than that of Saint Poemen or Pastor. The Greeks gave him great praise in their Menaia, and he seems to have deserved their praises. They called him fellow citizen of the angels, chief of the solitaries and prince of the desert. They compared him to a sun shining by its wonders over the whole earth, and to a mirror of the Divinity by the holiness of his life. He was Egyptian by origin, and can scarcely have reached the age of fifteen when he left the world, about 385; but he already had so marvellous a gift of inspiring the love of virtue that his brothers, touched by his devout invitations, followed him in his resolve and became solitaries with him. There were six of them. One, older than he, was called Anub, another Paisius or Paësius, and the others Simon, Alonius, Nesteros and Sarmatas the Younger. We shall not go into the detail of his virtues, austerities and miracles, which raised his reputation far above anything we could say of

it.

Humility was, so to speak, his favourite virtue; after it, charity, gentleness and patience were the most constant objects of his effort. To give all these virtues a sure safeguard, and purity above all, he gave himself up to the harshest austerities of the monastic life. He sometimes spent two whole days without taking any food, and as he grew older he extended this rigorous fast to four and five days. He had forbidden himself wine and meat, and if he sometimes departed from this rule, it was only out of charity, and he watered with his tears the food he consented to take. Yet he was as indulgent to others as he was severe to himself; his maxim was that one must not kill the body but kill the passions. No less assiduous at vigils, prayer and manual work than at the other austerities, he divided the twelve hours of the night into three periods: four hours for work, four for prayer and four for taking a little rest. By day he worked until Sext, read until None, and then gathered herbs for his food.

His deep wisdom and his high holiness are seen both in his counsels and in his direction of the religious. No one was more given than he to the practices of the interior life, or more careful to keep away from everything that might give rise to distractions and the memory of a world he had left and for which he had nothing but contempt. When his own mother came to visit him, she received this answer: “Which would you rather: see me now for a moment, or be with me eternally in the world to come? You will enjoy the happiness of heaven if you resist your desire now.” The mother, hearing these words of her son through the door, which he had not even opened to her, withdrew, saying: “I give up the pleasure of seeing you on earth to make sure of the happiness of enjoying your company in heaven.”

A man from Syria, drawn by the reputation of his merit, came to consult him about hardness of heart. Saint Poemen answered him: “Water is soft and stone is hard. Yet water falling drop by drop from a vessel onto a stone wears through it little by little. So it is with the word of God. Although it is in a way soft by its gentleness, and our heart is hard by its insensibility, if we take care to listen often to this divine word, it opens the heart at last, in spite of its hardness, to let in the salutary fear of God.”

Like all the other Saints, he regarded humility as the foundation and the proof of all the virtues. “It is,” he said, “as necessary to the soul as breathing is to the body.” He also said: “Men carry their wickedness behind them.” Finally, he declared that this virtue was the source of peace of soul. One day a brother said to him: “How, Father, can I avoid speaking of my neighbour?” And he answered him: “By being humble enough to reproach yourself with your own faults. For this, imagine that you and your neighbour are like two pictures. If, looking at the one that represents yourself, you find nothing in it but faults, you will undoubtedly find your neighbour’s worthy of respect and admirable in comparison with yours. If, on the contrary, yours seems good to you, you will find your neighbour’s ugly. So you will take good care not to disparage anyone if you think rather of reproving yourself.” He regarded obedience and the renunciation of one’s own will as the soul’s most effective instrument for reaching perfection, and he said: “One advances in virtue in so far as one distrusts oneself, has recourse to God in trouble with deep humility, and casts one’s own will behind one; for,” he added, “our own will is like a wall of brass that we set between God and ourselves, or like a stone that pushes us away from Him. Let us abandon our own will, and we shall be able to say with the Prophet: The wall shall not stop me; I will leap over it to go to God.”

These are the rules he gave for silence. He was asked whether it was better to speak or to be silent. “He who speaks for the love of God does well,” he answered, “and he who is silent for the love of God does well too.” “If you put a bridle on your tongue,” he said to another, “you will be at peace everywhere.” “Whatever trouble comes upon you, if you know how to keep silent, you have conquered it.” A brother said to him: “When I see something, ought I to report it at once?” He answered him: “You know what Scripture says: He that answereth before he heareth is a fool and worthy of contempt. So when you are questioned, answer, by all means; otherwise keep silence.”

Poemen was several times obliged to change his desert because of the frequent incursions of the Barbarians. Thus in 395, after frightful ravages committed at Scete by the Mazices, he had to withdraw with his brothers to Terenuthis, near an ancient temple of idols, and stay there several years. But the danger there still was in staying there, because of the incessant attacks of which they were the object, led him, much against his will, to go to the desert near the town of Diolcos, which was peopled with solitaries and where there were several monasteries.

At last, as soon as calm was restored, he returned to Scete, where he gave himself up more than ever to the delights of contemplation. As his end drew near, his ardent love for God increased and the treasure of his merits filled up; his body, worn out by vigils and prayers, grew detached; his soul, wholly seraphic, rose in continual ecstasies, until, ripe for heaven, he sprang radiant into the bosom of his God in the year 451, about his eightieth year.

Taken from the Esprit des Saints, by M. l'abbé Grimes.

Saint Caesarius, Archbishop of Arles

470–542. — Popes: Saint Simplicius; Vigilius. — Kings of the Franks: Childeric I; Childebert I.

> *To have true knowledge belongs only to him who has drawn his knowledge from God.*
>
> *Lactantius, Divine Institutes, book VII.*

Saint Caesarius was born in the territory of Chalon-sur-Saône, of parents illustrious by birth and notable for their outstanding piety. When he was only seven he gave signs of heroic charity towards the poor: he already took pleasure in giving them his own clothes, and when he came home half-naked and his parents scolded him for his generosity, he answered pleasantly that passers-by had stripped him. At the age of eight, already feeling in his heart a holy ardour for the evangelical life, he went of his own accord, without his family's knowledge, to the bishop of Chalon, Saint Silvester, to beg him to give him the clerical tonsure and consecrate him to the service of his Church. The holy prelate could not put off granting it, having noticed from his face, and from the fervent and resolute way in which he made his request, that divine Providence destined him for something considerable. Nor was he mistaken. Caesarius spent two years in the functions of a cleric, to the great edification of all; then, moved by the desire for a higher perfection and resolved to leave not only his parents but his country too, so as to free himself from the captivity of the world, he set out from Chalon with a single servant and went to the monastery of Lérins, which was the public school of piety for the Gauls. His mother, having noticed his flight, promptly sent after him as far as a neighbouring river to stop him at the crossing; but by a divine favour he was not seen by those pursuing him. It is true that the devil, wishing to thwart his devout plan, did what he could to make him known through the mouth of a possessed man, who followed him step by step crying out behind him: "Caesarius, go no further!" But the holy boy, moved with compassion and also afraid of being discovered, turned to the unfortunate man, gave him a drink from a vessel he was carrying, over which he had first made the sign of the cross, and drove out of his body the devil that tormented him. This miracle was learned from the very servant who accompanied him.

Thus Caesarius, happily escaped from the hands of those who wished to oppose his vocation, arrived at Lérins, where Saint Porcarius, who was abbot, gave him the habit of the Congregation, to the great satisfaction of the Fathers. He at once became a model of virtue in the monastery; for he was the most diligent at vigils, the most careful in observing the Rule, the promptest in obedience, the most assiduous at work, the humblest in the services of the cloister, and the most admirable in modesty and gentleness. The eldest were quite surprised to see a young man whom they had received to train in regular discipline already accomplished in the practice of all the religious virtues. He practised extraordinary mortifications, knowing well that the weaker the body, the more vigorous the spirit, and that the perfection of the inner man is founded only on the ruins of the outer man. He spent his nights in reading, prayer and work; and instead of

giving his body the food his age required, he deprived it of what was necessary, eating only a few vegetables which he prepared from one Sunday to the next.

This excessive austerity in a young man soon ruined his health and reduced him to a state of languor that moved the holy abbot to pity. But as long as he remained in the monastery, no one could ever check his fervour or oblige him to interrupt for a time his spiritual exercises and his practice of mortification. It was therefore decided to send him to Arles so that his health might be restored. There was in that city an illustrious citizen named Firminus, who with his wife spent his wealth helping the clergy, the religious and the poor who implored his charity. He was asked to receive the young Caesarius into his house. He received him and treated him as his own son. Not content with restoring his protégé's health, Firminus wished to adorn his mind, and for this purpose had him follow the lessons of Pomerius, a celebrated rhetorician who had come from Africa to teach at Arles. But a terrible vision warned Caesarius not to learn profane sciences: God reserved to Himself the instruction of this privileged soul. Meanwhile Firminus spoke of the virtues of our Saint to Eonius, bishop of Arles, a fellow countryman and relative of Caesarius. That prelate asked for him from the abbot Porcarius, obtained him with difficulty, and conferred on him successively the diaconate and the priesthood, so as to employ him in the service of his Church.

Our Saint changed nothing in his way of life, and always faithfully kept the constitutions of the monastery of Lérins. He had been raised to sacred orders, but he was no less a religious for that, distinguishing himself among the other clerics by his deep humility, his ardent charity, his prompt obedience and his continual mortification. He was the first in church and the last to leave it. He closed his eyes and ears to all the things of the world in order to apply himself solely to the contemplation of heavenly truths, and there appeared in his face something divine that inspired devotion in those who had the happiness of seeing him.

The abbot of a monastery situated on an island at the gate of Arles having died, Eonius at once cast his eyes on Caesarius to put him in his place. Three years later Eonius, worn out by a long illness and seeing himself extremely ill, asked for Caesarius as his successor. At this news the Saint took flight and went to hide among the tombs built by the Romans, whose ruins may still be seen today near Arles. But he was discovered and forced to yield to the wishes of the people and the clergy, who had elected him their pastor with one voice (502). He was then thirty-three. As soon as he was elected to this first see of the Gauls, he made himself by his vigilance and tireless labours a true successor of the Apostles. He left the care of the temporal affairs of his Church to his deacons and to other officers he appointed for the purpose, so as to apply himself wholly to studying the word of God and dispensing it usefully to his people. He knew Holy Scripture so well that one would have said he was reading it from a book rather than reciting it from memory. From it alone he drew all the fine instructions he gave his flock, and he explained it with such eloquence that, like the man in the Gospel, he brought forth new things from this treasure every day. He described the vices with an ugliness that filled his hearers with horror of them, and represented virtue with beauties that charmed everyone and inspired an ardent desire to practise it. He gave moving descriptions of the vanity of the things of earth and showed the solidity of those of heaven. Some he converted by threats and severity, others he won by his courtesy and gentleness; by his tears he triumphed over the hardness of the most obstinate. In a word, he prudently applied the remedy to each sick man, and, like a wise physician, considered not so much what might please the patient as what he judged most useful for his cure. He did not blush to exhort even the bishops who visited him to discharge their duties worthily and to labour without respite for the salvation of the souls God had entrusted to them. Above all he exhorted his clergy to make themselves worthy of their functions and their ministry. He represented to them that it was a crime on their part to keep silent when they saw abuses to be corrected among the people; that their profession bound them absolutely to proclaim the word of God; and that if they failed in this duty, which others would discharge more worthily than they, they would draw upon themselves this terrible reproach of Jesus Christ: "Woe to you lawyers, for you have taken away the key of knowledge: you yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering in you have

hindered." Finally, as if he had seen into the depths of their consciences, he set before each of them the faults to which he was prone and of which he should correct himself. To prevent chattering in church, he made the lay people sing psalms, hymns and antiphons with the clergy, and he established the custom of sermons and exhortations on feast days. He founded hospitals for the sick, in which he wished the divine office to be said as in his cathedral. He also assigned places and revenues for the shelter and maintenance of the poor. He had such tenderness for them that he often ordered his servants to go and see whether anyone was at the door of his palace, for fear of making him wait there too long exposed to the weather while he himself was at his ease in his room. He used to say that God had left poor people on earth so that we might give them the goods whose restitution we hope to receive from the hands of Jesus Christ in heaven.

While Caesarius was thus peacefully guiding his people, he was accused before Alaric, king of the Goths, of conspiring with the Burgundians to deliver the city of Arles into their hands. His real accusers were clerics of his own clergy. Their status might have made them credible, had not their bad lives, which their prelate rebuked too strongly for their liking, deprived them of all credit. They did not appear themselves, however, but made use of Licuman, the Saint's notary or secretary. Licuman, who by his office had a larger share in his master's affairs, made the calumny more plausible. Alaric, who though an Arian had until then had great respect for Caesarius, believed this report too readily, as is the way of tyrants, who cannot help being suspicious; so he drove him from his see and banished him to Bordeaux. But this exile became infinitely glorious for him through a miracle that bore witness to his innocence. Fire broke out in the city and threatened it with complete ruin, and the inhabitants, who had recognised his holiness since he had been living among them, turned to him and begged him to pray God to stop the conflagration. He could not refuse them. He went out into the street to meet the flames, knelt down and made so effective a prayer that the fire stopped all at once. During the time he remained at Bordeaux he often preached to the people, and his words moved every heart. Far from complaining of Alaric, his persecutor, he always spoke of him with great respect and urged the people to obey him, because the Gospel obliges us to be subject to sovereigns. This conduct turned out happily for Caesarius, for Alaric recognised his innocence from it and wrote him a most honourable letter telling him he might return to Arles whenever he wished. The inhabitants, learning that he was approaching, went out to meet him with crosses raised and lighted candles, as if to meet a conqueror. His arrival was marked by a miracle. For a long time an extraordinary drought had been ravaging their land, and there was no hope of a harvest that year; but as soon as he entered the city, the sky, which had lit it with the most serene day ever seen, suddenly darkened and poured down so abundant a rain that the earth was watered enough to produce a fine harvest. Alaric had condemned his calumniator to be stoned; when Caesarius saw the stones in the hands of the people, he stood in front of the guilty man and saved him.

He did not enjoy this peace for long. Clovis, having allied himself with Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, came to besiege Arles together with him. During the siege some treacherous Jews, who were secretly in league with the besieging army, contrived, the better to cover their designs, to accuse the bishop Saint Caesarius of treason, on the pretext of the charity he showed to the Frankish and Burgundian prisoners. They seized him, loaded him with chains and took him to the prince's palace, where they imprisoned him, intending to throw him into the Rhône as soon as possible. When the besiegers had drawn back a little from the walls, the besieged made a sortie, and a letter from a Jew was found tied to a stone. It told the enemy that if they attacked the city on the side where the Jews kept guard, they would certainly take it, and asked, as a reward for this information, that those of the Jews' quarter be exempted from the pillage. This letter revealed both the treachery of the Jews and the innocence of Caesarius, and he was set free. He at once set about relieving the misery of many people whom the Goths had brought into the city after the siege was raised. For this purpose he sold his furniture and had the gold and silver vessels of the church melted down. "If you were in the same misfortune as these poor people," he said to the priests and clerics who found fault with this charity, "you would no doubt approve my conduct, and your misery would make what you now blame seem just to you. Why do you wish me to abandon the members of Jesus Christ and let them die of want, while I

have in hand the gold and silver that were given to that same Jesus Christ, with which I can save their lives? Will it not be more pleasing to His heart and His eyes to see His precious blood and His sacred body, which He was willing to let be nailed to the wood of the cross for our salvation, in vessels of lesser price, than to see so great a number of His children, the objects of His love and tenderness, perish of misery?" It was doubtless thanks to Caesarius's reputation and charity, and to his credit with God, that in his time the city of Arles was neither taken nor pillaged, but passed peacefully from the Goths to the Visigoths, then to the Ostrogoths, and from these to the Franks under King Childebert.

As soon as the siege was raised, he had a monastery built in the city for his sister Caesaria, who was a nun at Marseilles. He had begun one outside the gates, at which he had worked himself by the sweat of his brow; but as the Barbarians had ruined it, he had the new one built near the church, so that the nuns might be sheltered there from the storms of war. Several young girls of illustrious birth entered it at once to live there under the discipline of the holy Prelate and the virtuous Caesaria. Among the rules he prescribed for them, he obliged them to keep enclosure inviolably until death.

While he was engaged in this good work, a new persecution was raised against him. Malicious persons accused him before Theodoric of having plotted something against his service. That too credulous prince sent him an order to come to him in Italy to clear himself of the things imputed to him. Caesarius, feeling himself innocent, willingly undertook the journey and went to Ravenna. He entered the palace with a face so serene and so full of majesty that the man who had summoned him as judge trembled on seeing him and felt himself touched with an unfamiliar respect for him. So, instead of speaking to him of the things of which he had been accused, the king asked about the hardships he had suffered on so long a journey and about the state in which he had left the city of Arles. He paid him extraordinary honours: he sent him a silver dish of about sixty marks and a considerable sum in ready money, as compensation for the expenses he had caused him, with orders that these words be said to him: "Holy Bishop, receive these presents; the king your son begs you to apply them to your own use, so that you may remember him." The Saint did indeed receive them; but as he had never used silver plate at his table, except for spoons, he at once used them to ransom all the prisoners from the country of Orange and the Durance whom he found in the army, and he further took care to provide them with mounts to return to their own country. So generous and charitable an act was reported to Theodoric, who proclaimed it with great praise. The whole court admired so extraordinary a man and was eager to make his acquaintance. The honours he received there did not puff him up with vanity; regarding them as smoke, he believed he should not be praised for having done what he ought to do, and he felt more grief at being forced to leave some prisoners still unransomed than satisfaction at having ransomed a great number. God glorified him by still more wonderful deeds: on leaving Ravenna he raised to life the son of a poor widow, who supported her by his work, and delivered a possessed man named Elpidius by sprinkling holy water throughout his house.

Caesarius went from Ravenna to Rome. Pope Symmachus, the clergy, the senators and the people welcomed him as a Saint. Symmachus gave him the Pallium with his own hands, and granted the deacons of his Church the privilege of wearing dalmatics as the deacons of the Roman Church did. Having received considerable sums as gifts, our Saint used them to ransom the prisoners of his country who were still in the power of the Goths, and he returned with them to Arles more glorious than if he had come laden with the spoils of all the enemies of the empire. As he still had a considerable sum left, he went himself to Carcassonne to free other prisoners there, and sent abbots, deacons and clerics to do the same in various other places. One day he met a poor man who asked him for the means to ransom a captive; having no money to give him, he ran quickly to his room, took the cope he used in processions and his alb for Easter Day, and gave them to him.

As he possessed all the virtues in a most eminent degree, whenever he practised one of them he did so with such perfection that one would have said it was the one that excelled most in him. He left off the exercise of one only to take up another, so that his virtues seemed to vie with one another for duration and rank. Indeed,

it is impossible to express what his patience, his purity, his charity, his fervour, his discretion, his moderation, his kindness, his zeal and his prayer were. He was the defender of the faith, the model of bishops, the ornament of the churches, the preacher of grace, the peacemaker of dissensions, the fountain of love, the rule of discipline, the reformer of morals, the arbiter of counsels, the protector of peoples and the redeemer of captives. He was never heard to say the least thing against his neighbour; nor could he bear those who spoke ill of others. He severely punished the members of his household when they insulted or ill-treated anyone. No harsh word ever came from his mouth, and when his duty obliged him to correct someone, it was with a gentle severity that inspired repentance. The tranquillity of his soul showed in his face, which was always serene, unless he was weeping for the sins of his people. He was continually occupied with God, and had made meditation so much a habit that he did not interrupt it even in his sleep. He wished the clergy to use his house and his table as their own, whether he was present or absent. During meals he had reading on some devout subject, so as to feed the soul at the same time as the body; and after the meal he summed up what had been read and took occasion from it to exhort those present to virtue. He wore no linen shirts, but only shirts of coarse cloth. He took care to have help given to the monasteries he knew to be in want, to pilgrims, widows and the sick.

Saint Caesarius took part in several Synods. The first was that of Agde, held in the year 506, where ecclesiastical discipline was restored, which had become miserably slack through mingling with the Arian heretics. Several Catholics, through associating with the Arians and to win the favour of Alaric, who had embraced their sect, had renounced the faith. The bishops, not wishing to exclude them from the hope of reconciliation, found a middle way between the ancient rigour of the Church, of which Christians were no longer capable, and the complete relaxation of discipline: this was to oblige them to the laborious exercises of penance for two years, which would serve as a test of whether their conversion was false or true. He presided over the second Council of Orange, held under the consulship of Etius the Younger in 529, although Baronius gives another date. The occasion was the dedication of a basilica built by the patrician Liberius. The disputes then causing much stir in the Gauls were dealt with there: they arose from the books of Faustus and from the accusations his partisans brought against the true disciples of Saint Augustine concerning predestination, grace and free will. They were settled by the authority of that same Saint Augustine, from whose words almost all the Canons were composed. Caesarius showed the deep knowledge he had of the doctrine of that great bishop, and upheld it against those who had declared themselves its enemies; but at the same time he condemned the Predestinarians, who, on the pretext of this doctrine, taught altogether heretical and pernicious propositions. He had previously composed two excellent books *On Grace and Free Will* against those of Faustus. Pope Felix IV, to whom he had sent them, found them so learned and so useful to the Church that he ordered him to publish them, and gave them his approval by a letter placed at their head. But this fine work is no longer extant, and its loss cannot be sufficiently regretted.

He also presided over the Council of Vaison in 529, where it was ordered that the name of the living Pope be recited in all Masses, and over that of Riez, at which Contumeliosus, bishop of that see, was deposed for the disorders of his life. Caesarius's conduct on this occasion was approved by Pope John, who ordered in his reply that the guilty man should be shut up in a monastery to expiate by penance the scandal he had given his people, and that a visitor should be elected to govern his diocese, but that he should perform no ordinations and should not meddle in temporal affairs. Our Saint had a revelation of his death two years before it happened, and in an ecstasy he saw the glory to which he was to be raised as the reward of his labours. He told his disciples of it, so as to prepare them to bear this loss with the submission they owed to the order of divine Providence. During his illness, which caused him very great pain, he asked those present when the feast of Saint Augustine would be celebrated, and, learning that it would be soon, he answered: "I hope that my death will not be far from that of this great Doctor, whose doctrine I have always cherished and whose views I have always followed." He made his will, in which he declares that, having inherited nothing from his parents, he leaves them nothing; he leaves his goods partly to his church and partly to the monastery of

nuns he had founded. Feeling that his hour was near, he had himself carried, dying as he was, to that monastery of nuns, so as to console them once more by his presence and give them his last blessing. He exhorted the abbess, named Caesaria like his sister, whom she had succeeded, and all her daughters, two hundred in number, to labour fervently to correspond to their vocation and to keep inviolably the Rule he had given them some time before. Then, taking leave of them while they dissolved in tears, he had himself carried back to his church, where three days later, on 27 August, the eve of Saint Augustine, as he had foretold, at the hour of Prime, he peacefully gave back his soul to Jesus Christ in the presence of the prelates, priests and deacons who were attending him, in the year of grace 542. He was buried in the principal church of the monastery, dedicated under the name of the Blessed Virgin and intended for the burial of the nuns; his body has been very carefully preserved there since.

We have not related all the miracles he worked during his life and after his death, because their number is too great. They may be read in his life in the sixth volume of Surius, composed by Saint Cyprian, bishop of Toulon, his disciple, and by Stephen, a deacon of the same Church. It is addressed to the abbess Caesaria, whom Surius and Baronius believed to be his sister; but it is evident that it was the one who succeeded her, of whom we spoke in connection with his death. Four homilies of his have come down to us, which are included in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*; those who have embraced the monastic life will find admirable instructions in them. He had composed them for the monks of Lérins, and they show the deep knowledge he had of the obligations of those who consecrate themselves to God in the cloister.

Acta Sanctorum; Histoire de l'Église, by Jager; Godescard; Légendaire d'Autun, by the abbé Pignot; Histoire de l'Église, by the abbé Darras. — Cf. Trichaud, Histoire de saint Césaire, 1 vol. in-8°.

Saint Syagrius, Bishop of Autun

600. — Pope: Saint Gregory the Great. — King of France: Clotaire II.

> *When a soul is conscious of having done some good thing, it rejoices in it, and its spirit is filled as with an infusion of spiritual joy.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose.*

Syagrius was born at Autun of one of the most illustrious families of the Gauls; for he counted among his ancestors that Afranius Syagrius who under the empire was raised to the high dignity of the consulship, and that other Syagrius, grandson of the consul, whom Saint Sidonius Apollinaris reminds of his nobility in a letter full of amiable banter. The collect of Saint Syagrius in the old Breviary of Autun also mentions the high distinction of his birth. It has been claimed, though evidently wrongly, that he was a brother of Queen Brunhild. Some say he was related to the great Saint Desiderius, bishop of Vienne. There is no positive proof either for or against this last assertion; but it is quite possible that their families, both very distinguished and both of Autun, were united by ties of blood. We know nothing of his youth, except that he was even more remarkable for his piety than for his nobility, and that, renouncing early all the pleasures, advantages and hopes of the world, he entered the sacred militia to consecrate himself entirely to the service of the altar, to the interests of God's glory and to the salvation of souls. Trained no doubt, like Saint Germanus, in the abbey of Saint-Symphorien, that great school of the clergy, he was, like him too, dear to Saint Agrippinus, who made him deacon, and to Saint Nectarius, who ordained him priest.

After the death of Remigius (others say Benignus), successor of Eupardus, who had himself replaced Saint Nectarius, no one was judged more worthy than Syagrius to occupy the see of Autun. Saint Germanus made it a duty and a joy to come expressly from Paris to take part in his consecration (560). The importance of the ancient church and the distinction of the great city of which he became bishop; the authority and great influence he exercised in his native land, now his diocese; the esteem and veneration that surrounded him; the eminence of his universally recognised merit; his reputation and the nobility of his family: all this soon

gave him great credit at court. He was all-powerful, first with Guntram and afterwards with Brunhild.

Equally distinguished by his learning and by his zeal, he gathered round him, either in his palace or in the abbey of Saint-Symphorien, young men of the noblest families who came to place themselves under his direction, to be guided in their studies and in the paths of clerical perfection. Among others may be named Eustasius or Eustadius, bishop of Bourges; Desiderius, bishop of Vienne, of whom we have already spoken; and another Desiderius, bishop of Auxerre. Such disciples would suffice to make their master illustrious. Here is yet another, to whom a lively interest attaches. Aunacharius or Aunarius, a young lord brought up at the court of King Guntram, was touched by grace; he suddenly renounced the most brilliant prospects, fled secretly to the tomb of Saint Martin at Tours, and there, stripping off the livery of the world, entered the clergy to consecrate himself wholly to the service of God. Having heard Syagrius spoken of as the bishop most eminent in learning and virtue in the Gauls, it was into those skilful and holy hands that he went to commit his soul. The venerable pontiff, full of admiration and tenderness for a young man capable of so great a sacrifice, welcomed him as a father welcomes the most beloved of sons, was happy to keep him by his side, and imparted to him his light and his holiness.

Meanwhile people continued to have recourse from all sides, and never in vain, to the great Pontiff who occupied the see of Autun with such distinction. A religious named Baudenus, of the monastery of Saint-Arédius (probably Saint-Arige at Gap), arrived one day at Autun asking to speak to him. He had come from the depths of Provence and held a bundle of papers in his hand. “My lord,” he said when he had been shown in, “our monastery is being persecuted by enemies who wish to despoil it, despite our title deeds, which are here. Full of confidence in your goodness, and knowing all the credit you enjoy at court, I come to implore your help.” Syagrius received him with his usual charity and kindness, then reassured him by saying that he would take charge of his affair. At the holy prelate’s request the king set his signature to the deeds, and the good religious went away content. Another time a grief-stricken father went to Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers. “My son,” he said to him, “has just been thrown into prison; I beg you, obtain his release through the intervention of the great bishop of Autun.” Fortunatus wrote at once to Syagrius, told him the facts, set out the object of his request and added: “This poor man, embittered by grief, after pouring out his bitter complaints before me, has named you as the only one who can bring a remedy to his ills. He believes a word from you will be enough.” Syagrius, who always seized with joy the opportunities of doing good, did not fail to profit by this one, and no doubt obtained a favour asked of him by an intimate friend. Our Saint was involved in all the great affairs of his time. The monastery of the Holy Cross, founded at Poitiers by Saint Radegund, had just been the scene of a strange struggle. This affair took on such proportions that the greatest bishops of the Gauls were obliged to intervene. So we find the name of Syagrius cited more than once in the proceedings, and this illustrious Pontiff was one of those who did most to restore a peace momentarily disturbed by princesses ambitious even under the veil. Nor did he show his zeal only on this occasion, when he was seen playing an important part with Gregory of Tours and obtaining a happy outcome by his care and prudence. Whenever grave interests of the Church or of the peoples required it, he spared neither his time nor his trouble. The longest journeys cost him nothing when it was a question of attending those august assemblies where the greatest questions of faith, morals and discipline were dealt with, where everything was organised and everything purified, in the civil and social order as much as in the ecclesiastical; for councils were at that time like councils of State. Syagrius very often brought his light and his great influence to his brothers in the episcopate gathered in great numbers at Paris, Vienne, Lyons and Mâcon, where, full of the spirit of the Church, always the friend of peace and of the poor, they concerned themselves with the needs of the poor and sought to reconcile the ever-divided kings. The signature of the bishop of Autun comes immediately after that of the metropolitan.

The devout King Guntram always had the highest esteem, the greatest veneration and a boundless deference for Syagrius. He gave him marks of it on every occasion, and again two years before his death, in 591, when

he wished to take him to Paris for the baptism of Clotaire, his nephew and godson. But the finest title of glory for Syagrius, and the most impressive testimony to his merit, were the affection and confidence of Saint Gregory. That great Pope, having noticed young fair-haired slaves, with gentle and thoughtful faces and a beauty full of nobility and charm, put up for auction in the market of Rome, at once conceived a plan worthy of his immense zeal: to win for Jesus Christ a country that gave birth to so choice a race. “What a pity,” he said, “that such men are not Christians!” Now these young slaves were Anglo-Saxons. Before his pontificate he had wished to go in person to bring them the gift of the faith. But the Romans, afraid of losing him for ever, kept such a watch on the roads that he could not follow his magnanimous and holy inspiration. Once raised to the chair of Saint Peter, he soon sent the monk Augustine and some other religious (596) to evangelise England; it was his cherished work. And so he chose among all the bishops of the Gauls Syagrius of Autun, Virgilius of Arles and Desiderius of Vienne, to commend his beloved missionaries to them.

Saint Gregory had not presumed too much on the zeal and charity of these great bishops: he was perfectly understood and seconded by them. It is even claimed that Syagrius, not content with helping the missionaries with his assistance and receiving them perfectly at Autun, went far beyond what was asked of him: after going with them to pray at the tombs of Saint Symphorian and our other saints, he wished to accompany them in person as far as England.

Saint Gregory showed further how much he counted on Syagrius to help him in governing the Church of the Gauls, by a long letter he addressed to him and to Virgilius, Desiderius and Aetherius (Ythaire) of Lyons. In it he charged him with convoking councils regularly and with labouring, together with his three worthy colleagues, to root out simony and the ordination of the unworthy, and to maintain in the clergy the greatest purity of morals and the most exact discipline. This letter shows how highly the sovereign Pontiff regarded Syagrius, what a high idea he had of his credit and influence, and how much he honoured him; for he names him first, although the other three prelates were metropolitans. It was he, too, whom by an exceptional distinction he charged with sending to Rome, by the abbot Cyriacus, the acts of the coming national council whose convocation he had so strongly recommended. Seconded by the powerful support of Syagrius, he did not fear to lay a firm hand on the Church of France. Clearly the bishop of Autun was in his eyes the first bishop of that great Church and held the first place in his esteem. He knew, besides, that no one could help him more effectively than this venerable prelate, at once so holy and so enlightened, who enjoyed the widest reputation in the Gauls, exercised there the most legitimate ascendancy, and possessed at court an authority without equal. That is why he also charged him with several important affairs relating to other bishops. Finally, it was to him that he turned to settle with the Frankish kings a difficulty concerning the creation of the diocese of Maurienne. It now remains for us to speak of the magnificent buildings and the pious foundations to which the name of Syagrius is attached. At almost the same time as Childebert and Saint Germanus of Paris were founding the celebrated basilica of Saint-Vincent (later Saint-Germain-des-Prés), which was entrusted to the religious of Saint-Symphorien, a church also dedicated to Saint Vincent was rising at the gates of the monastery of Autun. Syagrius was no doubt the founder of this religious monument, which came to be added to so many others on that sacred soil. He wished, after the example of Saint Germanus, to associate the cult of the young martyr of Autun with the then very widespread cult of the young deacon martyr of Saragossa. The first Merovingian kings, when they took up residence at Chalon, gave up to the bishops of Autun the praetorium and the castrum of the city. It was there that Saint Nazarius had dedicated a basilica under the title of Saint Nectarius and made it his cathedral. Syagrius, who joined to zeal for the splendour of worship a taste for the arts and a love of the beautiful and the great, made it his care and joy to adorn the new building, to enlarge it, and to make it worthy of the illustrious church of Autun and of the superb city, which the imposing Gallo-Roman buildings still embellished. On the east side he added a great apse, which was decorated with extraordinary richness and splendour. The panelling shone with gold, and everywhere magnificent mosaics displayed their varied designs. All the resources of art were exhausted, in a city full of the rich spoils of antiquity, where learned traditions and a taste more refined than anywhere

else had been preserved. These traditions, joined to zeal for the house of God, produced marvels. And so the beauty of the cathedral of Autun became famous from that time. Not content with magnificently adorning the house of God, our holy bishop assured the splendour of its worship by the gift of the considerable estate of Laisy.

No doubt Syagrius had already been helped in the decoration of his church by the royal munificence of Brunhild, a princess in whom everything was great: her views, her works, her passions and her crimes. But soon he was helped still more generously in founding three religious establishments whose importance equalled their extent, grandeur and magnificence. In keeping with the method followed long before by the great bishop of Tours, recommended by Pope Saint Gregory and invariably followed by the Church, always faithful to her plan of transforming without destroying, he wished to turn to the profit of the new faith the old habits fostered by the worship of false gods, to attack pagan beliefs on their own ground, to sanctify by Christian buildings the places defiled by idols, and in this way to make a more striking and solemn reparation to Jesus Christ. He therefore built, with the ruins and on the very site of the temple of Berecynthia, where it is believed there was already a baptistery, the great abbey of Saint Mary, later also called Saint-Jean-le-Grand, which sheltered a numerous swarm of chaste virgins consecrated to God.[1] Thus an atmosphere once corrupted by the exhalations of paganism would be purified by the incense of psalmody rising unceasingly before God, and by the heavenly perfume of that white flower called Christian virginity. Thus the stains imprinted on this soil by an unclean goddess, whose cult was too long an insult to virtue, would vanish beneath floods of prayer and be washed away by the innocent tears of penance. Thus would be recalled the martyrdom and glory of the young Symphorian, heroically bold and virtuous enough to honour Christianity and humanity by refusing, even in the face of death, his homage to the infamous idol. Syagrius wished to give the new abbey a holy and beloved name, to recall that the church of Autun was founded by the disciples of him who had Mary for his adoptive mother, and at the same time to present the most beautiful type of the virgin consecrated to God.

It was not enough for Syagrius to have opened a vast and holy refuge for the chaste brides of Jesus Christ; the venerable Pontiff also wished to perpetuate at Autun the traditions of charity which, like that of Christian virginity, had come from Ephesus and Smyrna. He therefore founded a hospice, a holy refuge open to the sick, the poor, travellers, and the many pilgrims drawn by the miraculous tombs of Saint Symphorian and Saint Cassian. This new establishment was likewise near a temple, that of Minerva, it is believed, or according to others that of Apollo, so as to replace the proud, cold, dry and heartless wisdom of antiquity with humble and gentle evangelical charity, always compassionate and active. According to tradition, the devout building occupied the very place where the house of Faustus and Augusta had stood, where Saint Symphorian was born and later baptised, and where the first altar in honour of Jesus Christ was raised in Autun, under the title of the prince of the Apostles. The new palace of the poor, built by charity, received the name of the apostle of Autun, who was himself a victim of that sublime love of God and men called priestly zeal. Christian memories thus crowded round the hospice or *xenodochium* of Saint-Andoche,[2] as round the abbey of Saint Mary; there too they made the pagan memories forgotten; they purified and consecrated this once profaned soil.

Finally, it was on the ruins of the temple and druidic school of Saron that Syagrius raised the vast monastery, a monument of imposing grandeur, a peaceful retreat open to one of those colonies of chosen men to whom Saint Benedict had just given an admirable code and taught to lead on earth an almost heavenly life, useful to men and glorious to God. There, by a happy alliance, solitude and common life, work, study and prayer were united to lead the Christian to evangelical perfection. The new abbey could receive no other name than that of the great Saint who had founded the first monastery of the Gauls, evangelised the country of the Aedui and broken the old Gallic idol in that very place. Syagrius did for the bishop of Tours what Euphronius had done for Saint Symphorian: both wished to consecrate by pious monuments this soil so full of two inseparably

united memories, that of the apostle and that of the martyr. Two abbeys rose side by side: the daughter of Saint Euphronius and her worthy sister, the abbey of Saint-Martin.

The monastery of Saint-Martin was built to receive three hundred monks. The church was built of great blocks of dressed stone, like the gates of the city. The old temple of Saron, converted by Saint Martin into a church under the title of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, was incorporated as a memorial into the new building. The east wall was demolished and replaced by a low-vaulted apse recalling the catacombs. For the rest, the building rather resembled the old basilicas of the fourth century. Inside it was a hundred and eight feet long by fifty-four wide, and it had three distinct parts. The first part, a portico with columns and a great round arch, was separated from the second by a transverse wall pierced by three doors. The middle one was surmounted by a dedicatory painting showing the royal foundress, Brunhild, offering religious with her right hand, and with the other the monastery, to Saint Martin and Saint Benedict. The second part, or body of the building, was divided by two rows of marble columns into three naves corresponding to the three doors, each ending in an apse. The third part, the sanctuary, was separated from the nave by a marble balustrade, above which rose the triumphal arch, supported by two magnificent columns, also of marble. The vault of the apse displayed brilliant mosaics on grounds of gold and azure; the triumphal arch had arabesques and bas-reliefs; and the nave had panelling in gilded compartments. The pavement of the sanctuary was of mosaic and that of the nave of marble. The altar, small and very low like the ancient altars, raised by Saint Martin in the temple of Saron, stood against the wall closing the apse. The Blessed Virgin, whose cult had been brought to these places with such tender veneration by apostles so closely linked to Saint John, could not be forgotten in the new church: the crypt, an underground funerary chapel recalling the Confession where the precious remains of the martyrs were gathered, was dedicated to her. There she seemed to watch, like a good mother, over the sleep of her children lying in their beds of stone awaiting the awakening of eternity. A happy and consoling thought, thus to place under the protection and as it were under the eye of the gentle Mother of Jesus, *alma Redemptoris mater,* the dead who sleep in the peace of the Lord.[3]

Some time afterwards the sovereign Pontiff, to reward a prelate so great by his learning, his virtues and his zeal, by the services he had rendered the Church and by the good works of which he had been the promoter or the instrument, and who had long possessed all his esteem and confidence, granted him the pallium. But Syagrius did not long enjoy the privileged distinction sent him by the vicar of Jesus Christ. A year later, in 600, he went to receive his eternal reward from Jesus Christ Himself. No bishop of that period, fruitful as it was in Saints, enjoyed among his contemporaries or left to posterity a greater reputation for learning and virtue. Fortunatus of Poitiers gives him the highest praise; he calls him a most worthy and most holy bishop. Ado of Vienne calls him a man of the most eminent holiness. A council of Metz also gives him the title of Saint; and in citing an old canon concerning the Jews it relies only on the authority of Syagrius, as if the council in question, at which several metropolitans nevertheless sat, had been summed up entirely in the person of this great prelate who stood at the head of the whole episcopate of the Gauls. Without ever flattering the passions of princes, he knew how to use his immense credit with them, and to use it only for good.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Saint Syagrius was buried in the church of the hospice of Saint-Andoche, which was a creation of his charity and which he had endowed with his own property. Father of the poor, he had no doubt wished to rest in the midst of his adoptive family. There, every day, those who owed him a refuge and help liked to pray at his tomb and blessed his memory. The greater part of his dear and precious relics was kept there, among others his head, which was later enclosed in a silver reliquary in the form of a bust given by the abbess of Saint-Jean-le-Grand. For in the obituary of Saint-Andoche, about the year 1400, under 25 March, we read: “Jeanne de Montigny, abbess of Saint-Jean d’Autun, who gave the silver head in which is placed the head of Monsieur saint Syagre.” The Val-de-Grâce in Paris also possessed some notable relics of our holy Bishop. In

a hamlet of the parish of Grury there was a chapel under his invocation, in the gift of the Jarsaillon family. The parish of Maltat kept Saint Syagrius and Saint Sulpice as its patrons.

Taken from Saint Symphorien et son culte, by the abbé Dinet.

Blessed Margaret of Bavaria, Duchess of Lorraine

1376–1434. — Popes: Gregory XI; Eugene IV. — Emperors: Charles IV; Sigismund. — Kings of France: Charles V; Charles VII.

> *Penance blots out sin, but compassionate charity, which leads us to help the poor by alms, delivers from punishment.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

The blessed palatine princess Margaret of Bavaria, so little known to modern ages, was the guardian angel of Lorraine in one of the most troubled periods of the history of the Church, that of the great Western Schism, from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century. To appreciate the mission of the holy duchess properly, it is necessary to glance at the failings of Christendom at that time and at the astonishing means Providence used to prevent the whole of society from going to the abyss. The Middle Ages were then drawing to a close, and Christendom, as a political institution presided over by the sovereign Pontiff, was also moving into rapid decline. While outside, Islam, already at the gates of Constantinople, was taking its revenge for the crusades by threatening, from one sea to the other, a Europe divided by the ambition of its princes, within, the papacy, weakened in its prestige among the nations by seventy years' residence at Avignon, was seen to undergo the still more deplorable trial of an almost interminable schism. All these struggles had spread unbelief and laxity of morals far and wide, sparing no institution. Good seemed to have become the exception and evil the rule, at every level of the sacred hierarchy as well as of civil society; and the ruins with which the Protestant reformation was to cover so many kingdoms could already be glimpsed in the spirit of independence and ingratitude of the peoples towards holy Church.

In those lamentable days, which seemed to foretell the end of time, as Saint Vincent Ferrer was then preaching, where was Our Lord going to place the supreme remedy? In holy women. Saint Catherine of Siena is indeed the greatest figure of that period, and it is in her history that we hear the divine Saviour pronounce these astonishing words when, about 1368, He called the young virgin to her noble mission: "Know," He said to her, "that in this time the pride of men has become so great, especially in those who call themselves lettered and learned, that My justice can no longer bear them, and is going to confound them by a just judgement. But because mercy superabounds in all My works, I wish first to confound them for their good and without destroying them, so that they may know themselves and humble themselves, as the Jews and the Gentiles did when I sent them unlettered men whom I filled with My divine wisdom. I am therefore going to send to these proud men women, ignorant and weak by nature, but wise and strong by My grace, to confound the vain assurance of these men. If they know themselves, if they humble themselves, profiting by the teachings I shall offer them through these frail but blessed beings, I shall be full of mercy for the guilty. If on the contrary they disdain this humiliating but salutary remedy, I shall send them so many other humiliations that they will become the laughing-stock of the whole world. That is the just judgement with which I strike the proud: the more they wish to raise themselves above themselves under the breath of vanity, the more I abase them below themselves…"

History attests how far the events of that time answered to this astonishing prediction. The Popes were still wavering between Avignon and Rome when already the valiant women raised up by the Lord's mercy hastened, like other Judiths, to save their brethren. Beside a few Saints raised to a power that had almost nothing human left in it, such as a Vincent Ferrer, a Bernardine of Siena, a John Capistran, we see on all sides a host of heroines entering the lists. On the battlefields there is Joan of Arc, snatching the sceptre of

Saint Louis from the forerunners of Henry VIII. In the still bolder struggles of asceticism, what magnificent palms were gathered by a Bridget and a Catherine of Sweden, a Catherine of Siena, a Frances of Rome, a Colette of Corbie, a Lydwine of Schiedam, and so many other Saints, most of them too little known since, but who nonetheless helped in their time to bring human society back from the brink of the abyss. Among these valiant women, whose life, so meritorious and too long forgotten, is happily restored to us today, when the Church still expects so many services of Christian women, Blessed Duchess Margaret of Bavaria takes a brilliant place. She was the ornament of the throne in Lorraine, as another Margaret of Bavaria, her cousin, shone on that of Burgundy, while Isabeau of Bavaria, their kinswoman, defiled the throne of France with scandals and unspeakable treachery.

Our Blessed was born in the year 1376 in the Upper Palatinate of Bavaria, of Rupert III of Bavaria-Wittelsbach and Elizabeth of Hohenzollern, burgravine of Nuremberg. Her father later became Elector Palatine of the Rhine, and was elected emperor of Germany on the deposition of Wenceslas IV, surnamed the Drunkard. But noble as was the blood of Wittelsbach and Hohenzollern, from which the royal houses of Bavaria and Prussia are still descended in our own day, it was made far more illustrious then by holy traditions and shining virtues. Margaret of Bavaria, with her six brothers and two sisters, could truly glory, like Tobias, in being of the race of the Saints. Thus she was closely related to Saint Elizabeth of Hungary and to that saint's niece, Saint Elizabeth of Portugal, who were her great-great-aunts. Nearer to her, she saw her father's grandmother, Irmengard of Oettingen, piously end her course in 1389, not far from Worms, in the convent of the Dominican nuns of Liebenau, where she had withdrawn at the age of twenty-three on the premature death of her husband, Adolf of Bavaria, Elector Palatine of the Rhine. On her mother's side the princess found no less touching examples: three of the sisters of Elizabeth of Hohenzollern, the burgravines Catherine, Anne and Agnes, had just taken, in the flower of their age, the humble veil of Saint Clare at the convent of Hof, where Catherine, the eldest of them, was elected abbess in 1393, the very year in which Margaret became duchess of Lorraine. Later the Blessed must also have drawn inspiration from the virtues of her cousin, the empress Joan, who had become so perfect in a short time under the heroic direction of Saint John Nepomucene. Finally, in the family home, the young palatine princess, contrary to the too free manners of her time, was brought up like her brothers and sisters under the watchful eye of her devout parents, in the fear of God, self-respect and love of neighbour. It is true that she yielded to the allurement of vain finery and worldly festivities, almost inevitable at the courts of princes; but this was less from a fault of character than from deference to fashion, and also by a special permission of Providence, which wished, before making her a vessel of election, to let her undergo something of the allurements of our poor nature. Married at eighteen to the duke of Lorraine, Charles II, surnamed the Bold, Margaret continued for some time on the throne that worldly life without fervour which she was soon to make people forget by her heroic virtues.

It is greatly to be regretted that the few historians who have mentioned Margaret of Bavaria have left us such vague details about her conversion. We had at first believed that it had been obtained miraculously by the duchess's recourse to the practice of the holy Rosary, in a grave illness in which the physicians had given up hope of her recovery; but the original texts we have since had before our eyes do not speak clearly on this point. Father Dominic, a Carthusian of Trier and a contemporary of the Blessed, whom he had often seen at Sierck in Lorraine, does relate, however, how God sent mysterious illnesses to the duchess to detach her completely from herself and from every creature. "This," he says in his *Treatise on True and Humble Obedience*, "is what this devout duchess, of whom, thanks be to God, we hear so much good, told a person in her confidence" (no doubt her director): "'The Lord takes a wonderful pleasure in instructing and enlightening me in the art of dying well. He often afflicts me, especially in the darkness of the night, with great and intolerable pains that seem to bring me to the last extremity. Thus suspended between life and death, when I have searched my conscience severely and prepared myself to appear before the Lord, He at once restores my health. By these supreme anguishes with which He is pleased to strike me so often, He

makes me attentive and watchful, so as not to be surprised by death.'" Perhaps it was one of these illnesses of the princess that made her have recourse to the light of the Carthusians of Saint-Alban at Trier, during a stay of the court of Lorraine at the ducal castle of Sierck, not far from there. There lived at that time in the monastery of Saint-Alban a holy religious named Adolf of Essen, equally versed in divine and human letters. He had learned by revelation how salutary was devotion to the holy Rosary, unhappily fallen into neglect in that calamitous period. From then on Father Adolf had become the apostle of the Rosary, and he had even written a little work under the Latin title *De Commendatione Rosarii*, to extend the action of his zeal beyond his solitary cell. Not yet being prior at that time, he sent, with the permission of his superior, a German translation of his book to the duchess of Lorraine, together with a collection of meditations he had composed on the life of the divine Saviour. Such was the duchess's ardour in putting these salutary teachings into practice that she soon found herself entirely transformed, and could scarcely recognise herself in the inner splendours with which grace was pleased to adorn her, in return for her renunciation of the vain pomps of the world. In a short time she advanced so far in the ways of holiness that no one far or near was known to equal her, in whatever condition, not even in the cloister, where Father Adolf, who attests this fact, had nevertheless met great servants of God. Our Lord Himself, moreover, took it upon Himself to make the holiness of the princess shine outwardly by numerous miracles, the mere account of which, according to her biographer, would have filled a voluminous book. Unfortunately for us, the duchess's ordinary confessor, Master William, a learned doctor of theology and inquisitor of the faith, died before his penitent without having written anything about her. Even the biography of Margaret of Bavaria traced for us by the venerable Carthusian Adolf of Essen, who later became her spiritual director, is less a complete portrait than a rapid sketch of the greatest and holiest of the duchesses of Lorraine. It is to this writing, recently discovered against all hope, and to various manuscripts of a disciple of Father Adolf, the Father Dominic cited above, that we owe most of the following details that remain to us of the life of the Blessed.

The princess thus soon made up for the time lost in her early years. She applied herself first of all to the spiritual combat, according to the method and order indicated in her manual of the Rosary. The Christian virtues effaced the traces of her former worldliness: humility and condescension, charity and gentleness, devotion and mortification of the senses, mercy and an inexhaustible generosity towards the unfortunate came in rivalry to adorn her soul in a rare degree of perfection. She no longer left caprice the slightest influence over the distribution of her time. Rising long before dawn, she at once prostrated herself in adoration and thanksgiving before the Author of all good, made Him the complete surrender of her person, and ardently begged Him not to let the day find her in any way unfaithful to her resolutions. Then, at the first stroke of the bell, when she was alone or had no reason to fear displeasing her husband, she hurried to the altar, taking with her only one willing person, so as not to cut short her servants' rest too much. After devoting all her free time to her exercises of devotion, she belonged only to her household and to the unfortunate. Finally, when night came, she fell again at the feet of the divine Master to examine under His jealous eye the whole course of the day. If an imperfection had surprised her, she accused herself of it before the sovereign priest Jesus with signs of the keenest contrition; and if she recognised herself guilty of a more notable infidelity, she confessed it at once, as occasion allowed, or never put off beyond the next day the care of unburdening her conscience at the holy tribunal. Already purified thus almost every day in the sacrament of penance, the duchess added mortification to mortification, to subject her least appetites without truce or rest to the yoke of Christian perfection. Very simple in her private life, she loved, after the example of her blessed aunt Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, to deprive herself in eating and drinking without anything showing. Often, for example, after letting the most delicate dishes go round the ducal table without touching them, she would withdraw apart to appease her hunger with some coarse food brought her by a discreet attendant. In the absence of Charles II, not content with expiating her former vanities under a rough hair shirt, she brought a pitiless rigour to tearing her limbs with bloody disciplines.

With what ardent devotion, then, must our Blessed not have felt herself consumed towards the adorable Eucharist! She approached it with angelic humility and fervour as often as the rigorism of her time allowed, that is, on Sundays and on the feasts falling during the week. Our Lord, to show her His gratitude for so much devotion to the sacrament of His love, was pleased one day to give her communion in a wholly wonderful manner. The Blessed had expressed to the venerable Father Adolf, then prior of the Charterhouse of Marienflos (recently founded near Sierck and transferred shortly afterwards to Rettel, not far away), her desire that he should come and celebrate Mass in her private chapel at the ducal castle in the town of Sierck, where the court of Lorraine sometimes resided. At the moment of receiving holy communion, as the princess had just knelt before the altar, her face suddenly became as resplendent as the noonday sun. At the same time the sacred host vanished from the hands of the venerable prior, whom a religious awe had transported out of himself and who had not at first noticed this second wonder. Coming back from his amazement and thinking he had dropped the sacred species in his agitation, he was looking anxiously around him when the sight of Margaret of Bavaria, prostrate in thanksgiving, drew him out of his perplexity, with lively feelings of gratitude for this new favour granted to his spiritual daughter. Thus she sometimes shared the chalice of the Lord's blessings with Saint Catherine of Siena, her contemporary, whose life she loved to reread; thus she drank deep of the torrent of divine graces, and often passed from prayer to ecstasy after communion! This superabundance of heavenly gifts poured out on our Blessed bore fruit a hundredfold in the countless works of justice and mercy to which her life was now irrevocably devoted. In her relations with her husband she seemed rather the humble servant than the wife of Charles II, so constantly did she study to please him and to forget the duke's incredible wrongs towards her, especially in the last years of his reign, when he had left her to live publicly in his palace with a courtesan of the basest extraction. So cruelly tried in her conjugal affections, our Blessed had nevertheless been able to keep her soul in perfect resignation to the will of God, and so to crown so many other family trials that had made her heart bleed, without any cry of revolt or even of too bitter grief. She was indeed still in the flower of her years when death took from her, one after another, two of her brothers, then her two sisters, and finally her parents, the emperor Rupert, who died in 1410, and the empress Elizabeth, who followed her husband to the tomb a year later. Of the five sons born to her, not one was spared to her. Only her two daughters were left to her, the princesses Isabella and Catherine of Lorraine. Without ever yielding to a false tenderness for these two only children, she applied herself above all to giving them the strong education necessary for crowned heads. She was, moreover, by the touching spectacle of her holy life, the best of mistresses for so great a work. Simple and modest in her dress, full of reserve in her bearing, rising very early for her exercises of piety so as to be the sooner at her family cares, so lavish that she often found herself in straits for having given everything to the unfortunate, frugal at table, everywhere observing the noblest restraint, she constantly appeared to the two young princesses as the perfect mirror of the virtues of the throne. Always active at work, because she knew that idleness is the source of all vices, she would not tolerate the idleness so usual in the dwellings of the great, either in her children or even in her ladies of honour and her maids: each had, according to her rank and her leisure, to occupy herself with woollen work or embroidery, which was afterwards no doubt distributed to churches and to the poor. The holy duchess's care thus extended to all the persons of her household, whom she regarded in reality as her family. More concerned for their inner progress than people in the world usually are, she watched scrupulously over their instruction, even giving them the spiritual reading herself on Sundays and feasts after the midday meal; she would leave this task to others only when she was prevented, or when a cleric was present for the ministry of the word. For this purpose she had a good number of chosen books, such as the Old and New Testaments, the *Explanation of the Epistles and Gospels of the Year*, books of sermons, the *Lives of the Saints*, and other works written in Latin, French or German. When the reading was over, the duchess and her suite went devoutly back to the offices. The Lord was to grant His blessing to so much domestic care. Never was a palace household calmer, more faithful or more devoted. Never above all did princesses answer more happily the expectations of Church and society. Their descendants were numerous and valiant, and sometimes even crowned with the halo of the Saints. Thus from Isabella, the

elder, who was married to René of Anjou with the presumptive succession to the ducal throne, descended Blessed Margaret of Lorraine, duchess of Alençon and great-grandmother of Henry IV, who died glorified in the habit of Saint Clare at the convent of Argentan; and those brave dukes of Guise who prevented France from passing to the Huguenot heresy; and those illustrious princes of Lorraine who, after making the happiness of their duchy for several centuries, came to the first crown of Germany at the time of the union of Lorraine with France. It is from the marriage of Margaret of Bavaria's great-grandson, Duke Francis, with the empress Maria Theresa that the present house of Austria, called Habsburg-Lorraine, descends. From the second of Margaret of Bavaria's daughters, Catherine of Lorraine, married to Margrave James of Baden, was born among others Blessed Bernard of Baden, the Aloysius Gonzaga of the fifteenth century.

Devoted as our holy duchess thus was to her domestic duties, she was still more devoted to the service of the sick and the poor. A special vocation called her to imitate her two holy kinswomen of Hungary and Portugal, and Saint Catherine of Siena, in their boundless love for the suffering members of Our Lord. She was seen hastening to the hospitals as to the only palaces to her taste, whenever her obligations as wife and sovereign left her leisure. While the venerable Father Adolf, who sometimes accompanied her on her visits to the hospital she had founded at Sierck, shuddered with horror at the sight of his spiritual daughter's holy extravagances, she, usually assisted by one of her attendants named Luce, seemed to find a happiness without equal in tending the sores of the unfortunate, cleansing their fetid ulcers, and lavishing on their most repulsive infirmities the help that no one in the world dared give them any longer. From the care of the sick she passed to that of the poor, even washing their feet and drying them with her own hair. This inexplicable abasement, from which all the persons of her suite shrank far back, her faithful Luce excepted, could have its source only in a wholly special grace from on high. One day, however, the duchess felt her heart about to fail her, so horrible were the sores she had just uncovered. At once remembering the conduct of Saint Catherine of Siena in a similar temptation, she made a supreme effort upon herself, calling on the divine Master, and immediately her rebellious senses were calmed.

So merciful and so humble a soul was to become a glorious instrument of salvation in the hands of Our Lord. Often, at a mere sign of the cross from the duchess, the most inveterate illness disappeared. Often too, to escape public veneration and hide from her left hand the wonders of her right, she would give the sick some semblance of remedies, with which she sent them away, and after which they found themselves completely cured. And such was the crowd of suppliants who came every day on her way to beg her help as she returned from the holy offices, that the approaches to her apartments, crowded with the sick, recalled the porches of the sheep-pool besieged by the unfortunate waiting for the descent of the Angel. Three kinds of sick people, however, remained incurable, in spite of the duchess's good will to help them: those who came to her without full confidence of being cured, those who relied more on the efficacy of ordinary remedies than on her supernatural intervention, and finally those who, stained with some grave sin, had no firm will to be converted. As long as these bad dispositions lasted, they could find no relief from her.

An evil more to be dreaded than all bodily infirmities together, war, was then desolating Christendom. At the sight of so much fatal hatred and so much blood shed, to the great detriment of souls, the holy duchess's heart was seized with great pity for her people. By the efficacy of her prayers she became for Lorraine what Saint Elizabeth of Portugal had been for her adopted country, the Angel of peace. In the general opinion she was stronger, from the depths of her oratory, than an army in battle array. God showed this one day by one of those prodigies of bilocation that are rare even in the lives of the most famous Saints. It was in 1409, two years after the battle of Champigneulle, which the men of Lorraine had won less by the valour of Duke Charles than thanks to the public prayers made at Nancy under the leadership of our Blessed. Several powerful neighbours, too forgetful of that defeat, had again raised the standard of war and had come as before to put the lands of Lorraine to fire and sword. Charles II went to meet them near Pont-à-Mousson. At the moment the action was about to begin, the enemy, though far superior in numbers, were suddenly seized

with terror and fled without striking a blow. And when after this shameful flight they were overwhelmed with reproaches by their own people, they answered with one voice (and the rumour ran everywhere at the time) that it was certainly not the duke or his troops who had put them to rout, but solely the sudden appearance of the duchess Margaret of Bavaria at the head of the Lorrainers, with a face so terrible that they could not stand an instant before her blazing look. Yet our Blessed had not left Nancy that day. Prostrate in her oratory at the feet of the divine Master while the duke marched against the enemy, she had been content, as she later told the venerable Father Adolf in precise terms, to pray for the preservation of her people, with a perfect abandonment of the whole affair to the divine mercy. Such indeed had been her custom, ever since she had learned to know Our Lord better by meditating on the mysteries of His life: she always added to her prayers, however just their object, "My God, yet let it happen not as I will, but as Thou wilt." This victory, as peaceful as it was glorious for the duchess, made final the peace that Lorraine enjoyed until the end of the reign of Charles II, while outside, foreign invasions and civil war never ceased to carry their ravages from one country to another, notably in our own country, which, but for Joan of Arc, would have fallen under the English yoke.

In spite of so striking a success, Margaret of Bavaria, on whom the grateful eyes of her people were turned more and more, took good care not to attribute to herself the glory of so much prosperity. She would put her confidence only in the merits of others, and sought constantly to multiply round her husband's throne the most meritorious works of mercy and the most fervent monasteries. It is impossible to say how many good designs she inspired in Charles II. Thanks to her, the Carthusians, who were perhaps the only religious of that time to have remained faithful to the primitive austerity of their Order, were called by the duke in 1415 to settle in Lorraine. They are still there today, and it is from the monastery of Bosserville near Nancy, an offshoot of the one established near Sierck through the duchess's care, that the present superior general of the Order of Saint Bruno comes. This foundation was for Margaret of Bavaria a supreme consolation and at the same time a new impulse towards perfection, through the personal relations she then had with the venerable Father Adolf, first prior of this monastery from 1415 to 1421. Later our Blessed was also eager to second the zeal of Saint Colette for the reform of the Order of Saint Francis. Not only did she take an active part in building the convent that the virgin of Corbie had come to found at Pont-à-Mousson, but she begged her to be so good as to receive her there among the Poor Clares if the duke her husband should die before her. God, however, had other plans for His faithful servant. He wished to go on drawing her to Himself by the single path of Calvary until the end of her days.

The duchess, thus purified to the bottom of the crucible like the purest gold, first saw all her meekness and all her tears powerless to draw Charles II away from the shameful debauchery of his private life. This prince, gifted moreover with great qualities that would have raised him above the crowd of the princes of his time had he not made it his business to harden himself against the salutary influence of his holy wife, had never learned from his youth to command his stormy passions. Unhappily for him, he bore out that oracle of the Holy Spirit, that "a man usually ends his life by the road he has travelled in his early years." The youth of Charles II had been licentious, as his first will bears witness; his old age was without honour and without restraint. The bold remonstrances of Joan of Arc, urging him to take back his wife, left him unmoved. The duke's death, as sad as his life had been, was moreover fatal to the vile accomplice of his infidelities. Hardly had he breathed his last when the people, impatient to do themselves justice, invaded the ducal residence and dragged out by force the courtesan who had too long profaned the steps of the throne. Stripped of her sumptuous clothes and decked out in her original garments, the wretched woman was dragged on a cart through the streets of Nancy amid the curses and insults of the multitude; out of a remnant of respect for the duke, she was put to death secretly. The duchess, whom the people venerated as a saint and had so cruelly avenged, had not had time to prevent this bloody deed; at least she hastened to provide for the future of the children born of relations so outrageous to her, without ever departing from her usual meekness towards them. To crown her misfortunes, she was still mourning the lamentable death of Charles II when the war of

succession to the throne of Lorraine broke out, and the lawful heir, René of Anjou, taken prisoner in the first encounter, was thrown into chains by the duke of Burgundy, the ambitious ally of the pretender, Antoine, count of Vaudémont. Submissive and resigned to the will of the Lord, who so deeply humbled the crown of her daughter Isabella of Lorraine, but at the same time full of confidence in the justice of her right, the dowager duchess spared no pains to restore René of Anjou to his subjects. She wrung truce after truce from the count of Vaudémont; she gave the young duchess able counsellors, such as the bishops of Metz and Toul, to go and win over the duke of Burgundy; and finally she carried the cause to the tribunal of the emperor Sigismund, who settled the question of principle during the Council of Basle and on 24 April 1434 gave a sentence favourable to the good right of Isabella and René. Thus it was proved once more that piety, while safeguarding eternal interests, knows how in due measure to watch over those of time. In the midst of all this mourning, all these misfortunes and all these disastrous complications, Margaret of Bavaria, whose inner conversation was in heaven, was achieving other conquests more precious than the thrones of earth. Faithful to the providential mission of the holy women of her age, she was bringing back to the fold in crowds the strayed sheep of the good Shepherd. Her name had become the object of public veneration. Every day there came hurrying to her not only the sick and the poor, but persons of the most varied conditions, great and small, clerics and lay people, princes of the Church and the powerful of the world. Religious, more than others, hastened to visit her to be edified by her devout conversation. She had attained in a high degree the gift of touching hearts: hardly had a conversation begun when she at once turned its course towards God, and the science of the Saints overflowed in floods from her blessed lips. As she owed much to devotion to the holy Rosary, she did not fear to recommend this salutary practice to everyone, to her lords and barons as well as to clerics and the least of her subjects. It was rare for any of her hearers to resist her devout entreaties; most of them became better for it, and their families too. The sacred memory of it was handed down for more than one generation, and it would not be rash to believe that these conversations of our Blessed, as much as the sword of the dukes her grandsons, put Lorraine beyond the reach of Protestantism a century later.

This apostolate went admirably well, above all, with the way of life to which the duchess bound herself after the death of Duke Charles II, and in the midst of which she soon gathered the incomparable palm of eternal life. As the monastery begun by Saint Colette was still far from finished, and circumstances were not favourable to the holy widow’s entering religion, she wished at least to carry out a plan she had often liked to discuss with the venerable Father Adolf. She left the court as soon as her presence was no longer necessary there, withdrew to her dower estate of Einville-aux-Jarres (near Lunéville), and built near her residence a hospital, there to serve Our Lord in His suffering members until her death, as her holy kinswomen of Thuringia and Portugal had done. There, in a simple and coarse habit, perhaps the habit of the Third Order of Saint Francis, to which she very probably belonged, she gave her time to her favourite works. She took in the poor and travellers from the public road, washed their feet, dried them with her hair and pressed to them her lips burning with the love of Christ; she served her guests at table with exquisite gentleness, and let the needy go only after giving them a generous alms; and she surpassed herself in caring for the sick, for whom she was ready to sacrifice her health and even her life. Such a ministry had admirably prepared her for death. Feeling herself failing, she hastened to dictate her will on 24 August 1434. In it she spent her savings one last time on works of religion and mercy. She took care not to forget her hospital at Einville, or the Carthusians of Sierck, or the persons she had kept in her service; to the two princesses her daughters she left what remained of her jewels and all her books. Three days after making this will at Einville, she gave back her beautiful soul to God, at the age of fifty-eight.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Her precious body was taken to Nancy to be buried in the collegiate church of Saint-Georges, where the tombs of the house of Lorraine were. According to the historian Wassebourg and Father Guinet, of the Premonstratensian Order, many miracles took place at her tomb. Likewise, when in 1743 her venerated

remains were transferred, with the ashes of the other princely tombs, to the new funeral vault of the church of the Cordeliers, under the Chapelle-Ronde, which still exists today, several sick people recovered their health, as they declared, by the mere touch of the velvet that had covered her mortal remains on that occasion. These remains still exist, but profaned, in that same vault, where revolutionary vandalism mingled them with the ashes taken from the neighbouring tombs. A simple inscription in the Chapelle-Ronde is all that recalls to this day, in the old capital of Lorraine, beside the ducal palace, the memory, so pure and so glorious nonetheless, of Blessed Margaret of Bavaria, called the miraculous Duchess.

There is, we believe, an authentic portrait of our Blessed. It is found in volume III, book XXVII, of the *Histoire de Lorraine* by Dom Calmet, at the head of the reign of Charles II, facing the bust of that prince.

We have already cited her biography written by the venerable Father Adolf, Carthusian of Trier. Father Rader, S.J., devoted several pages to her under the title *Beata Margarita* in volume III of his *Bavaria Sancta*, printed in 1627. Father Arthur de Moustier, Recollect, places her on 27 August with the title of Blessed in his *Sacrum Gynecæum*, as Father Rader does. The Bollandists say a word about her on the same date, with the remark, which we repeat here after them, that no trace of public cult has come down to us concerning her. The title of Blessed, which we have kept for her after the example of the authors cited, is therefore only the expression of a personal opinion, without prejudice to the definitive judgement of holy Church, which we call for with all our hearts, on the cause of the illustrious duchess.

Saint Joseph Calasanz of Petralta, Founder of the Congregation of the Clerks Regular of the Pious Schools

1648. — Pope: Innocent X. — King of Spain: Philip IV.

> *Above the physical miseries of sickness, poverty and death are the miseries of the mind and of the heart: Joseph Calasanz brought a remedy to them.*
>
> *Mgr Gaume, Les Trois Rome.*

Joseph Calasanz was born on 15 September 1556 at Petralta in Aragon, of a noble family that gave him a very Christian upbringing. From childhood he was noticed for his precocious mind. He joined to the learning of the doctors the humility of the Saints and the noble enthusiasm for good of which his countryman Ignatius of Loyola was giving such happy examples. His deep learning led Cardinal Marcantonio Colonna to make him his theologian; but the brilliance of these distinguished duties was for him a reason to seek out humble works with all the more ardour. He joined the archconfraternity of the Holy Apostles, which distributes alms to the needy. In the exercise of this charity he saw that ignorance was the fruitful mother of vice and poverty. His heart was broken at the sight of a crowd of little boys, left in the streets by the careless complicity of their parents, spending whole days wandering about on the pretext of begging their bread.

Catechism teaching, given in the parishes only on Sundays, could not bear fruit through the rest of the week; and in any case Rome at that time had no other teachers than the district schoolmasters, very poorly paid by the senate. Joseph begged them to take these poor unfortunate children into their schools, but they refused to take them on unless their salary was increased. This tender friend of children knocked at one door after another; everywhere he was turned away on more or less plausible pretexts.

Seeing all his efforts in vain, he resolved to carry out his wishes himself. In November 1597 he founded the first free public school, at Santa Dorotea in Trastevere; he chose this quarter as the one in Rome where the need for instruction was most keenly felt. The worthy parish priest, Antonio Brendoni, put two rooms at his disposal and himself joined in his generous enterprise. Shortly afterwards two other good priests joined the founders, and the school soon numbered several hundred pupils. As the instruction of the poor is above all a work of piety, Saint Joseph gave his institution the name of *Pious Schools*. He therefore set about teaching the children catechism, reading, writing and arithmetic; and to the teaching the holy founder added the

supply of books and of all the other small things that the poverty of these dear children would not have allowed them to obtain.

Soon the Pious Schools moved to the Palazzo Vestri, near the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle. There a society of priest-teachers came into being, and Saint Joseph received the title of prefect of the Pious Schools. He gave his congregation the touching name of the Poor of the Mother of God and of the Pious Schools. Poverty, Mary, childhood: these three words went straight to the soul, and drew blessings and abundant help to the devoted men who took them as their motto.

Let us add that, by a trait of charity well worthy of a Saint, Joseph admitted even Jewish children, and he was often heard thundering in his sermons against the custom of the Roman populace of pursuing these poor little unfortunates with insults because of their religion. Clement VIII approved the new congregation, which became a regular Order with the three ordinary vows and, in addition, consecration to teaching. The Saint applied himself above all to bringing up the children under a wise discipline; the religious (*Scalopii*) still follow the same method. They receive free of charge children of every condition from the age of seven, and give them three hours of lessons in the morning and as many in the evening. The pupils go to Mass every day and say their prayers at the beginning and end of classes; they meet in their rooms even on Sundays for various religious exercises, among others to recite the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. Every year, around Easter, all these children are given the exercises of a retreat. Let France be proud, as she rightly may, of her Christian schools; but as a respectful daughter let her yield precedence here to her mother. Rome has over her, as over all the other churches, the glorious distinction of having opened the first free schools for the children of the people. It was a holy priest who, struggling bravely against every obstacle, left the world this fine example, and religion can say that the teaching of the poor belongs to her both by right of birth and by right of conquest.

Saint Joseph Calasanz died at the age of ninety-two. He was canonised by Clement XIII, who put his office in the Roman Breviary and fixed his feast on 27 August. The Pious Schools spread rapidly, not only in Italy but in Spain, Austria, Moravia, Hungary and Poland. The work of the first religious was limited to teaching reading, writing, catechism, arithmetic, grammar and book-keeping. Later the Clerks Regular opened large colleges where not only the humanities but also philosophy and theology were taught.

The Saint's body rests in the church of San Pantaleo in Rome, displayed in a fine porphyry urn above the high altar. Saint Joseph is represented: (1) holding in his hand the arms of his Order, which are the letters A and M interlaced, surmounted by a crown and a cross. Below these initials of the *Ave Maria* are the Greek abbreviations ΜΡ ΘΥ (Μήτηρ Θεοῦ, "Mother of God"), to recall that the Order of Piarists was placed by its founder under the special protection of the most holy Virgin; (2) accompanied by a band of children of the people, a striking symbol of the Order's philanthropic aim, which is the education of the poor; (3) with an image of Mary, whom he honoured with a very special devotion, beside him; (4) with a mitre upside down at his feet, perhaps because he refused a bishopric.

To compose this biography we have used *Les Trois Rome* by Mgr Gaume; *Rome, ses églises, ses monuments et ses institutions* by the abbé Rolland; and local notes supplied by the abbé Corblet, historiographer of Amiens.

Saint Ebbo or Ebbes, Twenty-Ninth Bishop of Sens and Confessor (740)

Ebbo, nephew of Saint Goeric, his predecessor in the episcopal see of Sens, became after him the second count of Tonnerre (Yonne). Following in his footsteps, he renounced the dignities and pleasures the world held out to him in order to live under the austere Rule of Saint Benedict in the monastery of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, of which he became abbot in 704. After his uncle's death he was drawn from his solitude and charged with governing the Church of Sens (709). Ebbo used his revenues to relieve the poor, mortified

his body by penance and sanctified his soul by prayer; he enlightened his diocese by the light of his miracles, edified it by his example and instructed it by his preaching.

During his episcopate, in 731 according to the most common opinion, the Saracens, drawn into France by Eudes, duke of Aquitaine, advanced up to the walls of Sens and burned its suburbs. Consternation was great among the inhabitants, who were thinking of surrendering so as not to be buried under the ruins of the town, when Ebbo raised their downcast spirits by offering to lead them into battle himself. The camp of the infidels, attacked by surprise, was taken; the Saracens fled in disorder before the Christians, who pursued them as far as the neighbourhood of the little town of Seignelay and made a dreadful slaughter of them.

The following year Ebbo attended an assembly called at Tolbiac by Charles Martel. When this warlike prince had destroyed the Saracens, Saint Ebbo resolved to withdraw into solitude to give himself to contemplation. He chose the village of Arces (arrondissement of Joigny), in the midst of the forests. A cave served him as a cell, and there the long years of his old age were spent. He did not, however, give up the direction of his flock altogether. Every Sunday he went to his archiepiscopal city, celebrated the sacred Mysteries there, broke the bread of God's word to his children, blessed them and went back to his hermitage. He died on 27 August 740, the day on which he is honoured at Sens and in several parts of France. Saint Ebbo was buried at Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, in the chapel of Our Lady, according to his last wishes.

Taken from the *France Pontificale* by Fisquet.

Saint Vidian, Martyr at Martres, in the Diocese of Toulouse (8th Century)

Vidian was descended on his father's side from the house of Alençon. His mother was called Stacia. Vidian's father took up arms against the Saracens and was taken prisoner at Lucerna in Galicia. The king of those lands consulted the oracles, and they answered that this French captive had a child who would one day be the terror of the Saracens, and that the child must be put to death. The prisoner was at once offered his freedom on condition that he gave his son as a hostage. This proposal was accepted, and the child came to Lucerna to take his father's place.

A merchant woman of Lactora, in the land of the Vascones, who had landed at Lucerna, set the young prisoner free, and he went into trade with his deliverer. Driven by the desire for vengeance against the Saracens, he gathered an army, marched straight on Lucerna, killed the king and burned the town. After this glorious expedition he returned to France, to the court of Charlemagne, and was loaded with honours by that prince. Learning that the Saracens had made a new incursion into Gascony, he went with his army to the banks of the river Garonne near Angonia and utterly defeated them in a field called the Campestrés.

During this campaign Saint Vidian sometimes went to rest in a forest where the sick have often felt the power of his intercession. The height on which the forest stood was called the Naout de san Vidian. This young lord, mortally wounded by the Saracens, dragged himself to the edge of a spring to wash his wounds; but the infidels caught up with him and cut off his head. The Saint gave this spring a miraculous power. A great number of companions shared his martyrdom. Stacia, Saint Vidian's mother, on learning of his martyrdom, came to Angonia, which then took the name of Martres (from *martyribus*), and had a superb tomb raised in his honour. The town has kept a moving memory of the victory won by the Christians over the infidels: every year, on Trinity Sunday, it gives an exact and faithful representation of the triumph and the defeat, dividing its brilliant youth into two camps, with the costumes and arms of the period.

Remarkable miracles have taken place at the tomb of Saint Vidian. The church of Martres still possesses the greater part of his relics, which are displayed in a fine chapel dedicated to him; another part of his bones rests in the collegiate church of Saint-Ybars. The spring at whose edge he washed his wounds has become the goal of a devout pilgrimage. At Martres was also kept the cup in which, according to tradition, Saint Vidian received the holy Eucharist.

Taken from the *Histoire générale de l'Église de Toulouse* by the abbé Salvan.

[1] Their bodies were discovered in 1712 under an altar of the metropolitan church of Capua. In 1719 they were reverently enclosed in silver shrines, which were placed with great honour in the chapel of the Treasury. — Father Sollier, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[2] His body was first laid in the Oratory of Saint Peter at Bergamo; from there it was translated to the church of Saint Alexander. When that church was destroyed (1561), the holy body went to enrich the basilica of Saint Vincent. This basilica was later dedicated under the title of Saint Alexander, and the tomb of the high altar of this church, which had by then become the cathedral, inherited this precious treasure. — Father Sollier, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] After governing the Church of Pavia for twelve years and making it illustrious by his learning and virtue, he fell gently asleep in the Lord and was buried in the sanctuary of the metropolitan church, under the high altar. — Father Sollier, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[4] Nothing now remains of the convent of the Annonciades of Rodez but a memory; the buildings themselves have been pulled down. Only, Providence has not allowed this ground to be profaned for ever: there is still a house of God there, for a fine building intended for the students of the sanctuary has been raised on it.

[5] We gave his life on 20 August.

[6] We shall give her life on 15 October.

[7] Since the Revolution this abbey, after passing through several phases, has very recently returned to the Mother of the Saviour, its first patroness, by receiving into it the congregation of the Oblates of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

[8] The hospice of Saint-Andoche later became an abbey of Benedictine nuns.

[9] Since the Revolution the remains of the great abbey of Saint-Martin have become the property of the major seminary.

28 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Hippo, in Africa, the birthday of SAINT AUGUSTINE, bishop and most excellent doctor of the Church. Converted to the Catholic faith and baptised by Saint Ambrose, he became the most invincible defender of that same faith against the Manichaeans and the other heretics. After rendering a multitude of other important services to the Church, he went to heaven to receive the reward reserved for him. His relics were first carried from Hippo to Sardinia to save them from the hands of the barbarians; later Liutprand, king of the Lombards, translated them to Pavia, where they were given honourable burial. 430. — At Rome, the birthday of SAINT HERMES, a man of distinction who, as the Acts of Saint Alexander, pope, relate, after being shut up for some time in prison, accomplished his martyrdom by the edge of the sword, with several others, under the judge Aurelian. 132. — At Brioude, in Auvergne, the martyrdom of SAINT JULIAN, who was a companion of the tribune Saint Ferreolus and served Jesus Christ secretly under the military habit. He was seized during the persecution of Diocletian by soldiers, who made him suffer a terrible death by cutting his throat. 4th c. — At Constance, in Gaul, Saint Pelagius,[1] who received the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Numerian and the judge Evilasius. 3rd c. — At Salerno, the holy martyrs Fortunatus, Caius and Anthes, beheaded under the emperor Diocletian and the proconsul Leontius.[2] About 304. — At Constantinople, Saint Alexander, a venerable old man, through whose prayer the impious Arius, condemned at the tribunal of divine justice, burst asunder in the midst and poured out his bowels. 340. — At Saintes, SAINT VIVIAN, bishop and confessor. 460. — Also SAINT MOSES THE ETHIOPIAN, who from a notorious robber became a fervent anchorite, converted several robbers and took them with him into a monastery. About 400.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the dioceses of Clermont, Carcassonne and Le Puy, Saint Julian of Brioude, martyr, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — In the dioceses of Lyons and Autun, commemoration of the same Saint Julian. — In the diocese of Viviers, Saint Hermes, martyr at Rome, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — In the same diocese, Saint Vivian, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — At Cologne, translation of the relics of Saint Agnes, virgin and martyr in England. — In Poitou, Saint Clarus, martyr, of whom we spoke in

the supplement to volume VI. The Loudunais has a parish church under his name, in which he was no doubt buried and which was enriched with his relics. There were also two chapels built to his memory, one near Le Puy-Notre-Dame (Maine-et-Loire, arrondissement of Saumur, canton of Montreuil-Bellay), in the diocese of Angers, and the other near Vouhé (Deux-Sèvres, canton of Saint-Maixent), in the diocese of Poitiers.[3] Before 260. — At Saint-Jean-d'Aulps, in the diocese of Annecy, Saint Guerin, abbot of Notre-Dame d'Aulps (*Monasterium B. M. V. de Alpibus*) and bishop of Sion, whose life we gave on 6 January. 1150. — At Poulangy (Haute-Marne, arrondissement of Chaumont, canton of Nogent-le-Roi), in the diocese of Langres, Saint Adeline, niece of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. First a nun at the monastery of Tard or Le Tart (*Tartum*, Cistercian Order), four leagues from Dijon, she later moved to that of Poulangy, of which she became abbess. 12th c. — In the old Benedictine monastery of Luxeuil (*Luxovium*), in the diocese of Besançon, Saint Emmo, monk. The Acts of Saint Adelphus (11 September) tell us that when that Saint came to see his brethren of Luxeuil and die among them, it was Emmo who had the happiness of nursing the illustrious invalid. — In the diocese of Nevers, Saint Eolade, sixth bishop of that see and confessor, of whom we have already spoken in the martyrology of France for 26 February. He must not be confused with Saint Eulade, first bishop of Nevers, as has very often been done. 580 or 581. — In the diocese of Saintes, Saint Ambrose, bishop of that see and confessor, predecessor of Saint Vivian, whose life we give today. About 545.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Hippo, in Africa, the birthday of our Father Saint Augustine, bishop and excellent doctor of the Church. Converted and baptised by Saint Ambrose, he became the most invincible defender of that same faith against the Manichaeans and the other heretics. After rendering a multitude of other services to the Church, he went to heaven to receive the reward reserved for him. His relics, for fear of the barbarians, were first carried from Hippo to Sardinia and then translated to Pavia by Liutprand, king of the Lombards, and received honourable burial in that city. 430.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The same as among the Canons Regular.

Martyrology of the Order of Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — The same as among the Canons Regular.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Jerome. — The same as among the Canons Regular.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the Circle of Swabia (German empire), Blessed Adelinde, foundress and first abbess of the Benedictine monastery of Buchau or Buchaw (*Bocogia, Buchaugia, Buchovia*). By a privilege granted by the emperor Charles IV, the abbess of this convent had the rank of a princess. At her blessing she had a book and a sword carried before her, and she had a seat and a vote in the diets of the empire and of the Circle. 10th c. — In Poland, Our Lady of Kiev, which possesses a fine large alabaster statue of the Blessed Virgin. The statue, it is said, spoke to Saint Hyacinth in 1241 and commanded him to take it with him and not abandon it to the enemies who were besieging the city. He did so without any difficulty, the image having lost its weight. — Among the Greeks, SAINT HEZEKIAH, thirteenth king of Judah. 694 B.C. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Polienus, Serapion and Justilus, mentioned by Saint Jerome. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Elias, Stephen, deacon, and Pollio, mentioned by the same. — At Sarsina (*Sassina, Bobium*), a town of Italy in the province of Forlì, Saint Vicinius, bishop of that see and confessor. A native of Liguria, he soon left his country and withdrew to Sarsina to flee the persecution of Diocletian. There he gave himself to preaching, and the people, learning of his virtues, placed him on the episcopal see of that town. It is not known how long he held it, but all agree that he was one of its brightest lights. His body was laid in his cathedral church, and many miracles have made his tomb famous. 3rd c. — At Taino (*Tadinum*), an ancient episcopal town of Italy

(Umbria), Saint Facundinus, bishop of that see and confessor. He remains famous among the faithful of Italy for his virtues, the zeal he showed in defending the orthodox faith, and the care he took of his flock. His body, buried outside the walls of the town, long remained without honours; later, after a revelation from heaven, it was discovered and surrounded with the greatest veneration. A magnificent chapel rose over his tomb, where lamps were kept constantly burning. The whole world competed for the relics of so holy a bishop, and a basilica harder of access had to be built to prevent strangers from carrying off little by little these precious remains so dear to the people of Taino. Beginning of the 7th c. — Also at Taino, Saint Juventinus, archdeacon and confessor, disciple of Saint Facundinus. His body rests near that of his master. — At Killaloe, a small town of Ireland in the province of Munster and the county of Clare, Saint Flannan, first bishop of that see and confessor. He was the son of King Thierry (probably Thierry II, fourth king of Orléans, third king of Burgundy and seventh king of Metz or Austrasia (587–613)); he was consecrated about 639 by the sovereign pontiff John IV and endowed his Church with great possessions. He was buried in the cathedral of Killaloe. 7th c.

Saint Hezekiah, Thirteenth King of Judah

723–694 before Jesus Christ.

> *Fecit Ezechias quod placuit Deo, et fortiter ivit in via David patris sui quam mandavit illi Isaias propheta.*
>
> *Docile to the wise counsels of the prophet Isaiah, Hezekiah walked resolutely in the way that David his father had traced for him, and became the instrument of God's will.*
>
> *Ecclesiasticus, XLVIII, 25.*

Hezekiah was the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, and of Abi, daughter of Zechariah. He inherited the throne of his father, who had associated him with the government of his kingdom a few months before his death, and he began to reign at the age of twenty-five. His accession changed the face of public affairs, which could not have been in greater disorder, above all in matters of religion. From the beginning of his reign Hezekiah applied himself to restoring the worship and service of the God of his fathers in all its purity. He revived the laws and justice, worked to strengthen peace among his subjects, and strove to do everything he believed would be pleasing to the Lord, taking as his model King David, the holiest of the kings his predecessors. Faithfully attached to the Most High, he did not turn aside from His ways; he religiously kept all the commandments He had given to Moses, took care never to lose His fear, and put all his hope in Him. Scripture bears him this witness, that among the kings of Judah none was seen after him, as none had been found before him, who could be compared with him. In the very first month after his accession, Hezekiah had the doors of the Temple of Solomon reopened, which had been shut by order of his father Ahaz, and had them covered again with plates of gold, as they had been before. He summoned the priests and Levites to a solemn assembly in the great square east of the Court. "Sons of Levi," he said to them, "hear my word. Perform on yourselves all the acts of legal purification; then you shall proceed to that of the Temple of Jehovah, the God of your fathers, and remove the traces of the uncleanness that has defiled the holy place. Our fathers have sinned; they dared to give themselves up to evil and to forsake Jehovah. They turned away their faces from His tabernacle; the doors of the porch were shut and the lamps put out; incense ceased to burn on the altar of perfumes, and holocausts were no longer offered on the altar of the God of Jacob. That is why the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Judah and Jerusalem; that is why He has sown trouble, ruin and death in our path. You are witnesses of it. The sword has mown down our forefathers, and we have seen our sons, our daughters and our wives dragged into captivity in punishment for so many crimes. Now therefore I have resolved to renew the covenant of Israel with Jehovah its God, and so to turn away the wrath of the Lord. My beloved sons, help me with your zeal and your piety. It is you whom Jehovah has chosen to serve Him in His sanctuary, to give Him solemn worship and to burn incense on the altar of perfumes!"[1]

So spoke Hezekiah, and the Levites answered the king's confidence with devout eagerness. "Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah, of the descendants of Kohath; Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehalelel, of the descendants of Merari; Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah, of the descendants of Gershon; Shimri and Jeiel, descendants of Elizaphan; Zechariah and Mattaniah, descendants of Asaph; Jehiel and Shimei, descendants of Heman; Shemaiah and Uzziel, descendants of Jeduthun, took the lead in the movement of religious restoration that was taking shape. They gathered their brethren of the priestly and levitical family and performed on themselves the ceremonies of legal purification. Then, entering the Temple, they set about restoring it. All traces of idolatrous worship and all objects tainted by any ritual uncleanness were carefully removed from the inside of the sacred building; they were brought out to the outer porch, where other Levites took charge of them and went and threw them into the brook Kidron. The work of restoration was begun on the first day of the month of Nisan (March); by the eighth day the inside of the Temple was purified, and eight more days were needed to restore the courts to their former splendour and purity. When all was finished, the priests went to tell Hezekiah: 'We have sanctified the whole house of the Lord, the Altar of holocaust and all the instruments of sacrifice, the Table of the loaves of proposition and all the sacred vessels for its use, and finally all the furnishings of the Temple that had been profaned in the reign of Ahaz, after that king's transgression. All is set out, according to the prescribed order, before the altar of Jehovah.'"[2]

"The next day, at dawn, Hezekiah, surrounded by all the princes of Jerusalem, went in the array of royal majesty to the Temple of the Lord. By his order seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs and seven he-goats were brought, offered as victims of propitiation for sin, for the kingdom, for the sanctuary and for the people. Then, turning to the priests, the sons of Aaron, Hezekiah told them to proceed with the sacrifice of propitiation. The priests therefore slew in turn the bulls, the rams and the lambs, and poured their blood on the altar. The he-goats, kept for the expiatory sacrifice for sin, were then set in the midst of the assembly. The king and all the people laid their hands on the victims, which were slain with this imposing rite, and their blood was poured out before the altar as the expiation of the sins of Israel; for the king had asked that the holocaust and the sin-offering be offered in the name of the whole people of Israel, without regard to the division of the two kingdoms. Meanwhile the choirs of Levites, with cymbals, psaltery and kinnor, had been reorganised according to the ordinances of King David, of Gad the Seer and of Nathan the Prophet. They stood in front of the Temple with the various instruments of music, as in the time of David; the priests, according to the law of Moses, held the sacred trumpets in their hands. When the fire was set to the pyre of the holocaust on the altar of the Lord, the trumpets sounded, and all the choirs of musicians began the singing of the sacred hymns composed by David and by Asaph the Seer. Meanwhile the prostrate crowd adored the majesty of Jehovah. When the ceremony of the holocaust was finished, Hezekiah said to the assembled people: 'You have all wished to fill your hands with offerings for the Lord; come near now, then; present your victims to Him, and let the Temple of Jehovah receive your sacrifices of thanksgiving once more.' The multitude then offered with devout eagerness its victims, its sacrifices of praise and its holocausts. Seventy bulls, a hundred rams and two hundred lambs were consumed on the altar of holocausts; six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep were sacrificed to the Lord on that solemn day. So the worship of Jehovah was restored. Hezekiah and the whole people rejoiced, and the demonstration was all the more striking because it had not been prepared in advance but had arisen spontaneously."[3] This demonstration, so deeply marked by faith in the Mosaic institutions, had in fact been wholly local. Only the inhabitants of Jerusalem, answering the zeal of their devout king, had taken part in it. But it was not to remain confined to so narrow a sphere. Hezekiah and the royal counsellors, in a general assembly of the people, resolved to celebrate the Passover in the second month (Iyyar, April). The feast had not been kept on its exact date because the priests had not yet been able to perform the purifications prescribed by the law, and besides, the people had not had time to gather at Jerusalem. It was therefore agreed to send messengers throughout the whole of Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba, to invite the multitude of the children of Israel to come and celebrate the Passover of Jehovah

their God at Jerusalem. Special letters of summons were addressed by Hezekiah to the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the nearest to the kingdom of Judah. The royal envoys carried out their mission. They went through the whole territory, announcing Hezekiah's command to the people of towns and countryside. "Children of Israel," they said, "return to Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the Lord for His part will consent to visit in His mercy the remnant that has escaped the iron hand of the king of Assyria. Do not follow the example of your fathers and your brethren. They forsook the worship of the Eternal; that is why the Lord let them perish before your eyes. Do not imitate our stiff-necked ancestors; give your hands to the covenant with Jehovah; hasten to the temple He has consecrated for ever by His holy majesty; serve the Lord, the God of your fathers, and He will turn the shafts of His vengeance away from you. If you return to Him, your brethren and your sons, the captives of the Assyrian, will find favour before their master and will be given back to your love. Our God is the God of clemency and mercy; He will let Himself be moved by your repentance." So spoke Hezekiah's messengers, and they hurried from town to town through the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh and Zebulun; but along their way they mostly met with nothing but the insults and mockery of the people. Yet in the tribe of Asher, and even in those of Manasseh and Zebulun, there were some faithful Israelites who welcomed their word with joy and took the road to Jerusalem."[4]

The mission of restoration that thus failed before the idolatrous obstinacy of the kingdom of Israel was, on the contrary, received with enthusiasm in that of Judah. "The blessing of the Lord showed itself on this occasion and united all hearts in one unanimous sentiment of faith and piety. An immense crowd came to Jerusalem from every part of the kingdom at the time fixed for the feast of Unleavened Bread. The idolatrous altars whose presence still defiled the streets and squares of the holy city were destroyed, and everything that had been profaned by the incense of a sacrilegious worship was thrown by the people into the brook Kidron. On the fourteenth day of the second month the solemnity began. The priests and Levites, sanctified according to the prescriptions of the law, offered the holocausts in the Temple of the Lord. Each of them performed the functions of his ministry in the order laid down by Moses, the man of God. The priests received from the hands of the Levites the paschal victims that were to be slain. This had to be done because there were in the crowd a great number of families who had not had time to purify themselves of legal uncleanness; the priestly family therefore undertook to slay the paschal lamb for them. A great number of Israelites of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, in their thoughtless eagerness, took no account of the ordinances of Moses and thought themselves entitled to share in the Passover meal without first performing the ritual purifications. Hezekiah interceded for them before the altar of Jehovah. 'The Lord is merciful,' he said; 'He will show mercy to those who seek in sincerity of heart to return to the God of their fathers, and will pardon them for having neglected the prescribed purifications.' And indeed this God of goodness heard the king's prayer and deigned to pardon the people. For seven days the feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated with gladness by the multitude gathered at Jerusalem. The praises of the Lord resounded ceaselessly in the holy city, and the choirs of Levites sang the sacred songs as in the time of David. Hezekiah, proud of the success of the religious restoration to which he had so powerfully contributed, spoke to the most zealous Levites and asked them to add one more week to the days prescribed by the law. The whole people welcomed this proposal with enthusiasm. The king put a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep at the disposal of the multitude; the princes of Judah for their part gave a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep. The sacrifices and the sacred feasts that followed them therefore began again and went on for seven days, amid the transports of joy of the priests, the Levites and the immense crowd made up of the proselytes of the kingdom of Israel and the faithful inhabitants of Judah. Since the days of Solomon, son of David, Jerusalem had not witnessed such a solemnity. The assembly of the people broke up after the priests had called down upon it the blessing of heaven. God heard the voice of His ministers, and their prayer reached the foot of His throne."

After the great paschal solemnity the people left Jerusalem and went back to their homes. On reaching the various towns, not only of the kingdom of Judah but of Ephraim and Manasseh, the pilgrims destroyed the

high places, set fire to the sacred groves of the idolatrous cults and overthrew the altars of the false gods, and so, by a sincere return to Jehovah, took possession of their homeland again. Hezekiah had given the order and the example. The brazen Serpent set up by Moses in the desert had lately become an object of idolatrous worship for the sons of Israel; they burned incense before this image. The king had it broken in pieces, saying: “It is only base metal!”

Everything had to be reorganised in the worship of Jehovah, since the disastrous apostasy of Ahaz had brought idolatry into the Temple of Jerusalem. “Hezekiah therefore had to re-establish the priestly and levitical families in the functions of their ministry and the degrees of their hierarchy, so as to set in order the holocausts, the slaying of the peace-offerings and the singing of the sacred hymns. After the example of David and Solomon, the king wished to provide the fat of his own flocks for the daily holocaust of morning and evening, and for that of the Sabbath, the New Moon and the solemn feasts fixed by the law of Moses. He brought the legal prescriptions back into force, and ordered the inhabitants of Jerusalem to provide the priests and Levites with the tithes and first-fruits due to them, so that they might devote themselves exclusively to the study of the law of the Lord. As soon as the royal decree came to the knowledge of the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem hastened to offer the first-fruits of wheat, wine and oil, and the tithe of all the produce of the land. In the other towns of Judah this devout zeal was imitated, and the tithe of oxen, sheep and the other produce of the soil was sent to the Temple. These religious convoys multiplied from every part of the kingdom, so that the priests found themselves obliged to gather the grain of every kind and the olives thus sanctified into enormous heaps. From the third month (Sivan) to the seventh (Tishri) the offerings never ceased. At the sight of these mountains of sheaves and olives, the witness of the nation’s faith, Hezekiah and the princes of Judah thanked the Lord and blessed the people of Israel. ‘Why,’ Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites, ‘do you leave these heaps out in the open?’ The high priest Azariah, a descendant of Zadok, answered the king: ‘Since people began again to bring the first-fruits to the Temple of the Lord, we have found in them a resource more than sufficient for all our needs. Jehovah has plainly blessed His people. What you see is the remainder of the offerings that we have not been able to use.’ Hezekiah at once gave orders for many storehouses to be prepared to hold these riches. In this way the gifts of piety and faith were set aside for the needs of the future. The Levite Conaniah and his younger brother Shimei were put in charge of them. They had under their orders Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath and Benaiah, who were directly answerable to them. The two general stewards referred all important matters to the king himself and to the high priest Azariah. Besides the obligatory tribute of first-fruits and tithe, the sons of Israel freely brought to the Temple a great number of gifts and offerings in fulfilment of personal vows. The Levite Kore son of Imnah, keeper of the East Gate, was charged with collecting these special offerings. He had under his orders Eden, Benjamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah, who were distributed among the priestly towns and saw to it that the distributions made to the Levites corresponded to the needs of the families and to the hierarchical rank of each. Such was the order Hezekiah restored in the worship of Jehovah, according to the precepts and rites of the Mosaic law. He applied it to the whole kingdom of Judah, and his government was that of a devout and wise prince who sought in sincerity of heart to walk in the ways of virtue and justice.”[5]

God was with him and gave him wisdom to direct all his undertakings. He made the

Philistines feel the weight of his victorious arms, and drove them back as far as their seaport of Gaza. Trusting in the goodness of the Lord, of which he had had so many proofs, he resolved to throw off the yoke of the king of Assyria. Sennacherib, son of Sargon, had succeeded his father on the throne of Nineveh. Yet in order to fight this formidable enemy with some advantage, Hezekiah relied too much on the props of a wholly human policy. By his orders the chiefs of Judah went to Tanis in Lower Egypt to renew with Pharaoh an alliance that had turned out so badly for the last king of Israel. The voice of Isaiah was soon raised against this step, which the Lord had not authorised. “Here is the word of Jehovah,” he said. “Woe to the children

who desert My law, who have taken counsel without Me, who have woven the web without being inspired by My Spirit and have added a new fault to all those of the past; who have taken the road to Egypt without consulting My oracle, putting their trust in the help of Pharaoh and in the phantom of Egyptian power. The Lord will stretch out His hand, and the ally will fall; he whose help is implored will be overthrown, and all will perish in his ruin." Meanwhile

Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, entered Judaea in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign; he came and laid siege to the chief cities of the kingdom of Judah and took them. Then Hezekiah sent messengers to Lachish to say to the Assyrian monarch: "I have sinned against you in rejecting your alliance; but name yourself the tribute you desire, and I will submit to it. At that price, consent to withdraw your army from my territory." Sennacherib fixed the tribute at thirty talents of gold and three hundred of silver. To raise this sum Hezekiah took all the silver deposited in the treasuries of the Temple and in those of the palace. He was even forced to strip off the plates of gold with which he had had the door of the sanctuary covered, and sent them to the king of Assyria. Sennacherib was satisfied for the moment with this submission. Hezekiah used this interval to fortify Jerusalem. "Measures of defence were agreed upon in the royal council, made up of the princes of Judah and the most skilful warriors. It was resolved unanimously to stop up the outer springs that watered the country. A great multitude was gathered to divert in this way the water of all the springs, and that of the brook Kidron, which with its tributaries, the Gihon and the fountain of Siloam, washes the walls of the city. Hezekiah had work pressed forward on repairing the outer wall, which was damaged at several points; he had new towers added to it and raised a second rampart in front of the first. The valley of Millo, joined to the hill of David by the bridge of Solomon, was furnished with defensive works. The king's arsenals were filled with shields and arms of every kind, and experienced chiefs were put at the head of the army corps."

Meanwhile Hezekiah's bodily strength could not withstand so many cares and terrible anxieties. An ulcer broke out with the most alarming symptoms; the illness made rapid progress, and consternation was painted on every face. The prophet Isaiah came to the king. "Set your house in order," he said to him, "for the hour is near and you are going to cease to live." At these words Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord. "Jehovah, my God!" he said, "deign to remember that I have walked before You in sincerity and uprightness of heart, and have taken Your holy will as the rule of all my actions." Having spoken thus, Hezekiah let a flood of tears flow from his eyes. Isaiah meanwhile had taken leave of the king; he was in the porch of the palace when the Lord made His voice heard to him. "Go back to Hezekiah, the leader of My people, and say to him: Here is the word of Jehovah, the God of David your ancestor: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears, and I will heal you. In three days you shall go up to give Me thanks in My Temple, and I will add fifteen years more to the number of your days. I will deliver your kingdom and your capital from the yoke of the Assyrians; My protection will cover this city, for the honour of My name and in memory of David My servant." Isaiah went back to the royal invalid and gave him the divine message, and turning to Hezekiah's servants, he said to them: "Bring me a basket of figs." They hastened to carry out this order. The Prophet took some of the fruit and had it applied to Hezekiah's open sore, renewing to him the promise that the Lord would heal him. "But what sign will you give me," the king asked, "to prove that my healing will be so swift, and that in three days I shall be able to go and thank God in His Temple?" "Here," answered Isaiah, "is the wonder the Lord is going to work before your eyes to attest the truth of His word. Do you wish the shadow to go down or to go up ten degrees on this dial?" "It would be easy to make the shadow go up ten degrees," answered Hezekiah. "That is not, then, what I wish to choose. Make the shadow go back suddenly ten degrees." The Prophet called on the name of Jehovah, and at once the shadow went back ten degrees on the dial built long before in the palace by Ahaz.

Hezekiah recovered his health within the time fixed by the Prophet. On going up to the Temple on the third day to thank the Lord, the devout king uttered this canticle of thanksgiving: "I had said: The midst of my days will mark their end; I am going down to the gates of the tomb; and I sought in vain to join again the

thread of my years. Alas! I said, I shall no longer see Jehovah my God in the land of the living; my dimmed eyes will no longer rest on the inhabitants of this earth or behold mortal men. But my bitterness has been changed into gladness; You have delivered my soul from the terrors of death. The tomb will not glorify You, death will not sing Your praises. It is the living, the living as I am today, who will sing Your mercy; the father will tell his sons the wonders of Your clemency. Lord, preserve for me the life You have given back to me, and every day Your Temple will resound with our hymns of gratitude."

Meanwhile the king of Assyria was returning victorious from his expedition into Egypt. Back at Lachish, and having no doubt learned of the preparations for defence made at Jerusalem, he sent to Hezekiah the Tartan of his army, together with the Rabsaris (chief of the eunuchs) and the Rabshakeh (chief cupbearer), with a powerful escort. The Assyrian envoys presented themselves in the name of Sennacherib their master before the east wall, near the conduit of the upper pool, on the road to the Fuller's Field. They asked to speak to the king and made him a speech full of insolence. When Hezekiah had heard it, he tore his royal mantle, put on mourning sackcloth and came and prostrated himself in the Temple of the Lord. At the same time he sent Eliakim and Shebna, with the elders of the sanctuary, clothed like him in the hair shirt of penance, to Isaiah son of Amoz. When they reached the Prophet they said to him: "This is the day of anguish, of terror and of blasphemy. Has Jehovah your God heard the insults against His holy majesty that came from the lips of the Rabshakeh sent by the king of the Assyrians? Send up your prayer to Him, that He may deign to save the remnant of His people." Isaiah answered: "Go and say to your master: Here is the message of Jehovah: Cease to fear the insolence of the servants of the king of Assyria, and do not be alarmed at the blasphemies they have uttered against Me. I will send down upon him the spirit of terror; he shall hear news of death, he shall take the road back to his own lands, and when he has returned to his country, I will make him fall, bathed in his blood, under a murderous sword." Events bore out the Prophet's prediction. The fact of the destruction of the Assyrian army in a single night is expressly affirmed by the Bible.

Delivered by a miracle from the yoke of the Assyrians, Hezekiah lived in peace during the last years of his reign. Offerings multiplied at the Temple of Jerusalem; people came from all sides to sacrifice victims to the almighty God and to bring the king of Judah the tributes of loyalty. The name of Hezekiah became famous among all the nations neighbouring Judaea. The prince's riches grew with his reputation. He heaped up in his treasuries masses of gold, silver, precious stones, spices, armour and artistically chased vessels. His storehouses overflowed with corn, wine and oil; he possessed immense herds and sheep without number. To keep pace with the ever-growing increase of his prosperity he was obliged to build towns for his shepherds. Thus the blessing of the Lord rewarded his zeal and his piety. At this time Merodach-Baladan, king of the Babylonians, sent him an embassy to congratulate him on his miraculous healing and on the recent wonders that had just been worked in his favour. The foreign prince's envoys bore rich presents and a letter from their sovereign. Hezekiah was very glad to receive them. He showed them the House of Spices, the gold, the silver, the spices and the precious vessels that filled his treasuries, and displayed all his riches before them with a marked feeling of ostentation. Then the prophet Isaiah came to the king. "What did these strangers say to you?" he asked him, "and what is their country?" "They come from the distant regions of Babylonia," answered Hezekiah. "What have they seen in your palace?" the Prophet went on. "They have seen all the magnificence of my dwelling," answered the king, "and there is nothing in my treasuries that I have not shown them." "Now then," Isaiah went on, "here is the sentence of Jehovah the Lord. Hear what He bids me tell you. The days are coming; soon all the riches of this palace, gathered by your ancestors and by yourself, will be carried off to Babylon. Not a particle of them will be left here. So says the Lord. Your descendants, born of your race, will be dragged into captivity; they will be seen as slaves in the palaces of the king of Babylon." "The Lord is just to punish my pride in this way," answered Hezekiah. "May His mercy at least keep peace in Jerusalem during the last days of my life!" Thus it was that a thought of vanity puffed up the heart of this devout king, and that the Lord permitted this temptation to try his fidelity.

The last years of Hezekiah's life were lit up by the splendour of the oracles of Isaiah. The feeling of vain ostentation that had led this prince to display the treasures of his magnificence before the eyes of the envoys of Merodach-Baladan no doubt found a bitter counterweight in the terrible prophecy of the Babylonian captivity announced by the man of God. Hezekiah ended his glorious reign in peace. He slept with his fathers and was given a place of honour in the tomb of David. The whole kingdom of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem celebrated his funeral. Hezekiah is represented clothed, like David, in royal robes and holding in his hand a scroll on which are written the words: "You alone are the supreme Master of all kingdoms." These words allude to the king's prayer when he was struck by the illness we have spoken of.

Baillet: *Vies des Saints de l'Ancien Testament*; Darras: *Histoire générale de l'Église*.

Saint Hermes, Martyr at Rome

132. — Pope: Saint Telesphorus. — Roman Emperor: Hadrian.

> *God is just and merciful; and as He is severe towards those who persist in evil, so He is indulgent towards those who are converted. Saint Gregory the Great.*

Hermes was a rich patrician of Rome, converted by Pope Alexander. He set free his slaves, who numbered more than twelve hundred, not counting women and children. This conversion, which had been accompanied by those of his wife and his sister, made a great stir in Rome. As soon as Count Aurelian arrived there on behalf of the emperor, whom death carried off that same year, the priests of the idols ran to the palace to demand justice from him against Alexander and Hermes, because they had drawn several thousand persons away from the worship of the gods.

Aurelian at once had them arrested and taken as prisoners to the house of the tribune Quirinus. Quirinus asked Hermes how it was that he had deserted the national worship. "I was in error, as you are," he replied, "and I used to mock the religion of the Christians; but Alexander, whom you hold in chains, undeceived me and opened my eyes to know the truth." "Very well," returned Quirinus, "if this Alexander, whom you take for a saint and I believe to be a magician, can free himself from his chains and come to you tonight, or break yours so that you may go to him, I will believe what you say." Hermes agreed to this, and the tribune at once went to Alexander's dungeon to load him with fresh chains and have his guard doubled. But no sooner had the holy Pope said his prayer than an angel, in the form of a child of five holding a torch in his hand, appeared to him and led him to Hermes' room. Quirinus came in a few moments later and was much surprised to find them free, praying together with their arms stretched out to heaven. "You see," Hermes said to him, "that nothing is impossible to Jesus Christ; but so that you may be still more convinced of His power, you will find us both this morning loaded with our chains as before."

As the tribune did not yield to these wonders, Hermes went on: "I had an only son who fell ill. His mother and I took him to the Capitol to sacrifice to the gods and make great presents to the priests, to obtain his cure. Yet he died. His nurse told me that if I had taken him to the church of Saint Peter and believed in Jesus Christ, I would have saved his life. 'Why then,' I said to her, 'do you not go there yourself to ask for the sight you have lost?' (for she was blind). 'I would have been healed five years ago,' she said, 'if I had gone there and believed in the true God.' 'Go there, then,' I replied, 'and if you recover the use of your eyes, I will believe that Alexander can raise my son to life.' She went there about the third hour, and about the sixth hour she came back to me perfectly healed. Then, taking my son in her arms, she carried him to the holy Pope, who gave him back his life. I went at once and threw myself at his feet to thank him and beg him to make me a Christian; from that day I believed in Jesus Christ. I have given part of my goods to the Church, another part with their freedom to my slaves, and the rest to the poor. Now I fear neither confiscation nor any threat of a mortal man."

Quirinus, convinced by this account, threw himself at the feet of the holy Martyrs and said to them: “Today you will win my soul for Jesus Christ. I have a daughter named Balbina whom I wish to marry. Nothing is lacking to the beauty of her face, but she is afflicted with scrofula. Heal her, and I will become a Christian.” Alexander told him to bring her to him, and restored her to perfect health. This brought about the conversion of Quirinus, of his daughter and of the other prisoners, who were all baptised by the holy Pope. All of them also received the crown of martyrdom through the cruelty of Aurelian, with Saint Hermes, who was beheaded in the year of Our Lord 132, under the empire of Hadrian, and not of Aurelian, as Ado writes, confusing the emperor of that name with the count we have just spoken of. The virgin Theodora, sister of our holy Martyr, took his body and buried it on the Via Salaria, quite near Rome. From there, in the year 831, it was translated to the town of Münster at the request of the emperor Lothair. Later, under Louis, son of the same Lothair, it was taken to Renaix in the county of Flanders, between Tournai and Oudenaarde, where it is greatly honoured, as the learned Miraeus relates in his *Recueil des saints de Flandre et de Bourgogne*. Pope Pelagius II had a cemetery made under his name.

Acta Sanctorum.

Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in Africa and Doctor of the Church

430. — Pope: Saint Celestine I. — Roman Emperor: Valentinian III.

> *Verbo Dei dum obedit, Credit errans, et accedit Ad baptismi gratiam. Firmans fidem, formans mores, Legis sacrae perversores Verbi necat gladio.*
>
> *Touched by the word of God, he brings his straying mind back into the paths of faith and offers himself of his own accord to the grace of baptism. He strengthens faith, he forms morals, and armed with the sword of the word he destroys the corrupters of the law of God.*
>
> *Prose of Saint Augustine.*

Saint Augustine was born at Tagaste, a town of Africa, under the emperor Constantius, in the year of Our Lord 354, on 13 November. His father was called Patricius and his mother Monica. Patricius was one of the leading men of the town, where he held the office of curial. Some time before his death he received the Christian faith and was baptised. Monica joined to the true religion an eminent piety. During her marriage she was an example of purity, modesty, gentleness, wisdom and well-ordered devotion for women whose husbands are of a difficult temper, and in her widowhood she was a model of the true widows of whom Saint Paul speaks. She brought Augustine up in the fear of God from the first years of his childhood. He paints that childhood in his *Confessions*, and notes even the slightest movements of that age. “If the limbs of children,” he says, “are innocent at that time, their minds are not, as appears from the jealousy, envy, spite, anger and disobedience of which they are already capable.” When he was old enough to begin to learn something, he was sent to school in his own town of Tagaste; but this exercise of counting letters and putting syllables together was so tedious to him and seemed so unworthy of his mind that he applied himself to it only under compulsion. As he had a quick mind and an excellent memory, he did not need much time to grasp what his masters taught him; but he had so strong a passion for ball games and the other pleasures of children that it turned him away from his studies, and although he was often punished for it, he hardly mended his ways. As great as his aversion was for Greek letters, so great was his passion for the fictions of the poets and for the sight of the shows put on in the theatres. He read with extreme pleasure Virgil’s descriptions of the Trojan horse, of Jupiter’s descent in a shower of gold, of Aeneas’ travels to Carthage, of Dido’s love for him and of the fatal death she brought on herself on his account; these fabulous tales moved him to tears. In his *Confessions* he accuses himself of these emotions as of a great crime. “What can one imagine, O my God,” he says, “more wretched than a man who is not touched by any feeling of his own miseries, as I was then? I wept bitterly for the death of Dido, who, for love of Aeneas, had plunged the dagger into her breast, and I did not weep for the death I gave a hundred times a day to my poor soul.”

Falling ill at that time, he asked for baptism; but as soon as the danger had passed, his father, then a pagan, had the ceremony put off to another time.

At the age of thirteen, about the year 367, Augustine was sent from Tagaste to Madaura, which was not far away and where the schools were better. There he learned rhetoric, music and astrology. Soon his masters at Madaura were no longer equal to his intelligence and learning. His father resolved to take him to Carthage, in spite of the considerable expense that the journey and the stay in that city would cost him. While he was gathering the necessary sum for this plan, his son spent a year at Tagaste in idleness, listening more to the corrupt talk of his companions than to the wise remonstrances of his mother. He went to Carthage towards the end of the year 370, at the age of seventeen.

His appearance in the schools caused a sensation. He already knew several languages; he had a singular aptitude for philosophy and metaphysics, a great ardour for study, a taste for poetry, for art and for beauty of every kind, and above all a natural eloquence that sprang without effort from a lofty and loving soul. He astonished his fellow students and even his masters, and everyone foresaw that in a few years he would be the glory of the bar of Carthage.

What added a singular charm to his whole person was that in the midst of his successes he was reserved and shy. He did not like to put himself forward. His face, which grew more beautiful every day, bore that candour which so well becomes superior natures and is at once the sign and the companion of true talent. So men saw him; but he confesses to us in his humility that inwardly he was quite different: that he dreamed of glory, that he looked at the bar with eyes full of ambition, and that under this modest appearance, which he never put off and which was natural to him, he hid a soul more and more intoxicated with itself. “I held,” he says, “the first place in the schools of rhetoric, which filled me with proud joy and puffed me up with wind. Yet You know, O my God,” he adds, “that I was more restrained than the others and far removed from the follies of my companions, who called themselves *wreckers*. I even felt a kind of shameless shame at not being like them; and though I lived with them and took pleasure in their company, I abhorred their deeds, those cruel and insulting jokes with which they mocked the embarrassment of newcomers and strangers and made their confusion the food of their malicious joys. Such were the men and such the company with whom I was then studying eloquence, for that wretched and damnable end of ambition which finds its spur in vanity.”

But great as this vanity and ambition then were, they were only the least of Augustine’s wounds. His heart was far sicker than his mind. His soul, empty of God and lacking nourishment, longed for something that could satisfy it; but this unknown something that he lacked, Augustine did not know where to find. An indefinable restlessness tormented him. Consumed by vague desires without object and without limit, he had reached that perilous moment which usually precedes great falls and too often announces them. “I did not yet love,” he says, “but I longed to love, and, devoured by this longing, I sought an object for my passion. I wandered through the city to find it, and the roads where I hoped for no snares were hateful to me.” He adds these words of admirable depth: “My heart was fainting, empty of You, O my God; and yet it was not with that hunger that I was hungry. The inner and incorruptible food my soul lacked aroused no appetite in me. I was weary of it, not from fullness but from want. And my soul, sick, covered with sores, fainting from starvation, threw itself wretchedly out of itself and begged from the creature something that could soothe its wounds. I wanted to love and to be loved, with an affection that held nothing back.” Augustine was poor, unknown, lost in a great city; but he was young, pleasing, elegant and distinguished. How then, to his misfortune, should he not one day or another fall into the nets in which he so much wished to be caught?

The shows, into which Augustine threw himself from his arrival at Carthage with the passion he had always had for that pleasure, completed his push towards the abyss. With his lively imagination, with that exquisite sensibility that made him weep at the reading of a fine line of verse or the story of a sacrifice inspired by love, the theatre had an irresistible charm for him. “The shows enthralled me,” he says, “full as they were of images of my misery and of fuel for my flame.” On coming out, he was so full of all these beauties, so

moved by all these sacrifices, that he sought only an occasion to awaken them in someone's heart, so as to receive the same pleasures and offer the same devotion he had seen so well portrayed. The sad fall was not long in coming. "I fell," he says, "into those nets in which I so much wished to be caught. O my God, with what bitterness Your goodness seasoned that honey! I loved; I was loved; and, rushing into a net of painful joys, I knew the burning jealousies, the suspicions, the fears, the angers and the storms of love." Who was this unhappy young woman who, forgetting God for Augustine as Augustine forgot God for her, held such a heart captive for fifteen years; who followed him by land and sea, to Tagaste, to Carthage, to Rome, to Milan; who left him, all in tears, only at the moment when he was being converted, and who she too, in order to be converted, threw herself into a monastery and gave herself at last wholly to God? We do not know. Augustine, out of a reserve full of delicacy, has hidden her name. She passes like a veiled figure through this story. It is probable that for as long as possible Augustine hid this name with still more care from his devout mother, together with the bond with which he had just chained his life and which no prayers or tears of Saint Monica could have brought him to break. Soon, however, he had to confess the painful secret to her; for in 372 Augustine had a son, that brilliant Adeodatus, whom later, in the days of his repentance, he no longer dared to call anything but the son of his sin. But then, in the days of his passion, in the first thrill of his sad happiness, he called him God-given, *Adeodatus*. "Such was my life then, O my God," cries Saint Augustine, "if that can be called a life!"

Augustine was then fulfilling, or rather surpassing, all the hopes his brilliant youth had raised. The brilliance that had accompanied his literary studies was nothing beside the success that crowned his philosophical studies. People began to see that his chief gift would be neither his eloquence, admirable though it was, nor his sensibility, exquisite as that was, nor even his wit, so agreeable, so brilliant and so fine. Above all these qualities, which had appeared first, he was to have a sovereign gift that would eclipse everything; and precisely in 372 this gift had just revealed itself with marvellous brilliance. This is how.

While he was still engaged in literary studies, Augustine had several times heard his master of rhetoric speak of Aristotle's *Categories* as a book of such depth that it could only be understood with the help of the ablest masters and by means of figures traced in the sand to make the metaphysical obscurities of things visible to the eye. Impatient to know what he thought so extraordinary, and not having the patience to wait for the time when it would be explained to him, he opened the book and began to study it alone. To his great astonishment he found no difficulty in it. He moved at his ease among these arduous problems, and when later he followed the public lectures on it, he could be taught nothing that he had not perfectly understood on his own. In the same way, without help from anyone, he read all the books of dialectic, geometry, music and arithmetic. He found difficulties nowhere; or rather he began to notice difficulties only when he tried to explain them to others, for then he was astonished at the trouble the most intelligent people had in understanding him. Only a very small number of minds, even among the most excellent, could follow him, and then only from afar. Although he was only nineteen, it was evident that one day he would have the eagle's clearness of gaze, for which no light is too dazzling, and that broad and powerful stroke of the wing for which no summit is too high.

At the same time as Augustine's genius appeared, his soul, his character and his heart finished revealing themselves. The rebellions and caprices of his childhood had fallen away. They had given place to the most charming gentleness. Augustine was more and more reserved and modest; he feared noise and display; he avoided the wild gatherings of his fellow students; he loved dignity; he had a keen sense of honour; he attached himself for ever to those who did him good. And just as he had a master quality of mind, so he had a sovereign gift of heart: an inexhaustible spring of the deepest tenderness.

People also began to see what his features, his countenance and in short his outward appearance would be, and what form the precious vessel would have in which this great mind would dwell. He was not tall, and was not to exceed middle height. His constitution was frail, delicate and nervous, as usually happens in

chosen souls, according to the remark of Saint Gregory Nazianzen. He had fine, transparent skin and a penetrating look, but gentle, calm, bathed in sensibility and tenderness. His weak voice, his delicate throat and his narrow chest, very prone to inflammation, showed that he was made rather to contemplate than to speak, or at least rather to persuade than to dominate; rather for the intimate, affectionate, persuasive word spoken in a circle of chosen friends than for the outbursts of great eloquence in tumultuous assemblies. The whole of his person, in short, was of the most perfect elegance and the rarest distinction. Under this fine exterior one could see the horrible ravages of evil: a wound growing larger every day, a conscience, an eternal soul on the way to perishing. This sight covered all the rest with a veil of mourning. Along with virtue, faith itself had declined in Augustine's soul. From the heart, where they had been born, as they always are, the shadows were beginning to rise into his mind; and one could have predicted that after abandoning virtue Augustine would deny the faith; or rather there was nothing left to predict. From the first abyss he had already rolled into the second, and the loss of faith had closely followed the disappearance of morals. "Alas!" he says, "what use to me then was that quickness and liveliness of mind with which I penetrated all the sciences and explained alone, without anyone's help, so many obscure and difficult books, since I had fallen into such horrible excesses and such shameful indifference towards the things of piety? And were not the little and the simple, who were slower of mind, happier, since they did not go astray as I did, and, staying in the nest of holy Church, waited there in peace for their wings to grow?"

Augustine shared the house of a friend, Romanianus of Tagaste, who after the death of his father became his support. At nineteen Augustine read a work of Cicero entitled *Hortensius*, which we no longer have today. It was an exhortation to philosophy, and he was deeply moved by it. He felt himself seized with a violent contempt for riches and honours and an ardent love of wisdom. Something, however, cooled his enthusiasm for the works of Cicero and the other pagan authors: the absence of the name of Jesus Christ, which he had drunk in with his mother's milk, which had remained at the bottom of his heart in spite of the storms of youth, and without which the finest treatises of philosophy seemed to him incomplete and lost their charm. So he began to read the holy Scriptures; but their style displeased his mind, which was enamoured of Cicero's stately eloquence and swollen with pride. Some time later he met some Manichaeans. These impostors, seeing him eager for truth, boasted that they would make him know the nature of things. They told him there was no mystery, that reason could account for everything once it knew how to free itself from faith; they painted Catholics to him as slaves of the authority of the Church and therefore incapable of any science. He fell into this snare and remained in it nine years. He found among the heretics what is found among unbelievers of every age: many subtleties and no demonstration. They did not explain to him the great problems that most concern mankind, such as the origin of evil, whose solution is found only in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Augustine drew several Catholics into the Manichaean error with him, among others his friend Alypius and his benefactor Romanianus. He never, however, took part with the initiates and the priests in the horrible practices of these heretics; he always remained a mere hearer.

In 375, having finished his studies, Augustine returned to Tagaste and taught grammar and rhetoric there with success. He lived with Romanianus, for his mother, seeing him persist in heresy, had forbidden him her house. She did not for all that abandon her dear son: she ceaselessly offered prayers and alms for his conversion. Yet Augustine was to remain a long time still in error. From nineteen to twenty-eight his life was given in turn to the defence of Manichaeism and the teaching of letters. The grief into which the loss of a friend threw him did not allow him to stay longer in places that reminded him of it. He went to Carthage, where he taught rhetoric with great brilliance; among his hearers we find Licentius, son of Romanianus, and Alypius. Having won a prize for poetry, which was proclaimed in the theatre, he was crowned by the proconsul of Carthage, Vindicianus. This was a famous physician, who became Augustine's friend and cured him of his passion for judicial astrology. In 380 or 381 Augustine wrote a treatise on what is beautiful and

fitting in each thing; this work, which he dedicated to the orator Hierius, has not come down to us. Meanwhile he did not find among the Manichaeans the knowledge they had promised him. At every somewhat difficult question he put to them, they referred him to Faustus, one of their bishops and the oracle of the party. In 383 Faustus came to Carthage, and Augustine found in him only an ignorant man who spoke well. It is true, on the other hand, that the Catholic Church in Africa then had no learned and distinguished mind able to convince Augustine. Wishing to find greater light and more docile pupils than at Carthage, he resolved to go to Rome. His mother, learning of it, would not leave him, so as to prevent him from going or else go with him. One day, when she had accompanied him to the seashore, he pretended to go on board a ship only to prolong his farewells to a friend and stay with him until the signal for departure. He persuaded his mother to spend the night on the shore in a chapel dedicated to Saint Cyprian, and the ship sailed while she was praying there. When she saw the loss she had just suffered, she was overwhelmed with grief.

A few days after his arrival in Rome he was attacked by a dangerous illness. He recovered from it through the care of his friend Alypius, who had followed him, and through the prayers of his holy mother, who, although absent, was with him in heart. As soon as he was well again, he taught rhetoric in the Greek school of Saint Mary. But the Roman students displeased him no less than those of Carthage. They were not unruly, but ungrateful: on the day when the professor was to be paid for his lessons, they deserted the school. This conduct made him accept without hesitation the chair at Milan that Symmachus, prefect of Rome, offered him. He arrived there in October of the year 385 and was received with great joy by all the inhabitants; the emperor himself, who was Valentinian the Younger, showed much satisfaction at his arrival. Augustine answered the fine hopes people had formed of him, and soon acquired at Milan the great reputation that followed him everywhere.

He had not been there long before he made the acquaintance of Saint Ambrose, whose name was so famous, and was received by him with fatherly kindness. He often went to hear his sermons, not to profit by his doctrine but to judge his eloquence. He found less grace in his language than in that of Faustus the Manichaean, but more solidity in his reasoning. He began to see that Catholicism could be reasonably defended, and so he fell into a state in which he was neither orthodox nor Manichaean, but wavering between truth and falsehood. Meanwhile, as the daylight grew little by little in his soul, he resolved to enrol among the catechumens. Monica found him in this suspense of mind when she arrived at Milan, where the desire for the salvation of her dear son had brought her from Africa, heedless of the length, the dangers and the hardships of so long a journey. She was soon known and esteemed by Saint Ambrose. She put herself under his direction; and when he rebuked her for carrying food to the tombs of the martyrs according to the custom of Africa, she gave it up, showing that her devotion was genuine because it was obedient. She never missed one of his sermons. Augustine also attended them, as we have just said. Part of the veil that hid the truth from him fell; he recognised that until then he had abhorred the Catholic religion only because he mistook for it the phantom he had formed of it.

Had Augustine’s heart been pure, the fire of faith and divine love would quickly have blazed out; but for fifteen years he had borne the yoke of a guilty liaison. He had put his whole soul into it. What he had so much desired as a young man he had found; and if the length and dangers of a journey of six hundred leagues had not stopped Augustine’s mother, neither had they made the mother of Adeodatus hesitate. She had come to join Augustine at Rome; she had gone with him to Milan; they lived together; and Adeodatus was growing up beside them, uniting them and delighting them by his precocious genius. How was he to get out of such a position? And as long as these bonds were not broken, how was he to come to the faith, to holy baptism, to penance, to the holy Eucharist, to the full and perfect Christian life?

There was then with Augustine a young man whom we shall come to know more intimately. His name was Alypius, and he was the best and dearest of his friends. He had become attached to Augustine in Africa, had seen him again at Rome, and, unable to live without him, had joined him at Milan. Augustine had drawn him

into all his errors, and he still held to them; but he was a young man of a rare inclination to virtue. He had had hardly more than a passing weakness in his youth, from which he had turned away with contempt and remorse, and he had lived ever since in perfect continence. He was always urging Augustine to do as he did. He praised to him with enthusiasm the joys of that austere, lofty and wholly spiritual life which, for the sacrifices chastity demands, makes up by a peace, a freedom and a strength that can be found only in the solitary contemplation of truth. Unhappily Augustine was too sick to relish this advice. The union whose yoke he had borne for fifteen years seemed to him so necessary that life without it would have seemed to him misery and death. “I could never have lived deprived of the affection of the one I loved,” he says, “and as I did not know the strength with which God clothes the chaste soul, I felt myself incapable of that solitude. You would have given me that grace, O my God,” he goes on, “had I struck Your ears with the groans of my heart and, by a lively faith, put all my cares into Your hands.”

But alas, he hardly thought of it. “Charmed by the criminal sweetness of pleasure and unable to bear anyone touching my wounds, I dragged my chain after me,” he says humbly, “trembling lest someone should come and break it. I pushed away everything that could be said to me in favour of virtue, as a hand that wished to take from me a slavery I loved.” For such a situation, for so deep a sickness of the heart, there was evidently only one possible remedy. Since Augustine could not live in the austere solitude of chastity, the union he needed must be blessed by God. Saint Monica thought of it unceasingly. She prayed ardently to that end, and, persuaded that on the day when Augustine knew no other affections than the holy and lawful affections of marriage the last difficulties of his mind would vanish, she raised to God the loudest cries of her heart.

The simplest course would have been for Augustine to marry the mother of Adeodatus. But, though no one can say why, it seems that this was not possible; for when one knows what Augustine suffered in parting from her when it had to be done, it is evident that the laws, or custom, or circumstances unknown to us, set insurmountable obstacles in the way of this union. Able neither to marry the mother of Adeodatus nor to send her away: such was Augustine’s cruel plight at that time. Under all these hesitations, in all this anguish, behind all these postponements, lay a deeper, more intimate and more painful question: the great question of virtue, the eternal question of the heart. Who feels these things better, and who suffers from them more, than a mother? And yet there could be no hesitation. Since these guilty bonds could not be transfigured, they had to be broken; and the only way to make Augustine bear this wound was to offer him the prospect of some noble union truly worthy of him.

Saint Monica probably had recourse to the advice and high influence of Saint Ambrose to help her in so difficult a work; above all she prayed ardently. “She sent up to heaven,” says Saint Augustine, “loud cries, to beseech God to enlighten her at so important and so perilous a moment.” And at last, after seeking carefully and praying long, she had the happiness of finding, in a Christian family, a young girl who seemed to her to unite all the qualities a Saint can desire in one to whom she is about to entrust the sick soul of her son. She spoke of her to Augustine and pressed him hard; and he, overwhelmed, feeling that he must resign himself to the sacrifice, daring neither to grant it nor to refuse it, let his mother act. The request was therefore presented by Saint Monica and accepted. Only, as the girl was barely out of childhood, it was agreed that the marriage should not take place for two years. Perhaps, too, this delay seemed necessary to both families to give Augustine’s position time to become regular and more honourable. However that may be, as Augustine could not remain under the eyes of his betrothed in so false a position, which would have become so indelicate, the separation was hastened, and the sacrifice was consummated.

Saint Augustine said only one word about this separation; but what a word! “I let her who shared my life be torn from me; and as my soul clung deeply to her soul, it was rent and broken, and my heart shed blood.” And further on he adds: “The wound this separation caused me would not heal, and for a long time it gave me the sharpest pain.”

As for the mother of Adeodatus, one can easily imagine her groans and tears; but history says nothing of them. What we do know, at least, and are glad to learn, is that this woman who for fifteen years had disputed Augustine's heart with God was at last touched by grace. At the moment when the affections of earth were forsaking her, she turned eagerly towards heaven and went and hid herself in a monastery, and spent the rest of her life there weeping, purifying herself, and asking God's pardon for having chained such a heart and delayed for fifteen years the triumph that this great genius was preparing for the Church. "She was better than I," says Saint Augustine, "and she made her sacrifice with a courage and generosity that I had not the strength to imitate."

At that moment there came into Augustine's life a ray of peace, like a clearing between two storms. The bonds were broken, the sacrifice was made. Like a ship that rights itself as soon as a weight is taken off it, Augustine's soul recovered its natural elevation. His mother shone with happiness at his side. His friends threw themselves eagerly into the study of philosophy. Every day some fellow countryman of Augustine's arrived from Africa, happy to find his young master or his old friend again at Milan. There was Romanianus, for instance, whom endless lawsuits had brought to that city, and who, ever faithful to the son of Patricius and Monica, had brought him the resources of his great fortune with the same delicacy as before. There was Alypius, whom we already know, who had lately settled beside Augustine and was to be so sweet a consolation and so tender a companion to him. There was Nebridius, who had left Carthage and his father's vast estate, and his house, and even his mother, to devote himself to the study of philosophy. Younger than Augustine, wavering like him, seeking the truth without finding it and groaning over his doubts, of a deep and penetrating mind, he had a place apart in Augustine's heart. A few others, about seven or eight, most of them from Africa, also gathered round him, given to the same studies. They cultivated letters and conversed on the noblest questions concerning God and the soul.

In reading the books of Plato, Augustine had caught a glimpse of the wholly spiritual nature of God and of the existence of His Word; he had seen neither the love nor the abasement of the Word incarnate. He had risen to the idea of a God invisible, glorious, separate from every creature; he had even glimpsed, through the dazzling brightness of the divine nature, something of that divine nature itself: a light coming forth from a light and equal to it. Great intuitions no doubt; so great, indeed, that one wonders whether human genius could have reached so far, and whether it was not rather an echo of ancient traditions faithfully caught again through the noble soul of Plato. But a poor God, a humbled God, a God brought low to man and for man; a God loving man to the point of passion, to the point of folly, to the point of suffering and dying for man: that is what neither Plato nor Socrates, neither Cicero nor Virgil, ever suspected. Such things could only be conceived in the heart that was capable of carrying them out. Someone greater than Plato, then, had to come to Augustine's help, someone greater and at the same time holier, to raise his mind, and above all his heart, to such astonishing mysteries.

Guided invisibly by the merciful hand that was bringing him back from so far, Augustine then opened the Epistles of Saint Paul; but he did so only with trembling, after strange agitations and resistance, as if he had a presentiment of the sacrifices this reading would at last wring from him. "I felt myself strongly urged," he says, "to turn my eyes towards that holy religion which had been so deeply imprinted on my heart when I was a child. But I hesitated; I could not make up my mind; and yet it drew me in spite of myself. At last, cruelly uncertain, willing and not willing, I seized the book of the Epistles of Saint Paul with a kind of feverish agitation and anxiety."

From the very first lines Augustine was seized with admiration. He who had just been so moved by reading Plato felt here a shock of which he had had no idea. "Oh, if you knew," he wrote to Romanianus, "what light suddenly appeared to me! I would have liked to show it not only to you, who had so long wished to see this unknown beauty, but to your very enemy, that relentless enemy who is suing you in the courts to get your property. And certainly, if he saw it as I see it, he would leave everything, gardens, houses, banquets, all that

attracts him, and, a devout and gentle lover, he would fly enraptured towards that beauty."

That, however, was only Augustine's first glance; the second went far deeper. He saw unveiled before him a great mystery he did not yet know: one that Plato did not know, which is why he had not been able to teach him the way of virtue; one that the Manichaeans had tried in vain to solve by the doctrine of the two principles; and one that Saint Paul alone showed him in dazzling light. He saw that man is no longer in the state in which God had formed him; that he had been created holy, innocent, full of light and understanding, made to see the majesty of God and already seeing it; but that man could not bear so much glory without falling into presumption; that he wished to make himself the centre of everything and independent of God; that he was abandoned, blinded, driven far from God, and left in such a state of corruption that sin dwells in him; that there is in him a wretched creature, hateful, an enemy of truth, incapable of virtue, with a taste for evil: "the man of sin," as Saint Paul says, "the old man," as he says again. These are strange expressions, of a deep sadness but a sublime hope, for they show that this is not the whole man, and that there is a new one. And that is what Augustine soon learned as he read on. He saw in the same pages that to overcome this man, this hateful mixture of pride, concupiscence and revolt, the Word was made flesh; that He lived in humility, obedience and sacrifice, and emptied Himself down to man in order to heal man, who wishes to exalt himself to God. The whole mystery of the Incarnation and the Redemption was unveiled to his eyes and plunged him into admiration. He felt that he had crossed all distances, that he was no longer in the region of human conceptions, that he had reached that sublime point where man vanishes and God appears; and he knelt down, dazzled and moved.

"Ah!" he said, with tender astonishment, "what a difference there is between the books of the philosophers and those of the envoys of God! What is good in the former is found in the latter, and there one finds besides the knowledge of Your grace, O my God, so that he who knows You may not only not glory in himself, but be healed, and grow strong, and come at last to You.

"What do these great philosophers know, besides, of that law of sin embodied in our members, which fights against the law of the mind and drags us captive into evil? What do they know above all of the grace of Jesus Christ, the innocent victim whose blood has blotted out the sentence of our condemnation? On all this their books are silent.

"There one learns neither the secret of Christian piety, nor the tears of confession, nor the sacrifice of a contrite and humbled heart, and still less the grace of that precious chalice which holds the price of our redemption.

"There one does not hear these canticles: O my soul, submit thyself to God, for He is thy God, thy Saviour, thy defender; leaning on Him, what shouldst thou fear? There does not sound that sweet call: Come to Me, all you that are burdened, and I will refresh you. They do not know, these learned men, that the Word, come down to earth, is meek and humble of heart. Divine mysteries, which You have hidden, O my God, from the learned and the wise, but have revealed to the little and the humble!"

Such were the truths that entered Augustine's soul as he read him who calls himself "the least of the Apostles," and the sight of so many wonders filled him with admiration.

"Oh," he said as he closed the book, "how different it is to see from afar, from the top of a wild rock, the City of peace, without being able, however hard one tries, to find a road to reach it; or else to find that road, and on that road a guide who directs you and defends you against the robbery of those who would stop you!" Here then was Augustine in possession of that blessed light for which he had sighed so long and which his mother had begged for him with so many tears. He had pierced all the veils; and now that he had come to God and to Our Lord Jesus Christ, His divine Son, who died for love of us, it seems that only one thing remained to be done: to rise, run to his mother and say to her, "Do not weep; I am a Christian."

But Augustine had not yet reached that point. This bright flash of light had pierced the clouds rather than scattered them. There remained in Augustine a host of false, inexact and incomplete ideas that he had drawn from the books of the Manichaeans and could hardly rid himself of: last shadows that were slowly departing.

He would have made them vanish had he had the courage to kneel, strike his breast, confess his sins and prepare himself to receive the sacraments of purification and the holy Eucharist; for there comes a moment in these great searches for truth when the soul can merit to see fully only by an act of humility and self-surrender to God. One must risk even sacrifice for Him if one wishes the last shadows to vanish. God sets His favours at that price.

Augustine felt this vaguely, but he was afraid. He wanted to see more clearly before kneeling, whereas one must kneel to see more clearly; and meanwhile he multiplied his studies, his reading and his efforts of mind to increase in himself the light of which he had received the first-fruits. Yet the cries of Augustine's conscience had grown louder. It pressed him more keenly than ever. It began to murmur in his ears these words, which were never again to cease sounding in the depths of his heart and would soon resound there like thunder: "Until now you claimed that uncertainty about the truth was the only reason that kept you from doing your duty. Well, everything is certain now. The truth shines before your eyes. Why do you not surrender?" "I heard," says Saint Augustine, "but I played deaf. I refused to go forward, but now without looking for any excuse. All the reasons I could have put forward were refuted in advance. There remained to me only a mute fear: the fear of seeing the course of those long, sad habits stopped which had nevertheless brought me to so desperate a state."

For a long time, indeed, Augustine had not had the courage to believe; now he believed, but he had not the courage to practise. The obscurities of faith had at first held him back; now it was the demands of virtue that frightened him. "Thus, always wavering and not wishing to be settled, consulting ceaselessly and fearing to be enlightened; always a disciple and admirer of Saint Ambrose, and always agitated by the uncertainties of a heart that fled the truth, he dragged his chain, afraid of being freed from it. He still put forward doubts in order to prolong his passions; he still wished to be enlightened because he feared to be enlightened too much; and, more a slave to his passion than to his errors, he rejected the truth that showed itself to him only because he regarded it as a victorious hand that came at last to break the bonds he still loved." "I had found a pearl," he cries eloquently, "and now that I had to sell my goods, that is, make sacrifices to buy it, I had not the courage."

Agitated, undecided, pressed by his mother and harried by his conscience, Augustine at last resolved to go and consult a holy priest named Simplicianus, whose fine life had long impressed him.

He was one of those venerable old men such as one constantly meets in the bosom of the Catholic Church, who, having passed from a chaste youth to a still more chaste maturity and been blessed by God with a hale old age, present to men, who bow as they meet them, a venerable image of peace and serenity in virtue. Young men troubled by the storms of passion love to draw near these tranquil snows and grow calm beside them.

So Augustine came to confide to Simplicianus the troubles of his life and the secret weaknesses that now held him back, no longer before the light, but before virtue.

The good old man received him with a gentle smile, listened without astonishment to the story of his wanderings, and congratulated him because, instead of opening those atheistic and materialistic books that degrade the soul, he had applied himself to the study of Plato and Socrates, who raise the mind and the heart. Simplicianus, like all old priests, had known many men. He was intimately connected not only with Saint

Ambrose, whom he had directed in his youth and to whom he had even given holy baptism, but with a great number of Roman philosophers, poets and rhetoricians, and in particular with Victorinus, the very man who

had translated the works of Plato that Augustine was then studying. Like all old men, too, Simplicianus loved to tell stories, and, skilled in handling minds, he knew how to hide a lesson cleverly in a story.

Seeing beside him, then, this young man of so great a mind and so noble a character, already enlightened by grace but still hesitating to give himself up to it, he shrewdly took advantage of the name of Victorinus, which Augustine had just mentioned. After saying that he had once known that eloquent man at Rome, and wishing to show Augustine indirectly the road of Christian courage and honour, he told him his story in roughly these terms:

"Victorinus had won fame in the same career Augustine was following. A professor of eloquence, he had seen at the foot of his chair not only all the youth of Rome but a crowd of senators. He had translated, explained and enriched with luminous commentaries the finest books of ancient philosophy, and by force of eloquence he had obtained a statue in the Forum, an honour rare in any age. When he had thus exhausted the study of all the masterpieces of the human mind, the idea came to him of opening the holy Scriptures. He read them attentively, and then said to Simplicianus, but secretly and in private, as to a friend: 'Do you know that I am now a Christian?' 'I will not believe it,' Simplicianus answered, 'until I see you in the church of Christ.' And Victorinus said, laughing and ironically: 'Is it walls, then, that make the Christian?' At bottom he was afraid of displeasing his friends, and feared that from those heights of human and all-powerful greatness, from those cedars of Lebanon that God had not yet broken, crushing enmities would roll down upon him.

"Meanwhile he went on reading; he prayed much, and, drawing more deeply from the holy Scriptures, he felt courage and strength being born in him. There came a day when he was more afraid of being disowned by Jesus Christ than mocked and despised by his friends; and, trembling lest he betray the truth, he went to Simplicianus and said to him: 'Let us go to the church, for I wish to be a Christian.' Rome was filled with astonishment, and the Church leapt for joy. When the time came for him to make his profession of faith in the presence of all the faithful, Victorinus was offered the chance of reciting it in private, as was done for persons whom a public ceremony intimidates. But he refused firmly and went up boldly into the ambo. As soon as he appeared there, his name, passed from rank to rank by those who knew him, raised a murmur of joy in the assembly, and the restrained voice of the general gladness whispered: 'Victorinus! Victorinus!' The desire to hear him quickly restored silence, and he pronounced the Creed with admirable faith; and all the faithful who were there, consoled by such courage, would have liked to take him into their hearts. Their joy and their love were like two hands with which they did in fact place him there.

"From then on," Simplicianus continued, giving each of his words a more penetrating tone, "from then on this illustrious old man made it his glory to become a child in the school of Jesus Christ. He let himself be humbly nursed by holy Church, and joyfully bowed beneath the ignominious yoke of the cross a head that had worn so many crowns. When Julian the Apostate shortly afterwards forbade Christians to teach letters, he closed his eloquent lips and crowned his life with the finest and most painful of all sacrifices."

This example, so well chosen and so perfectly suited to Augustine's position, stirred him to the depths. He went out full of enthusiasm, reproaching himself for his weakness and indignant at his cowardice, and he went back to his house, where his mother was waiting for him in prayer, determined to have done with it this time and to imitate Victorinus. "O my God," he cried in a kind of transport, "come to my help! Act, Lord, do it; awaken me, call me back; kindle me and carry me away; be flame and sweetness; let us love, let us run." But alas, the chain Augustine had been dragging for so many years was heavier than he had at first imagined. As soon as he put his hand to it, he felt himself incapable of breaking it. He did not say No; he had not the courage to say Yes. "This succession of corruptions and disorders," he says, "like so many links interlaced with one another, formed a chain that riveted me in the hardest slavery. I did indeed have a will to serve God with a lofty and chaste love and to enjoy Him alone; but this new will, which had only just been born, was not able to overcome the other, which had been strengthened by a long habit of evil. Thus I had two wills,

one old and the other new, one carnal and the other spiritual; and these two wills fought within me, and this combat tore my soul."

Meanwhile he tried to quiet his conscience, and when it cried out to him that he must decide, he could only answer it like a sleepy and lazy man: "In a moment; leave me a little; just a little while longer." But this "in a moment" never came, and this "little while" lasted for ever.

At this juncture an old friend of Augustine's, named Ponticianus, came to visit him. Both were from Africa, where they had once known each other intimately. But while Augustine had followed, in error and forgetfulness of God, the long and sad road we have tried to describe, Ponticianus had remained a fervent Christian. He lived at Milan, where he held one of the chief military posts at the emperor's court. Saint Monica had been happy to find him again in Italy and to bring into the company of Augustine, Alypius, Nebridius and all these young men wavering in the faith a soul so well tempered that neither war nor the court had been able to make it waver for an instant.

That day, while talking with Augustine and Alypius, Ponticianus noticed a book on a gaming table. He opened it absent-mindedly, as one does when busy talking; he expected to find a Cicero or a Quintilian. It was the Epistles of Saint Paul. A little surprised, he looked at Augustine with a smile; and when Augustine confessed that for some time he had been reading holy Scripture with the greatest attention and the greatest delight, the conversation took a wholly Christian turn of its own accord. Ponticianus had travelled a great deal. He knew Gaul, Spain, Italy, Africa and Egypt, and knew them as a Christian, that is, everywhere he had studied the wonders the true faith was working in the Catholic Church. He told him of the conversion of some great men of the court of Maximus through reading the life of Saint Antony, and then told him of the marvellous penitential exercises of that great anchorite and of a countless multitude of monks who lived under his Rules. This account touched Augustine so powerfully that he resolved to embrace the same kind of life and withdraw completely from the world. But as his bad habits were very strong, a strange combat took place within him between the spirit and the flesh; and the devil, seeing himself on the point of losing this great prey, used all his tricks and all his strength to keep it. He himself describes the painful state to which he was reduced. "The enemy," he says, "held my will bound with the cord he had woven to drag me; for a perverse will had produced evil desires, and these desires, not having been stifled, the evil had passed into custom, and custom at last, for want of resistance, had become a hard necessity. The chain of my misfortune was made up of these links and held me in close captivity. This new will that I felt to serve You, O my God, which was beginning to form in my heart, was not strong enough to supplant the first, which, having become the more powerful and the master through inveterate habit, had more strength against me and led me where I did not wish to go. But as I was still attached to the earth, I still refused to follow You when You called me, and I was no less afraid of seeing myself freed from these bonds than faithful souls are glad not to be entangled in them. I went along gently, laden with this burden of the world, as if I had been at rest; and my thoughts of changing my life were like the drowsiness of those who are asleep and wish to wake, but who, by the heaviness of sleep, fall back on the other side and go on sleeping." "Being in this sickness," he says elsewhere, "I accused myself of cowardice, and, writhing in the chain I dragged, to try to break the little that remained of it, which was still strong enough to hold me, I said to myself: Come, let it be done now, let it be this very hour. At once I set about it and half did it, but without being able to finish. I did not go back to the things of the past, but I stayed very close to them and drew breath a little. I came back another time with new strength; I almost arrived and touched it; though in fact, through my weakness, I did neither the one nor the other. The habit of evil had more power over me than the desire of the good I wished to embrace. And the nearer the time of my amendment came, the more I dreaded its arrival; for the vanities of my youth and the delights I had tasted pulled me as it were by the robe and said to me tenderly: What, Augustine, do you mean to leave us then? Must it be that from now on we shall no longer be with you, and that all you loved so passionately will be forbidden you for ever? I listened to them from afar, no longer I myself, but the least part

of myself; for, no longer daring to address me in open war, they only followed on my track and murmured to make me turn my eyes towards them. They did not cease to trouble me with their importunities, because I was slow to rid myself of them. I would not go where they called me, because on the road I saw before me, and by which I feared to pass, I saw from afar the holy majesty of continence, with a rosy face and an enchanting gravity, which, coaxing me in my fear with a gentleness full of modesty, invited me to come boldly to her. She showed me a countless multitude of maidens, young men, chaste widows and continent women, whose purity was not barren but fruitful and the mother of true joys; and, mocking me, she said to me with a pleasant look: Can you not do what all these persons have done so generously? Do you think they did it of themselves and without the help of God's grace? It is in Him and through Him that they were able to do all they have done and all they do. Lean no longer, then, on your own strength, but throw yourself courageously, without deliberating further, into the arms of your God; He will receive you and save you. I blushed with shame to hear still the voice of my past follies, and as I remained dreamy and pensive, she said to me: Stop your ears to all these filthy and shameful thoughts, and mortify the members that stir them up in you. The pleasures they hold out to you do not come near those that are tasted in the law of the Lord. Such was the combat that went on in my heart, of myself against myself."

These are the very words in which this holy Doctor explains the difficulty he had in giving himself wholly to God. But at last Providence, which had destined him to be one day the brilliant light of the Church, took him by the hand and drew him out of the mire in which he lay. It did so in an extraordinary way, which he sets out in these terms: "When I had thus gathered together by deep meditation, and set before my eyes, the whole extent of my misery, I felt a dreadful storm rising in my heart, laden with a rain of tears. To let it break in full, I rose and went away from Alypius. I needed solitude to weep more freely, so I withdrew far enough apart not to be hindered even by so dear a presence. Alypius understood, for some word or other had escaped me in a voice heavy with tears. I went and threw myself on the ground under a fig tree, and, no longer able to hold back my tears, they poured from my eyes like a torrent. And I spoke to You, if not in these words, at least in this sense: Ah, how long, Lord, how long will You be angry? Remember not my past iniquities. For I felt that they still held me back. And that is what made me add with sobs: How long? How long? Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Why not this instant? Why not put an end to my shame this very hour?

"And suddenly, while I was speaking thus and weeping in all the bitterness of a broken heart, I heard coming from the neighbouring house a voice as of a child or a young girl, singing and repeating these words: 'Take, read! Take, read!'

"I stopped at once, my face changing," Saint Augustine continues, "and began to consider with the greatest attention whether children in any of their games used such a refrain. But I could not remember ever having heard it. Then, checking the flow of my tears, sure that this was a voice from heaven commanding me to open the book of the holy apostle Paul, I ran to the place where Alypius was sitting and where I had left the book. I take it, I open it, and my eyes fall on these words, which I read silently: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.* I would read no further, and indeed what need was there? For hardly had I finished these lines when there spread through my heart as it were a calm light that scattered for ever all the darkness of my soul.

"Then, having marked the place in the book with my finger or some other sign, I closed it, and with a calm face told everything to Alypius. He in turn revealed to me what was going on in his soul, which I did not know. He wished to see what I had read. I showed it to him; and reading further than I had, he took up these words, which I had not noticed: *Him that is weak in the faith, take unto you*; and he applied them to himself. Strengthened by this admonition, and quicker to return to the faith because of the purity of his morals, he joined me, and we ran to my mother."

The conversion of Alypius, who out of friendship for Augustine had strayed from the faith without leading an immoral life, greatly increased his happiness. They went together to find Monica and told her all that had happened. What was not the joy of that devout mother when she learned that her son had not only resolved to live according to the precepts of the Gospel, but wished also to follow its counsels and practise its most rigorous teachings!

To prepare himself for baptism he resolved to withdraw from the world; but as there were only twenty days left until the holidays, he waited for that time out of prudence and modesty, so as not to give up his chair of rhetoric with a stir. As soon as the term was over, he withdrew to Cassiciacum, to a country house offered him by Verecundus, a citizen of Milan, and took with him Saint Monica, his son Adeodatus or God-given, Navigius and Alypius. It was in this retreat that, though still a catechumen, he composed the books *Against the Academics*, who professed to doubt everything; the books *On Order*, *On the Happy Life* and *On the Immortality of the Soul*; and the *Soliloquies*, two dialogues, loving conversations of his soul with God, in which he tasted delights so pure and received consolations so abundant that one would have to experience them oneself to speak of them. There he was tormented for some days by so cruel a toothache that, wishing to ask his friends' prayers and being unable to speak to them, he was obliged to write his request on wax tablets. No sooner had his friends knelt to pray than he felt relief, and in a short time he was freed from this torment. He wrote to Saint Ambrose to ask him which book of Scripture he should read to prepare himself for the grace of baptism. The holy Bishop advised him to begin with the prophet Isaiah, who speaks more openly than the others of the calling of the Gentiles and the mysteries of Christianity. But Augustine, having read the first chapter and not understanding it to his satisfaction, put off this reading until he should be better versed in the study of sacred letters.

At last, five months having passed, the happy day on which he was to receive holy Baptism arrived. He went to Milan accompanied by Evodius, Alypius, Trygetius, his son Adeodatus, Ponticianus, Simplicius, Faustinus, Valerius, Candote, Justus and Paulinus, all his friends or relatives, who were to be baptised with him. Saint Ambrose felt an unspeakable joy at seeing this chosen band, with Saint Augustine at its head, which he was about to win for the Church and of which he was to be the father in the spirit. He baptised them all with his own hand, in the presence of an immense crowd, on the eve of Easter in the year 387, in the night of 24 to 25 April. The common tradition is that in this ceremony Saint Ambrose sang the first words of the famous Canticle (the *Te Deum*) which the Church uses to give thanks to God, that Saint Augustine answered him, and that they continued it alternately to the end as the Holy Spirit inspired them. Besides the white robe he received from Saint Ambrose, according to the custom of the Church, as a sign of the purity and innocence conferred in holy Baptism, he also received a black habit (whether at the same time or only a week later) to show that he was embracing the rigours of the religious life and wished to expiate by the fire of penance the stains from which he had just been washed by the saving waters of grace. Blessed Simplicianus, who shared with Saint Ambrose the glory of Augustine's conversion, gave him a leather belt to distinguish him from the other hermits.

The joy all the faithful felt at this conversion cannot be expressed. Until then he had been regarded as another Saul, a persecutor of the Church; for his wit and learning had made him so formidable that it is even said Saint Ambrose had added to the public Litanies sung in his time, of which some authors claim to have seen copies: *A logica Augustini, libera nos, Domine*, "From the logic of Augustine, deliver us, O Lord." But now that he was seen to have become another Paul, a defender of the Church, thanksgivings to God were heard on all sides for having made so wonderful a doctor out of so great a sinner. Monica, that once so desolate mother, seeing at last this son of her tears and sorrow in the bosom of the Catholic religion, humble, devout, chaste and religious, and changed from a raging lion into a gentle lamb, gave a thousand blessings to heaven and thanked the mercy of God with all her heart for having at last heard her prayers.

Having received Baptism, Augustine stripped himself of all earthly ambition. The desire for honours and the ambition to make a show, which had been his passions, no longer touched him. He thought only of leading a life in conformity with the rules of the Gospel. Thinking he would do so more peacefully in Africa than in Italy, he resolved to return there as soon as possible. So he left Milan with the blessing of Saint Ambrose and Saint Simplicianus, accompanied by his holy mother, his brother Navigius, his son Adeodatus, his faithful Alypius, Evodius, Anastasius, Vitalis the poor and several others who wished to imitate his way of life, and went to Civitavecchia. This town was called Centumcellae because a hundred halls had been built there, where audiences were given and all the business of the province was judged. Among the ruins of its buildings lived several hermits, alone, far from the tumult of the world and the company of men. When they learned of Augustine's merit, they gave him every possible welcome, and he stayed some time with them to meditate on the mysteries of religion in that devout company. It was there, according to some authors, that he began the books *On the Trinity*, which he himself admits he first set his hand to in his youth; but he was obliged to break off after a famous apparition. Walking one day on the seashore, turning over some thoughts on this subject, he saw a child who, wishing to empty the sea, was trying to put all its waters into a little hole he had made on the shore. Augustine, surprised at this plan, gently pointed out to him that it was impossible. "Know," the child replied, "that I shall succeed in this sooner than you will comprehend, by the light of your mind, the mystery of the most holy Trinity." Taught by this wonder how difficult his undertaking was, Augustine did not press on with it; but, to leave an everlasting monument of his devotion to this adorable mystery, he contented himself with founding on the same spot a hermitage that the religious of his Order now possess. Over the door is a tablet on which the sense of these words has been engraved in Latin: "Passer-by, whoever you are, revere the hermitage and chapel where Augustine, that shining light of the Church, began his work on the Trinity, and where he broke it off on the advice and oracle of a child sent from heaven on the shore; he finished it at last in Africa in his old age." From Civitavecchia he went to Rome to wait there for a favourable time to set sail. During his stay he composed the *Dialogue on the Soul*, a book *On the Morals of the Church* to make its holiness known, and another *On the Morals of the Manichaeans* to confound their arrogance, which he found intolerable. When the rigour of winter was past he went to Ostia; and there, while he was preparing for the voyage, after being consoled by that admirable vision of the divine essence which he relates in chapter X of book IX of his *Confessions*, he had the grief of seeing Saint Monica die, as we said in her life on 4 May.

He paid the last duties and the honours of burial to that great Saint, who was doubly his mother. He had the holy sacrifice of the Mass celebrated for her, as she had expressly asked him before her death. He then embarked with his companions and set sail for Africa, and arrived safely at last at Carthage, where the report of his holiness had already spread. He lodged with Innocentius, lieutenant of the governor of the country, and cured him by his prayers of a diseased leg in which gangrene had set in, so badly that the physicians had decided to amputate the limb to save the patient's life. From Carthage he came to Tagaste, where his first care was to sell all his goods, give part of the proceeds to the poor, and use the rest to build, in a lonely place near the town, a small monastery to which he might withdraw with his first companions and with those who might afterwards join him to lead a religious life. It was there that the Son of God appeared to him and with His own lips gave him the name of Great. As he was occupied there in works of mercy, and especially in hospitality, receiving the poor, feeding them and washing their feet, Jesus Christ presented Himself to him in the guise of a poor man in so wretched a state that the holy Doctor, moved by it, took him into his cell, treated him as well as he could, washed his feet and kissed them. After this the poor man said to him: *Magne pater Augustine, gaude, quia Filium Dei hodie in carne videre et tangere meruisti*, "Great Augustine, rejoice, for today you have deserved to see and touch the Son of God in His flesh." Then He disappeared, leaving that heavenly man quite enraptured by the favour he had just received. It is believed that it was also in this monastery that the holy practice began among the religious of greeting one another with the two words *Deo gratias*. That is why Saint Augustine defends it against the heretics who mocked it.

"Are you so stupid," he says to them, "as not to know what *Deo gratias* means? These words are spoken only to thank God for some benefit received from His goodness. Now is it not a signal favour for religious to live together united to Jesus Christ, to have but one heart and one soul in His service, to walk securely in the way of salvation, to perform the same duties, to aspire to the same end and to be occupied in the same exercises? Is it not right that those who have been called to so great a happiness should give thanks to God for it whenever they find occasion?" And because the Donatists called Circumcellions greeted Christians with *Deo laudes*, "praise to God," though they did so only to draw them into their errors and massacred without pity those who would not embrace them, he reproaches them for their treachery by showing them the difference between their greeting and that of the religious: *Vos nostrum Deo gratias ridetis; Deo laudes vestrum plorant homines*, etc. "You make a joke of our form of greeting, and everyone groans at yours, which is only a deceitful pretext you use to cover the malice of your intentions. You come to us with the praises of God on your lips and the dagger in your hand; you invite us to praise Him while you blaspheme Him by your deeds. Your praises make men weep and are as abominable before God as our thanksgivings are pleasing to Him." Finally, it was at this time that he composed the treatise entitled *On the Teacher* and two books on Genesis against the Manichaeans, with some other works, and put the finishing touches to the books *On Music*.

However careful he was to live hidden in this hermitage, where he spent three years, his holiness, his learning and his reputation made him well known throughout Africa. He was consulted from all sides as an oracle on the difficulties people had, and he answered them on the spot with such marvellous clearness that the most obscure matters became very clear by the light of his mind. He had such an aversion to honours and dignities that he would not go to towns he knew to be without a pastor, for fear of being forced to accept some office in the Church. He regarded holding the first rank and being raised to high office as a disgrace or a punishment rather than a favour. The prelacies of the Church seemed to him reefs on which it was easy to be wrecked; and mitres, whose splendour is now so highly regarded, seemed to him like crowns of thorns, which brought far more pain and trouble than ornament to the heads that wore them. But this very humility of Augustine was a deep foundation on which was to be built the glory prepared for him, to which Providence was leading him without his thinking of it.

There was at Hippo (which is now the town of Bône) a great lord, very rich and God-fearing, a friend of Saint Augustine, who longed passionately to see him and hear him speak of the truths of the Gospel, of which he knew Augustine had once been the most formidable enemy. He was even quite ready to renounce the world and give all his goods to the Church, if this great man approved the plan when he had told him of it. Saint Augustine, who sought only the occasion to win souls for Jesus Christ and lead them to high perfection, had no sooner learned of his friend's good disposition than he went to Hippo. Valerius, a Greek by birth, who was its bishop, did what he could to make him stay there so as to attach him to the service of his Church. But having noticed that Augustine was resolved to return to his monastery as soon as he had satisfied his friend, he assembled the people, and after representing to them his need of a learned man to work in his diocese for the salvation of souls, he urged them to turn their eyes on one whose holiness, learning and zeal made him fit for this office. At once the people, as if by divine inspiration, went to fetch Augustine, seized him, and, crying aloud that God had sent him to Hippo to be their pastor, presented him to Valerius to be ordained priest. This was done in spite of his tears and the reasons his humility made him put forward for not being raised to the priestly dignity.

The first thing Augustine did on finding himself a priest was to ask the bishop for a place to build a monastery like the one at Tagaste. Valerius granted it, giving him a garden adjoining his church. As soon as it was built it was filled with persons who embraced his institute, and whom he also had ordained priests so that they might work as he did at instructing the faithful and administering the Sacraments. It was then that he composed his Rule, having until then been content to govern his disciples by word of mouth and by the example of his virtues. This establishment was a seminary from which apostolic labourers were taken to

work in the Lord's vineyard, and where men of extraordinary merit were found who were sent to various parts of Africa to govern Churches. Possidius writes that he knew ten whom Saint Augustine had given to be bishops in various places; among them were Alypius and Evodius.

Having thus formed a community of apostolic men, Saint Augustine received from Valerius the order to preach and to distribute the bread of God's word publicly to the faithful. He excused himself at first on two grounds: first, that according to an ancient custom of Africa, condemned however by Saint Jerome but from which no one had yet been exempted, priests were not allowed to preach in the presence of their bishops; secondly, that he did not yet think himself learned enough to carry out this ministry worthily. When he could obtain nothing, he asked at least for a delay of a few months in order to prepare for it by the study of sacred Letters, by prayer and by penance. The letter he wrote to Valerius on this subject is admirable and deserves to be read by all who are obliged to proclaim the word of God. In it he points out how easy it is to carry out this duty when one is content to do it superficially; but at the same time he shows the dangers one runs, the difficulties to be overcome, the qualities one must have and the preparation one must bring to do it worthily. Then, applying all these things to himself, he begs Valerius to help him with his prayers and to grant him at least the time he had asked for to consult God and apply himself to study. How many preachers this modesty of Augustine condemns, who, thinking themselves capable of anything, rashly expose themselves to this divine ministry! He had already published several excellent works against the heretics and the philosophers in defence of religion; he had composed various treatises of piety in which the faithful found solid meat to nourish their souls; and yet he did not dare undertake to preach the Gospel. This office seemed to him fearsome and beyond his strength, and to hear his excuses one would have taken him for some unlettered man, not at all versed in the study of sacred Letters, who had never learned anything of Christian theology. His humility had to give way, however, to the authority of his bishop, who, being a Greek by birth and not having a familiar command of the Latin tongue, was very glad that a man of Augustine's merit should make up for his deficiency. Afterwards the primate of Carthage, no longer afraid of doing wrong after so great an example, introduced into his Church preaching by priests in the presence of their bishop.

Augustine's preaching had an immense success. No one could resist the force of his doctrine and his reasoning. Even those who listened to him only to criticise found themselves insensibly persuaded of the truths he preached to them. Though his learning always appeared eminent, it was without ostentation; he was cured of that disease which puffs up the mind and by which he had once been possessed. He preferred to draw tears from his hearers rather than applause; to meet the needs of the simple rather than the appetite of the curious; to instruct rather than to shine; to give others the luminous fire of truth rather than take for himself the fumes of vanity. He raised or lowered his style according to the dignity of the matters he treated and the capacity of those he taught. The learned found knowledge in it, the orators eloquence and erudition. His words were, for sinners sunk in the torpor of evil habits, thunderclaps that woke them; for the proud, lightning strokes that broke their pride; for the sensual, an antidote that gave them a distaste for their debauchery; for the ambitious, weapons that overthrew their designs. In short, everyone found in them what he needed for his own sanctification.

While he was occupied in preaching the word of God, a national Council of Africa was assembled at Hippo, to which he was called to give his opinion on several difficulties proposed there. He did so with such learning that it was resolved to abide by what he had said. The reputation Augustine had gained in this assembly made Valerius fear that he would be carried off from his Church to be made a bishop. So, to keep him for his diocese, he wrote to Aurelius, primate of Carthage, begging him, in view of his great age and weakness, to give Augustine to him as coadjutor during his life and successor after his death. Aurelius gladly consented; but Augustine resisted strongly, preferring to obey rather than command, and to secure his salvation in a lowly state rather than risk it in a brilliant position. He had nevertheless to submit to the will of God, made known to him by that of his superiors, and to suffer Megalius, bishop of Calama and primate of Numidia, and

the same Valerius to confer the episcopal character on him, to the great satisfaction of the clergy and the whole people, while he alone was overwhelmed with sadness at seeing himself charged with a burden he did not think himself capable of bearing. He used to say afterwards that he had never seen more clearly that God was angry with him and wished to punish him for the sins of his past life than when He raised him to the episcopate. After his consecration he stayed for some time with his religious in the monastery of the Garden. But finding by experience that he could not reconcile the strict regular observance of the cloister with the audiences he was obliged as bishop to grant to the continual crowd of persons who visited him, he decided to have in the bishop's house a community of clerics living as he did, in which he could render to strangers the charitable offices of Martha without losing the quiet and tranquillity of Mary. To form it, he set about reforming the clergy of his Church, obliging them to live according to the discipline of the Apostles, from which they had grown lax; and because he also gave them Rules, they were called Canons Regular.

Augustine's new dignity changed nothing in his conduct. He appeared always the same in all his actions. Placed as bishop between God and men, he never failed to honour the one by his sacrifices and his piety and to edify the others by his good example, thus rendering to God and to Caesar what belonged to each. The bishopric of Hippo had a revenue of more than forty thousand crowns; yet Augustine was not seen more richly dressed or more magnificently attended than before. He never wore silk; his clothing was simple and suited to the religious poverty he professed. Even his pontifical vestments were of stuffs of modest price. His mitre, which is kept with his pastoral staff in the convent at Valencia in Spain, where they were taken from Sardinia so that the inheritance of so great a Father, as Pope Martin V says, should return to his lawful children, was only of fine linen. He was content with this modesty so as to have the means to provide more generously for the needs of the poor, for whose support he did not spare even the censers, crosses and silver chalices. Though he had no attachment to his relatives, he did not fail to help them like the rest of the faithful and to give alms to those of them who were in need. In this he behaved with extreme moderation, for he did not intend to enrich them but only to help them in their need; not to make their house more splendid but to rescue it from utter poverty. He did not think it reasonable that the goods of the Church, for which God would one day demand so strict an account of him, should serve to foster the luxury and ambition of his relatives, or that he should use the blood of Jesus Christ and the patrimony of the poor to make them footstools of gold and silver to raise them up, aggrandise them and bring them close to his person. He would never take charge of the key of his Church's treasury or of the revenue of his bishopric; he left their management and distribution to the most upright clerics of his clergy. He even told his people one day that he would rather be maintained by their offerings and charity than enjoy so great a revenue, and that if he were given a modest allowance for his own subsistence and that of his officers, he would willingly make a general surrender of all that belonged to him. When he was given a costly robe he was ashamed to wear it and had it sold, so that the money might be used for the relief of many. "The Church," he said, "has money only to distribute it, not to keep it. It is a cruelty unworthy of a father's heart, such as a bishop's should be, to amass goods while pushing away the hand of the poor man who asks him for alms." When he had completely exhausted himself and had nothing left to give, he went up into the pulpit and told the people of his poverty and his inability to help the needy, so that they themselves might give alms.

He would never buy either house or farm. He would not accept inheritances bequeathed to the Church by will to the prejudice of children, because he could not approve of their being defrauded of them. He did not, however, refuse other gifts made to him for the relief of the poor, but he accepted them with such detachment that he was always ready to give them up. Someone had made over to his church the ownership of an estate and put the deed of gift into his hands; some years later this person repented of it and asked him to return the contract. The Saint did so very willingly. He pointed out to him, however, that his conduct was hardly Christian, and that he ought to do penance for having repented of a good work and for having wished to take back from God a thing he had given Him without any constraint. This readiness of Augustine's gave the people occasion to murmur against him, on the pretext that rejecting pious legacies left to the Church by will

wronged the poor and cooled the devotion of the faithful towards the Church. But the holy Bishop, to show the uprightness of his intention, explained himself publicly in a sermon, in which, after discussing the subject, he concluded with these words: “Whoever disinherits his son to make the Church his heir, let him look for someone other than Augustine to accept the inheritance; and I pray God that no one will be found willing to take up his estate.” He does not blame those who leave something to the Church to have prayers said for them, but those who on a whim, without any reason and out of an indiscreet and wholly intolerable devotion, dispose of all their goods in favour of the Church and disinherit their relatives.

The dishes on his table were of wood, marble or pewter, not silver; and this he did not to grow richer by the saving, but to be more generous. No exquisite or delicate dishes were served there, but only herbs, roots and vegetables. When other dishes were brought, it was for the sick or for strangers who happened to be there. During the meal there was usually a holy reading to serve as food for the mind while the body took its own. And because it happens only too often that at meals people let themselves speak ill of their neighbour, to shut the mouths of slanderers entirely and banish from his house those bloody feasts where the tongue cuts more dangerously than knives, he had these two Latin lines written in large letters in the room that served him as refectory:

Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam, Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi.

“Let him who likes to tear the reputation of the absent with his slanders know that this table is forbidden him.” He had this rule kept so strictly that one day, when some bishops began a mocking conversation into which slander was about to enter, our Saint interrupted them, saying: “Gentlemen, read these lines: either they must be rubbed out, or you must change the subject, or else you must not take it amiss if I withdraw and leave you to devour among yourselves the prey you hold.”

Continence, for which he had felt such horror before his conversion, became the tenderest object of his heart. He fled even the appearance of impurity. The mere representation of an unseemly object caused him strange alarm; the phantoms that strike the imagination during sleep seemed to him raging monsters, from which he ceaselessly begged God for the grace to be delivered. As he knew from sad experience the frailty of the flesh, he was always on his guard so as not to give temptation the least entry. He studied his words, watched his looks and examined his actions and his comings and goings, so that everything about him might breathe purity. When his pastoral duty obliged him to receive visits from women or to go and visit them, he never spoke to them except in the presence of some other priest.

The more his rank raised him above others, the more his charity made him accessible to all who needed his help. He was ceaselessly intent on procuring the good of his flock. He received their visits with fatherly gentleness, answered their requests, heard their complaints, resolved their doubts, settled their quarrels and stifled their desires for revenge; in a word, by his prudence he brought round the most difficult minds, and by his great insight he unravelled the most tangled affairs. As he devoted himself with tireless zeal to these many and ceaseless duties without drawing breath, he longed for his dear solitude. “I take to witness,” he says in one of his works, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, for love of whom I do it and in whose presence I speak, that if I considered my own satisfaction I would much rather work with my hands every day and have certain hours free to give myself in peace to prayer and the study of holy Scripture, than be tied like a slave to listening to other people’s quarrels and the affairs of the world, to decide them as judge or settle them as arbiter.” His usual visits were to widows, to console them in their affliction; to the poor, to provide for their needs; and to the sick, to help them bear their sufferings patiently or prepare them for a good death. He rarely paid those visits which civility rather than charity requires, and even these he made so short that they hardly robbed him of any time. He never left his diocese except for unavoidable necessities, either particular to his Church or common to all Christendom, such as attending Synods or negotiating some matter of public importance. Thus he undertook, with other bishops, an embassy to the emperor Honorius against the Donatists, who were cruelly persecuting the Catholics. He boldly rebuked prelates who stayed too long at the

courts of princes, pointing out to them that the true honour of a bishop was not to beg the favour of the great by servile submission, but to reside in the places where they have the objects of their zeal, the obligations of their office and the souls for which God will demand of them a most strict account.

Many remnants of pagan customs had survived in Africa. Augustine undertook to abolish them, and worked at it with such gentleness, prudence and zeal that in a short time he purged his diocese of them. It was the custom to hold dances before the church doors on feast days and then feasts in the cemeteries; he abolished this unchristian recreation. On certain days of the year all the inhabitants of the town gathered in the public square, where, dividing into two bands, they fought each other with stones so brutally that many lost their lives; he put an end to this cruel entertainment, in which fathers often killed their children and children their fathers. Every Thursday a feast was celebrated in honour of Jupiter; he cut off this idolatry. Having noticed that the people left the church before the end of Mass and grumbled against the priest when he was sometimes too long, he inveighed so strongly against this lack of devotion that his exhortations were followed by amendment. He had it decreed that the holy Canons should be read at the consecration of bishops, as laid down by the third council of Carthage, so that, not being ignorant of what they prescribe, nothing contrary to them might be done in their ordination. He himself felt a keen regret at having been consecrated in the lifetime of Valerius, against a Canon of the council of Nicaea of which he had known nothing. Some believe that he introduced into the Church several pious and devout ceremonies, and that he composed prayers, the blessing of the paschal candle and an office of the dead.

As the chief end of a cleric's study must be to defend the Church, Augustine used all the liveliness of his mind and his deep learning to combat the errors of his time. Mani had spread the poison of his heresy of the two co-eternal natures so widely that, in spite of all the remedies applied to it, his errors still survived. Augustine purged the Church of them, and Africa in particular, by the books he composed against that doctrine, as absurd as it was pernicious. He wrote the one he entitles *On the Usefulness of Believing* to undeceive a friend of his named Honoratus. Fortunatus wished by his tinsel eloquence to revive this fallen monster. Augustine offered him a debate at Hippo, where, in the presence of the whole people and the most learned men of the province, with notaries writing down word for word all the arguments on both sides, after two days of conference the Manichaean remained dumb before the invincible objections of our holy Doctor. Ashamed at having been thus publicly defeated, he left the town and never appeared there again. Felix, who obstinately upheld the same errors, let himself be persuaded by the force of Augustine's reasoning and abjured, which caused such consternation among the

Manichaeans that none dared any longer present himself for debate. But Augustine completed by his preaching what he could not do by public conferences. Among the conversions he made from the pulpit, that of Firmus is remarkable. He was a rich merchant of Hippo whom the Manichaeans had so deceived that he supplied them with large sums of money to spread their sect everywhere. But having heard Saint Augustine preach against their errors, he abandoned them. Later, giving up trade, he became a religious of the Order of Saint Augustine, where he led a very holy life for the rest of his days. Some works of Adimantus, who had been a disciple of Mani, having fallen into the hands of our great Doctor, he answered and refuted them in the book we have under the title *Against the Adversary of the Law and the Prophets*. The greatest enemies Saint Augustine had to fight during his episcopate were the Donatists. The error of Donatus, their leader, counted nearly four hundred bishops and was very powerful in Africa. These sectaries boasted that they alone made up the true Church, and consequently that all who were not of their sect must be rebaptised. Among them was a faction called the Circumcellions, because they prowled ceaselessly around the cells of the brethren and sought out the faithful on all sides to lead them astray. They were so barbarous that they cruelly put to death all who fell into their hands and would not renounce the Catholic faith, without distinction of sex, age or condition. They demolished churches, overthrew altars, plundered the goods of priests and drove the orthodox from their houses; they mutilated some, threw quicklime mixed with vinegar

into the eyes of others, and practised every kind of cruelty on those who resisted them. As Saint Augustine was their most formidable adversary, they had conceived an implacable hatred of him. They used both force and cunning to get rid of him. They proclaimed everywhere that he was a ravening wolf and a seducer of souls who must be done away with, and that whoever struck the blow would render a signal service to the Church and deserve eternal praise. Indeed they often made attempts on his life, and but for a particular protection of divine Providence they would have cruelly put him to death.

It was Augustine's glory to have such monsters to fight. He beat them continually in his sermons. He showed the impiety and falsity of their sect, overthrew their dogmas by powerful reasoning, and little by little undermined their party. At last he dealt them the death-blow at the famous conference of Carthage held under the emperor Honorius in the presence of Count Marcellinus, whom that prince had sent as commissioner; for by the zeal and prudence of our holy Doctor the Donatists were confounded there and the unity of the Catholic Church was perfectly established. What hindered the conversion of the perverted bishops was that they had been stripped of their sees and other bishops put in their place. Some arrangement therefore had to be found to bring them back to the faith. Saint Augustine, in the book he wrote on what passed between him and Emeritus, bishop of the Donatists, relates what was done for this purpose. The Catholic bishops wrote to Marcellinus to show their desire for reunion. If they were defeated in the conference, they would give up their sees without claiming anything further; and if they were victorious, although it could then no longer be doubted that they were the true pastors, they consented, for the sake of peace and so that two bishops might not be seen in one church, that both should renounce their dignity and a third be made the sole head. "Why should we make any difficulty," they said, "about offering this sacrifice to our Redeemer? What! He came down from heaven into a mortal body so that we might be His members, and we should find it hard to come down from our thrones to prevent His members from being torn apart by cruel division? We have nothing better for ourselves than the quality of Christians faithful and obedient to God; let us keep it, then, inviolate. But as for the quality of bishops, we have it only with regard to our peoples, since it is for them that we were made bishops; we must therefore dispose of it, either to keep it or to give it up, as shall be most expedient for the peace of the faithful."

Shortly before this conference of Carthage, Saint Augustine had this letter read by Alypius in the presence of three hundred Catholic bishops, and by his urgent remonstrances obliged them all to agree to this view. This began the ruin of the Donatist schism. Some time after the conference he attended, by order of the sovereign Pontiff, another assembly held at Caesarea in Mauretania, where he completed their destruction. Besides the Manichaeans and the Donatists, he also made war on the Pelagians. Pelagius, an Englishman by birth, of a restless and turbulent but very artful mind, had spread his pernicious doctrine everywhere, denying that grace was necessary to will good and practise virtue, and maintaining that free will alone, with natural gifts and qualities, sufficed for both. He had so well disguised his false dogmas that at the Synod of Diospolis he passed for orthodox; but Augustine, having discovered the poison hidden beneath them, wrote vigorously against him and proved divinely the necessity of interior grace to move our will to produce the supernatural acts by which we merit eternal glory. He spent ten whole years answering the writings of this heresiarch, and did so with such admirable eloquence and in so sublime a style that, as in the rest of his works he far surpasses the other Doctors, in writing on this subject he seems to have surpassed himself. Saint Jerome, having read what he had written, would write no more on the subject, because, finding it exhausted by Saint Augustine, he admitted that there was nothing to add. One can see the treatises of his that have come down to us, in which he shows the necessity and efficacy of grace, the ravages of original sin, the corruption of our nature by that sin, and the freedom man always enjoys in his greatest weakness. He proves all these truths by such explicit texts of Scripture, and explains them with such clearness and such fine thoughts, that all who have since wished to treat this subject soundly have held to his views and followed his principles, without fear of going astray in so thorny a subject. At the councils of Carthage and Milevis he was charged with writing against Pelagius and informing the faithful of what had been decided; and since then passages of his

writings have served to compose the definitions and Canons that general and provincial Councils have made on the same subject, and the sovereign Pontiffs have referred to his doctrine those who wished to know the mind of the Church concerning divine grace. It is true that Cassian, author of the *Conferences*, and Faustus, bishop of Riez in Provence (Semi-Pelagians), found fault with what he had written on the necessity of grace for every kind of salutary act, and composed some works against him in which they tried to soften his doctrine somewhat. Even Saint Hilary and Saint Prosper, his most zealous disciples, begged him to explain himself, because many, misinterpreting his views, took occasion from them to give themselves up to idleness or despair. But he again made truth triumph over these remnants of Pelagianism by the books *On the Predestination of the Saints* and *On the Gift of Perseverance*. After justifying his views by arguments drawn from holy Scripture and from the works of Saint Cyprian, Saint Ambrose and Saint Gregory Nazianzen, he says: “I know for certain that no one can, without error, dispute against this doctrine which we teach and defend by the authority of the holy Scriptures.” Then he adds: “Let him who understands these truths give thanks to God for them; but let him who does not understand them pray the interior Teacher of souls to draw back the curtain that hides these mysteries from him and take away the film from his eyes that prevents him from seeing them, so that he may not remain any longer in error.” These words show, given the great modesty of our holy Doctor, that he was fully convinced he was defending the side of truth. And indeed after his death Pope Saint Celestine, writing to the bishops of France, gave him this illustrious testimony: “We have always held the blessed Augustine in our communion for his life and his merits; there was never the least suspicion either of the purity of his faith or of the integrity of his morals. On the contrary, we know that all our predecessors loved and honoured him as a most excellent Doctor of the Church.”

The defeat of Jovinian increased still further the number of Saint Augustine’s victories. He was a priest of Venus rather than of Jesus Christ, keeping an open school at Rome, where he taught, to the detriment of religious chastity, that marriage should be preferred to continence. Our holy Prelate combated this error. He wrote and preached against it, and by the force of his doctrine he overthrew the maxims of this false priest and stirred up the faithful to the love of purity. We shall not dwell on Maximinus and Felicianus, Arians; on Parmenian, Cresconius, Gaudentius and Petilian, Donatists; on Caelestius and Julian, bishop of Capua, Pelagians; and finally on many others whom he overthrew. So as not to swell this history excessively, it is enough to say that all their artifices served only to raise new trophies to Augustine’s glory. But we cannot leave out what he did to complete the confusion and destruction of idolatry. When Alaric, king of the Goths and an Arian by religion, took the city of Rome, which he gave over to pillage and sacked completely, except for the inhabitants who had taken refuge in the church of Saint Peter, the pagans threw the blame for these misfortunes on the Christians, proclaiming that since people had ceased to worship the gods of the empire they had been overwhelmed with every kind of calamity. But our incomparable Doctor, unable to bear this unjust reproach being made against the Church of Jesus Christ, at once undertook its defence to clear it of this calumny. For this purpose he composed the twenty-two books of the *City of God*, which he dedicated to the tribune Marcellinus. In them he shows, with as much eloquence as solidity, that these great calamities had happened only because of the worship of false gods, that the temple of Saint Peter was respected by the barbarians, and that the Christian religion had been able to soften them a little.

Finally, Saint Augustine was not content with fighting the enemies of the faith and disarming infidels, heretics, libertines and schismatics; he wished also to work for the universal Church. For besides the polemical works he composed, he wrote treatises for every state of civil and Christian life. Married people, widows, virgins, religious, clerics and lay people find in his books the soundest maxims for their conduct. His doctrine is like a river whose source never runs dry, spreading over all the branches of the Church to make them flourish and bear every kind of good work and fruit worthy of Jesus Christ. He drew up the rules of grammar for children; he composed a rhetoric for orators; he explained the categories for philosophers; he sought out with great labour and exactness the rarest things of antiquity for the curious; he wrote whole volumes of positive theology for preachers; he treated with marvellous penetration the mysteries of religion,

the Trinity, the divine processions, the Incarnation, predestination and grace, for theologians; he left meditations all of fire and sublime contemplations for mystics; he provided many fine laws for jurists; in a word, he enriched the Church with countless writings, formidable and invincible weapons to overthrow those who dare to attack her. Pope Martin V, in the sermon he preached at the translation of the relics of Saint Monica, proclaims that no Saint has rendered such great services to the Church as Augustine. Saint Paulinus, bishop of Nola, his intimate friend, says in a letter he wrote to him that he is the salt of the earth with which hearts are seasoned to make them incorruptible; a Furnace of charity and a Seraph burning with the fire of the love of God; a Lamp set on the lampstand which scatters the darkness of error and by its burning light sets all Catholic truths in their finest light. Sulpicius Severus calls him the industrious Bee that feeds the faithful with its honey and kills heretics with its sting. Saint Remigius of Auxerre says that he surpasses the other Doctors in the exposition of the Scriptures as far as the sun surpasses the little lights that are kindled in the sky at night. Saint Jerome, in one of his letters, speaks to him in these terms: “Your virtue is preached wherever there are tongues that can speak. Catholics honour you and acknowledge you as the restorer of their ancient law; and what adds to your glory is that heretics fear you as their most formidable enemy.” Serapion, in a treatise addressed to Arnobius the Younger, which is found among the works of Saint Irenaeus, says: “His learning is so irreproachable that one cannot censure it without convicting oneself of heresy out of one’s own mouth.” And Arnobius, in his reply, admits that he is of the same opinion and upholds his doctrine as firmly as if the Apostles had dictated it to him. Saint Gregory, pope, advises reading his works to fatten one’s soul on delicious meat. Finally, ecclesiastical writers call him the Mirror of prelates, the Master of theology, the Ornament of bishops, the Glory of the whole priestly Order, the Light of Doctors, the Sun of Africa, the Shield of the faith, the Scourge of heretics, the Temple of religion, the Firmament of the Church and the unshakeable Pillar of truth.

But what is most admirable in him is that he was able to unite perfectly with his deep learning a great tenderness of heart for God and ecstatic feelings of devotion in his prayers. Learning often gives only brilliant light to the mind without kindling the fire of divine love. Augustine did not separate practice from theory; his heart received the same impressions as his mind, and as he had admirable knowledge of the Godhead, he felt marvellous ardours of love for it. One has only to glance at his *Confessions* and *Soliloquies*, his *Manual* and his *Meditations*, which are extracts from his writings, not only to be convinced that he loved much, but to be touched by the same flames with which he burned. “Receive this heart, O my dear Master,” he says in one meditation; “shoot at it all the arrows of Your divine love. Oh, how sweet and lovable those wounds will be to me! Oh, how glorious I shall be if my soul can one day say: I have been nursed by Your charity!” And as if he had been heard, he says in his *Confessions*: “You had shot into my heart an arrow of love that pierced it so deep that the iron has remained in the wound.” Some authors, relying on these words, have said that his heart actually received the imprint of Our Lord’s wounds. However that may be, it is enough to say that he was so penetrated by this divine fire that he breathed nothing but charity. All that is most brilliant in honours, sweetest in the delights of life, most advantageous in the favours of fortune and most charming in the company of men, all this, we say, seemed to him unworthy of the least desire of his heart; and he protests that the deep learning which had won him so many admirers would have been unbearable to him had it not led him to intimate union with his Beloved. “O my God,” he said, “how unhappy is he who knows much and does not know what You are; but a thousand times happy he who knows You, though he be ignorant of all the other things in the world!” Some learned men believe that Jesus Christ, to test the love Saint Augustine bore Him, put to him three different times the same question He put to Saint Peter: “Augustine, do you love Me?”

“You know, Lord,” he answered, “that I love You, though my love is unworthy of You; but as You deserve to be loved, make my love worthy of You!” “But what would you do for Me?” Jesus Christ went on. “I would willingly consent,” Augustine replied, “for the fire of heaven to come down upon me and devour me completely on Your altars, that I might be a holocaust pleasing to Your divine Majesty!” “What more would

you do for Me?" Jesus Christ continued. "Ah!" Augustine went on in a transport of love, "if it could be that I were God and You were Augustine, I would choose with all my heart to be Augustine, so that You might be God."

This astonishing and unheard-of hyperbole shows how far his charity went. The illustrious Giles of the Presentation, general of his Order, tutor of Philip the Fair and archbishop of Bourges, believes that this fervent love was rewarded even in this life by the clear vision of the divine essence, and that he was favoured with it in a rapture he had at Ostia; this, however, is uncertain.

All Augustine's fine and exquisite qualities and these extraordinary favours of heaven served only to humble him more deeply. He was so convinced of his own nothingness and so ashamed of the disorders of his youth that he thought himself unworthy to receive the least caress from Jesus Christ. After spending more than forty years in the study of sacred Letters, he confesses that he does not understand them and finds them as difficult as at the beginning. He could not bear to be given any praise or to be granted any precedence over others. In a letter he wrote to the Donatists he says that their bishops had not wished to confer with him because they did not wish to speak to a sinner such as he was. He begged Saint Jerome to examine his writings and to censure and correct them as a master. The learned are aware of the dispute these two holy doctors had together. The question was whether the rebuke Saint Paul gave Saint Peter at Antioch about the legal ceremonies, spoken of in the Epistle to the Galatians, had been feigned and only apparent, or real. Saint Jerome maintained that it had been only feigned, and that this interpretation could not be attacked without impairing the truth of Saint Paul's text. Saint Augustine held the contrary view. Saint Jerome took offence and wrote him a strong letter, not to say a sharp and heated one, in which he treated him as a young bishop, little versed in Scripture, who sought by new opinions to gain credit at the expense of the ancient Doctors who had grown old in the study of sacred Letters. Although Saint Augustine's view, which Saint Thomas followed, was more in keeping with that of the Church, he nevertheless upheld it in his reply with great humility, gentleness and respect for that great man, to whom he acknowledged himself inferior in learning; and this Christian conduct led Saint Jerome to change his view in his Dialogues against the Pelagians.

But the finest and most brilliant fruits of his humility are the books entitled *Retractations*[1] and his *Confessions*, in which he himself paints the picture of his mind and his heart. In the *Retractations* he goes over all the treatises he had written up to then, before and after his baptism, during his priesthood and since he had been bishop, and corrects them with such severity and exactness that he omits neither sentence, nor word, nor syllable. In the *Confessions* he uncovers his wounds with such sincerity, and depicts the disorders of his youth, which he goes back to seek even in the first years of his childhood, with such clearness that he does not forget the least circumstance. He is not ashamed to confess there the evil inclinations that drew him to vice and the follies of his imagination that had led him so far astray; he declares frankly all the irregularities of his life and the excesses into which bad company had thrown him; he weighs them in the scales of the sanctuary, without flattering or disguising himself. He is willing for everyone to know his wretchedness, so that God's mercy towards him may be the more admired. In short, he wishes posterity to know that he was a heretic, a libertine and a sinner, to teach us by this humility that penance gives glory to God and is profitable to the one who practises it.

Such was the life of the great Augustine up to the age of seventy-two. Seeing himself then even more worn out by the labours he had endured than weighed down by old age, he thought only of preparing for death by the contemplation of heavenly things, to which his soul aspired with inconceivable ardour. To have more leisure for this, he asked the clergy and the people to accept as his coadjutor and successor the priest Eraclius, whose piety and learning were as well known to them as to himself. He then spent the four years he still lived in continual transports of a most pure love for God, without however ceasing to preach to his people and to answer those who consulted him.

Some time before our Saint's death, Count Boniface, who governed Africa in the name of Rome, having been set at odds with the empress Placidia by Aetius, took his revenge by calling in the Vandals from Spain. Saint Augustine wrote to him to turn him from this treason, but the count did not heed his salutary advice. Eighty thousand barbarians rushed upon Africa and in a short time ruined the whole country by sacrilege, burning, theft and pillage, sparing sacred things no more than profane. Most deplorable of all, after massacring the bishops, priests and religious, they brought back the Arian heresy, which our Saint had banished. His heart torn with grief at the sight of his country's misfortunes, our Saint remained among his people, whom he tried to relieve and console. When the flock suffers, the good shepherd must not go away. Soon the Vandals besieged the city of Hippo. It was on this occasion that Saint Augustine composed the beautiful prayer that begins with the words *Ante oculos tuos, Domine, culpas nostras ferimus*, which is found at the end of the Diurnals, and which Cardinal Seripando, who had taken it from an ancient manuscript, distributed at the Council of Trent, where he was the Pope's legate.

At last, consumed with sadness and able to bear no more, he said to the bishops: "My brothers and my fathers, let us pray together that these misfortunes may cease, or that God may take me from this world." Some time afterwards he took to his bed with a violent fever caused by the grief that flooded his soul, and soon it was seen with dismay that he was going to die. That heart, so tender and so strong, then took on something still more affectionate and tender. He used his last strength to dictate for the bishops of Africa an admirable letter in which he urged them not to abandon their peoples, to give them the example of resignation and patience, and to suffer and die with them and for them. It was his last writing and, as it were, his swan song; and it was worthy of that great heart to utter such a cry of love on the edge of the grave. Meanwhile the people of Hippo learned that Augustine was dying. At once his house was besieged. The faithful wished to see their bishop one last time. The sick crowded round his bed. Mothers brought their children for him to bless them. Moved by these marks of affection, the dying man offered his prayers with his tears to God. When a father asked him to lay his hands on his child's head and heal him, the gentle old man said with a smile: "If I had the power to heal, I would begin with myself." Nevertheless, as the father insisted, he laid his hand on the child's head, and the child was healed.

But Augustine no longer held to the earth. He was slipping away from the embraces of his people. Carried away by the love of God that consumed him, and at the same time held back by the memory of his sins, which forty years of expiation had not made him forget, he spent his last hours completing the purification of his soul. He had had the Penitential Psalms written on large strips of cloth and placed against the wall, and from his bed, in the last days of his sufferings, he read these verses with abundant and continual tears. "And so that no one might interrupt him in this last meditation," says Possidius, "about ten days before his death he begged us to let no one enter his room except at the hour of the physicians' visit. We obeyed him religiously, and this great man spent these last ten days in absolute silence, alone with God, in a singular mingling of repentance and love." At last, as the final hour drew near, all the bishops gathered one last time around his bed; and amid their embraces and sighs the soul of the holy old man took flight into the bosom of God, on 28 August 430. It was seventy-six years since Monica had brought him into the world, forty-three years since she had converted him by her tears, and forty-two since she had been waiting for him in heaven.

"Saint Augustine made no will," says Possidius, "because, having made himself poor for Jesus Christ, he had nothing left to give." He left, however, two great treasures to the Church: the Works he had composed and the Orders he had instituted. God showed by a singular protection how dear his books must be to Him; for when the Arian Vandals took and sacked the city of Hippo about a year after his death, they were never able to set fire to his library, although, knowing how much he had opposed them, they did their best to do so. The angels, as Baronius relates, prevented them from causing the Church this loss, which would have been irreparable. As for the religious Orders he founded, which are divided into more than sixty different Congregations of both sexes, they may be called immense treasuries from which the Church has at all times

drawn powerful help.

He is represented: (1) with a church in his hand, to show that by his pen he defended it far better than cities are defended with the sword; (2) holding a flaming heart in his hand, with several terrified and dying heretics at his feet. He is also seen represented with Saint Monica on the seashore. Saint Augustine is seated in the foreground. He is a young man of about thirty. His face is pale, delicate, still a little sad; his eyes are dark, deep and full of the finest fire; his thoughtful mouth is closed. Short hair, cut round the head, leaves visible a broad forehead on which a ray of light falls. With his left hand he presses his mother's hands.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — SES ÉCRITS.

His body was buried at Hippo in the church of Saint Stephen, which he had had built. In 498, as the Vandals threatened his tomb, his holy relics were devoutly carried off to Sardinia by exiled bishops of Africa and laid at Cagliari, in the basilica of Saint Saturninus, in an urn or tomb of white marble that still exists. Two centuries later this precious treasure fell into the hands of the Saracens together with the island of Sardinia. Liutprand, king of the Lombards, ransomed it and had it taken to Pavia on the fifth of the ides of October 722. It was laid in the triple crypt of the basilica of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro. Until Pope Innocent III it was entrusted to the keeping of the disciples of Saint Benedict. At that time they were replaced by the Canons Regular, to whom the Hermits of Saint Augustine were added in 1326. Visitors admire in this church the *Arca*, a marble monument raised by the Hermits of Saint Augustine about the middle of the fourteenth century. The statue of the Saint in pontifical vestments, lying dead with his head resting on a pillow, is the finest of the *Arca* and even of the period. Augustine's remains stayed buried with the most signal honours in the basilica of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro at Pavia until 1695, when they were discovered and once more exposed to the veneration of the faithful. The church of this abbey having been turned into a hospital, the precious shrine containing his bones was taken to the cathedral. The authenticity of these relics was confirmed by Benedict XIII in 1728. The relics and the monument of Saint Augustine, formerly guarded by the Canons Regular, whom the emperor Joseph II suppressed in 1781, and by the Augustinians, whom the revolutionaries of Italy abolished in 1799, were taken from the church of San Pietro to the cathedral, where they are still venerated. The monument stands in a side chapel on the Epistle side. Its front is in the form of an altar, and Mass is celebrated there.

Pope Gregory XVI having erected an episcopal see at Algiers in 1837, its first bishop, Mgr Dupuch, wished to obtain relics of Saint Augustine for his diocese. He sent a request to the bishop of Pavia, which was favourably received. A notable portion of the holy Doctor's bones was handed over to Mgr Dupuch, who, entrusted with this precious deposit, went to Toulon to return to Algeria. There he embarked on 25 October 1842 with Mgr Donnet, archbishop of Bordeaux, and their Lordships the bishops of Châlons, Marseilles, Digne, Valence and Nevers, and the holy relics were carried solemnly from the old cathedral of Toulon to the ship. After a happy voyage lasting three days the ship entered the roadstead of Bône, where a solemn office was held. On Sunday 30 October the same prelates translated the relics to the place where Hippo once stood and laid them in a monument raised to the memory of the holy Doctor and adorned with his statue.

It is not recorded that Saint Augustine worked any miracles during his life other than delivering possessed persons by the power of his prayers and tears and restoring a sick man to health by the laying on of his hands; but a fairly large number are related as having been worked at his tomb, which may be seen in his life composed by the Rev. Father Simplicien de Saint-Martin, a religious of his Order. There will be found a prodigious thing concerning the heart of Saint Augustine. This author, relying on the word of the other historians of his Institute, writes that Saint Sigisbert, a bishop in Germany, was begging God fervently to be pleased to give him some relic of this great Doctor, for whom he had a singular devotion, when the guardian angel of the same Saint appeared to him and, presenting him with a crystal vessel containing a heart, said these words to him: "After the death of the blessed Augustine, bishop of Hippo, I took his heart by God's

command and have preserved it from corruption until now. Behold, I bring it to you, that you may give it the veneration due to it." Sigisbert, overjoyed at having received so rich a treasure from heaven, assembled the people to give solemn thanks to God for it; and by a wonder as astonishing as it is glorious to the love with which that man of fire had burned during his mortal life, at the words of the *Te Deum*, *Sanctus*, *Sanctus*, *Sanctus*, his heart began to move, as if it were still animated by the flames of charity and the great zeal he had shown for the glory of the most holy Trinity. What is still more admirable, this same wonder was renewed every year in the sight of all on Trinity Sunday, when this precious heart was placed on the altar and High Mass was sung. This is perhaps one of the reasons why the Popes have allowed the religious of his Order to sing the preface of the Holy Trinity on his feast. It is also said that no heretic could enter the church with impunity while his heart was exposed there. It was the custom to touch other small hearts to this holy heart and keep them as relics. The illustrious Augustine of Jesus à Castro, primate of the Indies, has given us an authentic proof of this: when, by commission of Gregory XIII, he was visiting the monastery of Munich in Bavaria, he found among the holy relics a small silver shrine in which was an iron heart surrounded by a ring of gold, with this inscription on a parchment: *Cor admotum vero cordi sancti Augustini; ferreum propter nimiam ejus constantiam et aureum propter inflammatam ejus charitatem*, "A heart that has been applied to the true heart of Saint Augustine; it is of iron to show his great constancy; it is surrounded with gold to signify the ardours of his charity."

Volume I of the Works of the holy Doctor, in the Benedictine edition, contains the works he wrote in his youth and before he was a priest: (1) the two Books of *Retractations*; (2) the thirteen Books of his *Confessions*; (3) the three Books *Against the Academics*, in 386; (4) the Book *On the Happy Life*, the same year; (5) the two Books *On Order*, the same year; (6) the *Soliloquies*, so called because in them Saint Augustine converses with his soul, written in 387. — In the Appendix to volume VI of the Works of Saint Augustine there is another book of *Soliloquies*, which is spurious, as is the book of *Meditations*. These two works are modern and drawn from the true *Soliloquies* and the *Confessions* of the holy Doctor, from the writings of Saint Victor, etc. The same must be said of the *Manual*, which is a collection of thoughts of Saint Augustine, Saint Anselm, etc.; (7) the Book *On the Immortality of the Soul* is of the year 388; it is a supplement to the *Soliloquies*. The Saint composed it at Milan shortly after his Baptism; (8) *On the Quantity or Greatness of the Soul*, about the beginning of the year 388; (9) six Books *On Music*, finished in 389; (10) the Book *On the Teacher*, composed about the same time; (11) the three Books *On Free Will*, begun in 388 and finished in 395; (12) the two Books *On Genesis against the Manichaeans*, about the year 389; (13) the two Books *On the Morals of the Catholic Church and of the Manichaeans*, about 388; (14) the Book *On True Religion*, written about the year 390; (15) the *Rule for the Servants of God*; (16) the Book of *Grammar*, the *Principles of Dialectic*, the *Ten Categories*, the *Principles of Rhetoric*, the *Fragment of the rule given to Clerics*, the *second Rule* and the Book *On the Eremitical Life* are spurious works.

Volume II contains the letters of the holy Doctor, two hundred and seventy in number, arranged in chronological order. A great many of them are real treatises. — The Appendix to volume II contains: (1) sixteen Letters of Saint Augustine to Boniface and of Boniface to Saint Augustine, all of which are spurious; the Letter of Pelagius to Demetrias; (3) also to be regarded as spurious are the letters of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem to Saint Augustine and of Saint Augustine to Saint Cyril on the *Praises of Saint Jerome*, as well as the *Dispute* of the holy bishop of Hippo with Pascentius.

Volume III is divided into two parts, the first of which contains: (1) the four Books *On Christian Doctrine*, begun about the year 397 and finished in 426; the *Unfinished Book on the Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, in 393; (3) the twelve Books *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, begun in 401 and finished in 415; (4) the seven Books of *Locutions*, or ways of speaking, on the first seven Books of Scripture, about the year 419; (5) the seven Books of *Questions on the Heptateuch*, in 419; (6) the *Notes on Job*, about the year 400; (7) the *Mirror*, drawn from Scripture, about the year 427.

The Appendix to the first part of volume III contains: (1) three Books *On the Wonders of Scripture*; (2) the *Opuscule on the Blessings of the Patriarch Jacob*; (3) *Questions on the Old and New Testament*; (4) a *Commentary on the Apocalypse*; these four works are spurious. — In the second part of the same volume are found: (1) the four Books *On the Harmony of the Evangelists*, about the year 400, the author's aim being to show that there is nothing in the four Evangelists that does not agree; (2) the two Books *On the Sermon on the Mount*; (3) the two Books of *Questions on the Gospels*, about the year 400; (4) the Book of *Seventeen Questions on Saint Matthew*, which several scholars doubt to be by Saint Augustine; (5) the hundred and twenty-four *Tractates on Saint John*, about the year 416; (6) the ten *Tractates on the Epistle of Saint John*, about the same year; (7) the *Exposition of some passages of the Epistle to the Romans*, about the year 394; (8) the beginning of the *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, about the same year; (9) the *Exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians*, about the same year. Volume IV contains the *Expositions on the Psalms*, in the form of discourses, which were finished in 415.

Volume V contains the sermons of Saint Augustine, divided into five classes: (1) the Sermons on various passages of the Old and New Testament, a hundred and eighty-three in number; (2) eighty-eight Sermons *de Tempore*, on the great feasts of the year; (3) sixty-nine Sermons *de Sanctis*, on the feasts of the Saints; (4) twenty-three Sermons on various subjects; (5) thirty-one Sermons that are doubtfully by Saint Augustine. — The sermons attributed to Saint Augustine and contained in the Appendix number three hundred and seventeen and are divided into four classes, bearing the same titles as the preceding ones. Some sermons that had until then been attributed to Saint Augustine are restored to Saint Caesarius of Arles, Saint Ambrose, Saint Maximus, etc.

Volume VI contains the holy Doctor's dogmatic works on various points of morals and discipline: (1) the *Eighty-three Questions*, in 388, in which Saint Augustine answers several difficulties on different subjects; (2) the two Books of *Various Questions to Simplicianus*; (3) the Book of *Eight Questions to Dulcitius*, in 422 or 425, an answer to difficulties put to the Saint in 421 by Dulcitius, a tribune in Africa; (4) the Book *On the Belief in Things Unseen*, in 399; (5) the Book *On Faith and the Creed*, in 393; (6) the Book *On Faith and Works*, in 413; (7) the *Enchiridion to Laurence*, or Book *On Faith, Hope and Charity*, about the year 421; (8) the Book *On the Christian Combat*, about the year 396; (9) the Book *On the Manner of Instructing the Unlearned*, about the year 400; (10) the Book *On Continence*, about the year 395; (11) the Book *On the Good of Marriage*, about the year 401; (12) the Book *On Holy Virginity*, about the same year; (13) *On the Good of Widowhood*, about the year 414; (14) *On Adulterous Marriages*, about the year 419; (15) the Book *On Lying*, about the year 425; (16) the Book *Against Lying*, to Consentius, about the year 420; (17) *On the Work of Monks*, about the year 400; (18) the Book *On the Divination of Demons*, about the years 406–411; (19) the Book *On the Care to be Had for the Dead*, about the year 421; (20) the Book *On Patience*, about the year 428; (21) *On the Creed, to the Catechumens*; (22) three other Sermons on the Creed, which the latest editors of Saint Augustine doubt to be by the holy Doctor; (23) the Discourse *On Christian Discipline*, in which it is proved that the whole law is reduced to the love of God and of one's neighbour; (24) the Sermon *On the New Canticle, to the Catechumens*, doubtfully by Saint Augustine; (25) the Discourses *On the Fourth Feria* are not considered authentic either; (26) the same must be said of the Discourses *On the Flood* and *On the Persecution of the Barbarians*; (27) the Discourse *On the Usefulness of Fasting*, whose title sufficiently explains its subject; (28) the Discourse *On the Fall of Rome*. In the appendix to volume VI there are a great many works falsely attributed to Saint Augustine: (1) the Book of *Twenty-one Sentences or Questions*, a poor rhapsody of various passages from the works of Saint Augustine; (2) the Book of *Sixty-five Questions*, a work in much the same taste as the preceding but with more method; (3) the Book *On the Faith, to Peter*, which is by Saint Fulgentius; (4) the Book *On the Spirit and the Soul*, believed to be by Alcher, monk of Clairvaux, a collection of passages from various Fathers of the Church; (5) the Book *On Friendship*, an abridgement of the treatise on the same subject by Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx in England; (6) the Book *On the Substance of Love*, commonly attributed to Hugh of Saint-Victor; (7) the Book *On the Love of God*, which

also seems to be by the monk Alcher; (8) the *Soliloquies*, of which we have spoken elsewhere, as also of the *Meditations* and the *Manual*; (9) the Book *On Contrition of Heart*, drawn largely from Saint Anselm; (10) the *Mirror*, which seems to be by Alcuin; (11) the *Sinner's Mirror*, drawn from Saint Odo, abbot of Cluny, and above all from Hugh of Saint-Victor; (12) the Book *On the Three Dwellings*, namely the kingdom of God, the world and hell; (13) the *Ladder of Paradise*, which is by Guigo the Carthusian; (14) the Book *On the Knowledge of the True Life*, whose author is Honorius of Autun; (15) the Book *On the Christian Life*, the work of an Englishman named Fastidius; (16) the Book *Of Exhortation*, or *Of Salutary Teachings*, whose author is Paulinus, patriarch of Aquileia; (17) the Book *On the Twelve Abuses of the World*, cited by Jonas of Orléans; (18) the *Treatise on the Seven Vices and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, which is by Hugh of Saint-Victor and has been left out of the new edition of Saint Augustine; (19) the Book *On the Conflict of Vices and Virtues*, which the Benedictines give to Ambrose Autpert, monk of San Vincenzo on the Volturno near Benevento; (20) the Book *On Sobriety and Chastity*; (21) the Book *On True and False Penance*; (22) the Book *On Antichrist*, attributed to Alcuin; (23) the *Psalter* which Saint Augustine is said to have composed for his mother, a prayer drawn from the psalms; (24) the exposition of the canticle *Magnificat*, which is only a poor extract from that of Hugh of Saint-Victor; (25) the Book *On the Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, which seems to be by an author of the twelfth century; (26) the Book *On the Visitation of the Sick*, which is not very old; (27) the two Discourses *On the Consolation of the Dead*, which are perhaps drawn from Saint John Chrysostom; (28) the Treatise *On the Rectitude of Catholic Conduct*, drawn largely from the sermons of Saint Caesarius of Arles; (29) the Discourse *On the Creed*, a patchwork of passages from Rufinus, Saint Gregory, Saint Caesarius, etc. — There follow several other small treatises that deserve little attention, as they have nothing remarkable about them. Volume VII contains the twenty-two Books of the *City of God*. This work was begun in 413 and finished in 426.

In the appendix to volume VII are found the documents relating to the discovery of the relics of Saint Stephen: (1) the Letter of Avitus, a Spanish priest, to Balconius, bishop of Braga in Portugal, concerning the relics of the holy Martyr; Avitus joined to this letter a Latin translation of the account Lucian had given of the discovery of this precious treasure; (2) the Account of the discovery of the body of Saint Stephen by Lucian. This Lucian was a priest of Jerusalem and parish priest of a place called Caphargamala, where the relics of the holy Martyr lay; (3) the Letter of Anastasius the Librarian to Landulf, bishop of Capua, in which he tells him that he had translated into Latin the history of the translation of the relics of Saint Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople; this piece is spurious; (4) the Letter of Severus, bishop of the island of Minorca, to the whole Church, on the miracles worked in that island by the relics of Saint Stephen; it was written in 418, and its authenticity is not doubted; (5) the two Books *On the Miracles of Saint Stephen*, attributed to Evodius, bishop of Uzalis.

Volume VIII contains the holy Doctor's polemical writings: (1) the Treatise *On Heresies*, addressed to Quodvultdeus, deacon of Carthage; (2) the Treatise *Against the Jews*, sometimes entitled *Discourse on the Incarnation of the Lord*; (3) *On the Usefulness of Believing*, in 391; (4) the Book *On the Two Souls*, the same year; (5) the *Acts against Fortunatus the Manichaean*, in 392; (6) the Book *Against Adimantus*, in 394; (7) the Book *Against the Letter called "of the Foundation"*, about the year 397; (8) the *Disputations against Faustus the Manichaean*, divided into thirty-three books, about the year 400; (9) the two Books of the *Acts with Felix the Manichaean*, in 404; (10) the Book *On the Nature of the Good*, against the Manichaeans; (11) the Book *Against the Letter of Secundinus the Manichaean*, about the year 405; (12) the two Books *Against the Adversary of the Law and the Prophets*, in 420; (13) the Book *Against the Priscillianists and the Origenists*, about the year 415; (14) the Book *Against the Discourse of the Arians*, about the year 418; (15) the *Conference with Maximinus*, an Arian bishop, and the three books against the same heretic, written in 428; (16) the fifteen Books *On the Trinity*, begun in 400 and finished in 416. — The spurious works contained in the appendix are: (1) the Treatise *Against Five Heresies*; (2) the Book *On the Creed, against the Jews, the Pagans and the Arians*; (3) the Book *On the Dispute between the Church and the Synagogue*,

which is by a jurist; (4) the Book *On the Faith against the Manichaeans*, attributed in the manuscripts to Evodius of Uzalis; (5) the *Admonition on the Manner of Receiving Manichaeans*; (6) the Book *On the Trinity against Felicianus*, which is by Vigilius of Thapsus; (7) the *Questions on the Trinity and on Genesis*, drawn from Alcuin; (8) the two Books *On the Incarnation of the Word, to Januarius*, drawn from Rufinus' Latin version of Origen's *Principles*; (9) the Book *On the Trinity and the Unity of God*; (10) the Book *On the Essence of the Divinity, to Optatus*; (12) the Book *On Ecclesiastical Dogmas*, which is known to be by Gennadius of Marseilles.

Volume IX contains the polemical works against the Donatists, in this order: (1) the *Abecedarian Psalm against the Donatists*, towards the end of the year 393; (2) the three Books *Against the Letter of Parmenian*, about the year 400; (3) the seven Books *On Baptism, against the Donatists*, about the same time; (4) the three Books *Against Petilian*, about the year 400; (5) the *Epistle to the Catholics against the Donatists*, or Treatise *On the Unity of the Church*, in 402; (6) the four Books *Against the Donatist Cresconius*, a grammarian by profession, in 406; (7) the Book *On the Unity of Baptism, against Petilian and Constantius*, which seems to have been written about the year 411; (8) the *Summary of the Conference against the Donatists*, in 412; (9) the Book *To the Donatists after the Conference of Carthage*, in 413; (10) *Discourse to the people of the Church of Caesarea*, delivered in the presence of Emeritus, bishop of the party of Donatus; (11) *Discourse on what passed with Emeritus the Donatist*, in 413, or in 418 according to others; (12) the two Books *Against Gaudentius the Donatist*, in 420. — In the appendix to this volume are found: (1) the Book *Against Fulgentius the Donatist*, which is spurious; (2) various Documents relating to the History of the Donatists, which contribute greatly to the understanding of the works Saint Augustine wrote against these heretics. Volume X contains: (1) the three Books *On the Merits and Remission of Sins*, or *On the Baptism of Infants*, in 412; (2) the Book *On the Spirit and the Letter*, in 413; (3) the Book *On Nature and Grace*, in 415; (4) the Book *On the Perfection of Justice*, about the year 415; (5) the Book *On the Proceedings of Pelagius*, about the year 417; (6) the two Books *On the Grace of Jesus Christ and on Original Sin*, written in 418 after the Pelagians and their errors had been condemned by several Councils and by Pope Zosimus; (7) the two Books *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, to Count Valerius, in 419; (8) the four Books *On the Soul and its Origin*, about the year 420; (9) the four Books *To Boniface, against the Pelagians*, about the year 420; (10) the six Books *Against Julian*, about the year 423; (11) the Book *On Grace and Free Will*, in 426 or 427; (12) the Book *On Rebuke and Grace*, the same year; (13) the Books *On the Predestination of the Saints* and *On the Gift of Perseverance*; (14) the *Unfinished Work against Julian*, about the year 428. — The spurious works contained in the appendix to this tenth volume are: (1) the *Hypomnesticon* or *Hyponosticon*, in six books, a summary of the arguments suited to combat Pelagianism, whose author is unknown; (2) *On Predestination and Grace*, a book that seems to be by some Semi-Pelagian; (3) the Book *On the Predestination of God*, which is unworthy of Saint Augustine; (4) *Answer to the Objections of Vincent*, which are by Saint Prosper. — Then come several important documents concerning the history of Pelagianism. Volume XI contains the life of Saint Augustine, a general table of his works and a table of the matters contained in each. This life is little more than a Latin translation of the one Tillemont had written in French, which had not yet been printed. — The most exact and complete edition of the holy Doctor's works that we have is without question that of the Benedictines. It is in 11 folio volumes, of which the first two appeared at Paris in 1679 and the last in 1700. — From 1839 to 1845 three editions were made at Paris: by M. Mellier, under the direction of the abbé Caillau, in 43 octavo volumes; by the abbé Migne, in 16 large octavo volumes in two columns; and by MM. Gaume, in 22 instalments of the same format.

We have been content to give the titles of these works. Reasoned analyses of them may be seen in the French Translation of the Complete Works of Saint Augustine, 17 vols., large octavo jésus in two columns, printed by the Imprimerie des Célestins at Bar-le-Duc. To complete Father Giry we have used the *Histoire de saint Augustin* by M. Poujoulat, the *Histoire de ses reliques* by M. Bocard, honorary canon of Algiers, and the *Histoire de sainte Monique* by the abbé Bougaud, vicar general of Orléans.

Saint Vivian, Bishop of Saintes, Confessor[2]

460. — Pope: Saint Leo the Great. — King of France: Childeric I.

> *Amare proximum in Deo, charitatem habere est: studere vero propter Deum amari, charitati servire est.*
>
> *To love one's neighbour in God is to have charity; to strive to be loved for God's sake is to be the servant of charity.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Vivian, also called Bibien and Bien, was born at Saintes of a distinguished family. Some make him a descendant of the ancient kings of the country; it is known that the Romans sometimes recognised petty sovereigns in certain provinces in return for a tribute. Vivian's father was a pagan, and he persisted in his errors in spite of the fine examples of Christian virtue given him by Maurella, his wife, and by his admirable son. Our old hagiographers therefore see a mark of just reprobation in the eternal oblivion to which his name remains condemned.

Vivian's father placed his son at court, in the midst of all the seductions of the world, hoping to make him lose his taste for Christian virtue and piety. However that may be, Maurella had the happiness of seeing her son's innocence and faith escape the dangers that threatened them. He was sixteen when she entrusted his education to Saint Ambrose, then bishop of Saintes. Under the direction of this holy prelate Vivian made rapid progress in sacred and profane letters. It was then that his father, seeking to dazzle his young soul with the lure of honours and dignities, obtained for him the title and office of count of the Santones. The young count saw in it only duties to fulfil, occasions to practise charity and to render his country important services. Under his fatherly government and his prudent administration, Saintes recovered a new lustre and shone in the first rank among the cities of Aquitaine.

But this office, which Vivian had accepted only out of fear and to keep his father from going to the last excesses against him, he soon laid down. Yielding to a sudden inspiration, he renounced all the honours that the world promised him. He was soon ordained lector by Saint Ambrose, his bishop, who attached him to himself and made him pass successively through the minor orders within the space of time required by the laws of the Church. At last, having reached his thirty-third year, he was raised to the priesthood.

Immediately after the death of Saint Ambrose, the votes of the bishops of the province, of the clergy, of the senate and of the people fell unanimously on Vivian to raise him to the episcopal see. The holy priest's humility was alarmed, but it had to yield before the public will. In those unhappy times, when the fall of the Roman empire and the continual inroads of the barbarians multiplied calamities, the bishops were usually the only defenders of the oppressed and the only support of the weak. Their house was the refuge of the proscribed and of fugitives, and their inexhaustible charity the only resource of the public misery. Such did Vivian show himself, making himself all things to all men, like the Apostle.

He lived in community with his clerics, and before long laid with them the foundations of a monastery and a basilica in honour of the Prince of the Apostles. In a heavenly vision the angels gave him to understand that he was to make the new church the cathedral of his diocese. This monastery and basilica, built in the old Roman city, later became a conventual priory of Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, which was united to the bishopric and finally to the major seminary of Saintes. In the course of the year 419 the emperor Honorius had been forced to abandon our province of Aquitaine to the Visigoths of Spain. Toulouse became their capital, and from that time an era of calamities and persecutions opened. Passionately attached to Arianism, these peoples, though less barbarous than several others, had nothing but antipathy for Catholicism and Roman ways. On every occasion they treated the orthodox as the Huguenots treated them in the sixteenth century and the revolutionaries in the eighteenth, covering the country with ruins and blood. To keep them from profanation by the heretics, the inhabitants of Saintes had been obliged to destroy several of the

architectural masterpieces that were the glory of their town; those above all which, under the ramparts, might have offered a refuge to the enemy were sacrificed to the common safety. At last, driven to extremity by exactions and the most shameful vexations, the citizens took up arms in 450 and drove out the officers of Theodoric I. He, beside himself with rage, hastened up, ravaging all the towns in his path, and laid siege to Saintes. His vigorous attack soon brought the inhabitants to bay; their walls crumbled under the battering of the engines of war. Sword, fire and pillage laid everything waste, and the riches of the country were swallowed up in the gulf of the conqueror's insatiable greed. To all these disasters Theodoric added servitude: he carried off captive to Toulouse all the notables of Saintes, in the hope that privation and ill-treatment would sooner or later rid him of the most considerable among them, whose lands and treasures he promised himself to hand over as plunder to his officers.

A shepherd such as Saint Vivian could not abandon his sheep in such distress. He resolved to share their exile and their miseries, so as not to deprive them of the resources of his charity, and to protect their faith, which was in peril among the heretics. With no other weapons than prayer and the austerities of a penitent life, he undertook this long and dangerous journey in the wake of the captives; and wishing to crush the pomp of the heretics by his humility, he was content, for his whole equipage, with a rough cart drawn by two oxen. On his arrival at Toulouse his first care was to commend himself to the blessed Saturninus, pontiff and martyr of that city. He chose his dwelling in a village of the neighbourhood, near enough to be within reach of helping his brethren, and lonely enough for him to live there in peace, sheltered from persecution and far from the tumult of the capital. There he spent the nights in prayer, asking the Lord for the deliverance of his dear diocesans.

While our Saint was thus given up to prayer and works of charity, a thief stole the oxen that had drawn his cart during the journey and hid them in an out-of-the-way place. All at once the man felt his feet fixed to the ground by an invisible force. At the same time a bright light shone on the place where he had hidden his theft. Recognising in these wonders the hand of God striking him, he found himself obliged to confess his crime and to beg for pardon, prostrating himself at the feet of the holy bishop, who had nevertheless no authority to punish him. Vivian received him gently and even offered him money to help him live without resorting to theft, urging him henceforth to earn by his labour enough to live honestly.

This admirable deed came to the ears of the king. Theodoric wished to see Vivian. He summoned him to the palace and did him the signal honour of inviting him to his table with other prelates who happened to be at Toulouse. In spite of his repugnance for the company and favours of this heretical prince, the holy Bishop thought he ought to accept, so as to secure himself a favourable access to Theodoric in the interest of the prisoners from Saintonge.

At the time of the meal all the bishops present, Arians for the most part, offered the cup to the monarch in turn, according to the custom of the time. When Vivian's turn came he refused to take the cup, without troubling about the displeasure his refusal caused the king. The king indeed became furious at it. "Prince," the noble pontiff then said to him with dignity, "as a minister of the altars I can offer the chalice of the altars only to the children of the Church; and so, unless you sincerely return to orthodoxy, I cannot pay you the honour you expected of me."

This truly episcopal language only inflamed Theodoric's anger. In his passion he swore to take a striking and bloody vengeance for what he regarded as an insult, instead of seeing in it a salutary lesson that deserved his gratitude, and which a bishop after God's own heart owed him in conscience.

Vivian, calm in the midst of the storm, left the table and went to the church of the holy martyr Saturninus. Theodoric, drunk with rage and revelry, had already fallen asleep when the venerable prelate granted a little rest to his body, wearied by the length of the night office and its genuflexions. At that moment, through the merits of the blessed Saturninus, he appeared in a dream to the king of the Visigoths and struck him with

such terror that when the king, half dead with fright, came out of that crushing sleep, the anger and threats of the day before gave place to feelings of respect and goodwill towards the bishop of Saintes. The prince, who before had breathed nothing but bloodthirsty fury, had become, under the sway of the grace of Jesus Christ, gentle, humble and suppliant. In the morning Vivian was summoned to the king. Theodoric, on seeing him, apologised for the scenes of anger he had made the day before, and to win the Prelate's confidence he was the first to speak to him of the reason for his journey to Toulouse. "Blessed Pontiff," he said to him, "please forget the excesses of our passion. In reparation we grant you the object of your desires. We are disposed to refuse nothing that may be agreeable to you." At these words the holy Bishop understood that God alone could have thus changed that proud heart and calmed that violent and vindictive soul. He therefore asked without hesitation for the deliverance of his dear diocesans. It was granted him on the spot, and their goods that had been taken from them were even restored. Vivian returned with them to Saintes, taking for his own share only the merit of his good deeds. The captives' return to their homes was greeted with the most enthusiastic demonstrations: on every side there were the cries of joy of the city that saw its children again, and the thanksgivings of the Church of Saintes, happy to receive back its holy and charitable shepherd.

Later another circumstance gave Saint Vivian a new occasion to show his generous devotion to his people. Countless Saxon pirates were laying waste every point of the Ocean coast. One of their fleets came to land in Saintonge, at a place called Marciac[1] in the old historians. The whole invaded country was put to fire and sword. Thirst for richer plunder soon drove the Saxons towards Saintes, which they hoped to take by surprise. Unable to resist the superior forces of this cloud of barbarians, the inhabitants nevertheless did not lose heart; they had already proved the efficacy of their holy Pontiff's prayers, and they had recourse to him as their best defender. Meanwhile the Saxons surrounded the town; their engines were already set up to breach the ramparts when, all at once, all the defences of the place seemed to them covered with countless warriors whose threatening bearing disconcerted them. The Saxons felt no more strength for resistance than for attack: at every point they were seen beating a retreat, asking for peace and crying for mercy. They hastily regained Marciac and re-embarked, loudly ascribing their rout to a heavenly power swayed by the prayers of some virtuous mortal. Vivian, indeed, had obtained by his merits and his powerful intercession the deliverance of his country without the shedding of blood. The holy Bishop's name soon became famous, and from every side crowds of afflicted people were seen flocking to him, as to their only resource. The day was approaching when Vivian was to leave this life. Before dying he had the happiness of seeing completed the basilica he was raising in honour of Saint Peter, which he had received from heaven the command and inspiration to make his episcopal church, as we related above. The building, admirable for its proportions and the richness of its architecture, stood on the hill where the diocesan Seminary was built in the seventeenth century.[2] In the time of Saint Gregory of Tours this place was already a suburb of Saintes. Vivian was preparing to make the solemn dedication of the new cathedral. The spirit of prophecy with which God favoured him made known to him the day of his approaching end. He therefore took his measures so that his own funeral should coincide with the consecration of his basilica, and summoned the neighbouring bishops in good time. Meanwhile he called to him the people of his household, lay and ecclesiastical, gave each the kiss of peace, foretold the day of his death and prescribed the manner in which he wished his body to be laid in the tomb. For three days he did not cease exhorting his clergy to remain united in the bonds of a perfect charity, so as to fight with advantage for the true religion. On the third day, in the presence of the invited bishops and of the clerics of the various orders, leaving his body to the earth, he gave up his soul to heaven, where it went to receive, in the assembly of the angels, the garment of an immortal glory.

At the news of this death the mourning was general in the town and the whole country. Yet a ray of divine consolation shone in the midst of the general sadness. Vivian, people said, has gone to receive in the heavenly fatherland the glorious reward due to his merits, and from the abode of eternal bliss he will still make us feel his ever-compassionate kindness and his fatherly protection. It was therefore judged that, since his soul was in heaven, it was fitting that his body should be joined to the holy relics prepared for the

consecration of the new altars. Saint Vivian's deposition thus took place on the same day as that august ceremony, of which it even formed part. It was on the 28th of the month of August, 460, according to some historians.

Saint Vivian might be represented: (1) raising a dead man to life — this miracle, worked by the Saint on an inhabitant of Saintes, has in fact supplied the subject of a painting to be seen in the parish church of Pons; (2) healing a poor wretch black all over with leprosy; (3) tracing the sign of the cross on the lifeless body of a child bitten by a viper, and restoring him in full health to his weeping parents.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Every year, for many centuries, pilgrims came in crowds on 28 August to venerate the relics of the holy Bishop. It is only in the last few years that the Church of Saintes has again celebrated his feast on this date, hallowed by a tradition fourteen centuries old. Saint Vivian's day was, for Saintonge, one of those notable times of the year which were named in public deeds as a term of payment. Devotion to this admirable Pontiff was at all times so popular that his former diocese counted no fewer than seventeen parish churches dedicated to him. A certain number are still found in the dioceses of Bordeaux, Angoulême, Agen and Bayonne. On the edge of the forest of Benon there was a monastery of nuns of Fontevrault, whose chapel, called the chapel of Saint-Bivien, can still be seen. Near Aigrefeuille-d'Aulnis there was likewise a house of men under the same dedication. Of this last nothing remains but the name of Saint-Bien, an abbreviation frequently used, especially outside our diocese. The Chapter of Saintes honoured Saint Vivian with a quite particular devotion. Every year, on the evening before the Saint's feast, a deputation of Canons went in procession to his church to sing Matins there with great solemnity, together with the clergy of the place, whose chaplain presided in the choir. This feast was one of those celebrated with an octave in the old cathedral of Saintes.

In the sixth century Bishop Eusebius undertook to rebuild the church of Saint-Vivien on a larger plan. Death prevented him from finishing his work. Emerius, his successor, lacking sufficient resources to complete this sumptuous building, had recourse to the generosity of his metropolitan, Saint Leontius the Younger. This illustrious prelate, at the moment of being raised to the episcopate, was bound in marriage to Placidina, a princess of imperial blood. By common consent the two spouses separated to live in continence when the Church of Bordeaux chose Leontius as its chief pastor. Placidina had been the first to suggest to her husband that he accept this dignity in the interest of Catholicism. From that day Leontius and Placidina employed their immense revenues in building and endowing churches. One of the finest monuments of their pious liberality was the church of Saint-Vivien at Saintes, whose splendour and elegance inspired Saint Venantius Fortunatus with fine verses in praise of the generous founders. Magnificent panelling adorned the inside of the new sanctuary. A skilful artist had carved there figures of animals so true to life that one would have thought them alive, says the poet. The Saint's tomb above all was marvellously rich. It was covered with plates of chased silver inlaid with gold, and the art with which these precious metals were combined greatly enhanced their brilliance.

The entire body of Saint Vivian was kept in this church until the ninth century. At that time, by one of those stratagems which the piety of the age thought permissible, monks of the monastery of Figeac managed to steal a considerable part of the holy Bishop's relics and brought them to their abbey, where they worked many miracles. The author of the account of this theft relates several of which he was an eyewitness at two Councils to which these precious relics had been carried in great pomp. These Councils are those of Coles, in Auvergne, and of Limoges, both assembled to regulate what was then called the Truce of God. These same relics of Saint Vivian were taken from the treasury of Figeac in 1329, by order of Bertrand de Cardaillac, bishop of Cahors, to be solemnly exposed to the veneration of the faithful. In the fifteenth century Guy de Rochechouart, bishop of Saintes, sent a portion of those kept in that town to the parish church erected several

centuries before at Rouen under the dedication of Saint Vivian. Signal graces often obtained there had made this sanctuary famous.

In the sixteenth century the church of Saint-Vivien at Rouen was burnt by the Protestants with all the relics it contained; at Saintes the tomb and church of the holy Bishop suffered the same fate.

Taken from the Bulletin religieux of La Rochelle and Saintes.

Saint Julian of Brioude, Soldier and Martyr (4th century)

There is no profession, however opposed to religion men's prejudices may suppose it, in which one cannot be saved: Saint Julian of Brioude is an admirable proof of it. He belonged to one of the best families of Vienne in Dauphiné (Isère), and he held a high rank in the army of the emperor Diocletian. He encouraged himself in the faith by the example of the tribune Ferreolus, who had given him hospitality and who also worshipped Jesus Christ. When the persecution was declared in Gaul, and Crispinus, governor of the province of Vienne, had promulgated the imperial decrees against the Christians, Julian left the house of Saint Ferreolus and withdrew to Brioude (Haute-Loire), to the house of a pious widow who hid him from the searches of the persecutors.

Yet Julian had not left Vienne out of fear of death: quite the contrary, there was nothing he desired so much as the glory of martyrdom. And so, on learning that the emperor's officers were looking for him everywhere, he went out to meet them and said to them fearlessly: "I have stayed too long in this world; I burn with an ardent desire to be united to Jesus Christ." He had scarcely finished speaking when the soldiers cut off his head. This was at the beginning of the fourth century. The place of the Saint's burial long remained unknown. God revealed it miraculously to Saint Germanus of Auxerre when he passed through Brioude on his way back from Arles, about the year 431. The Acts of his life and martyrdom are reproduced in a magnificent stained-glass window which the parish priest of Saint-Julien, near Troyes, has just had placed in the sanctuary of his church. Several churches of the diocese of Nevers — Mars-sur-Allier, Mesves, Dornes and Fleury-sur-Loire — honour him as their patron. The cathedral possesses an arm of Saint Julian, enshrined in a silver reliquary; the parish of Mesves also possesses a small part of his relics. The parishes of Dierrey, Saint-Nabord and Saint-Julien, near Troyes, likewise recognise our Saint as their patron.

Taken from the Saints de Troyes, *by the abbé Defer, and from the* Hagiologie Nivernaise, *by Mgr Crosnier.*

Saint Moses the Ethiopian, Solitary in the Desert of Scete, in Egypt (400)

Moses was born in Ethiopia (present-day Abyssinia), a great country of eastern Africa. Black like the inhabitants of that sun-scorched land, he had a conscience blacker still than his body. At first the slave of a rich townsman, he showed nothing but an unhappy inclination to every kind of vice; soon his master, weary of being unable to gain anything over his intractable nature, turned him out of his house altogether. He then made himself the leader of a band of robbers and committed a thousand acts of brigandage: his crimes spread terror everywhere, together with hatred of his name.

However, God touched this perverted heart with His grace and made of Moses a perfect penitent. The notorious robber of yesterday, his heart now pierced with compunction and his face bathed in tears, presented himself to the religious of a neighbouring monastery and showed a lively regret for his crimes. After making a public confession of his sins to them, he begged them earnestly to set him in the way of salvation and to grant him its precious pledge by clothing him with the monastic habit. After several days of trial he was admitted into the community. You would then have seen him become, in a short time, as well formed in the religious virtues as if he had practised them for many years. Exact in every duty, in fasts, vigils and prayers, he joyfully carried out everything that was commanded him for the service of the monastery. He lived on nothing but bread and water and spent whole nights without sleeping. He excelled in the virtues of humility

and compunction, groaning ceaselessly and shedding torrents of tears.

The deserts of Scete and Calamus were later the happy witnesses of his austerities. The devil waged hard battles against him, but he overcame them with the help of heaven, and they served only to establish him firmly in the most sublime virtues.

The admirable progress he had made in the religious virtues, joined to the extraordinary gifts with which God had favoured him, earned him a rank among the most illustrious Fathers of the solitude. He was raised to the priesthood and made priest of the solitaries of Scete by Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria. It was in the midst of the unceasing efforts he made to raise his conduct to the height of his dignity that he died in his desert of Scete, aged seventy-five, after forming seventy-five disciples.

Acta Sanctorum, 28 August. — Cf. Les Pères des déserts d'Orient, *by Michel-Ange Marin.*

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[1] He is also called Pelay. — The Constance meant here is Constance on the Rhine (grand duchy of Baden). It is well known that Germania or Upper Germany, which corresponds today to the Rhineland, was formerly one of the seventeen provinces of Gaul proper, which the Romans called *Gallia Transalpina*.

[2] The holy martyrs Caius, Fortunatus and Anthes are titular patrons of the city of Salerno (Principato Citeriore). Their bodies at first rested in an oratory dedicated to them outside the walls of Salerno; on 15 May 940 they were moved inside the city for fear of the Saracens. The basilica of Saint John was enriched with this precious treasure, which it still possesses. — Papebroch, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] Cf. *Histoire de l'Église et de la province de Poitiers*, by the abbé Auber, historiographer of the diocese. Poitiers, 1866.

[4] II Paralip., XXIX, 8–11.

[5] Ibid., 12–19.

[6] II Paralip., XXIX, 20 to the end.

[7] II Paralip., XXX, 1–11.

[8] II Paralip., XXXI, 2 to the end.

[9] M. Poujoulat rightly remarks that the true title of this work is *De Recensione Librorum*. In this Review of his works Saint Augustine had nothing false or imprudent to retract. Severe as he was, he could only correct a few slight inaccuracies, clear up obscure points and develop incomplete thoughts.

[10] Alias: Bibien, Bien.

[11] This is perhaps Meursac. A commandery of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem was established in the Middle Ages at Les Épaux, in the neighbourhood of this place, where the marshes, then still under water, offered a landing-place.

[12] Today the Naval Hospital.

29 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, whose head Herod had cut off about the feast of Easter. Its solemnity is kept on this day because it is the day on which his venerable head was found for the second time. It was translated to Rome, where it is honoured with singular devotion by all the people in the church of Saint Sylvester in the Campus Martius.[1] 31. — At Rome, on the Aventine, the birthday of SAINT SABINA, martyr, who was struck with the sword under the emperor Hadrian and won the palm of martyrdom. 119. — Also at Rome, Saint Candida, virgin and martyr, whose body Pope Paschal I translated to the church of Saint Praxedes. — At Antioch in Syria, the birthday of the holy martyrs Nicaeas and Paul. — At Constantinople, the holy martyrs Hypatius, a bishop of Asia, and Andrew, a priest, who suffered for the veneration of the holy images under the emperor Leo the Isaurian; their beards were smeared with pitch and then set on fire, and the skin of their heads was torn off; finally they were butchered. 8th c. — At Perugia, Saint Euthymius, a Roman, who, fleeing the persecution of Diocletian, withdrew to that city with his wife and his son Crescentius, and died there in peace in Our Lord. About 309. — At Metz, SAINT ADELPHUS, bishop and

confessor. 5th c. — At Paris, the death of SAINT MERRY or MEDERICUS, priest. About 700. — In England, Saint Sebba,[2] king. 697. — At Smyrna, a city of Turkey in Asia, the birthday of Saint Basilla.[3] — In the diocese of Troyes, Saint Savina or Sabina, virgin, illustrious for her virtues and her miracles.[4] 313.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Paris, Saint Frou or Frodulphus, solitary, a disciple of Saint Merry or Medericus, who is named in the Roman martyrology of this day. He died at Barjon, near Grancey (Côte-d'Or, arrondissement of Dijon), on 22 April, the day under which he is named in the martyrology of France. 8th c. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint Merry, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Louvain, a town of Belgium in the province of South Brabant, Saint Verona, virgin, of the royal family of France. She was the daughter of Louis the German (876), third son of Louis the Pious. When her father died she distributed all her goods to the poor and founded a monastery where she took the religious habit. She died at Mainz, where garments that belonged to her are kept. Koblenz also possesses some of her relics. About a league from Louvain there is a chapel dedicated under her name: it is there that she was buried; near the oratory is a spring called the fountain of Saint Verona. About 870. — In the Limousin, the Venerable Jean Audebert, a Benedictine monk of the Congregation of Saint-Maur. He was born at Belloc, in the diocese of Limoges (1660), and made his profession at Saint-Junien de Noaillé (*Nobiliacum*), in the diocese of Poitiers (11 November 1620). He was one of the first superiors to govern the abbey of Saint-Denis after the Reform of the Congregation of Saint-Maur had been introduced there. He was at its head as grand prior when he was appointed abbot of Argenteuil, in the diocese of Versailles (11 November 1646). Appointed prior of Saint-Germain-des-Prés in 1656, he was raised in 1660 to the dignity of general of the Benedictines, an important post that he held for twelve years. After being one of the purest glories of the Order of Saint Benedict, Jean Audebert died a simple religious at Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris, aged seventy-five. 1675. — In the diocese of Autun, the anniversary of the consecration of the church of Saint-Pierre at Chalon-sur-Saône. The proportions of this church, on whose construction more than a hundred thousand livres were spent, are fine and elegant; the shape of the Latin cross is broadly drawn, and the apse is spacious, as in all churches meant to receive a large choir. The Corinthian pilasters support an entablature with flat bands; above rises a second storey of simpler pilasters joined by the Roman arch. On four slender piers rises a graceful dome, neither too small nor too heavy. The windows are a hundred feet above the pavement, and their light, which seems to be taken from the sky, brings out admirably all the beauties of the temple. In the choir are fine stalls from the abbey of Mayzières, and stone statues of the four great Doctors of the Latin Church: Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome and Saint Gregory. Two other statues placed at the entrance to the apse represent Saint Peter and Saint Benedict. The front bears two dates, 570 and 1709: the first is that of the foundation of the original abbey, the second that of the building of the present church. — At Vienne, in the diocese of Grenoble, Our Lady of the Isle, in the parish of Saint-Maurice. This sanctuary of Mary is held in great veneration by all the inhabitants.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The feast of the Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, whose head Herod had cut off about the feast of Easter. Its solemnity is kept on this day because it is the day on which his venerable head was found for the second time. It was translated to Rome, where it is honoured with singular devotion by all the people in the church of Saint Sylvester in the Campus Martius. 31.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Tunis, capital of the State of that name in Africa, Blessed Anthony of Rivoli (*Antonius Ripolanus*), martyr, of the Order of Friars Preachers. Wishing one day to cross from Sicily to Naples, he was seized by pirates, loaded with irons and taken to Tunis with the other Christians who had been on the ship (9 August

1468). The captives were imprisoned. Anthony could not bear this humiliation and, to be freed from his chains, he denied the glorious name of Jesus Christ and the holy Catholic faith in the presence of the sultan. He then wrote an apology for the religion of Mahomet and began to translate the Koran from Arabic into Italian; but as he found in it only an incoherent tissue of absurd fables, he came little by little to himself and recognised his error and the enormity of his sin. He then went to the palace of the dey, declared to him that he was a Christian and that he bitterly repented of his apostasy. In a fury the dey had him shut up in a dark dungeon; a few days later he was taken out to be beheaded. His body was then thrown into the flames, but they spared it. The Christians took it and buried it in the church of Tunis, as he had asked before he died. 1470. — At Rome, with Saint Sabina, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saint Serapia or Seraphia, virgin and martyr, Saint Sabina's governess. Arrested as a Christian during the persecutions that bloodied the Church in the second century, she was handed over by the judge to young libertines who tried to rob her of her honour; the virgin struck these wretches down, and they rolled lifeless at her feet. The judge, suspecting her of magic, had her sides burnt; she was then beaten with rods and beheaded. Her body rests in the church of Santa Sabina at Rome. She is named in the Roman martyrology on 3 September. About 126. — In Palestine, the birthday of nine hundred blessed Martyrs, named by the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Bagnorea (*Balneum Regis*), in the diocese of Sarsina, in the province of Forlì (Italy), Saint Albericus, solitary. On the territory of that town there is still shown today a place still called the Cell of Saint Albericus, which is inhabited by solitaries. His feast draws a great concourse of people every year. — At Rome, on the Ostian Way, with Saint Candida, virgin and martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saint Felix, martyr; and Saints Foricia or Forigia, Adausia or Adavisa, Gemellina and their companions, martyrs. — In the neighbourhood of Cracow (*Carrodunum*), a town of Austria in the kingdom of Galicia, Our Lady of Clermont, where there is an image of the Blessed Virgin painted by Saint Luke. It was sent to the empress of the East, Saint Pulcheria (399–453), and placed by her in the church of Our Lady of the Guides at Constantinople; from there it was taken by Leo, duke of Russia, and afterwards by the duke of Apolia. As he wished to carry it to that town (1380), he could not move it once he had reached the mountain of Clermont; a church was therefore built on that spot, and the image of the Blessed Virgin was placed in it. 1383.

Saint Merry or Medericus, Priest and Abbot of Saint-Martin of Autun

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

> *Nullum est tam gratum Deo sacrificium, quam zelus animarum.*
>
> *No sacrifice is so pleasing to God as zeal for the salvation of souls.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great, On the Seven Penitential Psalms.*

While the abbey of Saint-Symphorien was governed by Hermenarius, afterwards bishop of Autun, and its sister abbey of Saint-Martin by Heroaldus, a pious child of a noble family of Autun presented himself at the door of the monastery of Saint-Martin, asking for a place among the young novices who lived in that holy refuge. Medericus or Merry (*Medericus*) was the name of this blessed child. He was only thirteen, and already his soul, too lofty to be content with the things of this world, disgusted with the world even before knowing it well, and forestalled by a special grace, longed to climb higher and turned of its own accord towards heaven. An angel exiled on earth for only a few years and yet weary of his exile, he hastened eagerly to the invitation of the divine Master: "Come to Me, all you who labour, and you shall find rest for your souls." Merry's parents had founded the finest hopes on him, and for a long time they had fought, always believing they could overcome it, a resolution which came so prematurely to upset their plans for the future of their beloved son. But the wholly manly and truly extraordinary perseverance with which the predestined child struggled against the fears and regrets, the efforts and the pull of a father's love and a mother's tenderness, and against the promises and seductions of the world that smiled on him at his entry into life, at last revealed to them a divine vocation. Not daring to resist the call from on high any longer, and no longer

able to ignore or refuse the sacrifice that heaven so plainly required of them, they had at least wished to join in their son's generous step, and had just brought him themselves to the monastery to give him to God.

Here, then, is the young oblate who, after the example of Samuel and of Mary, Mother of Jesus, crosses the sacred threshold of the cloister to consecrate to God the first-fruits of his life, and says with the divine Master, through the mouth of the Prophet: "Behold, I come, Lord, to do Thy will." During the celebration of the holy mysteries, at the very moment of the oblation of the eucharistic gifts, in the presence of fifty-four religious ranged in a circle round the altar and praying for him whom adoption was about to initiate into the labours and heavenly joys of a new family, the child, led by his parents, his head crowned with flowers like an innocent victim, comes forward and presents the eulogia of bread and a chalice, which the officiating priest receives as a pledge offered to the Lord. Then he kneels. The long, flowing edges of the altar cloth are spread over him, and his parents write a deed of renunciation or consecration, promising on oath never again to give him anything as his own, either themselves or through others. He is clothed in the monastic habit and shorn of his hair. It is done: Merry belongs to the Church; the abbot of the monastery has become the adoptive father of the son whom God has just sent him. In those days parents often offered their children of their own accord. This oblation was a sort of monastic commendation, but very different from the commendation of the palace in use in the Merovingian period. The one was an enfeoffment, the other an ennoblement, an honour; the former a kind of servitude, the latter an enfranchisement, an exceptional happiness. The child thus given lost little and gained much: he acquired what makes us so justly proud today; whatever his condition, he was free, emancipated, inviolable, called to the noblest existence and to the most liberal and the highest education then known. He depended now only on God, on the rule, on his duties and on his conscience. Thus individual perfection and the softening of the social institutions of the age were the twofold aim of a custom which had to cease when that aim could be reached by other means; and that is why the councils later put off the profession of oblates until mature age.

If children were sometimes brought to the monastery by their parents before they understood well enough the whole bearing of this solemn act, it was not so with the young Merry. In him the oblation had been perfectly considered, free and spontaneous; and it was soon seen that he had come to give himself wholly, body and soul, to God. The ordinary austerities of the religious life were not enough for his fervour. Never forgetting that he had offered himself, after the example of Jesus Christ, as a victim for his own sins and those of others, he immolated his flesh every day with the sword of penance, taking only at long intervals a little barley bread or some other poor food and drinking only water. All the religious, his brethren, admired him as a prodigy whom the ancient Fathers of the desert had not surpassed. And still they did not know everything: the holy young man, as humble as he was mortified, carefully hid a very rough hair shirt under his ordinary clothes. "This great servant of God," says his biographer, "remembered that the first man had been lost by sensuality and pride, and he wished to expiate and fight the one of these two vices by cutting off from his body almost what was strictly necessary, and the other by hiding all his mortifications from the eyes of men by the holy artifices of humility. But the brilliance of his virtues, in spite of the veils with which he tried to cover them, passed even the walls of the abbey and soon spread far and wide. Before long people flocked from all sides to see the holy religious whose fame proclaimed so many wonders, to be edified by his example and his words, to consult his wisdom and to carry away some good thoughts, the fruit of instructions gathered like oracles from his inspired lips. Thus," continues the historian, taking a tone of solemn emphasis, "the queen of Sheba hastened from the ends of the earth to hear the wise Solomon; thus the multitudes, leaving their homes, crowded in the footsteps of the Saviour, drawn by His miracles, by the charm of His words and by the charm of His goodness."

Meanwhile the abbot of the monastery fell ill and, after long sufferings, went to the God towards whom, as a true religious, he had never ceased to tend with the aspiration of his whole life. Then the bishop of Autun, who embraced everything in his pastoral care, the sheep as well as the lambs, recommended the monks to

choose a man capable of preserving the flock of Jesus Christ from the teeth of the ravening wolf and of guarding the fold so well that the divine Master should one day find again all the sheep entrusted to his vigilant care. The choice was made in advance: Merry was elected abbot by acclamation, and the crowd that had flocked to the monastery greeted the news of the election with a thousand enthusiastic cries. Everyone was happy. The venerable bishop, who saw his dearest wishes fulfilled, was happier than anyone. At once, turning to the new abbot, he said in a solemn voice: "O torch of Christ! O vessel chosen from the treasures of the Lord! Receive from the eternal God the measure with which you are to distribute to His flock the spiritual food destined to nourish it. Guide it by the precepts and counsels of the Gospel, so that you may deserve to hear one day from the mouth of the merciful Judge these words: 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Because you have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many; enter into the joy of your Lord.'"

Seeing in the important office that had just been laid on him not the honours but only the duties, Merry redoubled his exactness, if that were possible, in carrying out the smallest practices of the religious life. "A superior," he used to say, "is the rule in person, the living rule." The model of all, he was also their servant, in keeping with the divine saying he loved to repeat constantly: "The Son of Man came into this world not to be served but to serve. So too he who would be first among you must be the servant of his brethren." Placed at the head of a religious family, he loved above all to show himself its father. Never thinking of himself, always of others, ceaselessly attentive to the bodily and spiritual needs of his children, he watched not only over their outward conduct but also over their hearts. "Beware of evil thoughts," he often told them, "as of evil deeds." And so as to be able to apply the remedy where the evil lay, he wished all of them to lay open their inner state to him with childlike simplicity and filial abandon. His merciful charity and his way of dealing with souls, as full of skill as of gentleness, were so well known that each one hastened to reveal to him his most intimate dispositions, and went away better and happier. One monk among others, tormented by a violent temptation, went to make the humiliating avowal of it. At once the holy abbot wrapped him in his tunic and, addressing the devil, who was complaining loudly at being obliged to abandon his prey, said: "Be silent, wretch, and come out of this man. No, you shall no longer possess a vessel that Jesus Christ has purified with His divine blood." The poor religious, delivered from the infernal obsession, reached under Merry's direction such eminent holiness that God Himself was pleased to manifest it by wonders. Another monk, also a victim of the evil spirit, could not stay a single moment in church. As soon as he had entered he was seen to go out again at once, before he had even knelt down. All warnings had been useless. Then Merry thought he should have recourse to supernatural remedies: he blessed a little bread and gave it to him. Nothing more was needed to heal that tormented soul.

Meanwhile our Saint, ceaselessly taken out of himself by business, wearied by a government of which he thought himself unworthy, and besieged every day by a multitude of people drawn to him by the fame of his virtues and miracles, groaned under a necessity that tore him from his intimate communion with heaven and alarmed his humility. He had taken refuge in the cloister to flee the world, and now the world seemed bent on pursuing him even into his retreat. It was too much: he could no longer live; he was stifling in that atmosphere where his aspirations towards heaven were ceaselessly hampered and everything prevented him from following his irresistible attraction to the contemplative life; and he looked for another life that would be in harmony with his spiritual temperament. One day, then, without the knowledge of the community, he left his monastery, as Saint John of Réôme had once done, and hastened to bury himself in the wilds of the Morvan, so as at last to converse every day, at leisure and in full freedom, alone with God. After wandering for some time in those wild places, deeply furrowed by many dark valleys enclosed by steep, forest-covered mountains, whose vast silence is broken only by the noise of the torrent, he stopped a few leagues from Autun in a deserted wood and built himself a little hermitage there. There, giving himself day and night to intimate converse with heaven, he remained for long hours absorbed in prayer, poured out his soul in holy raptures and breathed long desires for eternal bliss. There, he thought, hidden in the secret of the Lord's face, he might see his days flow by, devout and calm, far from the cares of administration and from all the noise of

the world, unknown and forgotten, while awaiting the oblivion, the silence and the rest of the tomb. His hope was disappointed: the glory he fled clung to his steps in spite of him during his life, as it did to his memory after his death. The deserted place where he had pitched his tent to finish the pilgrimage of his life took a name, and that name was La Celle, or the cell of Saint Merry, which it has always borne and still bears today. People went to visit the spring where the man of God had quenched his thirst and the rock on which he used to pray. The desert itself had spoken, and it was peopled. Pilgrims flocked from all sides, and a church replaced the humble cell. Cottages grouped themselves all round: the village of La Celle was created and bore witness that a Saint had once lived there.

As soon as his sudden disappearance from the abbey was discovered, all the brethren, sad and desolate like children who suddenly find themselves orphans, gave the first moments to grief; then, coming out of the dull and uncertain stupor into which they had been plunged, they spread out in all directions, seeking and asking for their father. At last, after many anxious inquiries, they managed to discover the place of his retreat. The difficulty was to draw him out of it. They tried everything to win him over, putting forward the strongest reasons and urging the motives most capable of acting on his tender and timorous soul, appealing at once to his heart and to his conscience. They begged him to come back for the love of God and of his spiritual sons, and represented to him that he would gain more merit for heaven by devoting his life to the happiness of his brethren, the edification of his neighbour, the good of souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and the fruitful works of zeal, than by labouring in sterile isolation at his own perfection alone. Prayers and remonstrances were all useless. The Saint believed that God willed him in the desert, and his poor children, at first so joyful at having found their father again, went back very sad: they were not bringing him back and remained orphans. What means could they take? Only one could succeed. All in tears, they went to tell their grief to the venerable bishop of Autun. Ansbert, at this news, set out at once with them; and nothing less than an order backed by a threat of excommunication was needed to tear the solitary from the delights of his Thebaid.

Merry, who wished and sought nothing but the salvation of his soul and the will of heaven, had seen the expression of that sovereign will in the so formal declaration of his bishop’s will. He obeyed, therefore, but offered to God his return among men as the greatest sacrifice of his life. Yet he fulfilled all the functions of his office with new zeal, spending his whole life as before in the service of his neighbour, not from inclination but from duty, and therefore in a way all the more meritorious; and never did his holiness shine more brightly. People did not know what to admire more in him, his charity or the miracles with which God rewarded it. While his humble and powerful prayer gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and the use of their limbs to the paralysed, the words of salvation, burning with faith and fragrant with piety, that came from his mouth healed the diseases of the soul, sadder still and often more stubborn than those of the body. Thus, brought back to the active and public life and giving himself to it by heroic efforts and continual struggles against his nature, which called him to contemplation, he imitated the divine Master to the end in His sacrifices and in His goodness, and like Him went about doing good.

But the day of deliverance and eternal rest was approaching. To prepare him for it, no doubt, God allowed that before calling his soul from the earth he should for some time be relieved of the weight of his daily cares. Among the religious of the abbey there was one named Frodulphus (commonly Saint Frou), whom Merry particularly esteemed and loved. The holy abbot had once held him at the font of baptism and had since devoted himself to his education. He loved him as a son and cared for him as a disciple who knew how to understand him. Pouring his whole soul into this young soul, he had raised it to the highest perfection. Frodulphus repaid in virtues and filial love what he received in sublime lessons and fatherly affection. Moreover, he shared all the tastes of his dear and venerated master, or rather his father. Like him, he was little content with the common life of the cloister and aspired only to the solitude of the desert; like him, he loved to savour the delights of the contemplative life, a foretaste of heaven, and to imitate in a mortal body

the life of the seraphim. One day, out of pity and love for the holy abbot, whose troubles and most intimate desires he knew, and also to follow his own attraction, he urgently proposed to him a pilgrimage to the tomb of the illustrious abbot of Saint-Symphorien, Saint Germanus of Paris, his fellow countryman and his model. Merry accepted the invitation. So the two of them set out on foot towards the goal of their pious journey. On reaching the monastery of Champeaux-en-Brie, near Melun, Merry could go no further. Forced by illness to stop in that holy house, he stayed there a long time. Happy to be able to offer his sufferings to God, to converse freely with Him, to fast at his ease and to spend long hours of the day and night in church, he thanked Providence for having granted him these few moments of devout calm in a family of brethren. But soon, reproaching himself for this quiet life, he left his enforced rest as soon as his illness allowed and sought in the exercise of Christian charity the occasion to acquire new merits for heaven. Having gone to Melun in the hope of finding there some persons with whom he might satisfy the sublime passion that drove him to do good, the holy abbot heard from the church, as the office was ending, the pitiful cries of the prisoners, poor people held, no doubt, for being unable to pay their dues to the treasury. At once, moved by a deep feeling of pity, after the example of Saint Germanus, for whom he had a special devotion, he went to the holder of the public authority to ask for the release of the unhappy captives. Not finding him, he turned directly to the sovereign Master. His prayer was heard: the prison doors opened of themselves. At once the crowd of people who had witnessed the miracle burst out in a thousand enthusiastic cries of admiration and joy, while the Saint, the author, after God, of this wonder obtained by charity, hastened back to the monastery of Champeaux to hide his glory there.

He stayed there some time longer; but seeing that his illness dragged on, and wishing to accomplish his pilgrimage, he procured a rough vehicle and set out for Paris, regretting that he could not continue his journey on foot as he had begun it. His reputation was so great that the people of the country all ran out as he passed, their hands full of presents. He accepted these gifts of popular piety with affability and gratitude and had them distributed to the poor, using for himself only the modest teams that took turns along the road to draw his poor cart. This humble journey was turned by the brilliance of the miracles that accompanied it into a sort of ovation, and the wretched vehicle into a triumphal car. Halfway, a man named Ursus, who had made his way with great difficulty to where Merry was passing, went home entirely rid of a violent and obstinate fever. A woman called Benedicta, sick and possessed by the devil, was cured and delivered at that very instant. At the villa of Boneil and at Charenton the Saint, whose heart, formed by Christian piety, always opened to compassion, asked and obtained the pardon of some unhappy prisoners. During the journey from Melun to Paris, fatigue obliged him to stop at a place then uninhabited and nameless. The piety of the people did not forget it: this little corner of land sanctified by the presence of the holy abbot of Autun kept his memory and his name. An oratory was built there, round which the devout faithful liked to group their dwellings; and the village of Saint-Merry came into being. His memory was also honoured not far from there, at Lynais, where a collegiate church was founded.

The servant of God was at last able to enter Paris. He was in great pain, but the joy of at last reaching the long-desired goal of his pilgrimage made him forget all his sufferings. After pouring out his soul in prayer for a long time, kneeling at the tomb of the former abbot of Saint-Symphorien, he went to rest his body, broken by fatigue and illness, in a little cell adjoining the church of Saint-Pierre, which at that time was outside the walls of the city — a city then still very modest, though destined for so much magnificence and grandeur. After living there as a recluse for nearly three years, able only to suffer and pray, the good and faithful servant heard the voice of the divine Master calling him to the eternal reward. He gathered his disciples, revealed to them the day of his death and completed, says the biographer, all his preparations for the mysterious passage from time to eternity, from earth to heaven. Then, having said farewell to his friends, to his spiritual children and to his dear Frodulphus, he breathed his last sigh (29 August 700), mingled with a last aspiration towards God: *Inter verba orationis migravit ad Dominum* — in the midst of the words of his prayer he passed to the Lord. That great and beautiful soul, which had always felt itself a stranger in this

world and had aspired only to the heavenly fatherland, was at last there for ever.

Saint Merry is represented holding chains, or having the door of a prison opened by angels. He is also seen looking up to heaven, from which several stars seem to come down towards him. The reason for this last picture is that it was meant to express the heavenly warning he received of his death.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The chapel of Saint-Pierre, where Merry was buried, became famous for the miracles worked there by the holy abbot's relics and for the public cult established in his honour in the following century, under Charles the Bald. Being by then too small and moreover falling into ruin, it was rebuilt and transformed into a large church in 884 by Odo the Falconer, the same man who distinguished himself two years later in the defence of Paris. Then the priest Theodebert, who served it, wishing to render to the venerated remains of the monk of Autun the honours they deserved, asked Gozlin, bishop of Paris, to make their solemn translation. The pontiff, kept away by the grave cares of public affairs, had himself represented by his archdeacons. The ceremony was magnificent. All the clergy and all the religious of Paris attended, with a great multitude of people. To the chant of the Te Deum and the psalms, the Saint's bones were raised from the crypt where they had first been placed, to be put in a silver shrine enriched with precious stones and supported by two angels, which was exposed above the high altar to public veneration. Adalard, count of Autun and abbot of Saint-Symphorien, made rich donations on this occasion to the new church, which was thenceforth placed under the double invocation of Saint Peter and Saint Merry. But it has kept only the latter dedication: it is still called today, in Paris, the church of Saint-Merry. The dioceses of Autun and Paris, already united by the close ties established by Saint Germanus and Saint Droctoveus and by the chapel and cult of Saint Symphorian, thus saw the dear and sacred bonds that already linked their respective histories drawn tighter still by Adalard, by the church and cult of Saint Merry. Thus wherever the Saints went, the remembrance, respect and confidence of the peoples followed them; thus currents were set up which, starting from several main centres, made religious life circulate abundantly through the social body, from one end of France to the other, throughout the Middle Ages. The church of Champeaux received part of the relics of the Saint who had once made it illustrious by his presence. The monastery of Autun, justly proud of having brought up and then had as abbot so great a servant of God, founded a solemn Mass in his honour, to consecrate the memory and obtain the help of a dear brother, a venerated father and a powerful protector with God.

Taken from the Histoire de saint Symphorien et son culte, *by the abbé Dinet.*

Saint Sabina, Martyr at Rome (119)

After the death of the virgin Serapia, who was beheaded near the arch of Faustinus at Rome under the emperor Hadrian, the most noble widow Sabina, whom she had converted to the faith and drawn into the service of the poor, the sick and prisoners, was denounced to the prefect Helpidius and brought to the praetorium. "Are you not Sabina, the widow of the illustrious Valentinus?" the prefect said to her. "I am she." — "Why then have you dared to join the Christians and refused to worship the gods?" — "I give thanks to Jesus Christ our Lord, who has deigned, through His servant Serapia, to deliver me from my defilements and from the power of the devil, so that I may no longer fall into the error you are in when you worship him." — "So you claim that the gods we worship, we and the Augusti, our sovereigns, are devils!" — "Ah! how I should like to see you worship the true God, who created all things and governs as He pleases all beings visible and invisible, instead of worshipping the statues of the devils with whom you will burn, your emperors and you, in everlasting fire." — "If you do not sacrifice," said the angry prefect, "I swear that I will condemn you without delay to the penalty of the sword." And the noble Roman lady answered: "No, I will not sacrifice to your devils, for I am a Christian; Christ is my God, I worship Him and serve Him; to Him alone must I sacrifice." — "We order," said Helpidius at once, "that Sabina, in punishment for her

disobedience to the gods and her blasphemies against our masters the Augusti, be struck with the sword and all her goods confiscated."

When the executioner had done his work, Christians took the body of the holy Martyr and buried it in the tomb she had had built for herself near the arch of Faustinus, which already held the remains of Saint Serapia. In 425 a priest of Illyria named Peter built a church to Saint Sabina on the place of her execution, on the Aventine. This church, given to Saint Dominic by Honorius III, belongs to the sons of the blessed Patriarch, and the bodies of the two holy Martyrs are venerated there under the high altar.

About the middle of the twelfth century the church of Lassey, in Auxois, dedicated to Saint Martin, bishop of Tours, received half of the head of Saint Sabina. Little by little the devotion of the faithful to this remarkable relic dispossessed Saint Martin of his ancient patronage; the village itself forgot its Celtic name to take that of the Saint, which it bears today.

This generous Martyr was honoured at Périgueux on 29 August. A procession of Sainte-Sabine (the spring of Laurière) used to be made in times of heavy rain or great drought. This spring, it was said, had come out of the ground miraculously, and Saint Sabina was for the people of Périgueux what Saint Geneviève is for the Parisians.

Taken from the Saints de Dijon, *by the abbé Duplus, and from notes supplied by the Rev. Father Carles, of Toulouse.*

Saint Adelphus, Tenth Bishop of Metz and Confessor (5th century)

Saint Adelphus, tenth bishop of Metz, exercised the pastoral office after Saint Rufus and governed for seventeen years the flock entrusted to his care. By his miracles he protected the Christians against the fury of the idolaters, some of whom he terrified and others of whom he converted. He fell asleep gently in the Lord on the 28th of the month of April. Although the authentic history of his life has been lost in the disasters suffered by the city of Metz, one must none the less believe in his brilliant holiness, which was shown, according to what Paul the Deacon writes, by many miracles. Saint Adelphus was first buried in the celebrated crypt of Saint-Clément at Metz (formerly Saint-Pierre-aux-Catacombes). Later, about the year 826, he was translated by Drogo, bishop of Metz and brother of Louis the Pious, to the Benedictine abbey of Neuwiller (*Novum Villare*, *Nova Villa*), in the diocese of Strasbourg. The abbey of Neuwiller, situated at the foot of Mount Scaurus, which separates Alsace from the Vosges, had been founded about the year 723 by Saint Sigisbald or Sigebaud, bishop of Metz, together with Saint Firminus, his chorbishop, to whom he gave the direction of the new monastery. The many miracles worked at this translation, and since, made the cult of Saint Adelphus very famous. An eyewitness, or someone informed by persons worthy of belief, wrote an account of it, which was published in 1506 by Wimpheling from a manuscript in the library of Philip, count of Hanau (Electorate of Hesse) and baron of Lichtenberg (Rhenish Prussia), and reprinted by Father Stilting in the collection of the Bollandists.

The religious of Neuwiller celebrated this glorious translation every year on 29 August, and their church, dedicated at first under the invocation of the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, was known in the fifteenth century only by the name of Saint-Adelphe. The abbey, which depended in temporal matters on the bishopric of Metz, remained under the Rule of Saint Benedict until 1496, when it was transformed into a collegiate church of secular Canons through the efforts of Albert, bishop of Strasbourg. Neuwiller was ruined during the wars of religion, and nothing remains of it but the ancient church, which was served by a few canons until the end of the last century. The relics of Saint Adelphus are still at Neuwiller, in the middle of the high altar of the church that bears his name. Robert of Bavaria, bishop of Strasbourg, opened the shrine that contained them in 1468; he declared them authentic and allowed them to be exposed to the veneration of the faithful.

Taken from the Proper of Metz, from Godescard, and from notes supplied by the abbé Noël, archpriest of Briey.

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[1] We have spoken of the beheading of Saint John the Baptist in his life, which we gave on 24 June.

[2] Sebba, also called Sebbi and Sebbe, was the son of Seward, and began to reign over the East Saxons in 664. If by the wisdom and gentleness of his government he was the father of his people, he was also its model by his virtues. After a reign of thirty years, as brilliant as it was happy, he handed the crown to his two sons Sigeard and Senfrid and took the monastic habit; his wife followed his example and took the veil as a nun. Sebba died in London two years after his retirement. Bede assures us that his holiness was attested by several miracles; his body was laid in the church of Saint Paul, and his tomb remained there until the great fire of 1666. — Godescard and *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] Other martyrologies call her Basilissa and have her die and be honoured at Sirmium (today Mitrovica), the ancient capital of Pannonia.

[4] We gave her life on 29 January, volume II, page 112.

30 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

SAINT ROSE OF SAINT MARY, whose birthday in heaven is marked on the 26th of the month of August. 1617. — At Rome, on the Ostian Way, the martyrdom of SAINT FELIX, priest, under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian. He was first put on the rack and then condemned to be beheaded. As he was being led to execution, a Christian came to meet him, declared aloud that he professed the religion of Jesus Christ, and was beheaded on the spot; the faithful, not knowing his name, called him ADAUCTUS, which means “added”, because he had received the crown of martyrdom together with Saint Felix. 303. — Also at Rome, Saint Gaudentia, virgin and martyr, with three others. — In the same place, Saint Pammachius, priest, remarkable for his learning and his piety.[1] 410. — At Sufetula, one of the colonies of Africa, sixty blessed Martyrs, massacred by the fury of the pagans. 399. — At Hadrumetum, another town of Africa, Saint Boniface and Saint Thecla, who had twelve children, all martyrs. 250. — At Thessalonica, Saint Fantinus, confessor, who suffered much ill-treatment from the Saracens, was driven from his monastery, where he had lived in wonderful abstinence, and died in extreme old age, after leading several persons in the ways of salvation.[2] 4th c. — In the diocese of Meaux, SAINT FIACRE, confessor. 670. — At Trevi, in the Roman Campagna, Saint Peter, confessor, who shone by his virtues and miracles and died in that place, where he is the object of particular veneration. About the middle of the 11th c. — At Bologna in Italy, Saint Bononius or Bonein, abbot. 1026.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Toulouse, SAINT GAUDENS and his companions, martyrs. 475. — In the dioceses of Paris and Angers, Saint Fiacre, confessor, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Metz, the feast of Saint Rose of Lima, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, and the memory of Saints Felix and Adauctus, named in the same martyrology. — At Cologne, in the church of the Maccabees, Saint Sigilende or Sigillinde, virgin and martyr. — In the Angoumois (Charente, Dordogne), Saint Fraigne or Fermère, also called Frenir and Frevir, confessor. 6th c. — At Arles, Saint Eonius, seventeenth archbishop of that see and confessor. He was born at Chalon-sur-Saône and ascended the see of Arles about 485. Pope Gelasius, elected in March 492, wrote to him to inform him of his accession to the chair of Saint Peter and to charge him with informing the bishops of Gaul of it: this was to recognise the primacy of his Church. Eonius was present at the celebrated conference that the bishops held at Lyons in September 499 in the presence of King Gundobad. On the point of death, anxious about his successor, he urged his clergy and the citizens of Arles to choose no one but Saint Caesarius to take his place. Having received the promise that his wishes

would be carried out, he left all his goods by will for the ransom of captives and the relief of the poor of his Church, and then fell asleep in the Lord. He was buried at Arles in the crypt of the church of Notre-Dame de Grâce, in a white marble tomb that the emperor Constantine had intended for his son Crispus. For a long time the Church of Arles celebrated his feast on the very day of his death (17 August), but today the feast is fixed on 30 August. 502. — At Avignon, Saint Amatus, bishop of that see. He is regarded as the first in that city to have suffered martyrdom for the faith. It was about 411 that the fierce Crocus or Chrosc, chief of the Vandals, ran him through with his sword, and this murder was followed by the massacre of all the people of Avignon, who, like their pastor, would not desert the banner of Christianity. 5th c. — At Jumièges (Seine-Inférieure), in the diocese of Rouen, Saint Ameltrude, virgin, whose body was brought from England by devout Christians to shelter it from the profanation and pillage that Rollo and the Danes inflicted on the tombs of the Saints. 7th or 8th c. — At Avioth (Meuse, arrondissement and canton of Montmédy), in the diocese of Verdun, Our Lady of Avioth, a pilgrimage formerly very famous, but which has lost a great deal of its former splendour. The sanctuary dates from the thirteenth century. The church of Avioth can rival the most splendid cathedrals in the world: it is a true poem in stone. Its portal, representing the scene of the Last Judgement in the most striking detail, presents a grandiose appearance. A flight of steps raises it; a magnificent rose window crowns it; and at the corners of its façade rise two square twin towers with pyramidal roofs. Five doors, symmetrically arranged, give access to the interior; the church measures 42 metres in length and 18.50 metres in height and breadth. Eleven chapels adorn it and three naves divide it; eleven windows and three splendid rose windows light it. The building, somewhat damaged by the Revolution, was restored in 1824.[3]

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — At Bologna, Saint Bononius or Bonein, abbot, disciple of our Father Saint Romuald. 1026.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — At Lima, in the kingdom of Peru, Saint Rose, virgin, of the Third Order of our Father Saint Dominic, whom the sovereign pontiff Clement IX called the first flower of holiness of the West Indies. She made a vow of virginity at fifteen; received in an admirable manner by Our Lord as His spouse, she joined the harshest penance to the purest and most innocent life. 1617.

Martyrology of the Servites. — The Octave of Saint Philip Benizi, propagator of our Order.[4] 1285.

Martyrology of the Hieronymites. — At Rome, Saint Pammachius, disciple of our Father Saint Jerome, remarkable for his learning and his holiness. 410.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Portugal, Our Lady of Cuarquère. Egas Moniz, governor of King Alfonso I (693–757), had that young prince carried into this ancient church of the Blessed Virgin to have his feet uncrossed: no sooner had he laid him on the altar than his legs were so perfectly loosened that he used them without any inconvenience for the rest of his life. — At Curium, today Piscopia, in the island of Cyprus (Mediterranean), Saint Philonides, bishop and martyr. Diocletian had him shut up in a dungeon with Aristocles, Demetrian and Athanasius. These soon gathered the palm of martyrdom. As for Philonides, the lewd

Maximian sought to attack his chastity and charged some young libertines with this sacrilegious task; but Philonides, revolted by the very thought, climbed a height, threw himself down and died in the fall. His body, shut up in a sack, was thrown into the sea, which carried it to the shore, where the unbelievers gave it the honours of burial. 3rd c. — Among the Greeks, the holy martyrs Irenaeus, Or and Orepse. As they were preaching Jesus Christ, the idolaters seized them and placed them on a pyre, which they set alight; but the flames did them no harm. They were then given to the beasts, which respected them; fastened to crosses and

torn with iron hooks, they did not feel the bite of the instruments of torture; scourged and stoned in the most horrible manner, they seemed to feel no pain. At last, weary of the struggle, the pagans cut off their heads. 2nd or 3rd c. — In the province of Ulster, or Ultonia, in Ireland, Saint Modan, who is believed to have held the episcopal dignity. 6th or 7th c. — At Koblenz (*Confluentiae*), in the Rhine province, Blessed Ritza, virgin and wonder-worker. She is specially honoured in the church of Saint Castor at Koblenz. Her tomb was formerly much frequented. 10th or 11th c.

Saint Fiacre or Fèvre, Confessor, Solitary in the Diocese of Meaux

570. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of France: Clotaire III.

> *Saint Fiacre is a sovereign whom virtue degrades to make him a slave of Jesus Christ; he is a slave whom virtue crowns to make him reign over his own heart by penance.*
>
> *Saint-Martin, Panégyriques.*

Saint Fiacre was the eldest son of Eugenius IV, king of Scotland, who from his childhood placed him, with two others of his sons, under the guidance of Conan, bishop of Soder, so that he might learn from this wise prelate at once the maxims of piety and the elements of human letters. Docile to the instructions of his holy tutor, Fiacre preferred the service of God to the pleasures and honours of the world. Although he was the eldest son and the lawful heir of the crown of Scotland, he resolved to leave the court of the king his father and to withdraw into some solitude, sheltered from the storms of the world. He shared this generous design with the princess Sira, his sister, who embraced it too; encouraging each other, they agreed to leave their country. Having left the court without their father’s knowledge, they made for the sea, took ship and crossed into France.

They sought only a lonely place to withdraw to. They found one near Meaux, to the happiness and eternal glory of that diocese. They therefore applied to Saint Faro, who was its bishop. He listened to their proposal and was pleased to satisfy it. The princess Sira asked for a monastery where, living with holy virgins, she might think of nothing but Jesus Christ, whom she had taken for her Spouse. The holy bishop placed her in the one of which Saint Fara, his sister, was abbess, which was afterwards named Faremoutiers (*Farae Monasterium*). Saint Fiacre wished to have an out-of-the-way place in a forest, to shut himself up there and occupy himself only with the contemplation of heavenly things: this was Breuil, in Brie, which has since taken the name of Saint-Fiacre. Faro willingly granted him a portion of land in this forest, which belonged to him, and Saint Fiacre at once built a little monastery there and dedicated it to the most holy Virgin, for whom he had had a singular devotion since his childhood. He led an angelic life there, as much by his continual application to God as by the practice of the virtues that wholly subject the flesh to the spirit. He waged relentless war on his passions, repressing their least outbursts, and treated his body with as much severity and rigour as if he had been entirely insensible. His history says that there was excess in this, and that he was too cruel an enemy to himself: *Proprio corpori hostis nimis austerus* — too harsh an enemy of his own body. He ate little, so as to have more to give to the pilgrims and the poor whom he received charitably in his hermitage, and he spent on their keep everything he could gather.

When the report of his holiness had spread, people came to him from the most distant places. The possessed and the sick of every kind were brought to him from all sides, and by the merit of his prayers and the laying on of his hands he delivered the former and restored the latter to perfect health. Saint Chilain, a Scottish lord, on his way back from Rome, where he had gone on pilgrimage, passed through Brie and visited our devout Solitary. He saw that his holiness surpassed even his reputation, great as it was. Saint Fiacre was delighted with the visit of so illustrious a person, and had heavenly conversations with him which confirmed him in his design of living hidden from the eyes of the world. Saint Chilain was his near kinsman; but they formed together a spiritual bond much stronger than that of flesh and blood. Saint Faro was soon informed of Saint Chilain’s merit. He often conferred with him and, having noticed the great talents with which nature and

grace had favoured him for serving the Church usefully, he ordained him priest and sent him into Artois to preach the Gospel there and complete the conversion of the people of that province, from which idolatry had not yet been entirely banished. This great man died while carrying out these apostolic functions. His relics were later placed in the shrine of Saint Fiacre at Meaux, where they still are, but mixed and confused with those of Saint Fiacre and of other Saints.

As the number of pilgrims and poor who came to implore the charity of this good solitary grew from day to day, he found himself unable to receive them all without fresh help from Saint Faro. He went to find him and ask him to give him a piece of ground in the forest large enough to sow vegetables there, with which he might provide for the needs of his guests. The prelate agreed to his request and granted him as much land near his hermitage as he could enclose with a little ditch by digging it himself in a single day: everything within the bounds of this circuit would belong to him as his own property and as a patrimonial estate. God allowed this condition to be laid down so as to make His servant's holiness shine the more. For no sooner was Saint Fiacre back in his solitude than, taking a staff in his hand after a prayer full of confidence in God, he traced a line on the ground to mark the circuit of his garden; and, by a surprising and almost incredible wonder, as he advanced the earth opened of itself and the trees fell on either side. While this marvel was taking place a woman came by who, having seen the earth open at the mere presence of the man of God, ran quickly to the bishop to tell him that this hermit he thought so much of was nothing but a magician and an enchanter, and that she had seen him with her own eyes work unheard-of spells. Then, retracing her steps to the forest, she poured out a thousand atrocious insults against the Saint and ordered him to stop his work, adding that the bishop was coming himself to confirm this prohibition. Saint Fiacre stopped; but when he wished to sit down on a stone to rest while waiting for the holy prelate to come, the wonders followed one upon another, and the stone hollowed itself into the shape of a chair so that the Saint might be more at ease. It can still be seen in the church that was afterwards built in his honour, where it is preserved as an everlasting monument of this great miracle. Meanwhile Saint Faro arrived; and, seeing the truth of all these marvels, he was even more convinced than before of the great merit and holiness of the blessed hermit; he loved him more tenderly than ever and honoured him for the rest of his life with a singular familiarity.

While Saint Fiacre was peacefully enjoying the delights of solitude, the king his father died, and Ferchard, his younger brother, succeeded to the crown of Scotland. But as this prince let himself be infected with the heresy of the Pelagians, which then prevailed in that kingdom, and gave himself over to every kind of crime, as usually happens to those who abandon the true religion, he drew on himself the hatred of all his subjects to such a degree that in an assembly of the Estates he was deposed and shut up in prison. They then deliberated into whose hands they should put the crown, and all having unanimously agreed to give it to Saint Fiacre, to whom it belonged by full right, ambassadors were sent to Clotaire III, king of France, to beg him to use all his authority to persuade him to leave his hermitage and return to Scotland to take the crown of the king his father. Our Saint, having had a revelation of the whole plan, asked God with many tears and prayers not to allow him to leave his dear solitude, where he tasted such great sweetness, to possess honours that were full of dangers and that he had renounced with all his heart for love of Him. His prayer was heard. He at once became like a leper, so that the envoys, finding him in this state, which would fill them with horror, should no longer think of raising him to the throne. And indeed, when they saw him so disfigured, they asked him very coldly, and only to discharge their mission, whether he would not come back to his country to take the crown that the king his father had left him, inwardly wishing that he would refuse, such disgust had they conceived for his person. "Know," Saint Fiacre answered them, "that this sore with which you see me covered is not the effect of some disorder of nature, but a grace that God has given me to confirm me in my humiliation; and be assured that I prefer this little cell to the greatest kingdom in the world; that here I work out my salvation in safety, and that with the sceptre you offer me I should be exposed to a thousand dangers of being lost." The ambassadors went back well content with this refusal; but the Saint was still more joyful to remain a solitary. His leprosy, which God had sent him only to favour his humility, disappeared, and his

face recovered its natural beauty. Our Saint had built a kind of hospital for strangers, where he served the poor himself. But he did not allow women to enter the enclosure of his hermitage; it seems this was an inviolable rule among the Irish monks. It can still be seen today that, out of respect for the memory of Saint Fiacre, women enter neither the place where he lived at Breuil nor the chapel where he was buried. Anne of Austria, queen of France, having made a pilgrimage there, was content to pray at the door of his oratory. Saint Fiacre spent the rest of his life in his hermitage, from which he sent his soul to heaven on 30 August, about the year 670. His body was buried in the chapel he had built in honour of the Blessed Virgin. So many miracles have been worked at his tomb and through his intercession that it would take too long to relate them here; we shall give only a few, to stir up the faithful to devotion towards a Saint who is so powerful with God. An inhabitant of Monchy, in Picardy, was carrying two of his sick children on a horse to the tomb of Saint Fiacre to obtain their cure. As they were crossing a bridge called Rapide because of the violence of the water, which was extreme at that spot, the horse fell into the river with the father and the two children. The bystanders could not help them, because the river, where they had fallen, was ten or twelve feet deep. But the Saint, whom they invoked, appeared to them and drew all three out from under the water; then the father, taking his children by the hand, led them to land, walking easily on the water without sinking; and, to make the miracle more striking, the children were at the same time delivered from their illness as well as from the danger.

Four little children bathing in the river Oise were swallowed up by the water, and their bodies could not be found, although fishermen had searched for them for several hours. The mother of the two we have just spoken of, who were among them, had recourse to Saint Fiacre and begged him to show once more on this occasion the power he had in heaven and to save their lives. At once all four appeared on the water and declared that Saint Fiacre had delivered them. — A man had on his nose a polyp the size of an egg, which made him monstrous; he visited our Saint's tomb, and there, after saying his prayer, he fell asleep and on waking found himself perfectly cured. — Seven pilgrims were returning from Saint-Denis in France and, passing near the monastery of the servant of God, four of the band said to the others: "Let us go to the tomb of Saint Fiacre." "We have no mange," answered the other three; "we have no business going there; only the mangy go there on pilgrimage." And mocking their companions, they said to them: "Off with you, you mangy ones, to the doctor of the mangy." At that moment they lost their sight, and they recovered it only through the merits of the Saint, to whose tomb the others led them.

In 1620 a Scottish religious, having received from the sovereign Pontiff the order to go to the island of Great Britain to assist the Catholics there, saw his ship assailed during the crossing by so furious a storm that the crew had lost all hope. Each one invoked the Saint to whom he had devotion. The religious had recourse to Saint Fiacre, who at once appeared to him and said in an intelligible voice: "I am Fiacre, a Scot by nation like you; have confidence in God, and I will pray Him to preserve you from shipwreck." No sooner had he said these words than the storm ceased, to the great astonishment of all the passengers.

Gardeners honour him as their patron. He is usually represented in monastic dress, holding a spade in his hand.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Devotion to Saint Fiacre has at all times been very famous among the faithful, in France as well as in other countries. Louis XIII, surnamed the Just, king of France, had so much veneration for him that he wished to have some of his relics in his palace, as one of the most powerful protectors of his kingdom. The effects of this protection were felt when he delivered France from Henry V, king of England. That prince, having been defeated at the battle of Beaugé (1421) by the army of Charles VI, was so indignant that the Scots had served in the king of France's army that, to revenge himself on them, he had his troops plunder the monastery of Saint-Fiacre and do great damage in the neighbourhood of Meaux. But he was not long without being

punished for his irreligion; for some time afterwards he was struck by the disease called Saint Fiacre's, of which he died at the wood of Vincennes, without having been able to obtain any relief from human remedies.

A priory was established at the place where Saint Fiacre died and where his relics remained until 1568. The buildings of this priory and its church are now destroyed, but the faithful still visit the place; they go to the parish church to venerate a relic of the Saint, which was given to the priory by M. Séguier, bishop of Meaux. In 1568 the relics of Saint Fiacre were for the most part taken to the cathedral of Meaux, where some of them remain since the Revolution, but, as we said above, confused and mixed with others; a few bones have been separated from them to satisfy the devotion of the faithful. The grand duke of Tuscany obtained a small one through the favour of Queen Marie de Médicis; and in gratitude for the graces he afterwards received through the Saint's intercession, he had a fine church built in his honour at Florence. In 1637 the canons of Meaux presented one of his vertebrae to Cardinal Richelieu; in 1671 it was placed in the parish church of Saint-Josse in Paris, through the piety of the duchesse d'Aiguillon, for the confraternity established there in honour of Saint Fiacre. This confraternity is very old, and since Charles VI, who wished to be enrolled in it with the whole royal household, the kings of France have made it their glory to belong to it. The place where the chapel of this confraternity is built was formerly a hospital, in which, by immemorial tradition, it is held that Saint Fiacre lodged on arriving from Scotland, in an unknown habit, and that there he made his first trial of the life, more angelic than human, that he wished to embrace. The church of Tilloy-lès-Conty, that of Trilport and the seminary of Meaux possess some fragments of the relics of Saint Fiacre. The cult of Saint Fiacre is very widespread, and a great number of churches in France are dedicated to him. In times of public calamity his shrine is brought down. The Roman martyrology mentions Saint Fiacre on 30 August.

His life is found in volume V of Surius. We have also used the lessons of the Paris Breviary and some memoirs communicated to us by the parish priest of Saint-Josse.

Saint Rose of Saint Mary, or of Lima, Religious of the Third Order of Saint Dominic

1617. — Pope: Paul V. — King of Spain: Philip III.

> *The blessed virgin of Peru is a rose closed by love of retirement, a rose opened by the brilliance of her virtues, a rose withered by the rigour of her penance.*
>
> *Nicolas of Dijon (Orat. sac., Migne's collection).*

Rose was born on 20 April 1586 at Lima, capital of Peru, in South America, most of whose inhabitants were still slaves of the devil and offered incense only to idols. Her father was called Gaspar de Flores and her mother Maria de Oliva, both illustrious for their nobility and their piety, but not for their riches. She was named Isabella at the font; but three months later, her mother having seen a very beautiful rose on her face while she slept, called her nothing but Rose. When she reached the age of reason our Saint had a scruple about it; she believed that she had been given this name only to flatter her beauty. But the Blessed Virgin, to whom she turned in her anxiety, consoled her in a vision, assuring her that the name of Rose was pleasing to Jesus Christ her Son; and as a mark of her affection she was pleased to honour her with her own name as well, declaring to her that henceforth she was to be called Rose of Saint Mary.

Her childhood resembled that of the seraphic Saint Catherine of Siena. At the age of three months she suffered very cruel pains and very painful operations, but with extraordinary patience. The surgeons were quite astonished and admitted that this could not happen without a miracle. She was so strongly forestalled by grace that from her childhood she had the spirit of prayer and applied herself to it a great part of the day and night. She was only fifteen when she consecrated her virginity to God.

She always showed perfect obedience to her parents, but she knew so well how to manage it that the obedience she owed to God never suffered by it. One day her mother ordered her to fasten a garland of

flowers on her head. She obeyed; but she worked into it a needle that made her suffer a great deal. That is how she behaved in things that smacked of vanity or the world, always adding some mortification to them to turn away the pleasure. In matters of duty, and even in indifferent things, the blessed Rose brought a blind, prompt and universal obedience. This obedience did not concern her parents only, but extended even to the maidservant of the house, whom she respected as her mistress and whom she obeyed in all things with great joy. To keep herself in complete dependence, she resolved to take nothing of herself of what was needed for her daily work; so every morning she went to ask her mother to give her the materials and tools she needed. Her mother, wearied by an importunity that seemed to her ridiculous, received her angrily one day and cried out at her: “Do you mean to make me your servant, then? Kindly leave me in peace from now on and see to your needs yourself.” “Forgive me, mother,” the young virgin answered; “I wished to join to the merit of my work that of my dependence, and to pay you every day the tribute of my filial respect. From now on I shall try to put more discretion into my obedience.”

As her parents had fallen into want, she used all her industry to try to help them. She spent part of the night doing needlework, at which she was very skilful, and by day she cultivated a little garden, so as to feed them with what she could earn. When they were ill she nursed them with incredible assiduity: she was constantly at their bedside, spent days and nights there and did not leave them unless she was torn away by the need to do them some other service. She made their beds, prepared all their remedies and rendered them every kind of help, even in the lowest and most repugnant things.

Rose of Saint Mary had everything needed to please the world: uncommon beauty, exquisite judgement, a very gentle disposition, an excellent heart, and obliging and most courteous manners. These qualities caused her mother to think early of marrying her, and made her believe, with good reason, that they would procure her an advantageous match. Such, however, was not her vocation. Her attraction had long called her to the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and she would have followed it very early if her mother had not opposed it. Meanwhile she had neglected nothing to end her bondage: it was with this design that she had cut off her hair, that she made her face pale and thin by fasting, that she fled the eyes of men and hid her beauty under coarse clothes. During the four years her parents lived at Canta she never went out, not even to walk in a delightful garden that adjoined the walls of her father’s house. All her precautions, however, did not keep her from public notice, as she intended; several young men, charmed by her virtue and her outward qualities, thought of asking her parents for her hand.

One of them made his wish known to his mother, who was all the more delighted to see this inclination in him because it agreed with her own thoughts. Entering ardently into her son’s views, she hastened to go and treat of the matter with the young woman’s mother. The proposal was welcomed as a blessing from God, and the matter was concluded, subject to Rose’s ratification; but that was precisely where the difficulty lay.

The holy girl, long bound by a perpetual vow of virginity, had not the courage to reveal her secret to her mother; but she told her of her repugnance for the state proposed to her and begged her to answer in the negative. This refusal raised a terrible storm against her. Her whole family undertook to wring from her by violence a consent she would not give willingly. And so they spoke to her only in tones of anger; they overwhelmed her with reproaches and insults; they even went as far as the most ignominious treatment. Yet, upheld by Saint Catherine of Siena, whom she had taken as her protectress from childhood and in whose arms she had taken refuge during this storm, the holy girl persisted in her resolution to have no other Spouse than the One she had chosen.

With the consent of her family, Father Alonso Velásquez, her confessor, solemnly gave her, in the chapel of the Holy Rosary, the habit of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, which she had so long and so ardently desired. With her mother’s consent she had a little hermitage made for herself in her house, where her only thought was to live in such a way that no part of her time should pass without fruit. All the hours of the day were divided between the work of her hands and the holy exercise of prayer, and the better part of the nights

was given to contemplation. She then set herself with more fervour than ever to the practice of the most rigorous virtues of Christianity. Her humility was astonishing. She occupied herself only with the lowliest tasks of the house, leaving the other work to the maidservant; she bore with extreme patience the insults her relatives offered her for the retired life she led; she attributed to her sins all the misfortunes that befell her family; she rejected all the praise given her, and even imposed harsh penances on herself when she had been applauded, to check the complacency she might feel at it; and she hid her illnesses as much as she could, for fear of being relieved of them. When she went to confession it was with such an abundance of tears, groans and sighs that she might easily have been taken for a debauched woman laden with every kind of crime, had not everyone been persuaded of her innocence.

She lived in such great restraint that she was never heard to utter one word louder than another, or anything showing that she found fault with the conduct and actions of anyone at all. Her gentle and affable disposition made her lovable: everyone said that it was wrong to have given her the name of Rose, because she had none of its thorns. Her charity towards her neighbour was universal; it seemed that this queen of the virtues was the soul that moved her and animated her words, her actions and her whole life.

With all this she was so detached from creatures, and so insensible to all the satisfactions of the earth, that she reached in a short time a purity of heart that yielded nothing to that of the angels. For during the thirty-one years she lived on earth she never committed a venial sin in matters of impurity, and, what is miraculous, she was never even troubled by dangerous thoughts on that subject, from which the most beloved and favoured Saints of God have not been exempt. Eleven learned religious, six of the Order of Saint Dominic and five Jesuits, who heard her general confessions several times, deposed to this juridically and on oath.

The love of the Cross was so ardent in the soul of this blessed one that she procured for herself all its bitterness, after the example of Saint Catherine of Siena, whose copy she wished to be as well as her spiritual daughter. From her childhood she abstained from eating fruit of any kind, though it is excellent in Peru. At the age of six she began to fast three days a week on bread and water. At fifteen she made a vow never to eat meat unless she was compelled by those who had authority over her. Her mother, unable to bear this way of life, obliged her to sit at table with the others. Rose obeyed, but she knew how to forestall all satisfaction by always mixing something bitter with what she ate, such as wormwood and other wild herbs; and she even always had a vessel full of sheep’s gall, with which she sprinkled what served her for food and with which she rinsed her mouth every morning, in memory of the gall the Saviour was given to drink on the tree of the cross — so that one is at a loss to know whether she did not suffer more in eating than in abstaining from food. Her fast was all the harder and more rigorous because in twenty-four hours she took only one meal of a morsel of bread and a little water. During the whole of Lent she gave up bread, contenting herself with a few orange pips, which she reduced to five on every Friday of the forty days. She was seen to content herself with one loaf and a little water for fifty days; another time she went seven whole weeks without drinking, in spite of the unbearable heat of the country; and towards the end of her life she quite often spent several days without eating or drinking. Although her body was greatly weakened and dried up by so many fasts, this did not prevent her from practising on herself other almost incredible austerities.

Ordinary disciplines were too gentle for her; she made herself one of two iron chains, with which she struck herself every day until she bled, and especially when she did it for the conversion of sinners. Her confessor, being told of the pitiless way in which she treated herself, forbade her to use so harsh a discipline any longer. She obeyed, but only to change her torment, for she made of this iron chain a belt of three rows and fastened it so tightly round her loins that it entered deep into her flesh; afterwards she could remove it only with extreme pain and a very great effusion of blood. The hair shirt she wore was woven of horsehair and came down from her shoulders to her wrists and knees; and to make it rougher still, she armed it underneath with a multitude of needle points. She watched for the times when baking was being done at her parents’ house, and

when she could not be seen by anyone she held the soles of her feet, the only part of her body without a wound, to the mouth of the oven, where the heat is fiercest, remaining steadfastly in this voluntary torment until the pain made her faint.

As she was holily insatiable for torments, she used yet another device to make herself suffer. From her earliest childhood she made herself a crown of tin and, having fixed a number of little sharp nails to it, put it on her head and wore it for several years without anyone noticing. Some years later she made herself another of a strip of silver, into which she fixed three rows of sharp iron points, each row of thirty-three points in honour of the thirty-three years that the Son of God lived on earth, making ninety-nine in all. She wore it in this state for long years with incredible pain, because these points made as many holes in her head. Thus she afflicted every part of her body, and she made herself so like Jesus Christ crucified that one could say of her what Scripture says of that Man of sorrows: *A planta pedis usque ad verticem non est in eo sanitas*: "There is not in his body, from the sole of the foot to the top of the head, any limb or part that has not its own pain and torment."

Her bed was always the hardest and most painful she could have; but the one on which she slept longest was made in the shape of a chest, filled with rough pieces of wood and broken tiles whose points tore her whole body; her pillow was only a large stone, also very rough. This unbearable rigour shows clearly enough that this bed was more apt to make her suffer and keep her from sleep than to give her rest. Yet this invincible lover of the Cross had further reduced herself to sleeping only two hours, and very often she did not sleep them in full. She arranged the rest of her time so that she spent twelve hours, by day and by night, in perpetual application of her mind to God in prayer, and the other ten she spent in needlework or other work, to provide for the needs of her family. If sleep came to surprise her at these times, she practised new rigours on herself to overcome its attacks.

The blessed Rose's love for her God and her disgust for creatures were so powerful that, to avoid all the courtesies and conversations of the world, she often disfigured her face and made herself unfit to receive or return visits. Her mother, who saw clearly that this bloody conduct was premeditated, resolved no longer to take her out with her; she even allowed her, as we have said, to make a little hermitage in the garden of their house, so that she might live there cut off from all converse but that with her God. It was in this dear solitude that, uniting herself more and more to Jesus Christ by continual prayer, as much in the time of work as in that of prayer, she deserved that Our Lord should in His turn unite Himself to her, no longer in an invisible and hidden manner, but by wholly sensible ways and by caresses full of brilliance and glory. For one day, when she was absorbed in God in the chapel of the Rosary in the church of the Dominican Fathers, this adorable Saviour, who wished to have her for His Lover and His Spouse, appeared to her and, after pouring into her soul a torrent of joys and delights, said to her: "Rose of My heart, I take you for My Spouse." The Saint, enraptured by this goodness, but feeling herself unworthy of so illustrious an alliance, answered with deep respect: "Behold, my God, Thy handmaid; that is the only title I deserve. I bear in the depths of my soul marks of servitude and slavery too visible to deserve the name and rank of Thy Spouse." Then the Blessed Virgin, to forestall in her any fear of illusion, assured her of the truth of this mystery with these gracious words: "Rose, beloved of my Son, you are now His true Spouse."

From that blessed day this faithful lover felt her heart set on fire with new flames; and as she renewed the fervour of her prayers to make ever more perfect the union she had with her divine Spouse, He at last became so intimately present in all the powers of her soul that she could not turn her thought away from Him, even when she expressly wished to apply it to some other object.

The devil, ever envious of the happiness of God's friends, did not fail to cross so delightful an enjoyment with frightful temptations. He tormented this great Saint for fifteen years, an hour and a half a day, with such violence that she suffered in some fashion the same pains that souls endure in purgatory. During this furious storm she could no longer think of God, and she felt unbearable desolation, abandonment and dryness; the

spirits of darkness filled her imagination with such horrible spectres that when she felt the hour of her pains approaching she trembled in her whole body and was obliged to beg her dear Spouse to dispense her from drinking this chalice. Sometimes the temptation was even so violent that it would have made her fall into despair, and would have dealt her the death-blow a thousand times, if God had not sustained her by His extraordinary grace.

This way of being led seemed so strange to everyone that she was made to undergo examination by the most famous theologians of the University of Lima; but after all the questioning they thought fit to put to her, they testified that there was no illusion in her state, and that her pains were a trial from God, who wished to keep her in humility and dispose her for eminent perfection by a way full of darkness and suffering. It is true, nevertheless, that when she came out of this torment she received inward consolations that made her forget all its rigours. The Son of God often made Himself visible to her eyes, honoured her with His familiarity and admitted her to intimacies that were like delicious foretastes of the happiness He was preparing for her in heaven. Now He relieved her sensibly in an illness, now He consoled and strengthened her in an affliction, now He showed her the excess of His love in conversations full of kindness and tenderness, and now He bestowed on her the wholly holy caresses that the Holy Spirit describes to us in the Song of Songs. The Blessed Virgin, who was her powerful protectress, also very often favoured her with her visits, to give her the help she needed to advance in virtue. Her guardian angel did her the same favour, and stooped even to render her visibly a thousand little services. Finally, the blessed Rose had such frequent conversations with Saint Catherine of Siena, who had been given her by God as her mistress, that the features of that seraphic virgin's face soon passed on to hers, as happened to Moses, who was transformed into God after the converse he had had with Him on the mountain. She resembled her so perfectly that all the people of Peru, who had her image before their eyes, took Rose for a second Saint Catherine of Siena.

We are no longer surprised if, after so many sweetnesses and heavenly communications, she became more than ever insensible to all the pleasures and consolations of the earth, and if she always had an invincible patience in persecutions, in illnesses and in her other trials. There is hardly an illness by which she was not tormented: quinsy, asthma, pains of the stomach and chest, and sciatic gout were those that tried her most. But in the midst of all these ills she would usually say these words: "O good Jesus, may Thy will be done! I ask only for the increase of my sufferings, provided that at the same time Thou increase in me the flames of Thy holy love." This great love she had for God was accompanied by so ardent a zeal for His glory that she spared nothing to win Him ever new lovers. She worked at it now by her words, full of the fire of charity, now by her prayers and tears, and at other times by great miracles that she obtained from heaven to make so good a design succeed. The same love filled her with compassion for the poor and for every kind of unfortunate. There was nothing she would not do to relieve them. She took sick women and girls into her home and gave them all her care; she helped them eagerly, made their beds, dressed their wounds, prepared their remedies and gave them all the other assistance they needed in that state. One cannot speak worthily enough of her devotion to the most holy Sacrament of the altar. She usually communicated three times a week, and sometimes more often, as her directors thought fit; but she never did so without preparing herself by some particular austerity, by fasting, by prayer, and above all by the sacrament of penance, which she never approached without sincere contrition of heart. In this she was very different from certain persons who go to confession only out of habit and bring to this venerable sacrament neither sorrow nor feeling of piety nor any true purpose of breaking their bad habits — above all that angry and cantankerous temper that makes them unbearable in their families; for on the contrary, on their very communion days, and after receiving Our Lord, they are seen to be more impatient and more hot-tempered than on other days. It was not so with the blessed Rose. As her dispositions were wholly holy, she always came from the holy Table gentler, humbler and more modest than before, and so filled with the flames of divine love that the fire burning in the depths of her heart flowed over into every part of her body and made her face all radiant and aglow.

Here is an instance of her zeal for this august mystery. One day the Dutch fleet appeared off the coast of Peru; it was already approaching the port of Lima; all the people were terrified and expected soon to see the city sacked. Rose alone remained fearless and, in spite of the weakness of her sex, she went into the church, stood on the altar step and, inspired with a courage that astonished everyone, prepared to defend the tabernacle at the peril of her life against the fury of those heretics. Shortly afterwards she was told that the enemy had weighed anchor without attempting anything. She showed great joy at their withdrawal, but extreme sorrow because, she said, she had not deserved to suffer martyrdom for her dear Spouse, as she had wished on so fine an occasion.

She also had a perfect devotion to the Blessed Virgin and to her illustrious mistress, Saint Catherine of Siena; she ceaselessly addressed her vows and prayers to them with a fervour and in ways that were quite extraordinary.

It was not possible that, being so penetrated with the spirit of God, she should not always feel a great confidence in His goodness and mercies. That is why she could never form the least doubt: first, of her salvation; secondly, of God's inviolable friendship towards her and that, in return, she would never be separated from His love; thirdly, of His all-powerful help in the necessities and dangers in which she might need His protection, as she experienced on a thousand different occasions.

God also honoured her with the gift of prophecy. She foretold to her mother that she would become a nun, in spite of her old age, her poverty and her little disposition for religious life; and she did in fact become one, in a convent that the Saint herself advised should be built, relying solely on the confidence she had that God would provide everything necessary for the undertaking. She also foretold the establishment of another celebrated monastery of nuns of the Order of Saint Dominic in the city of Lima, and pointed out who would be its foundress and its superior, and many other circumstances that were beyond all likelihood. But the most remarkable of her predictions was that of the place, the day and the very moment of her death, which she declared so distinctly that one would have said she saw them in God, just as they were afterwards fulfilled. She prepared for this blessed passage, which was to be on Saint Bartholomew's day, by redoubling her prayers, her fasts, her vigils and all her austerities. At last, having reached her thirty-eighth year, she fell ill at the beginning of the month of August with a host of very contrary ailments. The physicians who came to see her, after carefully examining her condition, admitted that her ills were beyond human science, that there was something miraculous in the union of so many incompatible disorders, and that it was God who made them subsist in so weak a body in order to give this predestined spouse a share in the terrible torments of His Passion. And so, as she had herself foreseen all the pains she endured, she always bore them with admirable patience and resignation, even when they redoubled and their attacks were most violent, which happened very often. Three days before her death she received the holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction with wholly heavenly dispositions. To imitate perfectly the humility of Jesus Christ, she asked pardon of all the servants, her eyes bathed in tears, although she had never offended or disobliged them. She expressed a thousand regrets to her mother for having been such a burden to her during her life. She thanked very affectionately Don Gonzalo, her protector, in whose house she had lived in her last years. She prayed for her enemies, and, holding a little crucifix in her hand, she kissed it without ceasing. She had raptures in which she tasted in anticipation the delights of heaven. And two hours before she expired, coming back from a long ecstasy, she turned to her confessor and said to him in confidence: "O my father, what great things I should have to tell you of the abundance of consolations with which God will fill the Saints for all eternity! I am going with an incredible satisfaction of spirit to contemplate the face of my God, whom I have longed to possess all the days of my life." On 24 August, Saint Bartholomew's day, she gave up her holy soul into the hands of her Spouse, as she had foretold, after twice uttering these words: "Jesus Christ, be with me!" She was then thirty-one years and some months old.

Several persons had a revelation of her death at the very moment she expired; several also knew by the same means the glory she possessed in heaven. Her face appeared so beautiful after her death that for a long time people could not believe she was dead. She was buried in the convent of the Dominican Fathers with all the pomp and magnificence that this illustrious Servant of God deserved. The archbishop of Lima officiated; the members of the chapter carried her body part of the way, then the magistrates and the leading men of the city carried it; and the superiors of the religious houses received it from their hands to carry it into the church. The miracles worked through this holy body in the sight of all the people drew such a crowd that for two days it could not be buried. The eagerness of the people to cut pieces from her clothes was also so persistent that new ones had to be put on her as many as six times.

As the miracles continued every day more and more at the tomb of the blessed Rose, Pope Urban VIII sent apostolic commissioners to the spot in the year 1630 to make a juridical inquiry. A hundred and eighty witnesses appeared before them and deposed in the customary forms what they had seen.

In these depositions are found countless surprising conversions of men and women of every condition, brought about by the merits of this Spouse of Jesus Christ throughout the kingdom of Peru. It is found there that, through her intercession, Magdalena Tortez and Antonio Bran, who were dead and buried, had been raised to life; that Elisabeth Durand, who had a dry and withered arm, had been miraculously cured by the mere touch of her relics; that a like grace had been granted to a negress who merely touched her habit; and that even the simple dust of her tomb had cured, as it still cures every day, a great many persons afflicted with every kind of illness — fevers, catarrhs, dropsies, quinsies and stomach pains — and that it is very favourable to women whose pregnancy is near its term. She was beatified in 1668 by Pope Clement IX. The following year the same Pontiff gave her the title of principal patroness of Peru and had her name written in the martyrology. Pope Clement X placed this illustrious virgin in the Catalogue of the Saints in 1671, and the Church celebrates her feast on 30 August.

Saint Rose is patroness of Lima. She is represented holding a grapnel whose shank passes through and whose flukes support a city surrounded by the sea. *Spes civitatis* — “the hope of the city” — is sometimes read beneath.

Several authors have written her life; the fullest and most accurate is that of the Rev. Father Feuillet, a religious of the Order of Saint Dominic of the Congregation of Saint-Louis. We have followed it in this abridgement. — Cf. Vie de sainte Rose de Lima, *by Father Leonard Hansen, and the* Année dominicaine.

Saint Felix and Saint Adauctus, Martyrs at Rome (303)

Saint Felix was a priest of the Church of Rome. Arrested at the time of the persecution of Diocletian, he was sent to the tribunal of Dracus, prefect of the city, who had him taken to the temple of Serapis to offer incense to that goddess. Felix blew against the face of the statue, which was of bronze, and made it fall. From there he was led before those of Mercury and Diana, which he overthrew in the same way. The judge then had him stretched on the rack to make him say by what power he had broken the statues of the gods in pieces. “Do not think,” Felix said to the prefect, “that it was by some pact with the devil; I did it by the confidence I have in the Almighty and by the power that Jesus Christ has given me over your false divinities.” At this answer the prefect flew into a great rage and ordered him to be taken out of the city, on the road to Ostia, where there was a tree consecrated to the idols with a little temple beneath it. As soon as Felix arrived there he blew against the tree and said to it: “I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to uproot yourself this very hour, to fall upon this temple and break it in pieces with its altar and its idol.” At these words the tree came out of the ground with its roots and, falling on the temple, crushed it so completely that not a trace of it was left standing. When the matter was reported to the judge by one of his officers, he condemned Felix to be beheaded and ordered his body to be exposed on the highway as a prey for wild beasts. As the execution was about to take place, there came forward a Christian unknown to men but known to God. Having learned that

Felix was being put to death because he would not renounce Jesus Christ, he began to cry out with all his strength: “I am of the same faith as the man you are going to put to death, and I confess like him that my Lord Jesus Christ is the true God. So I will die with him: for I would rather be put to death in his company, so as to live eternally with my Saviour Jesus, than embrace the religion of your cruel emperors and burn with them in hell for all eternity.” This happy encounter filled Felix with joy. He thanked God for giving him so generous a companion in his martyrdom. After praying together and giving each other the kiss of peace, they were beheaded. The faithful, unable to learn the name of this Christian who had so generously given himself up to martyrdom, gave him that of Adauctus, that is, “added”, because he had joined Saint Felix to die with him. Their bodies, abandoned by the executioners and left without burial, were buried the following night by the Christians in the pit the tree had made in uprooting itself. The next day the pagans, having learned of it, set about digging them up; but all who tried to do so were possessed by the devil, which obliged them to give up their design. When the persecution had ceased, a church was built in their honour on the same spot, and Christians have received great benefits from heaven there through the merit of their intercession. About the year 850 Irmengard, wife of the emperor Lothair, obtained the relics of these holy martyrs from Pope Leo IV and placed them in the abbey of the canonesses of Eschau, in Alsace, where they remained until 1358. In 1361 they were given to the church of Saint Stephen at Vienna, which afterwards became a cathedral.

Acta Sanctorum, 30 August.

Saint Gaudens, Martyr, in the Diocese of Toulouse (475)

The town of Saint-Gaudens, in the Haute-Garonne, takes its name from a young martyr who shed his blood for Jesus Christ in that place and has become the patron of the district. Saint Gaudens, tradition says, was a shepherd or herdsman, a native of a hamlet called Les Nérous, in the Nébouzan. His mother, Quiteria, was a holy widow who took great care to instruct him in the Catholic religion and to forearm him against the heresy of the Arians, which was then much to be feared: this was in the fifth century, when the Visigoths had already established their rule at Toulouse. Euric, their king, let loose his fury against the Catholics everywhere and sent his lieutenant Malet into the country of the Onobusates to convert the people to his sect. Many Catholics were victims of the persecution, but tradition has kept only the name of Gaudens and a few details of his martyrdom. This child, only thirteen years old, was keeping his flock at the foot of the Pujament when Malet’s soldiers came to arrest him and bring him before their master’s tribunal. Neither promises nor threats could shake the young shepherd, and he boldly confessed the divinity of Jesus Christ, declaring that he would rather die than renounce that belief. Malet flew into a great rage and ordered his head to be cut off; the sentence was carried out at once: soldiers led Gaudens to the place of execution, and he received the death-blow smiling. But God showed by a striking wonder how precious this death was in His eyes. As soon as the head had rolled to the ground, the child took it in his hands and made his way swiftly towards the Mas-Saint-Pierre.[1] When he had covered half the distance that separated him from the town, he stopped by the roadside and, placing his head on a stone, rested for a few moments.[2] However, as he noticed that soldiers on horseback were pursuing him, he soon resumed his course and did not stop again until he was in the town, where the doors of the church opened to let him in and closed again at once behind him. The soldiers sent in pursuit tried in vain to enter the basilica; one of them spurred his mount hard, and it reared its feet against the church door and left its shoes there. They remained there for several centuries in witness of what had happened.

When the Arians had gone away, the faithful went into the church and gathered up the martyr’s body with great respect, to save it from the rage of the persecutors. From that moment miracles multiplied at his tomb, and the cult of Saint Gaudens became popular. The original church, built in honour of Saint Peter by Saint Saturninus, the apostle of Toulouse in the first century, gave way to an oratory in honour of the district’s new patron; the town itself was renewed and took the name it still keeps today. Later a fine Romanesque church

with three naves replaced the oratory, and it still exists, but it has lost its beautiful cloister.

In 1569 the Protestants gave the relics of Saint Gaudens to the flames, and only a very small part of them remains. The Saint's feast, which used to be celebrated in May, the time of his martyrdom, is now celebrated on 30 August.

The chapel of La Caoue, built on the very spot of Saint Gaudens' martyrdom, was demolished in 1794; in our own days it has been rebuilt and was solemnly blessed on 9 April 1855.

Notice owed to the kindness of the Rev. Father Carles, of Toulouse.

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[3] Pammachius was a Roman senator and an intimate friend of Saint Jerome. He was the first to discover the errors of Jovinian (a monk of Milan and heresiarch who rejected fasting, penance and virginity and denied the virginity of Mary), and denounced them to Pope Siricius, who condemned this heresiarch in 390. Saint Jerome drew great light from his friend for the composition of his works against Jovinian; he often consulted him and relied on him for the solution of several difficulties. Pammachius married Paulina, the second daughter of Saint Paula; he lost her after three years of marriage. We read in Saint Jerome (Epist. LIV) that he watered his wife's ashes with the balm of almsgiving and mercy; that from then on the blind, the lame and the poor were his co-heirs and Paulina's heirs; and that he was never seen to go out in public without being followed by a troop of unfortunates. Pammachius wrote to the farmers and vassals he had in Numidia to urge them to renounce the Donatist schism; this zeal for the faith earned him a letter of congratulation from Saint Augustine in 401 (Epist. LVIII). — Godescard, Ceillier, Saint Jerome.

[4] See note 1 of the martyrology of the Basilians on 31 July, volume IX, page 131.

[5] Cf. *Les Sanctuaires de la sainte Vierge dans le diocèse de Verdun*, by the Rev. Father Chevreux; and *Notre-Dame de France*, by the parish priest of Saint-Sulpice, volume VII, page 107.

[6] We gave his life on 23 August.

[1] That was then the name of the town of Saint-Gaudens.

[2] A column was later set up on this spot; it disappeared at the Revolution.

31 August

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Cordova in Spain, SAINT RAYMOND NONNATUS, cardinal and confessor, of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives, illustrious for the holiness of his life and for his miracles. 1240. — At Trier, the birthday of SAINT PAULINUS, bishop, who, at the time of the persecution of the Arians, was banished for the Catholic faith by the emperor Constantius, worn out to death by continual changes of exile into countries where the name of Jesus Christ was not known, and died at last in Phrygia, receiving from Our Lord the crown he had merited by so many sufferings. 359. — Also the holy martyrs Robustian and Mark. — At Transacum, in the country of the Marsi in Italy, near the lake of Celano, the birthday of the holy martyrs Caesidius, priest, and his companions, crowned during the persecution of Maximian. 310. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia, Saint

Theodotus, father of the martyr Saint Mammes,[1] Saint Rufina, his mother, who gave birth to him in prison, and Saint Ammia, his nurse. 3rd c. — At Athens, Saint Aristides, illustrious for his faith and his wisdom, who presented to the emperor Hadrian a book on the truth of the Christian religion; he also delivered before the same emperor an excellent discourse, in which he proved by convincing reasons the divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 2nd c. — At Auxerre, Saint Optatus, bishop and confessor.[2] About 518. — In England, Saint Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne; Saint Cuthbert, a shepherd, having seen his soul carried up to heaven, left his flock and became a monk. 651. — At Nusco, Saint Amatus, bishop. 1093. — On Monte Senario, near Florence, Blessed Bonajuncta, confessor, one of the seven founders of the Order of the Servites. He was speaking to his brethren of the Passion of Jesus Christ when he gave up his spirit into the hands of the Lord.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Jouarre (Seine-et-Marne, canton of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre), in the diocese of Meaux, Saint Ebregisilus, also called Ebrigisilus and Evrèle, bishop of that see and confessor. Brother of Saint Agilberta (10 and 11 August), abbess of the monastery of Jouarre (*Jotrum*), he was the perfect imitator of her virtues, of which he first gave the example in the cloister. The death of Patusius, bishop of Meaux, then called him to that see, of which he was one of the glories. He died at Jouarre, and that town still keeps the greater part of his relics today. 7th c. — In the diocese of Marseilles, the feast of Saint Lazarus, first bishop of that see and martyr, patron of the cathedral and of the whole diocese.[3] — In the diocese of Nîmes, Saint Veredemus or Vrime, bishop of Avignon (though the Proper of Nîmes gives him only the title of confessor). He is already named in the French martyrology of 17 June, where we gave some details of his life. 720 or 722. — In the diocese of Sens, Saint Raymond Nonnatus, named in today's Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Nantes, SAINT VICTOR OF CAMBON (*S. Victor Campibonensis*), solitary. 6th c. — At Longchamps (Seine), near Boulogne, in the diocese of Paris, BLESSED ISABELLE OF FRANCE, foundress of the monastery of that place (*Longus campus, Humilitas B. M., Abbatia S. M. juxta Clodoaldum*). 1270. — At the monastery of Lobbes in Hainaut, Saint Theodulphus or Thiou, bishop, already named in the Roman martyrology of 24 June. 776. — At Montpellier, the feast of the Miracles of the most holy Virgin, called the Miracles of Our Lady of the Tables. — In the diocese of Orleans, the memory of SAINT Y OR AGYLUS OF VOISINAT, viscount of Orleans and confessor. 6th c. — At Sisteron (Basses-Alpes), in the diocese of Digne, Saint Florentina, virgin and martyr, of whom nothing is known today but the name. — At Evreux, the Venerable Henri-Marie Boudon, grand archdeacon of that Church and ascetical writer.[4] 1702. — At Rebais (Seine-et-Marne), in the diocese of Meaux, SAINT AGILUS OR AILE, first abbot of the Benedictine monastery of that name (*Rebascum*), founded about 638 by Dado, chancellor of King Dagobert. 650. — At Toul, in the present diocese of Nancy, SAINT GAUZLIN, thirty-fourth bishop of that ancient see and confessor. 962. — Formerly, in the diocese of Nevers, Saint Gildard, priest, who edified by his virtues the parish of Lurcy-le-Bourg (Nièvre, arrondissement of Cosne, canton of Prémery), where he died on 24 August; his feast was put off to the 31st of the same month because of the occurrence of that of Saint Bartholomew. Saint Gildard was buried in the church of Saint-Loup, near Nevers. 7th c. — Formerly, at Limoges, Saint Nicetius, who is believed to have been a disciple of Saint Martial, apostle of the Limousin. His body rested in the cathedral church.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — The dedication of the churches of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — At Cordova in Spain, Saint Raymond Nonnatus, cardinal and confessor, of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives, whose feast is celebrated on the following day. 1240.

Martyrology of the Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — Near Florence, on Monte Senario, Blessed Bonajuncta, one of the seven founders of our Order, famous for his remarkable merits. After saying holy Mass, still vested in the sacred vestments, as he was giving his brethren an instruction on the words of the Passion of Jesus Christ, he came to these words of the Gospel, "And they crucified Him", stretched out his arms and hands as if he were to be fastened to the cross, uttered these words, "Into Thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit," and suddenly breathed his last.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — The same as with the Carmelites.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In England, Saint Cuthburga, virgin and abbess. She married Alfred, who in 685 was crowned king of the Northumbrians. Her husband allowed her to carry out the resolution she had taken to remain a virgin and to withdraw to the monastery of Barking, in the county of Essex. She afterwards founded that of Wimborne, in

the county of Dorset, and took its government. There she joined the austerities of penance to the fervour of prayer; her gentleness and affability towards her neighbour made her universally loved and respected. The holy Abbess died after being purified by a long and painful illness. Her relics were venerated at Wimborne until the so-called Reformation. Between 720 and 730. — At Padua, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, Saint Syrus, ninth bishop of that see, which he held for twenty-four years, and confessor. There is a church dedicated under his invocation in the territory of Padua. 3rd c. — At Spoleto, an archiepiscopal city of Italy, Saint Primianus, martyr. Arrested during the persecution of Diocletian and Maximian, he was first stretched on the rack; then his sides were torn with iron hooks and burnt with flaming torches; finally he was beheaded. 3rd c. — At Fossombrone (*Forum Sempronii*), an episcopal city of Italy, Saints Maurentius, Urban, Avitus, Maternian and Vincent, monks, disciples of Saint Paternian, bishop of Fano (*Fanum Fortunae*), and martyrs. The head of Saint Maurentius is religiously preserved at Fossombrone. 3rd c. — At Ancyra in Galatia, the holy martyrs Gaianus, Lucian, Rufinus, Vincent, Silvanus, Emelinus, Florentinus and Antinaeus, and the holy women Vitalica, Antiquora, Justa and Julia, martyrs, named by the copies of the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — In England, Saint Eanswith, virgin, abbess of the Benedictine monastery of Folkestone (*Folkstoniense coenobium*, founded about 630), in the county of Kent. She was the granddaughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent, and the daughter of Prince Eadbald. Rejecting the rich marriages her father wished her to make, and desiring no other spouse than God alone, she shut herself up in the monastery of Folkestone that her father had just founded, gave there the example of every virtue, fell asleep in the Lord there and was buried there. 640. — At Saragossa (*Caesarea Augusta*), an archiepiscopal city of Spain and the ancient capital of Aragon, Saint Dominic of Val, a child of seven, put to death by the Jews in hatred of the Catholic religion. 1250. — At Arezzo, an episcopal city of Tuscany, Blessed Benedict of Arezzo, of the Order of Friars Minor. He was one of the first disciples of Saint Francis and shed lustre on the beginnings of his Order by the brilliance of his virtues. About 1280. — At the Camaldolese monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, in Umbria (the present provinces of Spoleto and Urbino), Blessed Albertinus, prior of that monastery. His precious remains were kept in that abbey, enclosed in a golden shrine. About 1285.

Saint Agilus or Aile, First Abbot of Rebais, in the Diocese of Meaux

650. — Pope: Saint Martin I. — King of France: Clovis II.

> *It is no great merit to be humble in a lowly position, but it is a great and rare virtue to be humble in the midst of honours.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Saint Agilus, whom we commonly call Saint Aile, had for his father Agnoald, one of the chief lords of the court of Childebert II, king of Austrasia and Burgundy. His mother was called Deuteria, and she too was of distinguished birth and of the first nobility of Burgundy. Both were at one in leading a very Christian life, which served as a model of perfection to all who knew them. They practised with great exactness all works of piety and of charity towards their neighbour, supporting poor widows and orphans with their goods and their authority, giving large alms, receiving pilgrims and travellers into their house and making themselves the protectors of the afflicted. These examples contributed wonderfully to inspire good desires in the little Agilus and to give him a holy upbringing. His parents would have liked to keep him in their family for their own satisfaction; but Saint Columban, who had come from Ireland into France, having come to lodge with Agnoald, our Saint's father, and having recognised the rare qualities and holy inclinations of his son, then seven years old, made known to his father that he ought to consecrate his son to the service of God. The devout parents, obeying this counsel, begged Saint Columban to give his blessing to their child, and soon took him to that holy abbot's monastery at Luxeuil, in Burgundy.

Agnoald, while thus making a sacrifice of his son to God, wished also to make gifts worthy of his liberality to Saint Columban's monastery. He gave books, furniture and other suitable goods, to make it easier to

receive a greater number of religious. The young Aile was entrusted to the care of Saint Eustasius, a man as devout as he was learned, who was bringing up several other noble children in the same monastery, teaching them the first principles of the Christian life and of solid piety at the same time as human letters. Eustasius succeeded so happily in this office that several holy prelates came out of his school who afterwards made various Churches of France illustrious.

Under so good a master the little Agilus made remarkable progress in learning and virtue. Although he did not neglect the authors it was proper to consult and read to perfect himself in human learning, he nevertheless preferred to all things the study of the holy Scriptures. He mortified himself by continual fasts and vigils; he was most assiduous at prayer, and the humblest and most obedient of all his brethren, always regarding himself as the last of all. He practised these virtues with such fidelity and in so judicious a manner that he won the esteem and goodwill not only of all who lived with him, but even of the prince's courtiers, who were the least capable of approving such practices of virtue.

When Agnoald, Saint Aile's father, died, the monastery of Saint Columban lost in him a powerful protector. Shortly afterwards Queen Brunhild, widow of Sigebert and mother of Childebert, raised a harsh persecution against Saint Columban, whom she could not bear because of the firmness with which he forbade women to enter his monastery, without respect of persons; she even had him driven out of Luxeuil by her grandson Theuderic, king of Burgundy, with orders to return to Ireland. Saint Eustasius, Saint Columban's successor, showing the same constancy, Brunhild persecuted him too; she had a prohibition published in the name of the king her grandson forbidding all the religious of Saint Columban to leave the enclosure of their house.

Saint Eustasius and his religious sent Aile as their deputy to King Theuderic, to try to soften his mind and make him change his views. But he was stopped by soldiers who were guarding the monastery to prevent any religious from leaving. One of them tried to strike him with his sword, and the rash man's arm and hand were paralysed; he could not even take a step or move from his place until the Saint had prayed for him. This soldier was converted by the miracle and became a good religious in the monastery of Luxeuil. The prince, informed of this wonder, gave Aile the best of welcomes and confirmed the rule that forbade women to enter the monastery. Our Saint even came back laden with presents that the prince and the queen his wife gave him for the church of Luxeuil. Five or six years later (617), Saint Aile and the abbot Eustasius were chosen by an assembly of bishops to carry the light of the Gospel beyond the Vosges and the Jura and as far as Bavaria. They converted many unbelievers there. Saint Aile supported his preaching with miraculous works, which did much to confirm the new converts in their faith. Among other wonders, he drove an unclean spirit out of the body of a possessed man, who complained openly at seeing the dominion destroyed that he had so long exercised over the peoples of that country. He foretold to a father of a family that two of his children, whom he blessed, would be raised to high dignities in the world and would afterwards become great servants of God. He also restored sight to a young girl who had lost it. Our Saint having himself fallen into a very high fever, which obliged him to stop on the way and break off his labours, Eustasius, his abbot, who had a singular esteem and friendship for him and knew his power with God, urged him to ask his health himself of Him who alone could cure him in a moment. Saint Aile, following his superior's wish, prayed, and at once received a perfect cure.

Back at Luxeuil, Saint Aile continued to edify that abbey until God called him to the government of Rebais. This was a monastery newly built in the diocese of Meaux by Saint Ouen, who was still only a layman and referendary, or chancellor, of France. Saint Faro having made known to him Saint Aile's merit and capacity for good government, he did all he could to draw him away from the monastery of Luxeuil and bring him to Rebais. This matter was all the more difficult because the peoples of the dioceses of Besançon, Langres, Metz and Toul could not bring themselves to be deprived of the preaching, the good counsels and the miracles of this apostolic man. Saint Ouen brought in the royal authority to obtain what he desired, having no other aim in this than the glory of God. Saint Aile was therefore obliged to leave the monastery of Luxeuil.

He went, according to the orders of his prince and the wishes of Saint Ouen, to Rebais, where he had the monastery that had already been begun completed with great economy and prudence; and after Saint Faro, Saint Amand and some other bishops had solemnly dedicated the church, the prelates, in an assembly held at Clichy, established Saint Aile as first abbot of the place (636).

This humble servant of God, seeing himself raised above the others, regarded himself as the last of the house, who had merely been given the charge of providing for everything. He fed his flock as much by the holiness of his conduct as by the eloquence and unction of his devout exhortations; he became a perfect example of every virtue and increased his fasts, his vigils, his mortifications and his prayers. He was very liberal towards the poor and received pilgrims and strangers with great charity. Once, among other occasions, having seen one evening at the door of his monastery a poor man covered with ulcers, who begged to be given lodging, he opened to him and ordered food to be prepared for him. When the poor man said he could not walk easily, the charitable abbot took him on his shoulders and carried him to the place set aside to receive him; but he was much astonished to notice that this burden, which should naturally have been heavy, had become weightless. He continued his works of charity towards this stranger; he took a basin, water and towels to wash his feet and wipe his sores; but another marvel happened: his guest vanished in an instant, which gave reason to believe that this poor man was not one of those who ordinarily appear on earth. Another day, when he had had pilgrims given a little wine, all that was left for offering at Mass, they all drank as much as they wished, yet the vessel remained full to overflowing; Saint Aile begged those present not to make this marvel known until after his death. The infernal spirit, unable to bear the charities and alms of this holy Abbot, appeared to him in the form of a horrible dragon that threatened him; but the Saint, trusting in God, easily triumphed over his threats by the mere sign of the cross. By the same sign, to which he added prayer, he dispersed a furious storm with thunder and lightning that was threatening workmen at the harvest: Saint Aile, the religious who were with him and the reapers received not a drop of water, although torrents of rain fell on all the land surrounding the fields where they were.

So many wonders and so great a holiness drew a great number of noble persons, from the court and from other parts of the country, who embraced the religious state under the wise guidance of the abbot of Rebais. Saint Philibert, first abbot of Jumièges in Normandy, was one of Saint Aile's most famous disciples. At last, after labouring thus for the glory of his God and forming in His service a great number of holy persons who afterwards upheld the glory of the monastic state, being very old and having no more desires except for heaven, he begged God to take him from this world. His prayer was not long in being heard, for shortly afterwards this venerable abbot died on the 30th of the month of August, about the year 650, aged about sixty-seven. Several sick people who implored his help suddenly received their health while preparations were being made to lay him in the ground. A religious of the monastery who was suffering from a very violent fever was perfectly cured by touching a cloth that lay on his coffin. Another religious, who suffered from a very painful toothache, was likewise delivered from it on the spot by touching his head to the Saint's tomb.

Saint Agilus, or Saint Aile, is held in great veneration at Rebais and in all the neighbourhood. A kilometre from the town there is a chapel to which pilgrims go on Friday of every week. This chapel has just been rebuilt through the care of the abbé Remy, founder of the agricultural Orphanage of Saint-Aile. The choir of the parish church of Rebais served Saint Aile as an oratory; it is there that he was buried, and the stone that covered his tomb is still kept. Of Saint Aile's relics only a bone of the arm remains; the rest were destroyed during the Revolution. A solemn procession, in which the shrines are carried, takes place on Whit Monday. Nothing remains of the old monastery of Rebais: the revolutionary hammer destroyed everything. Some insignificant ruins can still be seen, however, on the site of the abbey.

Mabillon; the Légendaire de Morinie; local notes supplied by M. Cottin, parish priest and dean of Rebais.

Saint Gauzlin,[1] Thirty-Fourth Bishop of Toul and Confessor

962. — Pope: John XII. — King of France: Lothair.

> *Non magnum est te episcopum fieri; sed episcopum pauperem vivere, id plane magnificum.*
>
> *That you have become a bishop is nothing surprising; but that you should live as a poor bishop is an admirable thing.*
>
> *Saint Bernard, Letters.*

Drogo, or Dreux, thirty-third bishop of Toul, was succeeded by Gauzlin, a Frenchman by origin and of one of the most illustrious houses of the kingdom. He had been brought up at court, where he had won the esteem of the great. Charles the Simple, who knew him, arranged his election in the chapter of Toul. He was consecrated on the 16th of the calends of April (17 March) 922 by Rotger, archbishop of Trier, Wigeric of Metz and Barnoin of Verdun, who came to install him at Toul at the request of the two other prelates.

The beginnings of his pastoral administration were troubled. Henry the Fowler, claiming that Charles the Simple had made him an absolute cession of the kingdom of Lorraine, had taken possession of it and demanded the oath of the lords. Gauzlin of Toul, like Wigeric of Metz, recognising no sovereign but Charles, the only descendant of the house of Charlemagne, refused to take the oath to Henry and yielded only to force. However, when the emperor had gradually made himself master of the kingdom, Gauzlin accepted the new government and attached himself to that monarch with as much fidelity as he had shown to the son of Louis II, called the Stammerer. Henry, accordingly, let slip no opportunity of showing him his gratitude. By a charter of 928 he gave him the city and county of Toul, to be enjoyed by him and his successors with all regalian rights. This title became the principle and solid foundation of the sovereign rights that the bishops of Toul afterwards exercised throughout the whole extent of the county of that name. Our venerable prelate took part in several councils in which the affair of Artaud and Hugh, who were disputing the archbishopric of Reims, was dealt with: that of Verdun in December 947, that of Mouzon in January 948 and that of Ingelheim in June of the same year.

The abbey of Saint-Epvre had lost its former splendour, and as a result of the misfortunes with which war had afflicted the country, laxity had crept in. Saint Gauzlin gave back to this abbey buildings and revenues enough to house and feed forty religious. He placed them under the direction of Archembald, who was well versed in monastic discipline and very fit to carry out his design. What he had done for the monastery of Saint-Epvre he undertook, with equal success, for the other houses of the same kind in his own diocese and in that of Châlons. He passed on the zeal for a salutary reform to the prelates of his neighbourhood. Following his example, Adalbero I, bishop of Metz, introduced reform into the abbeys of Saint-Arnoul and Gorze; and Berengar, bishop of Verdun, asked Gauzlin to send him monks of Saint-Epvre in order to reform those of Saint-Vanne.

To maintain and strengthen this happy transformation among the religious, our zealous prelate restored learning to honour in his episcopal city. He brought there Adso, a religious of the abbey of Luxeuil, a native of Franche-Comté, then in the flower of his age and reputed one of the most learned and holiest men of his time. He put him in charge of the schools of the abbey of Saint-Epvre, where the clerics of the bishopric went to study together with the religious of that monastery and others besides whom people hastened to send there.

Saint Gauzlin succeeded in obtaining for his church the abbey of Montier-en-Der and those of Moyenmoutier, Offonvilie and Poulangy, in the diocese of Langres. Most of these houses had already belonged to him before; wicked or ambitious lords had taken them from him. He exchanged that of Varennes with the bishop of Langres for the village of Bauzemont. He reclaimed that of Bonmoutier from the abbess of Andlau (Alsace), who claimed to own it, but which Gauzlin proved before the emperor Otto to belong to his cathedral. He acquired other considerable property with which he endowed the chapter’s mensa. He bought

in part, and in part was given, the estate of Ambleville, the fief of Boucq, Aingeray, Molésiac, Girauvoisin, the toll of Mont-Saint-Élophe, what King Henry possessed at Gondreville, and several other lands.

Gauzlin undertook to restore the chapel of Saint-Mansuy, which was threatening to fall into ruin, and to establish the monastic order there. He entrusted the care of this undertaking to Archembald, abbot of Saint-Epvre, who placed some religious there under a prior, supplying them from the goods of his abbey with the means to meet their needs. Archembald began the projected building, but death came upon him and prevented him from finishing it. That honour was reserved for Saint Gerard, as was that of founding and endowing the monastery of this suburb of Toul.

The Hungarians, invited by Conrad, son-in-law of the emperor Otto, entered Lorraine in the year 954, plundered and sacked the whole country, took the city of Toul and stripped it so completely that the inhabitants were obliged to go and seek their living elsewhere. Barely three canons remained to perform the office in the cathedral, and even they had great difficulty in finding enough not to die of hunger. The bishop, moved by so many evils, begged the lords of the region, and the emperor himself, to give him help. Otto ordered the Church of Toul to be restored to its former possessions.

Meanwhile the devout bishop, having restored the abbey of Saint-Epvre, resolved to found a new monastery in which he would place Christian virgins who, under the Rule of Saint Benedict, would honour blessed Mary ever Virgin with a special cult. Having learned that on the hill of Bouxières, in his diocese, there was an old temple consecrated to the holy Mother of Jesus Christ, but abandoned and altogether neglected, despite the many wonders the Lord had worked there in favour of the sick of every kind who had come there to pray, he thought that this sanctuary could profitably be raised again and become the oratory of the monastery he would build beside it. But in order to act with prudence and deliberation, he consulted Archembald, abbot of Saint-Epvre, about this design, and other persons of sound judgment and true piety, who all confirmed him in this generous resolution. God favoured His servant's holy intentions; He let him find devout young women, full of good will, who, having no retreat, were waiting for Providence to furnish them with the means of working out their salvation in the enclosure of a monastery. He gave them as superior Rothilde, formed in the monastic virtues by the celebrated Humbert, recluse of Metz, who soon made her community a model of regularity for nuns and a subject of edification for the whole country. To ensure a peaceful and honourable existence for this new house, the holy prelate made himself poor and gave it several lands of his bishopric. The abbey of Bouxières-aux-Dames (*Buxeriæ*)[1] became what the old church on the hill had been, the goal of a famous pilgrimage where several miracles are said to have taken place. Among others is cited the cure of a mute, in commemoration of which a mute was always maintained in the abbey who, on the feast of Saint Gauzlin, went first to the offering, even before the abbess. It is also in memory of this wonder attributed to Saint Gauzlin's intercession that the institution for the deaf and dumb at Nancy has quite recently been placed, at the request of its able director, M. Piroux, and by episcopal ordinance, under the patronage of this blessed Pontiff of the people of Toul.

Four years before his death, Saint Gauzlin was attacked by a violent illness that never left him and gave him occasion to exercise his patience. At last, after governing his Church for forty years with untiring zeal, he died full of merits on the 7th of the ides of September (the 7th of that month), in the year 962. He was carried by his clergy and people to the abbey of Bouxières, which owed him its foundation.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The nuns of Bouxières built an underground chapel over his tomb and kept his body in a very rich shrine. The blessed bishop's head was placed in a silver bust; the jaw was given to the cathedral of Toul, which long kept this relic in another very precious bust.

In 1635 the nuns of Bouxières, frightened by the ravages that the Swedish, Hungarian and other soldiers were committing in the country, plundering the churches and spreading desolation everywhere, resolved to

withdraw from the sacrilegious greed of these destroyers the shrine containing the relics of Saint Gauzlin, their most precious treasure. They therefore had it taken to Nancy, to the nuns of Saint Francis, commonly called the Grey Sisters, who received it and gave it faithful hospitality. They took it back on the eighth day of October 1659, when public tranquillity had been restored, after their return to the monastery they had been forced to abandon. After being solemnly recognised, the relics were taken out of the shrine that held them, to be placed in another, much richer shrine offered by the abbess Anne-Catherine de Cicon.

On 12 January 1734 a new translation was made of Saint Gauzlin's remains from this last shrine into another still richer, provided partly by the generosity of the chapter of Bouxières, partly by a considerable gift from the abbess Anne-Marie d'Eltz-d'Ottange, and lastly from those remains of the old one that could be put to use.

At the unhappy time of the suppression of the convents, Madame de Messey, last abbess of Bouxières, took with her to Luxembourg, where she withdrew to escape persecution, the shrine of Saint Gauzlin and the precious remains it contained. On her return to France the abbé Raybois, formerly provost of the chapter, who had accompanied the venerable canoness into exile, brought back the relics of the holy bishop of Toul and handed them over to Mgr Osmond, bishop of Nancy. They rest today in the old shrine of the relics of Saint Sigisbert, in the primatial cathedral, in the side chapel dedicated under the title of that blessed king.

The relics of Saint Gauzlin are not limited to his dry bones. Several objects that he used during his mortal life have happily escaped the ravages of time and revolutions. They are a chalice, a paten, a book of the Gospels and a liturgical comb. A chalice veil had also long been kept; it ended by disappearing without anyone being able to find out where it had gone.

Formerly, people afflicted with ringworm went on pilgrimage to Bouxières-aux-Dames and asked that their hair be touched with Saint Gauzlin's comb in order to obtain their cure. It is probably to this circumstance that the loss of the finest teeth of this little object must be attributed. As for the others, they must necessarily have triumphed over the most unkempt heads of hair. Hence it was that formerly in Lorraine it was said of someone whose hair was in disorder that he had combed himself with Saint Gauzlin's comb.

Extracted from the Histoire du diocèse de Toul et de celui de Nancy, by the abbé Guillaume, canon of Nancy.

Saint Raymond Nonnatus, Cardinal, of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives

1240. — Pope: Gregory IX. — King of France: Louis IX.

> *Charitas Christi urget nos.*
>
> *The charity of Christ presses us. (II Cor. v, 14.)*
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> *Raymond Nonnatus exercises towards the slaves: 1. corporal mercy, by ransoming them and restoring them to health and to their country; 2. spiritual mercy, by strengthening them in the faith and consoling them with hope.*
>
> *The abbé Martin, Panégyriques.*

Saint Raymond Nonnatus was born in Catalonia in the year of Our Lord 1204, at Portel, a village belonging to the bishopric of Urgel. His father was of the noble family of the Sarrois, later called de Segers, well known in Spain and allied to the celebrated houses of Foix and Cardona. His mother had died of a grave illness which attacked her in the seventh month of her pregnancy. The physicians declared that the child was dead too, and that it was even its death that had caused the mother's. The father, nevertheless, could never bring himself to see her taken to the grave without knowing what she carried in her womb. One of his relatives, seeing him in this perplexity, had the boldness to draw a dagger from his breast and open the left side of the dead woman with it, and at once a fine child full of life appeared, against all human hope and to the great astonishment of all who were present.

The father, who regarded this birth as a particular blessing of heaven on his family, turned his grief into thanksgiving and had the son baptised that very hour, so that he might be preserved from the death of the soul as he had been from that of the body. Count Raymond of Cardona, a kinsman of his house, was his godfather and had him named Raymond after himself; but later he was surnamed Nonnatus, that is, in the Catalan tongue, “not born”.

Scarcely had he the use of reason when, seeing himself without a mother on earth, he chose the holy Virgin as his well-beloved Mother in heaven. Everywhere he spoke of her as the one consolation of his life, and wherever he came upon her image he paid her his homage with a love and devotion that delighted everyone. His father, who was very fond of him, fearing that he would leave the world, would not let him finish his studies; when he had learned something in the schools, he put him on one of his farms to manage it. Raymond, who felt drawn to the ecclesiastical state, was grieved by this arrangement; but, regarding his father’s orders as so many oracles of the divine will, he submitted to them entirely and even carried his obedience so far as to do the work of a shepherd and lead the flocks to the fields, over the mountains and into the forests. It was in this kind of solitude that, redoubling his love and zeal for the holy Virgin, he paid her his respects and homage with more leisure, application and quiet. Divine Providence also seconded these holy dispositions: at the foot of a mountain where he usually led his flock it let him find a little hermitage with a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas. In this sanctuary there was an image of the holy Virgin which became the object of his assiduity and devotion and his refuge in his temptations and troubles.

Satan neglects nothing to turn the faithful from the ways of their salvation; he makes his greatest efforts at the beginning, when a soul undertakes to give itself to God, in order to stop the progress of a nascent virtue. He did not fail to lay his snares to catch the young Raymond. To succeed better in his temptation, he appeared to him in the form of another shepherd who came out of courtesy to visit him. At first he paid him a thousand compliments; then, entering further into conversation with him, he represented to him that the advantages of birth, fortune and intelligence ought to take him away from this rustic life which, he said, was fitter for wild beasts than for rational men born for society, all the more since one is deprived there of every human consolation and every spiritual and temporal help.

All this talk could not shake Raymond’s courage. On the contrary, when towards the end he heard some words against chastity, which the demon had cunningly slipped in, he turned his back on him at once and called the holy Virgin to his aid. And no sooner had he uttered the holy name of Mary than, as if he had crushed the head of this disguised serpent, he saw it vanish with a horrible cry. Raymond, astonished at this adventure, ran to his hermitage and prostrated himself face to the ground at the feet of his holy Protectress, to beg her help once more against the attacks of Satan. He received on the spot from that good Mother so great an abundance of graces and interior consolations that he consecrated himself anew to so gracious a Mistress and promised to serve her more faithfully than ever.

The shepherds round about, often seeing our Saint go into this sacred cave, were curious to know what he did there. And as they always found him praying on his knees, or prostrate before the image of the holy Virgin, instead of being moved by so evident a piety they saw in it only simplicity and a waste of time. Their malice went so far as to accuse him to his father of neglecting the care of his flocks. The father, unable to believe such slackness of a son who had always been perfectly obedient to him, resolved to come and find out the truth of the matter for himself. He set out shortly afterwards and took the road to the mountain where his son was accustomed to go; but when he reached the place where his flock was grazing, he was much surprised to see a young boy of wonderful beauty, all shining with light, who was guarding it. The sight inspired him with such respect that, not daring to approach him, he went on to go down to the hermitage he had been told of, and there indeed he found his son on his knees praying before the image of the holy Virgin. He watched him for some time in this state, then asked him who was the handsome young man to whom he had entrusted the keeping of his flock. Raymond, who knew nothing of this miracle of divine Providence and did not know

what to answer, threw himself at his feet and, bursting into tears, asked his pardon for his negligence. The father, who understood from this that it was all the work of God's hand, gave Him thanks for it, and, not wishing to interrupt his son's devotion any further, went back home well content and full of joy. Raymond, for his part, much troubled by this adventure, went back to find consolation at the feet of his heavenly Mother. She cleared up the mystery for him and told him that it was she who had sent an angel to guard his sheep while he was busy serving her.

So rare a favour filled Raymond's heart with great confidence in Mary. He begged her earnestly to make known to him the state in which he could be most pleasing to her. That lovable Mistress, moved by the fervour of so faithful a disciple, appeared to him in visible form, as she had already done several times, and told him that it was her desire that he should leave this solitude and go to Barcelona, to take the religious habit there in an Order established in her name under the title of Our Lady of Mercy, or of the Redemption of Captives. Raymond received this news with incredible joy. Having, by the same Virgin's command, begged the count of Cardona to obtain his father's consent to this vocation, he was sent by the count himself to Barcelona, where he was admitted to the novitiate and received the habit of the Order of Mercy from the hands of Saint Peter Nolasco.

It is impossible to express with what fervour this holy religious walked in the way of perfection. His piety appeared to all so lofty, so solid and so eminent that a few years after his profession he was found worthy of an office that called for consummate virtue. Saint Serapion, a religious of the same Order, had been chosen to make a journey among the barbarians to free captives there; but as he was on the point of leaving, an important matter obliged his superiors to make other arrangements and send him to England. A redeemer had to be named in his place. They asked his opinion; he implored light from above and was inspired to name Raymond, whose zeal he knew and who had often revealed to him, as to his novice master and director, the ardent desire he had to risk his life in so dangerous and arduous an enterprise, although he was still only thirty years old.

Raymond accepted this commission with great pleasure, and shortly afterwards he crossed to Africa and stopped at the port of Algiers, a refuge of pirates and a market where the infidel corsairs went with complete freedom to put up for sale the Christians they had taken as slaves in their raids. The number of these poor captives was then so great that the funds Saint Raymond had brought were not enough to ransom them all. But as the charity of this generous redeemer was extreme, he would not leave any of these unfortunates in servitude. So, after agreeing on the price of their ransom and distributing what money he had, he had them all set free and gave himself as a hostage until the rest of the payment should arrive. The holy man, seeing himself loaded with irons, thanked God for having given him so fine an occasion to endure something for the love of Him who suffered death on the cross for the redemption of all men. The cruelties and outrages the barbarians inflicted on him during his captivity cannot be told. They were so excessive that the cadi, or judge, of the place, who feared at last that these torments would kill him, which would have made them lose the sum for which he was a hostage, was compelled to have it proclaimed by trumpet that no one was to ill-treat him further, and that if he should die, those who had ill-treated him would answer for it and would pay the whole ransom expected for his release.

Raymond took advantage of the little freedom this truce gave him to exercise his charity in every possible way. He often went to visit the dungeons, where new Christians were continually being brought; he confirmed them in the faith and consoled them in their misfortunes. He even instructed the infidels and converted several of the most obstinate, among others two Moors of high rank who received holy baptism from his hands.

These devout practices of Raymond could not remain so secret that the pasha, named Sétim, did not come to know of them. He was so angered that he ordered on the spot that the saint be impaled, and this cruel sentence would have been carried out had not those concerned in the ransom of the captives, whose place he

was holding, moderated the barbarian's anger. He therefore changed the punishment of death into that of a great number of blows with a stick, which he had laid on this innocent victim with the inhumanity usual among infidels.

This punishment, violent as it was, was so small a thing to his courage that it could not stop his zeal or prevent him from continuing to instruct those who showed some desire to know the principles of the Christian religion, and to strengthen the Christians whom the severity of torments and irons, the weariness of prison or despair of being freed, made waver in the faith. The pasha was again informed of this holy boldness of Raymond, and it drove him to such a pitch of violence that, after having him whipped naked at the corner of every street in the city, he ordered that he be taken to the great market, that there the executioner pierce both his lips with a hot iron and put a steel padlock on his mouth to prevent him from speaking; that the key be kept by the cadi, who would give it only when he judged it necessary to let him eat; and finally that in this state he be thrown into a dungeon loaded with chains and irons.

This illustrious Saint, instead of grieving over so sad a lot, thanked God with all the breadth of his heart. He could no longer open his mouth to proclaim His praises, but he opened his heart to speak to Him the language of love in his prayers, his desires and his transports. One day, when his mind was deeply occupied in contemplation, he was rapt into so profound an ecstasy in the darkness of his dungeon that he remained for a long time with all his senses suspended. The Moors who had charge of him, coming to bring him bread, found him in this state lying on the ground, his head resting on his left hand and pointing with his right hand, in a book, to this verse of Psalm cviii: *Ne auferas de ore meo verbum veritatis usquequaque*: "My Lord and my God, never take the word of truth from my mouth." They were much surprised at this novelty; but their astonishment was far greater when, having brought him to himself, they heard him, with his mouth padlocked, utter aloud this verse of Psalm lxxxix: *In aeternum, Domine, permanet verbum tuum*: "Your word, O Lord, endures for ever." Yet these barbarians were hardened enough to attribute this wonder to a spell, so that, to make him keep silent, they rained blows of sticks and kicks on him and left the padlock on his mouth without giving him anything to eat that day.

Saint Raymond remained for eight months in these torments and anguish, which he suffered always with admirable joy and constancy. At the end of that time the religious of his Order arrived with the funds agreed upon for his release; even so they had great difficulty in getting him out of captivity. The cadi, who was extremely avaricious, pretended to be dissatisfied, and the Saint himself, all on fire with charity, would gladly have stayed there altogether for the consolation of the other slaves. He was nevertheless set free and left Algiers, but not without reward for his labours: the religious who accompanied him let him know that Pope Gregory IX, having been informed of the wonders of his life and the purity of his actions, had raised him to the cardinalate, and that, as a special mark of his affection, he had given him this dignity under the title of Saint Eustace, which was the title he himself had held when he was elected head of the Church. Raymond was so little moved by this news that, always preferring religious mortification, poverty and modesty to all the honours of the world, he would never change his habit, his lodging or his way of life. So, on reaching Barcelona, he went back into his convent and went on living as he had before, without display or any outward pomp, although the count of Cardona had had an apartment prepared for him in his palace. It was too little that blessed Raymond should be crowned by men; God too willed to crown him Himself. As his love and compassion for the unfortunate knew no bounds, it happened one winter's day, when the season was very severe, that our Saint met in the streets a poor old man, badly clothed and shaking all over with cold. The sight touched his heart deeply. He had pity on him and, having embraced the poor man as if to warm him, he gave him alms and even gave him his hat to cover him, so that he went home bareheaded. The following night, Our Lord, to reward so heroic an action, showed him in the fervour of his prayer a most delightful garden, strewn with a thousand different flowers. The Queen of angels and a great number of other virgins were gathering these flowers and making them into a crown of wonderful fragrance and beauty. A

virgin of the company asked for whom this crown was; the holy Virgin answered that it was for him who had taken his hat off his own head to cover that of a poor man. At the same moment the whole glorious company came towards him to put it on his head. Far from rejoicing at this, our Saint was extremely grieved, and in the excess of his confusion and sorrow he sent up his complaint to heaven: “O unhappy man that I am, I have lost what I had gained! Alas! was I to receive in this world the reward of a little good that I had done only for the glory of God and to please my crucified Saviour?” Scarcely had he finished these words when all he had seen vanished, and he found beside him only a poor afflicted man whose head was bound with a crown of thorns. He looked at this poor man attentively and, recognising that it was Jesus Christ Himself, he wished to throw himself at His feet to pay Him homage. Then the Saviour, taking the crown of thorns from His head, said to him: “My dear son, your holy Mother, who is also Mine, wished to crown you with flowers; but since you want no other glory in this world than that of My cross, here I bring you My thorns.” Saint Raymond took the crown and put it on his head, but with such force that it brought him out of his rapture. For a long time he remained full of consolation and joy at what he had seen, and he kept from it this fine maxim: that all our good actions must be done purely for the love of God, without seeking any other interest than that of His glory.

Pope Gregory IX, who heard every day of the wonders God was working through His Servant, blessed Him a thousand times for having inspired him to choose so great a Saint to join to the sacred college of cardinals, and, as he had an extreme desire to see him and keep him near him in order to follow his counsels, he sent for him to come to him at Rome. Raymond’s humility made him despise all these honours to which he saw himself called; but, not wishing to lose the merit of the obedience he owed to the Holy See, he made ready to carry out His Holiness’s wish. For this he went to ask the blessing of Saint Peter Nolasco, founder of his Order, whom he still acknowledged as his superior, cardinal though he was; he also went to the count of Cardona, whose spiritual father he was, to pay him his last visits. His whole Congregation and all Catalonia promised themselves great advantages from this journey; but it pleased God, in the unfathomable secrets of His Providence, to cut these hopes very short. As soon as blessed Raymond had entered the house of the count of Cardona, which was two days’ journey from Barcelona, he was seized with a very violent fever, accompanied by convulsions and all the symptoms that could be signs of approaching death. He wished to prepare himself for it by the ordinary means the Church offers to all the faithful. But the religious of Mercy depended on the parish priest of the place, who was absent, and they had to wait for him to administer the last Sacraments. Then this man of God, who feared to die without being fortified with the holy Viaticum, raised his eyes to heaven and prayed God not to let him be deprived of this blessing that he desired so ardently, though he acknowledged himself unworthy of it. And at once there came in by the door of the room where he lay, in the presence of the count, the religious and several other persons who were attending him, a fine procession of unknown men, clothed in white habits like the Fathers of Mercy, each holding a lighted torch in his hand. Our Lord followed them with a holy ciborium in His hands; but the light He shed was so great that all the company were dazzled by it, so that no one could see what took place in the rest of so miraculous an action.

It lasted a good half-hour, after which the procession went back in the same order in which it had come, with only this difference: on coming, the religious had appeared only from the door of the room to the bedside, while on returning they took the road to the river that flows at the foot of the village, crossed it dry-shod, walking on the waters as on firm ground, and then disappeared. The count and all those present, who had gone out to see the end of this wonder, found on their return the holy Cardinal on his knees, his eyes bathed in tears, his face and hands raised to heaven, as if coming out of a profound rapture. They asked him what had happened, but he said only these words of David: “How good is the God of Israel to those who are upright and innocent of heart!” At last he admitted that he had received the most august Sacrament of our altars. And so, all his desires being fulfilled, shortly afterwards he gave back his spirit to his Creator, uttering these words of the Saviour dying on the cross: “My God, into Your hands I commend my soul.” This took

place in the year of Our Lord 1240, sixteen years before the death of Saint Peter Nolasco.

After his death his face became beautiful and radiant like that of Moses when he came down from the mountain where he had been speaking with God. And although the heat of the season was extreme, and was further increased by the great crowd of people who came from all sides to honour his precious remains, his body nevertheless never showed any sign of corruption. On the contrary, it spread through the whole room a fragrance sweeter than balm and the most precious perfumes, and many supernatural cures took place in favour of those whom piety had brought there and who had the good fortune to touch it.

Meanwhile thought had to be given to the place where so precious a treasure should be laid, and a new dispute arose on this subject between the count of Cardona, who wanted to keep it, and the religious of Mercy, who wanted to take it to their convent. To settle their quarrel it was agreed that the holy body should be put in a shrine and then loaded on a blind mule, which would be guided only by its own instinct, and that the place where it stopped would be chosen for the burial. This agreement was faithfully carried out: the mule, after walking for some time, finally stopped near the hermitage of Saint Nicholas, where the servant of God had seen his devotion to the holy Virgin born and where that good Mother had let him taste her favours. It was never possible to make the beast go any further: it went three times round the hermitage and then fell dead at the door of the chapel. It was recognised that God's will was that the sacred relics of Saint Raymond Nonnatus should be laid in that place, as indeed they were.

This blessed redeemer had worked many miracles during his life. By his blessing he had delivered all Catalonia from a contagious disease that was killing the cattle and spreading desolation and famine everywhere. Even in his absence he had prevented a lady falsely accused of adultery from being killed by her husband, by making useless and without effect the dagger blows he dealt her, although the man firmly believed he had killed her. He had given a thousand extraordinary helps, spiritual and temporal, to those who commended themselves to his prayers. We have just said that he worked still more shortly after his death and before his burial; but those he worked at his tomb, in that chapel of Saint Nicholas, as soon as he was laid there, are without number. This is what obliged Saint Peter Nolasco to ask the abbot and Chapter of Solsona, since raised to a bishopric, for the ownership of this chapel, which belonged to them, in order to build a convent of his Order there. His request was granted, and the convent he had built there has since grown greatly. It was there that the holy Cardinal appeared to him in the immense glory he enjoyed and made known to him that the following year (1256) he would come to possess with him the delights of eternal happiness. He still continues to work similar wonders, particularly for the help of women who are dying in the pains of childbirth, for the preservation of domestic animals and cattle commended to him, for the vindication of innocent people falsely accused, and for the relief of the sick suffering from fever. Benedict XIII, whom France and Spain held to be Pope, placed him among the Saints, and this was ratified not only by the Council of Constance but also by many Popes who followed. He was afterwards put into the martyrology and the Roman breviary, and his office is now said throughout the Christian world. Before ending this life we must note that several historians distinguish two journeys that he made to Barbary for the deliverance of captives: one under the direction of Saint Serapion, in which he did not remain as a hostage; the other as leader, which is the one we have spoken of. They add that between these two journeys he was elected procurator general of his Order, and that in this capacity he went to Rome, where he worked generously to obtain the Bulls of confirmation of this holy institute. It was there that he became known to Pope Gregory IX, who was then still only a cardinal, and to the other members of the sacred college; which is why, later, this Pope, informed of the wonders he was working at Algiers, himself raised him to the dignity of cardinal. He was recalled to Spain only for his second journey to Africa. Other authors make no such distinction and attribute only one journey to him; but it is more likely that he made two. All the chronicles of this Order speak of him with great honour.

He is represented: 1. with a padlock on his lips; 2. sometimes with three crowns or even four, to which the palm is also added; 3. with a crown of thorns on his head: this representation is not frequent, but it refers to an incident in the Saint's life; 4. with a monstrance in his hand, to indicate that, as he was dying and the priest who was to bring him holy Viaticum could not be found, angels came to present it to him.

His Life has been printed in Latin, Spanish, Italian and French. We have a fine abridgement of it in the martyrology of the Saints of Spain, under 14 November, the day on which his venerable image was set up with great honour by Cardinal Virginio Orsini in his title of Saint Eustace at Rome.

Saint Isabelle or Elizabeth of France, Foundress of the Monastery of Longchamp, in the Diocese of Paris

1270. — Pope: Clement IV. — King of France: Louis IX.

> *Boni, qui salutem suam et aliorum quaerunt, magis volunt exemplo quam verbo docere.*
>
> *The good, who seek their own salvation and that of others, would rather teach by their example than by their words.*
>
> *Cardinal Hugh, On Ecclesiasticus, ch. v.*

Isabelle of France was, by her nobility and by the glory of her parents and ancestors, the most illustrious princess of her century, since God had given her Philip Augustus for grandfather, Louis VIII for father and Blanche of Castile for mother, and Saint Louis was her brother. After her father's death she was placed under the guardianship of the queen her mother, who had a wonderful tenderness for her and took all the care of her that a daughter so dear to heaven deserved. From her earliest childhood this devout princess was touched and moved by God. While still at the breast she pushed away all the trifles shown her to amuse her; but when she was shown an image of Our Lord, of the holy Virgin or of some other Saint, then she showed her joy: she took it in her hands and kissed it with feelings of devotion that surprised everyone.

The pomp and luxury of the court never made any impression on her heart. She declared one day to a good nun that if, to obey the queen her mother and not to appear too unsociable to the other princesses her kinswomen, she was sometimes obliged to let herself be adorned, it was altogether against her will, and she took not the least satisfaction in it. From her earliest youth she had such great communications with God, and she gave herself to prayer with such zeal and fervour night and day, that she was sometimes rapt in ecstasy.

She soon joined abstinence to prayer, and from her childhood she practised it with such rigour that Madame de Bensemont, her governess, declared that what she ate could not have nourished a human body without a miracle. The queen her mother admired so generous a virtue at so tender an age; yet she was moved to pity to see her treat her innocent flesh with such severity. And as she knew that she had an inclination to give alms, she tried to moderate this spirit of penance by the motive of charity: she would sometimes invite her to eat, promising that if she did so she would give her money to distribute to the poor. This contest of virtues made some impression on Isabelle's soul; but, not wishing to satisfy her body to the prejudice of her spirit, she begged the queen to favour her inclination to almsgiving by means other than those incompatible with fasting. So she did not give up her custom of fasting three times a week, besides the fasts ordered by the Church. That is where the Saints have always begun the great work of their perfection.

To avoid all idleness, our young princess learned from her earliest years to read, to write and to make many of the small works usual to her sex, at which she busied herself in her closet with her ladies, never allowing any man there. She did not stop at this knowledge; she also learned the Latin tongue, which was already a dead language, and the queen her mother allowed it because, seeing that she had a wise, humble, moderate and modest mind, she easily persuaded herself that this language would serve only to make her penetrate more deeply the truths of salvation by reading so many fine spiritual treatises of the holy Fathers, which did

not then exist in our language.

The liveliness and great activity of her mind, together with the little care she took of her body, brought on an extreme illness. This misfortune touched deeply the heart of the king, of the two queens and of the whole court; they feared to lose a person of such rare merit. Public prayers were ordered everywhere for her, and a thousand mouths were opened at the altars to ask God for her cure and her life. There was at that time, in the village of Nanterre, a person who lived in the repute of holiness and was held to have the gift of prophecy. The queen mother, who had a special esteem for her, sent a messenger to her from Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where the patient was, to beg her to join her prayers on this occasion to those of all the virtuous people of the kingdom and to let her know what the outcome of her daughter's illness would be. This holy woman answered that she would not die of it, and that on the contrary she would soon recover perfect health; but that neither Her Majesty nor the king her son should count her any longer among the living, because for all the rest of her days she would be dead to the world and would live only for the King of heaven, who had chosen her for His bride.

The truth of these words was soon seen, for our Saint attached herself to this heavenly Bridegroom. Yet she was sought in marriage by Conrad, king of Jerusalem, son and later successor of the emperor Frederick II. The king and the queens greatly desired this alliance, which they judged very advantageous to the house of France; the Pope himself, Innocent IV, desired it for the good of all Christendom, as he showed her by a letter he wrote to her expressly. She nevertheless refused steadily, but in so humble and judicious a way that His Holiness, having understood from her answer that her vocation came from God, changed his mind and confirmed her in the devout resolution she had taken to live in a state of perpetual virginity, without, however, leaving the world or entering any congregation or institute.

Saint Isabelle shaped her whole conduct on four great virtues: truth, humility, devotion and charity. By truth we do not mean that common virtue which consists in not lying, but a nobler and loftier truth, which consists in a just harmony of our feelings, our conduct and our words with the thoughts, the will and the commands of God. Our illustrious princess accustomed herself from her earliest youth to perfect sincerity in her feelings, to great uprightness of soul and to ordering well the affections of her heart. Her words matched the purity of her mind, and they were always so truthful that no disguise, flattery or slander was ever noticed in them. Nor could she bear lying in others: when she was about to give her alms, she would send Sister Agnes, who was then in her household, to prevent the poor from lying in her presence.

Her humility was extreme, for she went down into the deepest abysses of that spiritual emptiness where the mystical doctors have always placed the throne of this sublime virtue. She was persuaded that she could never do anything pleasing to God unless she esteemed herself less than nothing. The nobility of her birth, which she drew from so many kings, the triumphs of her grandfather, the victories of the king her father and the majesty of her brother, who was then the greatest king in the world, the riches of her house, the honours that poured in from all sides at her feet, her beauty and the graces with which she was adorned: all these advantages were but little atoms lost in the rays of the great daylight with which God had illumined her soul. In a word, she always kept the four chief points of holy humility, which consist in despising the world, despising no one, despising oneself and, lastly, despising contempt itself. Although she had such horror of the world in general and of all its pomps, its grandeurs and its pleasures, there was no one in particular for whom she did not have esteem and love; and as she saw the image of God in each, she received with incredible kindness the humblest persons who approached her. She was never heard to speak in an imperious tone; on the contrary, she treated her own servants with a gentleness that delighted them and won her their admiration and respect. If she was severe, it was only with herself: while she excused everyone else, she could forgive herself nothing. She persecuted herself as an enemy; everything the world esteemed in her she made the object of her disdain, and she felt an inner joy when she saw herself dishonoured, placing her glory only in sharing the reproaches of her Saviour.

Her devotion was a model by which the most perfect souls might rule themselves. She rose long before daybreak to say her prayers and perform her other spiritual exercises, in which she usually persevered until noon, and in Lent until three o'clock, putting off taking any food until that hour. When she came out of her closet, one could see from her eyes that she had been melting in tears at the foot of the crucifix. Her conscience was so tender that she went to confession every day, with sobs and a surprising compunction. She often took the discipline, but with such rigour that nearly all her clothes were stained with her blood. Good books were her most delightful converse, and holy Scripture pleased her more than anything else.

Her love for God and her neighbour was very ardent and very active; for, not content with an idle charity, she showed its effects on the unfortunate, on whom she lavished her goods continually. Every day before her dinner she had a number of poor people brought into her room, and after giving them her gifts she served them at table with a kindness and grace that charmed everyone. After dinner she visited the sick and the afflicted, to relieve them in their infirmities or console them in their troubles; and all the time left to her she spent working, now for the adornment of altars, now for the needs of the poor and the furnishing of hospitals.

King Saint Louis, her brother, visiting her one day, asked her for a veil she had spun with her own hands; but she answered that it was destined for a greater lord than he, and the same day she sent it to a poor sick woman whom she often visited. Some ladies, having found this out, bought it back, and it later fell into the hands of the nuns of the abbey of Saint-Antoine, who still kept it in 1685 as a precious relic, in a silver arm enriched with jewels. The alms she gave every day so lavishly were not confined to the kingdom of France: her care extended as far as the Levant, where she usually maintained ten horsemen as her contribution to the French troops serving against the infidels. Her very holy and innocent life was not free from those tribulations with which it sometimes pleases God to try the most just souls, those who attach themselves to His service with the greatest purity and perfection. She was attacked by several very long and very violent illnesses; but these pains gave her only joy, because she had no greater satisfaction than to suffer something for her heavenly Bridegroom. What touched her more were the reverses of the Christian arms in the Levant, the oppression of the faithful of the Holy Land, and the captivity of King Saint Louis, the dearest and most lovable of all her brothers. Another blow that she felt very keenly was the loss of Queen Blanche, her mother, who, after bringing up the king her son so well and governing his kingdom with such wisdom and glory during his minority and his absence, chose to end such glorious days lying on the ground on a poor straw mattress, where she received the last Sacraments of the Church with a devotion that made all present burst into tears, and her dear Isabelle more than all. This death completed our holy Princess's disgust with the court and the world; as soon as the king her brother had come back from his voyage overseas, she resolved to withdraw altogether. She considered whether she should build a monastery of nuns, to spend the rest of her days there, or only a hospital, to devote herself there to helping the poor and the sick. Doctor Emery, chancellor of the University of Paris and her director, whom she consulted on the matter, advised her rather to build a convent. She followed this advice and resolved to found a house of women of the Order of Saint Francis. A design of such importance could not be carried out without her communicating it to the king her brother and having his consent. She chose the moment when he was most at leisure in his closet, and there, throwing herself at his feet as was her custom, she begged him to approve her undertaking. The holy king, who was full of piety towards God and of tenderness for his sister, after making her rise and sit beside him, not only gave his approval but promised to contribute all he could to so devout a design.

The Princess thanked him very humbly for this favour and, after commending the matter to God, began to set her hand to the work. Her first concern was to have statutes drawn up in conformity with the Rule of Saint Clare, which she wished to give to her nuns. Six of the most learned and devout men of the Order of Saint Francis took this in hand, namely Saint Bonaventure, doctor of the Church and later cardinal; Brother Eudes Rigaud, later archbishop of Rouen; Brother William of Millençonne; Brother Geoffrey Marsais; and Brother William Archambault; and they worked at it with as much care as if it had been a question of founding a

great monarchy. As soon as they had drawn up the form of this Rule, the Saint sent it to Pope Alexander IV, who confirmed it. But shortly afterwards these new constitutions were found so austere and so difficult in practice that they seemed made rather to crush nature than to mortify it. King Saint Louis, who took pity on these poor nuns, begged Pope Urban IV to bring some mitigation to it. The Pope did so once the cardinal of Santa Cecilia had settled its articles; and it is from this that the nuns who follow this wisely mitigated Rule are called Urbanists. At last Saint Isabelle chose for her daughters' dwelling the solitude of Longchamp, two leagues from Paris, on the bank of the Seine, below the wood of Boulogne, in the very place where the Dryads had been worshipped by the superstition of antiquity. She placed there heavenly souls who filled the whole country with blessings. Saint Louis, accompanied by the queen his wife and the heir to the throne, followed by the princes, the lords of his court and a great crowd of people, had the cross planted there by the bishop of the diocese and himself laid the first stone. This building, at a cost of thirty thousand livres (a considerable sum in those days), went up so quickly that in a short time a complete monastery was to be seen. But what may show everyone that this undertaking was from heaven is that on the day the work was begun three doves, of wonderful whiteness and shining with light, appeared in the air above those present and stayed a long time in the same place, as if they wished to have their share in it. The queen, taking the princess by the hand, said to her: "Courage, my sister; the whole august Trinity is taking part in our affairs." On the eve of the feast of Saint John the Baptist in the year 1260, Saint Louis came for the second time, with great pomp, to this monastery and installed the nuns there under the direction of his sister, Isabelle of France.

The holy Foundress would never let her abbey bear any title but that of the Humility of Our Lady, and when Sister Agnes, her historian, asked her the reason, she answered that she found no name more beautiful or more favourable to the honour of the holy Virgin than that one, and that she was astonished that among so many congregations there was none yet honoured with this title. Saint Louis, in accordance with the permission the Pope had given him, which was even inserted in the Rule, entered the monastery with a small number of chosen persons and, sitting on a bench in the chapter house in the midst of all the nuns, himself gave them a very fine and very urgent exhortation on their state and on the perfection of the spiritual life; for which Sister Isabelle of France thanked him very humbly, calling him "our most reverend and holy father, my Lord the King".

The Saint did not make profession of the religious life. Although she was within the enclosure of this abbey of Longchamp, she always lived in a separate building and in secular dress. Her conduct in this was very wise and very judicious. As she was subject to great infirmities, she had reason to fear that her weakness would oblige her to take dispensations that would not have been of sufficiently good example for the community; for the Rule, with all the mitigation Pope Urban IV had brought to it, was still very austere, and those who enjoyed the best health could observe it only with great efforts of virtue and courage. Moreover, had she become a nun, she could never have avoided being elected abbess and superior of the house, since she was its foundress and the most capable of governing it, and her humility made her dread this above all things. Lastly, the temporal good of her house required that she act in this way, because by keeping her rank and part of her goods she was better able to support it with her credit, protect it with her authority and help it with her alms. Her resolution was approved by the most enlightened persons, who attributed to great wisdom what others might perhaps have taken for a lack of generosity and fervour. Isabelle nevertheless lived like the most austere nun of Longchamp. She was dressed in plain camlet; her veil and kerchiefs were without lace; she fasted continually and very often took the discipline to excess; she kept very few persons about her, served herself in all her needs, kept strict silence, attended the divine offices as often as she could, spent the greater part of the day and night in prayer, served the poor as usual and gave them large gifts, humbled herself at the feet of her servants and always asked their pardon on her knees before going to Communion; in short, she carried all her nuns in her heart and took particular care of their spiritual progress as well as of the temporal affairs of the house.

She spent more than ten years in this state, purifying her spirit more and more by a life of the mind, until, drawing near to the Promised Land, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem, she entered, like another Moses, into a cloud of glory, where she had such sweet and familiar converse with God that she spent several nights in contemplation without being able to lie down. Sister Agnes, who was told of it, went to her room to beg her to take some rest; but she found her in a rapture that took from her the use of her senses and all her natural faculties and made her face redder than newly opened roses and all shining with a heavenly light. Her confessor and her chaplain, who also came into her room for the same purpose, were witnesses of the same thing and could not doubt that this excellent bride of Jesus Christ was then enjoying that union of love which Scripture calls the kiss of the Lord and which is the effect of spiritual marriage. When she came out of her ecstasy she said several times these beautiful words: *Illi soli honor et gloria*: "To Him alone be honour and glory."

Some time later she had a distinct revelation of the day of her death. She then wrote to Pope Clement IV to beg him to give her his blessing before she left this world, and also to allow the princesses of France of her family to attend her funeral and visit her tomb after her death, which His Holiness granted her by an express Bull of the year 1268. Having then fallen ill, she received holy Viaticum with a devotion and fervour that touched the heart of the whole assembly; then, turning to the nuns, whose pardon she had already asked with very deep humility, she said these few words to them: "Farewell, my dear sisters; remember in your prayers your poor Isabelle, who has always loved you so tenderly and who will never forget you before God." Immediately afterwards she had herself laid on a straw mattress, where she received the sacrament of Extreme Unction. At last, all on fire with the flames of divine love and longing only for the embraces of her Beloved, she gave back her spirit into His hands, to be crowned with glory for ever. This took place on 22 February in the year 1270. Her daughters showed clearly enough the grief they felt at this loss by the torrents of tears they shed. But God, who did not wish to leave them without consolation, made them hear several times, in mid-air, from the mouths of angels, these words of Psalm lxxv: *In pace factus est locus ejus*, which signified that she was enjoying that peace which is born of the happy possession of the sovereign good.

The life of Saint Isabelle is an admirable lesson for every state and condition. Ladies of the court will learn from it that, though they are bound up in the affairs of the world, they must not fail to give themselves to the chief exercises of Christian piety; that the more they are surrounded by dangers, the more they are obliged to retirement, prayer, mortification of the senses, penance and the other practices that sustain the soul and strengthen it against the snares of the devil; that helping the poor, visiting hospitals and serving the sick have nothing that is unworthy of their greatness, and that, far from dishonouring themselves by stooping to the feet of the members of Jesus Christ, they do themselves great honour and acquire great treasures of merit for heaven. Virgins living in the world will learn from it with how much care they must guard the priceless pearl of their chastity; that gaming, balls, the theatre and conversation with men are reefs they must avoid if they are not to suffer sad shipwreck there; that, whatever their rank, modesty in dress, silence, solitude, spiritual reading and frequenting the Sacraments must be extremely dear to them; and that, being bound to please no one but God, they must put all their care into adorning their souls with the virtues He seeks in His brides. Lastly, nuns will learn from it with what zeal they must fulfil all the obligations of their profession; that since God has given them a Rule by which they will be judged, they can never be too exact in observing it; that their whole life must be a prayer and a love of God; and that the only consolation they will be able to have at the hour of death will be to have loved Jesus Christ alone, to have sought Jesus Christ alone and to have forgotten all creatures, in order to place in Him all their desires and all their affections.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Isabelle's body, clothed in the habit of Saint Clare, was buried in the monastery she had founded, as she herself had ordered. Her memory has remained blessed in all the following centuries. Pope Leo X had an inquiry made into her miracles, and sixty-three were verified in the usual forms; they are reported by the

authors of her life. That Pope declared her Blessed by a Bull of the year 1521 and gave the nuns of Longchamp permission to say her office on 31 August, which falls within the octave of Saint Louis, although she died on 22 February. Since then Pope Urban VIII, at the request of Marie-Élisabeth Mortier, abbess of this royal house, allowed by an apostolic Indult her sacred remains, which had rested in the ground for nearly four hundred years, to be raised and placed in a shrine. This ceremony was performed with great pomp on 4 June in the year 1637 by Jean-François de Gondi, first archbishop of Paris, in the reign of Louis the Just, great-nephew of this great Saint, as descending in direct line from Saint Louis, her brother.

Formerly there were kept in the famous house of Longchamp, called the Humility of Our Lady, together with her bones, her hair and her robe, which was of plain woollen stuff, brown in colour, and her gold rings, on one of which were engraved the words *Ave, gratia plena*, a mark of her devotion to the holy Virgin. Many more miracles have taken place at her tomb since her beatification; many sick people have been cured by her merits, and many people overwhelmed with affliction have received relief and consolation there in their troubles. Her house long kept up the strict observance of her Rule. In 1685 it was still spreading the good odour of Jesus Christ, not only in the places nearest to it but also in the city of Paris; people went to admire in these holy nuns the ancient innocence and simplicity of their first Institute.

At the Revolution the monastery of Longchamp was entirely destroyed, and the place it occupied became a farm. The church of Saint-Louis-en-l'Île in Paris possesses part of Saint Isabelle's relics, which are exposed every year to the veneration of the faithful on the feast of the holy king.

Many authors have given us her life, among others Rouillard, advocate at the parlement, and the Rev. Fr. Caussin, of the Society of Jesus. The Annals of the Order of Saint Francis also speak of her at great length. The Rev. Fr. Artus du Moustier mentions her in his martyrology of the same Order and in his *Recueil*. Du Saussay gives a very fine eulogy of her in his martyrology of the Saints of France.

Saint Paulinus, Bishop of Trier and Confessor (359)

Saint Maximinus, the great bishop whom Poitou gave to Trier, had for his successor another Poitevin whom the Church has judged no less worthy of the honours due to holiness: we mean Saint Paulinus, a disciple of his illustrious predecessor, whom the faithful of Belgic Gaul found all the more capable of so heavy a burden for that reason. In 353 he was one of the Fathers of the council of Arles, and Arianism found in him an antagonist as enlightened against error as he was courageous against the emperor Constantius, who was so eager to have the doctrines that had been desolating the Church militant for more than thirty years upheld there by the bishops of his party. Against this prince too he maintained the innocence of Saint Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria (296–373), and this noble conduct brought him the same fate. Various places of exile were assigned to him one after another in the most barbarous regions, without his patience ever being worn out. It was he who, in one of the intervals of these active persecutions, found the means of coming to his native country to arrange the return to Trier, at the urgent request of his diocesans, of the relics of Saint Maximinus, which were still kept at Silly (Vienne). This did not suit the people of Poitou, who opposed it vigorously, not wishing to deprive themselves of the miraculous cures that had become frequent at his tomb. It was above all at Silly that opposition ran high. An unexpected storm, by scattering the parishioners, had to give the assailants more courage and strength; they took advantage of it to carry off the holy body, and Paulinus went home with his precious conquest. This consolation, and the enthusiasm that greeted him in his city with the treasure he brought it, only increased the fears of his enemies. Fresh representations to the emperor obtained a new exile against him. This time he was sent to Phrygia, a country infested by the Montanists, and he had much to suffer from their malice during the five years he was kept there. These torments put an end to his life, which earned the praises of Saint Hilary and ended on 31 August 358.

Along with admirable examples of pastoral firmness, he left writings that place him, like Saint Maximinus, among the finest Catholic lights of his time. Felix II, bishop of Trier, had his body brought back from

Phrygia to that city and laid it in the church of Our Lady, now called the church of Saint-Paulin.

The abbé Auber, Origines de l'Histoire du Poitou; cf. Dom Rivet, Histoire littéraire de la France.

Saint Victor of Cambon, Solitary, in the Diocese of Nantes (Sixth Century)

Saint Victor was one of those souls whom God hides in the secret of His face so that, preserved from the corruption of the world, they may serve Him with a purer heart. He was born in the territory of Cambon, a parish of the diocese of Nantes near Pontchâteau, and spent his days there in solitude. Perhaps he should be regarded as one of the disciples of Saint Friard, Saint Martin of Vertou or Saint Hermeland, who at that time filled the Nantes country with the splendour of their virtues. What is certain is that the servant of God, far from the tumult of the world, led an angelic life and acquired great merit for eternity. When the Lord had called him to Himself, his body was buried in the oratory of his cell, and the fame of his holiness spread so far that the faithful were soon seen coming in crowds to his tomb to seek his intercession.

This concourse lasted until the year 878, when the Normans, having seized the Nantes country, destroyed the oratory of Saint-Victor, which stood at one end of the village of Cambon, and at the same time overthrew the parish church. The church was rebuilt about the year 980 through the care of Guerech, count of Nantes. As for the hermitage, it was left in ruins; but its walls were still standing in the tenth century. It is said that at that time Geoffrey, count of Rennes, who was at war with Judicael, count of Nantes, wanted to stable the horses of his troops in this oratory, and they all died in a single night to punish him for his irreverence. It is also related that a young man of Cambon, seeking out of guilty curiosity to make sure whether Victor was truly a saint, took his relics and threw them twice into the fire to test them; twice too, it is said, they came out at once with a great noise and undamaged. The foolish man fell backwards, lay as if dead and did not recover his senses until his father had carried him to Saint Victor's tomb. This tomb can still be seen in the church of Cambon, but it was profaned during the Revolution. As for the relics of the servant of God, it appears that they are lost.

The Church of Nantes has long honoured Saint Victor on 31 August.

Taken from the Saints de Bretagne, by Dom Lobineau.

Saint Agylus or Y of Voisinat, Viscount of Orléans and Confessor (593)

Agylus, viscount of the city of Orléans in the time of King Guntram (593), was, so it is related, much given to anger and cruelty. One of his slaves had failed in his service and had fled to the tomb of Saint Maximinus the Elder, and Agylus in a fury was pursuing him and meant to kill him. But suddenly, in the middle of his course, he felt himself stopped by a supernatural force and could not take a single step further. Then his horse reared and threw him; he fell, and his body was so bruised and broken by the fall that only a breath of life remained in him when his servants picked him up and carried him to that same tomb, near which they laid him down. There he not only came to his senses but recovered his health. He asked pardon for the crime he had intended and allowed the fugitive servant to withdraw to the monastery of Micy, or Saint-Mesmin, to serve there.

After this event Agylus, moved by the grace of God, began to lead a life altogether different from the past: he abstained from his habitual vices, practised the Christian virtues, endowed holy places, fed the poor, helped the unfortunate, and in short did all the works of religion he could. A visit to the tombs of the Apostles took him to Rome, and from there he went on to Jerusalem, where he venerated the Saviour's sepulchre with great devotion. On returning to France he spent the rest of his life very holily. Warned that the day of his death was near, he called Austrinus, bishop of Orléans, and Maximinus the Younger, abbot of Micy, and it was after receiving the last Sacraments from their hands that he gave up his soul to God. His body was carried with honour to the church of the holy Virgin that he had built, now called the church of Saint-Agyle; tradition says

that he rests there under the altar. Agylus died towards the end of the sixth century, and his tomb was made famous by many miracles.

Proper of Orléans.

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[1] This is Saint Mammes, patron of the city and diocese of Langres, whose life we gave on 17 August, where details may be read on Saint Theodotus, Saint Rufina and Saint Ammia.

[2] This devout bishop, elected on 28 December 531, had a particular devotion to Saint Christopher, martyr, and had a little church built under his invocation. It was there that he was buried, after an episcopate of only one year, eight months and five days, with the two priests Sanctinus or Saintin and Memorius or Memorianus, who were inseparably united to him in life and in death. Saint Optatus' tomb is still shown in the crypts of Saint-Germain, to which he was afterwards translated; but his bones had been taken to Berry before the ninth century, where the churches of Dèvres and Vierzon possessed them in turn. — Fisquet, *France pontificale*.

[3] The life and history of Saint Lazarus will be found in the month of December. Let us confine ourselves here to remarking that the Church of Marseilles takes advantage of the Octave of the solemnity of its first Apostle to venerate, on the Sunday within the Octave, the holy Bishops, his successors, who have not found a place in its martyrology. They are Saint EUSTACHIUS, Saint HONORATUS I and Saint HONORATUS II. Saint Eustachius lived from about 452 to 470. Musaeus dedicated to him the second part of his work. It was indeed at the urging of the successor of Venerius that the learned Marseilles priest composed the Sacramentary (Missal and Ritual) which completed the liturgy of the diocese at that time. Eustachius, whom Gennadius calls a man of God and to whom Sidonius Apollinaris gives the title of Saint, is hardly known to us except through the Sacramentary of Musaeus and through the ordination of Saint Eutropius. Eutropius was a rich man of Marseilles, as distinguished by his birth as by his virtues. After he had lost his wife, the bishop of Marseilles obliged him, in spite of the repugnance of his humility, to receive the diaconate. Later he was elected bishop of Orange, and he has left glorious traces in the general history of the Church. Everyone knows that the cult of Saint Eutropius was dear to our forefathers, and several churches were placed under his invocation. Saint Honoratus I lived towards the end of the fifth century. Canon Antoine Ricard, from whom we borrow the details of the lives of these three holy Bishops, expresses himself as follows about him in his *Histoire des Évêques de Marseille*: "Under the guidance of Saint Hilary of Arles, Honoratus early learned to fear the Lord and to walk in the ways of perfection. He possessed in an eminent degree the gift of speech, always ready to preach with marvellous facility, quoting holy Scripture so aptly that one would have said he knew it by heart. In the form of homilies he composed several discourses, unfortunately lost, in which he upheld the faith and fought heresy. He also wrote lives of the Saints, and in particular that of Saint Hilary of Arles, whose grateful and faithful disciple he remained all his life. Pope Gelasius paid tribute to the soundness of Saint Honoratus' faith by writing to congratulate him on it. The Rogations, or solemn supplications to obtain God's blessings on the fruits of the earth, had recently been established by Saint Mamertus. The holy Bishop of Marseilles hastened to establish them in his turn in his diocese. It was only much later that they were adopted in the whole Church." Lastly, Saint Honoratus II lived about the year 950. His life is summed up as follows in the work already quoted: "Here is yet another Saint among our ancient bishops of Marseilles, the last of the successors of Saint Lazarus to bear this title in our glorious episcopal chronology. Saint Honoratus II appears for the first time, in 948, in a transaction made in favour of a pious lady named Thucinda. The beginnings of his episcopate were marked by one of those cruel necessities to which the Saracen invasion too often reduced the piety of our forefathers. Gerard of Roussillon, commissioner of Provence for King Lothair, had the relics of Saint Lazarus carried from Marseilles to Autun, and it was on this occasion that the diocese of Autun was placed under the patronage of our first bishop. Honoratus II obtained from Count Boso a first restitution of property that had belonged to the abbey of Saint-Victor. This abbey was, moreover, to be the constant object of his pastoral care, and he became as it were its second founder. He was helped in this work of restoration by his brother William, who was viscount of Marseilles. Not only did they have the property restored to the monastery which had been taken from it during the troubles caused in Provence by the barbarians, but their pious liberality procured it much more. In concert with his clergy, the holy Bishop placed a new colony of monks in this monastery, under the Rule of Saint Benedict. Following a deed that records important concessions made by the Church of Marseilles to Saint-Victor, the devout prelate adds: 'I, Honoratus, bishop, and my clergy, grant you permission to search for the lands of Saint-Victor which we do not possess, and, as soon as you have discovered them, to summon those who hold them and then to possess them, without the intervention of any bishop being necessary.' The concession was made and published at Marseilles on a Wednesday, 31 October, in the reign of Conrad; it was signed first by the bishop Saint Honoratus. Another donation, emanating from the count of Provence, was made in the presence of Saint Honoratus and his brother. It is couched in these terms: 'I give all that I possess in this territory (of La Cadière) by the liberality of the king, that is, the royal fisc, to Saint-Victor and to the monks who dwell in that same place.' The last deed in which the name of the holy Bishop appears is dated 967, and it too relates to a claim to lands belonging to Saint-Victor."

[4] We shall give his life in the volume devoted to the Venerables.

[5] We restore the venerable name of this prelate according to its original spelling and on the strength of authentic documents.

[6] The abbey of Bouxières was secularised about the middle of the fifteenth century and transformed into a chapter of canonesses which accepted only persons able to prove sixteen quarterings of nobility. The foundation of this monastery and the consecration of its church furnished the matter of a delightful legend, from which the nuns had taken the fifth and sixth lessons of the office of their holy patron, and of which the abbé Lyonnois preserved the Latin text in the first volume of his *Histoire des villes vieille et neuve de Nancy*.

1 September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

In the province of Narbonne, Saint GILES, abbot and confessor. 720. — At Benevento, the blessed brothers, martyrs, twelve in number. IIIrd c. — In Palestine, Saint JOSHUA and Saint GIDEON. 1580 and 1309 B.C. — At Jerusalem, Saint Anna the Prophetess, whose holiness is attested by the Gospel.[1] About the year 1. — At Capua, on the Via Aquaria, Saint Priscus, martyr, one of the early disciples of Jesus Christ. Ist c. — At Reims, Saint XYSTUS or SIXTUS, disciple of the apostle Saint Peter, who, having been consecrated by him first bishop of that city, received the crown of martyrdom under Nero.[2] — At Todi, in Umbria, Saint Terentian, bishop and martyr, who under the emperor Hadrian, by order of the proconsul Laetianus, endured the torments of the rack and of whips armed with iron points; finally his tongue was cut out and he was beheaded, and so completed his martyrdom. About 118. — At Heraclea, Saint Ammon, deacon, and forty blessed Virgins whom he instructed in the faith and led with him to the glory of martyrdom, under the tyrant Licinius. IVth c. — In Spain, Saint Vincent[3] and Saint Laetus, martyrs. — At Populonia, in Tuscany, Saint Regulus, or Rieul, who came from Africa and accomplished his martyrdom in that place under Totila.[4] About 546. — At Sens, Saint LUPUS or LEU, bishop and confessor, of whom it is related that one day, while he was at the altar in the presence of his clergy, a precious stone fell from heaven into his chalice. 623. — Again at Capua, another Saint Priscus, bishop. He was one of those priests who, during the persecution of the Vandals, after suffering various torments for the Catholic faith, were put on an old ship at the mercy of the waves and carried from the coasts of Africa to those of Campania; from there, having dispersed and taken charge of various Churches, they gave a wonderful increase to the Christian religion. His companions were Castrensis, Tammarus, Rosius, Heraclius, Secundinus, Adjutor, Mark, Augustus, Elpidius, Canion and Vindonius. Vth c. — At Aquino, Saint Constantius, bishop, made famous by the gift of prophecy and his great virtues. About 572. — At Le Mans, Saint VICTORIUS or VICTEUR, bishop. 490. — At Baden, in the diocese of Constance, Saint Verena, virgin.[5] 308.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the dioceses of Reims and Soissons, Saint SINICIUS, first bishop of Soissons, disciple of Saint Sixtus, apostle of Reims, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. 287. — In the diocese of Laval, Saint Victorius or Victeur, bishop of Le Mans, named in today's Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Quimper, the twelve blessed brothers, martyrs, mentioned on this day by the Roman martyrology, the chief of whom are Donatus of Hadrumetum, Felix of Ecane, Repositus, Sator, Septiminus and Vitalis of Veliman. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Nivard, or Nivon, twenty-fifth archbishop of that see and confessor. He was brother-in-law of Childeric II, king of Austrasia. Richer than his predecessors, he surpassed them in liberality and seemed to have accepted the episcopate (649) only to enrich his Church and become poor himself. In 658 he attended the Council of

Nantes, where he won the bishops' approval for his plan to rebuild the abbey of Hautvillers (*Altum Villare*, Order of Saint Benedict) in his diocese, long since ruined by the barbarians. He carried out this plan and installed there as first abbot Saint Bercharius, who had urged him to this good work. Saint Nivard died in that monastery, from which his body was brought to Reims to be buried in the church of Saint-Remi. Rotrou du Perche, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, made the translation of some of Saint Nivard's relics into a silver shrine on 5 September 1199. 672. — At Amiens, Saint Firmin, bishop of that see and martyr, whose life we shall give on 25 September, the day on which he is named in the Roman martyrology. — In the dioceses of Albi, Meaux and Saint-Flour, Saint Lupus or Leu, bishop of Sens and confessor, named on this day in the Roman martyrology. — At Trier, translation of the body of Saint Matthias, apostle, whose life we gave on 24 February. 63. — At Salins (Jura), in the diocese of Saint-Claude, elevation of the body of Saint Anatolius, bishop of Adana in Cilicia and confessor; we gave his life on 3 February. IVth c. — At Paris, translation of the relics of Saint Marina, surnamed the Disguised, virgin and nun in Bithynia, whose life we gave on 18 June. 750. — At Poitiers, Saint Justin, bishop of that see and confessor, successor of Hilpidianus. IVth c. —

In Berry, Saint Placidus, or Plaisis, acolyte. — In the diocese of Dijon, Saint Ambrosinian, patron of the parish church of Fontaine-lès-Dijon (Côte-d'Or). There were relics of him at Dijon, in the collegiate church of Saint-Étienne. — In the diocese of Algiers, Saint Regulus or Rieul, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Orléans, Saint Austregildis, or Agia (that is, the Saint), mother of Saint Lupus or Leu, named today in the Roman martyrology. About 670. — At Renneval (Aisne), in the diocese of Soissons, Saint Bossien or Bothien, confessor. About 886. — In the diocese of Meaux, the blessed death of the venerable Eresvide (*Eresvitha*), mother of Adulf, king of East Anglia, one of the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy, and a nun under the Rule of Saint Columban. About 685. — In the Limousin, Saint Godin, confessor, honoured particularly at Castelet. — At Fontaine-lès-Dijon (Côte-d'Or), Saint Aleth, also called Elizabeth or Alix, mother of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, whose life we gave on 4 April. XIIth c. — At Auch and at Dax, Saint Vincent of Saintes, or of Xaintes, first bishop of the latter see and patron of Dax; he must not be confused, as several hagiographers have done, with Saint Vincent of Agen, deacon and martyr (9 June). About the middle of the IIIrd c. — At Metz and at Strasbourg, Saint Adelphus, tenth bishop of Metz and confessor, whose life we gave on 29 August. Vth c. — At Saint-Omer, in the diocese of Arras, Blessed Giles, a Dominican religious, distinct from his namesake in the Roman martyrology of this day. He was a man of eminent virtue, all on fire with zeal for the salvation of souls. God, who had given him the gift of tears, at the same time poured into his heart a superabundance of joy that shone even in the features of his face. He died at Ghent (East Flanders). About the middle of the XIIIth c. — At Avignon, Saint Rusticula, nun, whose life we gave on 10 August. 632. — At Luzarches (Seine-et-Oise), in the diocese of Versailles, Saint Etern or Aetherius, eleventh bishop of Évreux and confessor, already named in the martyrology of France for 16 July, where we gave some details of his life. About 663.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — At Rome, on the Aventine hill, the heavenly birthday of Saint Sabina, martyr, who, struck by the sword under the emperor Hadrian, won the palm of victory.[6] 119.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — Saint Rose of Saint Mary, virgin, named on 26 August.[7] 1617.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — Saint Joseph Calasanz, mentioned on 27 August.[8] 1648.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — The same as with the Cistercians.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Longchamp, near Paris, Blessed Isabelle, virgin, of the second Order, sister of Saint Louis, king of France, who, despising the delights of the world, chose rather to serve Jesus Christ, her Bridegroom, in humility and poverty, and, famous for her miracles, took her flight to the Lord on 23 February.[9] 1270.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Sylvester. — On the Saturday before the third Sunday of September, the translation of the body of our Father Saint Sylvester.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At Valencia, in Spain, the blessed martyrs John, a priest, and Peter, a layman, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, having boldly preached the faith of Jesus Christ and condemned the sect of Muhammad, were beheaded by Azot, king of the Moors, on 29 August. Their bodies, kept at Truela (Teruela) in Aragon, are venerated by the faithful.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Raymond Nonnatus, named yesterday.[10] 1240.

Martyrology of the Servites. — At Florence, Blessed JOAN SODERINI, virgin, of the Third Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary, famous for the innocence and austerity of her life. 1367.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At La Guardia, in Catalonia, Blessed Peter Armengol, martyr, of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives. Having been in his youth a proud and arrogant nobleman, he had put himself at the head of a band of brigands and become the terror of the country. One day he met his father and, not recognising him, tried to murder him. When the latter made himself known, Peter stopped dumbfounded, threw away his sword and fell at his father's feet, begging his pardon. This was the starting point of his conversion: he entered the Order of Our Lady of Mercy and devoted himself to ransoming captives; the Muslims of Africa, among whom he was doing his works of charity, hanged him in hatred of the Christian religion. 1304. — In the ancient episcopal city of Sulci (now destroyed), on the northern coast of the island of Sant'Antioco, a league from Sardinia, Saint Rose, who is believed to have suffered martyrdom, and Saint Platanus, also a martyr, who is supposed to have been her son. Beginning of the IInd c. — At Todi, in Italy, in the province of Spoleto, together with Saint Terentian, bishop and martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saint Flaccus, martyr, his disciple. His body, with that of his master, was devoutly buried eight miles from Todi by a priest of that city named Exuperantius and a holy woman named Laurentia. Many miracles have taken place at their tombs. About 118. — At Lentini, or Leontini, a city of Sicily in the province of Syracuse, Saint Neophytus, bishop of that see and confessor. He died after thirty-eight years of wise episcopate. Towards the end of the IIIrd c. — At Benevento, a fortified city of the kingdom of Italy, the holy martyrs Donatus, Felix, Arontius, Honoratus, Fortunatus, Savinian, Septiminus, Januarius, another Felix, Vitalis, Sator and Repositus, who are none other than the twelve brothers of whom the Roman martyrology speaks today. IIIrd c. — At Antioch in Syria (*Antiochia ad Daphnen*), now Antakya, a city of Asiatic Turkey, Saint Martha or Mathane, mother of Saint Simeon Stylites the Elder. About 428. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Tasce, Dubitatus, Valens and Donatus, named in the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology. — Saints Marcian, bishop, Sisinnius, Amausus, Primus and Maternus, martyrs, named by Saint Jerome without further details. — At Besalú (*Bisuldinum*), in Catalonia, Saint Vincent, priest and martyr. — At Pisa, a city of Tuscany, Saint Felix, archbishop of that see and perhaps a martyr. VIth c. — At Brescia, a city of Lombardy, Saint Areald, martyr. The cathedral of Cremona possesses some of his relics. About 576. — At Borgo San Sepolcro, in the province of Spoleto, in Italy, Saints Arcanus and Giles, hermits and confessors, founders and patrons of that little town. Xth c. — In the diocese of Astorga, in the intendancy of León, in Spain, Blessed Giles, abbot and confessor, distinct from his namesake in the Roman martyrology. About 1203. — At Venice, a city and port of the kingdom of Italy, in the province of Venetia, Saint Juliana, virgin and abbess, of the Order of Saint Benedict. 1262.

FÊTES MOBILES DE SEPTEMBRE.

On the Sunday after the Nativity of the holy Virgin, FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF MARY.

On the third Sunday of September, FEAST OF THE SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

On the first Sunday of September, in the diocese of Bayeux (canton of Douvres), Our Lady of La Délivrande, and Saint Regnobert, second bishop of Bayeux, its founder. According to a respectable tradition, Regnobert, consecrated bishop at the age of thirty to succeed Saint Exuperius, who died in the year 78, governed the diocese for ninety years; and during this long episcopate he built several churches and oratories, among them Our Lady of La Délivrande. This sanctuary, burned by the Normans in 830, was restored in turn in 1030, 1422, 1560, 1629 and 1735. Since 1823 the diocesan missionaries have been established near the sanctuary to serve it. These worthy guardians have rebuilt the whole nave in the pointed style of the thirteenth century, raised a graceful bell tower fifty-six metres high topped by a fine gilded cross, and placed in it a bell named Marie weighing two thousand six hundred kilograms. The Holy See has granted this chapel a plenary indulgence every Saturday, on all the feasts of the holy Virgin, once a year on the day of the pilgrimage, and finally the same indulgences enjoyed by Our Lady of Loreto. — On the second Sunday of September, in the diocese of Vannes, Our Lady of Bethlehem, called by corruption Béléan. The sanctuary bears the inscribed

date 1407 and was built by the lord of Le Garo, a crusader knight miraculously saved from the hands of the Saracens by the intercession of the holy Virgin. Mothers go there to commend their children who are not yet walking, and the women of the islands pray there for the return of their husbands or sons sailing on the sea. — On the third Sunday of September, on Easter Day, on the first and last Sundays of May, on Rogation Monday, on the second Sunday of Corpus Christi, on 15 August and on the Friday before Palm Sunday, at Volnay (Côte-d'Or, arrondissement and canton of Beaune), Our Lady of Pity, or of Volnay. The sanctuary seems to go back to the thirteenth century. In 1540 it was destroyed, and the inhabitants of Volnay rebuilt it; it is now a fine chapel in the pointed style of the sixteenth century. — On the Friday before the first Sunday of September, at Valenciennes, in the diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of Halle. From the end of the thirteenth century this sanctuary was famous for the miracles the holy Virgin worked there; there came to pray and leave their offerings Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy; Charles the Bold; Louis XI, king of France; the emperor Maximilian; Charles V; Philip II; Margaret of Austria; Henry VIII, king of England; John Casimir, king of Poland; and others. — On the first Sunday of September, at Murat (Cantal), in the diocese of Saint-Flour, Our Lady of the Olives. According to tradition, the statue of this sanctuary was brought from Palestine by Saint Louis on his return from the crusade; a lamp filled with olive oil burns before it night and day. — On the third Sunday of September, at Bourbourg (Nord, arrondissement of Dunkirk), in the diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of Bourbourg, famous long before the fourteenth century. A novena that begins on the third Sunday of September celebrates every year the memory of the miracles that have taken place in this sanctuary through the intercession of the most holy Virgin. — On the second Rogation day and on Whit Monday, procession of the parish of Megève (diocese of Annecy) to the nearby wood of Les Crêtets, where there is a sanctuary of the most holy Virgin, founded about 1740 by a doctor of the University of Turin named Socquet, whom Mary had delivered from the jaws of a wolf. — On the fourth Sunday of September, at Viterbo, a city of the States of the Church, Our Lady of the Oak, commonly called the Madonna della Quercia. This sanctuary, which dates from 1417, is dear to the Italians and has been enriched with many indulgences by the sovereign pontiffs Paul II, Innocent VIII, Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X, Paul III, Julius III, Pius IV, Gregory XIII, Sixtus V, Clement VIII, Urban VIII, Innocent X, Pius VI and Pius IX.

Saint Joshua, General of the Hebrews and Conqueror of the Promised Land

1690–1580 before Jesus Christ.

> *The Joshua of the Hebrews is the figure of the Jesus of mankind: the land promised to Israel opens before the sword of the first; the heaven promised to man opens before the cross of the second.*
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> *Darras, Histoire de l'Église.*

The man who was to establish the Hebrews for good by giving them a homeland was Joshua. Valiant in war, penetrating and wise in counsel, handling minds with skill and speech with eloquence, he had drawn the attention and esteem of Moses. He was chosen from on high to continue the work of that great man, and he upheld the honour of such a choice by the firmness of his character and the heroism of his devotion. Freed from the yoke of Egypt and escaped from the devouring wastes of Arabia, the Hebrews were encamped in the plains of Moab, not far from the Dead Sea. Moses had just died on the summit of Mount Nebo, after casting a long and loving look over the land of Canaan, the object of hopes so long and so ardently cherished. Then Jehovah said to Joshua: "My servant Moses is dead. Go, cross the Jordan at the head of all the people and enter the country that I destine for the sons of Israel. All the extent that your steps shall tread I will give you, according to the promises made to Moses. The land of the Hittites belongs to you, from the desert of Egypt and Lebanon to the river Euphrates and the great sea, which are your limits. No one shall be able to resist Israel as long as you live; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you, and I will never forsake you. Be firm and courageous, for you shall divide among this people the land I shall give them, as I pledged to their fathers." This land, promised to the patriarchs, where their descendants were about to live as masters, was

then wonderfully fertile. Lying in a latitude still more southerly than the part of Africa that is now French, it presents its valleys and hills to the fires of an ever-warm sun. The Mediterranean sends it refreshing breezes from the west; Lebanon with its cedars protects it from the cold north winds; a chain of mountains bounding it on the south and then running eastward beyond the Jordan checks the waves of burning air that rise from the sands of Arabia. Rain is rare there except in the seasons of autumn and spring; in summer there are only heavy dews. But abundant springs gush from the mountainsides, and the hollows of the valleys grow green under this moisture that nature constantly keeps up. The soil, admirably varied, offers plains fit for tillage and stony hills where vines and fruit trees can grow, whose lower slopes, covered with thick grass, would easily feed numerous flocks. The country had oil and honey, barley and wheat in abundance, and all the savoury and delicate produce of southern lands. So it was that throngs of men could soon crowd within its narrow borders without suffering the hardships of want and hunger.

About to bring the borders of this fair country under his arms, Joshua sent ahead of him two brave men charged with reconnoitring the point where the invasion was to be made. He was then at Shittim, two leagues beyond the Jordan, to the north of the Dead Sea and not far from it. Opposite, on the near side of the river, also two leagues away, lay Jericho, the first city that had to be taken. It was there that the two scouts went, at the risk of their lives. They stopped at a house overlooking the ramparts, belonging to a woman of doubtful morals named Rahab. The king was quickly told that Israelite spies had entered the city towards evening; he sent word to Rahab: “Hand over the men who have come to you and are in your house, for they are spies come to reconnoitre the country.” But this woman, already aware of her guests’ secret mission and won over to their faith, made them go up in haste to the roof of her house and hid them under stalks of flax that were spread out there. She then said to the king’s officers about the two strangers: “It is true, I received them, but without knowing where they came from. They went out about the hour when the city gates are shut, and I do not know where they have gone; but pursue them quickly and you will overtake them.” The officers did indeed run after them along the road leading to the ford of the Jordan; besides, the city gates were kept shut, so that the spies could not get out henceforth if they had not already escaped. It must be admitted that Rahab neither spoke truthfully nor acted patriotically. But doubtless she acted and spoke under the sway of the fear that had spread among all her compatriots, and under the impression of the wonders worked by heaven in favour of the Hebrews; that is the explanation, if not the excuse, of her words and her acts. However that may be, she went back to her guests and said to them: “I see that God has given you this country, for you have spread terror among us, and the courage of all the inhabitants of the region has melted away. We know that when you came out of Egypt God dried up the waters of the Red Sea under your steps, and what you did to the two Amorite kings, Og and Sihon, who lived beyond the Jordan and fell under your blows. These tidings have frightened us, our heart has sunk, and your coming finds us without strength; truly the Lord your God is He who reigns in heaven above and on earth below. Swear to me then in His name to treat my father’s house with the same compassion that I have shown you; give me a sure sign to save my father and my mother, my brothers, my sisters and all that belongs to them, and to snatch our lives from death.” This was the fulfilment of the words of Moses, who had promised the children of Israel that Jehovah would send dread before them and deliver into their hands an enemy frozen with unspeakable terror.

The two envoys gave the required pledge and swore on their heads that no harm should be done to Rahab or her relatives, provided that she herself remained faithful to her oath. Then she let down from her window a rope by which her guests were to slide down and escape, for the open country stretched out at the foot of her house, which was built on the city wall. And she said to them: “Make for the mountains, lest the pursuers meet you; stay hidden there three days, until they come back; then you shall go on your way.” Delighted with this good advice, they gave her a fresh assurance of their protection. Having got down to the foot of the walls of Jericho, they took refuge in the neighbouring mountains and waited three days for the pursuers to return to the city, wearied by fruitless searching and giving up their prey. When this time had passed, they went back to the camp of the Hebrews and gave Joshua an account of their mission: “The Lord has put all this country

into our hands, and all the inhabitants are plunged in fear and stupor." Meanwhile Joshua had made all the preparations for the invasion. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh had obtained from Moses the lands of Jazer and Gilead, formerly inhabited by the Amorites, along the eastern bank of the Jordan, but on condition that they should help their brothers in the labours of the conquest and even march first against the enemy. They were therefore asked to leave their families and flocks under a sufficiently strong guard and to swell the expeditionary army with their bravest men. They were to bear all the perils reserved for the other tribes and to settle in the peace of their homes only after the submission of the country and the final division of the land. All answered the general: "We will do what you have commanded us; we will go wherever you send us. As we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only may God be with you as He was with Moses! Whoever resists you and will not heed your commands, let him die! Be firm, and act with manly courage." The troops were spirited, unity doubled their strength; the solemn and supreme hour was felt to be near. Before setting out, Joshua said to the people: "Come and hear the word of Jehovah your God. By this sign you shall know that Jehovah, the living God, is with you and will destroy the Canaanites, your enemies, before your eyes: the ark of the covenant of the Master of the universe will cross the Jordan at your head. When the priests who carry the ark touch the waters of the river with their feet, the waters below will flow away and leave their bed dry; the waters above will stand still like a solid mass." The heralds had passed on the general's orders and assigned the various tribes their places. The march began. The priests went forward carrying the ark of the covenant. It was spring, in the first month of the Hebrew year. The rains of the season and the torrents of melted snow pouring down from the mountains had greatly swollen the Jordan, which was flowing bank-full. Yet no sooner had the priests set foot in the waters than the waters above, piling up on themselves, went back several leagues towards their source, while the waters below followed the natural slope that carried them to the Asphaltite lake. The ark halted in the middle of the dried-up river to give the multitude time to cross. And indeed the multitude, struck with amazement, passed without hindrance from one bank to the other; the same arm that held the Jordan suspended, acting on the courage of the native peoples, disconcerted all resistance: no obstacle stopped the conquerors.

Joshua had received the command to hand down to posterity the memory of this prodigious event by means of a simple but significant monument: he was to pile up in the plain twelve stones taken from the bed of the Jordan. He therefore chose twelve men, one from each tribe, and while the ark stood in the middle of the river he ordered each of them to carry away a large stone, to make a heap that would recall so great a day to future generations. Then, when the whole army had made its wonderful passage across the dried-up stream, the priests themselves withdrew, bearing on their shoulders the protecting ark. At the moment they reached the western bank, the waters, freed from restraint, obeyed only their natural weight and resumed their regular course.

Between the river and Jericho stretches a stretch of country about two leagues across. From the Jordan it rises by very marked steps separated from one another by level plains. Today the soil there is dreary and arid: it is a white sand whose surface seems impregnated with the salts that the evaporation of the Dead Sea spreads round about. The Hebrews advanced to within half a league of Jericho, on the heights overlooking the city, on the very spot where a hamlet called Gilgal was later built. Joshua had the memorial stones taken from the Jordan gathered in this place, and he said to the people: "When one day your sons ask their fathers what these stones mean, you shall tell them, to teach them: Israel crossed the bed of the Jordan dry-shod, Jehovah our God drying up the waters before us until we had passed, as He had done with the Red Sea, which He dried up under our steps, so that all the peoples of the earth may know His almighty arm and that you may fear the Lord your God for ever." It was indeed in undying remembrance of this marvel that the great poet of the Hebrew nation asked the waters of the Jordan and of the Red Sea whether they had not seen the face or felt the hand of Jehovah when terror made them turn back, and whether the God of Israel had not sufficiently distinguished His cause from that of vain idols by suspending the course of nature with these inimitable flashes of sovereign power.

The crossing of the Jordan, accomplished in so unheard-of a manner, had two results. It fixed on Joshua the universal confidence of the Hebrews, who saw the wonders once performed by Moses the deliverer live again in the hand of their new leader; and it threw irresolution and terror among the native populations, who no longer felt the strength to uphold a cause that heaven was fighting. On this double account the conquest was swift and easy, whereas it might have cost the invaders dear and held them up for a long time.

The Israelites remained some time at Gilgal. One day, when Joshua was in the open country, he suddenly saw before him a man standing with a drawn sword in his hand. He went up to him. “Are you one of us,” he said, “or of our enemies?” “Neither,” replied the stranger; “but I am the prince of the army of Jehovah, and I come to your help. Take off your shoes, for the ground you tread is holy.” Joshua prostrated himself full of respect and did what he was told. The vision went on: “I have delivered into your hands Jericho, its king and all its defenders. Let the whole army march round the city to the sound of the trumpet, once a day for six days running; on the seventh you shall march round the city seven times, and the priests, walking before the ark of the covenant, shall sound the trumpets. Then, when the voice of the instruments has made longer blasts sound in your ears, the whole multitude shall raise a mighty shout together; the walls of the city will fall of themselves, and each shall enter by the breach in front of him.”

Joshua passed on to the priests and soldiers the orders he had just received. The march of the people round Jericho was to remain silent all the time until the supreme hour when the shout of triumph should burst from every breast. The general added: “Let the city be accursed and all it contains devoted to the Lord. Let Rahab alone be spared, with all who are in her house, because she hid the scouts we sent. For the rest, beware of keeping anything from the accursed city, lest you be guilty of transgression and draw the whole army of Israel into trouble and sin. All the gold and silver and vessels of bronze and iron shall be consecrated to Jehovah and put aside in His treasury.”

The siege of Jericho began, but according to the plan that the mysterious warrior had laid down for Joshua. It lasted seven days. Operations began in the morning. The men of war marched in front; then came the ark carried by priests, while other priests sounded the trumpets; and finally the whole multitude followed without confusion and without shouting. When the circuit of the city was completed, they went back to the camp. This new strategy must have seemed quite harmless to the besieged. But on the seventh day the marches were multiplied. The seventh time they passed under the walls, long blasts of the trumpets were heard; a mighty shout rose from the army, and the ramparts fell of themselves. The Hebrews went up to the assault, each by the breach in front of him. Thus did the breath of God overthrow all those stones in which Jericho proudly placed its vain hope, to make all ages understand that the true strength of peoples lies not in the walls that bristle round cities, nor in the steel that arms the hand, but in the faith that fills and stirs the soul.

Masters of Jericho, the Hebrews treated it with extreme rigour. Not only the men able to bear arms, but the old, the children and the women, all perished by the sword; even the animals were slaughtered. What the sword had not reached, fire devoured. The unhappy city had to bear all the consequences of an absolute ban. Only the gold, silver, iron and bronze were set aside, to serve later in the splendour of religious worship. Then Joshua pronounced curses over the ruins of Jericho: “Cursed before the Lord,” said the Hebrew captain, “cursed be the man who raises up and rebuilds the city of Jericho! When he lays its foundations, may he lose his firstborn; may he lose the last of his sons when he sets up its gates!” This curse was not in vain: long afterwards, in the reign of Ahab, an Israelite of Bethel tried to rebuild the accursed city; the work was being begun when his eldest son died, and it was being finished when his last son was taken from him.

In the midst of the slaughter and the burning, the oath guaranteeing Rahab’s life was not forgotten. She herself had hung out the agreed signal. Joshua sent her the two warriors she knew, to protect her and bring her out of the city with all her relatives. This family was afterwards incorporated into the nation; Rahab married Salmon, of the tribe of Judah, and her name is even found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Doubly fortunate, she escaped the disasters of the conquest in which her compatriots perished, and above all she

escaped error and vice, the deadly principles of the death of souls.

Joshua made haste to take advantage of the incredible terror that the swift ruin of Jericho inspired far and wide. He was helped in his designs by the isolation in which his enemies at first placed themselves in resisting him. Not only did the seven peoples occupying the country fail to oppose the invaders with combined forces or a simultaneous effort, but each of them could not even fight in concert, at least at the beginning of the conquest; for each had as many political groups as it had important towns, whose chief took the title of king and maintained complete independence of his neighbours. A league was formed, however, but too late to save the interests under threat. Joshua marched against the city of Ai, a few leagues from Gilgal, where he had set up his headquarters. After a slight check he made himself master of it and gave it the fate of Jericho: it was given to the flames and its population put to the sword. Only the riches and the flocks were kept. Then a religious ceremony placed the victors under the protection of God and confirmed them in respect for the law. An altar was set up on Mount Ebal according to the prescribed rite, and victims were sacrificed there. The priests, the judges, the officers of the army, the elders of the people and the whole multitude were ranged around the ark of the covenant. Joshua blessed the crowd and recited the words of glory and of woe pronounced by Moses over those who faithfully kept, and those who violated, the pact solemnly concluded with God, thus recalling the conditions on which national prosperity depended. The repeated blows that had just struck down Ai and Jericho frightened the inhabitants of Gibeon, the chief town of a few villages and now the nearest to the places where the storm was falling. They used cunning: some of their people came to the camp in old shoes and clothes, covered with dust, carrying among their provisions loaves that had gone quite dry. They presented themselves as ambassadors from a distant country, and thanks to this fraud they were able to make an alliance with the Hebrews, who did not seem disposed to clemency towards the natives. So when the trick was discovered, the army wanted to deal harshly with the little kingdom of Gibeon and above all to plunder it; but the leaders had their given word respected, although it had been obtained by surprise. The Gibeonites were spared, but on condition that they should for ever supply men for the humblest labours and the menial service of the temple.

But Gibeon had not escaped all dangers. By treating with the foreigner it had just set an unfortunate example and opened the road to Jerusalem. The king of that city undertook to remedy this double evil by promptly punishing those who had caused it. He did not dare attack the Hebrews, because the forces of the national league were not yet assembled; but, supported by some neighbouring princes, he laid siege to Gibeon. Joshua received a deputation from his new allies asking for prompt help. He set out at the head of his best soldiers and, after a forced march, fell upon the besiegers suddenly and vigorously. Disconcerted by this sudden attack, they thought only of flight; the sword decimated them; heaven itself declared against them, and a rain of stones struck down a great number. It was then that, in the enthusiasm of victory and seized by that power of religious feeling which raises man to an unaccustomed height and brings him into familiarity with God, Joshua asked for time to complete the enemy's defeat that day and gave orders to nature: "Sun," he said, "stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, do not move over the valley of Aijalon." Nature heard this word spoken with energetic faith, Jehovah deigning to obey the voice of a man and fighting for Israel. The victory Joshua won under the walls of Gibeon brought other successes in its train. The whole southern part of Canaan was attacked and subdued in this first campaign. It is true that the Hebrew captain did not follow a plan suited to giving stability to his conquests: instead of occupying the conquered towns for good, he abandoned them after exterminating or putting to flight their inhabitants. Either he feared to weaken his forces and expose scattered garrisons to the enemy's attacks, or, being unable to satisfy all his troops at once, and they were in any case hard to lead, he feared to arouse jealousy and murmuring if he gave some at once the rest and the land that the others lacked. It was necessary, therefore, first to carry victorious arms over the whole country where they intended to settle, to scatter the native populations by striking them with terror, and, after this summary taking of possession, to proceed to the general division of the country and settle there for good.

Joshua had taken only one year to overrun the south of Palestine as a conqueror; but he needed no less than five years to subdue the north. The league of the threatened princes gathered numerous troops near the waters of Merom, between the lake of Tiberias and the source of the Jordan; it counted greatly on its cavalry and its war chariots. The Hebrews had no horses, and they did not know how to defend themselves against those chariots armed with sharp blades which were hurled into the midst of battalions to break into them and scatter them. Joshua made up by speed for the forces he lacked. Having devoutly assured himself of God's help, he fell upon the confederates with such violence and surprise that they had no time to rally for serious resistance. A great number perished; the rest, fleeing the victor's wrath, scattered into the strongholds that were still holding out.

When the labours of the conquest were completed, Joshua turned to the final division of the land. Some tribes already had their portion on the eastern bank of the Jordan. Skilled men were ordered to go through the country, draw up a plan of it and divide it into such portions that there should be less extent where there was more fertility. Then the lot decided the respective positions of the twelve children of Israel. Simeon and Judah occupied the south, bordering on Idumea and Arabia Petraea. In the north, Asher and Naphtali had Phoenicia and Syria for their borders. Between these extreme points, and between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, the other sons of the patriarch found their place. Joseph figured in the division in the persons of his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Levi did not have a separate portion like the others: towns were reserved for him at various points in Palestine. Each tribe had to repeat for itself what had been done for the whole people: divide its lands into as many principal districts as it counted families within it, and then subdivide them into portions assigned to the citizens. By this original operation, and by the regulations that maintained its result, this little Hebrew people solved at its birth, forty centuries ago, a problem over which the genius of modern nations hesitates, wearies itself and takes fright: to favour agriculture and abolish the proletariat by dividing up property.

Worn out by fatigue even more than by old age, although he was of a very advanced age (one hundred and ten), Joshua died recommending the exact observance of the law to his brethren. His last looks could rest with some joy on the providential part he had just played: the Canaanites were vanquished for good; the Israelites had made themselves a homeland; religion saw its ceremonies observed; the civil and political government, laid down beforehand by Moses, was in force; the nation was founded with the elements of a lasting life. It lived, despite harsh trials, until the moment when the Roman eagles gripped it in their bloody talons and flung it, torn to shreds, into all the slave markets the empire possessed.

The children of Israel buried Joshua at Timnath-serah, on the mountain of Ephraim, on the northern slope of Mount Gaash. In Saint Jerome's time this tomb, on which the image of the sun had been engraved, was still shown. Long forgotten since, it has just been found again: its remains have been seen and described by MM. de Saulcy and Guérin.

Joshua and Caleb, as leaders of the scouts sent by Moses to reconnoitre Palestine, usually carry the great bunch of grapes that was shown to the Israelites as a sample of the fertility of the country. He is also represented commanding the sun to stand still over the city of Gibeon.

CULTE. — ÉCRITS.

The memory of Joshua has always been blessed among the people of God. Scripture declares that he succeeded Moses not only in power but chiefly in the spirit of prophecy; that he was predestined to save God's elect, to overthrow His enemies and to win for Israel the inheritance the Lord had prepared for it. So the Jews have always honoured him as a saviour, and Christians as an image of the divine redeemer of our souls. The Jews commemorated his death by a public fast established on the twenty-sixth day of Nisan, which was the first month of their ecclesiastical year. Christians honour his memory on the first day of September, which the Greeks chose as corresponding to the beginning of the imperial indiction, or Greek

year.

Joshua is the author of the book of our Bibles that bears his name. It is not known exactly in what year he began it; but it is certain that he finished it only after holding the assembly he had called at Shechem (now Nablus, a city of Palestine), since he speaks of it at great length in that book. It contains the most remarkable events from the death of Moses to his own, that is, during the space of about seventeen years in which he governed Israel. It can be divided into three parts: the first (i–xiii) is a history of the conquest of the land of Canaan; in the second (xiii–xxiii) Joshua makes the division of the promised land; in the third (xxiii and xxiv) he relates the manner in which he renewed the covenant between the Lord and His people.

Saint Jerome, in the short enumeration he makes of the books of the Old and New Testaments, says of Joshua that "he describes mystically the spiritual kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem and of the Church in the villages, the cities, the mountains, the rivers, the torrents and the boundaries of Palestine".

The Jews still use today a form of prayers that they usually recite on leaving the synagogue and that they attribute to Joshua.

For this biography we have used the Femmes de la Bible by Mgr Darboy; the Histoire de l'Église by Darras; the Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques by Dom Remy Ceillier; and the Saints de l'Ancien Testament by Baillet.

Saint Gideon or Jerubbaal, Judge and General of the Hebrews

1309 before Jesus Christ.

> *Like Gideon, Jesus Christ wants as soldiers only those who use this world as if in passing; with twelve Apostles He marches to the conquest of the universe, having for weapons the trumpet of preaching and the torch of faith.*
>
> *Eulogy of Gideon.*

When God had called to Himself Deborah the prophetess (1356 before Jesus Christ), Israel again entered the ways of iniquity and provoked God's anger by crying ingratitude. It was not slow to break out in a way the transgressors could clearly feel. This time they fell into the hands of the Midianites. Every year these came into their lands and flooded the whole country. Their number was so great that they were compared to clouds of locusts; they brought their tents with them, drove their flocks and camped in the middle of the fields. When one region was ruined, another was invaded. They laid waste the towns and villages, and went home only to come back at the right moment. After seven consecutive years of oppression the children of Israel opened their eyes, wept over their ingratitude and begged the divine Mercy to deliver them from the hands of their cruel enemies. The sovereign Master deigned to hear them. In Ophrah, a small town of the tribe of Manasseh, there was a man of mature age called Gideon. He was threshing his wheat in a winepress for fear of being surprised by the Midianites, when suddenly he saw a person in whom there seemed to be something divine. He was sitting under an oak not far from his dwelling: it was a heavenly messenger in the guise of a traveller. The stranger came up to Gideon, greeted him and said: "The Lord is with you, O bravest of the children of Israel!" "If the Lord is with us," replied Gideon, "why then are we so wretched? Where are the wonders of the Almighty that our fathers have so often told us of?" The angel cast on Gideon a look full of kindness and gentleness and said to him: "No, the Lord has not abandoned you; it is you, Gideon, whom He has chosen. Go, use the courage He has given you, and you will deliver Israel from the persecution of the Midianites. Know that it is I who have chosen you on behalf of the Most High to be the instrument of His mercies; it is I who send you." "But I pray you, my Lord, how shall I deliver Israel, I whose family is the least in the tribe of Manasseh, and who am moreover the least of my father's house?" "When man humbles himself, it is then that he becomes capable of great things. I will be with you," replied the heavenly envoy, "and you shall strike the numerous armies of the Midianites as if you had only one man to fight." "If that is so," replied Gideon, "if you are the Lord's envoy, do not be offended, and allow me, I beg you, to ask you for

a sign that will assure me that you are what you say, so that I may believe. Do not leave this place; I will come back at once. I will bring you food and offer it to you." "Go," the angel said to him; "I will wait for your return." Gideon set off at once, went into his house, cooked a kid, prepared unleavened loaves and hurried back. He set the meal under the oak and offered it to the traveller. "Take this meat and these unleavened loaves," the angel said to him, "put them on the rock in front of you, and watch." Then, with the tip of the staff he held in his hand, he touched the meat; a sudden fire came out of the rock and consumed the burnt offering, and the angel disappeared. Gideon thought he would die because he had seen an angel and spoken with him; but the Lord reassured him, and he thought only of carrying out the orders he had just received.

The following night he took ten servants with him and went, by the Lord's command, to the altar of Baal, overthrew it and cut down the trees around it; and having set one of them up at the place where he had seen the sacrifice consumed by fire from heaven, he offered a burnt offering on it. But the next day the inhabitants, seeing their altar overthrown, flew into a rage. They ran to Joash, Gideon's father: "Hand over your son," they cried; "he deserves death; he has destroyed the altar of Baal." "You are joking," said the accused man's father to his fellow townsmen. "What! you make yourselves the avengers of Baal! This god, no doubt, will not be able to defend himself unless you lend him your arms! Do you really think that if he wishes to punish the rash man who overthrew his altar, he will have to beg your help? Believe me, leave Baal to look after his own interests; if he is an all-powerful god, his enemy is a dead man who will not see tomorrow." This speech calmed their fury, and there was no more talk of putting Gideon to death. Thus God often chooses the weakest to do great things, to humble the proud and show His power to those who rely on their own strength.

While the Midianites and their allies were crossing the Jordan as usual to come and camp in the fair valleys of Jezreel, the spirit of the Lord took hold of Gideon. He sounded the trumpet and gathered round him the house of Abiezer, that is, his relatives, his family and his fellow townsmen. He then sent through the tribes of Israel, announcing that he was going to march against the Midianites. Shortly afterwards he was at the head of thirty-two thousand men. Then he made this prayer: "Lord, if it is true that You are to save Israel by my ministry, give a proof of the truth of my mission. I am going to spread a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if the ground remains dry and the dew falls only on the fleece, it will be a sign that You will set Your people free by my ministry." The wonder took place as the general had asked. He asked for a second: "Lord," he said, "do not be angry if I ask You for one more wonder. Now let the ground be soaked with dew and the fleece alone remain dry." The Lord granted His servant's wish.

The general no longer hesitated. At the head of his army he went and camped in sight of the Midianites, who were spread out in the valley of Jezreel to the number of one hundred and thirty-two thousand. "You have too many people," the Lord said to him; "Midian will not be delivered into your hands. Israel would take the honour of the victory to itself; it would say: It is by my own strength that I have shaken off the yoke of oppression. Have it proclaimed therefore throughout the camp that those who feel any fear are to go home." At this warning twenty-two thousand withdrew. "There are still too many soldiers," the Lord said to him. "A stream will come before you. Put on one side those who take up water in the hollow of their hand to carry it to their mouths, and on the other those who kneel down to drink at their ease; you shall send these last away." There were nine thousand seven hundred of them, so that Gideon's army, which had numbered thirty-two thousand men, was reduced to three hundred. "It is with this small number," the Almighty said to him, "that I will deliver My people and give you the victory over Midian." Gideon put his trust in God, from whom he expected all the success of the undertaking. Sure of victory, he awaited only the order to fight, and his men longed only for the moment when he would lead them against the enemy. Such was the state of mind of the army when Gideon, accompanied by a single servant named Purah, set out secretly by night. Without being seen, he crept so close to the enemy's advance guard that he was within hearing of what the sentry was

saying. Their multitude seemed countless, like clouds of locusts filling the whole length of the valley. Their camels, lying in the midst of their camp, seemed so numerous that they could be compared to the grains of sand that cover the seashore. Two Midianites were talking together; one was telling a dream he had had: “I imagined,” he said, “that I saw in my sleep a barley loaf baked in the ashes; this loaf seemed to roll down from the top of the hill into our camp; I saw it go as far as the general’s tent, knock it over with its weight and throw it to the ground.” “This dream is serious,” answered the Midianite soldier to whom he was speaking; “this is doubtless what it announces to us: this barley loaf is the sword of the Israelite Gideon, son of Joash; the God he worships has delivered Midian and all its allies to him; it is all over, we are lost.” The Hebrew general, having heard these words, gave thanks to the Lord and took the road back to his camp.

During the night Gideon, still led by the spirit of the Lord, gathered his little band round him and encouraged them with these words: “Soldiers, courage, let us lose no time; the Midianites are ours, the Lord has delivered them into our hands.” With that he divided his men into three companies and put into their hands earthen jars containing a lighted lamp, and trumpets, telling them how they were to use them. Each company marched on the enemy from the side assigned to it. When the moment came, Gideon gave the agreed signal. At the same instant the jars struck together and broke with a fearful crash; the lighted torches held in the left hand were raised in the air, and the trumpets in the right hand rang out loudly. This terrifying noise was broken from time to time to make way for the words that the Israelites shouted from their three different posts: “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!” They went on both sounding the trumpets and crying in turn: “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!”, still holding their torches in their hands. The sword of the Almighty was indeed hanging over the camp of the Midianites. A sudden fright had spread through the hearts of all the soldiers; all was tumult, disorder and confusion; everyone fled in the darkness of a black night; they knocked one another down and slaughtered one another without being able to tell friend from foe; and so the rest of the night passed. In a few hours the valley was stained with blood, and Israel had not drawn the sword. Day came, and the wretches who had escaped the slaughter fled, leaving a prodigious number of dead in their camp. At the news of this victory, the troops that Gideon had dismissed came together and joined the tribes of Asher, Naphtali and Manasseh; on all sides they fell upon the fugitives and made great slaughter of them. Moreover, the general sent messengers to the tribe of Ephraim to tell it to occupy the crossings along the Jordan and to share in Israel’s triumph. So it was that of this prodigious multitude, this formidable army of Midianites, only fifteen thousand recrossed to the other side of the river, and most of these were put to death by those who were pursuing them. The children of Ephraim, jealous of the glory Gideon had won, reproached him bitterly that he, who was only of the tribe of Manasseh, had beaten the Midianites without sharing the honour of the battle with Ephraim. But he knew how to calm them by his modesty: “What have I done,” he said, “that equals the brilliant successes the Lord has given you over the enemy? Is not one grape of Ephraim worth more than all the vintage of Abiezer?” This humble and flattering answer appeased them. Gideon, having dismissed his brave soldiers, had returned to his own town. Then the magistrates and the elders of all the tribes came to find their deliverer, apparently in the town of Ophrah, his usual dwelling. They congratulated him in the name of all the people as their saviour, their deliverer and the man of God’s right hand; and had not this great man’s modesty equalled his courage, he would from then on have borne the name of king instead of judge. “We come,” they said, “to offer you, in all the Israelites, faithful and devoted servants; be our judge, our prince. Not only do we offer you the crown, but we wish it to pass from you to your son, to your son’s son and to your most remote descendants.” “No,” replied the modest general, “I will not be your king, and my son shall not bear the sceptre of Israel. Heaven preserve me from adorning myself with a title that our God has reserved for Himself; it is He who is our king, it is He who will govern us, it is He whom we will obey.” When the envoys had withdrawn, Gideon applied himself only to fulfilling the duties of his office. He had been judge for about thirty years when he died. He left a numerous family. He was buried at Ophrah, in the tomb of Joash his father. The faithful Israelites shed sincere tears for their deliverer.

Representations of Gideon chiefly recall the wonder of the fleece, which the holy Fathers regard as a prophetic figure of the virginal motherhood of Mary.

We have drawn the substance of this biography from an anonymous work entitled Les Merveilles de l'Histoire du peuple de Dieu.

Saint Sixtus or Xystus and Saint Sinicius, First Bishops of Soissons and Reims

Date uncertain.

> *Virtue cannot be acquired without toil and combat, nor can it be kept without prudence.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

We shall divide what we have to say about Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius into two sections. In the first we shall deal with a very important question, that of the date of their mission in Gaul. In the second we shall make known what the local traditions tell us of their life, their death and their relics.

§ 1. It is an undisputed fact that the Church of Reims, as well as that of Soissons, had for founders and first bishops Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius, both sent directly by the Holy See. But when it comes to fixing the precise date of the mission of these two Apostles, three opinions confront one another.

The first opinion holds itself entitled to reject as ill-founded the apostolic origin of these two Churches. On the contrary, it was only after the death of Saint Crispin and Saint Crispinian, martyred at Soissons towards the end of the third century, that Rome is said to have sent new missionaries into Belgic Gaul to gather the faithful scattered by the persecution of the emperors Diocletian (284–305) and Maximian Herculius (286–305). On this hypothesis the mission of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius would have been given them between the years 288 and 310, following an apparition of the martyrs Crispin and Crispinian to Pope[1] Marcellinus (296–304) or to Pope Marcellus (304–310), who is supposed at once to have chosen other missionaries to replace those whom the sword had just cut down at Soissons, Reims, Fismes, Bazoches and the neighbouring country. — Some Soissons archaeologists have thought they found traces of this tradition in the apse of the cathedral, in one of the five thirteenth-century windows. There one does indeed see, in very legible letters, the names *Crispinus* and *Crispinianus*, as well as the word *Marcellus*. A figure lying on a bed is being woken by an angel. In a panel next to the first, another figure, dressed like a monk, appears to be sending on a mission the three men standing before him. — These paintings, if they have been learnedly interpreted, would attest only one thing: the *local* belief of the time about the date of the arrival of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius at Soissons.

The authors who maintain that the churches of Soissons and Reims are not of apostolic origin rely first on manuscripts that are no more than six hundred years old and were written far more to edify the faithful than to inform them exactly of facts and their dates. They further allege that, on the hypothesis of the apostolic origin of these two churches, one would of necessity have to admit (which they find extremely repugnant) considerable gaps between Sixtus, Sinicius and Amantius, recorded and recognised as the first three bishops of Reims in the first and second centuries, and the Pontiff regarded as the fourth bishop of this metropolitan see, Betausius, who subscribed in 314 to the first council of Arles, in Provence, held against the Donatists. In a space of more than two hundred and sixty years, the names of only four bishops are in fact known.

These various reasons convinced neither the authors of the *Gallia christiana*, who, without however specifying the date of the mission of Sixtus and Sinicius, place it well before the year 287, nor those of the *Art de vérifier les dates*, in which we read: "Saint Xystus or Sixtus was the first bishop of Reims, about the year 290, according to Tillemont; but others maintain, with more probability, that Saint Xystus and Saint Sinicius, his colleague in the government of the churches of Reims and Soissons, are much older than the end of the third century."

And indeed, says Canon Lequeux, it is difficult to reconcile the non-apostolic origin of the churches of Soissons and Reims with the great number of Christians living in Belgic Gaul at the end of the third century, a number proved by the very severity with which the persecution was carried on there; for it must seem astonishing that Christianity should already have made so much progress in this region if these countries had not yet received their first form.

A second opinion, very vague but linked by an essential point to the first, is the one based on a text of the learned Hincmar, thirty-second archbishop of Reims (845–882): "Blessed Sixtus," it says, "was sent to the metropolis of Reims by Sixtus, pontiff of Rome."

The first question is which Sixtus the illustrious prelate meant. Is it Pope Sixtus I, of the second century (117–127), or is it Pope Sixtus II, of the third century (257–259)? Some of the early Bollandists, in 1746, thought it was Pope Sixtus II, which would put the foundation of the two Churches of Soissons and Reims in the middle of the third century. We shall see below what to think of the accuracy of the transcription of Hincmar's text, and what sense should be given to this sentence in the light of the aim the prelate had in his letter.

The third opinion, which is the oldest, holds itself entitled to maintain that the Churches of Reims and Soissons go back to apostolic times; that Saint Sixtus was a disciple of Saint Peter, who chose to consecrate him bishop himself and gave him his mission for the most important cities of Belgic Gaul, Reims and Soissons.

"This opinion," says M. Ravenez,[2] "has always been very widespread at Reims and in all the neighbouring churches. In every century distinguished writers have adopted it as the only true one, the only admissible one. It has always enjoyed great favour, and it has seemed worthy of consideration even to the severest critics." "If this opinion," says Canon Lequeux, "does not have all the certainty one could wish, we believe that it has many probabilities in its favour." Here are the authorities on which it rests.

The emperor Lothair (840–855), writing to Pope Saint Leo IV (847–855), spoke to him of the pre-eminence of the Church of Reims as having been founded by Saint Sixtus, a disciple of the Apostles.

In the seventh century the Church of Châlons traced its origin back to Saint Peter. Now the Church of Châlons is quite certainly contemporary with the Church of Reims.

Fulk (883–900), Hincmar's successor, wrote in 887 to Pope Stephen V (885–891) "that the see of Reims has been particularly honoured by the Popes because Saint Peter gave it Saint Sixtus as its first bishop". — Fulk would not have wished to contradict his illustrious predecessor Hincmar without giving his reason. From this it is concluded that he then read the above-quoted text of Hincmar differently from Father Sirmond; that there is consequently an error in this text, and that instead of *a Sixto* one should read *a Petro*. This copyist's error seems all the more probable because Hincmar's aim in writing to the bishop of Laon was to stress the antiquity, dignity, prerogatives and jurisdiction of his metropolitan see over the other Churches of the region. His argument would be weak if one kept to Father Sirmond's reading. And so Father Gilles Boucher, the contemporary and friend of Father Sirmond, the editor of Hincmar's works, says in his *Belgium Romanum ecclesiasticum et civile*, published in 1655: "It follows from Hincmar's opinion that Saint Sixtus was sent to Reims by Saint Peter, at the same time as the Prince of the Apostles was directing Eucharius and his companions to Trier." (Now the Church of Trier has always been regarded as the sister of the Church of Reims.)

According to the exact and judicious Flodoard (894–966), canon of Reims and parish priest of Cormicy, "the blessed apostle Saint Peter, having ordained Saint Sixtus archbishop of our city and feeling the need to have him assisted by suffragans, gave him as companions and assessors in the province Saint Sinicius, first bishop of Soissons and afterwards of Reims, and Saint Memmius, pastor of Châlons".

Coming down the course of the centuries, we further meet the Benedictine Hugh of Flavigny (1065–1115), who says in his chronicle of Verdun: “The first pastor and apostle Peter sent Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius to Reims, and Saint Memmius to Châlons.” In the middle of the thirteenth century Vincent of Beauvais speaks no differently in his *Speculum*.

From these passages, and many others that we cannot transcribe here, one can sense how ill-founded are the claims of the recent editors[3] of Dom Marlot, who, while priding themselves on rescuing from oblivion and publishing the French manuscript of his *Histoire de Reims*, have set themselves, in a very long note, to contradict the illustrious Benedictine’s view on the apostolic origin of the Churches of Soissons and Reims.

To the authority of books may be added that of monuments. In 1738 there was discovered at Reims, under the tower of the church of Saint-Martin, at a depth of 20 feet, a monument earlier than the year 200 representing several events of the Old and New Testaments, for example the paralytic carrying away his bed, the sacrifice of Abraham, and so on. Very old tombs were also found containing bodies that bore marks of torture: the head and arms were pierced with great nails. They are presumed to be the remains of martyrs.

All these testimonies taken together led Cardinal Gousset to profess openly his view of the apostolic origin of his Church, and since the year 1858 these words, printed by his order, are to be read in the ordo of the diocese of Reims: “Reims, a metropolitan see, counts since Saint Sixtus, disciple of Saint Peter, prince of the Apostles, and consecrated by him first bishop of Reims, ninety-nine archbishops, of whom thirteen are venerated as saints.” Such had been, for long centuries, the generally accepted opinion. Reims and Soissons, and many other Churches of France, traced their origin back to apostolic times without any opposition.

But in the seventeenth century the Norman Jean de Launoy (1603–1678), doctor of the Sorbonne, known for the boldness of his writings, twenty-nine of which were put on the Index and condemned by Pope Benedict XIV, strove to overturn this belief. He claimed that Christianity was introduced into Gaul only in the fourth century. He drew into his view Le Nain de Tillemont, Baillet and, among recent authors, Amédée Thierry, Henri Martin, the editors of the French version of Dom Marlot, and the abbé Pécheur in his *Annales du diocèse de Soissons*.

Doctor Launoy relied chiefly on a text of Gregory of Tours and one of Sulpicius Severus. According to Gregory of Tours, it was under the emperor Decius (249–251) that missionaries were sent from Rome into Gaul: Saint Gatian to Tours, Saint Trophimus to Arles, Saint Martial to Limoges, and so on. According to Sulpicius Severus, it was at the time of the fifth persecution, under Marcus Aurelius, that Gaul saw martyrs for the first time, the Christian religion having been received late beyond the Alps. These two texts no longer carry authority. The second, moreover, is open to a favourable interpretation. But, understood in Launoy’s sense, it would not stand examination today against the monuments of history more seriously studied. The first text was contradicted and refuted by the celebrated Franciscan Pagi in his critique of the Annals of Baronius, year 834. “Gregory of Tours’s error,” says the abbé Faillon, “comes from his having taken the names of the bishops sent by Rome from the acts of Saint Ursinus of Bourges, and the date of their mission from those of Saint Saturninus.”

Here are other documents that refute Gregory of Tours and Sulpicius Severus and testify in favour of the apostolic origin of the Churches of Soissons. In 440 nineteen bishops of Gaul wrote to Pope Saint Leo the Great: “All the provinces of Gaul know, and the Roman Church is not unaware, that the city of Arles was evangelised by Saint Trophimus, sent by Saint Peter.” We refer the reader to M. Ravenez for texts of Saint Justin, Saint Irenaeus, Tertullian and Saint Hilary of Poitiers, which attest that from the beginning of the Church the preaching of the Gospel was universal, and that the whole land of Gaul was not forgotten by the chief of the Apostles.

In 1854 the Congregation of Rites, by declaring Saint Martial of Limoges an apostle, and therefore a disciple of the Saviour, by that very fact weakened the text alleged from Gregory of Tours and deprived it of all

authority.

The gaps found in the catalogues of bishops of the first centuries, at Reims and elsewhere, do not seem a very strong objection to the apostolic origin of the Churches of Reims and Soissons, since similar gaps are found in these same catalogues at periods when, by the admission of all historians, these Churches had already existed for several centuries. “These gaps,” says M. Ravenez, “show, not that the bishops did not exist, but only that their memory has perished. A book with a page torn out is a book nonetheless.”

The silence of history about those early times is also very easily explained. The missionaries did not know the language of the country; they hid themselves in order to announce the good news little by little and more safely; they forgot themselves and never in the least thought of perpetuating the memory of their labours in history. Hence the few documents remaining to us on the first centuries of the Churches of Gaul.

M. Ravenez, whose learned *Dissertation sur l’origine des Églises de Reims et de Soissons* we have just partly summarised, himself sums up his whole argument in these lines: “The apostolic origin of the Church of Reims is therefore proved: 1. by the tradition proper to this Church; 2. by the texts of the Fathers of the Church who wrote in the first three centuries; 3. by the refutation of the texts of Sulpicius Severus and Gregory of Tours; 4. by the opinion of Archbishop Hincmar, whose text has been restored to its true reading.”

From this whole discussion, which has inevitably been somewhat dry and arid, we draw the conclusion that the faithful of the dioceses of Reims and Soissons, knowing better the origin of their particular Churches, will henceforth be all the more attached to the Roman Church, the head and mother of all the Churches of the world, to that apostolic see from which the faith and the divine morality of the Gospel came to them directly. Consequently they will profess the deepest veneration for the successors of Saint Peter, who are, like him, the vicars of Jesus Christ on earth and watch over the preservation of the deposit of the doctrines taught by the God-Man and preserved in the Scriptures and in tradition. They will always be grateful to those sovereign Pontiffs who, for a thousand years, by sending or confirming the successive bishops of our Churches, have developed and upheld in the ecclesiastical province of Reims, as in the whole world, the true principles of true civilisation and of the morality of peoples and sovereigns; who have often repressed abuses; who have taken up the cause of the weak and the oppressed; and who have justly deserved to be called, as they really are, the Popes, or Fathers, of all Christendom. We know little of the life and labours of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius, first bishops of Soissons and Reims. It appears that while Saint Peter was shut up in the Mamertine prison, this Apostle, ever occupied with the desire to make known far and wide the name and law of his divine Master, consecrated as bishop one of his disciples named Sixtus, gave him as companion a priest named Sinicius, and sent them both into Belgic Gaul to work there for the conversion of its inhabitants. The two missionaries stopped first at Reims. Sixtus behaved there with great wisdom. Living apart and avoiding stirring up popular commotions, he watched for the favourable moment to instil the principles of our faith little by little into the souls of the least rebellious. The demons, who saw the worship of idols threatened by the law of the Gospel, raised obstacles of every kind against this zealous missionary. After some time Sixtus, seeing that his efforts among the people of Reims remained fruitless, remembered the Saviour’s word to His Apostles: “If they will not receive you or hear you, go out from there and shake the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”

He turned his eyes to Soissons, the second city of Belgic Gaul, and went there with his faithful companion. The people of Soissons proving more docile than those of Reims, Sixtus fixed his episcopal see among them, and soon he saw himself surrounded by a numerous Christian community. The people of Reims, learning of the wonders worked at Soissons, regretted having forced Sixtus by their obstinacy to abandon them, and called him back among them. The holy Pontiff let himself be moved by their repentance and their entreaties. He conferred the episcopal character on Sinicius, who thus became the second bishop of Soissons. On his return to Reims, Sixtus found hearts better disposed. Thousands of pagans renounced their superstitions, and

as the number of the faithful grew from day to day, the apostle thought the favourable moment had come to establish at Reims too an episcopal see, of which he was the first bishop. On certain days the faithful went out of the city to hear the holy Prelate's exhortations in a little oratory he had built in the suburbs, which long bore his name. It was there that they attended the sacrifice of the altar and shared in the holy mysteries. This oratory was first dedicated to the memory of the prince of the Apostles. Sixtus lived thus for ten years in the exercises of piety and zeal, in the midst of a people he cherished and by whom he was cherished. When he felt that the end of his pilgrimage was approaching, he sent for Sinicius to assist him in his last moments; and after commending to him the care of the church of Reims, he died full of merit on 1 September, and, according to Dom Marlot, in the reign of Trajan, though the year of his death cannot be fixed. His body was buried in the oratory of Saint Peter.

After the death of Saint Sixtus, Sinicius consecrated as bishop of Soissons Divitianus, who is believed to have been his nephew, at least by adoption. He then returned to Reims and took possession of that see, of which he was the second bishop. He continued and perfected the work his predecessor had begun so well; and after some years of a happy episcopate the Lord called him to enjoy the eternal rewards.

The body of Saint Sinicius was buried beside that of Saint Sixtus, in the same oratory of Saint Peter.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

In 920 Hérivée, or Hervé, thirty-fourth archbishop of Reims (900–922), took the bodies of the two Saints out of the vault where they had been laid and had them carried to the church of Saint-Remi, where they were placed near the altar of Saint Peter and Saint Clement. Their relics were later carried back to the metropolitan church, and the chapter enclosed them in a very rich shrine. If, as is likely, this reliquary is the same as the one mentioned in the revolutionary inventory of 1782, it was of silver-gilt and weighed thirty-eight marks, two ounces and four gros. The whole was sent to the mint and the bones profaned, without any part of them being saved. It is true that in the present treasury of the cathedral of Reims there is still a reliquary of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius, a charming jewel recalling the end of the Romanesque style. It is a box in the shape of a rose; the sides are silvered; the top is enamelled in blue and gold. In the centre is a figure of the Magdalen surrounded by three fine emeralds and three amethysts; on the back of the box the figure of Jesus Christ is engraved in intaglio. Inside is a piece of violet silk containing bones that an inscription says are those of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius (according to the abbé Cerf). But, as can be seen, there is nothing authentic in this.

For more than a thousand years the head of Saint Sixtus was kept in the church of Saint-Nicaise, now destroyed, together with the arm of Saint Sinicius, on which was written in Gothic letters: *brachium sancti Sinicii confessoris*. All this too disappeared at the time of the French Revolution.

In the ninth century Ebbo, thirty-first archbishop of Reims (816–835), had given Anskar, first archbishop of Bremen and Hamburg, his friend and a German like himself, a portion of the relics of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius. They were first placed at Hamburg in 833, and the church was consecrated under their title. Fear that they might fall into the hands of the Danes had them carried beyond the Elbe to a place called Rainsol (*Ramsolam*), in the parish of Verdun. It appears that the abbey of Fulda also possessed some fragments of the bodies of the first two bishops of Soissons and Reims.

The city of Soissons had long desired relics of its two first pontiffs. At last Simon II le Gras, eighty-third bishop of Soissons (1624–1656), obtained from the chapter of Reims in 1629 some portion of the bones of the founders of his church; the solemn translation took place on 26 April of the same year. Nothing remains of this precious deposit or of the shrine that contained it; it was broken up in 1792. But if the relics of our first bishops can no longer be exposed every year for our veneration, their memory has not been entirely wiped from the minds of the faithful. Their feast is celebrated at Soissons and Reims on 1 September. So that the people may always witness this homage paid to their apostles, the diocese of Soissons has recently

obtained from the Holy See an indult allowing it to transfer the solemnity of the feast of Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius to the Sunday following the day on which it is marked in the calendar. Moreover, by a happy inspiration, Mgr de Simony, ninety-third bishop of Soissons, fixed on the first free day after the feast of our holy apostles the solemn annual service that he founded in 1849 in the cathedral of Soissons for the repose of his own soul and of those of all the pontiffs his predecessors, a foundation that further helps not to let these courageous and zealous missionaries, to whom we owe the blessing of the faith, be forgotten. In our days religion is attacked on all sides by unbelief and rationalism. Indifferentism too has chilled many hearts. Let us pray our holy apostles to cast a look of compassion on their former flock, on these lands now grown barren, which they watered with their sweat and were ready to make fruitful with their blood, had the Lord asked this sacrifice of them, or rather had He granted them this favour.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. Henri Congnet, canon of Soissons. — Cf. Dom Marlot; Flodoard; the Gallia Christiana; Dormay; the abbé Pécheur.

Saint Lupus or Leu, Archbishop of Sens

623. — Pope: Boniface V. — King of France: Clotaire II.

> *Qui super rem sibi creditam vigilat, hostis insidias declinat.*
>
> *He who watches over what has been entrusted to him avoids the snares of the enemy.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Saint Lupus was born near Orléans, of a prince named Betto, who traced his origin to the ancient palatines, and a princess named Austregildis, or Aiga, who was of the blood of our first monarchs. The princess was warned on God’s behalf that the child she was carrying in her womb would one day be a great light in His Church. This revelation led her to nurse him herself, contrary to the custom of persons of her rank, so that he might suck in piety with his milk. She had two brothers who were bishops, Saint Austrenus of Orléans and Saint Aunarius of Auxerre. These prelates, seeing their nephew’s happy dispositions and his love of divine things, took particular care of his education, knowing that divine Providence destined him for something great. First his mind was cultivated by the human sciences, in which he made such notable progress that he was soon regarded as one of the wisest and most eloquent men of his time. But the grace of Jesus Christ was poured far more abundantly into his soul. He showed a strong inclination for the service of the altar, for the ceremonies of the Church and for the chanting of the divine office, in which his voice seemed as sweet and pleasing as an angel’s. The prelates his uncles allowed him to receive the clerical tonsure.

Saint Lupus then conceived so great a desire for perfection that, wishing to renounce the world entirely, he sold the greater part of his goods, distributed the money to the poor and withdrew to the island of Lérins. He spent some time there in the rigour of fasting and the other austerities of the Rule, in visiting the tombs of the Martyrs and in continual attention to God. But when Saint Artemius, archbishop of Sens, died, Lupus was elected in his place with the consent of the king and of all the people. The new prelate soon gave clearer signs of what he already was and surer presages of what he was to be later. To the virtues of a religious, or solitary, he added all the episcopal virtues. His vigilance over the souls committed to him was admirable. The luxury of the rich was soon cut back by his care, and the misery of the poor at once relieved by his charity. His palace was open to all the faithful, because the house of a bishop, he used to say, should be like a public inn, where the poor are received out of mercy and the rich out of courtesy. The crowd of unfortunates he helped never wearied him. One day he had distributed to them all the wine in his cellar; his servants warned him of it, because several persons of high rank were to dine with him. He implored the help of Providence, and a few moments later twenty cartloads of wine were seen arriving at his door, sent to him by the princess his mother.

It is noted that he took singular pleasure in doing good to his enemies. His innocence was not surprised by the slanders spread against him, because he had learned from the Apostle that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus suffer persecution; and those very people who had blackened and torn him with their calumnies were the chief objects of his goodwill.

France was then the theatre of war, and the variety of sovereigns whom the peoples were obliged to acknowledge always kindled its fire in some quarter. After the death of Theuderic, king of Burgundy, Clotaire, king of France, set his eyes on that country to seize it. He sent Blidebald, a general, with troops and siege engines to take the city of Sens, which was the first to bar his way. Blidebald pressed it so hard that, having knocked down part of its walls, he was about to take it by assault. But the holy Prelate, seeing that his city would thereby be exposed to plunder and to the brutality of the soldiers, had recourse to prayer. He went into the chapel of the prince of martyrs, Saint Stephen, raised his hands to heaven like another Moses, set before God the desolation of his people, and, urged by the Spirit that once animated Gideon, rang the church bell, which threw the besiegers into such terror that they were forced to raise the siege and withdraw. This bell was the one that was afterwards carried to Paris by order of King Clotaire because of the extraordinarily harmonious sound it gave. Saint Lupus had not consented to its removal, and so it at once lost its charm; and Clotaire, who understood the secret, was obliged to send it back to Sens. The people, hearing its sound more than three and a half leagues away, came out joyfully to receive it, and it was put back in its place. This wonder happened only after the troubles between the two kingdoms of France and Burgundy had been settled and after Saint Lupus had come back from the exile of which we are about to speak.

When Burgundy fell into the hands of King Clotaire, he sent a certain Farulf to Sens as governor. As he made his entry into the city, Farulf was extremely angry with the holy Archbishop because, instead of coming out to meet him as far as the suburbs, he had been content to wait for him at the church door to receive him there. Farulf resolved to avenge this supposed affront, and he was seconded in his evil design by an abbot of a suburb of Sens, who flattered himself with the hope of becoming archbishop in his Prelate’s place.

The governor and the abbot therefore loaded the Saint with so many calumnies before the king that he banished him to Neustria, afterwards called Normandy. Boso, still a pagan, commanded there on the king’s behalf, and, following His Majesty’s orders, he sent the bishop to Ausène, a little village of the Vimeu on the Bresle, near the town of Eu. Our blessed one appeared there not as an exile but as an apostle. He instructed the peoples he found in the errors of idolatry, drew them into the fold of Jesus Christ, and by the force of his preaching and the power of his miracles rooted out all the remains of paganism he found there. Prince Boso, informed of his merit, greatly desired to see and hear him. He sent for him, conversed with him several times, and was so convinced by his reasons that, after seeing him restore sight to a blind man in his presence, he had himself baptised by his hand, together with the greater part of his army.

Meanwhile the people of Sens, moved by extraordinary zeal, put to death the abbot of Saint-Remi, Madegisilus, usurper of the metropolitan see of Sens and persecutor of Saint Lupus. After this tragic death, which was an effect of God’s just judgment, the archdeacon of Sens, fearing the dire consequences of a popular outburst, implored the help of the holy abbot Vinebaud, who was flourishing at Troyes at that time, to obtain the return of his prelate. He represented to him the misfortune of the people of Sens in being deprived of this holy bishop and made known to him the falsity of the calumnies with which he had been charged. Vinebaud, moved by his words and his sighs, generously came to court, presented himself before the king and asked him, on behalf of God and of His people of Sens, to restore so great a man. He obtained all he desired and was even charged to go himself to the Saint to bring him back from exile. The meeting of these two servants of God was so moving that, as they embraced and shed tears of joy, those present could not keep from weeping. They took the road to court, where the king, seeing the Saint all disfigured, was touched with keen regret at having persecuted him. He threw himself at his feet, asked his pardon and paid him every possible honour; he even served him at table with great respect; after which, prostrating himself a

second time at his knees, he begged him to give him the kiss of peace as a sign of reconciliation. At last, having loaded him with honours and gifts, he restored him to his Church.

The inhabitants of the village where the Saint had been in exile lost his visible presence, it is true, but they were not deprived of his help: God granted them all they asked of Him in His servant's name, which has turned the place into a town that now bears the name of Saint-Leu.

On his return from this exile he passed through Melun, where he stopped a fire that threatened to reduce the whole town to ashes. The people of Sens came in crowds to meet him and the abbot Vinebaud, his deliverer, who was accompanying him. They were led to the church and to the bishop's palace with acclamations, hymns, canticles and tears of joy.

His troubles and labours had in no way lessened Saint Lupus's zeal; they had only increased his love for God and his ardour for the salvation of his neighbour. He was seen always continuing his holy practices and his generous undertakings. He pulled up from the field of his Church the tares of vice that had grown during his absence. He gave spiritual food to his flock by his instructions, his example and his miracles. It was his custom to visit the churches of the city every night, and when he came to the cathedral he would ring the bell first himself to call the faithful, and especially the clergy, to divine service. Its sound had the power one night to convert two priests who were sunk in crime. Another night, as he was going to the church of Saint-Aignan to pray there, the doors, which were shut, were opened to him by the angels.

The blessed spirits often favoured him with their visits and even delighted him with their music. His power over the demons was sovereign and absolute. One day, while he was at prayer, the evil spirit caused him an excessive thirst. He sent for water, had it poured into a vessel, and, in a manner like that of the archangel Saint Raphael, far from drinking it, he shut the demon up in it, and the demon uttered frightful howls until the next day. He also had the gift of prophecy, and showed it one day by suddenly leaving an assembly to go and meet Saint Vinebaud, whose arrival could have been revealed to him only by the Holy Spirit. Heaven even chose to bear witness to his merit: one day, as he was celebrating the holy Mysteries, a precious stone came down from it and fell into his chalice. It was kept for some time in the sacristy of his cathedral; but the king wished to have it in the chapel of his palace, and he could never tire of looking at it because of the great brilliance it gave off.

This most illustrious prelate, after worthily filling all the years of his pontificate, died in 623, on 1 September, in the village of Brinon, which belonged to him by inheritance and which he had ceded to his cathedral church. He was buried, according to his will, under the eaves of the abbey church of Sainte-Colombe. This was the last testimony he could give of his humility and of the particular devotion he had had for that glorious martyr of Jesus Christ. After his death his body gave off a pleasant fragrance, and many miracles took place at his tomb. A woman who had been blind for thirty years recovered her sight there; another woman, who was paralysed, was cured there; a priest who had broken his body by falling from a ladder on which he was working to adorn the church was restored to perfect health.

He is sometimes shown at the altar holding out his hand to the king to give him a precious stone that fell from heaven into his chalice.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Saint Lupus is invoked chiefly for the cure of epilepsy and for the relief of children's colic. At Paris, in a church dedicated to him in the rue Saint-Denis, children are made to kiss a little shrine in which part of his precious relics rests. King Henry IV had a solemn novena made there in the year 1601 for the Dauphin, who became Louis XIII, called the Just; and that prince had the same devotion made in the year 1638 for his son Louis XIV. All France honours Saint Lupus so universally that there are few places where one does not see marks of his memory. The chief monuments of his glory are at Sens, at Orléans, at Paris and at Saint-Leu in

Normandy, where he showed forth the greatest deeds of his life. His feast is celebrated every year at Sens with extraordinary magnificence. When Saint Lupus left Sens to go into exile, he threw his pastoral ring into a ditch, saying that he would not come back until that ring had been found. And indeed, shortly before his return, a barbel was caught near Melun, in whose entrails the ring was found. It was taken to the cathedral, where it is still to be seen today. Those who have sore eyes have it applied to them there and receive considerable relief and even a complete cure. Near the place where this barbel was caught, Louis the Fat built the famous abbey of Le Barbeau, where he chose his burial place. There is no martyrology that does not speak of Saint Lupus. Saint Lupus of Sens is patron of the parish of Saint-Loup in Champagne, in the department of the Ardennes, diocese of Reims, where a relic of the Saint was kept in a reliquary. The Huguenots carried off the shrine containing the holy relic, but when they had gone a short distance from the place, on the road from Saint-Loup to Blanzy, they felt the shrine become so heavy that they were obliged to leave it at the spot still called today the Fosse de Saint-Loup, where they buried it.

When the Huguenots had gone, the parish went to look for the shrine containing the holy relic, and it was carried back into the church. The feast called the translation of Saint Lupus has been celebrated there every year on the last Sunday of April from time immemorial.

Saint Lupus is also patron of the parish of Saint-Loup-des-Bois, in the deanery of Cosne, which possesses a fairly large bone of the Saint. The church of Chappes, in the diocese of Troyes, possesses some of his relics.

Surius; Vincent of Beauvais; Peter de Natalibus; notes supplied by the abbé Boulet, parish priest of Arançon. — Cf. the Hagiologie Nivernaise by Mgr Crosnier; the Saints de Troyes by the abbé Defer; the France Pontificale by Fisquet.

Saint Giles, Abbot of the Monastery of Saint-Gilles, in the Diocese of Nîmes

720. — Pope: Saint Gregory II. — King of France: Chilperic II.

> *Vera humilitas vituperata proficit, laudata periculum incurrit.*
>
> *True humility makes progress amid insults, and it is in danger amid praise.*
>
> *John Trithemius.*

Glory and honour follow virtue all the more closely the more detached it is from them and the greater the efforts it makes to avoid them. This will be plainly seen in the case of Saint Giles: the Church says expressly that he feared nothing so much as the glory of his name; but the more he strove to hide himself, the more God made him known by the splendour of his virtues and the brilliance of his miracles.

He was born at Athens about the year 640, of parents more remarkable for their piety than for the royal blood that flowed in their veins. His father was named Theodore and his mother Pelagia. They brought up their son in piety, and God singularly favoured their care by the graces and extraordinary helps with which He went before him. The ablest men of his century were his tutors, and he surpassed their expectations by the great progress he made in secular letters. He soon preferred to them the study of Holy Scripture, in which he drew the love of his God, contempt for the grandeurs of his house and distaste for the pleasures of the world.

Giles was reaching his twenty-fourth year when he lost, at a short interval from each other, first his father and then his mother. Keenly affected by this double loss, the orphaned young man fixed his thoughts on the nothingness of earthly things. Falling on his knees, he called upon the supreme Comforter and begged Him to come to his help.

It is the mark of generous souls to go boldly to their goal. And so he set about weighing the means of carrying out his difficult plan. God blessed it with triumphs that were to hasten its fulfilment. Going to church one day to make his devotions, he met a poor man who was sick and almost naked and who asked him for alms; the holy young man gave him his robe, which served not only to cover him but also to restore

him to health. Coming out of church another time, he healed a man bitten by a snake, whose wound would otherwise have been mortal. Finally, a third time, being in church, he drove the devil out of the body of a possessed man who was disturbing the divine service with his cries and howls. All these wonders gave him so great a reputation in his own country that, his humility being unable to bear it, he promptly sold all he possessed, distributed the price to the needy and embarked on a ship that was sailing for the West. But God, who is master of the elements, allowed a furious storm to rise on the waters and bring his ship within a hair's breadth of shipwreck; the Saint was obliged to pray for the deliverance of those who were with him, and at once the storm was calmed. Thus the glory he thought to escape by leaving the place of his birth followed him on the sea, and the passengers, who did not know him, gave him a thousand thanks and revered him as a divinity. Nothing more was needed to deprive them of his presence. He begged them to put him ashore on the first island, which they could not refuse him. Having landed, the Saint noticed the footprints of a man on the sand; he followed them and, coming upon a little grotto, saw there a venerable old man who had lived there as a solitary for twelve years with no other food than herbs and roots. He prostrated himself at his feet, asked his blessing with tears, and remained three days with him in fasting and prayer. The young servant of God found this abode well suited to his resolve to hide himself from the eyes of the world; but he thought it too near his own country for him not to be discovered by his family, who were having him sought. So he took ship again in another vessel and landed at Marseilles. Then, begging his bread, he, the descendant of Athenian monarchs and senators, made his way on foot towards Arles, the spiritual metropolis and refuge of the Gauls, where his virtue soon betrayed itself in spite of the efforts he made to conceal it.

For three years a stubborn fever had been consuming an unfortunate man. Witnessing our blessed one's exemplary devotion, he commended himself to his fervent prayers and recovered his health. At once the unknown wonder-worker was acclaimed. People surrounded him with respectful eagerness. "Tell us your name," they asked him insistently on all sides. "Become our fellow-citizen; you have won the right of citizenship among us." Terrified by these flattering demonstrations, Giles hastily escaped them, crossed the Rhône and, still harried by the fears of his humility, ran as far as the steep rocks washed by the Gardon. The hand of the Lord led him to a hollow closed in by brushwood, already made fragrant by the presence of a venerable solitary named Veredemus — Veredemus (*Ferodemos*), a Greek like himself and, like himself, drawn to a foreign soil by the same attraction. How sweet were the first outpourings of these two men, speaking the same language and blending their hearts, aflame with divine love, in the same sentiments of heroic self-denial! There disciple and master vied with each other in ardour and generosity. The neighbouring peoples, having caught sight of them, came to visit them, at first out of curiosity, then for edification. Giles suffered from these importunate visits, but he did not dare tell his dear spiritual guide. Two years had passed since he had accepted his hospitality. Tormented, however, by that inner restlessness which is calmed only by the possession of the repose one longs for, he could no longer hold back its stirrings. "O good father," he said one day to Veredemus, "this invading crowd that never stops disturbing us here causes me continual grief. I often ask myself whether I ought not to go away to find again the calm I no longer enjoy." — "My son," Veredemus answered him, "let us call together upon the Holy Spirit and not hesitate to follow His salutary inspirations, however cruel they may be to our mutual affection." Both being convinced of the divine will, they gave each other the kiss of peace and parted.

Giles ventured across the fields by out-of-the-way paths, and at the close of a whole day of hurried walking he reached the edge of the Gothic forest. Boldly, the next day, at the first rays of the rising sun, he entered it. The more laboriously he made his way under that thick foliage, amid gigantic trees and rough thickets, the more he rejoiced. "No one will ever surprise you here," he said to himself with joy; "who will imagine that these inaccessible retreats hide a living man?" As he was thus promising himself the charm of an inviolable solitude, he suddenly found himself before a grotto shaded by four enormous oaks.[1] Not far off wound a stream that disappeared under a carpet of greenery. What an enchanting refuge! Giles chose it for his dwelling. There he continued the contemplative and penitential life he had led with Saint Veredemus. Roots

and wild herbs were his daily food, while the nearby stream served to quench his thirst. A hind supplied him with her milk, and by her joyful frolics and innocent caresses distracted him from his long prayers. The gentle animal also stirred his gratitude towards the Lord, who knows how to provide unexpected and extraordinary help for His friends.

It was in the year 672. Recceswinth, king of the Visigoths in Spain, to whom Septimania belonged, having died without heirs, the chiefs of the nation called Wamba to the throne, a prince as religious as he was valiant. The liveliest acclamations greeted this royal election in all the provinces of the vast monarchy. Only the governor of the city of Nîmes, Count Hilderic, scorned it and openly fought it. Wamba, informed of this unworthy conduct, hastened up at the head of a large army and forced his enemies, entrenched behind the ramparts of ancient Nemausus, to capitulate and surrender unconditionally.

While the victorious monarch was enjoying the sweetness of the peace so gloriously won and restoring the blessing of wise administration, his courtiers gave themselves to the recreation of hunting. They came to work the Gothic forest, which was reputed to be very rich in game. They had advanced into the dense thickets when the blessed solitary's hind bounded off at their approach. The dogs rushed after her barking, the men urged them on and followed. The frightened beast ran to take refuge with her protector. An arrow whistled and struck the servant of God in the hand. What was the dismay of those who had shot it when they found themselves before the wounded man, whose blood was flowing abundantly! Overcome by that grave and calm countenance, they fell on their knees. "Forgive us," they cried; "it was quite unintentionally that we struck you. Our weapon was aimed at this timid animal. Had we known it belonged to you, we would certainly have spared it; forgive us!" At the same time they took his bleeding hand, washed the wound and dressed it after respectfully kissing it. The patient anchorite then stood up, pale and emaciated by austerities, and exhorted them in a persuasive tone not to abuse even the most innocent pleasures. "Know," he told them, "that life passes swiftly, like the trace of a cloud." If the love of Jesus Christ shows itself in it, "then, when that inexorable Judge appears, glory will surround us with its splendours." Let us always mortify ourselves and triumph over ourselves.

The warriors, seized with veneration, withdrew reluctantly, for night was falling. On rejoining their king, they told him all that had happened to them. Wamba, moved by their touching account, resolved to see such a marvel for himself. Accompanied by Bishop Aregius, he went to the good hermit's grotto. He put various questions to him and wanted to know his name, his country, the means he had of sustaining his life in so deep an isolation, and how long he had spent there. He admired at once the modesty and wisdom of his answers and the gentle piety with which his words were steeped. He would not have so many virtues remain any longer unknown and lost to example. This light must not stay hidden under the bushel any longer. It was then that, in the presence of the bishop and of some officers of his suite, witnesses of his generosity, Flavius Wamba made a gift to the pious solitary of the valley which from that time was called the Flavian Valley. "I wish," said the prince, "that you build a monastery, where many disciples will certainly not be slow to range themselves under the banner of Jesus Christ. With them you will pray for the Church and for me, who am a great sinner."

Supported by financial help, these wishes were carried out exactly and promptly. The humble founder, on whom Aregius had conferred the high dignity of the priesthood after long resistance on his part, soon found himself surrounded by fervent religious. They soldiered with him in perfection within the walls of a grand cloister set against a fine church, which he dedicated to the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Eleven years after these events, the blessing of the Lord had spread, ample and abundant, over the house of His devoted servant. At the head of a flourishing community, whose members spurred one another on to acquire the monastic virtues, Saint Giles, their enlightened guide and perfect model, humbled himself under the burden of the office he exercised so worthily. To unburden himself of a responsibility that frightened him, and to bear witness to his entire submission to the Holy See, he went to Rome in 685 to lay at the feet of Benedict II

an authentic deed of gift of his monastery. The Vicar of Jesus Christ accepted it, declaring the religious property of which he was becoming owner exempt in perpetuity from all episcopal jurisdiction.[2] Saint Giles came back laden with spiritual gifts for his brethren, who were delighted to see him again.

Some time afterwards, the crescent of Mahomet, victorious throughout Spain, crossed the southern frontiers of Gaul and swooped like a greedy vulture on terrified Septimania. A dreadful shudder ran through the peoples, powerless to defend themselves against the bloodthirsty hordes excited by a raging fanaticism. All was put to fire and sword. Cities were destroyed, holy temples overthrown, monasteries pulled down and castles mercilessly razed. Warned from on high of these terrifying disasters, Saint Giles, followed by his religious, who carried the relics and the sacred vessels, made his way towards Orléans, where Charles Martel covered him with his powerful protection. The exile did not last long. The duke of Aquitaine, Eudes, routed the Saracens, whose wretched remnants were pursued beyond the Pyrenees. Then the monks, reassured, went peacefully back to their homeland.

Our holy abbot's feelings at the sight of the heaped-up ruins of his dear monastery were sorrowful. "O my God," he cried, "grant me the courage to raise up these fallen walls!" The church, the cloister and their outbuildings soon reappeared in their majestic proportions. Then Saint Giles began to sing joyfully, like the old man Simeon: "Now, Lord, You may dismiss Your servant in peace, because he has seen the resurrection of the work raised to Your glory." In his mind this work was above all the spiritual edifice of the religious life, solidly established by the most edifying regularity. "My good friends," he would say again and again to his many disciples, "I feel my strength rapidly failing. Eighty-three years of miseries weigh on me with a crushing weight. Oh, when shall I be delivered from this body of death?" The hour of deliverance struck at last. Saint Giles was called to the eternal wedding feast, gently and without agony, on Sunday, 1 September 720.

The hind has become the distinctive attribute of our Saint, and she makes up the arms of the town of Saint-Gilles.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — PÈLERINAGE DE SAINT-GILLES.

(Cult and Relics. — The Pilgrimage of Saint-Gilles.) The body of Saint Giles, buried in a common stone, soon became the object of great veneration. It was displayed in an artistically worked reliquary, leaving in the very simple sarcophagus where it had been laid some bones and, it is thought, the iron head of the arrow that had pierced the pious solitary's hand. This translation took place on 15 June in the year 925. Popes Urban II in 1095, Adrian IV in 1159 and Gregory IX in 1233 granted many indulgences to the pilgrims who came in crowds from various countries to prostrate themselves beside the remains of Saint Giles. In 1562 the canons of the collegiate church of Saint-Gilles put the relics of Saint Giles in safety; they were carried away and laid in the church of Saint-Sernin at Toulouse. In 1865 his tomb was discovered at Saint-Gilles, with the relics it contained. On 22 October 1867 the anniversary of the finding of the holy abbot's tomb was celebrated amid an immense concourse of the faithful, who had flocked to attend this pious ceremony.

The church of Saint-Gilles gave relics of its glorious patron to a great number of churches and cities, such as the metropolitan church of Esztergom, Saint-Sauveur at Antwerp, Saint-Gilles at Bruges, Saint-Gilles at Paris, Saint-Gilles at Bamberg, Saint-Gilles-sur-Vic, Saint-Gilles at Noirmoutiers, Saint-Gilles at Vannes, Saint-Gilles at Saint-Omer, Avesne, Tournai, Walcourt, Cambrai, Cologne, Prague, Bologna, and finally Rome, in the church of Sant'Agata. Having thus shared out its largesse, it possessed no more than a few fragments of his body; but Mgr Plantier obtained from Toulouse a notable relic, which was solemnly translated into the church of Saint-Gilles on 27 July 1862.

Besides the town of which Saint Giles was the founder, eighteen towns bear his name, not counting Saint-Gilles on the island of Réunion. But at Saint-Gilles-Vieux-Marché, at Saint-Gilles-Pligneaux and at Saint-Gilles-du-Mené, in Brittany, on 1 September, the feast of the holy patron, the throng of pilgrims is

beyond counting. Between Péronne and Abbeville, in Picardy, where a fine Gothic church rises in honour of Saint Giles, lie the ruins of the monastery of Mont-Saint-Quentin, which had also dedicated a chapel and an altar to him. In England and Ireland his memory has at all times been held in great veneration, and a multitude of elegant and sumptuous churches are raised there in his honour. In Belgium his cult is very widespread.

In the forest of the Ardennes, Saint Theodore, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Hubert, built a church under the invocation of Saint Giles towards the middle of the eleventh century. At Brunswick, at Münster, at Bamberg in Bavaria and at Sémichen in Hungary, remarkable monuments under the name of Saint Giles arose from the tenth to the thirteenth century.

In 1044 Saint-Gilles was named as one of the three celebrated pilgrimages of the Christian world. Dom Mabillon cites a charter of that period in which it is said that pilgrims shall visit Santa Maria Maggiore and Saint Peter's in Rome, or Santiago de Compostela, or Saint-Gilles. A century later the accepted practice regarding the goal of these pilgrimages was slightly modified because of the Albigensian heretics, because this pilgrimage, which bordered on the stage where the incendiary torch of heresy was being brandished, would have been too easy. For five hundred years a long chain of papal grants wreathed this pilgrimage like a garland of roses that charm the eye and perfume the heart. In 1326, in the month of September, a hundred Belgian pilgrims were seen arriving at Saint-Gilles, carrying out a clause stipulated in the treaty concluded between Charles the Fair and the Flemings. From the depths of Armorica, from Great Britain, from Germany, from Poland, from Hungary, people flocked in waves to prostrate themselves before his tomb to implore the Blessed one whose remains it held and whose memory it recalled. The pilgrimage, which had ceased for several centuries, has today resumed its course. Since the finding of his tomb, priests, religious, tourists, archaeologists, pious caravans and even whole parishes have gone on pilgrimage to Saint-Gilles.

Saint Giles is invoked against fire, epilepsy, madness and fear.

We have revised and completed this biography with the Histoire de l'Invention du tombeau de saint Gilles *by the abbé Trichaud, apostolic missionary.*

Saint Victorius I, or Victeur, Bishop of Le Mans and Confessor (490)

Victorius was a disciple of Saint Martin of Tours, who had foretold to him in a prophetic spirit that one day he would be bishop of Le Mans, and had taught him what he would have to do for the glory of God. The fame of his qualities did in fact spread as far as the Cenomani, and when the Church of Le Mans was widowed of its pastor, Saint Victor I (422), the clergy and people asked with one voice for Victorius as their bishop. Deputies were sent to Tours to bring him the news of his election: he yielded to their eagerness and received episcopal consecration at the hands of Saint Brice, Saint Martin's successor. God showed by miracles how pleasing this election was to Him, and the new bishop's arrival in the diocese he was to govern was marked by the cure of a sick man who begged him to restore his health. Victorius surrounded the cult of the Saints with all the magnificence in his power; he had a special veneration for the holy martyrs Gervase and Protase, and had the happiness of enriching the city of Le Mans with their relics. The cathedral church needed restoring; besides, it was no longer large enough for the needs of the population, which had become Christian. The holy bishop undertook to repair it, but death did not allow him to see this wish accomplished. Having reached an age of more than ninety, he died on 1 September 490. His mortal remains were buried in the basilica of the Apostles, beyond the Sarthe, beside his father Saint Victor I and the holy bishops his predecessors. Saint Gregory of Tours tells us that his tomb soon became famous for the many miracles worked there, which were still continuing in his own time. Although the Church of Le Mans has for several centuries been deprived of the precious relics of its holy bishop, it has not ceased to keep a great devotion to him. The parish of Rouillon, near Le Mans, where he is believed to have been born, honours him with a special cult; a confraternity has long been established in his honour in the church of that village, which

regards him as its second patron.

Taken from the Histoire de l'Église du Mans *by the Rev. Fr. Dom Piolin.*

Blessed Joan Soderini of Florence, Virgin, of the Third Order of the Servites (1367)

Joan Soderini was born at Florence in 1301, of noble parents faithful to the Lord. From her earliest years she showed happy dispositions for piety. She had a great love for the Blessed Virgin, to whom she showed a quite special devotion all her life. Her governess, Felicia Tonia, having died before she could do without her care, she was entrusted, to her parents' great regret, to Saint Juliana Falconieri, who was then superior of a community of virgins of the Third Order of the Servites, known in Italy by the name of Mantellate. Joan had already chosen Jesus Christ as her Spouse, and it was with joy that she entered Saint Juliana's convent and put on the religious habit. She was still only twelve years old. Joan soon made such rapid progress in the ways of perfection that Saint Juliana held her up as a model to all her religious. Not content with having left everything for God and given up all the temporal advantages to which she was entitled, Joan Soderini wished to bind herself to God irrevocably, and, humbly prostrate before the altar of Our Lady of the Annunciation, she made a vow of perpetual chastity. Convinced that this delicate and fragile virtue can be kept intact only on condition of continually mortifying the senses, she gave herself from then on assiduously to fasting and watching, and practised harsh and frequent austerities. She spent the time at her disposal in prayer and contemplation. Following the example of the Saints, she had an ardent love for humility. She was seen eagerly seeking out the lowliest tasks of the house and carrying them out with joy. By her gentle and cheerful character she won the affection of her companions, whom she was called to govern for some time to everyone's satisfaction.

The devil, jealous, delivered terrible assaults against her. He tried, but in vain, to make her lose the merits of her good works. Leaning on the help of heaven, the Blessed one was able to resist all the assaults and come out victorious from every trial. After these combats God rewarded her fidelity by granting her the gift of prophecy. When Saint Juliana's last moments had come, Joan lavished her care on her and received her last breath (1340). She was the first to see the image of the Saviour imprinted on the Saint's breast, and she was so moved by this marvel that she took occasion from it to redouble her goodwill, zeal and fervour in the service of God. She lived twenty-six years more and was during that time the perfect model of all the virtues. At last, worn out by her mortifications, watchings and prayers, she gave up her soul to God on 1 September 1367. Her body was laid in the church of the Annunciation at Florence. Many miracles were worked at her tomb, and the people conceived a deep veneration for her. On 1 October 1827, Leo XII approved the cult of the Blessed one.

Cf. Acta Sanctorum, *and Godescard.*

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[1] See under 8 October, in the notice of Saint Simeon.

[2] The question has sometimes been raised whether Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius, first bishops of Soissons and of Reims, were Martyrs. The Roman martyrology gives them this title: *Rhemis in Gallia, sancti Xysti discipuli Beati Petri apostoli, qui ab eo primus ejusdem civitatis episcopus consecratus, sub Nerone martyrii coronam accepit.* And Du Saussay, in his martyrology: "After accomplishing his apostolic task for ten years, Sixtus, longing to suffer death for the Lord, fell a Martyr after a glorious combat." — The traditions of the Churches of Reims and Soissons have at no time regarded either Saint Sixtus or Saint Sinicius as Martyrs. Before 1574 no one had thought of honouring them under this title. At that time Doctor Antoine de Mouchy, or Democharès, of Ressons in the Beauvaisis, grand inquisitor of the faith under Charles IX, wishing to draw up a complete catalogue of the bishops of France to insert in his *Treatise on the Mass*, asked for documents from every diocese. For that of Reims, a canon of this metropolitan church was charged with replying: this was Jacques Bridou, penitentiary. He stated that he had read in a hagiographer of the seventh century: *Sanctus Sixtus, sanctus Sinicius, sanctus Amansius, B. Petri apostoli discipuli, sub Nerone martyres.* Democharès relied on this information without suspicion and recorded it in his work. On the strength of Democharès's reputation, this opinion was accepted by the editor of the Roman martyrology that appeared at Milan in 1578 under the name and authority of Gregory XIII. It was afterwards reproduced in the Rome edition of 1584 and adopted by Baronius for the edition of the Roman martyrology issued by Sixtus V. Later

editions have kept the same reading (*sub Nerone martyres*). Notwithstanding this, the dioceses of Reims and Soissons still honour Saint Sixtus and Saint Sinicius today, according to their Proper approved at Rome, under the title of confessors and pontiffs. Their feast is fixed on 1 September. — Henri Congnet, canon of Soissons.

[3] Several hagiographers think that this is Saint Vincent of Saintes, patron and first bishop of Dax, named in the martyrology of France for this day.

[4] Saint Regulus was one of the two hundred and twenty bishops of Africa who, under the reign of Thrasamund, king of the Vandals, were obliged to leave their sees and take refuge either in Sardinia or in the other islands of the Mediterranean. He is named in the letter of condolence that Pope Symmachus (498–514) addressed to these bishops exiled for the faith. The archiepiscopal city of Lucca (Tuscany) has long placed itself under his patronage. After confessing the faith in Africa, he received the crown of martyrdom at Piombino (Populonia), in Tuscany, under the reign of Totila, king of the Ostrogoths (541–552). Regulus was beheaded, which is why he is represented holding his head in his hands.

[5] This Virgin is believed to have come from the Thebaid to Italy towards the end of the third century with the legion called the Theban. She is then said to have gone over the Alps to Solothurn, and afterwards to Zurzach (Switzerland), where she died and was buried. Her bones were given in 1308 to Rudolf IV of Austria and buried in the church of Saint Stephen in Vienna. — Continuators of Godescard.

[6] She is named in the Roman martyrology on 29 August.

[7] We gave her life on 30 August.

[8] We gave his life on that day.

[9] We gave her life on 31 August.

[10] We gave his life on the previous day.

[11] The legend of the Soissons Proper, printed in 1852, says that it was to Pope Caius, who held the Holy See from 283 to 296, that Saint Crispin and Saint Crispinian appeared.

[12] *Recherches sur les origines des Églises de Reims, de Soissons et de Châlons*, by M. Ravenez. Paris, Lecoffre, 1857. One volume in octavo of 180 pages, awarded a prize by the Academy of Reims.

[13] It was the Academy of Reims that published the French Dom Marlot in 4 volumes quarto. Jacquet, at Reims, 1843.

[14] Local tradition holds that this is the *baume* (grotto) of Saint Giles, still so venerated today, to which people go in procession when some calamity afflicts the country, and above all in times of drought. The great oaks contemporary with the great saint, as Saint Giles is usually called, still exist, and it is said that the axe has never been able to cut into them. The traditional stream flows between the town of Saint-Gilles and the wood of Ribasse.

[15] The bull of Benedict II is in the parish archives of Saint-Gilles. Pope John VIII, in his bull of 21 July 878 addressed to Leo, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Gilles, states that he found this deed of gift in the archives of the Vatican.

2 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Alba Regia, Saint STEPHEN, king of Hungary, who, adorned with the Christian virtues, was the first to convert the Hungarians to the faith of Jesus Christ, and was received into heaven by the Virgin Mother of God on the very day of her Assumption. His feast, however, was fixed by order of Pope Innocent XI on this day, on which the Christians, with the holy king's help, retook the fortress of Buda from the infidels. 1038. — At Rome, Saint Maxima, martyr, who, having confessed Jesus Christ with Saint Ansanus during the persecution of Diocletian, was beaten with rods and gave up her spirit under this torture. About 304. — At Pamiers, Saint ANTONINUS, martyr, whose relics are kept with great respect in the church of Palencia. IInd c. — Also the Saints Diomedes, Julian, Philip, Eutychian, Hesychius, Leonides, Philadelphus, Menalippus and Pantagapes, who accomplished their martyrdom, some by fire, others by the sword or on the cross. — At Nicomedia, the holy martyrs Zeno and his children Concordius and Theodore. About 303. — The same day, the holy brothers Evodius and Hermogenes, and Saint Callista, their sister, martyrs.[1] — At Lyons, the heavenly birthday of Saint JUSTUS, bishop and confessor, a man of admirable holiness and endowed with the spirit of prophecy. Having left his bishopric, he withdrew to a solitude in Egypt with Viator, his lector; after leading an angelic life there for some years, he found there the happy end of his labours and flew away into the bosom of God to receive the crown of justice, on 14 October; afterwards his holy body was brought back to Lyons, together with that of Saint Viator, his minister. About 390. — In the same city, Saint Elpidius,

bishop and confessor.[2] 422. — In the March of Ancona, another Saint Elpidius, who gave his name to the town that rejoices in possessing his sacred body. Vth c. — On Mount Saint-Sylvester, Saint Nonnosus, abbot, who by his prayer moved a stone of enormous weight and shone by other miracles. VIth c.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Auch and at Agen, Saint ANTHONY OF LIAROLES, hermit and martyr. 540. — In the same country, Saint Licerius or Lézer, martyr. He was a Spaniard. When the Normans were ravaging Aquitaine in the ninth century, ruining the churches and putting the Christians to death, Lézer felt himself burning with the desire to uphold the religion under attack and to fight the enemy. To this end he encouraged the inhabitants of the little town of Sos (Lot-et-Garonne, arrondissement of Nérac, canton of Mézin), who resolved to conquer or die. In the fight Lézer received a sabre blow that split his head and sent half of it flying to the ground. The Martyr picked up this part of his head with his own hands, put it back in its place before the astonished enemy, and set out for Lectoure (Gers), where the fight was to continue. But on reaching Le Mas d'Avignon (Gers, arrondissement and canton of Lectoure), he fell, exhausted by fatigue and weakened by the loss of the blood that flowed from his wounds. His tomb, at Le Mas, is a place of pilgrimage. — At Louvain, a town of Belgium (Brabant), Blessed MARGARET, virgin and martyr. 1225. — In the diocese of Strasbourg, Saint Justus or Justinian, second bishop of that see. He was a very learned man, well versed in the divine Scriptures. IVth c. — In the same country, the Saints Maximinus I, Valentine and Solarius, third, fourth and fifth bishops of Strasbourg. — In Auvergne, Saint Justus, twenty-first bishop of Clermont and confessor, whose body was laid in the church of Saint-Allyre in that city. VIIth c. — At Fréjus and at Avignon, Saint AGRICOLUS or Arigle, bishop and first patron of the latter city. 700. — At Paris, the feast of the elevation of the relics of Saint Merry, whose life we have given on 29 August. — In the dioceses of Rodez and Carcassonne, Saint Antoninus of Pamiers, martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Stephen of Hungary, named today in the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Nice, Saint Justus of Lyons, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Nivard or Nivo, twenty-fifth archbishop of that see and confessor, already named yesterday in the martyrology of France. 672. — In the Limousin, the Venerable Father Léonard Garreau, of the Society of Jesus, missionary in Canada. He was born of one of the most honourable families of the town of Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche, in the diocese of Limoges, and made his first studies at the Jesuit college of the latter city. They soon received him into their Society: Garreau made his novitiate at Bordeaux and then went to Rome to study theology. Later destined for the missions of Canada, he spent his life in the service of souls and fell asleep in the Lord, rich in good works. XVIIth c. — At Antwerp, a city and port of Belgium, the anniversary of the Consecration of the church of the Augustinians in honour of Our Lady of Loreto. 1618.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — On Mount Saint-Sylvester, Saint Nonnosus, abbot, who by the power of his prayers moved a stone of enormous size and shone by other miracles. VIth c.

Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — On Mount Carmel, Blessed Brocard, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites, a man of admirable holiness and great prudence. — At Alba Regia, in Pannonia, Saint Stephen, king of Hungary, who, adorned with the Christian virtues, was the first to convert his people to the faith of Jesus Christ, and was received into heaven by the Blessed Virgin on the very day of her Assumption. His feast, however, is celebrated by order of Pope Innocent XI on this day, on which the Christians, helped by his prayers, retook the fortress of Buda from the infidels. With us his feast is

celebrated on 25 October. 1038.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — The same as with the Carmelites.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Among the Greeks, Saint Eleazar, brother of Aaron and high priest of the Jewish people.[3] 1471 B.C. — In Franconia (one of the ten circles of the former Empire of Germany), Our Lady of Helbron, also called Our Lady of the Nettles. This miraculous statue began to work miracles in 1441. — In the country of the Grisons, one of the cantons of the Helvetic Confederation, the martyrdom of Blessed Nicholas Rusca, apostolic missionary. A Swiss by nation, he went to prepare for the ecclesiastical state at the seminary of Milan that Saint Charles Borromeo had just founded. When he was a priest, the bishop of Chur called him into his diocese, and he laboured in the holy ministry with such zeal and success that soon afterwards he was named archpriest. The Protestants of the Grisons, out of hatred for the Catholic religion, put him to death amid the most atrocious torments. He was eighty years old. 1618. — At Roskilde, in Zealand, a province of the kingdom of Holland, Saint William, bishop of that see and confessor, chaplain of King Canute III, the Hardy (1043). He was an English priest of eminent holiness who, having accompanied King Canute on one of his voyages from England to Denmark, was moved with compassion at the sight of the ignorance in which the Danes, still idolaters, were sunk. He chose to stay in the country to proclaim the Gospel there and won a great number of souls to Jesus Christ. His virtues raised him to the episcopal see of Roskilde, where he was buried. 1067. — In the county of Cornwall, in England, Saint Maws, an Irish monk, who is thought to have been a bishop in Brittany. — At Nicomedia, today Isnikmid, a city of Bithynia on the Propontis, six thousand six hundred and twenty-eight Martyrs, victims of the persecution of Maximian. — Among the Greeks, the holy martyrs Aithalas, Junius, Philip and Theodotus, victims of the same persecution. — At Antioch, Saint Timothy, martyr. — At Adrianopolis, today Adrianople, a city of Turkey in Europe (Rumelia), the Saints Aithalas and Ammon, martyrs. — In Sicily, the holy martyrs Euplius, Joseph, Felix, Secundulus and Julius, named in the apographs of Saint Jerome. — At Rimini (*Ariminium*), a city of Italy in the legation of Forlì, the holy martyrs Facundinus, Juventinus, Peregrinus and Felicity. — At Nicomedia, with the Saints Zeno, Concordius and Theodore named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the Saints Paternus, Theodotus, sixty-eight soldiers, a mother and her two sons, Serapion, five hundred and twenty-two soldiers, Cusco, Monolappus and Joseph, martyrs under Julian the Apostate. — Near Volterra (*Volaterrae*), a fortified town of Tuscany in the province of Pisa, Saint Octavian, hermit and confessor, whose head rests in the cathedral church of that town. Vth c. — At Venice, a city and port of the kingdom of Italy, Saint Cosmas, a Greek by nation, who led the hermit's life in the island of Crete or Candia (Mediterranean), and whose body was carried to Venice. About 658.

Saint Antoninus of Pamiers, Martyr

IInd century.

> *Imitate the martyrs: they triumphed over tyrants by their moderation and their patience; you too, triumph over the tyranny of your passions with the same weapons.*
>
> *Saint Ephrem.*

A constant tradition, supported by authentic monuments, has been preserved at Pamiers, in the Rouergue and in Spain (at Palencia, or Palence) concerning Saint Antoninus; and this tradition affirms that the Saint belongs to Narbonese Gaul and that he suffered martyrdom in the town of Frédélas, which later took the name of Pamiers (Ariège). The many authors who have spoken of Saint Antoninus are far from agreeing; several have confused him with Saint Antoninus of Apamea, in Syria; and the Bollandists themselves would not settle the question. But the opinion of Baronius alone ought to be followed.

Saint Antoninus was born at Frédélas (“town of the cold lakes”) in the second half of the first century. He was the son of the king of that country, or at least of royal race, and he was brought up in the principles of the Christian religion, which was already beginning to make its appearance in Gaul. After spending some years in solitude to train himself in virtue, he came to Rome to venerate the tombs of the holy Apostles and to see the successor of Peter. Saint Clement then occupied the apostolic see; scarcely had he come to know this stranger than he granted him great affection, and, warned inwardly that this young man was a vessel of election, he laid hands on him and ordained him priest in spite of his resistance. Antoninus, invested with the priestly character, began to preach the Gospel in some towns of Italy, and his preaching was confirmed by miracles. He soon returned to Gaul, and we find him in the group of missionaries who set out from Rome with Saint Denis the Areopagite. Aquitaine was to be the theatre of his labours; but the place where his apostolate bore most fruit was the valley of Noble-Val, the farthest frontier of the Rouergue, today Saint-Antonin. There he converted Prince Festus, to whom he gave baptism, and after him he baptised a great multitude of people; his word had such success that he always loved Noble-Val with a love of predilection.

God gave him the power of miracles. One day, when the inhabitants of that country lacked water and were suffering the horrible torments of thirst, he struck the ground with his staff and opened a spring, which quenched their thirst and whose waters kept the property of healing the sick.

The apostolate of Saint Antoninus, however, was to show itself elsewhere. The Saint learned in a vision that he was to carry the Gospel word farther, and he parted from his people, prophetically telling them that he would not come back alive, but only after his death. He at once left Noble-Val and came to Toulouse. Here the legend is of great interest, but historians move our Saint some centuries later; it would nevertheless be difficult to call in question the following facts, which relate to his apostolate and which were painted in the fourteenth century in the chapel that bears his name at the Jacobins of Toulouse. (This chapel, built in 1342 by the Dominican Grenier, bishop of Pamiers, is a true poem in honour of the holy martyr.) Arriving at Toulouse, Antoninus freely proclaimed the word of God, but he was soon arrested and thrown into a prison, where angels came to visit him; his apostolate continued even behind bars: he converted and baptised his gaolers. Later he was plunged into a cauldron of boiling water, from which he came out without having felt any harm. He continued his preaching, converted a multitude of pagans and restored to life a child suffocated in the crowd. The persecutors laid hold of him again and threw him into the Garonne with a millstone round his neck; but the millstone floated and held him up above the water. A chapel in his honour was later built at that spot, and the martyr’s name, though disfigured, has not yet disappeared (it is the quai Tounis). But Toulouse was not to keep Saint Antoninus long. He soon came back to the town of Frédélas, where he had been born, and proclaimed the truth of the holy Gospel to his fellow-countrymen. At once the priests of the idols flew into a rage against him; they seized him and dragged him to the banks of the Ariège. There a soldier raised his sword over him and cut the martyr in two from the shoulder, so that the head and the right arm fell on one side and the body and the left arm on the other; finally his remains were thrown into the middle of the river. The faithful were not slow to gather up his body to keep it with honour. The waters, says the legend, drew back before them and left them room to pass along the bed of the river. This martyrdom probably took place under the reign of the emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161).

Angels and eagles are the fairly common attributes of Saint Antoninus; we shall say presently why. He is also shown making a spring gush forth with his staff. Some pictures show him with a club or with rods; it seems more probable, however, as we have written, that the holy martyr perished by the sword.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

(Cult and Relics.)

The tomb of Saint Antoninus soon became famous; but not all the relics remained at Pamiers.

The angels set apart the head and the left arm; a little boat presented itself of its own accord to receive them, and two eagles as white as snow came to push it with their wings. The boat went down the Ariège, entered the Garonne, passed Toulouse and came to the mouth of the Tarn. There it went up the current of the Tarn and then of the Aveyron and arrived at last at Noble-Val, where the people received the relics of their apostle with enthusiasm. Festus took this precious deposit and placed it in his house, which became a church in honour of the Saint. The memory of this miraculous translation is found in a host of monuments at Pamiers, at Toulouse and at Saint-Antonin. The shoulder and the right arm of the martyr were taken to Palencia in Spain, at what period no one quite knows; the rest of the body remained at Pamiers. In the sixteenth century the Protestants burned the relics of Pamiers and of Saint-Antonin; in the latter town the fire burned the man who had kicked them into the pyre, on the square that has kept the name of Place du Feu. Palencia has kept those it has possessed for long centuries.

On 1 October 1872, Mgr Legain, bishop of Montauban, assisted by Mgr Bourret, bishop of Rodez, consecrated at Saint-Antonin a new church built in honour of the town's holy Patron on the very site of the old one. In the evening of the same day a relic that had come from Palencia was carried solemnly in an immense procession of the whole town. A magnificent pavilion had been set up on the Place du Feu; the relic, carried by priests, stopped there, and the clergy, in reparation for the outrage committed three centuries before, sang the antiphon and the collect of the Saint.

We owe this notice to the kindness of the Rev. Fr. Carles, missionary of the Calvary at Toulouse. — Cf. Saint Antonin, martyr à Pamiers, *by the abbé Vaissière. Montauban, 1872.*

Saint Justus, Archbishop of Lyons

390. — Pope: Saint Siricius. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian II.

> *Professio haec est fidei christianae, ut qui vivit, jam non sibi vivat, sed ei qui pro omnibus mortuus est.*
>
> *It is a profession of the Christian faith that he who lives should live no longer for himself, but for Him who died for all.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Saint Justus had for his father a governor of the country of the Allobroges, a province afterwards called the Vivarais, which borders on the Dauphiné. When he had reached the age of reason, his parents, wishing to give him a thoroughly Christian education, placed him under the guidance of Saint Paschasius, archbishop of Vienne, who was regarded as one of the greatest prelates of his century. This wise teacher sowed with pleasure the first seeds of virtue in such good soil, and he had the consolation of seeing them bear fruit abundantly. Justus made such great progress in his school in piety and in the study of Holy Scripture that Claudius, the successor of that blessed prelate, attached him to his Church by conferring on him the dignity of deacon. A short time afterwards, as his merit drew upon him more and more the esteem and admiration of everyone, he was placed, after the death of Verissimus, about 350, on the episcopal see of Lyons, in spite of all the opposition he could offer. Everyone applauded this election, and he did not disappoint the expectation of good men. He governed his people with such piety, modesty and gentleness that he was regarded as an angel come down from heaven. His zeal made him the terror of demons and of the ungodly. His mercy earned him the name of Father of the poor, and no one was deprived of his care, because his charity was universal. We find in the *Ecclesiastical History* that he attended two Councils: first, the Council of Valence in the year 374; secondly, that of Aquileia in the year 381. The latter was held to stop the mouths of the Arians and their impostures. Two bishops of that party, Palladius and Secundianus, supported by the influence of Justina, wife of Valentinian the Elder, were demanding a general Council to review what had already been so many times decided and defined. Saint Ambrose opposed this and consented only to the assembling of a provincial Council. Gratian nevertheless left other bishops free to attend it. Those of Gaul

were summoned to it; but, not wishing to leave their sees, they contented themselves with sending a deputy. Saint Justus was chosen for this important charge. He went to Aquileia and was one of the thirty-two bishops who made up that Council. Saint Ambrose opened it, and our Saint helped him wonderfully to confound those two heretical bishops. When that holy Doctor addressed him in these terms: “What does my lord Saint Justus say too?”, he declared, in the name of all the bishops of Gaul, whose legate he was, that whoever did not confess the Son of God coeternal with His Father must be anathema. Then he voted that Palladius be deposed from the episcopate and the priesthood as a blasphemer who followed the impious errors of Arius; and the other bishops followed him. He then left that assembly with the glory of having generously upheld the interests of the Son of God and of having worthily discharged the charge our bishops had given him.

But when it was to be hoped that he would spread the influence of his teaching and zeal more fully over all Gaul, an unforeseen accident made him conceive the plan of withdrawing and going to spend the rest of his days in solitude. A madman, in a fit of frenzy, massacred several people in the streets of Lyons; people tried to seize him, but, his good sense returning a few moments later, he was clever enough to escape into the church and shut himself in. Reverence for the place held the people back for some time and kept them from going further; but as the riot grew, they went so far as to threaten our holy bishop, who was upholding the immunity of that sanctuary, that they would break down or burn the doors if he did not make the man come out. He represented to them, with his usual gentleness and zeal, the great crime they would commit by violating the holiness of God’s temple. A magistrate arrived in the meantime and, thinking to calm the tumult by his skill, addressed the bishop, begged him to hand the man over to him to take him to prison, and gave him his word that, as soon as the disturbance was calmed and the mob dispersed, he would bring him back to him so that he might himself deal with him as he judged fit; and this he swore to him before the holy altars. The man of God believed his oath and handed the unfortunate man over to him; but scarcely had he left the church when the people snatched him from the magistrate’s hands, dragged him through the streets and put him to death in a most cruel manner. This blow pierced Saint Justus to the heart: he would not listen to the excuses of his good faith and good intention; he no longer regarded himself as anything but the murderer of one of his sheep, and, without accusing the magistrate or condemning the people, he declared himself unworthy of the episcopate. And so he thought of nothing but retirement. He went to Tournon, his birthplace, where he was visited by his greatest friends, who tried hard to keep him and turn him from his plan; but it was in vain: his resolution was taken, and it was impossible to make him change it. Whatever care was taken to prevent him from fleeing, he escaped by night with a young lector of his Church named Viator. He took the road to Arles, then that to Marseilles, where he embarked for Egypt. The voyage went happily, and the sailors were spared every kind of danger by the merits and prayers of the servant of God. Scarcely had he landed when he withdrew into the deserts, in the company of the holy anchorites who then peopled those solitudes. He did not tell them his name or his dignity, and thought himself only too happy to be admitted among the least of their novices, with his lector, who was his intimate friend. He lived there several years in deep humility, perfect obedience and great contempt of himself. But God, who raises the humble all the more as they abase themselves, allowed a pilgrim from Lyons to become a religious in the monastery where our Saint was. He recognised him and prostrated himself at his feet, begging him to give him his blessing. All the brethren, astonished at this action, asked him the reason for it. He told them that he recognised his pastor, the great Justus, bishop of Lyons. This was a very painful blow to the holy prelate’s humility: he was more confused to see his virtue betrayed than those holy religious were at not having known him and having treated him as an ordinary man. They excused themselves to him for the little respect they had shown him, not having had the happiness of knowing him; but he implored them not to drive him from their company, which was as pleasant to him as that of the angels. He went on living there in the exercises of a simple religious and in the same perfection as before, content to pray unceasingly for his flock, who were always present to his mind. Some years passed after this incident, until God touched the heart of Blessed Antiochus, a priest of the Church of Lyons and afterwards one of Saint Justus’s successors, with the desire to see them.

He embarked for that purpose, and our Saint, having had a revelation of it, announced the news to Saint Viator, his dear disciple, even marking out distinctly for him all the places through which he was passing. When that holy priest arrived, he bathed his bishop's face with his tears. "Welcome," the prelate said to him; "the end of my life is approaching, and God has sent you to render me the duties of burial." Antiochus was greatly distressed by this prophecy; Viator was still more so. He showed his grief to his master, but the master consoled him with another prediction: "Do not grieve, my son," he said to him, "to see me leave this world; you will soon follow me into the happiness of a life that will never end." And indeed Saint Justus breathed his last on 2 September 390, and his disciple followed him a month later. Because he left his episcopal see to withdraw into solitude, he is sometimes shown with a pilgrim's staff in his hand, to express his flight, as it were.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

(Cult and Relics.)

The people of Lyons, having learned of the death of their holy pastor, sent some of their number to Egypt to fetch his body and bring it back to Lyons, where it was buried in the church of the Maccabees; there afterwards rose a collegiate church under the name of Saint-Just, which was already very famous by the fifth century. The tomb of this great bishop of Lyons became the object of the peoples' veneration. People came from all sides every year for his feast, and Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, who had attended it, relates that they walked in procession before daybreak, and that there was so great a concourse of people, men, women, children and old men, that, vast as the church and its porticoes were, they could not hold it. Countless candles were lit, and at the office of vigils, that is, Matins, the psalms were sung alternately by two choirs of monks, clerics and faithful. At the end of that office people withdrew until the hour of Terce, at which they assembled again for Mass; for, according to the ancient discipline of the Church, Mass was to be celebrated at the third hour of the day, that is, at nine in the morning. In the sixteenth century the church was laid waste by the Huguenots and the relics profaned. He is named on this day in the Roman martyrology, as well as in those of Bede, Ado and Usuard. He was formerly honoured in England, and there is still a village of his name in the province of Cornwall. The Church of Lyons also formerly celebrated four feasts in honour of Saint Justus: 1. his ordination or consecration, on 14 July; 2. his death, on 2 September; 3. the translation of his relics from Egypt to Lyons, on 14 October; 4. finally, the day of the dedication of the church that bears his name, on 5 August.

Acta Sanctorum; Dom Rivet's Histoire littéraire de la France; *Godescard; De Sainte-Marthe and Fr. Le Cointe.*

Saint Agricolus, Bishop of Avignon

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

> *A shepherd who loves God feeds his flock by his word, his example and his goods: by his word in consoling it, by his example in living among it, by his goods in relieving its needs.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

Saint Agricolus was born at Avignon about the year 630, under the pontificate of Pope Honorius I and the reign of Dagobert I, king of the Franks. He had for father Saint Magnus, whom tradition makes a descendant of the Albini, those illustrious Romans whom the beauty of the climate drew to our country and whom Provence counted among its governors. Magnus himself filled with the greatest distinction the first offices of the senate that existed in that city at that period. But his piety added still more to the lustre of his offices and of his birth, since, having become a widower, he was called to sit on the episcopal throne of Avignon and, immediately after his death, was placed among the Saints. As for his mother, who appears in history under the triple name of Gandaltrude, Augustadiale or Austaliale, she was of Gaulish origin; and, to judge by the

marriage she made, she too must have been of ancient race. The two spouses held the first rank in all the country, where the good odour of their virtues had won them the esteem and regard of all.

Saint Agricolus, born of such commendable parents, was to be called to a high destiny. The education he received matched the distinction of his birth, and still more the piety of those who gave it to him. His parents knew that the first and most essential of their duties was to bring up their family in a Christian way; and so they applied themselves with quite particular care to imprinting early in their son's heart the fear and love of God, to teaching him the truths of our holy religion, to making him relish the maxims of Christianity, and to training him, as far as his age allowed, in the practice of the evangelical counsels. They entrusted this delicate mission to no one else, convinced that the loftiness of their position could not dispense them from an obligation of conscience; in their eyes, moreover, a Christian education was the most precious inheritance that could be handed on to children.

God blessed their tenderness and solicitude. They soon had the consolation of seeing develop in the young Agricolus the seeds of holiness and the inclination to good that they had brought to birth in him, or at least strengthened by their lessons and examples. With the sweetest satisfaction they felt the blessings of heaven pouring down upon him in abundance, and they foresaw from then on what wonderful effects those choice graces would produce in him, graces with which the Lord never fails to go before those whom He destines for great things and causes to be born for the salvation of others. Indeed, the precious seeds of piety sown from the cradle in so well-disposed a heart did not wait for the ordinary time of ripeness to bear their fruit. People saw with astonishment Agricolus, still in childhood, practising virtues that are usually the portion of grown men. Full of respect for his parents, honouring God in their persons, he showed entire deference to their advice and blind obedience to their orders. Nothing was to be seen in his actions that savoured of childish lightness; on the contrary, he was distinguished by the modesty and regularity of his conduct. The fear of the Lord seemed to rule all his steps; he refused himself the innocent games and frivolous amusements of which children are naturally so fond; the practices of religion were his dearest delights, and his ardour kept all its impulses for works of piety. His assiduity at church did not, however, keep him from applying himself to study; on the contrary, it served as a spur to his love of work. With God's help he thus acquired in the human sciences a knowledge which, far from making him proud, made him more careful to fulfil the duties it revealed to him.

The Lord, who led him by the hand, so to speak, and who wished to be the only director of his innocent soul, gave him early a taste for solitude, in order to speak to him in the secret of his heart. Indeed, the blessed child had scarcely reached his fourteenth year when, yielding to the impulse of the Holy Spirit, he courageously tore himself from the tenderness of his family and the affection of his friends and withdrew to the abbey of Lérins, situated on the island of *Planasia*, off the coast of Provence, almost opposite Cannes and in the neighbourhood of Antibes. There he found masters consummate in the spiritual life; and under their eyes, shaped by their hands, he was soon able to walk with giant strides in the ways of perfection.

It is very hard to make oneself distinguished among people who have themselves reached the summit of holiness; for that one must have extraordinary merit. Yet it was among those angels of the earth, "whose conversation was all in heaven," that the virtue of the young Agricolus shone with a bright brilliance. People admired his purity, his modesty, his charity, and above all his fidelity to the rule in the least of its prescriptions. They found it hard to understand how, so young, he had made himself master of the movements of his heart to the point of effacing from it even the memory of the years he had spent in the world; and they regarded it as a real prodigy that, before the age fixed by the Church and in spite of the delicacy of his constitution, he could keep not only the abstinences to which all Christians are bound, but also those that Saint Benedict prescribes to his disciples.

He was then scarcely entering adolescence, and already the perfume of his virtues filled the whole monastery and the whole island. All eyes were turned on him; his name was on every lip, and he had won every heart.

He alone was dissatisfied with himself; he condemned himself in secret; he humbled himself before God; and the favourable opinion his superiors and brethren had of him he regarded as the effect of excessive charity, or as the devices of a skilful zeal that praised him only to encourage him to become better. In this way he spent several years in that holy school, exercising himself in the practice of the Christian virtues and applying himself at the same time, with equal ardour, to the study of theology and Holy Scripture. Whatever attraction he had for penance and prayer, he took care not to steal from study a single one of the moments the rule devoted to it. But he did not give himself to it with that restless avidity inspired by an immoderate desire to know or by the vanity of passing for learned. He had learned from his masters that when one studies with such aims one can gather from one's labours only swelling of the heart and dissipation of the mind. He had, moreover, understood for himself that whoever aspires to the priesthood, whatever virtue he may have, must also possess the treasure of knowledge, so as to govern in all safety the peoples who will be entrusted to his care. And so the desire to learn did not dry up his heart, and he showed by his example that piety loses nothing by study when study is undertaken for God. The surprising progress he had been making for sixteen years in knowledge and virtue led the Father Abbot of the monastery to have him enter holy orders. Agricolus certainly felt himself called, like Aaron, to that sublime honour; but at the sight of its awesome functions he could not help a holy terror. Obedience had to speak very loudly before he made up his mind to present himself before the bishop to receive from his hands the priestly anointing.

He had not long been a priest when Saint Magnus, who had been bishop of Avignon for two years, called him back to his side. Agricolus would gladly have enjoyed to the end of his life the inestimable sweetness of the religious life and the unspeakable consolations of solitude; but at the voice of his pastor and father he did not hesitate to sacrifice his inclinations and tastes, and he came back to his native city like the sun, which in the morning, in the Psalmist's words, rises from the heights of heaven like a giant to run its course. Scarcely had he arrived among his fellow citizens when he was seen, consumed by zeal for the house of the Lord, applying himself unceasingly to the functions of the holy ministry assigned to him. He fulfilled them with such wisdom that his father, yielding to the wishes of the whole population, took him as archdeacon to share in the administration of his church. It was then that our Saint truly appeared as the eye of the bishop, as the holy canons express it.

As dispenser of the divine mysteries, he had nothing so much at heart as to share them with the faithful, and he used all his energy to dispose them to approach them worthily. Charged with the care of widows and virgins, who, according to Saint Cyprian, are the noblest portion of the Church, he was able to provide for all their needs and keep them in piety: a perilous ministry, which called for nothing less than a virtue as tried as his. As he was used to watching over himself, he showed himself superior to all the weaknesses to which his youth and the necessary dealings with a sex always dangerous, even by its virtues, exposed him. As administrator of the temporal goods of the Church, part of which must be devoted to the relief of the poor, he took care not to fail in that mission of charity. As minister of the holy word of the Gospel, he was always ready to proclaim it whenever the infirmities or great occupations of Saint Magnus left the field free for his zeal. Thus Agricolus, by discharging the important functions of archdeacon so faithfully, showed that he also possessed the qualities of an excellent bishop. Without wishing it, he thereby led everyone to desire him as pastor and to choose him at last, when the time came, to succeed his father.

Saint Magnus, already weakened by age and by the labours of his episcopate, was about to undertake a long journey in the interest of religion, and he wished to forestall the troubles to which his Church might have been exposed if death had overtaken him while he was away from it. Following the example of Saint Augustine, he thought of securing a successor; to make the choice he consulted the clergy and the notables of the city in a general assembly. The deliberation was not long: all the votes went to Agricolus, for all hearts had long been calling him to replace his father. He was therefore named unanimously as coadjutor of Saint Magnus with right of succession. The blessed old man wished to consecrate him himself, with his own

hands, in his cathedral church. This was in the year 660; our Saint was barely thirty.

It was a great consolation for Saint Magnus to entrust his flock to another self, to leave his Church to his son, and to give that cherished spouse, for whom he had laboured so much, a pastor whose zeal equalled his own, who had the same attachment to her, who would follow his maxims in everything, and in whom would be found all the wisdom and gentleness of his fatherly government. These arrangements made, he set out for Chalon-sur-Saône. He attended and signed, with several of his fellow bishops of the province, the council held there. Back at Avignon, Magnus lived about ten years more, thinking only of the things of the next life. At last, on 18 August 670, he died, leaving to his Church the goods and revenues that remained to him from his patrimony, and to his people the precious inheritance of his virtues, his examples and his holy relics.

Agricolus, seeing himself alone in charge of the diocese, gave himself with untiring zeal to the guidance of his flock. He made himself all things to all men to win everyone to Jesus Christ. He was truly the father of his people, and above all the father of the poor; he used the greater part of his Church's revenues to relieve them. But, still more attentive to the needs of souls, he regularly distributed on the appointed days the bread of the holy word; and he always preached, say his old historians, with a truly apostolic force, simplicity and unction. He took in hand the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline among his clergy, and he had the happiness of succeeding. But he applied himself above all to preserving among his flock the sacred deposit of the faith, to preventing the tares from growing there with the good grain, and to combating and rooting out the errors that the enemy strove to slip in among the truths of religion. He also worked unceasingly to uproot vices from among his people, to reform morals and to remove scandals.

All these efforts were not fruitless. The number of the faithful grew considerably, and fervour reigned in Avignon. There seemed to be a holy emulation for good among the inhabitants; the sacraments were frequented; there were no prayers and no public instructions that the whole people did not wish to attend, so that the cathedral church, the only temple then standing, became too small to hold the crowd. Agricolus resolved to remedy this inconvenience. His generosity made his zeal fruitful: he had another church built at his own expense. It was his own house, the one in which he had been born, that he chose to consecrate to so holy a use.[1] This new sanctuary required new ministers, and their upkeep had to be provided for. Agricolus, whose zeal was as generous as it was enlightened, easily found the means of providing for both. His wisdom led him first to choose the ministers he needed to serve it from among the solitaries of the abbey of Lérins. So he brought religious from that monastery and put an abbot at their head; he granted them privileges in great number and, in his generosity, did not hesitate to assign part of his patrimony to their yearly upkeep. A fine example for the rich, who, by sacrificing the surplus of the revenues that Providence has allotted them, could easily create institutions useful to religion or helpful to the poor!

The monks of Lérins attached to the new abbey carried out the functions of the holy ministry so edifyingly that the holy Bishop called in others to fill the places in his cathedral that the misfortune of the times and the small number of clerics had left vacant. The regularity and fervour their presence brought about in the ranks of the cathedral clergy were not short-lived: for several centuries they were a source of edification to the city. But through the instability of human things this fervour finally slackened, and regularity weakened to the point that the canons would no longer live in common, as their predecessors had done until then, following the practice adopted in the Church at that period.

Strong in the zeal that inflamed him and sure of the affection of his flock, Saint Agricolus, while labouring unceasingly to establish the reign of God in hearts, was thus also actively engaged in giving the house of the Lord the splendour and majesty that befit it. According to the generally accepted opinion, our blessed Pontiff built four more churches within the city: two rose near the Roman theatre, Saint-Pierre (then called Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul) and Saint-Symphorien; another, Saint-Didier, was built on the ruins of an old pagan temple near the Arena; and the fourth, Saint-Geniès, on the edge of the public road that crossed the city, running on one side to Bellinto and on the other to Cypressetta. He entrusted these too to the monks of

Lérins. It seems that, in thus settling so many of his former brethren at Avignon, Saint Agricolus had knowledge of the future and wished to save all he could from the troubles that broke out at Lérins a few years later, in the course of which the holy abbot Aygulf, or Ayou, was massacred with thirty-two religious on the island of Amatis, between Corsica and Sardinia.

He also founded in the outskirts an abbey of women; he placed them under the Rule of Saint Benedict and gave them as abbess Saint Victoria, of whom only the name has come down to us. This convent no longer exists: the Durance, in one of its floods, so frequent and so terrible, has carried away its very last traces. It was about the year 690 that Saint Agricolus made his pious foundations. Six years earlier he had assisted Petronius, bishop of Vaison, at the inauguration of the monastery that prelate had just founded in the territory of Malaucène, near the spring of the Groseau, in honour of Saint Victor and Saint Peter.[2] Seven bishops of the neighbourhood accompanied our Saint at that ceremony.

The ancient acts of the Church of Avignon relate that at that period a large flight of storks swooped down on the city. These birds, which usually feed on reptiles, dropped on the roofs of the houses such a quantity of dead snakes that the air was soon tainted with the most noxious miasmas, and an epidemic soon broke out in the city. Moved by the sad state of his flock, the holy Bishop began to pray, and by virtue of the sign of the cross he at once drove away the storks, which fled, never to return, carrying off the snakes, the cause of all the harm; and so, when it came to giving arms to his Church, the stork was chosen, with outspread wings or with a snake in its beak, to appear on its shield. The Church of Avignon also owes to Saint Agricolus the practice of singing the divine office alternately in two choirs. This custom, according to all the ecclesiastical historians, had arisen at Antioch; Pope Saint Damasus then established it at Rome, and Saint Patiens at Lyons; but it was only long after it had been established at Avignon that King Pepin introduced it into France.

Having provided for these foundations, Agricolus, feeling his end approaching, understood that he ought to use the years of life that might still remain to him in preparing to die well. He had constantly before his eyes that saying of Our Lord, addressed to all but above all to those who are charged with the guidance of others: “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, shall find watching.” With this thought constantly in his mind, he applied himself with renewed zeal and fervour to the practice of good works and to the exercise of the functions of his pastoral ministry. He kept watch unceasingly over himself and over his people; his prayers became longer and more frequent, and his austerities redoubled.

So many virtues practised over so many years, so many labours undertaken for the good of religion, should no doubt have inspired him with great confidence at the end of his days and made him look with a calm and joyful eye on the death that was to open heaven to him. He was nevertheless filled with a religious dread at the thought of the judgments of God: his deep humility made him close his eyes to his good works and showed him only his imperfections. That is why he begged the prayers of his clergy and people, and charged the abbot of the monastery he had founded never to forget him, especially in the celebration of the holy mysteries. But he did not stop at these holy devices that his humility inspired in him to obtain the sooner the vision of his God and the possession of eternal glory: he also founded in his cathedral a solemn Mass to be celebrated in perpetuity for the repose of his soul, thus leaving his flock a testimony of his faith in the power of the august sacrifice of the altar.

Occupied thus with his last hour, he evidently could not be taken by surprise by death; and, as usually happens to just souls, his filial confidence in God at last gaining the upper hand, far from fearing death, he came instead to desire it. Because he knew that he served a Master full of goodness, he took reassurance in His mercy and ardently wished, like the apostle Saint Paul, for the dissolution of his body so as to be the sooner with Jesus Christ. The nearer that happy moment came for him, the more joyfully he glimpsed it; but before dying he wished, following the example of his blessed father, to have a successor named. A solitary of the neighbourhood called Veredemus, who had come from the depths of Greece to withdraw to these parts so

as to live the hermit's life more freely, seemed to him the man Providence destined to replace him in the government of his Church; and it was on him that he made all the votes fall, by giving him his own, in the assembly of clergy and people that he called to deliberate on this matter, according to the custom of that time. Having thus provided for the safety of his flock, he bequeathed all his goods to his church and to the most holy Virgin, to whom it is dedicated, thus making known the particular devotion with which he had always honoured the august Mother of God. He freed all his slaves and rewarded them generously, in particular the one he had charged with the care of his temporal affairs.

A few days before his death he exhorted his flock for the last time to the practice of the Christian virtues and the flight from sin; he showed them the dangers of the world and the vanity of its pleasures; he dwelt above all on the eternal happiness the Saints enjoy. At last, laden with merits and good works, he breathed his last gently in the arms of God, in whom he had placed all his hopes. His death came on 2 September in the year 700; he was in the seventy-third year of his age and the fortieth of his episcopate. All Provence was dismayed at the news of this death. The city of Avignon was in desolation: it mourned its child, its pastor and its father. And so, on the day of his funeral, there was an extraordinary concourse of people following the remains of the venerated prelate: the various bodies of the city accompanied that precious deposit to the cathedral church.

He is often shown with a crane at his side eating snakes and adders, to recall that the Saint delivered the inhabitants of Avignon from a plague caused by the dead reptiles brought by a band of storks.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

(Cult and Relics.)

Saint Agricolus was buried, as he had wished, in the chapel of Saint-Pierre, later called the chapel of the Holy Rosary and now of Saint-Joseph, at the spot where there was an iron grille before the Revolution. No one can say how many miracles the Lord worked at that sacred tomb. The inhabitants of Avignon at once perceived that they had a powerful protector in heaven. Several chapels were erected in a short time in honour of the holy Bishop. One among others was dedicated to him at Clary, near Roquemaure; it can still be seen today. Formerly the people of the surrounding country flocked there every Saturday of the year; all sorts of sick people, even the possessed, were brought there to obtain their cure through the Saint's intercession. Saint Agricolus is also honoured at Savoillans, formerly in the diocese of Gap; he is venerated there as Patron of the parish church, and he has given there unmistakable signs of his credit with God. He was also titular of the chapel of Loubières (*de Lupariis*), on an island in the Rhône between Beaucaire and Tarascon: Urban II mentions this patronage in his Bull of the year 1096, dated at Avignon and addressed to the canons of the cathedral, whose properties he specifies. In 1321 Pope John XXII, who was then residing at Avignon, had the church under his patronage rebuilt on a larger scale; he founded there a chapter of twelve canons, which he endowed munificently, and he translated there his precious relics, together with those of his father, which until then had rested in the cathedral church. The holy bodies were placed in a gilded wooden chest under the high altar of the new sanctuary. He had the sacred head of Saint Agricolus put in a silver bust, so that it could be exposed to the veneration of the faithful and carried solemnly in procession.

In 1393 the people of Avignon judged that his sacred head was not decently enough enclosed in a silver bust; they had another made, more magnificent, all set off with gold and precious stones and weighing one hundred and thirty-seven marks and six ounces. Twelve cardinals, several prelates and a great number of inhabitants of every condition made it an honour to contribute to the making of this rich jewel, which from then until the French Revolution was constantly exposed on the Saint's altar and carried in the most solemn processions. Towards the middle of the following century, in 1458, the canonical inspection of the state of Saint Agricolus's body was made with the greatest pomp.

In 1495 a pious Confraternity was set up at Avignon in honour of Saint Agricolus; about 1523 it took on new life by admitting into its ranks the first magistrates of the country and the elite of the nobility of Avignon. About a hundred years later it received a signal favour: in 1618 Pope Paul V granted it numerous indulgences in perpetuity, which kept up fervour in it for some years more. But through the weakening of religious feeling, so general at that period, this pious association finally disappeared, and by the middle of the last century scarcely a memory of it remained. In 1539 Mgr the vice-legate Charles Contamissa, titular bishop of Cairo, separated the relics of Saint Agricolus from those of Saint Magnus and, having enclosed each in a lead chest, placed them again under the high altar of our Saint's church. In 1612, the high altar having been moved because of the enlargement of the apse, the relics underwent a new translation. In 1625 Mgr Archbishop Marius Filonardi allowed the shrine of Saint Agricolus to be changed and the relics to be laid in a wooden chest lined inside with gilded lead and outside with brocade; he himself presided over the ceremony, which was magnificent, as was the general procession held on that occasion. In 1628 the Rhône left its bed and was on the point of entering the city. In this extremity the eyes of the people of Avignon turned at once to their heavenly protector, and within a few hours the river had returned to its usual course. In gratitude for this favour and to perpetuate its memory, public piety raised a statue of Saint Agricolus right opposite the Rhône gate, downstream of the Saint-Bénézet bridge, as if to command the waves. An unforeseen accident brought down this monument in 1660, but it was soon set up again. The same thing happened a century later, in 1763.

In 1647 Saint Agricolus was chosen as first patron of the city of Avignon, and from that time his feast was kept as a holiday of obligation in the city on a par with Christmas and Easter. As this feast remained confined within the city walls, the Sacred Congregation of Rites, at the request of the Council, extended it to the outskirts, as appears from the ordinance of Mgr de Manzi dated 7 August 1764.

In 1793 the church of Saint-Agricol was closed like all the others; and after serving for a time as a workshop for blacksmiths, it became a general store for powder and saltpetre. It was only in 1795 that, at the urging of a few men of faith, it was given back by the municipality to the Catholic religion. In 1801 it resumed its rank as first parish of the diocese, to which it joined, until 1836, that of cathedral, as the ancient metropolitan basilica of Notre-Dame des Doms could not be fully restored until then. As for the relics of Saint Agricolus, they were saved from profanation by the hands of a constitutional parish priest named Pignatelli, who had them hidden with those of Saint Magnus at the bottom of a tomb near the choir. They were found again in 1810, and in 1826 Mgr de Mons restored them to public veneration. They were then put back under the high altar, where they still are today. In spite of the events that have followed one another since the beginning of this century, the devotion of the people of Avignon to their holy Patron has suffered no change, and it has come out of the revolutionary storm as pure as on its first day. The public solemnity, instead of being held on 2 September, is celebrated on the following Sunday with no less pomp than formerly. The proper office of the Saint, which Mgr de Gontery had had composed in 1741, was approved in 1856 by the Holy See and imposed not only on the city and its territory but also on the whole diocese. And whenever the people feel the hand of God weigh heavily upon them, they have recourse with confidence to their heavenly protector, and they never fail to feel promptly the salutary effects of his powerful credit in the heavenly abode.

Taken from the Life of Saint Agricol by M. Augustin Canron. — Cf. Acta Sanctorum.

Saint Stephen, First King and Apostle of the Hungarians

1038. — Pope: Benedict IX. — King of France: Henry I.

> *Noli aviditate imperandi ponere tibi ante oculos provincias latissimas, qua tua regna diffundas; terram quam portas, rege.*
>
> *In your ambition to rule, do not cast your eyes on vast provinces to merge them into your empire; govern the earth that you carry.*

Hungary, formerly called Pannonia because of the abundance of corn and of all sorts of other goods that grow there, took its name from the Huns, who conquered it from the Romans and settled there. Geysa, the fourth duke of the Huns, or Hungarians, conceived a great esteem for our holy religion through the conversations he had about it with some Christian prisoners. Missionaries who came into the country made these first impressions bear fruit and convinced him of the divinity of that same religion, whose maxims seemed to him so fine and so reasonable. He therefore resolved to embrace it. The stir this step was bound to cause, and the ferocity of a people attached to its ancient superstitions, could not slacken his zeal for the truth. He received baptism with Sarloth, his wife, and several of the chief lords of his court.

Princess Sarloth was so struck by the mysteries and great truths of Christianity that she strove after perfection with a fervour worthy of the Saints. Some time afterwards she became pregnant. During her pregnancy she had a vision in which Saint Stephen assured her that the child she was carrying in her womb would complete the work she and her husband had begun and would root out paganism from among his people. This child was born in 977 at Gran, or Strigonium, which was then the metropolis of the country. He received in baptism the name of Stephen because of the vision his mother had had. The historians of Germany and Father Stilting maintain that this sacrament was administered to him by Saint Adalbert, bishop of Prague, who preached the Gospel to the Hungarians for some time. He was given as governor the pious Theodatus, a count of Italy, who, together with Saint Adalbert, inspired him early with lively sentiments of religion. Stephen could pronounce the admirable name of the Saviour before he could ask for bread or greet his father and mother. From childhood such fine inclinations to piety were seen in him that no one doubted he would faithfully fulfil what heaven had promised and foretold. He made the most rapid progress in his studies. He was almost always to be seen at Saint Adalbert's side, and it was through the examples and lessons of so wise a prelate that he acquired great holiness. He could not bear the barbarous and inhuman customs that the Hungarians, descended from the Scythians, had kept until then. He often reproved them vehemently for them, and, gathering them in groups around him, set before them by contrast the beauty, innocence and purity of the law of the Gospel. Prayer and the contemplation of divine truths were the sweetest converse of his soul; he gave himself to them as much as he could, and when relieving the poor and other unfortunates, for whom he had a particular kindness, occupied him outwardly, he still kept God before his eyes and conversed lovingly with Him. When he had passed fifteen, his father unburdened himself on him of part of the affairs of his State and, seeing that God had endowed him with singular prudence, deferred greatly to his advice and did nothing without calling him to his council. He even entrusted him with the supreme command of his armies.

Geysa having died in 997, Stephen succeeded him. His first care was to conclude a lasting peace with all the neighbouring peoples. He then applied himself with the greatest zeal to establishing Christianity firmly in his States; but a considerable number of Hungarians, stubbornly attached to their superstitions, took up arms against their sovereign. When they felt themselves strong enough, they besieged the town of Vesprin. Stephen, full of confidence in God, prepared for war by fasting, almsgiving and prayer; he also sought the help of heaven through the intercession of Saint Martin and Saint George. He gave battle to the rebels and, though inferior to them in numbers, won a complete victory over them and killed their leader. To mark his gratitude, he had a monastery built near the place where the battle had been fought, under the invocation of Saint Martin; it was afterwards known by the name of the Holy Mountain. He endowed this monastery richly and gave it, besides, the third part of the spoils taken from the enemy. It depends directly on the Holy See and bears in Hungary the title of arch-abbey. Stephen, finding himself free, took up again his first plan of procuring the glory of God by every sort of means. He brought in priests and religious commendable for their piety; and these holy missionaries, spreading the knowledge of Jesus Christ from place to place, civilised the people still sunk in barbarism, founded monasteries and built churches. Some of them obtained the crown of martyrdom.

The zealous prince founded ten bishoprics and the archbishopric of Gran, or Strigonium. After which he sent to Rome Astricus, or Anastasius, newly elected to fill the see of Coloctz; he asked Pope Sylvester II to receive Hungary, newly converted, among the Christian and Catholic States, to give it his apostolic blessing, to approve the erection of the bishoprics, to confirm the bishops named, and at the same time to allow him to take the title of king and bear its insignia, so as to give more weight and authority to all that he should ordain for the honour of God and for the spread of the faith and the Christian religion. Miceslas, duke of Poland, who had embraced Christianity in 965 on marrying the daughter of Boleslas, duke of Bohemia, had also sent to ask the Pope for the title of king; the Pope had had a rich crown prepared, which he was to place the next day in the hands of the head of his embassy. But the following night a heavenly messenger warned him in a dream that this crown was not for the Pole but for Stephen, prince of Hungary, whose envoys would present themselves before him in the morning, because his signal virtues and his ardour for the establishment of the Gospel made him deserve this preference. And indeed Anastasius had audience that very morning. The Sovereign Pontiff, learning what Stephen was doing for Christianity, confirmed what he had done and gave him full apostolic power to found churches and erect bishoprics and archbishoprics, and to appoint to them the persons he judged worthy to fill them; he allowed him to have the cross carried before him like an apostle, and sent him, with a precious cross, the royal crown of which we have spoken. When Stephen learned of his ambassador's return, he went out to meet him and, having had the Pope's bulls read to him, listened to them standing out of respect. He had himself crowned in the year 1000 by the bishop who had brought him the royal crown from Rome, and submitted his kingdom to the Roman Church.

He made very holy laws to abolish the barbarous customs of the Scythians and Hungarians, and published very severe ones against murder, adultery, theft, blasphemy and several other crimes. He provided for the protection of widows, wards and orphans and for the support of poor families; he forbade Christians to marry infidels, and obliged all who were neither religious nor clerics to marry, so as to uproot both incontinence and idolatry. A short time after his coronation he married Gisela, sister of the emperor Saint Henry, a princess worthy of this honour. He had her anointed and crowned queen, and thereafter she worked with him for the increase of God's worship and the spread of the Catholic religion. Stephen never ceased founding churches in every part of his dominions, and Gisela in particular had a very magnificent one built at Vesprin, to which she gave very precious ornaments with large revenues to maintain canons.

This wise monarch had not only submitted his kingdom and his crown to the Holy See, but had also placed them under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, Queen of heaven and earth, to whom he had a singular devotion: he had a fine church built under her invocation in the city of Alba, which was surnamed Royal because he usually resided there. He extended his piety beyond his States as far as Rome, Constantinople and Jerusalem: he founded at Rome a collegiate church for twelve canons and a hospice for Hungarian pilgrims; he had a church built at Constantinople, which he furnished with all that was needed to maintain divine service there; and he had a monastery built at Jerusalem, to which he assigned revenues sufficient for the support of a community of religious. This liberality towards churches did not keep him from exercising a very great liberality towards the poor; he loved them no less than if he had seen Jesus Christ in their persons, and none went away from his presence dissatisfied. He often chose the night for these works of charity, taking pleasure in washing the feet of pilgrims in secret and in hiding his alms in the bosoms of the afflicted and of beggars. One day, having taken a purse full of money, he went out in disguise and without any mark of his royal dignity to distribute it to the poor. The first he met, not recognising him and wanting to have it all for themselves, threw themselves on him, knocked him to the ground, heaped outrages on him, even pulling his hair and tearing his beard, and finally took his purse and all his money. The holy King was not moved by it; on the contrary, rejoicing to have endured something for Jesus Christ, he turned to the Blessed Virgin and said to her: "You see, Queen of heaven and earth, my gracious Lady, how your soldiers have treated him whom you have made king. If this insult had been done to me by an enemy, I would not suffer it, and, being sure of your help, I would undertake to avenge it; but since it has been done to me by

those whom your Son calls His own, I thank them for it, and I can have nothing but indulgence and tenderness for them. I know that the divine Saviour has said that not a hair of our head shall perish; and so for this affront I expect to receive from His hands the crown of eternal life." After this incident he resolved never to refuse charity to any poor person; and in fact he made such great distributions to every sort of needy person that no one could understand how all the revenues of his domain could suffice for them. Our Lord, to favour the inclinations of his charity, gave him the grace of healing the sick. He also granted him the gift of prophecy, so that he knew things to come as if they had happened before his eyes. It is related that one night he sent off a courier in haste to warn the peasants of the frontiers to withdraw at once into the towns, because the barbarians were about to make an incursion into the country; this did in fact happen, but without much damage, because the country people had already fled with their most precious belongings.

When the emperor Saint Henry, brother-in-law and intimate friend of our holy monarch, had died, Conrad, who succeeded him, sent a powerful army into Hungary to make war on him and seize his States. Our holy King at once raised troops to oppose this enemy; but because he knew that the greatest armies have only weakness if they are not upheld by the invincible strength of God's arm, he turned to the Blessed Virgin to obtain this help through her intercession: "Do you wish," he said to her, "glorious Virgin Mary, that this part of your inheritance should be the prey of those who hate us, and that this new plant of Christianity should be stifled at its birth? If so, may your holy will be done; but grant that my distrust and my cowardice may not be the cause of it. Here I am, ready to fight; give me the prudence and courage I need to discharge this duty worthily; and if I have deserved some punishment, be pleased that I endure it alone, and do not destroy this innocent people with their guilty prince." After this prayer he put himself boldly at the head of his troops; but the very next day a courier arrived from the emperor to his captains with orders to turn his men back, so that our Saint remained victorious without fighting and delivered from the fury of his enemies without blood being shed on either side. Conrad, who had not in fact countermanded his army, was much astonished to see it come back without having done anything; but when he learned from his officers that they had come back only on an order sent in his name, he saw clearly that God had taken a hand in the affair, and that the courier had been sent by a greater Master than he, who was taking Saint Stephen under His protection.

It was this holy King's custom to give the day to the government of his kingdom and to doing justice to his people, and to devote the nights to prayer, to the contemplation of divine truths, to penance and to tears. His spirit was then so carried away into God that even his body sometimes followed it: one day, as he was praying in his tent, he was lifted up into the air with it by the angels until his prayer was finished. His reputation became so great that his neighbours no longer dared attack him; even the Barbarians round about showed him a singular respect. People came from afar to Hungary to have the happiness of seeing him, as the queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem to witness the incomparable wisdom of King Solomon.

To consummate this wise monarch's virtue, it had to be tried and purified by pains and afflictions. He had very great ones, which would have thrown anyone else into grief and impatience. He was tormented by an acute illness that lasted three years. Then death took his children from him: there remained to him only his eldest, Emeric, who was beginning to bear part of the weight of government; he was his father's support and consolation. Stephen saw him die without issue. This terrible blow threw the whole kingdom into dismay, but could not shake the constancy of our holy king. He submitted to the decrees of the divine will, adored its guidance, and even thanked it for the favour it had done his son in calling him into its kingdom at an age when the abundance of earthly prosperity had not yet been able to tarnish his innocence. He increased his charities to the churches, the monasteries and the poor, to relieve the soul of that dear son, whose holiness shone forth by miracles, and to obtain from God a worthy successor.[1]

Some time afterwards he himself fell ill again with a slow fever that wore him down so much that he could no longer stand. Four palatines took advantage of this to make an attempt on his life. They were irritated by the strictness with which he had justice observed, without respect of persons. One of them came into his

room by night, hiding his naked sword under his cloak, to carry out his wicked design. But God, who watches over the safety of kings, allowed him to drop his sword; the Saint heard it (he had, moreover, been warned by revelation) and asked what it was; the parricide, trembling, threw himself at his feet and begged his pardon. Stephen granted him his pardon; but his accomplices were executed, as the good of the State required.

At last, in the year 1038 according to Baronius, on the day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, which the Hungarians, by command of this blessed prince, call the feast of the Great Lady, having devoutly received the sacraments of Extreme Unction and the Eucharist, and having exhorted the bishops, the clergy and the lords of the kingdom to maintain the Catholic religion there and to give him a worthy successor, he peacefully gave up his soul into the hands of Our Lord, to receive the reward due to his piety and to the labours of his apostolate.

Saint Stephen of Hungary is represented: 1. with a banner bearing the image of the most holy Virgin, to recall that he had placed his kingdom under the protection of the Mother of God; 2. with a church in his hand: not content with bringing the Magyar nation into the bosom of the Church, which won him from the Holy See the title of apostolic king, he founded two archbishoprics and ten episcopal sees, not counting the many churches that rose through his care; 3. with a sword in his hand, to indicate the frequent occasions he had to draw the sword for the honour of God; 4. in a group with Saint Gerard, bishop of Czanad, whose fellow-worker he was in the conversion of the Magyars.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

(Cult and Relics.)

The great miracles worked at Saint Stephen’s tomb were certain marks of his blessedness. A heavenly melody was also sometimes heard there and a pleasant perfume was smelt, showing that his body was destined one day to be glorious in heaven. His body, having been raised from the ground, was enclosed in a shrine and laid in a chapel of the church of Our Lady at Buda forty-five years after his death, on 20 August. This did not happen without a great number of new miracles: as a crowd of sick people came running from all sides to share in the blessing of this translation, those who could not arrive in time and were then on the way nevertheless recovered their health. His sacred bones were found swimming in a liquid like balm, which gave off a perfume sweeter than any on earth. People tried to draw it off with cloths, which they meant to use for the relief of the sick; but the more it was emptied, the more the tomb filled with a similar liquid, which obliged them to put back what they had taken out; and then, by a surprising miracle, the coffin, which was full, received all the earlier liquid without overflowing or appearing any fuller than it had been before. Among the persons of rank who were then healed by the merits of Saint Stephen, one of the most famous was the Countess Matilda, whom an illness of fifteen years had brought to the last extremity. Her people took her to the Saint, and she found there relief from her illness, which countless remedies had been unable to procure her. People were much surprised, on opening the tomb, to find there neither the holy King’s hand nor the ring that had been put on his finger. But it had been carried off invisibly, still in flesh and bone, by an angel and placed in the hands of a holy religious named Mercurius. For some time he did not reveal this secret, but at last he made it known, which gave the people a new cause for joy and made the merit of Saint Stephen’s almsgiving known more and more. Benedict IX canonised him, and Innocent XI fixed his feast on 2 September.

We have in Surius his life composed by a bishop of Hungary named Chartruiz. Antonio Bonfini has given a more detailed one in the second decade of his

History of Hungary. *Baronius speaks of him with great honour, both in his* Annals *and in his* Notes *on the Roman martyrology.*

Saint Anthony of Liaroles, Hermit, Martyr at Agen (540)

Sprung from an illustrious race and from a family of Agen, Anthony of Liaroles spent his early youth in the camps; but God had other designs for the young warrior, who soon grew weary of human grandeur. He learned to despise it, and, following the example of the great solitary whose name he bore, and fearing, besides, contact with the Arians, he exchanged his riches for poverty and his father's palace for the solitude of the desert.

Anthony had left the camps and his father's house in secret. His weeping parents and his faithful friends went through the forests, the mountains and the hollows of the valleys, searching everywhere for the young fugitive. For a long time they asked for him of all the wild echoes of the solitude, until a human voice was heard murmuring a prayer. They drew near and found the Saint prostrate on the ground, holding on to humanity only by a few shreds: all heaven was in his heart. Yet we shall not find in Saint Anthony what has been so absurdly called the savagery of the anchorites. The sight of his parents touched his heart and made him understand that he was still on earth; he embraced them with a flood of tears, consoled them with the gentlest words, and went back with them to the town of Agen. Having paid this just tribute to filial affection, Anthony set out again and withdrew into the Lomagne. But solitude was no longer made for him. He had made too much stir in the world to be unknown, and done too much penance in the desert to remain hidden from then on. The noise of his fame followed him everywhere; everywhere people came running after him. For the second time he returned to his father's house; he crossed the Garonne, and on the other bank, at the entrance to Agen, he found a great crowd waiting for him to present to him a paralysed woman of sixty. Anthony was touched by so much piety and so much confidence; he called upon the name of the Lord Jesus, and the paralysed woman rose and walked as in her early youth. This wonder struck too painful a blow at the heresy of Arius not to rouse the anger of its partisans. Alaric's ministers had Liaroles brought before their tribunal. They tried in vain to win him over with promises; then they went on to threats, from threats to tortures, and the Saint gave up his soul to God amid the cruellest torments. In the course of time the holy Martyr's body was translated to a place near Condom (Gers), which took the name of Liaroles. It was laid under the altar of the church, where every year it drew a great concourse of the faithful. The inhabitants of the place loved to tell of the miracles worked by the power of the holy Martyr.

The abbé Barrère: Histoire religieuse et monumentale du diocèse d'Agen.

Blessed Margaret of Louvain, Virgin and Martyr (1225)

Blessed Margaret was born at Louvain (Belgium) at the beginning of the thirteenth century, of poor but virtuous parents. From childhood, responding to her mother's care, she showed sentiments to which she remained faithful to the end of her life. When she was old enough to work, she entered the service of a relative of hers named Amand, an innkeeper, who out of Christian charity often gave hospitality to poor pilgrims who had not the means to pay for their lodging. Margaret profited in this school of virtue. She fulfilled all the duties of her place with the most exact fidelity, took pleasure in lavishing her care on the suffering members of Jesus Christ, and was never happier than when she had done some act of charity for them. She made early a vow of perpetual chastity, and since she scrupulously avoided anything that could do the slightest harm to the flower of her innocence, she was nicknamed "proud Margaret."

Meanwhile Amand and his wife had long planned to withdraw into a monastery. To carry out their plan they sold their goods, and Margaret, now without a place, resolved to take the veil in a convent of the Order of Saint Basil. On the eve of the day on which Amand and his wife were to leave their house, robbers disguised as pilgrims came to ask for a night's lodging and were well received; but while Margaret had gone to fetch wine in a jug that can still be seen at Louvain, these brigands murdered those who had just welcomed them with the most perfect charity. When Margaret came back, she was seized and dragged outside the town. The

robbers, after ill-treating her, were asking one another what they should do with her; one of them, more compassionate than his companions, offered to save her by taking her as his wife. Margaret preferred death; she was stabbed on the spot, and her body was thrown into the Dyle (2 September 1225).

God, wishing to make known how pleasing Margaret's life had been to Him, allowed her body to float on the waters. A heavenly light surrounded it, and harmonious songs were heard in the air. The news of this miraculous event spread rapidly through the town; the Chapter of Saint-Pierre came in procession to fetch the body of the Blessed one, placed it in a wooden shrine bound with iron, and laid it in a chapel before the choir. In the seventeenth century, devotion to the Blessed one having spread greatly among the faithful, the shrine was gilded. An altar was raised, and above it was placed a picture by Van Haegen of Alost representing the martyrdom of the servant of God. The faithful constantly come to implore the help of her intercession with God, and many miracles have never ceased to reward their pious confidence.

Acta Sanctorum, and Godescard.

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[1] These three martyrs are already mentioned in the Roman martyrology on 25 April, the day on which they are honoured at Syracuse.

[2] Elpidius equalled in holiness his predecessors the Saints Pothinus (177), Irenaeus (202), Justus (390), Albinus or Alvinus (397), Martin (400) and Antiochus (410). He was buried in the church of the Maccabees, where so many Saints already rested. One must take great care not to confuse this prelate, as some writers have done, with Saint Elpidius Rusticus, a mere deacon of the Church of Lyons, poet and physician, who died about the year 535 and is mentioned by the Bollandists on 5 February. — *France Pontificale*, by Fisquet.

[3] It was Eleazar who, with Joshua and the heads of each tribe, divided the Promised Land after Joshua had conquered it. He died a short time after him and was buried at Gabaath (a town of the tribe of Benjamin). More than four hundred years after Jesus Christ his tomb was still shown, and Saint Jerome tells us that Saint Paula went to visit it before shutting herself up at Bethlehem. On the same day the Greeks also commemorate Phinehas, son and successor of Eleazar in the high priesthood. — Baillet.

[4] Tradition holds that the former chapel of the Holy Spirit, which today bears his name, the first on the right as one enters the church dedicated to him, is built on the site of his father's house.

[5] The monastery of the Groseau, situated near a true Vaucluse fountain in miniature, is known above all for the stay that Pope Clement V made there in the fourteenth century.

[6] Emeric was canonised by Benedict IX; he is honoured on 4 November.

3 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, Saint Seraphia, virgin, who under the emperor Hadrian was handed over to two young debauchees and, since she could be neither violated nor burned by the blazing torches applied to her, was scourged and then beheaded by order of the judge Berillus. Her execution took place on 29 July, and Saint Sabina buried her in her own tomb near the threshing-floor of Vindicianus. The memory of her martyrdom is, however, celebrated more particularly on this day, on which the tomb of these two Saints was adorned and the place where they rest was dedicated as an oratory.[1] 119 and 126. — At Corinth, the heavenly birthday of Saint Phoebe, whom the apostle Saint Paul mentions in his Epistle to the Romans.[2] Ist c. — At Aquileia, the holy virgins and martyrs Euphemia, Dorothy, Thecla and Erasma, who died by the sword under Nero after many torments and were buried by Saint Hermagoras.[3] — At Capua, the holy martyrs Aristaeus, bishop, and Antoninus, a young child. About 302. — At Nicomedia, Saint Basilissa, virgin and martyr, who, at the age of nine, having overcome with the help of heaven, during the persecution of Diocletian and under the governor Alexander, the whips, the flames and the wild beasts, gave up her spirit while praying to God. About 309. — Also the holy martyrs Zeno and Chariton, one of whom was thrown into a cauldron of molten lead, the other into a blazing furnace. — At Cordova, Saint Sandalus, martyr under Diocletian. — The same day, the heavenly birthday of the holy martyrs AIGULF, or AYOU, abbot of Lérins, and several of his monks, who first had their tongues cut out and their eyes put out, and were finally beheaded. About 575. — At Toul, Saint

MANSUETUS, or MANSUY, bishop and confessor. About 375. — At Milan, the death of Saint Auxanus, bishop. 568. — The same day, Saint Simeon Stylites the Younger. About 596. — At Rome, the ordination of Saint Gregory the Great, an incomparable man who, having been forced to accept the burden of the sovereign pontificate, made rays of holiness shine from his throne that enlightened the whole earth.[4] 604.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Évreux, the anniversary of the dedication of the abbey of Corneville (Order of Saint Augustine, founded in 1143 by Gelebon de Corneville and his wife Matilda) in honour of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, by Hugh III, archbishop of Rouen. 1147. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Fleury, or Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, in the diocese of Orléans, Saint Frongentius, martyr, one of the companions of Saint Aigulf, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. VIIth c. — In the diocese of Séez, Saint Godegrand or Chrodegang, seventeenth bishop of that see and martyr. Of an illustrious family of the Hiémois, he was the brother of Saint Opportuna, abbess of Montreuil-les-Dames (*Monasteriolum*), in the diocese of Soissons. Leaving his diocese to make a pilgrimage to Rome, he entrusted his bishopric to a certain Chrodobert, a relative of his, who, jealous of his holiness, later had him murdered at Nonant (Orne). Opportuna carried the body of the pious prelate to her monastery and buried him there. The church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, in the diocese of Séez, long kept the head of Saint Godegrand, whose relics, it is said, were later carried to Saint-Flour. The cathedral of Séez obtained part of these relics in 1731.[5] 775. — In the dioceses of Bourges and Cologne, Saint REMACLUS, bishop of Maastricht and confessor. 664. — In the diocese of Saint-Flour, Saint Symphorian, martyr at Autun, whose life we have given on 22 August. About 180. — In the diocese of Fréjus, Saint Aigulf, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Verdun, Saint Mansuy, named today in the Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Soissons, Saint Fiacre, whose life we have given on 30 August. 670. — At Sens, Saint Ambrose, twelfth archbishop of that see and confessor. Many miracles made his tomb famous in the monastery of Saint-Gervais at Sens (founded about 386 by Saint Ursicinus, ninth archbishop of that see). Ansegisus translated his body in 876 to Saint-Pierre-le-Vif, near Sens. About 455. — At Reims, Saint Réol or Rieul, twenty-sixth archbishop of that see and confessor. At first count of Reims, he afterwards took the religious habit in the Benedictine abbey of Rebais (*Rebascum*), in the diocese of Meaux, and was drawn from the cloister after the death of Saint Nivard, his uncle (672), to occupy the metropolitan see of Reims. Rieul founded (680) the abbey of Orbais (*Dorbacense monasterium*), in the present diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne, and placed there six religious whom he took from Rebais. He attended (689) the council held at Rouen by Saint Ansbert, and died after an episcopate of twenty-six years. He was buried, it is believed, at Orbais, where his relics are still kept. 698. — In the diocese of Tarbes, Saint Lizier, bishop of the Couserans, whose notice we have given on 7 August. 548. — At Nantes, Saint Emilian, or Emiland, bishop of that see and martyr; we have given his life on 27 June. 725. — At Rodez, Saint Procula, virgin and martyr, whose life we have given on 9 July. XIth or XIIth c. — In the diocese of Saint-Claude, Saint Justus, archbishop of Lyons and confessor, whose life we have given on the preceding day. 390. — In the dioceses of Laval and Le Mans, Saint Chadouin, bishop of the latter see, whose life we have given on 20 August. 654. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint Maurilius or Maurilio, bishop of that see and confessor.[6] 580.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — Saint Simeon Stylites the Younger, of the Order of Saint Basil, a man of extraordinary abstinence and patience. About 598.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — Saint Stephen, king of Hungary, named on the 2nd of this month.[7] 1038.

Martyrology of the Order of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — The same as with the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli. — At the monastery of Fonte Avellana, Saint Albert, confessor, prior of that abbey, whose reputation for holiness, attested over several centuries by the piety of the faithful, was approved by Pope Pius VI. 1359.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Valencia in Spain, the Blessed JOHN and PETER, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, for having preached Jesus Christ, were beheaded by the Mahometans on 29 August and won the palm of martyrdom. 1230.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At Longchamp, in the diocese of Paris, Blessed Isabelle, virgin, of the Second Order, sister of Saint Louis, who, despising the splendours of this world, chose rather to serve Jesus Christ, her Spouse, in humility and poverty, and passed to the Lord, famous for her miracles, on 23 February.[8] 1270.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Joseph Calasanz, who is mentioned on 27 August.[9] 1648.

Martyrology of the Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At Borgo San Sepolcro, Blessed ANDREW DOTTI, confessor, of the Order of Servites, who, after preaching the Gospel in many places, withdrew into the desert and died a miraculous death on 31 August. 1315.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Bavaria, Blessed Hermann of Heidelberg, monk of Niederaltaich, then a solitary in the Nordwald. He was buried before the door of the church of Rinchnach, where a little chapel was raised in his honour. 1326 or 1327. — In the same country, Blessed Otto of Heidelberg, priest, brother of Blessed Hermann. He first led the hermit's life in the caves of Bohemia, then came back to Bavaria and continued his way of life there. His body was buried in the church of Niederaltaich. 1344. — Also in Bavaria, Blessed Degenhard, lay brother of Altaich and disciple of Blessed Otto of Heidelberg, whose way of life he imitated. He built, not far from Bischofsmais, a church in honour of Saint Bartholomew, where he was buried. 1374. — At Brescia, a city of Italy in the province of Lombardy, Blessed Guala, bishop of that see and confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers. A decree of 26 September 1868, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, approved the immemorial cult paid to him, and Pius IX confirmed the Rescript of the Sacred Congregation.[10] 1244. — At Jerusalem and in its neighbourhood, Saint Theoctistus, hegumen, friend of Saint Euthymius, who must not be confused with Saint Theoctistus or Theopemptus, disciple of Saint Macarius. 467. — At Verona, a city of Venetia, Saint Manus or Manius, bishop of that see and confessor, whose body was laid in the church of Santo Stefano in that city. About the Vth c. — At Coner, a town of Ireland in the province of Ulster and the county of Down, Saint Macnisse, bishop of that see and confessor. He was baptised and consecrated bishop by Saint Patrick, apostle of Ireland, made several pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem, came back to his own country, founded a monastery there and died there in holiness. About 514. — At Como, a city of Lombardy, Saint Martinian, bishop of that see and confessor. 628. — At Santarém (*Ourenium*, *Scalabis*), a town of Portugal in the province of Estremadura, Blessed Taraise, religious. 1266.

Saint Mansuetus or Mansuy, First Bishop of Toul and Confessor

About 375. — Pope: Saint Damasus. — Emperor of the West: Gratian.

> *Non est sine pugna victoria, non absque victoria pertingitur ad coronam.*
>
> *There is no victory without a fight, and one does not obtain the crown without victory.*

Saint Peter Damian.

The Church of Toul regards Saint Mansuy as the apostolic man to whom it owes the light of the Gospel. Popular tradition makes this holy founder a contemporary of the Apostles or of their first disciples. The acts of his apostolate were lost, together with those of many other illustrious Saints of Gaul, either as a result of the last persecutions of the pagans, which are said to have extended to the holy books and the first monuments of ecclesiastical history, or rather in the shipwreck that most of the churches of the country suffered in the flood of Barbarians from beyond the Rhine. But the memory of Saint Mansuy has always been kept with honour among the descendants of those whom the purity of his morals and the holiness of his life, no less than his preaching and his miracles, converted to the religion of Jesus Christ.

Saint Gerard, one of his successors, charged the monk Adso, afterwards abbot of Montier-en-Der, with gathering from the traditional memories of the Church of Toul what he found best attested and composing from it a sort of connected history that could be read on our Saint's feast day in all the churches of the diocese.

Mansuy was of Scottish origin. He came early to Rome, where he studied the doctrines of the Christian religion, and was soon judged worthy by the Vicar of Jesus Christ to receive Orders, to be called to the episcopate and to be sent into Gaul to the Leuci, "as a shining torch to scatter the darkness of error." Saint Mansuy made his way among these peoples, who had until then remained idolaters, and entered their capital, ready to suffer generously, if need be, every torment in order to bear witness to the good news he was bringing them.

The Apostle's preaching at first produced little fruit: the magistrates of the city, and the people following their example, closed their ears to the great and sublime truths he proclaimed to them. Mansuy was not discouraged by the scorn he met with; he went on sowing the divine word, waiting with confidence for the moment when it should please God to ripen the harvest. Meanwhile he built himself a hut of branches outside the city, to make his dwelling there and give himself to prayer and meditation.

Now it happened, on a great feast day, while all the people of Toul were given over to rejoicing, that the governor's only son fell from the top of the ramparts into the Moselle, which then washed their foot and was very deep at that spot. In vain were the gods invoked; the body could not be found, and the day that had begun in public rejoicing ended amid universal desolation. During the night the princess saw in a dream Saint Mansuy, who promised to give her back her son if she would turn to the true God. On waking she told her husband of this apparition; he sent for our Saint and promised to be baptised with all his people if he would recover for him the body of his child, even lifeless.

Mansuy went to the river, near the place where the young boy had fallen; he prostrated himself and prayed: at once the child's body came floating to the surface of the water, and it was brought back to the bank. "Here is the lifeless body of your son," said the holy Bishop to the father; "but if you have the firm intention of keeping the promise you made me, the clemency of my God is great, and you will obtain from it a more signal favour." The prince renewed his promises; all those present pledged themselves with him to renounce the false gods and embrace the Christian religion if the child came back to life. Mansuy again bent the knee to implore the divine Majesty; a few disciples whom he had already converted joined him in prayer. A breath of life then came to revive the child's frozen limbs; at the voice of the minister of Jesus Christ he rose and threw himself into his parents' arms.

So new a sight struck the whole multitude with wonder: the governor, all his family and the entire people were converted and acknowledged Saint Mansuy as their pastor.

The holy Bishop cleansed the city and its territory of idols and pagan practices. He had two churches built in the capital, one dedicated to the Virgin Mary and Saint Stephen, the other to Saint John the Baptist. He also raised a little oratory near his dwelling in honour of Saint Peter. Then, having conferred the sacrament of

Orders on a great number of priests and deacons, he had churches built in various places of his diocese, to adore and glorify God there and render to His Majesty the praises due to Him.

At last, after a long life spent in the labours of the apostolate, the athlete of the Lord gave up his soul to God on 3 September, amid the regrets and tears of his people, who venerated him.

Let us say just a word about Saint Mansuy's glory after death. Some peasants of the Barrois were taking home carts loaded with salt. As they were passing through Gondreville on Saint Mansuy's feast day, they were rebuked for daring to travel on that day; they laughed at it, but they soon felt that one cannot mock the Saints and profane the days consecrated to them with impunity. Scarcely had they gone into the Moselle with their carts, intending to cross it, when the oxen yoked to their carts, heeding neither rein nor their masters' voices, bolted and threatened to drag them over the edge. Terrified by the danger and touched from on high, these poor people confessed their fault, implored the help of Saint Mansuy and vowed to keep his feast day religiously in future. This vow was at once followed by their deliverance.

The Saint's shrine, carried solemnly in procession in times of great drought that made people fear famine, at once obtained by his merits the rain that was needed.

Seindebard, count of Toul, who was about to have a hand cut off that caused him great pain, devoutly invoked the Saint, and his hand, already quite withered, was at once completely healed. Saint Gerard obtained through his intercession the cure of a grave illness that the physicians despaired of curing by natural means. More than once, when plague, so frequent in former times, was ravaging the diocese, that terrible scourge has been seen to abate suddenly through the merits of Saint Mansuy. In all circumstances the peoples of the Toulois have felt signal effects of their Apostle's goodness; they have kept for him to our own day a great devotion and a filial gratitude.

The Roman martyrology marks his feast on 3 September; that is also the day on which the Church of Toul, whose see has been transferred to Nancy, is accustomed to celebrate it.

Saint Mansuy is represented: 1. raising to life a child killed by a blow from a tennis ball; 2. preaching in a wood to a great crowd; 3. wearing the cape called the superhumeral or rational, the usual distinguishing mark of the bishops of Toul and of some other sees; it indicates a kind of metropolitan superiority.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

(Cult and Relics.)

The body of Saint Mansuy was laid in the chapel of Saint-Pierre, which he had had built. There were several translations of this Saint; the last took place in 1506. On the site of the oratory of Saint-Pierre a famous Benedictine abbey had been founded under the patronage of Saint Mansuy. The choir of the abbey church was built over the vault in which the precious relics were enclosed.

This vault is today part of a private property and still contains the gravestone that covered the Saint's tomb. He is shown on it in pontifical vestments, overthrowing paganism, with a young child praying at his side. The image of the same child can still be seen carved on a stone of the rampart, at the bastion of Saint-Mansuy, no doubt in memory of the miracle of the raising performed by the Saint on the child of the chief whom the legend calls king of the country of the Leuci.

The principal shrine of the cathedral of Toul was a kind of tomb in silver-gilt, with a coffin-shaped lid, about a metre long, fifty centimetres wide and seventy centimetres high. This shrine contained the relics of Saint Mansuy and of the fourteen bishops of Toul who are honoured as Saints. It was adorned on the outside with full-length statuettes, also in silver-gilt, placed at intervals and representing the Saints whose bones were enclosed in the reliquary. These statuettes stood on a base running round and projecting at the foot of the shrine, and rose to the springing of the lid. In the middle of the length of the reliquary there was on each side

a glass, in the form of a medallion, through which the relics inside could be seen.

Here is the official record of the division, made on 11 July 1790 among the canons, of part of the relics of this precious shrine. The document is part of the collection of M. Dufresne, prefectural councillor at Metz.

“This day, 11 July of the year 1790, by virtue of a chapter act dated the 9th of the present month, by which the chapter, having regard to the request of the Gentlemen that relics from the treasury of our church be granted to them, orders that they be delivered to them, and has commissioned for this purpose MM. de Saint-Beaussan, canon-archdeacon and master of the fabric; Ducrot, canon and treasurer; and Pallas, canon-almoner of this church; accordingly: We, the commissioners designated, have had opened before us the shrine containing the relics of several holy bishops of Toul, as well as that of Saint Apronia, and, having found the seals sound and whole, we have taken from them: 1. several splinters of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 2. the bones of the vertebra of Saint Gerard, as well as the bones of his arm, joints of his fingers and of his ribs; 3. several splinters of the bones of Saint Amo, as well as shreds of his hair shirt and of his sandals; 4. the teeth of the lower jaw of Saint Gauzlin, together with several splinters of the said jaw; 5. a joint of the finger of Saint Evre, which has been broken into several pieces to be distributed; 6. several small bones and fragments of bone from the body of Saint Apronia. Which holy relics have been divided and delivered to the Gentlemen as follows:

“I. To M. d’Hammonville, canon and archdeacon of Port: 1. part of the lower jaw of Saint Gerard, a vertebra and a bone of a phalanx of the hand of the same Saint; 2. a particle of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 3. a particle of the bones of Saint Amo; 4. a tooth and a particle of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin; 5. a splinter of the finger-bone of Saint Evre; 6. two fragments of bone of Saint Apronia.

“II. To M. de Saint-Beaussan, canon-archdeacon of Vittel and vicar general: 1. of Saint Gerard, a vertebra, a bone of the foot, two halves of ribs and the end of a large bone; 2. a splinter of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 3. the end of a large bone of Saint Amo; 4. a fragment of the shoulder-bone of Saint Apronia.

“III. To M. de Montal, canon-archdeacon of Ligny: 1. of Saint Gerard, a vertebra and a fragment of bone; 2. of Saint Mansuy, a splinter of the shoulder-blade; 3. of Saint Amo, a fragment of bone; 4. of Saint Apronia, part of a rib.

“IV. To M. Ducrot, canon-treasurer: 1. of Saint Gerard, a vertebra, part of the arm-bone, part of a rib, part of the tibia and a finger joint; 2. a splinter of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 3. the end of the arm-bone of Saint Amo; 4. part of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin.

“V. To M. Pallas, canon-almoner: 1. a finger joint of Saint Gerard; 2. a tooth of Saint Gauzlin; an end of bone of Saint Amo; a fragment of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 5. a particle of the finger of Saint Evre.

“VI. To M. Sirejean, canon: 1. a fragment of a rib of Saint Gerard; 2. a particle of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 3. a third of the arm-bone of Saint Amo; 4. a fragment of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin.

“VII. To M. d’Heudicourt, canon: 1. a bone of the foot of Saint Gerard; 2. part of a rib of Saint Apronia; 3. a splinter of bone of Saint Amo; 4. a little of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy.

“VIII. To M. de Jumillac, canon: 1. of Saint Gerard, two vertebrae and two small bones of the hand; 2. of Saint Amo, a broken piece of bone and a little of his clothing, his hair shirt and his sandals; 3. a particle of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy; 4. a splinter of the finger of Saint Evre; 5. a small bone of Saint Apronia.

“IX. To M. de Manessi, canon: 1. of Saint Gerard, two ribs and a fragment of rib, three vertebrae and a fragment of vertebra, a finger-bone; 2. of Saint Mansuy, three fragments of the shoulder-blade and four splinters; 3. of Saint Amo, a hip-bone, an arm-bone and a rib; 4. of Saint Apronia, half a rib; 5. of Saint

Gauzlin, a tooth, five pieces and three small splinters of his jaw; 6. three particles of the finger joint of Saint Evre.

“X. To M. de Barthélemy, canon: 1. of Saint Gerard, part of a rib and the upper end of the bone of his arm; 2. a fragment of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin; 3. a little of the shoulder-blade of Saint Mansuy.

“XI. To M. Gauthier, canon: 1. of Saint Gerard, the thigh-bone, the large bone of the leg, the hip-bone, five vertebrae of the spine, a vertebra of the neck, four joints, two of the hand and two of the feet, two ribs, the breastbone, an arm-bone, a collarbone, the two bones of the shoulder; 2. of Saint Amo, the thigh-bone, two arm-bones, the hip-bone, shreds of his clothes, his sandals and his hair shirt; 3. of Saint Mansuy, a particle of the shoulder-bone; 4. of Saint Evre, a particle of the joint of his finger; 5. of Saint Apronia, the large bone of the leg, the upper part of the thigh-bone, a joint of the bone of the foot, part of the small bone of the leg; 6. a splinter of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin.

“XII. To M. César, vicar of our church: 1. of Saint Gerard, a vertebra; 2. of Saint Mansuy, two small fragments of the shoulder-blade; 3. a fragment of the jaw of Saint Gauzlin; 4. a fragment of a rib of Saint Apronia.

“XIII. To M. Aubri, vicar of our church, fragments of bone of Saint Mansuy, Saint Gerard, Saint Amo, Saint Evre and Saint Apronia.

“In witness whereof we have signed this present record at Toul on the day and year above, and have had the seal of our chapter affixed to it. — Thiéry de Saint-Beaussan, — Ducrot, — Pallas.”

It is hard to explain this division of relics otherwise than by the fear, alas only too well founded, of an irreparable profanation. The pious intention of the canons of Toul was in great part fulfilled: many of these precious relics were saved and have returned to the possession of the Church. The heads of Saint Mansuy and of Saint Gerard, saved from profanation, like that of Saint Apronia, by the care of M. Aubry, parish priest of Saint-Gengoult, and kept in his church, have been recognised and clearly identified by Dr Godron, dean of the faculty of sciences of Nancy. Even before this decisive examination, it was easy to establish which of these notable relics was which from the official records still enclosed in the shrine where they had been gathered, but which indiscreet investigators had moved. Today the head of Saint Mansuy has returned, with those of Saint Gerard, of Saint Apronia and of one of the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, to the cathedral of Toul; nor shall we say by what road. The humerus of the same Saint, which that basilica possessed, has been given in compensation to the church of Saint-Gengoult; the cathedral of Nancy has a fragment of his shoulder-blade; the chapel of the Christian Doctrine several fragments; the church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Port one of the first ribs of the right side and several fragments. In the shrine of this holy bishop at the abbey of his name, under the walls of Toul, part of his cope was kept, red in colour, with a gold edging. A fragment of it is in the shrine of Saint Gauzlin in the cathedral of Nancy.

For this life we have used the Histoire du diocèse de Toul *by the abbé Guillaume, and notes supplied by M. de Blaye, parish priest of Imling, and M. Guillaume, almoner of the ducal chapel of Lorraine.*

Saint Remaclus, Bishop of Maastricht, Founder of the Abbeys of Malmedy and Stavelot

664. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of France: Clotaire III.

> *When you do some good, remember the evil you have often committed, so that the thought of your faults may keep your heart from vainglory.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Saint Remaclus came into the world in the fortieth year of the reign of Heraclius and the fourteenth of the reign of Clotaire II, son of Chilperic and father of Dagobert I. He had for father Albutius and for mother Matrime, both of high birth, to whom God had given an ample patrimony and considerable wealth. Berry was his country. Placed under the guidance of Saint Sulpicius, then archdeacon of Saint Austregisilus and afterwards his successor in the bishopric of Bourges, he made such great progress in piety that he already seemed adorned with every virtue. Saint Sulpicius, seeing in him a young man of such great promise, entrusted him to Saint Eligius, who had just founded the abbey of Solignac, two leagues from Limoges, so that he might have him brought up among his religious, to be one day a model of holiness in all France. In that peaceful retreat the young man showed such modesty, obedience, humility, devotion and fervour that he was a subject of astonishment and admiration to the whole community. Saint Eligius conceived an extreme joy at this, and as he could not be absent long from the court, where the king urgently required him, he thought he could not place his flock in better hands than those of this servant of God, who made himself esteemed and loved by everyone. This new dignity only increased his reputation, as well as his virtue. It was represented to the king that it would be to his advantage and to that of his whole State to have him near him and use his counsel. Sigebert was then reigning; he listened willingly to this proposal and, without delay, sent word to our Saint to come to him as soon as possible. It was only with regret that the blessed abbot left his beloved solitude to enter the entanglements of the world, and above all to live at court, where life is as different from that of the cloister as a sea tossed by winds and storms is from the calm and stillness of the harbour. He was nevertheless forced to obey, and the king, who already had so high an idea of his merit, received him with every mark of friendship and confidence. He therefore stayed with this prince, assisting him with his advice in the most important affairs of his kingdom, with no other aim than to procure the glory of God, the relief of the peoples, the peace of the State and the preservation of the monarchy. At that time Saint Amand, bishop of Maastricht, seeing that neither by his prayers, nor by his threats, nor by the force of his exhortations could he prevail on his diocesans to give up their disorders and live according to the rules of Christian discipline, had shaken the dust of his feet off against them and withdrawn to another country to spread the light of the Gospel there. The inhabitants of Maastricht, after waiting long for his return, weary of being without a pastor and resolved to change their lives, sent deputies to the king to beg him to give them Remaclus in his place. He was the man in all the world who best deserved this prelacy and who alone could make up for the loss that people had suffered of the great Saint Amand. The king, moved by their prayers, sent for him and, having set before him the desire and entreaties of this abandoned flock, begged him to be willing to take charge of it. Remaclus excused himself from this charge as much as he could, alleging that it far surpassed his strength and that he was in no way capable of the functions attached to the episcopate; but the princes and nobles of the court, joining their remonstrances to the king’s, prevailed so far as to oblige him to accept the election that the clergy and people of that city had unanimously made of him.

He soon showed that they had not been mistaken in this choice. He made himself pleasing to God and to men: his bearing was grave and majestic, but with a modest majesty that was in no way contrary to Christian simplicity; his actions breathed nothing but holiness; his conversation had such unction that all who had the happiness of hearing him became better for it. He dealt as willingly with the poor as with the rich, but differently, according to the difference of their conditions. The just and the good always had the better part of his affection, though he did not repulse sinners and was full of compassion for them. He often preached to his people, and he confirmed the truth of his words by his works; he helped with his advice those who needed it; he consoled the afflicted in their troubles. He succoured the unfortunate by his influence and his alms, and visited the churches of his diocese with untiring assiduity.

As he had drunk in the holiness and sweetness of the monastic life from childhood, religious were the chief objects of his veneration and tenderness. He founded several monasteries, whose direction he gave to holy men. King Sigebert also had several abbeys built on his advice, among others that of Malmedy, in the diocese of Cologne, and that of Stavelot, within his own jurisdiction. He called the first *Malmundarium*

because he had first freed the place from evil spirits; and to the second he left the name *Stabuletum* because it was a place where animals used to gather, as in a stable, to graze. The devil set himself above all against the founding of this last monastery, and often brought round it a great number of wild beasts which, by their cries, howls and frightful bellowing, threw terror into the minds of the religious. But the Saint strengthened them against these attacks by his fiery exhortations: “Fear nothing, my children,” he would say to them; “keep the law of God inviolably; preserve the innocence of your souls; pray without ceasing; sing the praises of your Creator with fervour; watch by night; read the holy Scriptures; often make on your forehead the saving sign of the cross, and you will see all the phantoms your enemy conjures up vanish. It was thus that our Fathers, the first inhabitants of the desert, drove him out of the solitudes of Egypt, the Thebaid and Nitria, and you must not doubt that the same weapons will produce a like effect in your hands.”

The incomparable wisdom of this great prelate drew to him disciples of very great merit, among others Saint Theodard, Saint Lambert and Saint Trudo, whose names are held in singular veneration throughout Flanders. Saint Trudo told him of his desire to give his property, which was very considerable, to some church. The Saint did not propose his cathedral or any of his monasteries as recipients, but advised him rather to give his gifts to the church of Saint-Étienne at Metz, which he knew to be in want. Notger exclaims that in this he surely surpassed the virtue of all the priests and all the bishops of his time, since anyone else would have begged and pleaded for his own church and preferred its interest to all other houses.

When Saint Remaclus had filled the vast solitudes of the Ardennes with this multitude of earthly angels, he went back to take care of his flock at Maastricht. There was a great difference between the morals of his diocesans and those of the innocent bands of religious he was leaving in those monasteries; but he knew that he was debtor to the weak and the strong and that, following the example of Saint Paul, he must make himself all things to all men to win them all. So he applied himself with fresh zeal to civilising these minds, which the old barbarism of the country made unmanageable, and he succeeded happily. The king then ordered him to go and consecrate the newly built churches both of his own diocese and of that of Cologne, which he did in the presence of Prince Grimoald, mayor of the palace, having first obtained the permission of Saint Cunibert, archbishop of Cologne, for those within his jurisdiction.

The desire for retirement led him at last to prefer the monastic life to the episcopal functions. He obtained the consent of the court and proposed to his people Saint Theodard, his disciple, to succeed him. His farewell to his flock almost drowned them in tears; cries and groans were heard on all sides, and everyone begged mercy from heaven as if the city were about to be swallowed up. He tried in vain to calm them, pointing out that he would always pray to God for their preservation, and that, far from losing by the change of pastor, they would on the contrary gain much by it, because they would be governed by a Saint. These remonstrances only increased their grief. The wisest among them spoke up and said to him: “If the sad state to which you see us reduced, holy priest of Jesus Christ, has not force enough to make you change your purpose, we appeal from this resolution to the tribunal of your own justice. Judge for yourself, just judge, whether it is lawful for a shepherd to leave his flock when God still gives him strength enough to lead it and it is willing to profit by his teaching. Those who hear of your retirement will either condemn you for cowardice, for having preferred rest to labour and your own inclination to the salvation of your flock, or, laying the blame on us, they will imagine that we are rebels who cannot bear spiritual rule and who, after obliging Saint Amand, your predecessor, to shake the dust of his feet off against us, have again made ourselves guilty of so many crimes that you have been forced to take the same vengeance on us.” Saint Remaclus interrupted them to say that heaven and earth were witnesses of the profit they had drawn from his care, and that no one was unaware that he loved his people and was much loved by them; but he begged them to allow him, after spending the greater part of his life in the service of others and in the office of Martha, to use some remnant of it for his own satisfaction and in the exercises of Magdalen. Most of the bishops his predecessors had done so, and he wished to imitate their example at least in this. He would not go far from the diocese, but would choose a

solitude from which to help them in their needs: Moses was not useless to his people when he withdrew onto the mountain while Joshua fought their enemies. Finally, he was still willing to serve as spiritual father to those who had the courage to follow him and to the young clerics destined for the Church who would be placed under his guidance. In this way he moderated his children's grief, and they at last allowed him to withdraw to his monastery of Stavelot. Several people, touched by his example and wishing to live under so excellent a director, left the world at the same time to become religious there, among others Saint Babolinus, whom he made abbot of Malmedy and who was afterwards his successor in that same abbey of Stavelot. King Sigebert granted him several fine estates for the support of his monastery, a grant confirmed after that prince's death by King Childeric, his nephew. The holiness with which they lived in that house cannot be expressed; it was there that the great Saint Lambert, who mounted the see of Maastricht after Saint Theodard, later withdrew when he was driven from his throne for having spoken the truth.

At last Saint Remaclus, foreseeing the hour of his death, called around him his religious, who were very numerous, and said to them: "Most holy Fathers and dearest brethren, whom I carry in my heart and who are the half of my soul, I am about to leave you, to see you again only in heaven. Death has nothing dreadful for me, and I do not fear its approach: it is not harmful to one who has put his trust in God; it is not unforeseen by one who has thought of it all his life; and it cannot be wretched for one who has prepared for it at all times. You are the only thing in the world I find it hard to leave, because I fear that the enemy of our salvation may make you slacken from your first fervour after my death. But if the last words of a father who loves you and whom you love have any power over your minds, I beg and implore you to flee the least appearance of vice and faithfully to practise all the virtues. Keep the faith, purity of heart and concord among yourselves. Let the holy books scarcely ever leave your hands. Be assiduous in prayer and in meditation on the eternal truths. Repel temptations vigorously at their first appearance. Confess your sins humbly to God and to your superiors. Love poverty, chastity, obedience and temperance. Farewell, my dear children; may the grief you seem to feel make you better remember and practise what I recommend to you as I die. Remember that you must all die, and that a day will come when you could regret the precious moments you have lost; for we are but dust and ashes, and our years flee away almost imperceptibly." After this admirable exhortation he received the holy Viaticum and died in the kiss of the Lord in the hands of his disciples. His body was buried in a chapel of his abbey dedicated to Saint Martin.[1] The whole Church of Stavelot now has him as patron. Countless miracles have been worked through his intercession, of which Notger, who has given us his life, composed two large books; Surius gives a summary of them on this day, 3 September. It is enough to say that the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the paralysed and all sorts of other sick people were healed at his tomb, that the afflicted were consoled there, penitents absolved, and hardened sinners and libertines punished in a terrible manner.

Saint Remaclus is represented: 1. holding a church in his hand, because he is the founder of the abbeys of Malmedy and Stavelot; 2. with a wolf beside him, a way of expressing the power he exercised over the demons; 3. holding in his hand the pilgrim's staff: artists usually give this distinguishing mark to bishops who left their see to end their days in solitude or in the religious state.

Acta Sanctorum; the Vies des Saints du Limousin *by Labiche de Reignefort. — Cf. Trithemius, Peter de Natalibus, Du Saussay, Ferrarius, and Aubert Le Mire in his* Fasti Sanctorum Belgii.

Saint Ayou or Aigulf, Abbot of Saint-Honorat of Lérins, in the Diocese of Fréjus (VIIth century)

Aigulf, commonly called Ayou, was born at Blois about the year 630 and embraced the monastic life in the Benedictine abbey of Fleury, or Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire (*Floriacum ad Ligerim*), in the diocese of Orléans. He was received among the other religious by Saint Mummolus, second abbot of that house, who is sometimes called Saint Mommol or Mommolin. This superior chose him to carry out a plan he had long

formed, of having the relics of Saint Benedict, buried under the ruins of the abbey of Monte Cassino in the kingdom of Naples, removed.

Ayou set out, accompanied by some people from Le Mans, and took such good measures that, having happily discovered the tomb of Saint Benedict and that of Saint Scholastica, his sister, he took out their bones and carried them to France. Those of Saint Benedict were placed in the abbey of Fleury, and those of Saint Scholastica were sent to Le Mans. Called afterwards to govern the monastery of Saint-Honorat of Lérins in Provence, Aigulf tried to restore discipline there; but his virtuous efforts drew upon him the hostility of the wicked. Some perverse men, encouraged by the lord of Nice, hatched a plot against the holy abbot and murdered him on the island of Amatune. The Church, and in particular the diocese of Blois, his native place, honours him as a martyr on 3 September.

Pious hands gathered up his mortal remains and laid them at Lérins, where several miracles came to proclaim their holiness. In the eleventh century a Benedictine priory was founded in the town of Provins (in Brie) under the invocation of Saint Ayou by the piety of Theobald, count of Blois, Brie and Champagne. Some particles of the body were brought there from Lérins. The church of Provins has kept to this day an old statue of Saint Ayou, with a shrine containing his bones. Every year, on 4 September, this reliquary is exposed, and pilgrims continue to flock to it as in the past.

The abbé Duplus, Les Saints de Blois.

Blessed John of Perugia and Peter of Sassoferrato, Martyrs at Valencia in Spain (1230)

Wishing to offer the peoples the means of working out their salvation and to spread his Order, Saint Francis of Assisi sent several of his companions, in 1219 and in 1220, into the different countries of Europe. Spain was assigned to John of Perugia, a priest, and to Peter of Sassoferrato, a lay brother. Arriving at Teruel (*Turbula*), in the kingdom of Aragon, they built themselves two poor cells near a church and began to travel through the country, which they evangelised and edified by their holy life. They soon acquired a great reputation for holiness. Their zeal led them to Valencia, a city occupied by the Moors. There reigned a bitter enemy of the Christian name, called Azote. The two missionaries were soon arrested. This prince did everything to make them abjure their faith, but, furious at seeing his efforts useless, he had them beheaded (1230). Miracles soon proved the holiness of the two disciples of Saint Francis.

Azote was at war with the Christians, and from that moment the fortune of arms was constantly against him. Attributing these reverses to the protection of the God of the Christians, he resolved to treat with the king; he offered to cede his kingdom to him provided the king supplied him with the means of living honourably and of becoming a Christian. The king of Aragon accepted. Azote was baptised, and the palace of Valencia was assigned to him as his dwelling. Faithful to his promises, Azote banished Mahometanism from Valencia, restored there the worship of the true God and called in the Friars Minor, to whom, with the consent of the king of Aragon, he gave his palace to found a convent. Thus the Franciscans were established at Valencia, after Clement XI and Benedict XIV had approved the cult of the two martyrs. Pius VI beatified them on 2 April 1783. Their relics are kept at Teruel.

Acta Sanctorum.

Blessed Andrew Dotti, Religious of the Order of Servites (1315)

Andrew was born in 1256 in Tuscany, in the town of Borgo San Sepolcro. He belonged to the noble family of the Dotti. In his youth, keenly moved by a sermon he heard on renouncing all the things of the world, he conceived the desire to give himself to God and to enter the religious state. He went and threw himself at the preacher’s feet and humbly asked him to admit him into the Order of Servites. His prayer was granted, and he

became the constant companion of Saint Philip Benizi, the author of his conversion. Under so perfect a master Blessed Andrew made rapid progress in virtue, and, after accompanying him on his apostolic journeys in Germany, he came back to his own country, where he was ordained priest. From then on he worked with new ardour for the salvation of souls. Then, having learned that some houses near the Apennines, inhabited by solitaries, had just been given to the monastery of Borgo San Sepolcro, he obtained leave to withdraw there and lived there for several years, loaded with heavenly favours. These religious soon chose Andrew as their superior. He joined them to the Order of Servites, but he did not remain long at their head, being obliged to obey the orders of his general, who destined him for preaching the Gospel. His missions produced marvellous fruits. He kindled in every heart an ardent love of eternal goods, and many of his hearers renounced the world to enter the Order of Servites.

When, after long years of preaching, the servant of God felt his exhausted strength failing his zeal, he went back to his hermitage to give himself entirely to the service of God and to the works of the most austere penance. He knew beforehand the hour of his death, prepared for it, and died in 1315. The news of his death spread rapidly and brought a great concourse of people to his hermitage. He was buried in the church of Borgo San Sepolcro; many miracles were worked at his tomb, and Pius VII approved his cult.

Acta Sanctorum.

Supplement. Third Day of September. Saint Godegrand or Chrodegang, Bishop of Sées and Martyr (775)

Saint Godegrand[1] was born in the town of Exmes at the beginning of the eighth century, of one of the most illustrious families of Neustria. Brought up in his father's house with Saint Opportuna, his sister, he learned from his tenderest childhood to love the infinitely good God who had regenerated him in baptism and adopted him as His child. And so the Lord was pleased to pour out His sweetest blessings on him. As this holy child longed only for the glory of Jesus Christ, he early conceived the thought of devoting his life to making Him loved. Having obtained his parents' leave to enter the clerical state, he bade farewell to the world, trampled underfoot the greatness of the earth and went to Sées. Saint Lothar entrusted his education to Saint Frogent, his archdeacon, who took care to instruct him in the ecclesiastical sciences and to develop in him the virtues with which the Lord had adorned his soul. Hérard of Tours tells us that "he spent his life in prayer, watching and fasting, and exercised himself continually in the practice of the priestly virtues so as to please Jesus Christ, the sovereign priest. Far from priding himself on his birth, his talents and the affection his bishop showed him, he sought to surpass his fellow students only in gentleness and humility." God willed to crown such happy dispositions: Saint Godegrand was ordained priest by Saint Lothar. That holy bishop having resigned in 752, Saint Frogent was raised to the episcopal see of Sées. After the latter's death, which took place about the year 765, Saint Godegrand, whom all the clergy and people venerated as the model of priests, was chosen with one voice to succeed his uncle.

Far from growing proud of his new dignity, he only became humbler in the eyes of the Lord and more careful to call on the light of the Holy Ghost, so as to be a pastor after God's heart. "Every day," says the author of his Life, "he formed his brethren to the love of the Lord by wholesome exhortations. He went through towns and countryside preaching the holy Gospel and spreading everywhere the good odour of Jesus Christ. Like the holy man Job, he was eye to the blind, foot to the lame, father of the poor, protector of the widow, support of the orphan, the stay of all the unfortunate; in a word, he applied himself to giving all his brethren the spiritual or temporal help they needed." The holy Bishop showed a special kindness towards souls consecrated to God by the vows of religion. The nuns of the great monastery of Almenêches, governed by Saint Lanthilda, his aunt, and those of the little monastery governed by Saint Opportuna, felt the effects of his charity in particular. Saint Godegrand made it a duty to visit them often and feed them with the word of God. The Saint had already been labouring for several years with this ardent zeal to make Jesus Christ loved

when God inspired him with the thought of going to Rome to venerate the relics of the holy Apostles. Before leaving, he wished to give his church a powerful protector; for this purpose he appointed the governor of the town of Exmes, named Grodebert. But hardly had the holy Bishop left his episcopal city when this treacherous man showed himself rather the enemy of that church than its defender. He boldly seized the goods of the clergy, laid the faithful themselves under contribution, scattered the flock entrusted to him, and crowned his crimes by having himself ordained bishop of Sées, contrary to all the rules of the Church. Returning to his diocese after seven years' absence, the holy Bishop, to repair the scandals caused by the usurper, went through his diocese calling sinners to penance and striving to bring back to the fold those who had strayed from it. Meanwhile Grodebert, reflecting that if he could get rid of the shepherd he could then tear the whole flock at his ease, bribed a wretch with gold, who bound himself by oath to murder the holy Bishop. The opportunity to carry out this horrible promise was not long in coming. On 3 September 775 Saint Godegrand fell under the murderer's blade.

Saint Opportuna carried the body of the holy martyr to her abbey and had it laid with great honours in one of the crypts of her abbey church. Hardly was he buried when a pilgrimage to his tomb sprang up; the faithful came from all sides to commend themselves to the Saint's protection, and God rewarded the faith of His devout servants with many miracles. This devotion having gradually cooled, Saint Hildebrand, bishop of Sées, sent the dignitaries of his church with all the clergy of his cathedral to take the holy Pontiff's body from the tomb in which it lay. When it was opened, the Saint's body was found without the slightest mark of corruption. The relics were put in a shrine, carried to Sées and placed in the cathedral under the altar Saint Hildebrand had had prepared (870). Shortly afterwards, for fear of the Barbarians, this precious treasure was carried to the monastery of Saint-Céneri near Alençon, then to Panicières, a place now unknown but not far from the monastery of Corbion.[2] A few years after this translation, Saint Adelin had the holy martyr's body carried to Moussy-le-Neuf (Seine-et-Marne), where it remained only a short time, at least in its entirety. For, for fear of the Northmen, the greater part of it was moved to Auvergne. The holy relics were placed in the parish church of Beaumont-lez-Randans (Puy-de-Dôme), of which Saint Godegrand became the second patron. Every year from that time his feast was celebrated there on 3 September with great devotion by the inhabitants of the parish. Saint Adelin, who had sent these relics to Beaumont-lez-Randans, had kept part of them for his own diocese. This precious treasure, which was placed in the church of Almenêches, remained there until the beginning of the eleventh century. The holy Bishop must, however, have left some relics of the holy martyr at Moussy-le-Neuf, for a relic of Saint Godegrand has been venerated there from time immemorial.

The church of L'Isle-Adam today possesses the Saint's head in a fine shrine. This relic is permanently exposed to the veneration of the faithful on an altar erected in 1710 in honour of the holy martyr. The cathedral church of Sées possesses several relics of Saint Godegrand. The town of Exmes, birthplace of this illustrious martyr, also glories in having one of his relics.

The church of Almenêches keeps with deep respect a relic of the Saint given to it by Mgr Rousselet on 5 April 1847. In this church can still be seen the burial vault in which Saint Opportuna laid the body of Saint Godegrand. In one of the windows of the choir is a fine stained-glass window made up of seven medallions. The first shows the eternal Father blessing Saint Godegrand; in the second Jesus Christ is seen showing him His cross. The third shows the Saint at the school of Saint Lothar; in the fourth he entrusts his diocese to Grodebert. His martyrdom is painted in the fifth. In the sixth Saint Opportuna is seen raising her brother's lifeless body. The seventh shows the translation of the Saint's relics in 1847.

Some distance from the church can be seen the enclosure walls and some old buildings of the former abbey where Saint Godegrand came to rest on his return from his pilgrimage. Further on, to the south, near the church of the château of Almenêches, one sees the site of the abbey of Saint Lanthilda, to which Saint Godegrand was going when he was murdered by Grodebert's order. For some years the veneration for the

holy Bishop has increased in the diocese of Sées. This happy development is attributed to the approval given by the Holy See in 1857 to the cult of the holy martyr, and to the distribution of several particles of his relics to various churches or communities of the diocese. There are some at the major seminary of Sées, at the Mother-House of the Miséricorde at Alençon, at Mortagne, at Argentan, at Flers, at Sainte-Opportune and at Durcet.

Taken from the Vies des Saints du diocèse de Séez *by M. l'abbé Blin, parish priest of Durcet.*

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[3] We have given their life on 29 August.

[4] When he was at Corinth to preach the Gospel, wishing to make that city the centre of his whole mission for Achaia, Saint Paul lodged sometimes with Aquila, sometimes with Justus, sometimes with Phoebe, whom he made deaconess of the infant Church of Cenchreae, a small town of the Peloponnese on the Saronic Gulf and one of the two ports of Corinth. It is thought that the Apostle used her to deliver to the Romans the letter he wrote to them from Corinth in 58, on the occasion of a journey she made to Rome. — Baillet, Godescard.

[5] In 1653 Jeanne de Bourbon, daughter of Henry IV and abbess of Fontevrault, enriched the church of Poitiers with relics of Saint Euphemia of Aquileia. — The abbé Auber, *Histoire de la cathédrale de Poitiers*, vol. II, p. 350.

[6] See his life on 12 March.

[7] See his Life in the Supplement to this volume.

[8] Always fearless in opposing the oppression of the magistrates and lords who were crushing his people, he was, like Job, the eye of the blind, the foot of the lame and the support of the weak. He drew his strength and consolation from Holy Scripture, in which he was well versed. Love of suffering made him bear with joy the sharp pains of the gout to which he was subject, and his virtue thus found in an unavoidable ill the means of enriching his crown by increasing his merits. Seeing that his approaching death was giving several people occasion to intrigue for his bishopric, Maurilius thought he ought to choose his successor himself. He cast his eyes on Ursicinus, formerly referendary to the queen, and asked that he be ordained in his lifetime. He then fell asleep in the Lord. — Mgr Jager, *Histoire de l'Église de France*.

[9] See his life on 2 September.

[10] We have given her life on 31 August.

[11] See under 27 August.

[12] This decree can be seen in the *Analecta Juris Pontificii*, eighty-ninth number, November–December 1868, p. 750.

[13] An arm of Saint Remaclus was kept in the monastery of Solignac; the monks of Stavelot sent it there in 1268. These two communities, as daughters of the same father, have always kept up a very close union with each other.

[1] In Latin, *Godegrandus, Chrodegrangus*.

[2] This monastery, founded by Saint Lomer in 562, was in the parish of Moutiers-au-Perche (Orne).

4 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

On Mount Nebo,[1] in the land of Moab, Saint MOSES, lawgiver and prophet. 1585 B.C. — At Ancyra in Galatia, the heavenly birthday of three blessed children, martyrs, Rufinus, Silvanus and Vitalicus. — At Chalon-sur-Saône, Saint MARCELLUS, martyr, under the emperor Antoninus. Invited by Priscus, governor of the province, to a profane banquet, and showing his horror of such meals, he rebuked the guests for thus serving idols; then, with unheard-of cruelty, he was buried upright up to the waist by sentence of the governor, and, continuing for three days to praise God in that state, he gave up his soul and returned it all pure and spotless into the hands of his Creator. 178. — The same day, Saint Magnus, Saint Castus and Saint Maximus, martyrs. — At Trier, Saint Marcellus, bishop and martyr. IIIrd c. — The same day, Saint Thamel, at first a priest of the idols, and his companions, martyrs under the emperor Hadrian. IInd c. — Also the Saints Theodore, Oceanus, Ammianus and Julian, who, having had their feet cut off, were thrown into the fire, where they consummated their martyrdom under the emperor Maximian. — At Rimini, Saint MARINUS, deacon. About 307. — At Palermo, Saint ROSALIA, virgin, a princess of the royal blood of

Charlemagne, who for the love of Jesus Christ renounced the honours of her father's sovereignty and the delights of the court, and went to live in the mountains and caves, where she led a solitary and wholly heavenly life. 1160. — At Naples, the heavenly birthday of Saint Candida, who was the first to run to meet Saint Peter when he arrived in that city, was baptised by that Apostle, and later died a holy death. About 78. — In the same place, Saint Candida the Younger, famous for her miracles. 586. — At Viterbo, Saint ROSE, virgin. 1252.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Mende, Saint Frézal, also called Frézaud and Flotard (*Frodoaldus*), bishop of that see and martyr. He completed the uprooting of the few remains of idolatry still left in certain districts of the Gévaudan; after several years of a laborious episcopate, he became the victim of the greed of a nephew, who took his life so as to enjoy his wealth the sooner. He was honoured as a Martyr until 1720. His body is thought to rest in a church of his name near La Canourgue (Lozère, arrondissement of Marvejols).[2] 820. — In the dioceses of Lyons, Autun and Paris, Saint Marcellus, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Tarbes, Saint Taurinus, bishop of Auch, whose life we give on the following day. — In the diocese of Verdun, the translation of the relics of Saint Salvinus, third bishop of that see and confessor. He is thought to have been one of those apostolic men who travelled through Gaul at that time preaching the Gospel, and to have been induced, while passing through Verdun, to accept the pastoral charge there; he governed that Church for thirty-one years. His body was laid in the oratory of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, where his stone tomb can still be seen next to that of Saint Maurus. About 420. — At Marseilles, Saint Musaeus, priest, famous for the purity of his life and the eminence of his learning. — At Cologne, Blessed Irmgard, or Irmengard, sister of Blessed Hermann, abbot of Saint-Pantaleon in that city. She was noted for her active charity and rare piety. She brought back from Rome to Cologne part of the head of Saint Sylvester and presented it to the cathedral, where she was buried. XIIth c. — In Burgundy, Saint Aussile, honoured as virgin and martyr at Thil and at Précy. — At Chartres, the death of Saint Caltry, bishop of that see, whose life we shall give on 8 October. VIth c. — At Geertruidenberg in Holland, Blessed William Tappers of Gouda, of the Order of Recollects. He preached the word of God with great success at Dordrecht (South Holland), at Breda (North Brabant), at 's-Hertogenbosch, and at Geertruidenberg, where the Calvinists massacred him out of hatred for the Catholic religion. 1573. — At Paris, the Venerable Marie de Lumagne, foundress of the Institute of the Daughters of the Providence of God.[3] 1657. — At Dijon, the memory of the passage through that city of the body of Saint Germanus of Auxerre, whose life we have given on 31 July. 450. — In the diocese of Soissons, Saint Gennebaud, first bishop of the former see of Laon and confessor, whose life we shall give on the following day. 550. — At Meaux, Saint Agilus, first abbot of Rebais, whose life we have given on 31 August. VIth c. — At Provins (Seine-et-Marne), in the diocese of Meaux, Saint Ayou or Aigulf, monk of Fleury and abbot of Lérins, whose life we have given on the preceding day. VIIth c. — At Bayeux, Saint SULPICIUS, twentieth bishop of that see and confessor. About 844. — In the diocese of Albi, Saint Rose of Viterbo, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Saint-Sauveur d'Anchin (*Aquiscinctum*), in the diocese of Cambrai, Blessed Richard, religious. 1193.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Palermo, the heavenly birthday of Saint Rosalia, virgin, of the Order of Saint Basil, sprung from the royal blood of Charlemagne. Fleeing, for the love of Jesus Christ, her father's principality and the court, she withdrew to the mountains and into caves, to lead a solitary and wholly heavenly life there. 1160.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The Octave of Saint Augustine, bishop, confessor and doctor of the Church.[4] 430.

Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli. — At Viterbo, Saint Rose, virgin. 1252.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as with the Camaldolese.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The same as with the Camaldolese.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — The Octave of Saint Augustine.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Viterbo, the translation of the body of Saint Rose, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, which, having been found whole and incorrupt about thirty months after her death, was carried from the church of Santa Maria in Podio to the monastery of Santa Maria delle Rose, where, during her life, she had foretold that she would rest after her death. That monastery thereby took the name of Santa Rosa. Her blessed death took place on 6 March. 1252.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Joseph Calasanz, confessor, whose feast is kept on 27 August.[5] 1648.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The Octave of Saint Augustine. *Martyrology of the Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* — The same as with the Augustinians.

Martyrology of the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — The same as with the Franciscans.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Jerome. — The same as with the Augustinians.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as with the Franciscans.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Hersfeld, a town of Hesse-Kassel on the Fulda, Saint Ida, widow. She was the daughter of a count who had been at the court of Charlemagne and stood in great favour with that prince. Charlemagne gave Blessed Ida in marriage to a lord of his court whom he loved greatly, named Egbert; she lived with her husband in the most perfect union, and they spurred each other on to the practice of good works. Widowed a short time afterwards, she sanctified that state by redoubled fervour in her exercises and austerity in her penance. Her whole life was nothing but a series of good works; her tomb was made famous by brilliant miracles. About 849. — At Salzburg, in Upper Austria, the translation of the relics of Saint Erentrude, or Erentrudis, virgin, abbess of Honnberg near Salzburg, whose death is noted in the Bollandists' additions for 30 June, the day on which we gave some details of her life. About 630. — At Ephesus, today Aya Soluk, a city of Asia Minor, Saint Hermione, daughter of the deacon Saint Philip. Several martyrologies give her the title of virgin and martyr and think she was a victim of the persecution of the emperors Trajan and Hadrian. About 117. — At Ancyra, today Angora or Angourieh, a city of Asia Minor in Galatia, together with the holy martyrs Rufinus, Silvanus and Vitalicus named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the Saints Marcellus, Gaianus, Elpidius, Antoninus, Eustichius, Eusebius, another Gaianus, Gaison, Saturninus, Donatus, Eleusius, and their companions, martyrs. — In Ireland, Saint Munessa, virgin, sometimes called Monessa, Memessa and Muneria. She was of royal blood and lived for a fairly long time in the darkness of idolatry. Enlightened later by the light of the Holy Spirit, she had herself baptised by Saint Patrick and died immediately after her Baptism, on the very spot where the ceremony took place. That place was also her burial place; a convent of nuns rose there afterwards. Vth c. — At Bergamo in Lombardy, Saint Grata, virgin. Her father was called Lupus and her mother Adelaide; they were illustrious persons, but also God-fearing, and brought up their daughter in the principles of religion. She married a rich lord who died after a few years of marriage; Grata then devoted herself to the service of the poor and built them a hospital at her own expense in the city of Bergamo. There she died and was buried. IXth c. — In Asia, Blessed Benincasa Rapaccioli, martyr, of the Order of Servites. A native of Colle-Scipoli (*Collis Scipionis*) in Italy, he went to preach the faith in Bohemia at the time of the famous war of the Hussites; the Tartars, whom he afterwards tried to evangelise, put him to death. 1415.

Saint Moses, Prophet, Leader and Lawgiver of the Hebrew People

1705–1585 before Jesus Christ.

> *Moses and Jesus were both brought up in Egypt, on foreign soil; having come back to their brethren, they laboured to deliver them, the one from the bondage of Pharaoh, the other from the slavery of Satan.*

Eloge du Saint.

Praise of the Saint.

Jacob had gone down into Egypt with his sons, their wives and his sons' sons. This family, already numerous, multiplied like a fruitful plant, and at the end of a hundred and fifty years it already formed a small people. It found protection and a guarantee of independence in the name and memory of Joseph, who had rendered great services to the State. In that age and in that country, heredity did not always give the throne; on certain occasions the people chose its chief, whether because the religious books had so ruled, or because this was done with a view to the common good. A new king was therefore chosen, who had not known Joseph, and who showed no feeling of gratitude towards the brethren of the former minister. Amenophis (that was the name of the new Pharaoh) would not send the children of Israel away, for fear of impoverishing his kingdom, nor leave them free to grow and prosper, for fear of having a dangerous neighbour. He resolved to oppress them. The Hebrews were first set to the hardest labour: they were weighed down with unbearable burdens and ill-treatment; they were made to build strong cities; their life was made so hateful to them that later, remembering this captivity, they called Egypt a furnace of iron. Policy, baffled, gave orders that all the male children should be put to death at the moment of their birth, and only the girls spared. But this order was not carried out. Then the king, resorting to open force, commanded that all the male children born among the Hebrews should be thrown into the Nile.

One day Pharaoh's daughter, named Thermutis according to some and Moeris according to others, went down to the Nile to bathe; accompanied by her women, she followed the banks of the river. All at once she noticed a basket floating among the reeds; she sent one of her companions to fetch it. In it she found a little child who was crying, and, moved with pity, she said: "This is one of the Hebrews' children." The child did indeed have for father and mother Amram and Jochebed, of the tribe of Levi. He was of extraordinary beauty, and, whether this beauty added to his parents' inborn love, or seemed to them the providential sign of a great future, his mother kept him hidden for three months in spite of the known decrees. Then, seeing that she could no longer keep the thing secret, she thought it wiser to expose him to the danger of an uncertain death than to draw upon him, and perhaps upon the whole family, the angry fury of the tyrants. A basket of rushes was woven, daubed with bitumen and pitch; the child was placed in it, and the frail boat was set among the reeds that lined the river. It was there that Thermutis had found it.

The mother had told Mary, the child's sister, to stand apart and see what would happen. Her love dared not be present at the tragic scene that was about to take place, and yet she wished a friendly eye to follow and, so to speak, protect the fortunes of the sad cradle. So she withdrew, leaving the outlaw no other defence than the innocence and weakness of a young girl. Little Mary, seeing that her brother's fate aroused pity, came up and said to Pharaoh's daughter: "Would you like me to go and fetch you a woman of the Hebrew nation who can nurse this little child?" God, who was directing events, inclined the princess's heart as He willed, and she agreed to the girl's request; the girl ran to call her mother, and Thermutis said to her: "Take this child and nurse it; I will reward you." So a higher wisdom thwarted the calculations of human prudence, and the rod that was to chastise unjust men grew up under their very eyes. Later another cradle would escape the dagger of another persecutor, and some thousands of innocents slaughtered in Bethlehem would not prevent the divine fugitive from establishing his kingship, vainly threatened, upon the ruins of Herod's throne.

When the child had grown, his mother had to give him back to Thermutis. Ancient traditions collected by the historian Josephus state that the princess was married but had no children. She took a great liking to the one

she had just snatched from death and adopted him, giving him the name of Moses, which means *saved from the waters*. He was brought up at Pharaoh's court and instructed in all the sciences of the time and the country. When he reached the age of forty, he understood that God destined him for something other than temporal greatness. He renounced the title of the king's adopted son and went to visit his oppressed brethren, choosing to be persecuted with the people of God rather than to live amid the delights and favours that the court of a powerful and magnificent king procured for him. One day when he was with them in the fields, he saw from afar an Egyptian pitilessly beating one of the Hebrews; Moses, at this sight, seized with indignation, ran up, attacked the furious Egyptian and killed him. Seeing all the danger of such an act, he enjoined secrecy on the Israelite whom he had delivered from his enemy's hands, and hid the corpse in the sand. Pharaoh was informed of it; the deed was presented to him in the darkest colours, and he sought to put its author to death. Moses, warned of the king's intentions, fled in haste and took refuge far from the prince's dominions, in the land of Midian, where he married Zipporah, daughter of the high priest Jethro. There he spent forty years in the humble condition of a shepherd, pasturing his father-in-law's flocks.

Meanwhile King Pharaoh, who had pursued Moses, was dead; another had succeeded him, and the Israelites were treated with more violence than ever; they groaned, lifted their eyes to heaven and implored the Lord, from whom they awaited their deliverance. One day when Moses was pasturing his flock and had gone rather far into the desert, he found himself at the foot of a mountain called Horeb, very near the famous mountain of Sinai. All at once, in the midst of a burning bush, the Lord appeared to him in the form of a fair and lively flame which shone with a very gentle brightness and consumed neither the branches nor the leaves of the bush. Moses, astonished, said within himself: "I will go nearer, and examine why this bush, all burning and aflame as it is, is not consumed." He was eagerly coming forward and was already quite close to it, when the Lord, wishing to make him regard this apparition with the respect due to His awesome Majesty, made His voice heard to him in these words: "Moses! Moses!" — "Here I am, Lord," he answered. "Take care not to come nearer: take off your shoes, for this ground on which you are walking is sanctified by the presence of your God. It is I who am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." At these words Moses, seized with religious fear, covered his face, not daring to raise his eyes towards the place from which the voice came. "I have seen with compassion," the Lord went on, "the calamities of my people; their cries and groans have risen up to me. Prepare yourself, Moses, take courage with a holy zeal; it is you whom I shall send to Pharaoh to oblige him to let my people go." — "Ah! who am I, Lord," Moses replied, "to go and present myself to Pharaoh, and then to bring the children of Israel out of captivity?" — "I will be with you," said the Lord; "all your steps will be marked by some wonders." — "I must go to the children of Israel," Moses went on, "and I will say to them: The God of your fathers has sent me to you. But if they ask me what His name is, what shall I answer them?" — "I am who am," replied the Lord; "go, and say to your brethren: He who is sends me to you. It is under this name of mercy that I wish to make myself known to my people through the ages to come. I have seen the evils that overwhelm them, and I have resolved to lead them into a land flowing with milk and honey." — "But, Lord," Moses replied, "when I tell them that you have sent me, they will not believe me; they will treat me as a dreamer or a deceiver, and will say: The Lord has not appeared to you." — "I am going to give you the means of convincing the unbelieving: what have you in your hand?" — "A rod," answered Moses. "Throw it on the ground," the Lord said to him. Moses threw it down, and at once it changed into a serpent, so that he was afraid of it and began to flee. But God said to him: "Fear nothing; take this serpent by the end of its body." Moses stretched out his hand and seized it, and the serpent became his rod again in his hand. God said further: "Put your hand into your bosom." Moses did so, and drew it out covered with a leprosy white as snow. "Put it back again," the Lord said to him. Moses obeyed, and drew it out perfectly healed. "What I have just done before you," the Lord added, "you shall do before the Hebrews, and by this sign they will recognise that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has appeared to you." — "But I implore you, Lord," Moses replied, "consider that I find it hard to express myself." — "Aaron your brother," replied the Lord, "expresses himself with force and grace; you

shall tell him what you have learned from me, and he will speak for you to the people. See, I am going to send him to meet you." Moses at once went back to Midian, took leave of Jethro his father-in-law, and set out for Egypt. Arriving at the foot of Mount Horeb, he met his brother; he threw himself on his neck and the two embraced with every mark of the tenderest friendship. Moses told him all that had happened to him. Aaron believed, submitted to the will of the Lord, and gave himself joyfully to the deliverance of his nation. The union of these two great men was the salvation of Israel. They set out together for the land of Goshen. On their arrival they went to find the elders of the people, to whom Aaron told all that had happened at Horeb, and Moses confirmed his mission by working wonders. These first steps succeeded; the elders recognised that God had had pity on His people: they prostrated themselves to adore Him, and the people gave themselves up without reserve to the leadership of Moses. He was then eighty years old, and his brother eighty-three.

Moses and Aaron soon presented themselves to King Pharaoh and said to him: "Thus does the Lord, the God of Israel, command you: Give my people freedom to go and sacrifice in the desert." But this impious prince answered: "I do not know your God, and Israel shall not leave my kingdom. It is you who have undertaken to stir up the nation and who keep it from applying itself to the works on which I employ it; leave my presence, and let them go back to their labours forthwith." From that moment he ordered that they be treated more harshly than ever. Then they complained bitterly to Moses. And when the servant of God went back to them to console them, they showed themselves unmoved and blamed him for the excess of labour with which they were overwhelmed. Meanwhile the Lord spoke again to Moses and said to him: "Go, present yourself to Pharaoh, and order him on my behalf to let the children of Israel go. See, I make you the god of this prince, and your brother shall be your prophet and your mouthpiece. Pharaoh will obey only in spite of himself; but I will abandon him if he refuses to know me, and his heart will be hardened."

Moses and Aaron set about carrying out the orders of God. They went to the palace, presented their request and worked several miracles before the king to prove to him that they were sent by God; but this prince, led astray by his magicians, remained in his blindness and would not let the children of Israel go. God then began to strike Egypt with terrible plagues. The first of these plagues was that of the waters of the Nile changed into blood: the Egyptians were horrified, and were obliged to dig wells at intervals in order to quench their thirst. The second was that of the frogs: their number was so prodigious that they entered all the houses and troubled Pharaoh and his subjects, making their way even into the kitchens; the third, that of the gnats, whose fearful multitude tormented both men and beasts; the fourth, that of the great flies, which not only wounded the living but gnawed, spoiled and corrupted everything by their dangerous bites; the fifth, a horrible pestilence, which killed most of the animals; the sixth, that of the ulcers and painful sores with which men and animals were covered; the seventh, a hail mingled with lightning and thunder, which struck the men and animals that were in the fields and broke the trees; the eighth, a prodigious multitude of locusts, which devoured all that the hail had spared; the ninth, that of thick darkness, which lasted for three days. All these plagues, which struck the Egyptians without touching the Israelites, seemed so marvellous to Pharaoh's magicians that they were forced to say to the king: "It is the finger of God that is at work here." And Pharaoh himself was obliged to cry out: "The Lord is just, and my people and I are nothing but wicked men." Terrified by the dreadful chastisements his obstinacy was drawing upon his subjects, each time he begged Moses to make them stop, promising to let the people go; but no sooner had the scourge disappeared than Pharaoh returned to his former hardness, until at last God struck him with the tenth, which was the most terrible of all.

Before striking Egypt with the tenth plague, the Lord sent Moses and Aaron to the children of Israel to tell them that this month would be marked by their departure from Egypt. All were to gather at Rameses on the ninth day of the current month at the latest; and on the fourteenth, towards evening, the head of each family was to sacrifice a lamb to the Lord. All the children of Israel were to take part in this ceremony. Some of the

victim's blood was to be kept; branches of hyssop were to be dipped in it, and with this blood the two posts and the lintel of the door of each of the houses where the meal was held were to be marked. The lamb was to be roasted whole, the body, the head and even the entrails. Only unleavened bread was to be used at this meal, and wild and bitter lettuces were prescribed to be eaten with the flesh of the lamb. They were to put on travelling dress, gird their loins, have shoes on their feet and a staff in hand, and eat standing and in haste. The children of Israel had just carried out the precept that Moses had given them on behalf of the Almighty. It was the middle of the night; calm and silence reigned on every side, when the sovereign Master of the life of men sent His destroying angels, who put to death all the first-born of the Egyptians, from the son of Pharaoh, associated with him in the empire, to the eldest son of the lowest of the slave women. Every house was struck, except those whose doors were marked with the blood of the lamb. Then a universal cry was heard throughout the length and breadth of Egypt. Pharaoh, terrified and in despair at the death of his son, rose in the middle of the night with his courtiers; in spite of the darkness of the night he sent for Moses and Aaron and said to them: "Leave my dominions promptly, you and the children of Israel, and sacrifice to the Lord your God as you please." The people, crushed under the terrible blows that a monarch hitherto stubborn was drawing upon them, likewise pressed the Israelites to leave their country as soon as possible, "for," they said, "if the Hebrews do not go, we shall all die."

On leaving the audience, Moses went to Rameses and at once gave his orders for the departure. The children of Israel took advantage of the extreme impatience of their enemies to see them go, to ask them for what they had most precious: their vessels of gold and silver, their richest furniture, their most magnificent garments, as the sovereign Master of all things had made known His will to them through the mouth of Moses, to pay them for their long and painful labours and to compensate them for the houses and plantations they were leaving. When they came out of Egypt they numbered nearly six hundred thousand men able to bear arms. Countless flocks marched under the guidance of their herdsmen, together with wagons and beasts laden with riches, which terrified Egypt had put into their hands. The children of Israel, having left Rameses, made for Succoth. From this first march the Lord gave them a new proof of His protection. He formed a kind of great column, whose base was very broad and whose top rose extremely high; it was composed of thick, condensed vapours. During the day this column had the colours of a fair cloud; but during the night it appeared all of fire and bright as the sun. One of the heavenly Spirits was charged with guiding it. When it was time to set out, the column rose from the midst of the camp and placed itself at the head of the tribes, over the tent of the one that was to set out first. They marched while it was in motion and followed its direction exactly. When it was time to halt, it returned to the midst of the camp. This same column spread out as it rose and leaned towards the sun, to protect the travellers against the heat of that star, which, without this safeguard, would have been unbearable amid the burning sands of the desert. These two miracles continued during the long years that they wandered in the wilderness; there was not a day nor a night when they did not benefit from them.

On the third day after leaving Rameses they found themselves on the shores of the Red Sea. The Egyptians had just buried their dead; they were still plunged in mourning and grief. Nevertheless Pharaoh repented of having let the children of Israel go. By his orders his troops were assembled; two hundred thousand men were put on foot, fifty thousand horses equipped, six hundred chosen chariots armed; the monarch's chariot was made ready, the generals put themselves at the head of the troops, and the king meant to command in person. The formidable army set out and marched on the track of the Israelites; these, seeing themselves hemmed in on every side, murmured loudly against Moses; but he, after addressing himself to the throne of mercy to obtain pardon for the murmurers, ordered the children of Israel to hold themselves ready to continue their march. At the same time the column that was at their head placed itself at the rear of their camp, between the two armies; on one side it was bright and guided their march, while on the other, dark and gloomy, it hid the movements of the Hebrews from the Egyptians. At that moment Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the waters divided, leaving empty a broad and spacious road. The Lord made a

burning wind blow violently, which dried it and made it firm under the feet of His servants, who entered upon this miraculous road where no man had ever passed. Day was scarcely beginning to break when the Egyptians perceived that their prey was escaping them. They set out in haste and, finding the way all opened at the bottom of the abyss, they rushed blindly into it: horses, chariots and horsemen entered it under the leadership of Pharaoh. The Lord then said to Moses: “Stretch out your hand over the sea.” Moses did so; at once the heaped-up waters fell back of themselves into the bed they had left: they swallowed up the Egyptians, the horses, the chariots and the whole army of Pharaoh, without a single man escaping to carry the news to his country. The waves cast their corpses and all the baggage up on the shore. These rich spoils were seized, and Moses had them distributed by tribe and by family. Then, to celebrate this wonder of divine protection, he sang with all his people a magnificent canticle of thanksgiving.

On the very day after the great victory won by the protection of the God of hosts, Moses, at the movement of the column, gave the signal for departure; they entered the desert that had to be crossed to reach the promised land. But soon, the provisions being exhausted, the Israelites broke out in murmurs. “Would to God that we had all died in Egypt,” they said; “then we sat by pots full of meat and had bread to the full. Why have you brought us into this dreadful wilderness to die there of hunger?” Moses had recourse to the Lord; then, having sharply rebuked the murmurers, he said to them: “This very evening the Lord will give you the meat you desire; and tomorrow morning He will show His glory in a still more marvellous way by sending you bread.” And indeed, when evening came, a cloud of quails covered the camp. They seized them at once, and these gave them abundant and delicious food. The next day, very early in the morning, they saw all the surroundings of the camp covered with a kind of dew like those little grains of hoarfrost that cover the surface of the countryside in winter. “That is the bread which the Lord has promised to give you,” Moses told them: “let each gather what is needed for his family, a gomor for each person (about three litres).” They set to work; and those who out of greed laid in a larger supply found on their return that they had no more than the others. Nor was it allowed to keep any for the next day; otherwise it went bad. But on the sixth day of the week they could gather twice as much, because on the next day, which was the sabbath day, none fell. They soon left the desert of Sin and halted at Rephidim, not far from the mountain of Horeb. The travellers’ first care was to look for springs, but in vain; then the murmurs began again. Moses had recourse to the Lord: “What shall I do,” he cried, “to satisfy this people?” — “Fear not,” the Lord answered him; “go to the head of the camp; choose some elders and lead them to the mountain of Horeb; I will go before you there; you shall strike the rock with your rod, and water will come out of it in plenty.” Moses carried out God’s orders; at the first stroke of the rod, streams came forth from the hard rock, and clear waters flowed through the dry and barren valleys. All the time that the Israelites remained in those places, the waters regulated their course by their march and supplied their needs without interruption. Scarcely had they come out of this strait than another arose. The children of Amalek, grandson of Esau, came out to meet the Israelites to bar their way; they led a multitude of fighting men, covered with their arms. Moses was not frightened by this array; full of confidence in God, he had his men take up arms and gave the command to Joshua, son of Nun, chief of the tribe of Ephraim. The victory over the Amalekites was complete.

Meanwhile the signal for departure was given; the children of Israel left Rephidim on the first day of the third month after the exodus from Egypt and entered the desert of Sinai. They pitched their tents at the foot of the mountain. As it was to be feared that the truths God had taught men from the beginning might become corrupted and be entirely effaced from memory, God wished to renew them and give them in writing. Moses having withdrawn to the summit of the mountain to pray, the Lord made His voice heard to him and said: “Go, Moses, return to your Hebrews and say to them on my behalf: You have seen with what severity I treated the Egyptians, and how I delivered you from their hands; I have chosen you to be my people. If you listen to my voice, if you keep my covenant, I will make of you the chosen portion of my inheritance: you shall be my kingdom, you shall be the holy nation.” Moses came down from the mountain, assembled the children of Israel, repeated to them faithfully what the Lord had said to him, and ended by asking them for a

positive and precise answer. All cried out with one voice: “We will do what the Lord asks.” Moses went to carry his people’s resolution. “Well then!” replied the Lord, “you shall be my interpreter to them. Go back to the camp, purify them today and tomorrow; let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day; for that is the day the Lord has chosen to come down in the array of His glory in the presence of the children of Israel. Set up barriers around Sinai, and tell the people to beware of crossing them. Whoever passes beyond shall be punished with death.” Moses came down and did all that the Lord had commanded him. The third day came; the whole multitude of the children of Israel was waiting, when at sunrise great claps of thunder were heard; lightnings flashed, set the air aflame and furrowed it without ceasing; a thick, dark cloud covered the mountain and hid it from view. From the bosom of the cloud was heard the shrill sound of the trumpet, summoning the children of Israel; but, seized with fear, they kept to their tents. Moses himself, little reassured, had difficulty in getting them to come out; at last he succeeded, and drew them up in the open space between the camp and the barriers set at the foot of the mountain. Then he went forward beyond them and conversed with the Lord. He received the order to go up higher. Meanwhile the air seemed still to be on fire, the thunder did not stop rumbling, the smoke thickened and came out with whirlwinds of flame as from a burning furnace; the sound of the trumpet grew louder and more piercing; a moment later, from the midst of the cloud, these terrible words were distinctly heard: “It is I who am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: 1. You shall have no strange gods in my presence; — 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; — 3. Remember to keep holy the sabbath day; — 4. Honour your father and your mother, that you may live long on the land which the Lord your God will give you; — 5. You shall not kill; — 6. You shall not commit fornication; — 7. You shall not steal; — 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour; — 9. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife; — 10. You shall not covet his house, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his ass, nor anything that belongs to him.”

When the Lord had ceased speaking, the lightnings, flames and smoke were again seen issuing from the mountain; the noise of the thunder was heard, and the sound of the trumpets ringing out with the same blare as before. Then the Hebrews, overcome and terrified, withdrew to their tents and said to Moses: “Speak to us yourself; but let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.” Moses, having gone deep into the awesome darkness that covered the mountain, laid before the Lord the alarm of His people. “I have heard it,” the Lord said to him; “I am not offended by it: may they always keep this salutary fear and keep my precepts for ever! Go, tell them to return to their camp. As for you, come back here, so that I may make known to you my will.” Moses did what the Lord had commanded him, then went up the holy mountain accompanied by Joshua. They remained six days in the midst of the cloud; on the seventh, the Lord calling His servant, he left Joshua at once and went up through the cloud to the summit of Sinai. There he remained alone in the company of his God for forty days and forty nights, without thinking of taking any food; during this time the Lord gave him His orders for a great number of observances and ceremonies concerning divine worship and the building of the tabernacle. At last, on the fortieth day, He handed Moses two tables of stone on which the ten precepts, just promulgated with such splendour, were engraved by the finger of God. “Go,” said the Lord, “go down from the mountain; the people you brought out of the bondage of Egypt have sinned against me, they have fallen into idolatry; I will exterminate them in my fury and make you the head of a great people.” — “I implore you,” Moses replied, “be not angry with this people; it is yours; you broke its bonds by the strength of your almighty arm.” The servant of God came down from the mountain; he walked with a sad air, holding the tables of the law in his hands. Joshua joined him; he did not know to what to attribute his master’s dejection. Drawing near the foot of the mountain, he heard confused noises: “Are not those,” he said, “the shouts of two armies fighting?” — “You are mistaken, Joshua,” Moses answered him; “what you hear are the senseless shouts of men making merry.” Moses said no more. And as he drew near the camp, he saw a golden calf raised on a column, and the children of Israel singing and dancing around it in disorderly fashion. Indignation seized him; he threw the tables to the ground and broke them at the foot of the mountain. Then,

advancing into the midst of the astonished crowd, he took the idol, overthrew it, ground it, reduced it to powder, which he threw into the water to make the guilty drink it and show them the vanity of their idol. Then, taking his stand at the entrance of the camp, he ordered those of the tribe of Levi, most of whom had taken no part in the crime of idolatry, to take their swords and to pass back and forth through the camp, putting all the guilty to death without any distinction: he was obeyed. The transgressors, dismayed and overwhelmed with remorse, accepted the just sentence pronounced against them, and three thousand of the most guilty expiated by their death the crime of the nation. The next day Moses said to the people: "You deserve great chastisements; but I am going to intercede for you." Arriving at the place where he was accustomed to pray, the holy lawgiver prostrated himself as if he had himself been the guilty one: "Lord," he cried, "I know that this ungrateful people has committed a great crime; but I pray you, forgive them this fault, or blot me out of your book of the living." By dint of prayers and supplications he obtained that the Lord would continue to lead the people. He then asked the favour of seeing His glory. "Prepare to go back up the mountain tomorrow," the Lord said to him; "hew two tables of stone like those you broke at the sight of Israel's transgressions: I will write on them with my own hand the same ordinances; no one shall go with you." Moses did as he had been ordered; he set out at daybreak, holding the two tables of stone in his hands, and reached the summit of the mountain. It was then that the Most High, who had called him there, came down to him under the veil of a dark cloud, and, while Moses stood calling upon Him, He passed by with His glory, making him hear His great name, Jehovah, the mighty God, compassionate and merciful, slow to anger, full of goodness and truth itself, who shows His mercy to a thousand generations, who blots out sin, iniquity and crime, and before whom no one is innocent of himself. At that moment Moses, terrified, prostrated himself with his face to the ground and cried: "My God, if I have found grace before you, I pray you, walk with us; forget our iniquities, blot them out, and remember that you have chosen us for your inheritance." The Lord gave him a great number of ordinances and commanded him to write them; He Himself traced with His own hand the ten fundamental precepts of the law on the two tables of stone. Moses reported to the people the renewal of the covenant he had made in their name, and the laws that were laid upon them. This first time he published the Lord's ordinances with his face uncovered. Thenceforth he spoke to them only with his face covered by a veil; he took it off when he entered the tabernacle to converse with God. The holy lawgiver made no delay in carrying out the will of the Lord. He assembled the children of Israel and urged them to offer what they had most precious for the building of the tabernacle, the vestments of the pontiff and of the priests; in a word, for everything that was to serve for the worship of the Lord and the ceremonies of religion. He had scarcely finished speaking when each ran to his tent to take what he intended for the Lord. Vessels of gold, silver and copper; the most precious woods; hyacinth, purple, scarlet, fine linen, the finest and best-dyed skins: nothing was spared. Everything was offered in such profusion that Moses was obliged to have a herald proclaim that nothing more should be brought. God Himself had chosen two men whom He had filled with the spirit of wisdom, understanding and skill, to devise and carry out every kind of work in gold, silver and copper, and for the cutting and carving of stones. They were Bezalel and Oholiab; they presided over everything and directed the work of a great number of craftsmen. All was finished by the first day of the second year: the tabernacle was set up, made according to the pattern that had been shown to Moses on the mountain.[1] Moses, by the Lord's order, chose Aaron as high priest, or head of religion. His four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, were consecrated priests of the living God. Henceforth the sovereign pontiff was to be chosen from among them. As soon as the works concerning the Ark of the covenant and the rest were finished, Moses had brought to him the great quantity of balm that he had prepared by the Lord's order, and used it to consecrate the Ark, the tabernacle, the golden candlestick, the altars, tables, etc. The ceremony over, the Lord seemed to take possession of the dwelling that had just been consecrated to Him in the midst of His people. The cloud that served as guide and light to the Hebrews left the tent, or former tabernacle, and, approaching the new one, covered it and filled it with the glory and majesty of God. The darkness it formed there for some moments seized the Israelites with religious fear. Moses himself could not enter, so awesome did the cloud make the presence of the Lord; however, it

withdrew little by little, leaving the rooms of the sanctuary empty, and rose in its usual form of a column above the new tabernacle, to continue to guide the people on their march. Moses, encouraged by such consoling signs, went on to the consecration of the ministers of the Lord. He had brought to him the magnificent vestments of the pontiff, those of the priests, and the oil or balm needed for the anointings, and the victims destined for the sacrifice were led to the entrance of the court. After these preparations, Aaron and his four sons presented themselves, and Moses performed the ceremony: he began by purifying them in the basin placed at the entrance of the sanctuary, then clothed them in their vestments; he then took the balm of anointing and sprinkled it seven times on the altar of holocausts and on all the vessels destined for the sacrifices, on the great basin and on its base. As for Aaron and his sons, he poured the balm of sanctification on their heads and anointed their hands with it. To finish, he performed the office of sacrificer. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the heads of three different victims: these were slain, immolated and burned on the altar, and Moses dipped his finger in the blood to make the anointings of the new priests. He also consecrated their vestments with the blood of the victims mixed with the balm, with which he sprinkled the priests clothed in their vestments. This ceremony lasted seven days. When the eighth day came, Moses installed the high priest and his sons in the exercise of their functions; they offered the victims with all the rites prescribed by the law. Moses and Aaron entered the sanctuary to offer to the Lord the prayers of the children of Israel, then reappeared in the court and blessed the assembly. Then a fire, kindled by the breath of God, rushed down upon the altar, consumed the holocaust and devoured all the fat of it. The wonder made its impression, and the multitude prostrated itself face to the ground to adore the majesty of the Master whom they had the honour to serve and who approved the consecration of His ministers.

The children of Israel had been encamped for a year before Mount Sinai when the column gave the signal for departure. Then the Ark was carried from the midst of the camp to its head. The tribe of Judah held the first rank, with Issachar and Zebulun at its sides. Next came the tribe of Reuben, marching in the steps of Judah, with Simeon and Gad at its sides. Then followed the tribe of Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin at its sides. Finally the tribes of Dan, Asher and Naphtali closed the march, and they formed perhaps the most magnificent spectacle ever seen. It was an army of more than six hundred thousand fighting men, not counting a whole people of two million women, children, old men, proselytes and servants, led by the Almighty to the conquest of the Promised Land. After three days of slow marching, broken for the time of rest and food, ever protected against the heat of the sun and strengthened by the manna, the fatigue seemed excessive and unbearable to the cowardly, who complained aloud. The Lord was angered, and a sudden fire, kindled by the breath of His wrath, rushed down from heaven on the edge of the camp and devoured the murmurers. Alarm spread everywhere: they ran to Moses with loud cries. The holy man prostrated himself before the Lord and presented to Him the tears of the whole nation, and the fire at once buried itself in the bowels of the earth. The place was given the name of Burning. On the second day of the fourth month they arrived at Kadesh-barnea, in sight of the Promised Land. Moses, by the Lord’s order, chose twelve men, one from each tribe, to examine the country, the inhabitants, their valour and their strength. He also charged them to see whether the soil was good and fertile, and whether the cities were fortified. These envoys set out and did what they had been told. On their return they stopped by a torrent and gathered figs, pomegranates and above all a prodigious cluster of grapes. They had to cut off its branches in order to pass it onto a long pole, and two men carried it. At last, after forty days’ absence, the envoys arrived at the camp of Kadesh-barnea. As soon as they appeared, the people gathered around Moses and Aaron, to whom the twelve travellers gave a public account of their mission. First they let those fine fruits speak for them, and, showing them to the people: “Judge,” they said, “of the fertility of this land which we have just explored. You were not deceived when you were told that streams of milk and honey flowed there.” Up to then Moses had only to congratulate himself. But what was his surprise when he heard them change their tone! “It is far from being,” they went on, “an easy conquest; the country is full of great and fortified cities, defended by men of extraordinary strength.” Then discouragement showed on every face, and murmurs were heard in every rank. However,

two of the envoys, Caleb and Joshua, strove to undeceive the crowd: “You are being deceived,” said Caleb; “let us not lose heart; let us present ourselves before these peoples, and they will vanish in our presence.” But their cowardly colleagues contradicted them: “How could we present ourselves before these peoples,” they said, “before men of enormous stature? We saw monstrous giants there, descendants of Anak, whose very appearance strikes terror into the boldest. We seemed beside them no more than grasshoppers.” The whole night was spent in groans and tears. In the morning there was nothing but frightful confusion throughout the camp. They shouted and murmured against Moses and Aaron. “Would to God,” said the multitude, “that we had all died in Egypt or in this vast wilderness! No, we will not enter this land they tell us of, to be slaughtered there by the sword of our enemies.” And they said to one another: “Let us choose ourselves a leader and return to Egypt.” Meanwhile Moses and Aaron strove to reassure them and bring them back to better sentiments: all was in vain. In this extremity they prostrated themselves, imploring the help of the Almighty, while Caleb and Joshua, faithful envoys, tore their garments and threw themselves into the midst of the crowd to calm the tumult and revive confidence. Far from being moved, the mutineers redoubled their seditious cries and were preparing to stone those who were trying to calm them. But all at once the column of cloud that rested on the tabernacle changed into a threatening fire, and let these madmen glimpse all the indignation of an outraged God, ready to exterminate them. Moses himself, trembling for them, ran to ask for mercy. The Lord answered with kindness: “I pardon them because of your prayers. They shall not all perish in one day, as I had resolved; but say to your people: This is the sentence of Jehovah: You shall be treated as you have wished; all of you, from the age of twenty years and upward, who have murmured against me, shall die in this desert; your corpses shall rot there; you shall not enter the land which I promised to your fathers with an oath. I except from my sentence only Caleb and Joshua. You said that your children would be the prey of your enemies, and I tell you that these children I will bring into the country you have scorned. You shall die, and be buried in the sands of the deserts, and they meanwhile shall suffer because of your infidelities and shall wander with you for the space of forty years, until the corpses of their fathers are consumed.” From then on this terrible sentence began to be carried out on the most guilty. The ten unfaithful envoys fell dead, struck by the hand of God, in the presence of the multitude.

After some days of rest, then, they had to resolve to leave the neighbourhood of the Promised Land and take the road of the desert again, there to undergo for nearly forty years the sentence pronounced against them by the just Judge. The journey was beginning when there broke out a revolt, the most audacious that had yet occurred. Korah, of the tribe of Levi, was offended to see Aaron raised to the dignity of sovereign Pontiff. Dathan and Abiram, of the tribe of Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, could not bear that one Moses, of the tribe of Levi, should be in possession of all authority. These three ambitious men rose up and drew into their revolt two hundred and fifty men among the most distinguished of the children of Israel. All being ready, the leaders of the conspiracy, followed by their accomplices, went brazenly to find Moses and Aaron: “You have lorded it over us long enough,” they said; “lay down this dignity which you have made an honour for yourselves until this day. Are we not all equally sanctified? Why do you wish to lord it over the others with pride?” Moses, hearing these seditious words, fell on his face. Then, suddenly inspired, he rose and spoke thus to Korah and his band: “The Lord Himself shall decide the justice of your claims.” Everyone knows the terrible punishment of these impious men. It was for the people a new occasion of murmuring: they were punished for it by a burning that consumed fourteen thousand seven hundred men.

All the events we have just spoken of took place during the first two years after the exodus from Egypt. For the thirty-eight that followed, Scripture records nothing remarkable concerning the Israelites; it mentions fifty-one stations they made in the desert of Arabia, always protected by the hand of the Lord. The column led them, the manna fed them, God continued to communicate Himself to Moses; and, by a wonder of His divine goodness, the garments and shoes of so many people did not wear out. At last, in the course of the first month of the Mosaic year, the fortieth since the exodus from Egypt, they encamped at Kadesh-barnea, very near the Promised Land, where they had been thirty-eight years before. Water having run short, the people

gathered in a tumult around Moses and his brother: “Would to God,” they cried, “that we had died with our brethren! Why lead us into this wilderness to die of thirst, we and our cattle?” Meanwhile Moses and Aaron, prostrating themselves with their faces to the ground, cried: “Lord, God of Israel, hear the cries of your people, open the treasures of your mercy, give them an abundant spring of living water, that they may quench their thirst and be heard to murmur no more.” God was moved by the entreaties of His servants; He ordered them to assemble the people around the rock at the top of the mountain and to command it in His name to give water. Moses took his rod, assembled the people and, accompanied by his brother, took his place by the rock. The whole multitude was waiting. Then some little distrust passed into his heart; he did not doubt that God could, but whether He would, work the miracle; this uncertainty passed to his brother; he struck the stone, and it did not obey; he struck a second time, but with that lively faith and humble repentance that work wonders, and at once water came out in abundance. The servants of the Almighty had committed a fault: “You did not believe me,” the Lord said to them; “you hesitated, and you did not honour me in the presence of the children of Israel; you shall not bring them into the Promised Land.” This spring was named the Water of Contradiction, because murmurs had arisen there against the Lord.

Aaron died a short time afterwards. The forty years of penance had run out: the number of those whom the Lord had condemned to perish in the desert was now very small. They were on the point of taking possession of the promised land. The children of Israel were encamped in the plains of Moab when Moses and the high priest Eleazar, by the Lord’s order, made a census of the people: it came to six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty men able to bear arms. In this number there was not a single one of all those who had come out of Egypt aged twenty years and upward, except Caleb and Joshua, according to the sentence that had been pronounced. Then the Lord said to Moses: “You shall go up the high mountains of Abarim, and from the peak of Pisgah, on the summit of Mount Nebo, you shall gaze at leisure on all these fair regions that I am going to give to my people. I grant you only this last consolation, because you offended me at the Waters of Contradiction together with your brother.” Full of tenderness and solicitude for his people, Moses then said to the Lord: “I implore you, almighty God, you who know the hearts of all men and dispose of their days, deign to make known the one whom you choose to watch over the children of Israel, lead them into the Promised Land and fight at their head, that they be not as sheep without a shepherd.” — “Take Joshua, son of Nun,” the Lord said to him; “it is to him that I have communicated, as to you, the fullness of my spirit; lay your hands on him and give him your orders in the presence of the high priest and the multitude.” No choice could have been more in keeping with Moses’s inclinations. For forty years Joshua had been his disciple, his confidant, his friend; then aged ninety-three, he had been formed in the school of this great man, and his uprightness, his bravery and his experience commended him to the people. Moses hastened to carry out these orders. He assembled the people; the high priest, the princes of the tribes and the elders drew near; he pointed out Joshua, declared that God had chosen him, commanded them henceforth to obey this leader as himself, and then instructed the new leader of the people of God in the care, vigilance and devotion he owed to his subjects; he set before the nation the submission, respect and obedience it owed to its leader; finally he laid his hands on him and associated him in the government that he was soon to hand over to him entirely.

Before parting from his brethren, Moses assembled them several times to make known to them his last wishes. He reminded them of the wonders God had worked in their favour and urged them to be faithful to the law of the Lord. Then he received the final order to go to the mountain where he was to end the course of his life. He assembled the people one last time to bid them a solemn farewell and give them his blessing, as a good father of a family gives it to the children he loves. Then he parted from the grief-stricken multitude and, accompanied by Eleazar and Joshua, who were to be the witnesses of his death, he climbed the mountain of Nebo; then, from the highest peak, called Pisgah, the Lord ordered him to look upon the land of Canaan. He gazed on the whole of it: “There,” the Lord said to him, “is the magnificent country which I promised by oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob to give to their posterity. I am going to fulfil my promises; you have seen this land, but you shall not enter it.” As the Lord finished these words, Moses, aged a hundred and twenty

years, expired on that mountain in the land of Moab, yet so sound and vigorous that he did not yet feel any infirmity of old age: his sight was not weakened, and not one of his teeth was loose. Thus did he give back his soul to God, leaving his body in the hands of his two faithful friends, Eleazar and Joshua.

These are the principal emblems of Moses. He is represented: 1. exposed on the Nile in a basket of rushes and saved by Pharaoh's daughter; 2. kneeling before the burning bush, or taking off his shoes to approach it; 3. holding in his hand the rod he used to work so many wonders in Egypt and in the desert; 4. striking the rock with this miraculous rod to bring forth from it the water that is to quench the thirst of the people of Israel; 5. leading the Hebrews across the Red Sea and burying Pharaoh's army under its waters; 6. pointing out the manna to the Israelites; 7. holding in his hand the tables of the law which he brought from Sinai; 8. breaking those same tables at the sight of the Hebrews given over to acts of idolatry; 9. with his forehead shining and forming luminous horns, after his stay on Sinai; 10. reading the book of the covenant to the people; 11. sending out envoys to explore the promised land; 12. setting up the brazen serpent to heal those who had been bitten by reptiles; 13. unrolling a scroll on which are read these words: "You shall see your life hanging before you", words taken from the curses pronounced by the lawgiver against the unfaithful Hebrews; 14. appearing, though rarely, in scenes of the Transfiguration.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Writings.

It would seem that it fell to Eleazar and Joshua, despite the excess of their grief, to take charge of their master's burial; but God, for reasons He has not revealed, took the commission from men to entrust it to the first of the angels. The spirit of light met with resistance from the spirit of darkness, who opposed with all his power the removal of the body. However, the archangel Saint Michael commanded him, in the name of the Most High, not to disturb him in his task, and buried the body in an *allée* of the land of Moab; he did it so secretly that no one has ever been able to learn anything of the place of the Prophet's burial.

The Jews chose two days of the year to give religious honour to the memory of Moses. One was the 23rd of the seventh month, called Tisri: they called this feast the Rejoicing of the Law and Blessing, and kept it to honour the testament of Moses's death. The other day was the 7th of the twelfth and last month of their year, called Adar: this was a mournful feast consisting of a public fast to weep for the death of the Prophet, which they believed to have happened on that day. Christians have chosen 4 September to give their honour to Moses. The Greeks, besides this day, which they share with the other nations, also keep the memory of Moses, Aaron and the other Saints of the fourth age of the world on the first Sunday of Lent.

Moses is the most ancient of all the authors whose writings have come down to us. Among those that bear his name, there are five which cannot be denied him without rashness, namely the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, which are ordinarily all comprised under the name of the Pentateuch.

Although we have no certain proofs of the time when Moses wrote the Pentateuch, there is nevertheless reason to believe that he did not put this great work into the state in which it still is today until the fortieth year of the Israelites' journey in the desert.

The Hebrews give each of these books a name taken from the first words with which they begin. Thus they call Genesis *Beresith*, that is, *in the beginning*, because that is the first word of this book. They give Exodus the name of *Veele Schemoth* for the same reason, and so with the others. The Greeks, on the contrary, give these books titles taken from the subject treated in them. They call the first *Genesis*, because in it are found the creation of the world, the increase of the human race and the birth of the people of God. They give the second the name of *Exodus*, because it tells of the departure from Egypt, and so with the others.

This book is like a preface in which he prepares the mind and heart of the people to whom he meant to prescribe the laws described in the following books. In it he gives the history of the creation of the world, and

the genealogy of the patriarchs who lived before and after the flood, especially that of Seth and of Shem. He carefully records the increase of the human race, its corruption, the punishment of its crimes in the waters of the flood, the dispersion of men that came after the building of Babel, the calling of Abraham, and God's choice of this patriarch's race for His own particular people, from which the deliverer of mankind was to be born. In it are also seen the history of Isaac, of Jacob, of Joseph and of their descendants, down to the death of this last patriarch, which took place in the year of the world 2369.

This book, in the Hebrew, begins with the conjunction *and*, which shows that the events it contains are linked with what is related in Genesis, of which Exodus is the continuation. Moses first describes in it the occasion and motives of the persecution raised against the Israelites by the king of Egypt; the cry of the Israelites to the Lord to be delivered from the cruel bondage under which they had long groaned; their miraculous deliverance, the promulgation of the law, the covenant God made with the Israelites, and the manner in which He established their commonwealth. Exodus contains the history of a hundred and forty-five years, from the death of Joseph to the setting-up of the tabernacle at the foot of Mount Sinai, in the year of the world 2518.

The third book of the Pentateuch has been given the name of *Leviticus* because it treats thoroughly of all the functions of the Priests and Levites. The Hebrews have named it *Vaiicra*, that is, *And he called*, because it begins with that word in the original text. Besides the laws concerning the duties of the Priests and Levites, God prescribes in it the ceremonies of religion, the different kinds of sacrifices, the parts of the victims that were to be consumed on the altar and those that were to belong to the priests who offered them; the consecration of Aaron and his sons, the distinction between clean and unclean animals, the principal feasts of the year and the manner of celebrating them, the observance of the seventh or sabbatical year, and of the forty-ninth year, or year of jubilee. In it is read, moreover, what happened to the people of God while it was still at the foot of Mount Sinai, during the space of a month and a half.

The fourth book of the Pentateuch is called by the Hebrews *Vajedabber*, that is, *And he spoke*, because it begins with those words in the original text. The Greeks, and the Latins after them, have entitled it *Numbers*, because of the census of the people and of the Levites at the head of the book. It comprises the history of everything that happened from the first day of the second month of the second year after the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt down to the fortieth year; thus it contains the history of about thirty-nine years. In it is made the census of all the children of Israel from twenty years and upward; it relates the manner in which the Israelites encamped around the tabernacle, the consecration of the Levites to the service of the Lord in place of the first-born of all Israel, etc., etc.

The Greeks call the fifth book of Moses *Deuteronomy*, that is, *second law*: not that the law set down in this book differs from the one God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai some time after the departure from Egypt, but because it was published and enjoined anew for the benefit of those who were not yet born, or not yet of the age of reason, when it was published for the first time. The Jews call it *Elle haddebarim*, that is, *These are the words*, because it begins with those words in the Hebrew. It has also been given the name of the book of reproofs, because in it Moses addresses some rather harsh reproaches to the Israelites for their ingratitude and their infidelity towards the Lord. The rabbis sometimes call it *Misné*, which means the same as the double or the repetition of the law. Deuteronomy, which in the thought of Saint Jerome was "the figure of the law of the Gospel, relates the things already said in the three preceding books in such a way that it nevertheless makes a new history". Deuteronomy contains the history of about five or six weeks, that is, what happened in the desert from the beginning of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the departure from Egypt until the seventh day of the twelfth month of the same year, which was the year of the world 2553.

The following have been falsely attributed to Moses: 1. Psalm LXXXIX and the ten following, for the sole reason that Psalm LXXXIX bore the title "A prayer of Moses, the man of God"; Origen held this opinion, now abandoned; — 2. the Book of Job: Bellarmine, Lambecius and some other writers of recent centuries

were of this view; — 3. an Apocalypse or Revelation; — 4. an Ascension, a work often cited among the ancients; — 5. some *Mysterious Discourses*, containing several prophecies concerning David and Solomon; — 6. a testament made up, according to the *Stichometry* of Nicephorus, of eleven hundred verses; — 7. a *Little Genesis*, passages of which several ancient writers transcribed, which we still have today; — 8. a book of the *Life of Moses*, from which the historian Josephus seems to have drawn.

It is not easy to fix the time when these apocryphal books were composed, nor to discover their authors: the most certain thing that can be said is that most of them had already been published in the second century of the Church, as appears from the fragments that Clement of Alexandria and Origen have reported in their writings.

To compose this biography we have made use of the Femmes de la Bible, *by Mgr Darboy; the* Saints de l'Ancien Testament, *by Baillet; the* Merveilles du peuple de Dieu, *an anonymous work; the* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques, *by Dom Ceillier; the* Dictionnaire des Antiquités, *by the abbé Martigny; and the* Caractéristiques des Saints, *by the Reverend Father Cahier*.

Saint Marcellus, Martyr at Chalon-sur-Saône, in the Diocese of Autun

178. — Pope: Saint Eleutherius. — Roman Emperor: Marcus Aurelius.

> *Although death is the punishment of the sinner, when it comes to the just man under the blows of the wicked it becomes the crown of martyrdom.*
>
> *Saint Augustine, book VI Against Julian.*

The edicts that the emperor Marcus Aurelius had published against the Christians in all the provinces of the empire gave full licence to the prefects and to the judges of the individual cities. Driven even more by their hatred of the true religion than by the wish to obey the prince's orders, these exercised unheard-of cruelties against the faithful everywhere; on all sides their blood could be seen flowing in streams. But of all the cities that served as the stage for so sad a spectacle, there was none where the fury of the idolaters broke out more than in Lyons, one of the principal cities of Gaul. There all the servants of Jesus Christ were arrested indiscriminately, without any distinction of sex, age or condition, and, after being tormented with a thousand kinds of torture to shake their constancy, they were cruelly put to death. Among those who were taken prisoner are especially noted the priest Marcellus and the deacon Valerian, leaders of fifty generous confessors of the name of Jesus Christ. Young and ardent colleagues of the apostles of Lyons and Autun, they had seen the doors of their prison open miraculously. An angel had come, as for Saint Peter, to restore them to liberty, so that they might employ the activity of their zeal and the strength of their youth in preaching the Gospel in the fair regions watered by the Saône, and there too give the divine spectacle of the martyrdom that converts peoples. The news of their escape soon spread through the city, and the executor of the imperial edicts shook with fury on seeing so important a prey escape him. They were pursued; but the two apostles, protected by the same hand that had drawn them out of prison, foiled every search. Behold them calmly following the valley of the Arar, sowing the word of salvation as they went. Valerian took the great military road that runs along the right bank, and stopped only at Tournus (*castrum Trenorchii*), a station and granary of the Roman legions. Marcellus plunged into the forests of the left bank, preached the faith to the Sequani on the way, and came near the gates of Chalon, which he saw, not without groaning, crowned with the image of the Sun. There, by a chance circumstance, or rather, say the Acts of the Saint, by an effect of that providential will which often hides beneath second causes and which in our ignorance we call chance, he found gracious hospitality with a rich man named Latinus. At the entrance of the splendid dwelling lay a kind of inner court (*atrium*), in which stood the equestrian statue of Mars, escorted by those of Mercury and Minerva. At the sight of these idols, which saddened his gaze, the Saint felt in the depths of his apostle's soul a keen feeling of grief and pity, which he could not hide from his host; and seizing at once this occasion to instruct him, he said to him with a wholly evangelical gentleness and zeal: "What do you expect from these

so-called divinities that I see here? Vain images, dumb, deaf, insensible and powerless as the stone from which they were made, can they then grant your prayers, or even hear them? In truth, those who believe that in these works of man's hand there is something superior to man are not far from resembling them. Why do you not renounce this ridiculous and wretched superstition at once?" This pointed opening was like a ray of light for Latinus. He was astonished at having been so foolish and so blind until then, begged the apostle to continue his teaching, and was soon in a state to receive baptism with all his household.

Marcellus, whom this success, as swift and unhoped-for as a miracle of grace, filled with joy, would gladly have stayed longer in this place to add new conquests to his already numerous ones. But the events at Lyons and his escape itself were causing a great stir. The emperor's edict had just been published in all the cities of the province, and the Christians were being sought out with renewed relentlessness and fury. He thought it prudent to go away and let the violence of the storm pass; he crossed the Saône at a remote spot so as to avoid the city, and made towards Dijon, following the road that the old historian calls the *Argentomagensis agger*.[1] All at once he found himself unexpectedly in the midst of a pagan feast. It was the governor himself, the high intendant of navigation on the Saône (*praefectus navium Araricarum*), it was Priscus who was there, preparing a solemn sacrifice and a banquet in honour of his gods. The traveller, whom no one knew, was courteously invited to take part. Then the scene changed, and the apostle's role began: Marcellus refused, and boldly gave his reasons for refusing by flinging a few vigorous words against the worship of idols. At once the cry went up: "A Christian, a Christian!" — "Yes, I am a Christian," answered Marcellus. — "It is the prisoner from Lyons! Let us see whether we shall not force him to retract his refusal to adore the gods." And on the spot, by a cruel game, new no doubt, to enliven the feast, they tied him to two branches of a tree forcibly bent down, so that in springing back they would dislocate his limbs and pain would triumph over his obstinacy. Their barbarous expectation was disappointed: the martyr remained unshaken. "He rejoiced," say his Acts, "to suffer on the wood after the example of Jesus Christ, and to be able to unite his passion with that of the divine Redeemer, who had willed to die on the cross, so that, as the crime had come from a tree, the expiation might come from one too." Then Priscus, judging it better for the sake of example to make his torment a spectacle for the people, had him led before a colossal statue of Saturn which stood on the right bank of the Saône and seemed to preside over the sleeping waters of the river. There the Christian's head was to fall if he refused to adore the idol. "Marcellus," he said to him, "for it is surely you, there is no longer any possible doubt, do you not know that the sacred edicts of our divine emperor order that whoever refuses his adoration to Saturn, to almighty Jupiter and to all the divinities of their heavenly race shall be punished with death? If then you do not obey this very instant, I will have you perish in frightful torments." — "Your gods were nothing but wretched mortals stained with crimes. Instead of reigning in heaven, they are in hell, where they suffer the torments they deserve. There is only one true God almighty: He who was before all ages, who is today and who will be for ever. As for your torments, I do not fear them; I dread only the eternal and truly dreadful pains with which this God would punish my apostasy if I adored your idols. So, I repeat, I am a Christian. That is my profession of faith, plain and clear: it is irrevocable." Priscus, furious, ordered the intrepid confessor of Jesus Christ to be tortured on the rack and his body torn with rods at the foot of the statue of Saturn. Having thus offered the homage of vengeance to the insulted god, he had the Saint taken to the other side of the Saône, before the statue of the Sun which protected the left bank, so that further torments might also make amends for the outrage this other divinity had likewise received. Nor was that all. About two miles from the city, still on the left bank, was a place called Ubiliacus where, in the midst of a sacred *atrium*, rose a tall column topped by the statue of a god honoured in that country with a special cult and called Bacon. This was either Bacchus under a Gaulish name or some local divinity peculiar to the people of Chalon. The martyr, who had insulted all the pagan divinities, was therefore dragged before this third idol, to make a new reparation by new torments. There his limbs, torn by the rods and bruised by the chains, were stretched a second time on the rack and subjected at the same time to a more burning torture, that of fire. "Sacrifice," Priscus cried to him, "or I shall yet find other torments." But the invincible soldier of Jesus

Christ always met a crueller torment with a more unshakeable constancy, triumphed over the executioners, and answered the tyrant's threatening demands: "How do you expect one who holds with all the strength of his conviction, who keeps in the inmost depths of his heart, faith in the living God, to sacrifice to insensible idols of stone, images of the devil? To forget my Creator for him who is His enemy and mine, to prostitute my soul, which comes from heaven, to the adoration of so-called divinities, is a crime and a disgrace to which I shall never stoop. Every day I offer to the one true God a spotless victim, and could I defile myself with an impious sacrifice? No, never. I wish to imitate my glorious companions who have just given me the example of martyrdom. And if I did not fight with them at Lyons on the same battlefield, like them I shall die here for my faith, for my God."

The barbarous Priscus, driven to the limit and vanquished, fell into something like a fit of raging madness. Carried away by the fury of spite, he ordered that Marcellus, at once and on that very spot, be buried upright and alive up to the waist: wishing, by a cruelty without example, that the Christian who had vanquished him should not even have the rest of the tomb. During the whole time this unheard-of torment lasted, the Saint, his eyes raised on high, never ceased to praise God with heart and mouth. He thought himself only too happy to have been able to preach the Gospel in this region, win souls for Jesus Christ, and find again the crown of martyrdom that had escaped him the first time. A little while more and he would rejoin his brethren of Lyons. This anticipated death lasted three days, after which the divine Master at last allowed his great soul to fly away to heaven, on 4 September, about the year 178.

He is represented: 1. tied to two trees, or to two strong branches forcibly drawn together; 2. buried in a hole up to the waist; these mark the different kinds of torment he endured.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The body of blessed Saint Marcellus is preserved almost entire in a large and handsome shrine, borne by a group of angels in white marble of the greatest beauty, which is seen at the far end of the sanctuary of the fine church of Saint-Marcel-lès-Chalon, near Chalon-sur-Saône. Every year a great concourse of the faithful of the town and of the whole province come there to celebrate with pomp the feast of their holy apostle.

The cult of Saint Marcellus is common throughout the former kingdom of Burgundy. Several churches, even in the border countries, are dedicated to him.

For the former kingdom of Burgundy, one may cite the church of Saint-Marceau at Orléans (in all this part of France, at Paris as at Orléans, Marcel is pronounced Marceau), a fine large parish near Orléans on the bank of the Loire. It possesses a considerable portion of the relics of Saint Marcellus, enclosed in a very large shrine remarkable for its style. There, as at Chalon, the cult of the holy martyr is held in great veneration, as are his precious relics, which are carried every year in the very moving procession of the deliverance of Orléans.

The preservation of the relics of this great Saint is due to the vigilance of the Reverend Benedictine Fathers, who held the abbey of Saint-Marcel from its foundation until the revolution of 1793.

Taken from the Histoire de saint Symphorien et son culte, *by M. l'abbé Dinet.*

Saint Marinus of Arbe, Stonecutter, Deacon of Rimini in Italy, and Solitary

About 307. — Vacancy of the Holy See. — Roman Emperor: Galerius.

> *Charitas via quaedam est ad virtutem proclivior.*
>
> *Charity is a kind of road that slopes down towards virtue.*
>
> *Saint John Chrysostom.*

Marinus was born at Arbe in Dalmatia, of Christian parents, at the time when the Roman emperors were most relentless against the Christian religion. His upbringing was wholly holy, and he began to fear God from his tenderest years. Being of modest condition, he practised the trade of stonecutter to earn his living; for this he joined Saint Leo, his fellow-countryman. The little he spent on himself always left him something for almsgiving; he spent the greater part of the night and of his mealtimes in prayer; and the days set apart for the service of God he passed almost entirely in exercises of devotion.

At that time the city of Rimini in Italy had been destroyed, and when it came to rebuilding it, Saint Marinus and Saint Leo, hoping to make a considerable gain there, went over with many others of their country. But they were greatly astonished to find there a multitude of Christians of high birth who had been condemned to this labour, and to whom the overseers of the works gave tasks beyond their strength; and since they could not finish them, they were beaten black and blue with sticks and ox sinews. This cruelty moved our Saints to help them quarry the stones, carry the heavy loads laid on them, and render them a thousand other good services; they even bought a beast of burden to relieve them in carrying the materials that they were forced to bear in baskets on their shoulders. After three years of this exercise of charity, which did not prevent them from working at their trade for their own living and to continue their alms, Saint Leo withdrew to Mount Feltro, where a bishop's city has since been built which bears his name, Leopolis or San Leone.

As for Saint Marinus, he remained at Rimini until the buildings were finished, still continuing to help the faithful in every way he could. In spite of his great fatigue, he did not fail to perform faithfully his prayers and his usual devotions, and to afflict his body with long fasts and other austerities little compatible with such unremitting work. But when the city was entirely rebuilt, the Holy Spirit filled him so abundantly with His light and with the gift of speech that he began to preach the faith, to draw the idolaters to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. His preaching was not without fruit: he had the happiness of converting several pagans, and even some priests of the idols, who left that impious and sacrilegious office to profess Christianity. The devil could not bear this happy success; here is the means he used to thwart it. A woman of Dalmatia maintained that Saint Marinus was her husband and ought to take her to live with him. Her effrontery went so far as to summon him before the judge for this, and at the same time to accuse him of being a Christian. The man of God feared neither death nor torments; but, fearing that the prefect, out of aversion for his religion, might oblige him to live with this wicked woman, who was nothing to him, he fled secretly to Mount Titanus, to which he has given his name, and remained hidden there a whole year in a cave, without seeing anyone, completely separated from all the men there were on earth.

His life in this cave was admirable: he took only roots and wild herbs that he found round about, with water that trickled drop by drop from the rock; and even these he took only after None, so as to keep a continual fast. His sleep was so short that it did not deserve to be called rest: what rest could he take on a stone which, far from relieving his body, tormented it further by its hardness? He observed to the letter what Our Lord recommends in the Gospel, to pray always and never to cease; for either he was singing psalms or he was absorbed in the contemplation of divine truths. The evil spirit, unable to bear such great holiness, often made all kinds of wild beasts appear round his door, uttering frightful cries and howls; but the Saint, arming himself with the sign of the cross, remained undaunted, and by his constancy forced this enemy of men to quit the field of battle. After a year he was discovered by some herdsmen, who made him known in the city. The woman who had already brought a suit against him came to find him and renew her claims; but since she was acting only by the operation of the devil by whom she was possessed, the Saint made the saving sign of the cross over her, happily delivered her from so pernicious a guest, and sent her away wholly converted.

His reputation spread throughout the country, and many came to find him, to receive from his charity either instruction in their ignorance or relief in their troubles. He made great conversions: a patrician who wished to drive him out of his cave was punished on the spot for it with paralysis; Marinus healed him in body and soul, making him embrace the faith with fifty-three persons of his family. The bishop of Rimini (Italy,

legation of Forlì), touched by so many marvels, called him to the city and conferred on him the Order of deacon, so that he could solemnly baptise those whom he drew to the Christian religion. He also made Saint Leo a priest. Saint Marinus then went back to his cave, where he continued his exercises until his death, which took place about the year 307.

His body was buried in his own cell, which he had turned into an oratory. A town has since been built on the spot, called San Marino; it is only five miles from San Leone. It is the capital of a little republic called the Republic of San Marino, in the States of the Church.

The relics of Saint Marinus are venerated there with great devotion, in a church served by an archpriest, a choirmaster and ten priests. The Saint is also honoured at Pavia, at Rimini and in several other dioceses of Italy.

As for the cave where he lived so holily, it is called *Poenitentia Sancti Marini*: “the penance of Saint Marinus”.

Saint Marinus is represented: 1. with the chisel and the tools proper to the stonecutter beside him; 2. condemning a bear, which had devoured his ass, to carry on the services of that animal, which probably helped him to carry building materials.

Acta Sanctorum; Petrus de Natalibus.

Saint Rose of Viterbo, Virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Francis

1252. — Pope: Innocent IV. — Emperor of Germany: Conrad IV.

> *Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.*
>
> *I can do all things in Him who strengthens me.*
>
> *Philippians 4:13.*

Saint Rose was born in 1235 at Viterbo, capital of the Patrimony of Saint Peter, of parents more remarkable for their virtues than for their fortune or the lustre of their origin. Her father, whose name was John, was a man esteemed for his incomparable uprightness; Catherine, her mother, was a model of good sense, of modesty, and of unshakeable fidelity to her religious duties.

Scarcely had she come into the world when she was carried to the baptismal font, where she received the name of Rose. From the first moments of her life she gave some signs of her future greatness. She never asked for her mother’s breast, she was never heard to wail or cry, she was never seen to weep. No doubt she was keeping her tears and her cries for a better use. Her face, always calm, tranquil and gentle, was lit at times by an intelligent and gracious smile; and soon her gaze, which rose and fixed itself angelically on heaven, left the astonished persons who approached her under the power and charm of a religious admiration. It has never been doubted that God gave her the use of reason early.

Her parents were not slow to recognise the worth and beauty of the treasure heaven had entrusted to them; so they used everything their love and faith could suggest to set this child on the road of her destiny. Her tongue was not yet loosed when they were teaching her to pronounce the holy names of Jesus and Mary. They would not have wished other words to come first from her mouth. And since first actions are also those that shape the bent of the soul, they directed hers towards piety. However, they needed no great efforts to form her to virtue. Keenly stirred by grace, her nature inclined to it with ardour. She had a taste only for the things of God. From the age of two she listened with insatiable eagerness to the instructions on eternal truths that her father and mother gave her with touching and artless simplicity. Instead of playing like all children of her age, she spent the greater part of her time before the holy pictures that adorned the walls of her modest home, especially before those of the most holy Virgin and the divine Precursor; and there, motionless, on her knees,

her hands joined, she expressed, even more by the liveliness of her gaze than by the movements of her tongue, the feelings of veneration, tenderness and filial confidence with which her soul was filled.

When she was able to walk, the only outing she enjoyed was going to church. There she held herself in so modest and recollected a posture that those present were greatly edified. The august ceremonies of our holy religion made a deep impression on her heart. The divine word, which she seemed to listen to with ears and eyes, filled her with the tenderest emotions. Back at home, she would repeat the longest sermons, reproducing the tones and imitating the gestures of the preachers with such naturalness, grace, conviction and fire that she charmed and moved her hearers, and often brought back to God those of them who had had the misfortune to stray from Him.

Rose advanced less in age than in virtue. Her heart was so filled with her God that she thought only of Him and loved only to hear Him spoken of. Hence that great taste she felt for retirement, and that keen pleasure she found in going to church, especially to the church of Saint Francis, for whom she had a singular devotion. When she was present at the celebration of the divine mysteries, it could be seen that her recollection and her transports grew as she came to appreciate their holiness and greatness more. Now, wholly absorbed in the adoration of the sovereign Majesty present, she seemed as if annihilated: all was still in her limbs, on her lips and in her features. Now, her breast heaving, her gaze keenly fixed on the altar, her face aglow, her mouth half open, it seemed that her soul, unable to resist the fire that devoured it, was on the point of leaving her body to fly towards the divine object of her love.

As soon as this pious child was capable of acts of virtue, the first care of the heavenly Father was to lead her to make herself in all things like Jesus, her divine model. So she resolved early to imitate Him in His humility, His silence, His spirit of poverty, His love of suffering and His obedience to His parents. From her tenderest age she showed a great aversion for the world, for its conversations, its amusements and its vanities. If she shunned even the company of little girls of her own age, it was certainly not from pride. Finding in herself, on the contrary, nothing she had not received, she regarded herself as an earthworm deserving the contempt and rejection of all.

Although her parents were not in a position to give her anything superfluous, she always complained of too great an abundance. So she came to make herself very poor in the very midst of her poverty. Clad in a simple robe of very rough and coarse wool, which served less to preserve decency than to tear her flesh, she went about winter and summer barefoot, bareheaded, her hair dishevelled and left to the whims of the winds. This more than ordinary simplicity in dress went with a no less astonishing simplicity in food. As she never accepted foods fitter to please the taste than to sustain the strength, force had to be used to make her take what was necessary. Most often she was content with a little bread for her day, thus preluding the severe mortifications and incredible fasts to which she was later to give herself. “They that are Christ’s,” says Saint Paul, “crucify their flesh.” It would not be enough, then, for our holy child to humble it in the eyes of all and deprive it of everything; she must torture it by scourging. To the hair shirt, therefore, she added the discipline.

But if she was filled with a holy cruelty against herself, her compassionate and sensitive soul was moved with the most touching tenderness towards the suffering members of Jesus Christ. The least pain, the slightest suffering in her neighbour was enough to make her turn pale or draw tears from her. To relieve him, she always began by imploring the help of the Almighty upon him, and then addressed to him the most affectionate and consoling words. Although she was very small, older persons listened to her with pleasure, because they felt that it was more than a child’s soul speaking through her mouth. But it may be said that if she succeeded in healing many wounds and bringing joy and hope to life again in afflicted hearts, it was because from the first approach she became infirm with the infirm and suffering with those who suffered.

It was towards the poor, again, that her incomprehensible charity shone out. Seeing her divine Jesus in their persons, she loved them more than herself. In spite of her poverty, she always found the means of helping them. Those who could not go and beg public charity, because they were kept at home by some infirmity, especially stirred her compassion. She had their dwellings pointed out to her, and brought them, whatever the weather, always barefoot and bareheaded, through rain, ice and snow, everything she had been able to procure. When she saw any in the streets, without waiting for them to humble themselves by holding out a suppliant hand, she ran to meet them, approached them with an affable air, and after speaking to them a few words full of the most respectful tenderness, slipped them furtively all she possessed. Most often it was only the little piece of bread she had accepted for her day, the pious use of which she carefully hid from her mother. As the needy knew her extreme kindness, they came every day in fairly large numbers to her door. When her parents were away, she would take all the provisions and distribute them with as much pleasure and joy as if she had herself received the most precious treasures. But when her father or her mother was at home, the portion was naturally much less abundant. Then she accompanied her offering with words so cordial and so tender, and the feeling painted on her features was so full of sadness and grief, that the poor wretches, astonished, went away quite satisfied and well content. They celebrated her everywhere as charity itself embodied in the soul of a child.

But if Rose was full of tenderness and charity for the poor, we may say that she carried to the highest degree the love, respect and obedience that a child owes to her parents. Keenly convinced that they were, in her regard, the most august representatives of God on earth, she showed them by her words and actions the feelings of pious deference, sincere esteem and perfect veneration that she bore them from the depths of her soul. With what insight did she not foresee their needs in order to meet them! With what promptness, what good grace did she not carry out their orders and anticipate their wishes! Outpourings of the heart, gentle words, kindly manners, smiling looks: she used every means to show them the great, vast, deep affection with which she was filled towards them.

The example of so many virtues already caused her to be venerated as a saint. From all sides people gathered on the roads she was to take, to see or hear her. This eagerness caused her neither confusion nor vainglory, but it pained her because it broke the continuity of her converse with her God. The powerful attraction she felt for the contemplative life drew her towards retirement; from the age of seven she resolved to shut herself away.

At that time there was only one convent in Viterbo: the one in which her father and mother were employed as servants. The nuns who lived there had originally been only young girls who had gathered under the direction of a pious lady to edify one another by the practice of virtue. But, more and more desirous of rising to perfection, they bound themselves to observe enclosure, committed themselves to a poor life, and adopted the Rule of Saint Damian, a religious of the Order of Saint Benedict. That is why, in confirming their institute, Pope Gregory IX gave them the title of Nuns of Saint Damian. The people of Viterbo were so impressed by the calm and holy life of these good Sisters that, fearing they might be obliged to disperse for want of space and air, they built them at the city’s expense a monastery and a church known by the name of Santa Maria delle Rose. Our little child made incredible efforts to enter this pious retreat; but God, who wished to make her pass through a state of pure contemplation in order afterwards to send her into the world to work for the conversion of souls, did not allow her to be admitted. The superior objected to her still too tender age, and to the complete lack of means that she could offer a community whose members lived only on the little property each novice brought on entering. This refusal only increased her inclination for solitude. She made one for herself in her father’s house, where she shut herself up from the age of seven, firmly resolved to spend there all the days and all the moments of her life.

Scarcely had she entered it when, following the transports of her love for the suffering Jesus, she gave herself up, to imitate and please Him, to all the exercises of the most austere penance and of the most intimate union

with her God. Constantly clothed in the hair shirt, which she wore directly against her flesh, she took the discipline several times every day, but so long and so hard that, exhausted with fatigue, she fell senseless on the floor in a veritable pool of blood. Apart from the three and seven days running that she often spent without taking any kind of food, she never allowed herself anything but bread and water, and that in so tiny a quantity that she could evidently live only by an extraordinary help from the Godhead. When she was overcome by sleep, she threw herself fully dressed on her wretched bed, and at the first waking, hastened no doubt by her smarting pains, she rose to begin a new round of tortures. Alarmed at the sight of these incredible excesses, her parents made the most energetic efforts from the beginning to draw her out of her foul and dark cell and obtain from her another line of conduct. But she showed them, her eyes in tears, that the glory of God and the interest of her poor soul called for a very austere life, and she redoubled the number of her fasts, the harshness of her hair shirts and the rigour of her macerations.

Now suffering that is willed, loved and sought purifies the heart, ennobles the feelings, raises the thoughts, detaches the mind from earth and carries it towards heaven. Hence this lovable child found prayer so easy. She spent the whole day in it and the greater part of the nights, and her soul was so absorbed in it that the loudest noises seemed not to reach her. Nothing could distract her. Her parents and the strangers who came to her cell to contemplate, through the door that their pious indiscretion gently set ajar, the admirable spectacle of her angelic fervour often found her plunged in a meditation so deep that her body, insensible and motionless, made them take her for dead or fainted. It was in vain that they hastened to bring her back to her senses. Only after several hours, and sometimes at the end of a whole day, did she come out of her rapture and ecstasy and return to movement and life.

This intimate and continual converse with God was for her the source of a knowledge, a strength and a happiness that the Holy Spirit can indeed communicate, but that no human activity could acquire. Thus, when in answer to the various questions put to her she began to speak of the Power, the Mercy, the Justice, the Beauty, the Glory and all the perfections of God, she did so with feelings so tender and so lofty, expressions so simple yet so ardent, movements so compelling and so lively, a fruitfulness so sudden and so inexhaustible, that all who heard her proclaimed aloud that it was in the very bosom of eternal Truth that she drew such extraordinary and sublime knowledge, and that it was the very One who had inspired the Prophets and all the sacred writers who was speaking through her lips. Likewise, when visitors, pitying her age and the rigour of her penances, urged her to bring some relief to her harsh practices, she set forth the happiness there is in suffering with such charm and eloquence that it was soon seen that suffering was a real felicity for her. And indeed the greatest of her sorrows was to have none. It was certainly not that she did not feel all that is painful and poignant in pain; but, knowing that suffering helps to make us more like our divine Model, not only did she delight in torments, but she had recourse to a thousand means of making more for herself.

However, these rigid privations, these oft-repeated scourgings, this severe confinement in a narrow and ill-aired place, together with the constant occupation of her mind and heart, brought on her, at the age of eight, a serious illness that lasted nearly fifteen months and several times nearly brought her to the grave. It began with an excessive weakness that soon turned into consumption. What a touching sight was this little virgin, stretched on her poor pallet, continually burning with fever, never uttering a single complaint, never opening her mouth except to bless the Lord, keeping silence only to apply herself to prayer with as much calm and attention as if she had been in perfect health! What grieved her most was being obliged to keep still without being allowed to macerate herself as usual. So she complained to her parents, her friends and to strangers of her excessive delicacy, and begged them all with the most pressing entreaties that, since her arm was too weak to make her expiate her sins by voluntary pains, they would kindly make up for her unfortunate powerlessness by whipping her with all their strength, for the love of her adorable Jesus who had been so harshly scourged for her. Tears flowed down every face and sobs broke from every breast when this poor child, exhausted by long sufferings and with scarcely more than a breath of life left, was seen to raise herself

painfully on her bed and ask, with joined hands, weeping eyes and a voice more than moving, that new torments be added to those she was enduring. But if men refused to grant her wishes, heaven fulfilled them in the promptest and most rigorous way: her pains grew keener and keener, and there came a moment when, the fever having fallen, her weakness was so great that, all pale and entirely exhausted, she seemed to be no more. On the eve of Saint John the Baptist she had a very sweet vision which we cannot refrain from relating, because it was of the highest consequence for all the rest of her life. As her strength was still failing, and her last breath had for some time been expected from hour to hour, her cell and the whole house were full of young girls and pious ladies, her friends, who wished to assist her at that supreme moment. Now, at the moment when, motionless and without a pulse, she was regarded as already dead, all at once her eyelids opened, her gaze became fixed, her face sparkled with joy, an extraordinary vigour spread through all her limbs, and, sitting up suddenly on her bed, she cried: “All of you who are here, why do you not greet the Queen of the world? Do you not see Mary, the august Mother of my God, coming forward? Let us hasten to meet her: let us prostrate ourselves before her majesty.” At these words she rose, went with a quick and firm step to the door of her cell, and fell on her knees with all the persons present; and while humility, modesty, the tenderest devotion and the keenest love were painted on all her features, her gaze stayed constantly fixed on the object that drew her. She did not utter a single word. It seemed that her soul, completely absorbed in the contemplation of the great spectacle before her eyes, was incapable of bringing her body out of the complete immobility in which it was plunged.

The heavenly Queen appeared to her in all the splendour of her graces and the charm of her goodness. She was clothed in the most magnificent ornaments, and the bright, immense light that surrounded her and penetrated her through and through had nevertheless nothing in it but what was very pleasant and very gentle. The power and greatness revealed in her majestic bearing and on her resplendent face were admirably set off by the attraction of that merciful tenderness which forms the ground of her nature. Around her stood, in bright crowns, several groups of glorious lovers of Jesus. They were less tall, less luminous and less beautiful than their divine Sovereign. Their faces, all radiant with innocence and love, with happiness and joy, were framed in bands of long shining hair that flowed in golden streams over their virginal shoulders.

As soon as this blessed child had recovered the breath and speech that the rapture of her senses and the superabundance of her happiness had made her lose, she suddenly broke the silence and cried: “O my Queen, O my joy, O my consolation, O my happiness! You have some charge to give me, some order to lay on me; speak, speak, for your handmaid is listening.”

Then the Mother of God drew near, embraced her with the most affectionate tenderness, and in that calm, delightful, ravishing voice which would bring serenity, strength and happiness to the weakest and most troubled hearts, she said to her: “Most pure Rose, whose stem, resting in the very bosom of the most brilliant of lilies, has crowned itself with the most beautiful and most fragrant of flowers, you see me splendidly adorned, like the bride of a great king, decked with precious jewels and surrounded by innocent and richly clad virgins. Take, after our example, the most sumptuous ornaments you can find, and after visiting the churches of Saint John the Baptist and of my well-beloved servant, the poor Francis,[1] you shall go to that of Santa Maria in Poggio, where your hair will be cut. You shall then strip yourself of all those futile liveries of the world, and Dona Sita will clothe you with the holy habit of penance. For the cord, you shall take the one belonging to your little donkey. Having thus celebrated your nuptials with the great King of glory and given thanks to the Most High, you shall return to your cell where, clothed in the habit of the Third Order of Saint Francis, you shall apply yourself to praying to and praising your God. Later, when the time has come, you shall arm yourself with confidence and courage, and with all the zeal of which you are capable you shall go through the cities to reprove, convince and exhort, and to bring back the strayed to the paths of salvation. If such conduct draws upon you sarcasm and mockery, persecutions and pains, you shall bear them with patience, for they will be for you a source of merits and an occasion of precious rewards. But woe to those

who oppose you and persist in hindering you in the accomplishment of your mission! They shall be a prey to the saddest calamities, while those who second you in your pious efforts shall find themselves enriched with all the graces of the Lord." Having said these words, she blessed her and withdrew, leaving her as if plunged in an ocean of happiness and joy.

Rose, accompanied by an immense crowd that had run up at the first news of what was happening, went to the churches of Saint John the Baptist and Saint Francis, where she shed many tears of love, gratitude and joy; but it was above all in that of Santa Maria in Poggio that she was obliged to give free course to her ardour and her transports. After the Mass celebrated solemnly for her intention, she stripped herself of all her worldly finery, prostrated herself at the foot of the altar, and, aloud, between the hands of the priest and in the presence of all the people, made the three vows of poverty, obedience and perpetual virginity. Turning then to the lady Sita, she begged her to finish the ceremony begun by the minister of the Lord. Sita thought herself too unworthy to render her such a service. "Such is the will of Mary, our Immaculate Mother," replied the child: "would you refuse to fulfil so holy a duty?" Sita submitted: she cut her hair and clothed her in the habit of the Third Order of Penance, which the priest had imposed on her. When, after the ceremony, she turned towards the people to go back to her place, a cry of admiration burst from every breast and tears of tenderness flowed from every eye. A sudden stir ran through that immense crowd. Everyone wanted to come near her, to see her, to touch her. There is in holiness something like a powerful virtue that besieges hearts and draws them. How indeed could one not be moved at the sight of a little girl of ten who, with full and complete knowledge, had just given herself to God without reserve and for ever? Her bare feet, her body worn by privations, her eyes lovingly fastened on a crucifix that she pressed in her hands, her brow on which the most lovable candour shone with heavenly serenity, her angel's face standing out radiant and tender from the shapeless folds of a coarse tunic, as a delicate and pure lily might from the midst of rough thorns: all this produced a marvellous effect on souls.

When she was outside the church, the people wished to hear her. Speech sprang from her lips, abundant, majestic, aflame. She spoke with such vehemence and feeling of the misfortune of those who live far from God; she drew, over her crucifix, which she bathed with tears, so moving, so heartrending and so vivid a picture of the deplorable state to which sin had reduced her lovable Jesus; she used, to bring the guilty to repentance, arguments so forceful and so compelling, that there was no heart that was not overwhelmed, none that did not own itself vanquished. Sobs broke out everywhere; on all sides there was nothing but an immense outburst of voices rising to heaven to implore mercy and pardon. Never perhaps had the word of God, so effective and so penetrating when it is handled by an innocent and pure soul, acted with such power and mastery on the mass of a great people through the mouth of a simple little child. As soon as she had finished speaking, Rose hastened back to her home. A secret inspiration moved her to find herself alone again with God alone. So, slipping away as soon as possible from the dense crowd that accompanied her, she shut herself up in the silence of her cell and began to pour out before her heavenly Spouse the feelings of joy, humility, confusion, gratitude, love and complete self-abandonment with which her soul overflowed. But Jesus had called her back to solitude only to speak more intimately to her heart. He let her glimpse that if He had espoused her in the Order of Penance, it was so that she might become more perfectly like Him through suffering. From that moment she was seen to multiply her privations and increase her tortures. She struck her breast with a large stone which she had prepared for the purpose. Every day, and several times a day, she tore her body with harsh scourgings, which she gave herself for whole hours. It mattered little to her that the blood gushed out and flooded the floor; when the coarse folds of her robe of homespun had stuck fast to her wide wounds, she tore them away violently so as to take off strips of flesh.

One day, when her soul was pouring itself out as usual in feelings of the most ardent compassion, Jesus Christ appeared to her hanging on the cross, His hands and feet nailed, His head crowned with thorns, His face bruised and disfigured, His limbs frightfully stretched and dislocated, His flesh torn to the bone, His

whole body bathed in foaming blood that spurted from the wide, deep wounds He had received from His executioners. At this sight a piercing cry escaped her lips: a sharp, keen, crushing pain seized her in all her limbs; she fell fainting with her face to the ground. When she rose, her breast was too oppressed and her mouth could not utter a single word; but while her gaze fixed itself with a poignant eagerness on the great, silent Victim, an unknown work went on in her whole being: her veins swelled, her nerves were wrought upon, her sensibility grew keener, and her heart, widening and deepening, became like an abyss into which, from the breast of Jesus, all the bitterness, all the anguish, all the sorrows rushed in excess. Stirred by so many woes, and like that unhappy wife who, suddenly seeing the object of her love bloodied, crushed, dying in some terrible catastrophe, instinctively raises a sinewy arm against herself and seems, by torturing herself, to soften and even avert the rigour of too cruel a fate, Rose tore her hair, seized with a clenched hand the large stone that lay beside her, dealt herself frightful blows with it on the shoulders and breast, and, when the streams of blood flowing from her mouth had opened a free passage to her voice, she cried: “O my Jesus, who then has reduced you to this lamentable state? Who has so inhumanly bruised and torn you? Who has so cruelly pierced you and fastened you to this horrible wood?” — “It is my love, my ardent love for men,” the Saviour answered; “it is the sin of which they make themselves guilty.” — “Your love for men!” this admirable child replied, “then it is for me that you have suffered so much!… The sin of men! Then it is I, miserable sinner, who have caused you all these torments!” Then, carried away by all the fury of a holy despair, she uttered the most lamentable cries, shed the bitterest tears in torrents, and tore, tortured and beat herself until her bones broke.

Considering next that it was not only her sins but those of all men that had caused her God so much suffering, and that arm His justice every day against the earth, she placed herself between angered heaven and the guilty world. She begged the Lord to let all the shafts of His wrath fall on her head and to close His eyes to the crimes of so many men who know not what they do. To obtain, above all for Viterbo, the treasures of mercy she implored so ardently, she sought to move her divine Spouse by associating herself more and more with His sufferings, tearing off her skin and pieces of her flesh with her nails or a knife. Unable to struggle long against the inexpressible pains she was feeling, she fell senseless on the floor a second time, and rose only to go on bruising herself while contemplating her crucified Jesus.

Then the vision disappeared. But in withdrawing, the Saviour did not calm her sufferings. He left her only a burning thirst for the salvation of souls, which for a moment triumphed over her excessive weakness and led her to go through all the streets of the city to bring the people back to virtuous dispositions. She summoned them with loud cries to the principal squares; and there, to make herself heard by the great crowd which, driven by curiosity, the spirit of faith and the breath of the Almighty, poured in by every avenue, she gave herself up to the heavenly inspirations of her heart. The crucifix she held in her hands, the divine fire shining in her eyes, the touching expression of her bloodstained face, the vivid, forceful and true picture she drew of the dreadful disorders in which people were living and of the terrible chastisements with which they were threatened, made so deep an impression on minds that even some who had come with the avowed aim of contradicting and mocking went away quite silent and moved. She repeated her instructions several times in the various squares; and when evening came, she went to the church of Santa Maria in Poggio to complete publicly before God, by her prayers, groans and tears, what her preaching had so happily begun. But scarcely had she prostrated herself before the most holy Sacrament and, striking her breast, raised a suppliant voice to her heavenly Spouse, when, exhausted by cares, torments and fatigue, she sank down and fainted for the third time.

She was carried to her home; but as soon as she had come to her senses, the divine fire seized and inflamed her again. She freed herself from the arms of those who wished to hold her back and went again through all the streets of the city, crying to the people in a lamentable voice to be converted and to turn away by fervent supplications the avenging blows with which heaven was about to strike them. The whole city was stirred.

The Catholics brought forth worthy fruits of penance, and several of those who had let themselves fall into error opened their eyes to the faith and their hearts to repentance. But the principal leaders of the imperial party, fearing that as a result of her preaching the people of Viterbo would shake off the yoke of Frederick II and return to the obedience of the Holy Father, formed the plan of destroying her. Dangers would not intimidate her. The glory of God, the care of her own perfection and the salvation of souls were the only principles her conscience would consult, and she would follow their imperious laws without ostentation as without weakness.

So it was that scarcely a few months had passed before a notable change had already come about in every quarter of Viterbo. There was no more talk of murders, robberies, vengeances, insults and hatreds. Crime had given way to virtue; religion rose triumphant everywhere; and faith, once more the rule of beliefs and morals, brought new riches every day to the crown of glory that each was weaving for eternity.

For nearly four years already little Rose had been spreading in Viterbo, together with the good odour of her virtues, the ever-growing charm of her words, her miracles and her benefits. The ascendancy she had gained there was so powerful that she seemed to hold in her hands the springs of all souls, to direct the aspirations of all hearts, to give movement and energy to every will. Rose beheld with a feeling of inexpressible satisfaction the delightful spectacle offered by this happy city; but far from attributing the cause of it to her good example, her preaching and her zeal, she ceaselessly raised her hands to heaven to thank the Lord for having opened the treasure of His mercies upon her dear homeland and brought back to the paths of salvation so many unhappy people who were running blindly towards the abysses of perdition. Knowing, indeed, the price of souls from the horrible torments to which Jesus subjected Himself to save them, she felt the most smarting pains at the sight of the pernicious efforts made by the courtiers of Frederick II to stop the torrent that was carrying the whole population towards piety. There was no insult, derision, sarcasm, calumny or persecution that they did not use to discourage those who gave themselves to the service of the Lord and make them fall back into impiety. But the more formidable the malice of these enemies became, the more vigilant and active our admirable child showed herself in paralysing its evil effects. While in the silence of her retreat she redoubled her prayers, her fasts, her macerations and her vigils, she was seen outside multiplying her journeys and her instructions to encourage the weak and support the strong.

But the heretics, humiliated and vanquished, only became more obstinate, more ardent and more furious. They took counsel together; and to prevent her from fighting them and bringing to light the odious plot of their conduct, and above all to prevent her from lessening the sympathy of the people of Viterbo for Frederick by quickening their love for religion and the sovereign Pontiff, they gave her notice that if she appeared in public again to continue her preaching, she would not be long in receiving the punishment of her imprudence and temerity.

Rose was not intimidated. She answered that here below there was only one Being whose fear she bore in her heart: He on whom the whole universe depended, He who would one day judge them themselves, He whom we must love above all because He created and redeemed us, He therefore whom we must obey in preference to all, the God of heaven and earth; that this God had commanded her to make known, respected and practised the religion He had come to found, and to check the guilty audacity of blind or perverted men who, stirred up by the enemy of all good and led by the wretched bait of a few temporal advantages, strive to make fruitless the labour and sufferings of their Saviour. She said that, the Lord having prescribed to her to exercise her ministry in spite of the opposition and the personal dangers to which the fulfilment of His supreme will might expose her, she would pursue her mission with ardour, to the full extent and for as long as it had pleased Him to determine. She added that the power on which they relied did not overawe her; that their threats and evil designs would not make her change anything in the ways she had entered upon several years before; that, far from trembling before prison, exile, tortures and the most violent death, she would think herself only too happy to undergo them for the love of a God who had suffered so much for her, and

who was already showing her from the height of heaven the place reserved for her constancy and fidelity; that they could therefore carry out their plans by bringing down on her head the most repeated blows of their fury: for as long as God had not fixed the end of her heavenly mandate, and there remained a breath in her breast, a movement in her heart, a thread of voice on her lips, she would go forth, armed with confidence and courage, to proclaim to the people with all the zeal of which she was capable the all-important truths of the faith.

At this protest, so forceful and so firm, the anger of the heretics rose to fury; they went to find the Prefect and gave him a false and very black picture of the alleged excesses to which Rose was giving herself against the Emperor's government. They told him that, stirred up by her subversive speeches, the people of Viterbo, who already had only a cold indifference for Frederick, were on the point of rising to put themselves again under the protection of the Holy Father; and that if he wished to forestall the danger of this imminent revolt and revive in the city and province of Viterbo the spirit of attachment and submission to Caesar their master, he had only one course to take: to rid himself of Rose by having her expelled from the city immediately. The Count of Chieti was thrown into confusion at the mere word of a rising; he at once summoned Rose and her parents and, without giving himself time to accuse them or hear them, thundered against them the sentence of immediate exile. Rose left the city at once with her parents; but when they found themselves in the open country, their perplexity became extreme. Dark and stormy clouds rolled across the sky; the night was damp and black; a sharp, icy wind blew without ceasing from the north; and the snow, which was beginning to fall in large flakes, had in a few moments covered the plain, effaced the tracks of the roads, filled every hollow of the ground, and hidden under an immense sheet the thin film of ice that had formed on the streams, marshes and ponds.

After several hours of fatigue they arrived, frozen and half dead, at the end of one of the mountain gorges into which they had ventured. Obliged to keep going forward, they had to make for the heights. Their strength was exhausted, the darkness was horrible, and as they climbed, the ground became steeper, the wind more violent, the cold more intense and the snow deeper. So they huddled against a rock, and, so as not to be overtaken by a fatal sleep, they waited standing for daybreak. As soon as dawn appeared they set out again, and after wandering a long time they arrived, at a fairly late hour of the morning, opposite the fortress of Soriano, which stood out with its standard on one of the rocks across from them. Only towards noon did they enter the town and receive from the charity of one of its inhabitants a piece of bread to sustain their frail existence, and a poor lodging to rest their weary limbs. At the sight of all the dreadful disorders of which this unhappy town was the scene, Rose felt her heart torn. For several days she could take no kind of food nor taste a single moment of rest. The outrages her Beloved received echoed in her soul and produced in it an indefinable sadness, a supreme affliction which her strength seemed unable to bear. Scarcely a few months had passed since Rose's arrival in this town when all the inhabitants, rich and poor, touched to the bottom of their souls by the fervour, zeal and high holiness of which this young girl gave such constant signs, unable to resist the light of truth that shone in her words, and carried away besides by the force of the many surprising wonders she scattered daily under her steps, ended by yielding to her exhortations, abandoned their errors, renounced their disorderly life, and gave themselves entirely and for ever to the practice of their holy religion. It was not only the inhabitants of Soriano who drew such precious fruits of salvation from the preaching of this admirable child. From all the surrounding villages men and women could also be seen hastening to her; surprised at the astonishing marvels they heard told, they brought her their sick, commended themselves to her prayers, listened attentively to her exhortations, and went back to their homes as resolved to change their lives as they were keenly pleased with the cures and other benefits they had obtained. Rose learned that the inhabitants of Vitorchiano, led astray by a sorceress in the pay of the emperor's government, had conceived a deep hatred for the teachings and practices of religion, had separated themselves from the Holy See and were living in a frightful heap of iniquities. Nothing more was needed to draw her to this new centre of unceasing fatigues and perilous combats. She therefore assembled the people

of Soriano, rejoiced with them in the many graces they had received from heaven in the course of that year, begged them to remain faithful to the promises they had made to the Lord, and, after telling them that, in obedience to the inspirations of her heart as well as to the orders of the Most High, she would never forget them in her humble prayers, she announced to them that her mission called her elsewhere and that she was about to leave them. At these words a cry of grief broke from every breast, sobs burst out on all sides, tears flowed down every face, every arm reached out to hold her back: there was no one who did not feel keenly the greatness of the loss they were about to suffer. The poor remembered that she had fed them; the sick, that they owed her their health; sinners, their conversion; the just, their progress in the knowledge and love of God; all, that they had obtained some signal benefit from her: it seemed to them that in this young girl it was their hope, their happiness, their life that was about to flee. Rose tried to console them by reminding them that they had in heaven a tender Father and a devoted Mother who would watch over them, help them in their needs and load them with their favours; and to escape from the emotions that were more and more overcoming her soul, she hastened to make her way through the grieving crowd and take the road to Vitorchiano with her beloved parents. Having commended herself to the most holy Virgin, to her good Angel, to the divine Precursor and to her seraphic Father, she went forward in the name of God, entered the town and began her mission.

The people of Vitorchiano already knew Rose, if not by sight, at least by reputation. Most of them had attended her preaching at Viterbo or Soriano, and all had heard of her as a girl extraordinary for her eloquence, her miracles and her virtues. So scarcely had she appeared in the town when the news of her arrival spread with lightning speed into the surrounding countryside. From all sides a multitude of men and women, of persons of every age and condition, were seen hastening up and gathering around her in an ardent, compact mass, burning to see and hear her. She had not yet opened her mouth to speak when a sudden stir ran through that vast assembly: emotion had seized every soul, tears had sprung to every eye. Her bare feet; her uncovered head; her modest and calm bearing; her humbly lowered gaze; her crucifix, which she pressed to her heart with a lovingly trembling hand; her pale, angelic face, animated yet tranquil, on which, through the sacred character of suffering, the sweet and ravishing candour of a deified soul seemed to be painted; her coarse, worn robe, held up by a still poorer cord, whose dark colour set off so well the admirable serenity of her brow, like that dark cloud which, letting us glimpse the peaceful star of night through a slight rift, seems to clothe it with a more radiant and purer brightness: all this gave this engaging little girl an air of tender piety, of lovable greatness, of attractive and sublime majesty, which, winning hearts for her, led them to espouse her feelings and to submit to her wishes even before she had made them known. When the crowd had ceased to grow, Rose raised her tear-wet gaze to heaven for a moment, and then, in a voice broken by sobs, let fall upon this softened people the great and sorrowful thoughts that filled her soul. She set forth the many terrible calamities with which the devil, ever ungrateful towards those who serve him, had overwhelmed this city once blessed by heaven; showed the signal deceits he had used to seduce and draw them away; and after showing them the wrong they had done in renouncing their ancient faith to throw themselves into a party which, by perverting minds with lies and hearts by incitement to every excess, was leading them to their eternal loss, she begged them to return to a God whose justice is always disarmed by the tears of sincere penance. A week had not yet passed when the most notable inhabitants of the place were seen living according to her wishes and not fearing, the better to satisfy the Lord, to give themselves publicly to the exercises of the most austere penance. Of all the heretics, the indifferent and the impious, who were counted by thousands in the town and territory of

Vitorchiano, there were only a few who, held captive by the pleasures of a licentious life, obstinately refused to open their eyes to the light.

To triumph over their prejudices and show with great evidence the divinity of our holy religion, she had an immense quantity of wood brought to the public square, and after having a pyre made of it, she gave the sign

to light it. Sparks and smoke rose, the brushwood crackled, the blaze spread; heat and terror radiated on all sides. Now, while the onlookers drew sharply back and the flames shot up towards heaven in violent whirls, Rose came forward with a calm face and, with a firm and assured step, entered the fire!… A piercing, terrible cry burst from every breast; instinctively every arm reached forward to pull her out. But what was the general astonishment when, through the frightful mantle of flames surrounding her, she was seen to climb calmly to the top of the pyre!… There she stood upright, crossed her hands on her breast, and, her gaze lovingly fixed on heaven, seemed to converse with her Beloved. That pose, that ecstatic air, that mouth half-opening delightfully under the inspiration of her prayer, that face on which the splendour of a seraphic smile was beginning to blossom, that throne of fire which held her raised in space and which, crumbling little by little under the sway of the destroying element, seemed to tell her again that a soul created for God must detach itself from the perishable grandeurs of earth to fly towards the eternal bounties of heaven; and those flames which, on reaching her feet, lost their usual direction, drew aside with apparent respect, wrapped her round without touching her, and curved into a vault above her head, to vanish then in a long spire into immeasurable heights: all this gave her such an aspect of greatness and majesty that she no longer looked like a mere mortal. Soon her face lit up with the keenest enthusiasm, her feelings overflowed, and, like Saint Crescentia of old in her cauldron of molten lead, resin and boiling pitch, she intoned in a sweet but strong voice the admirable canticle, “Blessed art thou, O Lord, mighty God of our fathers”, which the three young Hebrews first made heard in the furnace of Babylon. While she was thus inviting the angels and the stars, light and darkness, heat and cold, thunder and lightning, mountains and valleys, rivers and seas, plants and all living beings, to bless Him who, seated on high, bends down to look below, in heaven and on earth, upon all that His hand has drawn out of nothing, the people stood there stupefied, eyes fixed, mouths agape, unable to make a single movement or utter a single word. But when she came to the words *Benedicite, filii hominum, Domino*, and, addressing the assembly directly, cried out, “Children of men, bless the Lord, praise Him and glorify Him for ever”, an immense outburst of voices was heard. Everyone repeated: “Children of men, let us bless the Lord, praise Him and glorify Him for ever and ever.” Meanwhile the pyre, hollowed out and devoured by the fire, collapsed, and the young girl, suddenly thrown down into the vast depths of that burning mass, disappeared beneath a thick cloud of flames, sparks and smoke. But in an instant she rose again, came back to the surface and, her brow serene, her hands laid on her heart, walked to and fro on that blazing pedestal as she might have done on a green lawn or in a garden bright with flowers. At last, when the wood had been reduced to ashes and the fire had gone out, the people, unable to master the pious movements of their hearts, rushed towards little Rose to see her more closely, to touch her, to embrace her. Struck by the humble and modest bearing, imbued with the thought and love of God, that this dear child kept amid the inexpressible eagerness of which she was the object, they felt a real joy in proclaiming her holiness and in thanking the Lord aloud for having brought them into a religion whose divinity was shown by such great miracles and such beautiful virtues.

Some time afterwards Rose left Vitorchiano and went through the whole province, leaving everywhere the traces of the most signal benefits. There were a multitude of sick to whom she had restored health, of sinners she had converted, of just persons she had inflamed with the love of virtue, of systematic hostilities against religion and inveterate hatreds between citizens that she had made to disappear. When she had thus brought back to God all the souls she had the mission to evangelise, she took the road to Viterbo with her parents, after the death of Frederick. At the news of her return the inhabitants of that city were filled with extraordinary jubilation and went out in crowds to meet her. She would have liked to regain her home by the most solitary and roundabout ways; but, swept along by the multitude, which pressed on her from all sides and took away her freedom of movement, she was obliged to follow the route traced for her by the long files of a people drawn up in several ranks along the road leading to her house. On seeing again, after sixteen or eighteen months of painful separation, the blessed child whom they regarded as the consoler of the afflicted, the help of the poor, the light of souls and the deliverer of their homeland, these good people could not

restrain their cries of rejoicing and their transports.

As soon as she had reached her cell, Rose thought only of carrying out the plan she had formed so long before. She wished to separate herself from the world to live alone with God alone. Going out only once a day to hear holy Mass or to talk with her confessor, without whose consent she never did or undertook anything, she returned as soon as possible to her solitude, to continue with her heavenly Spouse, in mortification and prayer, that union of thought and heart which she burned to make more perfect each day. But as her door was continually besieged by a multitude of people who came to take her advice or commend themselves to her charity, she sought a deeper retreat.

The monastery of Santa Maria delle Rose drew her gaze more than ever. The poor, innocent, retired life of the sisters who lived there gave new strength to the powerful attraction that had always drawn her to that house. Without letting herself be stopped by the thought of the refusal she had already met with, she commended herself to her divine Master, to the most holy Virgin and to her seraphic Father Saint Francis, and went and threw herself at the feet of the Superior. She gave her a vivid and striking picture of the obstacles she found in her father's house to conversing with her Beloved, and begged her, with tears in her eyes, to be so good as to admit her into a community to which the needs of her poor soul and all the dearest affections of her heart had so long been calling her. By an adorable and beneficent disposition of Providence, the Superior did not think fit to grant her prayer. Persuaded, no doubt, that this angelic little girl would work more for the glory of God and the salvation of souls in her father's house than in a convent, she put forward various pretexts for not receiving her. However painful this sacrifice must have been to her heart, Rose submitted to it instantly, without difficulty and with good grace. Scarcely had she returned to her cell when a step taken by several young girls, her former friends, suddenly revealed to her the secret of that double inclination, for retirement and for the sanctification of her neighbour, which she had never ceased to feel. These young companions had kept their fervour during the eighteen months of her absence, and on her return they had nothing more urgent to do than to beg her to take them under her direction again. Her confessor, Pietro Capostoti, parish priest of Santa Maria in Poggio, strongly urged her to comply with their wish; and from then on her house was almost transformed into a real convent. Apart from a few moments of recreation after the principal meal, their silence was broken only by the recitation of the holy office, the singing of psalms and canticles, spiritual reading, and the short but fiery exhortations that the little Saint addressed to them on the virtues most suited to their sex, their age and their condition. She spoke to them of humility, which is the necessary foundation of all perfection; of modesty, which is the most powerful safeguard of innocence and the fairest ornament of virginity, and which, like that perfume with which the morning breeze is scented, reveals by its mere presence, in the heart it adorns, a treasure of merits and holiness. "Now the truly modest girl," she added, "is she who, convinced of the dangers the world offers her, deeply aware of her own weakness, and delighting to converse inwardly with her divine Jesus, does not like to pour herself out on the outside, lives under her mother's eyes, avoids the company of men, speaks little and with circumspection, and fears as much to be seen as to see." She talked to them of the necessity of penance, of prayer and of work. "By weakening the disordered appetites of our nature," she told them, "mortifications make it readier to bend to the law of God and to follow the movements of grace. Prayer, which raises our mind and heart to God, shows them from that high vantage point the vanity of the goods and pleasures of this world, fills them with light, strength and consolation, and gives them a foretaste of the calm and the felicities of the heavenly homeland. Work has its pains, but it procures us very great advantages. Not only does it preserve us from idleness, the baneful source of so many vices, but, turning into prayer by the offering made of it to God, it enriches us with merits and is a means of making satisfaction for our sins." She also urged them to obey their parents and their superiors, whoever they might be; to keep their eyes ceaselessly fixed on Our Lord Jesus Christ and His most holy Mother, whose living image we must reproduce in ourselves; to shun the amusements of the world, luxury in dress and the fashion of finery, frivolities to which the thoughts of a soul made for God ought not to cling; and to behave as angels of peace and gentleness within their families,

bearing with resignation the ill-humour of the people around them, and receiving as a precious benefit all the vexations that heaven never ceases to send us. But the most usual subject of her talks was exact and scrupulous fidelity to all the exercises of piety; the love of God, which must always reign in our heart and must be the beginning as well as the end of our acts, our desires and our thoughts; and devotion to the most holy Virgin, which, because of the countless favours of which she is the source, is a mark of predestination and salvation.

It was on such principles that Rose applied herself to bringing up her beloved companions. Her efforts were soon crowned with the happiest success. They made such rapid progress in virtue that after only a few days the people of Viterbo recognised them by the simplicity of their dress, the modesty of their looks, the gracious candour of their features, the exemplary regularity of their life, and that something pure, indefinable and divine that flows from a heart which God alone possesses and in which God alone acts. Although their life of recollection and prayer sheltered them from most of the dangers the world offers, they conceived a keen desire to plunge into absolute retirement. Pietro Capostoti acquired for them a piece of ground adjoining the monastery of Santa Maria delle Rose and adapted the few buildings on it to the needs of their community. Scarcely were they settled in this new convent when, in spite of the weakness of their sex and their youth, they gave themselves to the exercise of the most sublime and most austere virtues. They rose very early, recited the office, made long meditations, sang psalms, took the discipline and imposed continual privations on themselves; and, not content with praying and mortifying themselves thus by day, they devoted the greater part of the night to these holy practices. However severe in itself the Rule of the Third Order of Saint Francis, which they had hastened to adopt, their piety drove them far beyond its prescriptions; and it must be added that, to spare their health, Rose was forced to check by her words the too impetuous impulse her example gave them.

Although her strength was steadily declining, she was seen to redouble her prayers, her macerations and her fasts. Ceaselessly united in mind and heart with her divine Jesus, she lived completely absorbed in Him. No longer sleeping at all, taking only a little bread and water every eight or fifteen days, she seemed to come out of her visions and ecstasies only to bloody, with strokes of whips armed with points and knots, the thin, livid layer of flesh that barely covered her dislocated and half-broken bones. Her companions would have liked, so as to prolong a life so dear to them, to halt the course of her violence and her transports. But they could only approach her, gaze at her with tenderness, fall at her knees, and withdraw silent, moved and all aflame.

Drawn by the charm of so heavenly and pure a life, many girls of Viterbo came every day to beg the favour of spending some time in their pious solitude. There they followed the rule of the community punctually, took part in all the public exercises, made no difficulty about entering on the course of mortifications and penances, and, after kindling their ardour for perfection by contact with these little angels of earth, went to breathe out the delicious perfume of their piety outside. It was not only a regular, deeply Christian conduct that they led in the world: there was in their bearing, their conversation and their whole way of acting something so candid, so delightful and so gentle that one could not see or hear them without feeling the sense of duty and the love of virtue. In view of the marvellous fruits such retreats produced, Pietro Capostoti was proposing to widen the scope of his recent buildings when, by a disposition of Providence, the little community was suppressed by Pope Innocent IV at the request of the Sisters of Saint Damian, who feared being deprived of the alms they received from outside. Rose and her companions all submitted with resignation and love to the will of the Most High and returned at once, content and happy, to their families, blessing God for having kept them longer than others in a refuge where they had received so many graces, and promising themselves to follow privately, as far as possible, the Rule they had adopted and from which they had gathered such precious favours.

Scarcely had Rose returned to her cell when she fell gravely ill. The harsh privations that had paralysed and as it were dried up her organs, the frightful blows with which she had torn her body, and the divine love that

devoured her to the depths of her being and left her not a moment's rest had at last impaired her health and added to the sharpness of her sufferings a wasting sickness that could end only in death. "O earth," she often cried in the anguish of her love, "earth watered with the blood of my God, but wrapped in too many of the baneful effects of the curse with which He struck you, how painful is your dwelling to my soul! Oh, that I could break the bonds that hold me captive and take my flight towards eternity! Night and day, Lord, I raise to you the voice of my prayer; why then withhold from your embrace a heart that longs only for you! Daughters of Jerusalem, I implore you, if you see Him whom my soul cherishes and my heart adores, tell Him that, cast down by sadness, I cannot live far from Him, far from Him I feel myself dying!" While by such fiery and pure accents this tender spouse of Jesus drew tears from all who pressed around her to soften the too keen bitterness of her sufferings with a few consoling words, heaven, which had long envied earth so beautiful a flower, was preparing to gather it. It was the divine Master Himself who made known to her the approaching moment when the circle of her days was to close.

We shall not attempt to paint the intoxicating transports this little Sister felt on learning that she was about to leave this world and fly away to heaven. "I rejoiced at what has just been said to me," she cried; "I shall soon go into the house of the Lord"; and from that moment her soul sprang with all its aspirations towards the ravishing object of its desires, and seemed to fall back to earth only to rebound and rise higher towards its God. All her acts, all her affections, all her thoughts tended now only towards heaven. A few hours before passing to the other life, she wished to receive, by partaking of the sacred body of her divine Spouse, a pledge of that far more intimate and a thousand times more perfect union which she was about to contract with Him in eternity. Scarcely had the divine Master taken possession of her soul when, suddenly plunged in the deepest contemplation, she lost all awareness of outward things and remained for some time without giving any sign of life. Her breathing had stopped, her pulse no longer beat, pallor covered her features, her limbs were struck with complete immobility. When she had recovered the use of her senses, her strength was so weakened that she had to lie down again to receive Extreme Unction. After thanking the Lord for all the graces He had just granted her, Rose said a last farewell to her good parents and to her young companions; then she at once withdrew into herself to prepare more and more for the great passage into eternity. She asked God's pardon for the sins of her life, thanked Him for the countless benefits with which He had loaded her, and made Him a sacrifice of all she held dearest. She interrupted these acts of contrition, gratitude and love only to beg the divine Mary, the august Precursor, her seraphic Father Saint Francis and all the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly homeland to receive her soul and present it to her lovable Spouse; and while her tongue repeated with unspeakable ardour this cry of hope and love, "O Jesus! O Mary!", her burning and pure soul took its flight to heaven, on 6 March 1252. Saint Rose can serve as a model to young children and to all Christian virgins by her affectionate respect for her parents, her deep modesty and her angelic purity; to apostolic men, by her ardent zeal and her unalterable patience; to the most rigorous penitents, by the continuity of her fasts and the harsh macerations of her body; to anchorites, by her love of solitude and the heavenly occupations of her mind; to all Christians, by her constant fidelity to religious duties and the continual exercise of all the virtues. She is often represented holding roses in her hand or in her apron. One day when she was carrying pieces of bread to the poor, she was met by her father, who wished to see what she was carrying; she opened her apron, and instead of bread she found nothing but roses. — She is also painted receiving communion, or kneeling near an altar and seeing in a dream the instruments of the passion of Jesus Christ.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Immediately after her death her body became all resplendent with light and underwent not the slightest change; so pleasant a fragrance came from it that the whole house was filled with it. She was buried without a coffin and in her religious habit, that very evening, beside the baptismal font in the church of Santa Maria

in Poggio. This ceremony took place as secretly as possible and without the knowledge of the people, whose pious thefts were feared. An immense multitude thronged every day the approaches to her home or her tomb: they came to thank the Saint for her favours, to implore her protection, and to turn into precious relics the various objects they touched to her garments, her bed, the walls of her room, the floor her feet had trodden, and the earth that covered her body. At the request of the clergy, the magistrates and all the people of Viterbo, Pope Innocent IV ordered inquiries into the life and miracles of Saint Rose; but he died before the end of the proceedings. In 1258 Rose appeared to Pope Alexander IV, who was then at Viterbo, and told him to exhume her body and carry it to the convent of Saint Damian. When it had been raised from the ground, it was enclosed in a handsome wooden shrine, richly ornamented and covered with hangings of crimson velvet bordered with gold; four cardinals took this precious body on their shoulders and, accompanied by the Pope, the whole Sacred College, all the magistrates and an immense crowd, carried it solemnly to the monastery of the Sisters of Saint Damian, which from then on took the name of Santa Rosa. As miracles multiplied at her tomb, Alexander IV allowed the people of Viterbo to celebrate her feast solemnly on 4 September, the anniversary of the translation of her relics. He even granted them a second feast, which he fixed on 6 March. The Pontiffs who mounted the apostolic See after him favoured the pious movement that led hearts to proclaim the holiness of this child. Pope Eugene IV, in a bull he issued against those who had usurped the property of the convent of Santa Rosa, after openly approving the veneration and cult that everyone paid her, did not hesitate to give her the title of Saint. Nicholas V ordered the council of the city of Viterbo to offer every year to the little Blessed, during the Candlemas procession, three candles of white wax, to honour by this mystical symbol the light she had spread in souls, the ardent love by which she had been consumed, and the virginal innocence she had never lost. Finally Pope Callistus III decreed that she should be inscribed in the catalogue of the Saints, and that the universal Church should pay her the cult due to the Saints. Scarcely was this decision known when altars were eagerly raised to her in the churches of the Ara Coeli and of Saint Catherine at Rome, of Santa Maria in Poggio and of San Sisto at Viterbo, and in those of Vitorchiano, Bolsena, Tivoli, Fabriano, Foggia, etc. Whole populations went to her tomb, and even in our own days the multitude of those who come to put themselves under her protection is countless. Among the sovereign Pontiffs who, after Alexander IV, Innocent VII, Martin V and Eugene IV, have made it a point of religion to visit her sanctuary, we will name Nicholas V, Pius II (1459, 1460, 1462), Alexander VI (28 October, 6 December 1493), Julius II, Leo X, Clement VII, Julius III, Gregory XIII, Clement VIII, Benedict XIII, who raised her office to the rite of the second class, Pius VI, Pius VII and the immortal Pius IX.

The most illustrious princes and princesses have also thought themselves very happy to be able to bow their heads before her holy remains. It will suffice to name the emperor Sigismund, who came to her sanctuary at the head of fifteen hundred of his lords; the emperor Frederick III and his wife Eleanor; the king of France Charles VIII, who was so struck at seeing her body in a perfect state of preservation that he called Viterbo *the city of Rose*; the grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo III; the king of England, James III, and his wife Clementina Sobieska; Violante Beatrice of Bavaria; the king of Spain, Charles IV; the infanta Maria Luisa, queen of Portugal, and her son; and the emperor of Austria, Francis I, with his wife Caroline and one of his daughters. As for the cardinals, bishops and priests of every country in the world who come every year to commend themselves to her prayers, it would be impossible to list them. What keeps devotion to Saint Rose alive in hearts is the boundless power she enjoys with the Lord.

In 1357, a fire having broken out in the chapel where her venerable relics rested, the shrine and all the hangings covering it were consumed; but the body was found intact, and God only permitted the Saint's flesh, which until then had kept all its whiteness, to take on a brown, almost blackish colour. A shrine like the one the fire had destroyed was made; the body was placed in it, and it was covered with hangings of the same kind and form as the earlier ones. But in 1615 Cardinal Mutio, bishop of Viterbo, had the velvet garments replaced by a grey tunic like that of the Poor Clare Sisters. In 1658, 1675 and 1750 this tunic underwent further changes in material, form and colour; but since 1760 it has been of black sarsenet and quite like the

one the Sisters of Saint Clare wear at present. As for the wooden shrine, it was replaced in 1699 by the fine transparent urn in which the Saint now rests, and which, for greater convenience, opens at the side.

In the more than six hundred years of its existence, the precious body of Saint Rose has as yet undergone no change other than that of colour. All who have seen and touched it agree in saying that it is as entire, as soft and as supple as if it were alive. The celebrated Papebroch, who examined it in 1661, states in his *Itinerary from Rome to Flanders* that he never met with one so perfect. His Eminence Cardinal Morlot, archbishop of Paris (1857–1862), and several priests and religious who examined it at very close quarters and moved its head, arms, hands and feet, have stated that, apart from the degree of warmth, it is still as it must have been immediately after death. Such a state of preservation can have no cause but a miraculous intervention of the Almighty.

Extracted from the Vie de sainte Rose de Viterbe, *by the abbé Barascud, chaplain of the Lycée Louis-le-Grand. — Cf.* Acta Sanctorum; *Wadding.*

Saint Sulpicius, Twentieth Bishop of Bayeux and Martyr (844)

Saint Sulpicius occupied the see of Bayeux towards the middle of the ninth century, that is, at the time when the Northmen, ravaging the whole of France, were bent with particular fury on destroying the churches, the monasteries and all the monuments consecrated to God. There flourished at that time, not far from Bayeux, in a parish called Liberiacum (perhaps Livry, in the department of Seine-et-Oise), a monastery placed under the invocation of Saint John the Baptist; the place is still called Val-Sainte (*Vallis Sancta*) today. The holy prelate had, according to his custom, withdrawn to this monastery to devote himself more freely to prayer in the company of the monks. The barbarians came upon them, invaded the monastery and killed Saint Sulpicius (844). A short time afterwards his body was found under the ruins of the church and buried on the same spot.

On 21 July 984, Simon, abbot of Saint-Ghislain near Mons in Belgium, having come on pilgrimage to Mont-Saint-Michel, went to the village of Liberiacum and visited Val-Sainte, where he received hospitality. Learning that the body of Saint Sulpicius was buried there, he planned to carry it off. So he came the following year with several of his men and, deceiving the guardian of the tomb, carried off the holy body. The relics of Saint Sulpicius were kept with great veneration in the abbey of Saint-Ghislain until the French Revolution; today they are preserved for the most part in the chapel of the nuns of the hospice. The abbot of Saint-Ghislain gave one of Saint Sulpicius's ribs to the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Vigor, near Bayeux. This relic, canonically recognised after the French Revolution, is religiously kept in the parish church of Saint-Vigor (diocese of Bayeux). At all times the tomb of Saint Sulpicius has drawn a great multitude of pilgrims; pious mothers in particular bring their sick children there for the Saint to heal them.

Proper of Bayeux.

Saint Rosalia of Palermo, Virgin and Solitary on Monte Pellegrino in Sicily (1160)

Rosalia, of the royal blood of Charlemagne, was born at Palermo in Sicily in 1130. Her father, lord of Roses and of Quisquina, was a knight renowned for his valour, whom Roger, king of Sicily, attached to himself by settling him at his court and giving him one of his kinswomen as wife; he assigned him great estates and a dwelling in his palace. His daughter received an education suited to her high position, and applied herself so earnestly to the practice of virtue and the love of God that the beauty of her soul surpassed that of her face, which was the admiration of all who saw her. The holy Virgin watched with jealous care over the purity of the young girl, and, when some lords of Sicily sought her hand, she appeared to her and advised her to withdraw from the world if she wished to keep herself for her Son. Rosalia did not hesitate, though she was

still only fourteen; leaving her father's palace, she took with her only a crucifix and her instruments of discipline. Under the guidance of two angels who served as her guides, she arrived on the mountain of Quisquina. Her guides pointed out to her as a retreat a cave in the midst of a wood that covered its summit. In this grotto, lying beneath the snows that wrap the mountain for several months, Rosalia spent long years, dividing her time between prayer, reading and devotion. For food she had roots, and to quench her thirst the water that fell from the rocks. Often she received visits from the angels and from Our Lord, who came to converse with her. At times she rested by carving on the stone of her cell these words, which are still read today: *Ego Rosalia, Sinibaldi Quisquinae et Rosarum domini filia, amore Domini mei Jesu Christi in hoc antro habitare decrevi* ("I, Rosalia, daughter of Sinibald, lord of Quisquina and of Roses, have resolved for the love of my Lord Jesus Christ to dwell in this cave"). In this cave one can also see a little fountain that she dug to gather the waters that seeped through the walls of the grotto; there is also a rough altar, and a long piece of marble on which she took her rest, a seat cut in the rock, and a very old vine which, according to tradition, was planted by Saint Rosalia.

Meanwhile, by order of her grieving family, the Saint was being sought throughout Sicily. The angels warned her that she would soon be discovered if she stayed on Mount Quisquina; then Rosalia, taking her crucifix in one hand and the pilgrim's staff in the other, made her way to Monte Pellegrino. The angels led her this time too. They showed her, in the highest part of the mountain, a grotto that God destined for her. Its opening was barely wide enough to pass through, there was little light inside, and the ground was so soaked by water that Rosalia could scarcely find a corner to rest in without lying in the mud. The vault was very low, so that the Saint was almost always bent over. It was in this frightful retreat that she spent the last years of her life, with only herbs and acorns for food. After eighteen years of this austere and penitent life, Our Lord called her to Himself to give her the reward she had so well deserved (4 September 1160).

Her cult spread rapidly throughout Europe and passed even into Africa. The two grottoes she had lived in became two much-visited and much-frequented sanctuaries. Her body, however, had not been found. The water, falling on it drop by drop, had wrapped it in a stone transparent as alabaster and hard as crystal. Many searches had been made; people had dug everywhere and found nothing. A belief had spread among the people of Palermo that this holy body would be found again only on the day when divine vengeance fell heavily on the city. On 29 May the plague broke out at Palermo, and a few days later the body that had been sought was found by breaking the long alabaster stone of which we have spoken. The plague, however, continued its ravages, and many plague-stricken people obtained their cure by invoking Saint Rosalia. On 22 January 1625, after much hesitation, the venerated body was exposed in public, and the plague ceased suddenly. As a result of these brilliant miracles a magnificent chapel was raised to Saint Rosalia, and her bones were laid in it, enclosed in a fine silver shrine. Since that time the grotto on Monte Pellegrino has become a sanctuary all covered with marble and gilding. Following a brilliant miracle, the cult of Saint Rosalia spread into the Indies, and her name became popular in the East.

She is represented: 1. carving at the entrance of her grotto the formula of the vow she made to spend her days in that retreat; 2. crowned with white roses, in memory of her name and her virginity.

Acta Sanctorum, 4 September. — In that collection (tome II of September) one may see a series of twenty-three magnificent engravings representing the various stages of the Saint's life.

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[1] Nebo, today Attare, is a mountain of Palestine forming part of the chain of the Abarim mountains, east of the Dead Sea.

[2] In the first half of the seventeenth century Mgr de Marcillac, bishop of Mende, wished to translate his relics to his cathedral church. Those charged with this task met, in sight of all the people, such miraculous resistance when they were about to leave the church of Saint-Frézal with the precious burden that the undertaking had to be given up, and the relics were left in their former place. The tomb has just been opened, and a whole body has been found in it; only some sign of authenticity is still wanted. — The Bollandists, and local notes supplied by the abbé Charbonnel (1 February 1872).

[3] This institute, which no longer exists at Paris, had as its aim to shelter, as in a refuge and a safe harbour, young girls for whom beauty, poverty, abandonment or the bad conduct of their parents might be a proximate occasion of ruin and damnation. Louis XIII and Louis XIV granted letters patent for the establishment of this community; Anne of Austria gave it (1651) the hospital of La Santé, in the faubourg Saint-Marcel, rue de l'Arbalète. — Cf. Hélyot, *Dictionnaire des Ordres religieux*.

[4] We have given his life on 28 August.

[5] See his life on that day.

[6] It was a kind of tent built of setim wood and covered with plates of gold and precious stuffs; it was thirty cubits long by ten high, and as many wide. A rich veil, adorned with magnificent embroidery, divided the tabernacle in two. The part one entered first was called the Holy, and the part hidden by the curtain was called the Holy of Holies, or the sanctuary. In this last compartment was placed the Ark of the covenant; this was a small chest of precious wood, two and a half cubits long by one and a half high; it was overlaid inside and out with the most precious gold, adorned all round with a crown, also of gold, and topped with a cover overlaid with gold, called the Oracle or propitiatory, because it was from there that God gave His oracles. On this propitiatory were two cherubim of solid gold, which spread their wings along the Ark as if to serve as a throne for the majesty and holiness of God. This Ark contained the tables of the law, from which it gets the name of Ark of the testimonies, of Ark of the covenant. It also contained some manna in a golden vessel.

In the part of the tabernacle called the Holy there stood, on one side, the golden candlestick with seven branches; on the other, the table of the loaves of proposition, which were renewed every sabbath day and could be eaten only by the priests; in the middle was the altar of incense, on which, evening and morning, incense of excellent fragrance was offered to the Lord. The tabernacle was covered by a magnificent pavilion a hundred cubits long by fifty wide, held up by columns whose capitals were of silver and whose bases were of copper. The space between this pavilion and the tabernacle was called the court; it was in this space, opposite the entrance of the tabernacle, that the altar of holocausts stood, on which the flesh and fat of the victims were burned; between this altar and the tabernacle was the brazen sea, a great basin of brass in which the priests washed before performing the functions of their ministry.

[7] Perhaps, say the Bollandists, it is the road to Argilly, a former villa of the dukes of Burgundy, five hours from Chalon in the direction of Dijon?

[8] This is the church which the Reverend Conventual Fathers still possess, and which was granted to them in 1236 by Pope Gregory IX. It stands on the site of the former fort of Sant'Angelo, which served as a palace for the sovereign Pontiffs when they resided at Viterbo.

5 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Saint LAWRENCE JUSTINIAN, first patriarch of Venice, who by his virtues and miracles honoured the episcopal chair to which he was raised against his will on this day. His death is recorded on 8 January. 1455. — In a suburb of Rome, Saint Victorinus, bishop and martyr, who, illustrious for his holiness and his miracles, was elected bishop of Amiternum by the whole people of that city. Later, under Trajan, having been banished with other servants of God to Cotilia, where there are foul and sulphurous waters, he was hung head downwards there by the judge Aurelian, and, after enduring this violent state for three days for the name of Jesus Christ, he went in triumph to receive the crown of glory. The Christians took away his body and carried it to Amiternum, where they gave it honourable burial. VIth c. — At Porto, the heavenly birthday of Saint Herculanus, martyr. About 172. — At Capua, the holy martyrs Quintius, Arcontius and Donatus. — The same day, Saint Romulus, prefect of the palace of Trajan, who, for having blamed the emperor's cruelty to the Christians, was beaten with rods and beheaded. — At Melitene in Armenia, the martyrdom of the holy soldiers Eudoxius, Zeno, Macarius and their companions, eleven hundred and four in number, who, having laid down the military belt, were massacred for the faith of Jesus Christ during the persecution of Diocletian. — At Constantinople, the holy martyrs Urban, Theodore, Menedemus and seventy-seven others, all clerics, who by order of the emperor Valens were burned on a ship in the middle of the sea out of hatred for the Catholic faith. 370. — At the monastery of Sithiu, in the territory of Thérouanne, Saint BERTIN, abbot. 709. — At Toledo, Saint Obdulia, virgin.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Soissons, Saint Ansery or Anseric, twentieth bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we shall give on the 7th of this month. 552. — At Laon, Saint GENNEBAUD or Génebaud, first bishop of that former see and confessor. 550. — In the diocese of Verdun, Saint Arator, fourth bishop of that see, which he held for thirty-three years. He fully lived up to the meaning of his name by his continual labour in the field of the Lord. His body was placed in a stone coffin which can still be seen today behind the high altar of the church of the nuns of the abbey of Saint-Maur in that city, near those of his predecessors. About 454. — At Auch, Saint TAURINUS, first bishop of the former see of Eauze (*Elusa*), the present diocese of Auch. — In the diocese of Besançon, the memory of Saint Anianus, archbishop of that see and confessor. Deeply learned in sacred letters, he joined to holiness of life a remarkable gift for preaching. It was during his episcopate that the relics of Saints Ferreolus and Ferrutio, apostles of Besançon, were found. His body was buried near them; in the ancient litanies of Besançon he is named first among the bishop confessors. 374. — At Laon, Saint Preuve or Proba, virgin, murdered by impious men near Guise (Aisne), in the diocese of Soissons. We shall speak of her relics on the 7th of this month, in the life of Saint Grimonia, virgin and martyr at La Capelle. VIth c. — In the former Auxerrois, Saints Felix and Moderatus, martyrs. 385. — At Tonnerre (Yonne), in the diocese of Auxerre, the death of the Venerable Margaret of Nevers or of Burgundy, countess of Tonnerre.[1] 1308. — On Mont Valérien, a hill in the department of the Seine above Suresnes and near the left bank of the Seine, the Venerable Pierre de Bourbon or de Burbone, recluse. 1639. — At Tours, Saint Corentin, first bishop of Quimper and confessor, whose life we shall give on 12 December. 401. — At Évreux, the finding and translation of the body of Saint Taurinus, first bishop of that see, whose life we have given on 11 August. About 912. — In Auvergne, Saint Peter of Pibrac, confessor.[2] 1080. — In the diocese of Versailles, Saint Etern, bishop of Évreux and martyr, named in the martyrologies of 16 July, 13 August and 1 September. About 663. — In the diocese of Arras, the Venerable ALVISE, bishop of that see and confessor. 1147. — In the same diocese, Saint Bertin, founder and abbot of the monastery of Sithiu, later called Saint-Bertin, at Saint-Omer. 709.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — Saint Lawrence Justinian, canon regular, first patriarch of Venice, who by his virtues and miracles honoured the episcopal chair to which he was raised against his will on this day. 1455.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — In Piedmont, Blessed CATHERINE OF RACCONIGI, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, who shone by an admirable charity and by an abundance of divine graces. 1480.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Toringia in Persia, Blessed GENTILE OF MATELICA, martyr, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, after many labours endured for the spread of the Gospel, was massacred by the Saracens and, being carried to Venice, was honourably buried in the church of the Friars Minor. 1340.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as with the Franciscans.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Pamiers, Saint Antoninus, martyr, nephew of Theodoric, king of France, who, having

embraced the Rule of Saint Augustine, became illustrious for his virtues and miracles, and was crowned with martyrdom by the hand of the impious for the Christian faith. He suffered on 2 September, and his relics are kept with great veneration in the church of Palencia in Spain.[3] IInd c.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the diocese of Naples, Saint Candida the Younger, virgin, named in the Roman martyrology of the preceding day. 586. — In Volhynia (formerly belonging to Poland, today one of the governments of Russia), Saint Gleb or Cleph, also called David, duke of Kiovia or Kiev. Recalled from the monastery of Cluny to be made king of Poland, he was massacred by the emissaries of Zuantopel, his brother. XIth c. — In England, Saint Alto, a Scottish monk and abbot in Germany, founder of the abbey of Altmünster. He is honoured in Germany on 9 February, the day under which we have already named him in the Bollandists' additions. 760. — At Ostia, a village and small port of the Roman States, Saints Censorinus, prefect of the praetorium, Cyriacus or Quiriacus, bishop, Maximus, priest, Archelaus, deacon, Aurea, a holy woman, and Saints Felix, Maximus, Taurinus, Erculanus or Herculanus, Venerius, Storocinus, Mennas, Commodus, Hermes, Maurus, Eusebius, Rusticus, Monachus, Amandinus, Olympius, Cyprus, soldiers, and Theodore, tribune, all martyrs. 252. — At Alexandria in Egypt, today Iskanderieh, Saint Rhais or Herais of Tamma, virgin and martyr. About 308. — In the same city, the holy martyrs Nymphidius or Nympha, and Saturninus. — In Egypt, the holy martyrs Taurinus, Nemoratus, Saturninus and Arapollinus, named in the apographs of Saint Jerome. — In Persia, Saint Abdas, bishop and martyr, and his companions, victims of the persecution raised against the Christians by King Yazdegerd I and continued by his successor Bahram V. About 420. — At Tortona (*Dertona*), a fortified town of Upper Italy, Saint Alpert of Cessima, priest and confessor. — At Ravenna in Italy, Blessed Ursicinus, twenty-seventh bishop of that see, which he adorned for three years, six months and nine days. His body was laid in the basilica of San Vitale in that city. 537 or 538. — At Como in Lombardy, Saint Victorinus, bishop and confessor, whose body was laid in the basilica of Sant'Abbondio in that city. 644. — In Russia, Saint Romanus or Boris, brother of Saint Gleb mentioned above, and son of Vladimir I the Great, prince of Russia. 1015. — At the Benedictine monastery of San Giacomo di Pontida in Lombardy, Blessed Albert of Bergamo, founder and first abbot of that monastery. His body, at first buried in the church of his abbey, was later moved to the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore at Bergamo. 1099. — At the monastery of Pulsano, in the diocese of Siponto in old Apulia, Blessed Jordan, abbot general of the Order of Pulsano (this Order no longer exists), founded in 1118 on Monte Gargano by Saint John of Matera (20 June). Middle of the XIIth c.

Saint Gennebaud or Génebaud, First Bishop of Laon and Confessor[4]

550. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Childebert I.

> *God does not remember the faults of one who has not forgotten to wipe them out by the rigours of penance.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

One of the first cares of King Clovis I after his baptism was to repair the damage that his army, still wholly pagan, had done to the churches. He gave Saint Remigius, fifteenth bishop of Reims (459–533), considerable sums of money and many lands, among others Anizy, Coucy and Leuilly. The holy prelate used these riches to form new bishoprics and to endow several churches.

Laon was one of the strongest places in Gaul: the Vandals and the Huns had not been able to take it; it formed part of the archbishopric of Reims. Remigius resolved to detach it and to found at Laon, his native town, a new bishopric which would comprise the county of the Laonnois and the Thiérache. In 497 he made a cathedral of the church of Sainte-Marie or Notre-Dame, in which he had prayed so fervently in his youth, and he assigned to the bishops of this new see the land of Anizy, which they held until the Revolution. It remained for Remigius to choose a worthy subject who would answer his hopes. He cast his eyes on a pious layman, noble by birth and very learned in sacred and profane letters; his name was Gennebaud, and he had married Remigius's own niece; then, touched by a particular movement of grace, he had separated from his wife in order to live in continence. Once consecrated bishop, Gennebaud fulfilled all its functions for some years with a zeal and vigilance guided by the rules of the most consummate prudence. The virtues he practised, the edification his people drew from them, and even the encouragement he received from his

metropolitan unhappily helped to give him too much confidence in his own strength and in the purity of his intentions. Little by little he relaxed his reserve and his severity towards her who had been his lawful wife; he allowed her visits and conversations at his palace, which became more and more frequent. He forgot that he must not think himself stronger or firmer than David, nor wiser than Solomon, and that there is a word in Scripture which has proved true only too often: "He who loves danger shall perish in it": *Qui amat periculum in illo peribit*. The force of the temptation became more violent day by day. Gennebaud ought, according to the Master's precept, to have used iron and fire to break at once with the proximate occasion: "If your eye scandalises you, pluck it out; if it is your arm, cut it off and cast it from you; it is better for you to enter into life with an arm and an eye the less than to be cast with your two arms and your two eyes into the exterior darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Gennebaud was blinded by the tenderness he had for his wife: he fell a first time. And when, some months later, this woman sent to tell him that she had brought a son into the world, Gennebaud came to himself and was covered with confusion. There was nothing but tears and groans over his unfaithfulness to his engagements. The fault he had committed was enormous; he could wipe it out by sincere repentance and serious penance; but how great is the frailty of man when, by blameworthy presumption, he neglects the means that our divine Saviour has prescribed to us so as not to provoke the attacks of the devil and not to fall victim to his suggestions! *Vigilate et orate, ut non intretis in tentationem*: "Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation." Gennebaud again allowed his wife to continue her visits. A new crime resulted. The first fruit of his incontinence had received the significant name of Latro (thief); Vulpecula (little fox) was the name of the child born after this second fault, as having been begotten by the deceit of an artful and cunning mother. For what follows we leave the word to the artless and learned annalist Flodoard:

"The Lord having again cast on Gennebaud a look like the one He had cast on Peter, he repented and, filled with compunction, begged Saint Remigius to come to Laon. After receiving him with the veneration due to his virtues, they withdrew together into a private room. There Gennebaud burst into groans; prostrate at the feet of his holy protector, he accused himself and tried to strip off his episcopal stole. Saint Remigius questioned him and wished to know exactly the cause of so great a grief; tears and sobs cut off his voice, and the guilty man could scarcely speak. Nevertheless he told his crime without disguising any circumstance. The man of God, seeing him so deeply contrite, tried to console him gently: he declared that he was less grieved by his faults than by his distrust of the goodness and mercy of God, to whom nothing is impossible, who never rejects the penitent sinner, and who has even given His blood for sinners. Thus the wise and charitable archbishop strove to raise Gennebaud from his fall, showing him by various examples that he could easily find grace before God, provided he was willing to offer the Lord worthy fruits of repentance. Having thus revived him by his holy exhortations, Remigius imposed a penance on him: he had a little cell built, lit by a small window, with an oratory, near the church of Saint-Julien at Laon, and shut the penitent bishop up in it. For seven years Remigius took care of the recluse's diocese, officiating alternately one Sunday at Reims and the next at Laon.

"The mercy of God soon showed how much Gennebaud had profited in this seclusion, to what rigour of contrition and continence he had condemned himself, and how worthy were the fruits of his penance. For in the seventh year, on the eve of the Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ, he was spending the night in penance and prayer, weeping bitterly over himself because, having once been raised to the honour and authority of reconciling sinners to God, he was not even worthy, because of his crimes, to mingle in the church among the penitents. About midnight an angel of the Lord came to him with a great light, in the oratory where he lay prostrate on the ground, and said to him: 'The prayers that your father Saint Remigius has made for you are granted, your penance has been pleasing to the Lord, and your sin is forgiven you. Rise from this place, go and fulfil your episcopal ministry, and reconcile to the Lord those who do penance for their iniquities.'

“Gennebaud, struck with too great a terror, could not answer. Then the angel of the Lord reassured him and urged him to rejoice in God’s mercy towards him. At last, comforted, the bishop answered that he could not go out, because his lord and father Saint Remigius had taken away the key and sealed the door with his seal. Then the angel said: ‘That you may not doubt that I have been sent by the Lord, as heaven is opened to you, so let this door be opened.’ And at once, without the seal being broken, the door opened. Gennebaud, prostrating himself in the form of a cross on the threshold, cried out: ‘Even if the Lord Jesus Christ Himself had deigned to come to me, an unworthy sinner, I will not go out of here until he who shut me in here in His name comes to bring me out.’ At this answer the angel withdrew.

“Meanwhile Saint Remigius was spending that same night in prayer in the crypt beneath the church of Notre-Dame at Reims. The holy man, weary with watching, was rapt in ecstasy and saw an angel beside him, who told him what had just happened and ordered him to go in all haste to Laon, to restore Gennebaud to his see, and to persuade him to fulfil his pastoral ministry. The blessed man rose without hesitating and went to Laon. There he found Gennebaud prostrate on the threshold of his cell and the door open without the seal having suffered. Then, opening his arms to him and shedding tears of joy, and praising the mercy of the Lord, he raised him up, restored him to his see and to the episcopal ministry, and returned to Reims full of gladness. As for Gennebaud, upheld by the grace of God, he afterwards spent all the rest of his life in the exercise of humility, proclaiming aloud what the Lord had done for him. So he died in peace, counted among the Saints of the Lord, after having long (fifty years) occupied the see of Laon.”

In 549, being very old, he sent his archdeacon Medulf as his deputy to the fifth council of Orléans, assembled against the errors of Nestorius and Eutyches. He died on 5 September, the day on which he is named in the Roman martyrology. Since the year 1852 his feast has been kept on 4 September in the diocese of Soissons and Laon. The relics of Saint Gennebaud were long preserved in the cathedral of Laon, and several chapels were erected there in his honour.

The fall of Saint Gennebaud should inspire us with great distrust of ourselves. Let us remember that there is no sin so enormous, committed by one man, that it could not be committed by any other man. And if we have had the misfortune to commit great faults, let us never despair of God’s mercy, provided we ask Him for the grace of sincere penance and a firm purpose of not exposing ourselves again to falling into the same faults.

Flodoard; Hincmar; the Bollandists; Arnauld d’Andilly; Dom Lelong; Carlier; Colliette.

Saint Bertin, Founder and Abbot of Sithiu, in the Diocese of Arras

709. — Pope: Constantine. — King of France: Childebert III.

> *Non est alia via ad vitam, nisi via sanctae crucis et quotidianae mortificationis.*
>
> *There is no other road leading to life than that of the holy cross and of continual mortification.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

Saint Bertin was born about the beginning of the seventh century near Constance, on the banks of the Rhine. His family, noble and rich, intended him to hold a distinguished rank in the world; but God saw fit to call him to His service. From the cradle a particular inclination for holy things was noticed in him; he had none of the usual faults of childhood. The more people tried to turn his thoughts towards worldly glory, the more he felt urged to cling to the only glory that does not pass. These dispositions only grew with age. So, as soon as he was able to dispose of himself, he resolved to consecrate himself to God in solitude. Following in the footsteps of his kinsman Saint Omer, he withdrew about the year 620, in the company of Mommolin and Ebertramne, also natives of the neighbourhood of Constance, to the monastery of Luxeuil, of which fame spoke so well. There he was received by Saint Eustasius. Although he was still very young, his first steps in the monastic life were a giant’s strides. He soon reached so high a degree of perfection that he became the

model of his brethren. But the practice of virtue did not make him neglect study. A happy rival of his companions Mommolin and Ebertramne, he made rapid progress in the knowledge of Holy Scripture and ecclesiastical discipline. But the spirit of mortification and prayer always presided over his labours, while humility hid their glorious results from him. In short, he became in a short time a model of virtue and learning, a truly accomplished religious. He had spent about twenty years in that flourishing solitude when his kinsman Omer was called to occupy the see of Thérouanne. It is probable that it was this prelate who called Bertin, Mommolin and Ebertramne into his diocese to evangelise it.

However that may be, these three apostles went into that country, preaching with success in the various parts of Gaul through which they passed. At their word the idols fell, the darkness scattered, vice and superstition gave way to the Christian virtues; thanks to the cooperation of the three missionaries, and above all to their example, Saint Omer soon had the joy of seeing the face of his diocese entirely changed.

Their work as apostles in no way lessened their monastic fervour; they joined to zeal for outward works that taste for prayer and solitude which makes the true religious. Saint Omer had already built on a hill[1] an oratory which he intended for his tomb; he placed the three missionaries there, and they built themselves a small building known by the name of the Old Monastery and lived there under the Rule of Saint Columban. Saint Omer, according to one author, wished to name Bertin director of this new work, although he was the youngest of the three; but he could not overcome his humble resistance. Mommolin, the eldest, had to accept the post; and his two companions, who professed the tenderest respect for him, submitted to his orders with joy. Soon disciples came to join them, and after a few years their number became so great that another establishment had to be thought of.

Among the new converts was the lord Adrowald, who had given Omer one of his estates, called Sithiu, about a league from the Old Monastery, for the purpose of building a hospital there. The presence of the holy missionaries inspired Omer with other thoughts; he judged that a monastery directed by such men would be more useful than any other establishment. He had no difficulty in bringing Adrowald round to his opinion. Accordingly he persuaded him to grant the land to the Saints; it consisted of a hill and a vast marsh, in the midst of which rose the island of Sithiu. But by that time Ebertramne had already been placed by Saint Mommolin at the head of the abbey of Saint-Quentin, so that Mommolin and his companion had to undertake the building of the new monastery alone. They wished to decide nothing without the clearly shown will of God; so, not knowing where to fix the site, they got into a boat and let it drift without oars at the mercy of the waters. Going up the course of the river as if driven by a strong hand, the little boat crossed the wide stretch of water and stopped at a certain spot: the two Saints landed there singing this verse of the psalm: “This is my resting place for ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it.” Now this place was the island of Sithiu. Work began at once; but, according to the most common opinion, Mommolin[2] was called meanwhile to occupy the see of Noyon, so that Bertin was left alone in charge of carrying on the undertaking.[3] In a short time the monastery was built, with its church dedicated to Saint Peter. A hundred and fifty, and even two hundred, monks came at once to take their places there. Bertin, now abbot, established perfect discipline among them; in this new offshoot of Luxeuil the virtues of the common mother could be admired. The Saint kept assiduous watch over his flock, but he always took care to give the example, “lest”, says his historian, quoting Saint Paul, “after preaching to others, he himself should become a castaway”. The Rule of Saint Columban was observed in all its rigour. The food consisted of a little bread and some herbs or roots; only water was drunk. As at Luxeuil, the monks formed different choirs, which relieved one another continually to sing the praises of the Lord. Prayer did not cease, even during work. Silence, and the spirit of mortification, chastity, obedience and the rest, made this retreat a spectacle worthy of the admiration of angels and men. At the same time they gave themselves to the hardest labours. The eye is still astonished today to consider what patience and effort these pious solitaries needed to turn a vast marsh into a fertile plain, by raisings of the ground that would frighten the boldest contractors today. Complete abandonment to Providence made up for

the lack of material resources. But God did not forsake His faithful servants; help always came in proportion to the need. Soon some nobles of the country even enriched the monastery in consideration of the virtues they saw shining there.

The marshy ground on which the new monastery was built allowed it to be reached only by boat, except on one side, and it was not possible to make a cemetery there. Saint Omer granted Bertin for this purpose the church he had dedicated to the holy Virgin on the neighbouring hill. The deed, signed by Saint Omer, by then blind, is dated 6 May 662, the sixth year of Clotaire III. It says in substance that Omer, by the grace of Christ bishop of Thérouanne, has built, together with the monks and in honour of Saint Mary, Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, a basilica in which his body is to be buried after his death, among those of the monks who will come from all sides to Sithiu to serve God there in the religious habit. He adds that he places this basilica under the patronage of the abbot Bertin, as well as the monastery of Sithiu itself, with full freedom and immunity from the episcopal power, as it is customary to grant this privilege to monasteries old or new. Thus no bishop or cleric may ever in future claim, or carry off to Thérouanne, anything that the monks of the said basilica, living according to rule under evangelical freedom, may have received from a king or from a private person: fields, slaves, gold, silver, sacred books, or any other kind of objects serving for divine worship or for their own needs, and everything that can be offered at the altar, at whatever time they received it. No one may take a meal on their lands unless invited by the abbot, so that they may live for ever without anxiety or disturbance under the holy rule, and may better pray to God for the good of the Church, for the health of the king and the stability of the kingdom, and so on. Saint Mommolin signed this deed as bishop of Noyon, among several other prelates and worthy persons. Following this grant, some monks settled around this church and formed a community there, which was turned into Canons Regular in 820. About 648, the town of Saint-Omer having grown up around the hill and obtained the honour of an episcopal see, this same church became a cathedral.

The same year, the sixth of Clotaire III, Saint Bertin exchanged with his friend Mommolin a property called Vausune, in the Cotentin, for four estates that Mommolin already held by exchange from Saint Ebertramne, abbot of Saint-Quentin. King Clotaire and Queen Bathild signed this agreement. When the holy bishop of Thérouanne died, Saint Bertin hastened to fulfil his wish by burying his sacred remains before the altar dedicated to the blessed Virgin Mary.

God rewarded the virtues of the abbot of Sithiu with the gift of miracles. His historian relates with satisfaction the following incident. A rich count named Walbert, whose confessor he was, used to come with his wife Regentrude to see the holy abbot, to listen to his teaching and to receive his blessing after communion. One day, when he had failed in this duty, Bertin was told that his friend Walbert had gone home without paying him his customary visit. “I know it,” answered the Saint, “and Walbert, before he reaches home, will have cause to repent of having neglected an old man’s blessing.” And indeed, a little later, a messenger came to announce that the count had fallen from his horse and was on the point of death. He asked pardon for his fault, accepted its punishment, commended himself to the prayers of his spiritual father, and above all begged him to bless some drink he might take before dying. Bertin at once ordered a young monk to go and fetch wine from a vessel he pointed out to him; and when the religious declared that not a single drop of wine had gone into that vessel for a month, the abbot again commanded him to obey. When he had done so, he found the vessel full of delicious wine. Bertin blessed a cup of it, which was carried in haste to Walbert. On hearing of the miracle that had just been worked, the dying man drank the blessed drink with confidence and at once recovered his health. Full of gratitude to God, he gave the abbot of Sithiu many estates; and soon afterwards, renouncing the world on the advice of the blessed man, he went to take the monastic habit at Luxeuil. His son, named Bertin after our Saint, entered Sithiu very young and lived there very holily. His relics used to be kept in the church of Saint-Omer. Many other lords, newly converted, also came to embrace the rule under the direction of Bertin, who saw the number of his children increase every

day.

In 675 the blessed man signed, together with Saint Mommolin and several other bishops, the will of Saint Amand, bishop of Maastricht, in favour of the abbey of Elnone. In 682 Theodoric III, king of Burgundy and Neustria, granted our Saint exemption for everything he possessed in the territory of Attigny. In 684 a lord named Analfride gave Bertin the monastery of Honnecourt, which he had founded on his property on the Scheldt near Cambrai, and of which his daughter Auriane was abbess. He reserved only the usufruct during his life and his daughter's. After the death of the latter, the house passed into the hands of Bertin, who made it a monastery for men.

Another lord, named Heremar, had given Saint Bertin his estate of Wormhout. In 695 the Saint had a monastery built there and sent some of his religious to it under the direction of Saint Winnoc, his disciple. This was a young religious whom he had brought up from childhood and who had profited worthily from his teaching. From the beginning he shed great lustre on his new foundation. The church was dedicated to Saint Martin.[4] According to John of Ypres, Bertin had a hospital for the poor built between Wormhout and Sithiu, with a road joining the two monasteries. The same author adds that between the two gates of Sithiu a community of women called *converses* had been established, who, without making regular profession, wore a religious habit, served the poor in the hospital, mended the linen and church vestments, and were charged with receiving the mothers, sisters and other relatives of the monks, to whom entry into the monastery was forbidden. Our Saint had a particular devotion to the holy Virgin, to whom his convent was consecrated. One author does not hesitate to say that it was to this first impulse that the monastery owed its having always kept so great a devotion to Mary and having given so many Saints to heaven. Thus God seemed to load His servant with spiritual and temporal favours. The ravages of time, the incursions of the barbarians in 847 and 868, and above all the fires of 881, 1000, 1031 and 1152, by destroying the records of the abbey of Saint-Bertin, have deprived us of details of Saint Bertin's long administration. We know only that God blessed all his labours, and that he was the instrument of many wonders which his humility did not always succeed in hiding. But the greatest of his miracles, to use the language of his historian, was his tireless zeal in the service of God and his unceasing vigilance over the souls entrusted to him. He had founded and consolidated a monastery that yielded nothing to the most flourishing of that age; for fifty-seven years he had administered it with wisdom, upheld it by his example and perfumed it with his virtues; the strictest discipline reigned there. He thought the hour of retirement had come for him, for he had reached nearly a hundred years. He then thought of resigning his office. His great age was the pretext; at bottom the holy old man wished to devote his last days to preparing for eternity. He chose as his successor the pious monk Rigobert and went back to the common life. From that moment he applied himself only to the contemplation of divine things. In Saint Omer's lifetime he had built a small oratory in honour of the holy Virgin near his monks' cemetery and had had it blessed by the bishop: it was there that he habitually shut himself up, spending the nights in prayer and macerating his body by fasts and vigils with all the fervour of a young soldier of Christ. He ordered Rigobert to build in the monastery church a chapel to Saint Martin, for whom he had always had a great devotion. This chapel was carefully preserved throughout the existence of the abbey of Saint-Bertin. In spite of his age and his virtues, the blessed man was not yet safe from the tempter. History relates that a young woman of loose life, inspired by the devil, came one day on the pretext of speaking of the convent's interests, but with the secret intention of laying snares for him. Saint Martin then appeared to the old man to warn him of this treacherous trick. And he, full of holy indignation, armed himself with the sign of the cross and drove the wretched woman away. But to prevent the return of such a danger, he forbade women entry to the monastery under pain of excommunication. At the end of the thirteenth century this law was still strictly maintained.

Rigobert held his office for only a few years. In imitation of his blessed master, he returned to private life and devoted himself entirely to works of piety. Bertin named in his place Erlefride, who had been brought up at

Sithiu from early childhood and who worthily upheld the work of his predecessors.

Our Saint, full of merits and virtues, awaited his reward calmly. When he felt his hour drawing near, he assembled his religious and charged them not to leave the place where he had established them, but to persevere there in the service of God and the practice of good works. Then he fell peacefully asleep in the Lord on the fifth of the ides of September (9 September) 709. He had spent fifty-nine years at Sithiu. He was buried with great honours by the abbot Erlefride in the chapel of Saint Martin, which he had had rebuilt.

He is represented carrying a small ship without a mast; we have given the reason for this emblem.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

A few years after his death the abbot Erlefride set up an altar on the Saint's very tomb; many miracles took place there afterwards. We will mention among others the cure of Adela or Alice, wife of Arnulf, count of Flanders. Suffering from an incurable illness, she obtained from the bishops of Thérouanne and Cambrai and from the abbot of Saint-Bertin permission to visit the blessed man's shrine, a favour that had been granted to no woman before her, not even to a queen. Supported by the two bishops, she approached the venerated relics with fear, prayed there fervently and was immediately cured.

In 1050 or 1052 the body of Saint Bertin was found in a crypt under the old chapel of Saint Martin, where it had been hidden to save it from the fury of the Northmen. In 1237 Peter, bishop of Thérouanne and of Cambrai, enclosed the precious relics in a shrine of gold and silver enriched with precious stones, and carried out their translation with great solemnity. The monastery founded by Saint Bertin shed great lustre on the Church of France. Its annals count no fewer than twenty-two Saints, besides a great number of prelates who came from it. It also had the glory of sheltering within its walls Saint Anselm and Saint Thomas of Canterbury, persecuted, the one by Henry I and the other by Henry II, kings of England. And later, when the monks of that same city of Canterbury were expelled in 1207 by King John, a hundred of them came to ask refuge of their brethren of Saint-Bertin and were welcomed with touching hospitality.

The Roman martyrology and that of France, those of Usuard, Ado and Florus, and the calendars of Bucelin, Trithemius, du Saussay, Chastelain, Monalus and Ypez commemorate Saint Bertin. His feast is fixed on 5 September.

During the years of the French Revolution, not only were religious driven from their houses, but what was most holy and sacred was squandered and profaned as well. The shrine of Saint Bertin was bought by a private person, and a pious woman of the town of Saint-Omer, called the widow Coulon, before whom it was opened, earnestly begged this man to let her take home the bones it contained. Having obtained this, she gathered them with the greatest devotion and kept them until peace had been restored to the Church of France. Then, on Monday of Passion week, 24 March 1806, Mgr Charles de La Tour d'Auvergne-Lauraguais, bishop of Arras, accompanied by the clergy, went in procession and with the greatest solemnity to the house of the said widow, amid an immense crowd of people who had come running from every quarter of the town to attend the ceremony there, and likewise the carrying of the said bones to the church of Saint-Denis. There, after the Mass, which was followed by a discourse suited to the ceremony, the bishop had the box opened in which the bones kept so piously by the widow Coulon were enclosed. This opening took place in the presence of a great number of persons. The bishop recognised the bones, to which the authentic was attached, as the precious remains of the mortal body of Saint Bertin, which had been enclosed in the old shrine when it was opened in 1688. He had a record of the whole drawn up by two notaries and two surgeons, authenticated these precious relics anew and commended them to public veneration; then, after showing them to the faithful present at the ceremony, he set his seal on the box containing them, having first enclosed the two authentics in it, and it was placed in the sacristy, to remain

there until it could be enclosed in the shrine intended for it. M. Ducrocq, priest in charge of Saint-Denis, delighted to possess this precious treasure in his church, hastened, together with the churchwardens, to give a chapel to house it. It is the first side chapel on the Gospel side.

We have taken this biography from the Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté, *and completed it with local notes supplied by M. Villy, parish priest of Saint- Denis at Saint-Omer. — Cf. the* Légendaire de Morinie *and the* Vies des Saints du diocèse de Cambrai et d'Arras, *by the abbé Destombes.*

Blessed Gentile of Matelica, Friar Minor, Martyr at Toringie in Persia

1340. — Pope: Benedict XII. — King of France: Philip VI of Valois.

> *Non solum de salute tua, verum etiam de multorum meditare.*
>
> *Think not only of your own salvation, but also of that of others.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Blessed Gentile of Matelica belonged by birth to a noble family of Matelica, a small town in the March of Ancona. His childhood was all fragrant with piety and purity, and he had scarcely reached adolescence when he consecrated himself to God in the Seraphic Order.

After brilliant studies he was promoted to the priesthood and then sent to Mount Alverna. This place, famous for ever by the stay Saint Francis made there and by the wonder of the stigmata he received there, was the home of religious chosen from among the most fervent. Blessed Gentile, filled with the memories that the holy mountain recalled to him, applied himself with unspeakable zeal to walking in the footsteps of the Seraphic Father, and he soon appeared as an accomplished model of every virtue.

The religious of Mount Alverna, just judges of his merits, twice raised him to the office of guardian. By his amiable qualities Gentile won the hearts of all his brethren; at the same time he was able to inspire them with a holy ardour for their perfection and to maintain among them the observance of the Rule in all its purity.

Blessed Gentile spoke little; but, on the other hand, he prayed much. Not content with giving a great part of the day to prayer, he very often spent the night at the feet of the most holy Sacrament, absorbed in the contemplation of divine things, his heart filled with a wholly heavenly joy. In his long converse with God he drew those happy inspirations that were noticed in his sermons, marked by that gentle and persuasive eloquence which goes straight to the heart.

He seized every opportunity of announcing the word of God to the people; and the people were always eager to hear him. The eloquence of his preaching, upheld by an austere life and by a zeal that nothing could discourage, brought many victims of vice back to the paths of virtue. Miracles too came to support his word, and he was able to make the truth known to souls that error had wrapped in its thick darkness. After evangelising various regions of Italy for several years, our Blessed obtained his superiors' permission to go and preach the faith in the Levant.

Before leaving he went to bid his father farewell. The old man, infirm and advanced in years, complained bitterly that his son was thus abandoning him in the decline of his life: "My son," he said to him, "so you will not stay to close your father's eyes and lay him in the tomb?" — "Father," answered the Blessed, "I promise you before God to come back and assist you at your last moments and render you the last duties." — Consoled by this promise, the old man blessed his son and let him go. Gentile travelled in turn through Egypt and Palestine, and then went deep into the interior of Persia. Yet in spite of all his efforts and all his goodwill he had not managed to speak the Arabic language. So, discouraged, he was thinking of taking the road back to Europe. It was a trial through which God was making His servant pass; He soon made His holy will known to him.

He who gives the apostolic vocation when He pleases and to whom He pleases, the Saviour Jesus, appeared to him one day and said to him, as once to the Prophet: “Behold, I have put my word upon your lips; wherever I send you, you shall go; and all that I have revealed to you, you shall say in my name to these unbelieving nations.” At that very moment, filled with the Spirit of God, the Blessed received the gift of tongues and spoke Arabic and the Persian idiom with the greatest ease.

The conversions he was then able to bring about were truly prodigious; the number of unbelievers and Jews on whom he conferred baptism is reckoned at fifteen thousand at least. The holy missionary neglected nothing that could strengthen his dear neophytes in the faith; his fasts were continual, his clothing rough and poor, and for love of Jesus Christ he despised all the things of earth as mud. A strict observer of evangelical poverty, he took from the alms given him only what was strictly necessary for his subsistence for the present day, and, without troubling about the morrow, he had all the rest distributed to other poor people.

So the confidence these peoples had in their apostle was boundless. When they were asked what their belief was, they answered: “We believe the faith of Brother Gentile.” Heaven, moreover, confirmed the missionary’s preaching by many wonders. Thus, many times while he was preaching, multitudes of birds of different kinds came and gathered round him, and, before the eyes of the astonished hearers, seemed to listen to him attentively.

Nor did our Blessed lack the gift of prophecy. The Shah of Persia had had all the Venetian merchants trading in his States arrested and thrown into prison, and the republic of Venice sent an embassy to that prince, at the head of which was the celebrated Marco Cornaro. These ambassadors met our Blessed on their way and took him with them. On the journey Cornaro fell ill and was within a few days reduced to extremity. Gentile never ceased to foretell his speedy recovery and the vicissitudes and trials that awaited him, and at last he announced to him that one day he, Cornaro, would be doge of Venice. Everything happened as the servant of God had foretold.

Gentile undertook the pilgrimage to Mount Sinai, where the relics of Saint Catherine, virgin and martyr, rest. He went there with the whole Venetian embassy. Now one day he suddenly disappeared from among his travelling companions; his absence lasted eight days, after which he reappeared among the astonished pilgrims. His bearing was as calm as if he had not stirred from the spot. Cornaro pressed him with all sorts of questions to make him reveal where he had gone and what he had done during those eight days. The servant of God could not help confessing in confidence to the questioner that he had gone to Italy to assist his father at his last moments, that he had presided at the funeral and had then taken part in the family council for the settlement of affairs.

As soon as he was back in Italy Cornaro made inquiries, and all the inhabitants of Matelica attested to him that Gentile had indeed come and spent eight days in his native town, that he had attended his old father in his last illness, and that he had left again only after the funeral. The Blessed’s presence in his homeland coincided exactly with the time and length of his disappearance on Mount Sinai.

Gentile then travelled as an apostle through Arabia and Persia, winning fresh victories every day over the impious sect of Mahomet. He came as far as Trebizond and Sarmastro, which he evangelised, together with the surrounding regions. His zeal shone there more brightly than ever, sanctioned by countless miracles and rewarded by many conversions of unbelievers.

Meanwhile God willed to crown the labours of His faithful servant with the halo of martyrdom. While he was preaching at Toringie, a town of northern Persia, the fierce followers of Mahomet, angered by the many spiritual conquests he was making among them and by the striking wonders he was working, put him cruelly to death on 5 September in the year 1340.

The precious relics of the holy martyr, obtained for money by a Venetian noble named Nicolò Querini, were carried to Venice and placed in the church of the Friars Minor Conventual, where they still are. Many wonders accompanied their translation.

The immemorial cult of the servant of God was solemnly approved by Pope Pius VI; and since then his feast has been kept by the Friars Minor, Observant and Conventual, and by the clergy of Matelica on 5 September, the anniversary of his precious death.

Taken from the Annales Franciscaines, *vol. VI.*

Saint Lawrence Justinian, First Patriarch of Venice and Confessor

1455. — Pope: Callixtus III. — Emperor of Germany: Frederick III.

> *The first sacrifice of justice that man must offer to God, the one most pleasing to Him and which makes him advance furthest in perfection, is the sacrifice of a heart contrite for its past sins.*
>
> *Spirit of Saint Lawrence Justinian.*

Saint Lawrence Justinian, born at Venice in 1381, was the son of Bernardo Giustiniani, who held a distinguished rank among the highest nobility of the Signoria. His mother was a Querini, and came of a house no less illustrious than his father's. She was left a widow early, with several young children. In spite of her youth she thought only of sanctifying herself in her state, resolved never to change it. She regarded herself as vowed to penance and retirement, and occupied herself only with fasting, prayer and other good works. The education of her children was also one of her chief cares.

In Lawrence there was noticed, almost from the cradle, an uncommon docility and an extraordinary greatness of soul. He did not waste his time like those of his age; he liked to talk with sensible people or to busy himself with serious things. His mother sometimes scolded him, to guard him against pride and keep him in humility, and urged him towards what was most perfect. He would then answer that he would try to do better and that he desired nothing so much as to become a saint. Convinced that he was on earth only to serve God in order to reign eternally with Him, he referred all his thoughts and all his actions to Him. At the age of nineteen he felt himself inwardly called to consecrate himself to the Lord's service in a particular way. In a vision he had, he seemed to see the eternal Wisdom in the form of a venerable woman, surrounded by a light more brilliant than that of the sun; at the same time he thought he heard these words: "Why, wandering from object to object, do you seek your rest outside of me? Only with me will you find what you desire; here it is in your hands. Seek it in me, who am the Wisdom of God. In taking me for your spouse and your portion, you will possess a priceless treasure." He was so touched by the honour and advantage contained in this invitation of grace that he felt himself inflamed with a new ardour to give himself entirely to the pursuit of the knowledge and love of God.

He no longer doubted that he was called to the religious state, where he would find more surely all the means fitted to bring him to the great end he set before himself. But he would not decide until he had first consulted God in humble prayer. He also asked the advice of Marino Querini, his maternal uncle. This was a holy and learned priest, a canon regular of the congregation of San Giorgio, called "in Alga" because the monastery stood on a small island of that name, a mile from Venice. (The convent and church are today in the hands of a community of Reformed Carmelites.) This wise director, seeing that Justinian had a strong inclination for the religious state, advised him first to try his strength by accustoming himself little by little to the practice of austerities. He obeyed, and began to sleep at night either on pieces of wood or on the bare ground. One day, having pictured to himself on one side the honours, riches and pleasures of the world, and on the other the rigours of poverty, fasting, watching and self-denial, he said to himself: "My soul, are you brave enough to despise these delights and to walk without a break in the ways of penance and mortification?" Then, after pausing a few moments, he cast his eyes on a crucifix and went on thus: "You are my hope, O my God! In

You are consolation and strength." From that moment he was seen to macerate his flesh by the austerities of penance and to give himself with tireless ardour to all the exercises of religion. His mother and his friends, fearing he would ruin his health, tried to turn him from the purpose he had resolved to carry out, and proposed to him an honourable establishment in the world. Not knowing how to escape the snares that a false tenderness was laying for him, he fled secretly and went to take the habit among the canons regular of the congregation of San Giorgio in Alga. He found no austerities in the community that he had not already practised, and his superiors were obliged to moderate the activity of his zeal in that respect. In spite of his youth he surpassed all the brethren in the rigour of his fasts and the length of his vigils. He never allowed himself any recreation that was not useful; he took severe disciplines; he never warmed himself, even in the greatest cold; he ate only to sustain his body and never drank outside meals. When he was urged to drink, on the pretext that the heat was excessive or that he was overcome with fatigue, he used to give this answer: "If we cannot bear thirst, how shall we be able to endure the fire of purgatory?" This readiness to suffer produced in him an invincible patience in all trials. During his novitiate a growth appeared on his neck, for the cure of which iron and fire had to be used. When the moment of the operation came, he reassured the trembling onlookers thus: "Why are you afraid? Do you think I cannot receive the constancy I need from Him who was able not only to comfort but even to deliver from the flames the three children cast into the furnace?" He bore the operation without letting a sigh escape, uttering only the sacred name of Jesus. He afterwards showed the same courage when a painful incision was made. "Cut boldly," he said to the trembling surgeon; "your instrument does not come near the iron hooks with which the martyrs were torn."

He always arrived first at the public exercises and left them last. When Matins were over he did not follow the brethren who went to rest, but stayed in the church until Prime, which was said at sunrise. Nothing pleased him more than being able to practise humility; the lowly tasks were those he chose by preference, and he always wore the worst clothes in the community. He obeyed as soon as the slightest sign showed him the superior's will. In private conversation he sacrificed his judgement to that of others and sought the last place in everything, as far as he could do so without affectation. When he went begging in the streets, he sought every occasion of drawing on himself the contempt and mockery of worldly people. Having one day gone to a place where he was sure to be made a laughing-stock, his companion pointed this out to him; but he answered calmly: "Let us boldly go begging for contempt. We have done nothing if we have renounced the world only in word; we must triumph over it today with our sacks and our crosses." He knew that humiliations accepted and suffered with joy are the surest means of winning a complete victory over oneself and of destroying that depth of pride which is in us one of the chief obstacles to virtue. He also understood how advantageous it is not to be content with those that Providence sends, but to add voluntary ones to them, provided always that one does so with prudence and avoids everything that might smack of affectation. In the course of his begging rounds he often came to the house where he was born; but he did not go in: he stayed in the street and asked for alms at the door. His mother never heard his voice without being moved. In vain did she order her servants to give to him lavishly; he would accept only two loaves, after which he wished peace to those who had helped him and withdrew as if he had been a stranger. When the storehouse holding the community's yearly provisions was burned, he said to a brother who was lamenting: "Why did we vow to live in poverty? God has given us this grace so that we may feel it!" Thus did he reveal his love for humiliations and sufferings, and practise all the virtues that follow from them and make up their chief merit.

As soon as he had renounced the world, he so trained himself to master his tongue that he never said anything to justify or excuse himself. Being accused one day in chapter of having broken a point of the rule, he kept silence, although the accusation was false. It should also be noted that he was then the superior; he left his place, took a few steps with his eyes lowered, knelt down, asked pardon of the brethren and begged that a penance be imposed on him. The accuser was so confounded that he went and threw himself at the Saint's feet, declaring that he was innocent, and loudly condemned himself. Lawrence so dreaded distraction that from the day he entered the monastery until the day of his death he went into his father's house only to assist

his mother in her last moments.

Some time after his retirement he was exposed to a severe trial by one of his former friends, who held one of the first posts in the republic and had lately returned from the East. This man imagined that he could succeed in making him change his purpose, and he resolved to use every possible means to that end. So he made his way to the monastery of San Giorgio, accompanied by a band of musicians, and was allowed in because of his rank. When he caught sight of Lawrence, he was extremely struck by his modesty and gravity, and the astonishment he felt kept him silent for some time. At last, forcing himself, he said everything that friendship can suggest that is most tender to persuade him to fall in with his views. When these means did not succeed, he resorted to reproaches and invectives, which had no more success. When he had finished speaking, the Saint gave so moving a discourse on death and the vanities of the world that his friend, touched with keen compunction, was beside himself. He went so far as to break without delay all the ties that held him in the world, and resolved to embrace the state for which he had had nothing but contempt. He took the habit at San Giorgio, made his novitiate with a fervour that never flagged afterwards, became the object of the admiration and edification of the whole city, and died at last the death of the just.

Saint Lawrence was raised to the priesthood, of which he was so worthy by his virtues. The spirit of prayer and compunction with which he was endowed in so high a degree, and the knowledge he had of spiritual things and the interior ways of piety, enabled him to work with great fruit for the sanctification of souls. The tears that escaped him in his exercises, and above all during the celebration of Mass, made a lively impression on those present and awakened their faith; he was also favoured with various raptures.

Elected general of his Order against his will, he governed it with admirable wisdom. He reformed its discipline to such a point that he was afterwards regarded as its founder. In his discourses, both public and private, he spoke of virtue with such unction that all hearts were softened. He roused the lukewarm, filled the presumptuous with a salutary fear, gave confidence to the faint-hearted, and brought them all to fervour. His usual maxim was that a religious ought to tremble at the name of the least transgression. He received few subjects into his Order, and he tested for a long time those he judged worthy of admission. He based this on the view that the perfection and duties of the religious state are for few persons, and that it is not always in great numbers that fervour and the spirit essential to religious life are found. It is easy to understand that, holding such principles, he examined all postulants scrupulously. The first thing he required of his disciples was deep humility; he taught them that this virtue not only purifies the soul of all pride, but also inspires it with true courage by teaching it to put its confidence in God alone. He compared it to a river that is low and quiet in summer but high and deep in winter. “Humility,” he said, carrying on the same comparison, “keeps silence and does not rise up in prosperity, while in adversity it is high, magnanimous, full of joy and of invincible courage. There is nothing,” he went on, “in which men are more liable to be mistaken; few know what this virtue is; it is possessed only by those to whom God has given it by infusion as the reward of their redoubled efforts and of the spirit of prayer that was in them. The humility that is acquired by repeated acts is only a preparation for this one, though a necessary and indispensable one; and so it is always blind and imperfect. Infused humility enlightens the soul in all its views; it makes it see all its miseries clearly and gives it the feeling of them; it imparts to it that true knowledge which consists in knowing that God alone is all and that we are nothing.” During wars and other public calamities he exhorted the magistrates and senators to be thoroughly penetrated with their lowliness, because this disposition was the most fitted to draw down on them the eyes of the divine mercy.

From the time he received the priesthood until his death he never failed to celebrate Mass every day, unless prevented by illness. He used to say on this subject that one has very little love for Jesus Christ when one does not try to unite oneself to Him as often as one can. He often inculcated this maxim, that it would be as foolish to aspire to chastity while leading a soft, idle and sensual life as to try to put out a fire by pouring oil on it. He never ceased to remind the rich of their obligation to give alms if they wished to be saved. No

studied thoughts were found in his discourses; but there reigned in them an unction that no one could resist. Pope Eugene IV, who knew Lawrence's eminent virtue, appointed him bishop of Venice in 1433. The Saint used every possible means not to accept this dignity; he even got the members of his Order to write to the Pope to beg him to leave him in his solitude; but all was in vain; he had to obey. He took possession of his Church with such simplicity and so secretly that his own friends knew of it only when the ceremony was over. He spent the whole of the following night in prayer before an altar, to draw down on himself the graces of heaven; he had done the same thing the night before his consecration. He was admirable for his sincere piety towards God, for the ardour of his zeal for the glory of the Lord, and for his extraordinary charity towards the poor. He relaxed nothing of the austerities he had practised in the cloister. His assiduity in prayer earned him wholly heavenly lights, and that invincible firmness and tireless activity which marked all his conduct; he was able to calm the internal dissensions that troubled the State, and to govern his diocese in the stormiest times as easily as he would have governed a monastery. His furniture reflected his love of simplicity and poverty; and when it was represented to him that he owed something to his birth, to the dignity of his see and to the republic, he answered that virtue was the only ornament of the episcopal character, and that a bishop ought to have no other family than the poor of his diocese. His household consisted of only five persons; he ate off earthenware; he had for a bed only a straw mattress covered with rags, and only a shabby cassock for clothing. His severity towards himself, joined to a great fund of affability and gentleness towards others, made him universally respected. He gained such an ascendancy over all minds and all hearts that he easily succeeded in reforming various abuses that had crept in among the clergy and chiefly among the laity. His flock loved and respected him, and there was no one who did not submit docilely to all his ordinances. If the carrying out of his pious plans at first met with some difficulties, he knew how to overcome them by his gentleness and patience. His zeal against the theatres raised up some enemies against him. One of them, a powerful man, spoke out with great impropriety against a pastoral letter he had issued on the subject; he made the holy bishop out to be a man who wanted to carry the rigidity of the cloister into the world, a petty monk troubled by vain scruples, and he did all he could to stir up the people against him. On another occasion Justinian was publicly insulted in the streets and called a hypocrite. He listened to the abuse heaped on him without changing countenance and without losing any of his calm. He was no less unmoved by the praise and applause given him; no stirring of sadness or of any passion whatever was noticed in him; he enjoyed an evenness of soul that nothing could disturb.

The first visitation he made of his diocese produced incredible fruits. He founded fifteen monasteries and a great number of churches; he reformed all the abuses that had crept in regarding the celebration of the divine office and the administration of the sacraments. He established such good order in his cathedral that it became the model of all Christendom; he founded new prebends there so that it might be served with more decency and dignity. He set up ten parishes in Venice, so that there were then thirty in that city instead of the twenty there had been before. Every day a countless multitude of people was to be seen in his palace: some came to seek consolation in their troubles or help in their poverty; others came to consult the Saint in their doubts. His door was never shut to the poor. He preferred to give bread and clothes, to prevent the misuse of money, which is only too common even among the needy; or, if he gave money, it was always in small amounts. Devout ladies carried his alms to the shamefaced poor or to those who had suffered heavy losses. In his charities he had no regard for flesh and blood. When someone came to him on behalf of Leonardo his brother, he sent him away saying: "Go back to him who sent you, and I charge you to tell him that he is in a position to help you himself." No one ever carried contempt of money further than he. He entrusted the care of his temporal affairs to a faithful steward, and he used to say on this subject: "It is unworthy of a pastor of souls to spend a considerable part of a time that is so precious in going into the petty details that have money for their object." The Popes showed Lawrence great veneration. Eugene IV, having summoned him to Bologna, received him with great marks of distinction and called him "the ornament of the episcopate". Nicholas V, who had the same sentiments towards him, sought every occasion to give him effective proofs of

his esteem. At last he found one at the death of Domenico Michiel, patriarch of Grado, which occurred in 1451. He transferred the patriarchal dignity to the see of Venice. The senate of that city, ever jealous of its liberty, raised great difficulties; it feared that its rights and privileges might be infringed in some circumstances. While this matter was being debated with great heat, Lawrence went to the place where the senate was assembled and declared that he would rather give up a post for which he was not fitted, and which he had held for eighteen years against his will, than add a new dignity to the burden he found so hard to bear. The speech he made on this occasion showed so great a depth of charity and humility that the doge himself could not hold back his tears; he went so far as to beg Lawrence not to think of resigning, and to conform to the Pope's decree, the carrying out of which would be useful to the Church and honourable to their country. The senators applauded the doge, and the installation of the new patriarch took place to the great satisfaction of the whole city.

Lawrence regarded himself as a man who had contracted a new obligation to work ardently for the increase of the reign of Jesus Christ and the sanctification of the souls entrusted to his care. It was then seen in the most striking way what a Saint can do in high places. Lawrence found time to sanctify himself and to serve his neighbour. He never kept anyone waiting through his own fault; he left everything to give audience to those who wished to speak to him, without distinction of poor or rich. He received everyone who came with such gentleness and charity, consoled them so touchingly, and seemed so perfectly free of every passion, that people could not imagine he had shared in the corruption of original sin. Everyone regarded him as an angel come down to earth. His advice was always suited to the state of the persons who turned to him. Justice was so universally done to his virtue, wisdom and insight that at Rome they would no longer re-examine the cases he had decided, and in case of appeal the sentences he had given were always confirmed there. Full of contempt for himself, he was indifferent to the opinion people might form of him. If anyone praised him, he took occasion from it to humble himself the more before God and men. He hid his good works as far as he could. When there escaped him any of those tears that had their source in divine love or in the keenness of his compunction, he accused himself of weakness and excessive sensitiveness of soul. He was entirely dead to himself. A servant having one day served him at table with vinegar instead of wine and water, he drank it without saying anything. Everything, even his library, proclaimed his love of poverty.

The republic was shaken in his time by violent upheavals and threatened with the greatest dangers. A holy hermit, who for more than thirty years had served God fervently on the island of Corfu, declared that he had learned in a supernatural way that the State had been saved by the prayers of the holy bishop. Lawrence's nephew, who wrote his life in a pure and elegant style, relates as an eyewitness that he was favoured with the gift of miracles and that of prophecy.

He was seventy-four years old when he composed his last work, entitled *The Degrees of Perfection*. He had scarcely finished it when he was seized with a violent fever. Seeing his servants busy preparing a bed for him, he said to them in great distress: "What are you about? You are wasting your time. My Lord died stretched on a cross. Do you not remember that Saint Martin said in his agony that a Christian ought to die on ashes and haircloth?" He insisted on being laid on straw. While his friends wept round him, he cried out in transports of joy: "Behold the Bridegroom: let us go out to meet Him"; then, raising his eyes to heaven, he added: "Lord Jesus, I am coming to You." At other times he gave himself up to that holy fear which the thought of God's judgements inspires. When someone told him one day that he ought to be filled with joy since he was going to receive the crown, he was troubled and answered: "The crown is for brave soldiers, not for cowards like me." His poverty was so great that he had nothing to dispose of. He nevertheless made his will, and that only to exhort all men to virtue and to order that he be buried as a simple religious in the convent of San Giorgio. But after his death the senate would not allow this last clause to be carried out. During the two days before his death the various bodies of the city came to receive his blessing. The door of his room was open to poor and rich alike, and he gave them all very moving instructions. When Marcello,

one of his beloved disciples, was weeping bitterly, he consoled him, saying: “I am going before you, but you will soon follow me. We shall meet again at Easter next.” The prediction was borne out by the event. Having closed his eyes, he breathed his last peacefully on 8 January 1455, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. He had been a bishop for twenty-two years and patriarch for four. He was not buried until 17 March, because of a dispute that arose over the place of his burial.

He is often shown with the cross in his hand, to mark not only his high dignity but also the memory of the self-denial he professed from his early youth. — Sometimes the city of Venice is painted beside him, from which he turns aside the thunderbolt that Our Lord is about to hurl. This is because his prayers more than once saved that city when it was threatened by scourges from heaven.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — SES ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — His writings.

The holiness of Saint Lawrence having been attested by several miracles after his death, Pope Sixtus IV began to have the process of his canonisation carried out, and it was continued by Popes Leo X and Adrian VI. At last Pope Clement VII issued the decree of his beatification in 1524, with permission to keep his feast and public office in all the churches of the republic of Venice. Long before, altars had begun to be raised under his name at Venice, his statues placed in the churches, chapels built to him and his intercession sought; he was already regarded as the protector, or tutelary saint, of the city and the whole Signoria, after Saint Mark. In 1597 Cardinal Lorenzo Priuli, patriarch of Venice, was preparing to carry out the solemn translation of his relics, in virtue of a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites dated 1 February, when the patriarch’s death caused it to be suspended. Pope Clement VIII granted indulgences by apostolic brief to those who visited the churches of the Canons Regular of the Congregation of San Giorgio in Alga throughout Italy on the feast of Saint Lawrence Justinian. His cult was brought into Sicily, and above all to Palermo, which placed him among its patron saints because it was preserved from the plague in 1626 by his intercession. This public devotion was authorised by a decree of the Congregation of Rites on 26 February 1628. Saint Lawrence was canonised on 1 November 1690 by Pope Alexander VIII. His feast, raised to a semi-double in the Roman office, was moved to 5 September by order of the Holy See and the Congregation of Rites.

His relics are kept at Venice in the cathedral church of San Pietro di Castello, and placed under the high altar.

Saint Lawrence Justinian has left us a great number of treatises and sermons, collected in a thick folio volume printed at Brescia in 1560 and at Venice in 1755. The best edition we have is the one that appeared at Venice in 1751, 2 vols. folio. They show vast learning, deep wisdom, and great vehemence, force and nobility of style.

Acta Sanctorum; Godescard; and the Esprit des Saints, *by the abbé Grimes.*

Blessed Catherine of Racconigi, of the Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic

1547. — Pope: Paul III. — King of Sardinia: Charles III.

> *In her generous love for Jesus Christ she would have blushed to see herself for a single moment without crosses and without sufferings; and so the Beloved of her heart never allowed it.*
>
> *Eulogy of the Blessed.*

Catherine Mattei was born at Racconigi in the year 1486. Her father was a simple artisan named Giorgio, and her mother was called Bilia; they had her baptised in the old parish church of San Giovanni, at the same font that is still there today.

From the age of five her devotion was admirable; she took the greatest pleasure in remaining in prayer before a little image of the most holy Virgin that was in the house; and these fine dispositions, in which she grew, made her the consolation of her parents. Her delight was to stay quietly at home, so as to be able to raise her heart to God more easily. Her mother left nothing undone to cultivate these fine budding virtues. One morning, after hearing Mass, while she was praying in her little room, she saw a pure white dove come in and settle on her shoulder. Fearing that it might be a trick of the devil to deceive her, she at once made the sign of the cross over it, saying: "Jesus, O Jesus!" At that very moment she saw a ray of light come out of the dove's beak and end in her mouth, and she heard these words: "Take, my little daughter, and drink this wine. By the power of this draught you will no longer hunger or thirst for the things of the world, and you will feel the hunger and thirst for the love of God and the salvation of souls increase in you."

While she was tasting the sweetness of this heavenly draught, a woman appeared to her, dressed in a white robe and a black mantle. "May the name of Jesus," she said to her, "be always in your heart, O my daughter." — "Who are you," Catherine asked her, "and how did you get in here, when the door is shut?" — "I am," answered the lady, "the Mother of Jesus your Redeemer; so fear nothing. I want you to give yourself wholly to my Son." — "And your Son, where is He?" — "You will soon see Him. But know, my daughter, that as great cold makes plants lose their beauty and kills flowers and fruits, so would it happen to you as soon as the grace of my Son failed you. That is why I want you to be united to Him by love, and to give yourself to Him with all that you hold most dear." — "Poor as I am, what could I ever give Him?" — "My Son wants nothing but your heart; you will give it to my Son each time you willingly obey His commandments and suffer some pain for love of Him."

About the age of seven Catherine had another vision, but it was the sign of the tribulations the future held for her. Going one day for her devotions to the convent of the Servite Fathers, she saw painted on the wall a picture of Saint Peter Martyr. While she was gazing with admiration at the palm, the glorious emblem of his martyrdom, and at the marks of his wounds, she felt a keen desire to die for the faith spring up in her heart. So she began to pray the holy martyr to teach her and strengthen her in the faith, begging him to obtain for her an ardent charity that would make her ever dearer to her heavenly Spouse and an imitator of His afflictions and torments. When her prayer was finished, the holy martyr appeared to her, surrounded by a splendid light and holding in his hand a chalice full of blood. "Take, my daughter," he said, "take this chalice and taste the most precious blood of Jesus Christ, as a sign that one day you will drink of the chalice of His bitter passion." She had scarcely tasted it when she felt as if inebriated with its sweetness and gentleness.

Jesus then appeared to her in the form of a child of about ten, seeming to carry a cross on His shoulder. "Be reassured, my spouse," He said to her; "he who came is not the devil, but Peter, my faithful servant, the same whom I have given you as master; he has already drunk the chalice of my passion by suffering martyrdom for love of me. So that you may be like him and like me, as you have asked, you shall carry this cross for love of me." So saying, the Child Jesus laid the cross on Catherine's shoulder, and to give her courage He added: "At first it will seem hard and heavy to you, but as my love grows in you, in the end it will seem sweet and light." He also showed her a crown of very beautiful roses and said to her: "All afflictions will seem roses to you if you bear them with goodwill." From that moment Catherine began to feel a wonderful ardour to suffer for love of Jesus Christ, an ardour that grew to such a point that, little child as she was, she longed to go to the unbelievers to preach the religion of Jesus and to die a martyr. About the same time the devil, for his part, began to tempt her strongly and to wage a fierce war on her. But the Saints and Jesus Himself did not fail to come and console and strengthen her.

During these same years of her earliest childhood Catherine was already beginning to have her conversation in heaven. Even in the thick of her work she raised her thoughts above the earth, and everything became for her an occasion of meditation. When she went up the stairs, the bottom step put her in mind of the baseness of sin, and as she went from one step to the next and reached the top, she pictured to herself the different

degrees of virtue, until at last, arriving in her room, the subject of her meditation was the beauty and dignity of the soul when it has the happiness of possessing grace, and the sublime dwelling God reserves for it in heaven.

At the sight of pictures of the saints our young virgin would begin to meditate on their virtues and be fired with the desire to imitate them. Once a picture of Saint Catherine came before her eyes, and noticing that this saint held in her right hand the crucifix and a branch of lilies, and in her left a raised heart, the sight led her into meditation. “The lily,” she said to herself, “means purity; the cross, the continual remembrance of the Saviour’s passion; the raised heart, true detachment from the things of this earth.” And so she prayed the saint to obtain for her the grace to imitate her. A year after these last events (1495), one day when Catherine, busy at her work, was thinking of her mother’s great poverty and of how great were the ills it made her suffer, the emotion of this thought brought her to tears, and turning to her heavenly Spouse she commended her family to Him with such fervour that she soon obtained abundant help, and in a wholly wonderful way.

About the same time it happened that Catherine broke a dish; her mother scolded her harshly and even went so far as to threaten to punish her if such a thing ever happened again. Now one day, while laying the table, the child dropped a glass, which broke into a thousand pieces. Remembering her mother’s threat, Catherine began to cry and to pray Jesus and His heavenly Mother to come to her help. She was heard, for by an extraordinary miracle she was able to restore the glass to its former state and make good the damage without her mother noticing anything. One day her father threatened his wife, and even carried out his threats, because she had not properly prepared the supper of the last day of carnival; Catherine, pierced with grief, wept over it until the next morning, which was the first day of Lent. Alone in the house, because her mother had gone to stay with one of her brothers, when dinner-time came she tried to make herself eat, but the big tears falling from her eyes prevented her. At the same time she was sending loving sighs to her Jesus, hoping for help and consolation from Him alone. At that very moment she saw a young boy of about fourteen come in and approach her; after greeting her he asked what was making her cry so. Catherine told him what had happened in her home. Then he consoled her with these words: “Take courage, for you will be delivered from all dangers, and I will not fail you in your needs. As for your mother, whose love causes your distress at this hour, her present grief will soon be relieved.” The devil, jealous of the great gifts the young child received from the Lord, tried by every means and by the strongest temptations to turn her from the straight path of virtue. One Sunday, while she was hearing Mass in the church of the Servite Fathers, at the moment of the consecration a devil in the form of a man came up to her and said: “Why do you bow down before a bit of bread soaked in a little water? If you think Jesus is there, you are greatly mistaken, and you are very foolish to believe such things.”

At these words the poor child, quite terrified, turned to her Jesus and addressed a fervent prayer to Him; then, raising her eyes to heaven, she saw on the altar Jesus in the form of a child of three, pierced with five wounds, whose blood dripped into the chalice. Another time the devil came to her in the guise of an angel sent from God and told her to worship him. “If you were really the one you say,” she answered him, “you would not claim such an honour from me, but would want it for God alone. It is no use pretending now; I see clearly that you are the one fallen from heaven, since you persist in your ancient pride: go to the place to which it was condemned.”

From Catherine’s early years her holiness began to be made known, even by miracles. One morning, very early, a holy priest was at prayer. While he was absorbed in God and contemplating His beauty, his guardian angel told him to come down from the heights of his contemplation and he would see a wonderful creature. The priest answered him: “It is painful for me to leave God to see a creature; yet if such is the Lord’s will, so be it.” Coming back to his senses, then, he saw a little girl of ten, clothed in a wholly resplendent robe. The servant of God at once asked her who she was. “I am,” she answered, “Catherine of Racconigi, poor in temporal goods but, by the grace of almighty God, rich in spiritual goods. I beg you to remember me in your

prayers, so that I may obtain from heaven all the help I need. That is why I have been brought here." And having said this, she disappeared. This same priest told the incident to one of his friends, who came to see Catherine and asked her how she had got into that place. After long insistence Catherine answered him: "I know nothing about it, except that an angel led me there."

About the age of thirteen Catherine went into a church where she heard a preacher giving the panegyric of Saint Catherine of Siena, whose feast was being kept that day. When she came home she went to her room and, beginning to pray with great fervour and a great flood of tears, accused herself of the negligence she thought she had shown until then in the service of God. Feeling herself spurred on towards Him by a keen love, she called to her aid Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Catherine, begging them to assist her in the offering she wished to make. "Behold," she said, "I offer myself wholly to You, O heavenly Father, to Jesus Your only Son and the beloved Spouse of my soul, to the Holy Spirit, and to Mary, Queen of virgins. To You, yes to You, I make the perpetual vow of virginity."

Then, turning with particular affection to the Blessed Virgin, she said to her: "Mary, my dearest mother, I am a weak creature, incapable by myself of keeping so great a treasure. So I give myself up entirely into your hands, and I beg you with all my soul to be pleased to help me to keep myself always pure from all stain. Let all the angels and saints of heaven be witnesses of this promise, I wish it, and particularly Saint Peter, Saint Jerome and Saint Catherine of Siena." This vow was followed by a feeling of contentment with which she remained wholly filled. The following night Saint Catherine of Siena appeared to her, surrounded by a bright light and holding in her hand two very beautiful roses, one white, the other red. She assured her that her vow had been pleasing to Jesus and Mary, and that they would always help her to keep her heart chaste and virginal. She told her why her divine Spouse was sending her these two roses: the red, to remind her of the most ardent love that Jesus had shown not only to her but to the whole human race when He shed His blood for the salvation of all; the white, so that she might always have present to her mind in what purity and innocence she must keep her heart, so that it might remain worthy of Jesus. Then, having given her her holy blessing, she disappeared, leaving a heavenly fragrance in the room.

In order to give herself to prayer more freely, or to keep the purity of her heart better, Catherine felt from then on keener desires for retirement and solitude. Company had become so unbearable to her that she fled the world as far as she could, except when the honour of God and the good of her neighbour obliged her to act otherwise.

Our young virgin, noticing that the snares and temptations against holy purity only increased more and more, took up the habit of invoking various saints, and in great number, chiefly on their feast days, begging them with all her heart to intercede for her. On the feast of Saint Stephen, the first martyr, Catherine rose before daybreak and began to pray the Saint to deign to preserve her purity in the same way as he had preserved his own when he was chosen by the Apostles to fulfil the ministry of deacon. She explained to him that, still very young, she found herself weakened and troubled by various tribulations, that a great many impure men laid snares for her, spoke evil words to her and made great assaults on her virtue. Finally she told him that she was greatly tormented by the devils, and that she would rather die than live amid so many dangers to her soul and body. As she spoke thus to the holy martyr, the poor child melted into tears. Saint Stephen, surrounded by a heavenly splendour, appeared to her and consoled her, saying: "O my sister, dry your tears, take comfort, for God has heard your prayers. Yes, by His holy grace you will be delivered from temptations against modesty. Now prepare yourself to receive the Holy Spirit." At that very instant the seraph who had been given to the Blessed as her guardian from her childhood arrived; he consoled her with these words: "The preservation of your purity, which you asked of the Lord with so many tears, you have obtained. Now, therefore, prepare yourself to receive the Holy Spirit." These words were scarcely finished when a wonderful light came down from heaven, formed of rays which rested on Catherine's head. At the same time she felt an inexpressible sweetness spread through her heart, and a heat so intense that she seemed to be on fire; she also

heard these words: “I have come to dwell in you, to purify, enlighten and set on fire your heart and to give you life.”

After this wonderful event there remained on Catherine’s face a tint of red and white mingled, and a kind of luminous radiance came from her. Her neighbours, astonished, and thinking she used some artifice for it, asked her what she put on her face to make it so bright. Catherine answered with a smile that her only secret was a little bread, meaning the holy Eucharist. And indeed it was that divine sacrament which coloured her soul white and red. But greater still was the astonishment of those of her family, who knew well that she used no artifice, but on the contrary often fasted on bread and water and often put off her meal until the evening. For a great many years she practised this austerity throughout Advent, Sundays excepted; she did the same in Lent, and it was not rare for her to spend a whole day without eating or drinking. She even carried the rigour of her fast so far as to take food only three times a week. The aim of all these austerities was to lose this natural beauty, for fear it might become an occasion of sin for someone. And because so austere a regime did not seem enough to her, she girded her waist with a thick cord, which she soon exchanged for an iron belt, which she tightened so hard that she made it enter right into the flesh. She also wore a hair shirt, which she never left off except in the last years of her life, when age had noticeably lessened her strength. Her support in keeping herself pure from all stain was above all the frequent exercise of prayer and meditation. So her spiritual father could affirm that never in the course of her life had she committed a grave fault.

About the age of fifteen, being ill, she occupied herself in considering the grave and many dangers with which she was surrounded; she compared herself to a green and flowering plant that the reaper’s scythe will soon cut down, or that the rays of too hot a sun turn yellow and wither, and she said to herself: “I who am young, flourishing and bright of colour, when death has come I shall be nothing but rottenness and foul smell, and much worse still than that, if I then had the misfortune to be far from God and separated from Him by mortal sin. Ah, wretch that I am! What then would be my deformity and my stench before God and His Saints!” But full of faith and holy fear, she added: “O my God, O my hope, O Mother of mercy, O my holy guardian angels, help me, assist me. Let all evils come upon me, and death itself, but let me never have the misfortune of committing a mortal sin.”

To keep the fair virtue of purity better, Catherine ardently desired to put on the religious habit as soon as she could, as the most holy Virgin had foretold to her from her earliest years. It was then that she foresaw by what road a wish she had so much at heart was to be fulfilled, and she announced the foundation of a convent of Dominican Fathers, although there was then no sign of such an event. She had as her confessor Father Alessandro, a religious of the Servants of Mary. These good Fathers, having heard that she wished to take the religious habit while remaining in her home, Father Alessandro offered her that of the sisters of his Order. “No,” she answered, “the habit I wish to wear is that of Saint Dominic.” — “But you know well,” the Father replied, “that there is no convent of that Order here.” — “God,” Catherine added, “will see to it that there is one.” Seeing later the beginnings of the fulfilment of this prophecy, Father Alessandro told all that had happened to a lord named Claudio, and from that time the latter held Catherine’s holiness in great esteem.

Several times she received the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a sensible way, and among others, in a quite special way, the gift of knowledge, which made her able to resolve the highest questions of religion. Meanwhile her ardour to suffer for love of Jesus Christ kept growing. In the twenty-fourth year of her age, on the third day after Easter, while meditating towards dawn on the mystery of the Saviour’s long prayer and sweat of blood in the garden, she fervently begged her divine Spouse Jesus to grant her the grace of resembling Him in His sufferings. At that very moment Jesus appeared to her, clothed in a robe of flaming red and all resplendent with wonderful rays of light that streamed from His sacred wounds, and said to her: “O my spouse! Great is your desire to suffer, but you do not well know your weakness.” — “O my hope,” Catherine answered, “my strength is less than nothing, and of myself I am capable of nothing; I need your powerful help in all things.”

This keenness of her love and the depth of her humility earned her this answer from the mouth of Jesus: “Your great faith deserves to be exalted; that is why I gladly make you share in the pains I endured in my feet and hands.” At these words the Saviour stretched out His divine hands towards Catherine’s, and from His sacred wounds there sprang as it were a dart of blood which pierced the hands of His beloved spouse. The same wonder took place in the feet, and it was accompanied by such suffering that Catherine felt her strength leave her through the violence of the pain. Her feet and hands kept the marks of the wounds received. These signs of the Saviour’s passion remained visible for some time, and after Catherine’s death a great number of persons testified on oath that they had seen these sacred stigmata on her body.

But soon Catherine’s humility compelled her to ask God for the grace that these signs might be hidden. She obtained it; her hands nevertheless remained so sore and weak that she could scarcely attend to the household tasks. She endured in her body all the torments of the Redeemer; for besides the stigmata of the feet and hands she also had the wound in the side and the crown of thorns. This last caused her such great pain that she could not prevent those present from noticing it.

Sometimes too the blood that came from her wounds was so abundant that not only her outer garments but her undergarments were soaked with it. Once, among others, she had given one of her dresses to be washed by some women of her family who, already knowing Catherine’s holiness, thought of keeping it out of devotion and exchanging it for a similar one. Catherine, noticing this pious trick, would never lend herself to it, but said and did so much that her kinswomen were obliged to give her back her garment.

We need not be astonished that a soul whom God treated with such familiarity possessed the gift of prophecy. Catherine foretold the wars of Piedmont, which were not to come until twenty-five years after her prediction. The Lord made still other gifts to His faithful servant. On the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, when Catherine was ill, the Lord Jesus appeared to her with two angels walking before Him carrying a great cross. Jesus took this cross, laid it on Catherine’s shoulder and said these words to her: “Here, O my spouse, is the cross you will have to carry all the time of your life. It will seem heavy to you, but it will only be the more glorious for you.”

From that day Catherine was not for a moment without pain or suffering. Nevertheless she felt renewed in her the desire to go to the unbelievers to spread the faith there, and she remained for several months with the intention of carrying it out, until, finding no means of achieving it, she gave it up, though not without keen regret. Catherine now had only one thought: the love of God and of her neighbour. The one desire that burned in her was for a pure and holy heart, worthy to be offered wholly to her dear Jesus. Her care to keep it in this purity was so great that it could easily be noticed even in the care and vigilance she took to keep everything very clean, both in her clothes and in her house. It is a saying of the Holy Spirit that outward cleanliness is the sign of purity of soul.

Having risen one day very early and being at prayer, she saw Jesus appear, accompanied by a great multitude of saints, among whom were Saint Dominic, Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Peter Martyr. The last opened her left side between two ribs and took out her heart, but with pains so sharp that she thought she would die of them. Saint Peter, turning to the Saviour, begged Him to be pleased to give back this heart, which he presented to Him pure of all stain. Jesus, with serene countenance, consented. Catherine, made all joyful, took courage to address to Him, with many tears, the prayer that He would give her back her heart made pure. Jesus granted His beloved’s prayer and, giving her His blessing, departed. Then Catherine was seized with so sharp a pain that she seemed on the point of death. Her family ran to her and, fearing she might die, sent for a priest, asking him to come at once to hear her confession and say the commendation of the soul, as is customary for the dying. The priest arrived; but seeing that Catherine’s complexion and face were as usual, and her colour as bright as if she had suffered no harm, he was seized with astonishment and suspected that the cause of this illness was not ordinary. So he ordered her to hide nothing from him. Constrained by obedience but deeply humbled, Catherine told him her wonderful secret. This happened on 3

August 1512, in the twenty-sixth year of her age. Nevertheless the Lord willed that His servant should experience that state of spiritual dryness which plunges the soul into such darkness and gloom that it seems to be in disgrace with God: a painful trial which God uses towards souls that are good, no doubt, but which He wishes to adorn still further and make more perfect.

By her great mortifications and penances Catherine sought to lose the beauty she had received from nature, but without success. The beauty of her soul was so great that it spread over her face and lit it up like a mirror. So she had to struggle against a great number of seducers who laid snares for her virtue; they made her rich promises, hoping thereby to shake her in her holy resolutions. But by the wisdom of her answers Catherine soon destroyed all their hopes. Yet noticing, to her great grief, that her beauty was an occasion for her neighbour to offend God, she begged Him to be pleased to take it from her. Her prayer was granted, and in a short time such a change took place in her face that most of her family were strangely surprised.

Not only men but devils with them did all they could to make her lose the virtue of purity. Unchaste thoughts, impure imaginings, foul dreams: such were their weapons. But Catherine repulsed them all by prayer and mortification. The subject of her meditations was the incarnation and passion of the Son of God, the beauty of the soul adorned with the virtue of modesty, the baseness of those who give themselves up to the contrary vice, and the eternal torments that await them in hell. She macerated her body by penance, she fled idleness, which is the mother of all vices, and took care to be always busy. Jesus, seeing His spouse's fidelity, consoled her from time to time, appearing to her surrounded by a dazzling brightness and driving all these unclean spirits from her room.

But the greatest trial she had to endure befell her in the year 512. It was 11 April. From that day, and for seven days running, she found herself wearied by continual temptations against modesty. She found relief only in prayer, without being able to take either sleep or rest. What she forced herself to eat or drink was of no help to her; far from it, she brought it up at once, and all day she melted into tears, but without relief from her suffering. She implored the help of Jesus and Mary, but felt no consolation from them. She called with cries upon the Saints who had been given her as guardians, and above all upon Saint Peter and Saint Catherine of Siena; she reminded them of their promises and complained to them amid lamentations and tears.

Receiving no relief and gaining no profit from the severe fasts with which she afflicted her body, she thought of another means of stifling this temptation. Full of anguish, she went to her confessor and told him everything. The man of God advised her to throw herself as a suppliant before God and to await from Him the help she needed. Catherine obeyed. She knelt in her room and there offered herself anew to the divine Majesty, detesting with tears and sighs all the errors of her past life, accusing her negligence in God's service and her monstrous ingratitude for so many favours received from His love. Finally she begged Him to treat her soul no longer as her unworthiness demanded, but solely according to the good pleasure of His great mercy and the merits of His superabundant redemption. During these prayers and sighs Jesus Christ appeared to her, His face gentle and serene, and said to her: "Fear not, for I am with you."

While Jesus was speaking to her, two angels appeared who girded Catherine's loins with a cord of heavenly whiteness. "On God's behalf," they said to her, "we gird you with the girdle of chastity, which will never be loosed." From then until the end of her life she was no more troubled either by the stings of the flesh or, on their account, by disturbances of mind; on the contrary, one would have said that she infused the gift of chastity into all who had the happiness of talking with her. Feeling herself thus out of danger, she was less afraid of helping by her conversation those who needed her assistance.

Then the report of her holiness began to spread; a multitude of devout persons came to visit her. This greatly displeased her. Her humility made her wish to flee the world, so that no one should be occupied with her or speak of her. The thought came to her to disappear, to cross the Alps and look for some solitary place to lead

the hermit's life there, or at least to enter some monastery. It was then the month of November; the countryside was covered with hoar-frost, and Catherine, still not well recovered from a long illness, rose at four in the morning without her mother's knowledge to carry out her plan. Before doing so, however, she knelt down to invoke the Holy Spirit. She asked Him to keep her from all danger and to guide her on her way. Her thought was to go first to a convent of women in the neighbourhood and then to cross the Alps. But as she was about to leave the house, she heard a voice saying to her: "Stop; where do you want to go?" Catherine looked round and, seeing no one from whom this voice could come, did not doubt that it was an order from God, who wished to prevent her from leaving, and she stayed. Some days later Jesus Christ assured her, through Saint Margaret, virgin and martyr, that it was God's will that she should not leave. He let her know that He had not lavished so many gifts on her for her to shut herself up in a monastery, but so that by her holy conversation and the example of her life she might procure the honour of God and the salvation of a great number of souls.

Italy was then torn by fearful wars, which caused the loss of many souls; and so Catherine often shed tears of grief. Her sadness, however, was sometimes softened by the conversion of some souls she won for God. All who had the happiness of dealing with her felt themselves spurred on to do good. Through her visions Catherine came to know clearly that she must live among sinners and that she therefore could not withdraw from the noise of the world. So she begged the Lord to teach her how to raise the building of her holiness there. The Lord answered her by sending her the following vision: it seemed to her that an immense temple was going to be built, and she was told that she would have to dig the foundations. When the trench had reached the height of a man and the foundation was about to be laid, she learned from Jesus Christ that by this foundation she was to understand humility. "By means of humility," He told her, "man considers himself vile and abject in the eyes of God, and the lower he places himself, the higher he rises, after the example of my most holy Mother, who, for having been the humblest of creatures, was raised by God above them all." Jesus added that she must raise the wall using the plumb line, which meant the tribulations, sorrows and pains by which God straightens the road on which He makes those He loves walk. When the wall was up, Jesus told her to make a square window, divided by a cross in the middle, whose sides would let her put her head through and look out. Catherine asked what this window meant, and it was explained to her that the window, arranged inside in the form of a cross, signified the remembrance of the Saviour's passion and death. Jesus ended by telling her that, just as by going to the window of one's house one has the brightness of the light, so her light on the road of holiness would be meditation on the passion and consideration of the death He had endured.

The Blessed Virgin Mary had promised Catherine that she would put on the habit of Saint Dominic. Now twenty-three years had already passed since this promise, and seeing no sign that the prophecy was to be fulfilled, she was seized with uncertainty and with the fear of having been deceived by the devil. But soon a new revelation assured her that the promise came from God, that everything would happen as had been announced to her, and that before long a convent of the religious of Saint Dominic would be founded at Racconigi. And indeed the foundations were soon laid on which rose a convent that can still be seen today.

Some time before Catherine put on the habit of Penance, certain ill-disposed persons, looking with an evil eye on the wonderful things she was doing, summoned her before the tribunal of the Inquisition, accusing her of heresy and magic. By this they hoped to make her lose the great reputation she enjoyed with a great many people, which the lustre of the finest virtues made brighter day by day. Catherine went to Turin to clear herself. God, who protects His faithful servants, brought it about that not only was she found innocent, but her reputation and her name for virtue only grew among persons of high rank.

The report of her holiness then began to reach the ears of the duke of Savoy and of the archbishop of Turin, who both honoured her publicly. From that time she was not only invited and received with great honours by the duke of Savoy's sister and by the other princesses of that illustrious house, but she was even asked to go

to distant places. Thus she had several times to go to Casale at the urging of Anne, marchioness of Montferrat, a kinswoman of the king of France. This pious lady went so far as to beg Catherine to be pleased to settle for good in that town; but the humble virgin would never consent. The marchioness of Montferrat said several times that in her afflictions she never found greater help than in Catherine's conversation; she even added that merely by looking at her she felt herself quite renewed.

Having reached the twenty-eighth year of her age, Catherine at last put on the habit of Saint Dominic, which she had so much desired. Nothing could shake Catherine's resolution: neither the calumnies raised against her and against the Dominican religious, nor the opposition of the world, which did all it could to prevent her from carrying it out.

At the same time as Catherine, another girl had put on the habit of Penance; but she was so poor that for lack of money she had not been able to procure the necessary garment. When Catherine learned of this, she said and did so much with her mother that she obtained permission to give her companion the money that was in the house. This fine action obtained for her from God a great increase of charity. From that moment she sought every occasion of doing charitable works. She never let a poor person leave her house without giving him some help. She worked longer and more diligently than before at her trade of braider, so as to be able to put by a little more money and so relieve a greater number of needy people. Often, after spending a great part of the night in prayer, she set to work before daybreak so as to be able to satisfy her ardent charity towards her neighbour. At her meals she often went without part of her food to carry it to sick people in need. How highly she valued this virtue can also be judged from the answer she once gave to some members of her family who wanted to persuade her to leave the care of household affairs to her mother, on the pretext that, not measuring her means, she gave the poor, for love of God, more than she could afford. "I will not do it," she answered, "I will not do it, because I should be depriving myself of the occasion of giving alms to the poor; and if I had nothing else to give, I would give them my own dress."

The devil, having failed to turn the servant of God from her resolution to put on the religious habit, left nothing undone to trouble her soul with a crafty abundance of deceitful reasonings. For example, he would suggest to her that she would have done better to marry and serve God in freedom, or at least under a habit more in favour, and a thousand other reasons of the same kind that he put into her mind. Wearied by these obsessions, Catherine obtained from Our Lord to be delivered from them. The desire Catherine had felt from her earliest years to give her life for love of her God was satisfied in part by her great and continual sufferings for the salvation of sinners, so that her life may be called a long and continual martyrdom. The love she bore God and her neighbour was so strong that nothing grieved her so much as the thought of offences against God and the ruin of souls. Many times, on hearing that someone had fallen into mortal sin, she would begin to shed tears of grief, and often her affliction made her ill and obliged her to stay in bed.

It was then that there arose in her the desire to bear the punishments due to all sinners, so as to shut the gate of hell and prevent any soul from falling into it in future.

At the request of several of her spiritual sons, Catherine went to stay for some time at Saluzzo in the company of a priest of her family. During her stay in that town, while she was praying one day in a church, a woman of evil life passed in front of her; Catherine cast on her so tender a look that the poor wretch came to herself and resolved to follow Catherine to Racconigi, where she could speak to her more freely. Once before her, she threw herself at her feet and, amid tears and sighs, told her the story of her whole past life. After listening to her kindly, Catherine instructed her with gentle words in the kind of life she must lead in future. Our poor sinner went to confession, therefore, and on returning home she edified by her example as much as she had given scandal in the past.

In 1519, one evening in the month of March, she was seized with frightful sufferings of mind and body. This fresh outbreak of pain always came from her great desire to endure every kind of torment for the salvation of

the sinners against whom she saw God was most angered. The very circumstances of the season revived this desire to suffer in her. It was, in fact, the month of March and the time of carnival, during which everyone gave himself up to all sorts of vices. It was an occasion for her to meditate on the blindness of men and the wretched allurements of human life, by which so many Christians hurl themselves into hell. These reflections grieved her greatly and led her to offer herself to God to suffer day and night for the benefit of sinners, and to call down the divine mercy on them. As she persevered, then, in her prayers for the good of the Church and the salvation of souls, she received this answer from Jesus: “I accept your offer, but the pains you will have to endure will be so violent that you will scarcely escape death.” And indeed a few days later she was overtaken by ills so violent that she was obliged to keep to her bed for eleven weeks. During this time she often went five days without taking anything; if the entreaties of her family persuaded her to try some food, she brought it up almost at once. The doctors themselves, seeing that she could no longer keep down any food and that one illness brought on another, soon declared her lost, and three times they were greatly surprised to find her still alive. It was not only for all men in general, but also for all those whose particular needs were known to her, that she offered her prayers and her very person to Our Lord; for it never happened that anyone commended himself to her prayers without receiving some help from them. God always granted her requests, both for the needs of the soul and for those of the body.

This is the manner of life Catherine followed privately. On rising in the morning she resolved to spend the present day in ordering all her actions to the greater glory of God. During the day she often raised her mind and heart to God by fervent ejaculatory prayers. In the evening, before going to bed, she called to mind how she had spent the day. If she recognised that she had done some good in it, she thanked God for it; if, on the contrary, she noticed some blameworthy action, she humbly asked pardon for it, detesting with all her heart the slightest failing. Her care was greater still when she went to church to confess. Then she searched her conscience for everything that seemed to her to have offended God, and after confession she asked Him for the grace to change her life and to do everything for His honour and glory. It was in this way that she reached a high degree of perfection and holiness. For his part the evil spirit set himself to stir up a thousand troubles for her, to hinder the great good she did by her prayers. It was then that the report spread that a deadly plague had invaded Turin and the surrounding country. Catherine at once began to pray without ceasing for the peoples struck by this scourge. So violent was the scourge in the neighbouring towns and countryside, and so great the number of victims, that the land and the houses were left empty of their inhabitants. The town of Racconigi alone remained untouched by this evil.

Catherine’s holiness was made known to a great many persons, either inwardly by inspirations or outwardly by visions and outward signs. There was then living at Savigliano, under the same habit as our Saint, another Catherine, famous for the lights with which God enlightened her. Whenever she was questioned about our Catherine, she never failed to load her with praise, calling her a great saint. Another virgin, who knew Catherine only by reputation, saw her in heaven placed so high that she could scarcely reach her with her gaze. A widow, her companion, one day saw on her head a light like a star, and by this brightness, as by the sudden radiance of her face, those who lived with her were warned of the presence of some heavenly spirit. A priest related that, going one day into her room where she lay ill, he saw her raised in the air above her bed, and heard her speaking like a person rapt in spirit. This holiness did not profit Catherine alone. A great many sinners found in it a help to their conversion.

Although Catherine was generally loved and venerated, there was no lack of wicked people to whom her holy life was a reproach that covered them with confusion. So they sought by every kind of means to make her lose the reputation she enjoyed. To succeed in this, several of them reported to the superior of her Order so many calumnies they had invented about her that this religious, giving credit to these evil reports, was led to become the instrument of their malice. While the superior was in this ill disposition towards Catherine, she asked him to be pleased to leave her her usual confessor, so that she might have a person she could trust to

answer the letters that princes and men of the highest merit addressed to her. But this religious would never grant it. However, God put an end to this groundless persecution.

Catherine's enemies then became more furious than ever and tried to kill her by poison. But God, who protects His servants, brought it about that she suffered no harm from it. Seeing then that their attempts were useless, they intrigued so much with one person and another that they obtained her banishment from Racconigi. When the day fixed for her banishment came, she was obliged, amid the mockery and insults of some libertines, to leave her father's house and go to a foreign land. So she made her way to Caramagna, a place two miles from Racconigi. Catherine's enemies, seeing that they had not succeeded in their plans by driving her from her homeland, and wishing to carry out still more harmful designs they were nursing against her, enlisted a superior of the Order to make her return to Racconigi.

Catherine, learning that this superior was at Racconigi, and knowing besides that she was not forbidden to come to her homeland from time to time, but only to make long stays there, went to see this superior to show him her respect. He then made known to her his will, which was that she should return to her homeland. But Catherine answered him: "Father, I am a daughter of obedience, and I am ready to obey unto death in everything that is in accordance with the rule to which I have bound myself; but for all the rest I do not consider myself bound. Now, since on the one hand my rule does not require me to live at Racconigi, and on the other the will of God is against it, please excuse me if I disobey you." The superior, displeased with this answer and, moreover, ill informed about the integrity of Catherine's life, forbade the neighbouring convents to take charge of her spiritual direction, a prohibition that lasted two years, until the end of his term of office.

Amid so many persecutions Catherine never ceased to pray for her enemies. God willed at last to console her by changing the hearts of her persecutors, several of whom repented of their ill treatment of her. Catherine had received from Our Lord the gift of miracles, and above all that of knowing the secrets of hearts. She never used this gift except for the good of souls and the greater glory of God. Her most abundant prayers and penances were above all for her friends and her spiritual children, whom Our Lord had entrusted to her in a quite special way. God enlightened her with a great number of revelations about them. She knew not only the secrets of those who were still in this world, but also those of the dead who had passed into the other. She said once that she had been given to know that all were in a place of safety; she named them by name, and she knew besides which of them already enjoyed the glory of paradise and which were still held back in purgatory. One Maundy Thursday she was rapt in spirit, and it was given her to contemplate the glory of God. She saw on a lofty throne the divine Saviour, who had at His feet a great book sealed with seven seals. The book was opened, and it was granted her to see written in it her name and those of her spiritual children. These heavenly visions came to her especially at the time of prayer, an exercise so frequent with her that usually no more than half an hour, or at most an hour, passed without her setting herself to pray. In the vigour and strength of her age she even spent a great part of the night in it.

Meanwhile the hour of her death was drawing near. Father Morelli, who had understood that she knew the moment of it, asked her whether the year 1546, which was then current, would be the last of her life. Catherine answered: "It is not this year yet, but the next one that comes after." In the year 1547, which was the last of her life, God worked great miracles in favour of those who called on Him through the merits of His faithful servant. We shall relate only a few of them. The Countess Françoise de Cacconato was tormented with severe pains in her side. Four months of assiduous remedies, instead of easing her, had only cruelly increased her sufferings. Seeing then the uselessness of human help, she remembered Catherine and prayed to God, saying: "If what is said of Sister Catherine's miracles is true, I beg You, O my God, to be pleased to deliver me through her merits." At that very moment she felt herself freed from all pain.

For many years a man had been afflicted with the falling sickness. The remedies he had carefully taken had done nothing for him. He went to see Catherine and, with a feeling of great confidence, begged her to be pleased to obtain health for him from God. The Saint promised it to him, and never afterwards did he feel the

slightest attack of that dreadful illness.

Having reached the last period of her life, Catherine, who until then had been afflicted chiefly in her body, found herself overwhelmed in her mind and heart; and so she said that the pains with which her youth had been scourged were much easier to bear than the spiritual anguish of her old age. Father Morelli testifies that he had often seen her so afflicted that she was pitiful to behold.

At last the time had come when God was going to withdraw Catherine from so many sorrows and call her to the joys of His glorious eternity. When the moment came, she fell into a long and serious illness, which was to be her last. Speaking one day with the doctor about the remedies she ought to take to get well, she said to him: “Every remedy is useless, since I have only four months left to live.” It was then the first days of May. It is impossible to give any idea of the patience and resignation with which she bore the pains of this illness, or of the frequent acts of love she sent up to her God. She no longer seemed a creature of this world, but an angel from heaven. All who came near her bed took away from her wholly heavenly instructions which filled them with love for paradise.

Meanwhile her condition grew more serious every day, and the day that was to end her exile was approaching with great strides. The sacraments were administered to her. On receiving for the last time her lovable Jesus, that Jesus who all the time of her life had been her Spouse and her sweet hope, her heart was flooded with such love that she was forced to cry out: “My heart boils so fiercely that I seem to have a burning furnace within me. Ah, why is the moment so long delayed when I shall fly into the arms of my heavenly Spouse?” In spite of the ardent desire that burned in Catherine to leave this world soon, yet, thinking of the dangers in which she was leaving her spiritual children, she addressed to God the prayer of Saint Martin: “Lord,” she said, “if it can be useful to souls that I remain still in this world, Your will be done.”

The report of her approaching death having spread, a great number of her spiritual daughters came and gathered round her bed. Catherine gave them a motherly look and, gathering what strength she still had, addressed to them so moving an exhortation that they all burst into sobs. She encouraged them to hate the world, to love God with all their heart, and to put all their trust in Jesus and Mary. Finally she promised to protect them from heaven and to go on loving them with a mother’s tenderness. But the hour of death has struck; already heaven is preparing to open its gates to this blessed soul, and earth weeps to see so precious a treasure taken from it. The dawn of 4 September has just broken, and with it the signal that Catherine is about to breathe her last. In the midst of those she has honoured with her friendship, who assist her with tears in their eyes, a Benedictine religious from a neighbouring abbey says the prayers of the commendation of the soul for her. While those present surrounded her, their tear-filled eyes fixed on her, Catherine raised hers to heaven and with a sweet smile gave up her soul and placed it in the arms of her God.

Above the altar of the chapel built for her at Racconigi, the divine Redeemer is seen giving back to His beloved spouse her heart, enriched with rays in the form of a cross, on which are read these words: “Jesus my hope.” — In the convent of Santa Margherita at Chieri she is shown adorned with the halo of the Saints, crowned with thorns, with a large cross on her left shoulder, a small cross on her breast, the stigmata and a lily in her hands, three rings on her finger, and the Holy Spirit above her head.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Catherine had scarcely breathed her last when her body gave off a most sweet fragrance. The people of Caramagna came in crowds to see it, and all wept for the great loss they had suffered. Her body was buried, amid a great concourse of people, in the public cemetery. Five months after her death, her body having been found as fresh and supple as if she had been asleep in a peaceful sleep, and moreover giving off a heavenly

odour, it was translated. Having arrived at Garessio, her precious remains were placed in the church of the Dominicans, under the altar of the chapel consecrated to her, where they began to be held in great veneration because of the many miracles worked through Catherine's intercession. In several provinces, not only of Piedmont but of the kingdoms of Naples and Spain, her relics were venerated on the altars and her images exposed for public veneration. At Turin and at Chambéry she was invoked in the prayers said in church. The room she lived in at Racconigi was turned into a chapel. On the altar there is exposed, in an elegant and precious reliquary given by Mgr Fransoni, archbishop of Turin, a bone of the Blessed; it is a whole femur, perfectly preserved. In the village of Santa Vittoria, near Alba, a chapel was raised in her honour, and every year, on 4 September, her feast is still solemnly kept there with a great concourse of people.

In view of this general cult, the master general of the Order of Saint Dominic, Pio Giuseppe Gaddi, asked and obtained from Pope Pius VII, on 9 April 1808, the approval of this public cult, that Catherine should be honoured with the title of Blessed, and that Mass and a proper office might be celebrated in her honour.

She is also honoured at Caramagna, a small town famous for its ancient abbey of Santa Maria, and much more for the stay the Saint made there. Of all the relics of Blessed Catherine that Caramagna possesses, the most notable is an arm, recognised and declared authentic on 5 August 1811. This sacred relic is exposed publicly for the veneration of the people throughout the novena, and also on the feast of the Blessed, which is kept with great pomp in the parish church on the fourth Sunday of September, when a solemn procession takes place. On 4 September, the anniversary of her precious death, there is a plenary indulgence for all who, having confessed and received communion, visit the chapel where, on that same day and during the novena that precedes it, which draws the devotees of our Blessed in crowds, a great number of Masses are celebrated. When the Regulars were suppressed in Piedmont at the beginning of this century, the convent and church at Garessio were sold and destroyed. The relics of the Blessed were carried to the parish of the upper suburb of Garessio and exposed for public veneration in a chapel consecrated to her. They were clothed with a wax body and the habit of the Third Order, and every year the feast of the illustrious Dominican is solemnly kept there. When the decree of the Holy See approving the cult of the Blessed was published, a great feast was held at Turin in her honour, and a chapel was raised to her in the church of San Domenico. This chapel still exists today. Catherine is also honoured in other churches of Turin. The ribbon manufacturers and workers keep her feast on the first Sunday of September; for, following the custom of the girls of Racconigi, Catherine in her time had learned and practised their trade. Every year they carry the portrait of the Blessed to the church they have chosen and keep her feast with great solemnity.

At Chieri the cult of the Blessed was long in use. One of the largest chapels of the church of San Domenico is consecrated to her; she is the patroness of the Tertiaries, who keep her feast every year with great devotion. Today, as a result of the new law against the religious, the church has become government property and the monastery a school. At Poirino, a town of seven thousand souls five leagues east of Racconigi, our Blessed receives from the faithful honours and a veneration that nothing can interrupt.

Taken from the Life of the Blessed by a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and from the Année Dominicaine.

Saint Taurin, Martyr, Bishop of the Ancient See of Eauze, Now in the Diocese of Auch

Date uncertain.

> *It is a fine thing, no doubt, to admire the labours of the Saints, but it is profitable for salvation to follow their teaching.*
>
> *Saint John Climacus.*

Saint Taurin was the fourth successor of Saint Paternus, whom Saint Saturninus, the apostle not only of Toulouse but of all the countries bordering the Pyrenees, set up as first bishop of Elusa or Eauze, then the metropolis of Novempopulana, as present-day Gascony was long called. He was fulfilling all the duties of a skilful and watchful pastor when a horde of barbarians, drawn by the lure of rich plunder, came to threaten the episcopal city.

Forced to withdraw with part of his flock, Taurin took refuge in Auch, taking care to bring with him the bodies of Saint Paternus, Saint Servandus, Saint Optatus and Saint Pompidianus, his predecessors; the altar consecrated to Mary by Saint Saturninus and Saint Paternus when they founded the see of Eauze; and relics which show us how dear and precious, in the eyes of the first faithful, was everything that more particularly recalled the memory of the Mother of the Saviour. These were some hairs of the Blessed Virgin, a piece of one of her robes, and some fragments either of the stone of her tomb or of the ground on which she breathed her last. Moreover, this flight and the circumstances that accompanied it had, it is said, been foretold by Saint Paternus; for on his deathbed the disciple of Saint Saturninus is said to have uttered these prophetic words: “I the first, three after me, and no other afterwards; after which the see will be changed. Let him who carries away from here the altar and the relics of the Virgin leave neither me nor them.”

Auch, where Saint Taurin withdrew, was divided at that time into two quite distinct cities: Climberris, the Gaulish town, much shrunken no doubt, on the crest and slopes of the hill; and Augusta Auscorum, the Roman town or “bright town”, as it was sometimes called later, on the banks of the Gers. Saint Saturninus had sown the Gospel there in the first century of the Christian era; an ancient tradition which has come down through the ages, and which we find mentioned in several very respectable documents of the metropolitan church of Auch, even holds that, having learned by revelation while he was preaching at Auch of the death of Saint Peter, martyred at Rome under Nero, he hastened to build an oratory on the left bank of the Gers in honour of the prince of the Apostles. The faith had made converts there since that first preaching, and the oratory of Saint Peter had soon ceased to be enough. Another had been raised a few steps away, towards the north, outside the walls of the two cities.

After raising on the top of the hill a small chapel in which he placed the altar of the Blessed Virgin and part of the relics he had brought from Eauze, he went and deposited the rest in the oratory of Saint John and established his pontifical see there. This was to settle there himself, and since he wished to keep the bodies of his predecessors near him, he buried them in this oratory near the high altar. The presence of Saint Taurin, the example of his virtues and his urgent exhortations could only revive the piety of the Christians at Auch and increase their number. So he is generally regarded as the first bishop of that city. It is true that the oldest documents of this Church go back to him and stop at him. We would incline, however, to believe that the see of Auch already existed. It was the almost constant practice of the early Church, when the faith had been preached with some success in a town of some importance, and above all when it had made progress there, to place there not one or more priests but a bishop. Now when Saint Taurin appeared at Auch, Saint Saturninus had cast the seed of the Gospel there a good many years before, and this seed had borne fruit to the point of requiring two oratories and a cemetery.

Yet the bounds of a town were too narrow for the zeal of the apostolic man. That ardent soul needed a wider stage; charity is sometimes as hungry for conquests as ambition. Like ambition, it can, when need be, go almost as far as imprudent rashness. One day word spread that a great crowd was gathering in the wood of Berdale, then larger than it is today, for it ended only a short distance from Aubiet, to carry out we know not what rite of Druidic worship. At this news the herald of the Gospel could not contain himself. Braving every danger, and perhaps smiling at the fate that awaited him, he ran to attack error in its very lair. The sacrifice had begun. Suddenly, amid the religious silence, a voice was heard. It was Taurin! To the deluded multitude, in the presence of the priests who were leading it astray, he declared all that was empty, unworthy and false in the worship of the false gods who had captured its adoration, and on the contrary all the virtue, consolation

and freedom that the God whose minister he was had brought to the earth. The crowd was at first astonished at the boldness and novelty of this language; it hesitated a few moments; but soon, urged on by the Druids, it threw itself on the fearless apostle and overwhelmed him under a hail of stones and blows of sticks. He was still breathing when an idolater, more violent than the rest, split his skull with a first stroke of an axe and with a second cut off his head entirely. An ancient tradition claims that the Saint renewed before the eyes of his murderers the miracle of Saint Denis of Paris, and that with his mutilated trunk he carried his head as far as the street of Auch which later received his name and which lay near the terraces of the archbishop's palace. It was there that the Christians went to fetch his sacred remains to bury them in the church of Saint John, beside the remains of his predecessors in the see of Elusa.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The feast of Saint Taurin is kept throughout the diocese of Auch with the same pomp as the greatest solemnities, on 5 September, which is believed to be the day of his martyrdom. He is invoked against headaches. When the pontifical see was transferred, about the year 850, to the old chapel built by Saint Taurin on the crest of the hill, which later became the church of Sainte-Marie, the archbishops thought of bringing his relics near them. No record that has come down to us tells us when this translation took place. However that may be, the body of Saint Taurin was taken down into a crypt with those of Saint Léothade and Saint Austinde. In 1610 Mgr Léonard de Trapes made the invention of his relics.

During the Revolution the head of Saint Taurin disappeared, together with the large silver bust that held it; as for the sarcophagus that held the rest of the body, it was respected, as was established at the visitation made on 4 February 1857 by Mgr de Salinis. Here is the inventory of the relics of Saint Taurin as it was made at that time:

Twelve ribs or fragments of ribs; — besides, four small fragments; — seven vertebrae whole or nearly so, of which two cervical joined together and two others also cervical but separate; — sixteen fragments of other vertebrae; — upper part of the larynx; — a large fragment of the upper part of the left shoulder blade; — the right collarbone; — two fragments of humerus; — a sizeable fragment of each of the two radii; — a fragment of an ulna; — the two femurs without their heads; — a separate head of a femur; — the left fibula whole; — the right fibula broken in two; — the two tibiae; — the two kneecaps; — the two heel bones with one talus; — four bones of the tarsus; — twelve of the long bones of the feet or hands; — four fragments of the hip bones; — a very small fragment of cloth; — two vessels of ashes.

Taken from the Vies des saints Évêques de la métropole d'Auch, *by M. J.-J. Monlezun, canon of Auch and of Le Puy.*

The Venerable Alvise, Bishop of Arras and Confessor (1147)

Alvise was born in the old diocese of Thérouanne at the end of the eleventh century and, while still young, entered the abbey of Saint-Bertin to be trained there in learning and the religious life. He became prior of Saint-Vaast at Arras. After two years' stay in that abbey, the religious of Anchin, earnestly urged by the abbot of Saint-Bertin to adopt the reform of Cluny, elected Alvise to govern them (1112). He took with him the unanimous regrets of the religious of Arras, and he himself left that community with great sorrow. Soon all the monastic virtues were seen to shine at Anchin, as at Saint-Vaast of Arras.

The abbey of Anchin had already prospered for nearly twenty years under Alvise's wise direction when he was elected bishop of Arras in 1131. On learning of his election he showed a strong reluctance and answered with a refusal. Pope Innocent II, who was then at Pontoise, had to order him to submit and accept. The king of France, Louis the Fat, also wrote to urge him to allow hands to be laid on him. At the same time the king

wrote to Thierry of Alsace, count of Flanders, and to the clergy and people of Arras, to congratulate them on this election. From the first year of his episcopate Alvise applied himself to reforming the religious houses, convinced that their good order is of a nature to give public edification and to draw down the blessings of heaven on a diocese. In 1134 he went with his metropolitan, the archbishop of Reims, to the council of Pisa, at which Saint Bernard was present and which resulted in the excommunication of the antipope Anacletus, the rival of Innocent II. On the way back to France the bishop of Arras was seized and ill-treated by men of the antipope's party. Several other prelates were seized at the same time and shared his captivity. This arrest did not last long. A friend and fellow countryman of the celebrated Suger, abbot of Saint-Denis, Alvise was invited by that statesman (1144) to attend the consecration of the church of his monastery, a monument no less remarkable for the style of its architecture and the richness of its decoration than for its being destined to become the burial place of the kings of France. In the crusade preached by Saint Bernard and led by Louis VII, Alvise was sent as ambassador to the Greek emperor Manuel Comnenus to ask him for passage through his States; but he fell ill at Philippe and died there (1147). His body was buried outside the town, in the church of Saint George, before the altar, where his tomb became an object of veneration. *Parenty, canon of Arras, in the* Légendaire de la Morinie.

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[1] Chastelain, in his *Martyrologe universel*, gives her the title of Venerable. Far be it from us to wish to dispute the holiness of this charitable princess; however, we must point out, in the interest of truth, that nothing proves that a public cult was ever paid to her, even at Tonnerre. It is true that every year the anniversary of her death is kept in the hospital of that town, but by a funeral service for the repose of her soul, which is incompatible with any act of public cult.

[2] Peter of Pibrac was born in 1008 at Langeac (Haute-Loire, arrondissement of Brioude), of a noble family thought to survive still in that of Flageac. Coming out of a youth spent in vigils, fasting and prayer, he was elected archpriest of Langeac with the unanimous consent of clergy and people, who were touched by his rare prudence and the admirable holiness of his life. But our Saint, longing for a more perfect life, soon withdrew, by God's inspiration, to a solitary place called Pibrac, formerly consecrated to the most holy Virgin. There he built a temple to the Lord under the invocation of the Mother of God; and there, on the advice of Durand, bishop of Clermont, he took the habit of the Canons Regular, living in community under the Rule of Saint Augustine. He laid the foundations of his monastery about the year 1062. The bishop of Clermont, learning that the Estates of the province had granted several churches to the Saint and his religious, also gave up a great number to him, with the consent of his canons. Adorned with every virtue, worn out with labours, laden with years and merits, the servant of God gave back his soul to God on 5 September 1080. His tomb has been honoured with the glory of miracles, the gift of which he had received during his life.

[3] We have given his life on 2 September.

[4] Alias: Guénebaud, Guinibold, Gombaut, Génebault, Ginebault.

[5] Where the village of Saint-Mommolin now stands.

[6] See his life on 16 October.

[7] It is reckoned that the plain was raised by more than seventeen feet over its whole extent.

[8] It later became the parish church of Saint-Martin-en-l'Île.

6 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Saint ZACHARIAS, prophet, who in his old age, having returned from Chaldea to his own country, was buried beside the prophet Haggai. Vth c. B.C. — In the Hellespont, Saint Onesiphorus, disciple of the Apostles, of whom Saint Paul makes mention in his Epistle to Timothy. After being cruelly scourged in that place with Saint Porphyrius by order of the proconsul Adrian, he was dragged by untamed horses and gave up his soul to God in this torment. — At Alexandria in Egypt, Saints Faustus, priest, Macarius and ten of their companions,[1] who under the emperor Decius and the governor Valerius were beheaded for the name of Jesus Christ and obtained the palm of martyrdom. About 249. — In Cappadocia, the holy martyrs Cottidus or Quottidus, deacon, Eugene and their companions. — In Africa, the holy bishops Donatian, Praesidius, Mansuetus, Germanus and Fusculus, who during the persecution of the Vandals were cruelly beaten with

sticks by order of Huneric, the Arian king, for having upheld the Catholic truth, and then sent into exile. One of these holy bishops, named Laetus, a courageous and very learned man, after being long shut up in a foul dungeon, was burned alive. 484. — At Verona, Saint Petronius, bishop and confessor. About 450. — At Rome, Saint Eleutherius, abbot, a great servant of God, of whom Saint Gregory, pope, has written that by his prayers and tears he raised a dead man to life.[2] About 585.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Sens, the holy martyrs Augustine and Sanctian, and Saint Beata, virgin and martyr, sister of Saint Sanctian. They came from Spain into France and were beheaded out of hatred for the Catholic religion at Sancéia, two miles from the city of Sens, where they were buried in an oratory which the Christians built in their honour. Later their relics were translated to Saint-Pierre at Sens. 273 or 274. — At Mauprevoir (Vienne, arrondissement of Civray, canton of Availles), in the diocese of Poitiers, Saint Impere, whose acts are lost but whose cult is very ancient. — In the Haute-Marne, the martyrdom of Saints Felix and Augebert. Natives of Great Britain, they were taken prisoner in a war, brought to Gaul and sold as slaves. Saint Gregory the Great, who was then busy ransoming captives, paid their ransom and placed them in a monastery, where they received baptism. Chosen later for a mission to England, Felix was ordained priest and Augebert deacon; but before reaching the end of their journey they were massacred by pagans. The place where they were martyred is pointed out between Villars-en-Azois (arrondissement of Chaumont-sur-Marne) and Silvarouvres; this last parish, like Sexfontaines, possesses relics of these valiant athletes of the faith. VIIth c. — In the diocese of Saint-Claude, Saint Taurin, first bishop of Auch, whose life we gave on the preceding day. — In the diocese of Montpellier, Saint Raymond Nonnatus, whose life we gave on 31 August. 1240. — In the dioceses of Soissons and Meaux, Saint CAGNOALD or Chagnoald, monk of Luxeuil and bishop of the former see of Laon. 632. — At Liège, a city of Belgium on the Meuse, the translation of the relics of Saint Hubert, bishop of Maastricht and Liège, whose life we shall give on 3 November. — In Lorraine, the translation of the relics of Saint Chlodulf or Cloud, bishop of Metz and confessor, whose life we gave on 8 June. — At Maroilles (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, the translation of the relics of Saint Humbert, priest and religious, whose life we gave on 25 March. — At Tarentaise (Savoie), the translation of the relics of Saint Peter, archbishop of that see, whose life we gave on 8 May. — At Vannes, the translation of Saint Vincent Ferrer, confessor, whose life we gave on 5 April. — At Mainz, Saint Magnus or Mang, confessor, founder and first abbot of Füssen on the Lech, in Bavaria (Circle of the Upper Danube).[3] About 666. — At Avignon, Saint Marcian of Saignon, abbot of Saint-Eusèbe and confessor, whose life we gave on 25 August. 1010. — At Dreux (Eure-et-Loir), in the diocese of Chartres, Saint Eve, virgin and martyr, patroness of Dreux, whose body rests in the church of Saint-Étienne in that town. — At Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre (Cher), in the diocese of Bourges, Saint Saphire or Saffier, confessor. — At Metz, Saint Gondulf, bishop of that see, which he held for six years and eight months (816–823). He attended (821) the council of Thionville (Moselle), held against those who ill-treated clerics. His body was buried in the abbey of Gorze, in the diocese of Metz. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint Rosalia of Palermo, virgin and recluse, whose life we gave on 4 September. 1160. — In the diocese of Rodez, Saint Julian of Brioude, soldier and martyr, whose life we gave on 28 August. IVth c. — In the diocese of Nevers, Saint Imbert, priest and abbot, whose body rests in the parish church of Chantenay (Nièvre, arrondissement of Nevers, canton of Saint-Pierre-le-Moûtier).

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Thessalonica, Saint Fantinus, of the Order of Saint Basil, who suffered much ill-treatment from the Saracens, was driven from the monastery where he had lived with admirable abstinence, and, after bringing many souls into the way of salvation, died in a happy old age.[4] IVth c.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — In Africa, the holy bishops Laetus, Donatian, Praesidius, Mansuetus, Germanus, Fusculus or Flosculus, of the Order of Canons Regular; the first, bishop of Lepta or Leptis Minor (Byzacena), a courageous and very learned man, was burned alive during the persecution of the Vandals by order of Huneric, the Arian prince, because he defended the Catholic truth; the others, after being cruelly beaten with sticks, were sent into exile. 484.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — Saint Stephen, king of Hungary, who is mentioned on 2 September.[5] 1038.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — The feast of the guardian angel of our Order.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — Saint Jane Frances Frémyot de Chantal, widow, whose feast is kept on 21 August.[6] 1641.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Saint Jerome Emiliani, confessor, whose feast is kept on 20 July.[7] 1537.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Genoa, in the monastery of Saint Thomas, Blessed Limbania, virgin, of the Order of Saint Augustine, remarkable for her admirable penance and sublime contemplation, whose soul flew to heaven on the 12th of August. XIIIth c. *Martyrology of the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* — Saint Rose of Saint Mary, virgin, whose heavenly birthday is kept on 26 August.[8] 1617.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Jerome. — Saint Rose of Viterbo, virgin, mentioned on 4 September.[9] 1252.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Alexis, confessor, whose heavenly birthday is on 17 July.[10] 404.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

Among the Franciscans, Blessed Vincent of Aquila, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, a man of great humility and of admirable prayer, abstinence and patience. Endowed with the spirit of prophecy, he shone with the lustre of many miracles. 1504. — In the diocese of Naples, Saint Rosalia of Palermo, virgin and recluse, whose life we gave on 4 September. 1160. — At Alba (*Alba Pompeia*), in Piedmont (former duchy of

Montferrat), Saint Frontignan of Carcassonne, deacon and martyr. His body, which long rested in a church dedicated under his invocation a mile from Alba, was translated in 1455 to the cathedral of that city, where it can still be seen today. — At Venice, a city and port of the kingdom of Italy, Blessed Pietro Acotanto, famous for his charity to the poor. Many miracles took place at his tomb. His body, first buried in an unknown corner of the cemetery of Venice, was found intact in 1250; it was solemnly carried in 1340 to the church of San Basilio in that city, where it was placed on the altar. Pope Clement XIII authorised his cult. 1180 or 1187. — In Scotland, Saint Bega, also called Bees, Vegue and Vée, virgin, Irish by birth. After leading the anchoretic life for some time, she founded the monasteries of Copeland, Heorthu and Hartlepole, in the county of Durham (England). She is believed to have died in the monastery of Hacanos, three miles from Scarborough (county of York); her body was afterwards translated to Withby. About 650. — In the former monastery of Santa Lucia near Syracuse, in Sicily, Saint Faustus, abbot and confessor. About 607.

Saint Cagnoald or Chagnoald,[11] Monk of Luxeuil and Sixth Bishop of Laon

632. — Pope: Honorius I. — King of France: Dagobert I.

God greatly loves the soul that has given itself wholly to Him and is attached to Him alone.

Saint Macarius.

Saint Cagnoald came of an illustrious family of Frankish origin, which had settled first in Burgundy and then in Brie. His father Cagneric, or Agneric, was a powerful lord, counsellor and table companion of Theudebert, king of

Austrasia. His mother Leudegonde was distinguished for great wisdom and a truly Christian piety. His brother Burgundofaro, or more simply Faro, after holding important posts at court, separated from his wife, who took the veil, and was promoted to the bishopric of Meaux, where his great virtues have caused him to be placed among the Saints. His sister Burgundofara, or simply Fara, also consecrated herself to God and founded the monastery of Eboriac, called after her Faremoutiers, of which she was the first abbess: the Church honours her also as a Saint. Besides, Saint Agilus was his first cousin, as the son of his uncle Agnoald.

It was hardly possible that Cagnoald, wrapped, so to speak, in this atmosphere of holiness, should not be initiated early into the practice of the virtues. And so from his youth he acquired a taste for holy things. The young school of Luxeuil was already shining brightly: Cagneric resolved to send his son there as soon as he was old enough to begin his education. There the disciple of Columban found a crowd of young men of the noblest families, Achaire, Ragnachaire, Donatus, his kinsman Agilus and many others, with whom he vied in virtue and learning.

It seems that Cagnoald was able to distinguish himself in this chosen band, for Saint Columban took a particular liking to him. We read in the Life of Saint Faro that he called him “the child devoted to God”. He therefore wished him to be raised to the priesthood, an honour fairly rare at that time in monasteries. He even attached him to his person as his minister. This was the name given to the religious specially charged with serving the abbot and accompanying him on his journeys. This office gave Cagnoald the signal honour of seeing Columban at close quarters, of being in some sort the confidant of all his secrets and the necessary witness of the favours with which heaven loaded him. It is supposed that it was shortly after 590 that Cagnoald entered Luxeuil, that is, at the very time of the founding of the monastery. When Saint Columban, about the year 610, was obliged to flee before the anger of King Theuderic, Cagnoald could not go with him; for the holy abbot had been forbidden to take with him any religious other than those who were Irish or Bretons by origin. The prince’s men had to use violence to prevent the grieving disciples from following their master; and long after Columban’s departure no monk could yet leave the monastery with impunity, so great was the hatred with which Theuderic pursued the noble exile! It was only at the prayer of Saint Agilus, and thanks to a miracle, that this harsh prohibition was lifted. Cagnoald hastened to seize the opportunity to rejoin his master.

Theuderic’s order had been that Columban should be taken back to Ireland; but heaven opposed the carrying out of this plan. The abbot of Luxeuil then thought of going to Theudebert, king of Austrasia, and his road lay through Brie. Now the lord Cagneric lived at *Pipimisium*, near Meaux. Columban came to see him there and was received with the honours due to his holiness. It seems that he spent some time there; Cagneric even wished to send away the guards whom Clotaire had given him to escort him to Metz, in the hope, says the historian, of keeping him longer, so as to profit himself, and to let his whole family profit, from the example and teaching of the man of God. It was then that Columban blessed Burgundofara, still a child, and consecrated her to God. We may suppose without improbability that Cagnoald rejoined his much-missed master there, accompanying Saint Eustasius on the journey he made there. We read, in fact, in the Life of Saint Eustasius, that this Saint went twice to Cagneric’s house, which allows us to conjecture that it was there that he rejoined Columban. In any case we see Cagnoald following Saint Columban to Bregenz, sharing his hardships, specially devoted to his service, and imitating the virtues of which he contemplated so perfect a model in him. He witnessed the wonder by which God came to the aid of the pious colony in its distress; he

ate of those miraculous birds whose flavour, according to Saint Eustasius, surpassed the most delicate fare on the tables of kings. More than that, he himself became the instrument of the divine power on an occasion which the monk Jonas relates in these terms: “At the time when Columban, withdrawn into solitude under a rock, was wasting his body with fasts and had no other food than wild fruits, a bear came to ravage the forest and began to devour and strip all the fruit in its path. When the hour of the meal drew near, Columban sent his minister Cagnoald to fetch the usual provision. He obeyed; but seeing the damage done by the bear, he came back in haste to tell his father of it. Columban ordered him to go back and to divide the share of the bear from his own. Cagnoald went back without hesitating, took a rod, drew a boundary line, and commanded the bear, in the name of the man of God, to respect these limits. A wonderful thing!” the historian goes on; “the animal obeyed, did not dare to break the prohibition, and was content with the share assigned to it as long as the holy abbot remained in that place.”

In 612, when Theuderic defeated his brother Theudebert near Tolbiac, Cagnoald was still with Saint Columban, as the following incident related by the same historian shows: “At that time the man of God lived in the wilderness and was content with the service of a single minister. At the hour when the battle of Tolbiac was beginning, the Saint was reading, seated on a tree trunk; suddenly sleep came over him, and he saw what was happening between the two kings. Waking at once, he called his minister, told him of the bloody battle being fought between the princes, and lamented with sighs the quantity of blood that was to be shed in it. The minister said to him in a fit of boldness: ‘O my father! Support King Theudebert with your prayers, so that he may triumph over our common enemy Theuderic.’ Columban answered: ‘The advice you give me is as foolish as it is irreligious. That is not what the Lord wills, who commands us to pray for our enemies. It is for the just Judge to decide between the two kings.’ Cagnoald, having later inquired the day and hour of the battle of Tolbiac, found that the revelation made to Columban was exact.”

The victory having delivered all Theudebert’s States to Theuderic, Columban was obliged to leave for Italy. It was then that Cagnoald parted from him, no doubt on his advice: Columban perhaps foresaw the designs of Providence for his faithful minister. Back at Luxeuil with Saint Eustasius, Cagnoald took up again the exercises of the cenobitic life there. History is again silent about him until the day when his sister Burgundofara, fulfilling Saint Columban’s prediction, thought of laying the foundations of her monastery of Eboriac. To help her in this great undertaking she asked Saint Eustasius for two of his monks, and he sent her her own brother Cagnoald and another religious of great virtue, Walbert, who gave Burgundofara powerful help in her enterprise. They established the Rule of Saint Columban at Eboriac, and the wonderful success that marked the beginning of this monastery proves what blessing God attaches to the labours of His Saints.

Cagnoald was still occupied with this work when, the see of Laon having fallen vacant by the death of Richebert, he was designated to fill it. In vain did he try out of humility to turn this burden from his shoulders. The unanimous entreaties of the people and clergy overcame his resistance. Lecointe and Cl. Robert assign this event to the year 619; the brothers Sainte-Marthe to 623. This last date seems to us more likely, because of the age of Burgundofara, who, being still a child in 610 when Saint Columban blessed her, must nevertheless have reached at least the age of twenty when she founded her monastery. Nothing is known of the acts that marked Saint Cagnoald’s episcopate. We only see him, in 625, attending the council of Reims, whose decrees he signed together with thirty-nine bishops, among others Saint Donatus, bishop of Besançon, who had been brought up with him at Luxeuil; Saint Sulpicius, bishop of Bourges; Palladius, bishop of Auxerre; Saint Anseric, bishop of Soissons; Saint Bertrand, bishop of Cambrai; Hadouin, bishop of Le Mans; Saint Arnulf, bishop of Metz, and others. The canons drawn up at this council number twenty-five.[1]

Moreover, we know that he fulfilled his duties in such a way as to win universal esteem. His wholly apostolic life, his consummate prudence, his gentleness, his piety and his charity, above all towards the poor and the sick, won him the affection and veneration of all his people.

On 22 November 631 we see him again signing, together with several bishops and other important persons, the deed by which Saint Eligius, still a layman, endowed the monastery he had founded at Solignac near Limoges under the Rule of Saint Columban.

It is believed that Saint Cagnoald died on 23 August of the following year, 632, as seems to be indicated by a letter of Saint Paul, bishop of Verdun, to Saint Desiderius, bishop of Cahors, in which these words are read: "You will know that Chainoald has just paid his tribute to humanity, struck down by sudden death." However, since it is not certain that this letter was written in 632, some authors have thought they could put back Saint Cagnoald's death to 633. Dom Lelong assigns it to the year 638. The authors of the *Gallia christiana* even place it in 640. We leave this point for the critics to clear up. As to the manner of his death, it seems it was apoplexy. He was struck by it in the midst of his brethren, the monks of the abbey of Saint-Vincent, an illustrious monastery founded by Queen Brunhild about the year 585. It was there that the Saint lived, given to all the exercises of the monastic life, according to the custom of the holy bishops of that age.

He is represented in a group with Saint Faro, bishop of Meaux, and Saint Fara, his sister. Sometimes a bear is seen beside him; we have given in his life the reason for this emblem.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Saint Cagnoald was buried in the abbey of Saint-Vincent, under the second arch of the choir. His body remained in the ground until the time of Abbot Hugh, who, having restored the choir of the church, discovered this precious treasure there in 1196. He had it raised from the ground and put in a shrine, which was broken by the English. In the first half of the sixth century, Abbot Simon de La Porte had the head of Saint Cagnoald placed in a large silver vessel and the other bones in a wooden shrine, which was renewed in 1643 under the episcopate of Philibert de Brichanteau, bishop of Laon. At this translation the gentlemen of the chapter obtained leave to keep a whole femur for their cathedral. In 1623 the religious of Faremoutiers asked and obtained from the abbot of the monastery of Saint-Vincent some of his relics. During the plague that raged in the city of Laon in 1628, the people's devotion to Saint Cagnoald showed itself in an extraordinary way; his shrine, exposed in the cathedral, was constantly surrounded by a great number of the faithful. At the end of eight days the scourge had entirely ceased its ravages. Several times the people of Laon had experienced the effects of their Saint's power with God, and in case of epidemic his shrine was their best resource. But it was not without extreme precautions that the religious of Saint-Vincent consented to part for a time with this precious deposit. They required a surety for the promise, signed by the leading men of the city and of the clergy, that the shrine would be returned to them within the agreed time, intact and whole, as it had been entrusted to them; so great was the devotion of the people at that time to the mortal remains of the friends of God! Saint-Vincent also kept Saint Cagnoald's pastoral ring, of silver gilt, in whose wonderful power expectant mothers had great confidence. All these relics disappeared during the French Revolution; the abbey of Saint-Vincent was partly demolished by purchasers of the national property. What remains of its old buildings, with the fine gardens surrounding them, was bought in 1860 by the religious of the Society of Jesus, who established there their third-year novitiate for those of their members who are preparing to pronounce their solemn vows. Their stay in this ancient and celebrated abbey will help to revive the faith in a city which lost part of its lustre in losing its bishops.

Taken from the Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté, *and from notes supplied by M. Henri Congnet, canon of Soissons.*

Saint Zacharias, the Eleventh of the Twelve Minor Prophets (5th Century before Jesus Christ)

Zacharias, son of Barachias and grandson of Addo, began to prophesy in the year of the world 3484, in the eighth month of the second year of the reign of Darius, first son of Hystaspes and king of Persia (521–485). A contemporary of the prophet Haggai, he very likely joined with him in urging the Jews to take up again the work of rebuilding the temple, which had long been interrupted. He also exhorted them to turn to the Lord and not to imitate the hardness of heart of their fathers, so often chastised for not having listened to the Prophets. God showed Zacharias, in two different visions and under several figures, the succession of the four monarchies, namely of the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, the Persians and the Greeks, which was to end in the reign of Jesus Christ, whose life and passion he describes. He also speaks of His entry into Jerusalem and of the thirty pieces of silver that were the price of His blood. Zacharias is the most copious, but also, in the judgement of Saint Jerome, the most obscure of the twelve minor Prophets. His prophecy contains fourteen chapters in our Bibles.

A controversy, so far left without a final solution, has arisen among the commentators over a famous text of the Gospel which seemed to refer to Zacharias. “I have sent you,” said Our Lord to the Jews, “prophets, wise men and teachers; you have slain them. And so the blood of the just shed on the earth, from innocent Abel to Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar, shall fall upon your heads.”[1] Yet neither Jewish nor Christian tradition has kept any memory of the murder of the prophet Zacharias. We may therefore adopt on this point the view of Saint Epiphanius, who applied Our Lord’s words to the high priest Zacharias, put to death between the temple and the altar in the reign of Joash (870–831).

The Greeks and the Russians honour the memory of the prophet Zacharias on 8 February; the Latins have assigned him 6 September. Some Greek synaxaries also mark his memory on 16 May, and the Egyptians keep his feast on 9 September.

We read in the Greek historian Sozomen (5th century) that the body of the prophet Zacharias was found in the territory of Eleutheropolis, in a village named Caphar. It was intact, clothed in a white robe, and laid in a lead coffin enclosed in another of wood. He is represented, like the other Prophets, unrolling a scroll on which the chief texts of his prophecy are read.

Baillet: Vies des Saints de l’Ancien Testament; *Darras:* Histoire générale de l’Église; *Dom Ceillier:* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques.

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[2] According to the Bollandists these are Saints Bibon or Abibon, deacon; Denis, lector; Cyriacus, acolyte; Andronicus, soldier; Theoctistus, Andrew, Sarapambon; and Saints Andropelagia, Thecla or Theocla, and Calodote. — Father Sollier.

[3] Simplicity of heart and the spirit of compunction were the virtues that chiefly marked Saint Eleutherius. He was elected abbot of the monastery of Saint Mark near Spoleto, in Italy. Having later given up the government of that abbey, he withdrew to that of Saint Andrew at Rome, where he died about the year 585. His body was afterwards carried to Spoleto. — Godescard, Baillet.

[4] Magnus, a disciple of Saint Gall, led the solitary life in Swabia with so wonderful a holiness that he had regained the absolute power which the first man exercised over the animals. Saint Columban had foretold to him that he would convert the inhabitants of the Julian Alps. After the death of the holy abbot, Magnus, to fulfil his master’s prophecy, went to Kempten (*Campidonum*). There was in that place a stronghold occupied by a dreadful demon which had taken the form of a dragon and which, in that shape, usurped among these poor mountain people the honours due to God alone. Magnus went to attack it: having armed himself with the help of prayer, he touched with the end of the staff he carried in memory of Saint Columban the throat of the animal, which was swelling with fury; and at once the monster died on the spot; with it vanished the whole troop of the other demons that occupied the country. This miracle converted many unbelievers and earned Saint Magnus the title of apostle of Swabia. — *Proper of Mainz.*

[5] Cf. the martyrology of the Bollandists on 24 July; the martyrology of the Basilians on 31 July; and the Roman martyrology on 30 August.

[6] We have given his life on 2 September.

[7] We shall give her life on 13 December.

[8] We have given his life on that day.

[9] We have given her life on 30 August.

[10] See her life on that day.

[11] See that day.

[12] In Latin *Chagnoaldus, Chainoaldus, Agnoaldus, Hagnoaldus, Chagnulfus*; in popular French, saint Chagnon.

[13] See the *Conciles généraux et particuliers*, by Mgr Paul Guérin, vol. I, p. 505.

[1] In the Bollandists' collection, at 6 September, may be seen the arguments that Father Stilting gathered to maintain that the Zacharias of whom Our Lord speaks is the same as the Prophet. Bergier, in his *Dictionnaire de Théologie*, took them up again and developed them with new force.

7 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Nicomedia, the heavenly birthday of Saint John,[1] martyr, who, seeing cruel edicts against the Christians posted in the public square, was fired with zeal for the faith and, putting his hand to them, tore them down and ripped them to pieces. When this was reported to the emperors Diocletian and Maximian, who were then at Nicomedia, they ordered every kind of torture to be tried on him; the illustrious martyr suffered them with such joy and serenity of soul that not the least sign of sadness could be seen on his face. 303. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia, Saint Eupsychius, martyr, who, accused of being a Christian, was put in prison under the emperor Hadrian. Set free shortly afterwards, he at once sold his patrimony and gave the money, half to the poor and half to his accusers, whom he regarded as his benefactors; but, arrested a second time, he was torn all over his body under the judge Sapricius, and then pierced with a sword-thrust that completed his martyrdom. IInd c. — At Pompeiopolis in Cilicia, Saint Sozon, martyr, who was thrown into the fire under the emperor Maximian and gave up his spirit there. About 303. — At Aquileia,[2] Saint Anastasius, martyr. About 304. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint REINE, virgin and martyr, who under the proconsul Olybrius endured the torments of the dungeon, the rack and burning torches; condemned then to capital punishment, she flew to her heavenly Spouse. 253. — At Troyes, Saint MESMIN or Mémiers, deacon, and his companions, martyrs, put to death by Attila, king of the Huns. 451. — At Orléans, the death of Saint EUVERT or Euverte, bishop, who, first a subdeacon of the Roman Church, was afterwards designated bishop of that city by a miraculous dove. 340. — In Gaul,[3] Saint Augustalis or Autal, bishop and confessor. IIIrd or IVth c. — At Capua, Saint Pamphilus, bishop. IVth or Vth c. — In the diocese of Paris, Saint CLOUD, priest and confessor. 560.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Bayeux, Saint Caesarius, archbishop of Arles, whose life we gave on 27 August. 542. — In the diocese of Chartres, Saint Cloud, priest and religious, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Reine, virgin and martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Tarbes, Saint Sever, confessor, of whom we spoke in the martyrology of France for 1 August. — In the diocese of Rennes, Saint Euvert, bishop, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Dendermonde or Termonde, a town of Belgium (East Flanders), Saint Hilduard or Heldouard, bishop (of Toul, say almost all the hagiographers, but the thing is very doubtful[4]) and glorious preacher of the Church, who by his patience as much as by the force of his word converted the lord of that place with all his people, still idolaters, and then fell asleep in peace, laden with merits. The collegiate church of Notre-Dame at Termonde possesses his relics. He is also named in the martyrology of France for 29 December. About 750. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Vivant or Viventius, ninth archbishop of that see and confessor. Born of a noble family of Laon, he was making his name at Rome by his piety and learning when the death of Saint Donatus or Donatian (389) left the see of Reims vacant: he was appointed to it by Pope Saint Siricius and governed that vast diocese wisely for five years. He was buried in the church of Saint-Agricole. In the IXth century Archbishop Hincmar (845–882) translated his relics to Braux-sur-Meuse and founded a collegiate church there under his invocation. 395. — At Die (Drôme), in the present diocese of Valence, Saint

ÉTIENNE DE CHÂTILLON, bishop of that former see and confessor. 1208. — At Toul, the present diocese of Nancy, Saint Gauzlin, bishop of that former see, whose life we gave on 31 August. 962. — At Maubeuge (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, Saint MADELBERTA or Amalberta, virgin, abbess of that monastery. 705. — In the diocese of Albi, Saint Carême or Carissima, virgin. Aspasius and Helen, persons of high nobility, were her parents. She made the vow of virginity early and, refusing the hand of a rich lord who had asked her in marriage, she went deep into a thick forest two miles from Albi. Gilmonde, her nurse, sent to look for her, found her; but, having witnessed a miracle the pious recluse worked before her, she did not dare to inform her parents. Later, at the invitation of Saint Eugene of Carthage, she withdrew to the monastery of Viants or Vioux (*Viantium*, Order of Saint Augustine), which that prelate had just founded a league from Gaillac. She died and was buried there; later her relics were translated to the cathedral of Albi. Vth c. — At Valenciennes (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, the translation of the relics of Saint Saulve and his companion Saint Super, martyrs at Beuvrage, whose life we gave on 26 June. 768. — At Dendermonde or Termonde, a town of Belgium (East Flanders), Saint Christiana, whose acts are lost but whose cult has not yet died out. Date uncertain. — In the diocese of Soissons, Saint ANSERY or Anseric, twentieth bishop of that see and confessor. 552. — In the same diocese, Saint GRIMONIA, virgin and martyr at La Capelle. IVth c. — In the diocese of Beauvais, Saint Eustace, abbot of Flay, now Saint-Germer, and confessor. 1211. — In the diocese of Sens, Saint Benedicta, also called Beata or Benoîte, virgin, named in the Roman martyrology for 29 June. About 294. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint Alpin, bishop of that see and confessor.[5] About 455. — At Metz, Blessed Dierry or Thierry I, bishop of that see and confessor. 984. — At Le Grand-Lucé (Sarthe, arrondissement of Saint-Calais), in the diocese of Le Mans, Saint Facile or Faziou, martyr, also sometimes called Faciole. Date uncertain.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — Saint Euvert or Euverte, confessor, canon regular in the monastery of the Lateran and subdeacon of the Roman Church. A dove, having twice settled on his head, designated him, and he was made bishop of Orléans; famous for his virtues and his zeal for the Catholic religion, he converted to the faith of Jesus Christ nearly seven thousand pagans in the space of three years, and flew to heaven. 340.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — At Gubbio in Italy, Saint John of Lodi (*Joannes a Laude*), bishop of that city and confessor, formerly prior of the monastery of Fonte Avellana. Broken by fasting, watching and the austerity of his life, he went up to heaven, famous for his miracles. 1106.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Viterbo, Blessed Rose, virgin.[6] 1252. — At Chalon-sur-Saône, Saint Marcellus, martyr.[7] 178.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Lawrence Justinian, bishop and confessor, whose memory is kept on the 5th of this month.[8] 1455.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as with the Franciscans.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — The octave of the dedication of the churches of the Carmelite Order.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Cordova in Spain, Saint Raymond Nonnatus, cardinal and confessor, of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy for the redemption of captives, famous for the holiness of his life and for his miracles. His heavenly birthday is kept on 31 August, and is kept solemnly in our Order on this day.[9] 1240. *Martyrology of the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* — The same as with the Friars Preachers.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — The same as with the Carmelites.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Saluzzo, a town of Italy in the former Sardinian States (Intendancy of Cuneo), Saint Jafroi (*Theofredus*), martyr, one of the soldiers of the illustrious Theban legion. IVth c. — Also at Saluzzo, and at Aosta (*Augusta Salassiorum*), a town of Piedmont, Saint Gratus, bishop and patron of the latter town. About 810. — At Hexham, a town of England in the county of Northumberland, Saints Alcmund and Tilberht, bishops of that former see (transferred to Durham) and confessors. In the XIth century their relics were carried to Durham, and they were honoured there until the so-called Reformation. By the intercession of its two holy bishops the town of Hexham was preserved from the destruction with which Macolm I (943–958), king of Scotland, threatened it. 780 and 789. — At Capua, a town of the former kingdom of Naples (Terra di Lavoro), Saint Synotus, martyr, who is believed to have succeeded Saint Priscus, first bishop of that see. Towards the end of the Ist century. — At Raphoe, a village and parish of Ireland in the county of Donegal, Saint Eunan, bishop of that former see and confessor. There is a church in this village dedicated under his invocation. VIIIth or IXth c. — At Città di Castello (*Tifernum Tiberinum*), a town of the former Ecclesiastical State, Saint Ventura, priest and martyr. It is said that his body was at first buried without honour under a heap of stones, where it remained for some time; but that a dove one day struck with its beak the bells of the church of San Bartolomeo in Città di Castello; the people ran to find out the cause of this unusual noise; the dove then left the belfry and went and perched on the heap of stones, then came back to the church and struck the bells of San Bartolomeo again. When this had happened several times, the inhabitants of the town went and searched the rubble of which we have spoken: they then discovered the Martyr's body and buried it honourably in the basilica of San Bartolomeo, which is now called San Ventura. His tomb can still be seen there today, on the left side of the high altar. About 1250. — At Noli (*Naulium*), three leagues from Savona, in the State of Genoa, Saints Paragorius, Partheus, Parthenopaeus or Parthempeus, and Severinus, martyrs in Corsica. Outside the walls of Noli there is a church dedicated under their invocation; a painting shows Saint Paragorius mounted on a horse, with his companions ranged round him; from which it has been inferred that Saint Paragorius was a lord of the country and that Saints Partheus, Parthempeus and Severinus were his slaves. Date uncertain. — In Japan, the martyrdom of Blessed Thomas Tsuji, Louis Maki and John his son, all three Japanese, the first of whom was a priest of the Society of Jesus. 1627.

Saint Reine, Virgin and Martyr at Alise, in the Diocese of Dijon

253. — Pope: Saint Lucius I. — Roman Emperor: Volusian.

> *Adorned with all the graces of nature, a faint image of the beauty of her soul, she was like a flower rising sweet and graceful from among the thorns.*
>
> *Eulogy of the Saint.*

Saint Reine, of a powerful but pagan family, was born about the year 236 at Alise[1] (*Alesia, Alixia*), a stronghold of ancient Gaul, capital of the Mandubii, famous for its antiquity, its size and its long resistance to Julius Caesar, who buried Gaulish liberty in its ruins. Her father, named Clement, was one of the first lords of the country, but also one of the most attached to idolatry. History does not tell us her mother's name; it says only that she died in childbirth after bringing this illustrious daughter into the world. The Providence of God had her given to a nurse who, being a Christian, took care to have her baptised, so as to nourish her soul with the milk of the Church before nourishing her body with the milk of her breasts. As soon as her father learned that she had been baptised, he flew into a violent rage and, forgetting the feelings of nature and the love he owed to his own blood, and looking only to his false gods, he drove her from his house and forbade her ever to return. Her nurse, to whose home she withdrew, received her with open arms and, regarding her as her own daughter, left nothing undone to give her a holy upbringing. Grace, seconding these good

intentions, easily impressed on her soul all the maxims of Christian piety, and particularly a great desire for chastity, an angelic modesty, continual recollection, an extreme tenderness for Jesus Christ, whom she chose from then on as her Spouse, a deep humility and an inviolable fidelity to her religion. The occupation of this innocent virgin was to tend her nurse's flocks, a task her nurse allowed her rather for the sake of her virtue than because of her station, in the solitude of Grignon, which she preferred to the most charming company of Alise, because there she could converse more freely with her God and speak to Him more familiarly of her chaste ardours. There she had all the time she needed to pray, to consider the vanity of earthly things and to be fired with love of heavenly things. She also gave herself there to reading the lives of the Martyrs; the account of their combats and victories strengthened her in the faith and kindled in her heart an ardent desire to shed her blood for the glory of her heavenly Spouse.

Her wishes were soon granted; for at that very time the cruel Decius, who had mounted the Roman throne only by the murder of the two Philips, father and son, the lawful emperors, stirred up the seventh persecution against the Church and sent edicts against the Christians to all the governors of the provinces; and the one who commanded in Gaul, named Olybrius, came to Alise to persecute the servants of the true God there. At the foot of the hill of Alise, at the place now called Les Trois-Ormeaux, he met our little shepherdess. As nature and virtue had made her beautiful, he had no sooner seen her than he resolved to marry her. So he had his chariot stopped in order to look at her. "Ah, my Saviour!" cried the Saint when the guards brought her near, "You are the Spouse of chaste souls and the Protector of virgins; will You allow a man to corrupt my fidelity and triumph over the weakness of my age and sex, to the prejudice of the sacrifice I have made You of my soul and body? Do not allow, my God, this injury to be done me, and a treasure of which I am only the trustee to be taken from me; grant me the grace to die rather than lose it; that death will make me doubly Your spouse, as virgin and as martyr." These words showed clearly enough that she was a Christian; but Olybrius, flattered by his passion, thinking that by foolish promises or by threats he would easily get his way with her, had her arrested so that she might be brought to him the next day in his palace. She spent all that time in prison asking heaven for graces to keep her virginity and remain constant in her faith.

When the hour came to appear before the judge, she made the sign of the cross on herself and entered the praetorium with a holy joy that gave fresh charm to her beauty. Olybrius at first spoke to her only of her religion, knowing well that if he could make her abandon Jesus Christ, he would then more easily bring her to abandon herself to him. "I am a Christian," the Saint answered him, "and I prefer this quality, which I received in baptism, to all those that nature and fortune could give me. I glory in being the servant of Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God; I have consecrated myself wholly to Him, and nothing will ever be able to separate me from Him; I will sign this profession with my blood, and I will gladly suffer every torment imaginable to uphold it until death." We do not know whether the tyrant's love prevailed over his cruelty, or whether he persuaded himself that with time she would change her mind; but he went no further and was content to have her put in prison until his return from Germany, where he was called to drive back the Barbarians who had just broken through the frontiers of the empire. Saint Reine's own father was the executor of this sentence. When he had her in his hands, he had her shut up in one of the towers of the castle of Grignon, which belonged to him. A respectable tradition relates that she was also imprisoned at Flavigny, in an underground vault, on the site of which a monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict was later built. The church of the Benedictines is entirely destroyed. Under the site of the choir there still exists an underground vault known by the name of the prison of Saint Reine. There this barbarous and pitiless father had her girded with an iron ring, whose circumference shows that her body was extremely slender; this ring was fastened to a chain of 47 links, eleven feet long, which was attached by its two ends to the wall on either side, so that this innocent virgin was forced to stand day and night without being able to move from the spot. This torment was no doubt beyond her strength, and it would not have lasted long had not grace upheld her to bear it with invincible patience. Meanwhile, with no other human help than that of a Christian named Theophilus, who secretly brought her bread and water for her subsistence, she awaited Olybrius's return in this state. As soon

as he had arrived, he asked for news of his prisoner; and learning that her heart was still more firmly bound to Jesus Christ than her body was to the irons in which she had been fettered, he had her brought before him, hoping to win from her by caresses what he had not been able to obtain by torments. For this he used everything a passionate love is capable of devising. He even swore to her by the tutelary gods of the empire that, if she would sacrifice to them, he would make her the first lady of Gaul, sharing with her the honours of his office; but, seeing her still inflexible, he changed his blandishments into cruelties. He had her stretched on the rack to be cruelly scourged. This sight drew tears from the eyes of the bystanders: those who knew her birth and merit urged her to obey the prefect's wishes; the girls begged her not to throw away so fine a fortune by obstinately taking the side of a crucified man; but she remained ever constant in proclaiming the praises of her Spouse, her greatest desire being to shed the last drop of her blood to show Him her fidelity. Olybrius, whom her words embittered more and more, ordered all her nails to be torn out and, when she had been hung up in the air, her skin to be torn on every side with iron combs. This torment, which horrified the executioners and the tyrant himself, who covered his face with his cloak so as not to see it, only increased the joy and courage of this holy and illustrious martyr.

After this cruel torment, which ended only with the day, she was thrown into a frightful dungeon to spend the whole night there. There, by God's permission, she entered into an agony like that which her Beloved felt in the Garden of Olives, so that, resembling Him more perfectly, she might also bear with more right the august title of His Spouse. The darkness of this prison, where she was quite alone, the memory of the torments she had just endured, the thought of those that were soon to follow, and the burning pains her wounds caused her filled her imagination; moreover, the sensible grace and heavenly consolations that had upheld her before having withdrawn, she found herself plunged in an ocean of bitterness from which it seemed impossible for her to emerge. But this furious storm, which produced only a gentle rain of tears that she shed in the height of her prayer, passed away almost in a moment. About midnight, rapt in ecstasy, she saw a great cross reaching from earth to heaven; at the top was a dove of wonderful whiteness, which said these words to her: "Hail, prudent Virgin, more a Queen in deed than in name; your heroic virtues have made you pleasing to God and the angels. By your virginity and patience you have prepared for yourself an immortal crown, which you will receive from the hands of your Spouse." And as a sign that this vision was no illusion, she found herself at that very hour perfectly healed of all her wounds, and felt her spirit so powerfully strengthened that she awaited the day only with impatience, in order to endure new torments.

The next day Olybrius had her appear again before his tribunal; but he was much astonished to see her in full health and more beautiful than she had ever been. The love he had had for her was rekindled; he resumed his first caresses and urged her with more passion than before to be willing to be his wife and to worship the idols; but she despised all his vain promises; then, after reproaching him for using religion only as a pretext to cover his impurity, she declared to him anew that she would be faithful to Jesus Christ until death, and that the harshest torments would never shake her constancy. This frankness of our incomparable Virgin drove him to despair; and, to avenge himself, he had her stretched out and bound in the form of a cross, and ordered that in this position her sides should be burned with blazing torches. This torment, which was more painful than the others, made no impression on her heart; she showed only joy at it, and even felt a holy satisfaction at seeing herself crucified in imitation of her heavenly Spouse. The tyrant, noticing the pleasure she took in this torment, had her quickly unbound and thrown, feet and hands tied, into a large vat of cold water, so that, passing from one extreme to the other, she might suffer more unbearable pains. But this new invention only served to crown her patience more gloriously. The dove that had consoled her in prison appeared to her again and invited her to come and receive in heaven the reward due to her victories. Its voice was heard by more than eight hundred persons, who, having seen this dove, were converted to the faith and confessed on the spot that they recognised no other God than the one whom Reine worshipped. This conquest, which she had often asked of her Beloved, filled her with gladness and renewed her courage to receive the stroke of death.

Olybrius, despairing at last of gaining anything from this innocent victim, condemned her to be beheaded. The people, having learned of this sentence, ran in crowds to the place appointed for the execution, which was outside the town of Alise. She obtained from the executioners an hour's delay, both to make her prayer and to address the gathering. She spoke with such grace, majesty, vigour and resolution that there was no one who was not touched by her words. People admired the constancy of a young, noble and beautiful girl who faced death on a scaffold with more courage than the bravest soldiers at the head of an army. Although she had always lived in innocence, she nevertheless publicly confessed that she was only a sinner; and, addressing the faithful who were present, she begged them to use their prayers and tears with God to obtain for her the pardon of her sins, which she was about to try to expiate by the shedding of her blood. She also exhorted them to perseverance and to contempt of torments and of life. Finally she generously offered her neck to the executioner, who cut off her head on 7 September, in the year of grace 253, according to the most exact chronology. Her soul went visibly up to heaven in the company of the angels, whose purity she had so perfectly imitated in a corruptible flesh.

In the old paintings in the church of Flavigny she is seen stretched out and bound in the form of a cross. — She is usually represented with the palm in her hand and a lamb at her feet; she is also given a tower to lean on, to distinguish her from Saint Agnes.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Her body was buried by the Christians at the foot of the hill of Alise, with the iron chain that had been one of the harshest instruments of her martyrdom. Some centuries later a magnificent church was built over her tomb, with a monastery of the Order of Saint Benedict. But through the changes of time, and still more through the greed of certain commendatory abbots, who unjustly appropriated all the revenue of this abbey and left it without religious, the memory of this holy place was so completely lost that the site of the Saint's tomb was no longer known. However, Cigile or Egil, abbot of Flavigny, wishing to discover so great a treasure to enrich his monastery, discussed his plan with Jonas, bishop of Autun, and Salocon, bishop of Dol; these prelates approved it; so he went in procession, with all the nobility of the country, to the church where he believed this precious pledge was hidden. A dove that came down from heaven favoured his undertaking by coming to rest on a spot in this church. Egil had his religious dig there, and the tomb they were looking for was found. The body of our holy Martyr was found in it, with her head still covered with its hair, as well as the iron chain of which we have spoken. This rich deposit was carried with all possible pomp to the abbey of Flavigny, where it has been religiously preserved. This translation took place in the year 864, in the reign of Charles the Bald, and every year its memory used to be solemnly kept on 22 March in the same abbey.

In the parish of Saint-Eustache in Paris there was a famous confraternity erected in her honour by Paul V in the year 1608. Her memory was formerly held in very great veneration in England, before schism and heresy had separated that country from the Catholic Church. An honest merchant of Paris, of the parish of Saint-Eustache, trading in that island, found a fine stone image of our Saint; he brought it to France and had it placed at the corner of the altar of the chapel of this confraternity, where it still was in 1685. At the time of the Terror the agents of the district of Semur seized the reliquaries and shrines; but they left the real treasure intact. It enriches the fine parish church. The head is in a gilded bust, the heart in a silver heart topped with a worked crown, and the rest of the body in a painted wooden ark. Beside it is the chain, made up of forty-seven links. Every year, on Trinity Sunday and on the Sunday after the feast of Saint Reine, the reliquaries are carried in triumph through the streets of the town. The procession no longer goes to the village of Alise-Sainte-Reine, the place of her martyrdom. The merits of Saint Reine are so well known throughout Europe through the continual miracles that God has worked, and still works every day, through her intercession at Flavigny, at the spring of Alise and in other places where she is honoured, that it would be

useless to relate any one in particular here, and impossible to relate them all in detail. People go to Sainte-Reine for the itch and ringworm, and a famous hospital was built there where persons suffering from these ills are received and treated with great care and charity.

Her cult became famous, above all in Burgundy and the Nivernais. An abundant spring in the commune of Menestreau bears the Saint's name, and the chapel of the château of Villiers, in the same commune, is under her patronage. In the diocese of Troyes there are three chapels dedicated to the virgin of Alise which are the object of a devout pilgrimage: the chapels of Roche, Bérulle and Brevonnes. The chapel of Roche obtained relics of the Saint in 1851. Beside this chapel there is a small spring called the spring of Sainte-Reine.

To revise and complete this biography we have used the Vie des Saints de Dijon, *by the abbé Duplus; the* Légendaire d'Autun, *by the abbé Pequegnot; the* Vie des Saints de Troyes, *by the abbé Defer; the* Hagiologie Nivernaise, *by Mgr Crosnier; and local notes supplied by M. Grognot, parish priest of Flavigny.*

Saint Euvert,[2] Bishop of Orléans

340. — Pope: Saint Julius I. — Roman Emperor: Constantine II.

> *The soul that loves God runs towards Him by charity, as if love gave it feet.*
>
> *Hugh of Saint-Victor.*

Euvert, a subdeacon of the Roman Church, was raised to the episcopal dignity and placed in the see of Orléans in the time of the sovereign pontiffs Miltiades and Sylvester, under the empire of Constantine. Having come into Gaul to ransom his brother and sister, Eumorphius and Cassia, who were captives, he arrived within the walls of Orléans at the moment when they were busy electing a bishop after the death of Désinien. He was received as a guest by a doorkeeper of the church, who got him to promise to attend the election to be held the next day. They went together to the door of the church of Saint-Étienne and stood there. Now while the bishops were at prayer with the clergy, a dove came down from heaven and, in the sight of everyone, settled on Euvert's head. The prelates inquired carefully, but could not at once discover, on whose head the dove had settled. They began to pray again, and before the eyes of all the dove once more settled on Euvert's head. Then the two candidates between whom the city was divided were brought forward; they were placed before the altar with Euvert, and, coming down a third time, the dove again settled on Euvert's head alone. Then all cried out: He is worthy, he is just; here is the one whom the Lord has chosen to be His bishop.

Designated to be bishop, he was ordained deacon in the church of Saint-Marc outside the walls; brought back from there into the city, he was consecrated priest and bishop in the church of Saint-Étienne, to the great admiration of the people. A year after his ordination he put out by his prayers a fire that threatened to devour the whole town. He gave hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, and health to paralytics and the sick of every kind. As the church of Saint-Étienne could no longer hold the multitude of the faithful whom he had converted from paganism to the religion of Christ, he joined the gifts of the faithful to a treasure miraculously found and, helped besides by the generosity of Constantine, built with extraordinary magnificence the basilica of Sainte-Croix, according to the plan an angel had traced for him on the snow. This is how it came about. In digging the foundations of the church a treasure was found, which the bishop sent by his archdeacon Mansuetus to the emperor as the lawful owner of this treasure trove; but the pious and magnificent prince not only returned the treasure but added an equal sum to it, together with seven pounds of gold and the tax of the territory of Orléans for three years, and gave the whole for the building of the basilica. It was finished at the end of three years; Euvert solemnly dedicated it on the day on which the Finding of the Holy Cross is kept. While he was officiating, a luminous cloud was seen above his head, and a hand which, with fingers outstretched, blessed three times. Not all those present witnessed this miracle, but only the celebrating bishop, his subdeacon Baudilius, later apostle of Nîmes and martyr, the virgin Praecopia, and a

certain Eleusinus, seated near the threshold among the penitents. The report of this wonder spread so fast and so far that within three days seven thousand pagans, marvelling at what had happened, received baptism. Such is the origin of the seal of the chapter of Orléans, on which is represented, with a cross, a cloud surrounding a hand in blessing.

Envoys went on the bishop's behalf to seek relics at Jerusalem, at Soissons and at Rome, and he placed that of the Holy Cross in the middle of the altar, those of the holy martyrs Crispin and Crispinian on the right side, and on the left side those of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. For twenty years he applied himself to destroying pagan superstitions in his diocese; and after winning almost the whole of the Orléanais for Jesus Christ and designating Saint Anianus as his successor, he was seized with fever and gave up his soul to God on 7 September 340, as he had foretold long before.

In the pictures made of him a dove is seen settling on his head while the people are gathered for the election of a bishop.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The body of Saint Euvert was buried with great pomp to the east of the city and outside the walls, on a small hill, on the property of Tetradius, a rich and powerful man, who built over his tomb, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, an oratory which later became the abbey church of Saint-Euvert. About the year 731, because of the fears the Saracens inspired, his relics were carried inside the city and placed in the church of Saint-Étienne, where they remained some years. Some small fragments of his relics still exist in the chapel of the Priests of Mercy, who now own the church and buildings of the former abbey. The feast of Saint Euvert is kept on 7 September, and that of his translation on 12 June. His cult was formerly as famous in England as in France, and the Protestants have not removed his name from the calendar of their new liturgy.

Acta Sanctorum; Les Évêques d'Orléans, *by M. Pelletier, canon and vicar general.*

Saint Grimonia, Virgin and Martyr at La Capelle, Diocese of Soissons

Fourth Century.

> *The strength of the just consists in conquering the flesh and stifling the pleasures of the present life.*
>
> *The Venerable Bede.*

Grimonia, born in Hibernia (Ireland), was the daughter of the king of that country. Her family was still attached to the worship of idols; by an altogether special grace, Grimonia had the happiness of being instructed in the truths of Christianity, and was baptized at the age of twelve without her parents' knowledge. From that moment she felt resolved to serve our Lord Jesus Christ alone and to consecrate her virginity to him. She gave as much time as she could to prayer and meditation, and trained herself in fasting and in every kind of mortification.

When she was of an age to marry, her father wished to unite her to one of the noblest and richest gentlemen of the country, and he was already having the preparations made for the ceremony when word was brought to him that the girl was no longer in her room and had no doubt taken flight. After a long search she was found on her knees in a lonely place and brought back to her father's house. "Why did you run away?" her angry father asked her. "Because I have chosen another bridegroom, Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my God; I love him with all my heart and I mean to stay faithful to him until death." At these words the father flew into a rage and ordered her to be shut up in a dark prison, to atone for the insult she was offering to himself, to her betrothed and to his gods.

This prison was for the young virgin like a temple, where she spent her days in prayer, fully ready to suffer every kind of torment to show her God her fidelity. In vain did her mother come and beg her to obey her father's will. The Lord was not to forsake this faithful bride; he sent one of his angels to set her free. "Arise, Grimonia," the angel said to her; "the doors of your cell are open; go out as quickly as you can and make for the sea." The virgin did indeed flee, under the guidance and protection of God; she found a ship all ready to set sail, went on board, and the vessel departed. During the crossing a furious storm arose, and shipwreck was thought inevitable, when Grimonia threw herself on her knees; raising her eyes and arms to heaven, she implored the Lord to have pity on the whole crew. Her prayer was heard; the waves grew calm, and the ship was able to land the young virgin in Belgic Gaul, where the emperor Valentinian was protecting the Catholics. Grimonia's whole desire was to spend the rest of her days in solitude and to give up all dealings with men. With this purpose she went deep into the forests of the Thiérache (*Therascia*) as far as a place named *Dorunum* (today the market town of La Capelle). There all her days and part of her nights were divided between prayer, devout meditation and the exercises of penance. Roots and wild fruits were her only food; the clear water of a brook was enough to quench her thirst. God was pleased to fill her with every kind of spiritual consolation. The contemplation of the works of creation often threw her into raptures and made her value all the more the happiness of having escaped the dangers of her father's house.

Meanwhile Grimonia's parents had not stayed idle after her flight. They had sent soldiers in search of her, with orders to bring her back alive or dead. For a long time their inquiries came to nothing. At last they learned that a wandering girl had taken advantage of a ship's departure to reach the mainland; they at once took ship themselves, and by dint of travelling and asking they learned that a young foreign woman, lately arrived, already had a great reputation for virtue and was living alone in the middle of the neighbouring forest.

The soldiers searched the forest and suddenly found themselves face to face with the one they were seeking. The sight of them did not frighten Grimonia, but she guessed their purpose. They made every effort to persuade her to go with them and return to their country, where a splendid wedding awaited her. Grimonia did not let herself be dazzled by their promises; she spoke to them of the happiness she enjoyed in this solitude, serving our Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Bridegroom of her heart; finally she declared firmly that nothing in the world could tear her from that place. The barbarians, seeing that their efforts were useless and that Grimonia would never consent to deny Jesus Christ and worship their gods, threw themselves upon her and cut off her head. After hiding the Saint's body under a heap of earth, they set out again for Hibernia. This martyrdom is thought to fall in the first years of the fourth century.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

For a long time the exact place where the body of Saint Grimonia lay remained unknown. This is how the constant tradition of the district tells of the finding of this precious treasure. A mysterious light appeared from time to time in a certain place in the forest. One day when it appeared even brighter than usual, the inhabitants gathered and dug the ground at the very spot from which the light came, and they found a perfectly preserved body; they did not doubt that it was that of the martyred virgin of whom their fathers had told them. Miracles took place; sick people recovered their health by praying before these precious relics. The people's gratitude led them to build a little chapel over her tomb. Soon people came from all sides to implore Saint Grimonia's help. Houses rose around this sanctuary, and as the number of pilgrims kept growing, the village of La Capelle took shape; it was later raised to the rank of a market town by King Francis I. A fine church soon replaced the original oratory, and the Saint's relics were laid in it with honour.

In one of the wars of which the Thiérache was the theatre, La Capelle was given over to the flames. Some of the inhabitants showed themselves more eager to save the relics of their patron saint than to protect their own

houses; they ran at once to the church, quickly took up Saint Grimonia's shrine and carried it to a village four leagues away called Lesquielles, where relics of Saint Preuve were already kept. Lesquielles was then an important post and had a fortified castle. Its church, dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, was served by twelve priests. (The anniversary of this translation is still kept today at Lesquielles with the greatest solemnity and amid a great gathering of devout pilgrims.) The ceaseless wars between the lords of these parts obliged the inhabitants to hide their precious treasure in the ground. It stayed there a long time, until it pleased the divine Goodness to reawaken the faith and confidence of the faithful by many miracles worked through the invocation of Saint Grimonia and Saint Preuve. Anselm of Magny, who occupied the episcopal see of Laon from 1215 to 1238, wished to verify for himself what was happening at Lesquielles; he went there on 7 September 1231, raised the bodies of the two Saints from the ground, verified them in the presence of witnesses and exposed them to the veneration of the faithful. The original of Anselm's official report still exists, and among the signatures is that of one Jean Lequeux, one of the aldermen of the place. A new recognition and exposition of the relics took place on the Tuesday of Pentecost in the year 1389, by Philippe de Grumelly, rural dean of Guise and parish priest of Lesquielles. In 1535 the relics of Saint Grimonia and Saint Preuve were placed in new shrines, with the authorization of the bishop of Laon, Louis de Bourbon-Vendôme, by Pierre Albain, abbot of the monastery of Bohéries.

During the war of Francis I with the Imperialists, the priory of Lesquielles was burned by the count of Nassau and Adrien de Croÿ, count of Rœulx and governor of Flanders and Artois.

The latter seized the relics of Saint Grimonia and Saint Preuve, had them verified by Baudouin de Mol, abbot of Bohéries, and in 1540 presented them to the canons regular of Saint Augustine of the abbey of Notre-Dame at Hénin-Liétard, in the diocese of Arras. There they remained, wrapped separately and sealed in pieces of silk, until 1638, when Robert de Mallebranche, abbot of the monastery, had them recognized and found all the old reports attesting their authenticity. In 1639 he placed the sacred bones in four shrines. In 1748 the abbot of Hénin-Liétard, named Desjardins, opened the shrines with the authorization of Mgr Baglion de la Salle, bishop of Arras, and took from them a bone of Saint Grimonia and another of Saint Preuve; he put them in two sealed boxes to be presented to the bishop of Laon, who had them returned to the church of Lesquielles. Their recognition was made by episcopal authority in 1749. At the beginning of the French Revolution, some devout and intelligent persons, foreseeing the profanation to which these holy relics might be exposed, secretly took the reports and the sacred bones out of the shrine, after putting ordinary bones in their place. When, in 1795, the free exercise of all forms of worship had been proclaimed by the republican government, the inhabitants of Lesquielles had two shrines made, and on 30 April of the same year the true relics of Saint Grimonia and Saint Preuve were placed in them. On 24 April 1803 Mgr Leblanc de Beaulieu verified them and recognized their authenticity. It is reported that several cures have lately been obtained through the invocation of these holy virgin martyrs. Three solemn feasts are kept each year at Lesquielles: on 20 April, the anniversary of the martyrdom; on the Tuesday of Pentecost, the day of the translation of her relics from La Capelle to Lesquielles; and the third on 7 September, in memory of the elevation of her body by Bishop Anselm.

The portion of the relics of the two Saints that had remained in 1748 in the possession of the abbey of Hénin-Liétard was likewise saved from profanation at the time of the French Revolution; since the restoration of worship they have rested in two fine reliquaries placed under the high altar of the parish church of Hénin-Liétard (Pas-de-Calais). In the distribution of the bones of Saint Grimonia and Saint Preuve made in 1748 by the Rev. Fr. Desjardins, abbot of the monastery of Hénin-Liétard, he offered a portion to the bishop of Arras, who was at the same time commendatory abbot of the abbey of Saint-Vincent at Laon. At the request of the monks, the prelate agreed to give them a tibia of Saint Preuve and a fibula of Saint Grimonia. In 1755 the monks in their turn agreed to part with a portion of this fibula in favour of La Capelle. The portion of Saint Grimonia's fibula that the monks of Saint-Vincent had kept belongs today to

Saint-Martin at Laon. This relic is wrapped in a double parchment, which is none other than the certificate of authenticity given by Mgr de Rochechouart, bishop of Laon from 1741 to 1777; the document is dated 1750. The other portion of the fibula, given in 1755 to La Capelle, was saved from revolutionary profanation in 1793, then recognized and verified in 1804 by M. Roger, parish priest and dean of La Capelle, and since then by Mgr Leblanc de Beaulieu. The pilgrimage to La Capelle is fairly well attended. Saint Grimonia is invoked for the eyesight. The Saint's spring still exists, and the chapel which partly covers it was built in 1854.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. Henri Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons, who drew it from the Bollandists, *the* Bréviaire de Laon *(1748), the* Histoire du diocèse de Laon *(1783), the* Histoire de Guise *by the abbé Pécheur, the* Histoire de la Sainte *by the abbé Lescot, and from authentic official reports made at various times.*

Saint Mesmin or Mémiers and His Companions, Martyrs at Brolium, Now Saint-Mesmin, in the Diocese of Troyes

451. — Pope: Saint Leo the Great. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian III.

> *Lord, thou hast given us up like sheep appointed for death.*
>
> *Ps. xliii, 12.*

It was the time when Saint Lupus was gloriously governing the Church of Troyes. Under his pastoral crook the city enjoyed a deep and unbroken peace. Idolatry was disappearing day by day and giving way to the faith of Christ; sacred studies flourished in the shadow of the sanctuary, and the holy army of clerics, whose ranks were growing ever larger and closer, gladdened the heart of the illustrious prelate by its rapid progress in learning and virtue. Among these young Levites was Mesmin (*Memorius*): a more tender piety, a more angelic innocence and a more marked attraction to the ceremonies of worship had singled him out from his fellow students and earned him the honour of the diaconate. With what respect he carried the Gospel of Jesus Christ upon his breast! With what holy trembling he went up the steps of the altar to assist the Pontiff when he solemnly offered the victim of salvation! Fulfilling here below the office of the angel in heaven, he recalled the angel's recollection and modesty; soon he was to share his glory.

Ominous rumours are going round the city. A dreaded enemy is approaching, leaving nothing behind him but ruin and desolation: it is Attila, king of the Huns. His tent is already pitched and his camp set up on the plains of Méry-sur-Seine; terror spreads everywhere; the countryside is abandoned; people come to seek refuge from the common enemy behind the feeble walls of Troyes. So the sheep flees before the lion; so the timid bird before the vulture. Saint Lupus too is not without anxiety; he redoubles his fasts, prolongs his vigils, and offers himself as a holocaust for his beloved flock. God has heard his prayer; but other victims must appease the wrath of heaven.

One evening, when weariness had exhausted the holy prelate's strength and closed his eyelids in well-earned rest, an angel appeared to him in a dream and spoke these words: "Fear nothing, soldier of the Lord; do not let anxiety tear your soul, for your prayers and groans have touched the heart of God. Take courage; your power is great with the Most High. Behold, your tears have washed away the sins of your people; they have put out the fire kindled against your city by the anger of the Lord. Not only will Troyes not pass through the flames, but it will have the glory of giving heaven new citizens, crimsoned with their blood. You are bringing up young disciples in your church who eagerly gather the holy words with which you feed them and who vie with one another in following in your footsteps along the road of good works; God destines some of them for the crown of martyrdom. I will tell you their names to avoid any mistake. First is Mesmin, honoured with the diaconate; seven other young men among those who attend your schools will be joined to him as victims. When the barbarian enemy draws near the city, you will send him those I have named to you, carrying with them the cross and the book of the Gospels. Do not be frightened at their death; it is thus that God calls them

to the abode of the blessed." With these words the angel vanished.

Saint Lupus awakes; he gives thanks to God and spends the rest of the night in prayer. At daybreak he gathers his disciples and tells them of his heavenly vision. His eyes fill with tears, for he thinks of the cruel death that awaits his children; but they, full of fearless courage and fired by the prospect of a glorious martyrdom, make the air ring with their songs of joy.

A few more days pass; then soon the hour of sacrifice arrives. The enemy is encamped at Méry-sur-Seine; the command of heaven must be obeyed. The generous victims are ready: Mesmin and his companions, among whom certain authors count two deacons named Felix and Sensatus and a subdeacon, Maximian, have put on their richest albs; the people crowd round them and accompany them with the singing of psalms to the gates of the city, where they give everyone the kiss of peace and receive the last blessing of the deeply moved Pontiff.

They arrive at Brolium, now Saint-Mesmin, on the bank of the Seine. Attila, mounted on a spirited charger, is surrounded by his fierce warriors. Mesmin comes forward respectfully to deliver his message; Attila sees him and comes to meet him. Suddenly a whirlwind rises and throws a cloud of dust into the barbarians' eyes. At the same moment the dazzling whiteness of the Levites' albs and the glitter of the gold surrounding the book of the Gospels frighten Attila's skittish horse, which throws its rider. Attila gets up at once, but his face is ablaze with anger. "Who are these people?" he cries in fury. "Lord," says Mesmin, "we are sent by Lupus, our bishop, to beg you on his behalf not to lead the city of Troyes into captivity." One of the officers of the king of the Huns then speaks: "These people," he says, "are the cause of the accident that befell you; they are sorcerers; order them to perish by the sword." "You give me good advice," answers the king; "go, have their heads cut off." At once the soldiers fall upon the defenceless young clerics and make a frightful slaughter of them. Mesmin too was about to fall under the blows of these madmen when Attila stopped them with these words: "Do not strike this one," he said, pointing to the head of the embassy; "let him go back and announce in his city what has just happened. Break the vessels they were carrying as the instruments of their magic, and burn part of them." The flames were devouring the image of the cross when a fragment broke off and flew into the eye of a servant, who fell down crying out loudly. Mesmin then said to Attila: "If you believe in my God, he is powerful enough to heal this young man." And at the same time making the sign of the cross over the injured man's eye, he gave him back the use of his sight. This miracle did nothing at all to convert the prince, for, yielding to the urging of the officer who had already advised the massacre of the young Levites, he ordered Mesmin's death. Mesmin asked for a little time to pray, and when he had begged heaven to accept his blood for the salvation of his homeland, he said to his executioners: "Finish what you have begun." At once his head rolled on the ground, and it was thrown into the river.

One of the seven, however, had escaped the slaughter. Under cover of the bushes that lined the Seine at that spot, he had been able to wait for night, take advantage of the darkness to cover the martyrs' bodies with branches, and return to the city. Great was the dismay of the citizens when he told what had happened. Saint Lupus could not hold back his tears; yet he blessed the Lord and his mysterious counsels, and imposed a harsh penance on himself, as if he had been the cause of this misfortune.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Saint Mesmin and his noble companions were buried at Brolium, and when Attila had for a time moved away from the land he was ravaging, Saint Lupus came with several persons, had nets cast into the river, and drew from it the head of the holy martyr Mesmin, which was reunited to his body. He would have liked to carry the precious remains of the head of the embassy back to his episcopal city, but an invisible obstacle opposed this plan. Saint Lupus then understood that the martyred deacon wished to be buried on the very spot of his triumph, and the body received the last honours at Brolium. A considerable part of it is still kept today in the

parish church of Saint-Mesmin.

These holy relics were visited in 1544 by Mgr Louis de Lorraine, better known as the cardinal de Guise, and again on 30 September 1828 by one of the vicars general of Mgr de Seguin des Hons. They had been saved from the fury of the Revolution in 1792 by Jacques Porentru, Jean-Baptiste Berthier and Étienne Herluison, inhabitants of Saint-Mesmin. As for the relics of Saint Mesmin's young companions, they long rested in the abbey of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires under the name of *Relics of the Holy Innocents*. The Revolution caused all trace of them to be lost.

No monument other than the church of Saint-Mesmin recalls the memory of the martyred deacon today. Formerly, however, a chapel dedicated to the Saint stood in the part of the district still called *la Chapelatte*; its ruins form a small grassy mound topped by a cross. Another chapel, to the west of the village, near the present railway station, also sheltered the bodies of the holy Martyrs at a later date; but, like the first, it disappeared long ago.

We have taken this biography from the Vie des Saints de Troyes *by the abbé Defer.*

Saint Ansery[1] or Anseric of Épagny, Twentieth Bishop of Soissons and Confessor

552. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Childebert I.

> *Si quis innocentiam retinet, et nihilominus humilitatem jungit, is geminum animae possidet decorem.*
>
> *He who has kept innocence of heart and knows how to join humility to it possesses the two beauties of the soul.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Ansery (*Ansericus*) was born at Épagny, a village four leagues from Soissons, of devout parents, with whom he learned from childhood to love and serve the Lord. After the death of Bishop Landulf, the clergy and people were unanimous in electing Anseric. He resisted for a long time and gave his consent only so as not to set himself against the will of God, which had just been made known. The episcopal dignity, far from dazzling him and puffing him up with pride, inspired in him only feelings of the deepest humility. He changed nothing in the way of life that had made him, while he was a cleric, the object of the people of Soissons' veneration. He even redoubled his austerities and became only the more assiduous in prayer. And so his words, his counsels, his exhortations and, when need be, his rebukes were always heard and received with respect and with the wish to conform to them; people knew that he prescribed nothing of which he did not first give the example. The people were eager to see him celebrate the holy mysteries or administer the sacraments, so great was the modesty, piety and recollection with which he performed these functions, delighting even the most indifferent. His holiness was rewarded more than once with the gift of miracles and the healing of diseases.

At his birthplace, Épagny, he made an abundant spring gush forth by his prayers and lively faith; it still exists and is still called the Fountain of Saint Ansery's Foot, because the Saint, setting his foot on a rock, cried out: "In the name of heaven, let there be a fountain here." This water has often had the power of restoring health to the sick.

Saint Anseric appeared with honour at the court of Clotaire II and of Dagobert I, his son. There he could inspire nothing but horror of vice and love of religion and good morals. Anseric was bound in friendship with several holy bishops or laymen: Saint Arnulf of Metz, Saint Faro of Meaux, Saint Eligius of Noyon and Saint Ouen of Rouen were all working, by their example and their exhortations, to make ever more Christian a population that still kept some remnants of pagan and barbarous customs.

Saint Anseric loved and favoured the religious communities of his diocese on every occasion; his generosity towards them knew no bounds. He even went so far as to give up part of his episcopal rights in their favour. Thus he asked for and obtained from Pope Saint Gregory the Great the confirmation of the Privilege of Saint-Médard of Soissons, a privilege that withdrew that famous monastery from the jurisdiction and visitation of the ordinary, made it head of all the monasteries of Gaul, placed it under the protection of the king and the immediate authority of the Holy See, gave it the freedom to elect its abbots, and so on.

Saint Anseric was no less zealous in restoring or building churches for the service of the parishes. The number of the faithful having greatly increased at the far end of the suburb of Crouy, beyond the suburb of Saint-Waast and the abbey of Saint-Médard, he built a new church in that place, which he dedicated to Saint Stephen and which later took the name of Saint-Paul. He attached to it a community of clerics, to whom he gave wise rules. Anseric would withdraw there for whole weeks, either to live there himself in solitude and recollection, or to instruct the young clerics in sacred learning and initiate them into the practices of the priestly life.

A great event of Saint Anseric's episcopate was a translation of the relics of Saint Crispin and Saint Crispinian, martyrs of Soissons. After lying for a long time in an oratory in what is now the rue de la Congrégation, their relics had been enclosed in the crypt of the basilica of Saint-Crépin-le-Grand, built in the suburb of that name. The constant practice of the Church of Jesus Christ has always been to guard the bodies of the Saints carefully and to open their tombs only on fairly rare occasions. Anseric assembled his clergy and asked their opinion; he consulted several bishops and ordered fasts and prayers to learn the will of God and to obtain the favour of recognizing the precious treasure, hidden for long years from the eyes of the faithful. After taking these wise precautions, he fixed 10 June for the solemn opening of the tomb and translation of the bodies. Several of his colleagues eagerly attended, among others Saint Eligius, Saint Faro and Saint Ouen. When the crypt was opened, a sweet fragrance came out of the two coffins and spread through the whole sacred building; tears of joy flowed from every eye. The bishops reverently kissed the holy bones, set apart the two heads of the martyrs, wrapped the rest of the relics in silk and enclosed them in the magnificent shrine worked by Saint Eligius himself. The bishops carried it on their shoulders and placed it above the high altar of the basilica. The head of Saint Crispin was placed in the archives or treasury of the church; that of Saint Crispinian was given to Saint Eligius. Several miracles took place during this translation. The accounts of the time mention above all the instantaneous and complete cure of a woman of Paris. Horribly tormented by the devil, she had appealed in vain to the most holy Virgin to be delivered, God, by a quite special design of his Providence, wishing to stir up confidence in the intercession of our holy martyrs. She enters the choir; at once the fits of her illness redouble; the bishops and the people are frightened; all prostrate themselves, groaning, before the shrine of Saint Crispin and Saint Crispinian; the woman, with humility and confidence, drags herself to the holy relics; scarcely has she touched them when she feels herself entirely delivered from the evil spirit that possessed her.

Anseric did not attend so much to the spiritual good of his flock as to neglect their temporal affairs. Serious disputes had long arisen among the inhabitants of Soissons over the measure of wine; the bishop made a last effort to settle this old quarrel. Having called together the clergy and people, he spoke to them with such unction and charity that all agreed to abide by his decision on this disputed point. On the spot he had a copper measure made, afterwards called the *demi-setier*, to serve as the model and standard. This instrument was kept for several centuries in the treasury of the cathedral, and on certain days the people came and kissed it with respect, as having served to establish peace and concord in the city.

A contagious disease was ravaging the city of Soissons and its surroundings; Anseric began to pray to avert the scourge. Suddenly a voice was heard in the air: "What harm can we do to this city? At the eastern gate rest the bodies of Saint Crispin and Saint Crispinian; on the western side is the place where they shed their blood; within its walls are their dust and the place of their burial; we can do nothing more here; we must

leave the city under their protection." After these words the contagious disease disappeared entirely.

Meanwhile Anseric was growing old and preparing to give an account of his stewardship to Him who judges the princes of the Church as well as the simple faithful. He prepared himself with faith and confidence for the last passage. His life had been wholly given to working for his own sanctification and the salvation of his people. He asked for the last sacraments and breathed his last in the arms of his clerics, about 552. After his death he appeared to Saint Salaberga of Laon. "Do you know me?" he said to her, coming towards her. "No," she answered. "I am Anseric, bishop of Soissons. Here, come, and I will show you the gates of paradise, the city of the Most High and the thrones of the twelve Apostles, all shining with gold and precious stones. Here is the place prepared for you." After these words he disappeared.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The body of Saint Anseric was laid in the collegiate church of Saint-Étienne (now Saint-Paul), on the road from Soissons to Crouy. The buildings of this house, sold at the Revolution, are divided into several private dwellings; no trace of the church remains. His tomb was visited by people suffering from fever and by the possessed, who came there to ask for healing. Until 1789 a stone placed on the altar step marked the spot where he had first been buried; but his relics were no longer there; they had been carried to the treasury of the cathedral, from which they have disappeared along with so many others. The village of Épagny has not forgotten its holy protector. Every year his feast is celebrated there very solemnly, and one of its gates still bears the name of Saint-Anseric today.

We owe this notice to M. Henri Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons. — Cf. Acta Sanctorum, *tome Ier of September;* Gall. Christ.; Hist. de Soissons; *the abbé Pécheur,* Annales.

Saint Cloud or Clodoald, Son of France, Priest and Religious

560. — Pope: Pelagius I. — King of France: Clotaire I.

> *The heart of man, warped and perverted, places the happiness of mortals in the splendour of palaces, without troubling about the defilement and ruin of souls.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Clodoald, commonly called Saint Cloud, is the first French prince whom the Church has honoured with public worship. He was born in 522. His father Clodomir, king of Orléans, the eldest of the sons of Saint Clotilda, having defeated Saint Sigismund, king of Burgundy, in pitched battle and taken him prisoner of war with his wife and children, had them all cruelly put to death; neither respect for the royal dignity with which Sigismund was invested, nor regard for kinship (for he was his second cousin), nor the remonstrances of Saint Avitus, abbot of Micy, who did all he could to turn him from this murder, could prevail against the ferocity of his spirit. This inhumanity was soon severely punished, not only in his own person but also in those of his own children. Having won a second victory near Vienne in Dauphiné over Godomar, brother of Saint Sigismund, he pursued the fugitives so eagerly that he went too far from his men and fell into the hands of a band of enemies, who killed him, cut off his head and set it on the end of a lance to show it to the Franks.

After his death his children, Theodoald, Gunthar and Clodoald, commonly Cloud, came under the care of Saint Clotilda, their grandmother, who brought them up in a Christian way and with the greatest care, until they should divide their father's states, which were governed in the meantime by lieutenants. But Childebert, king of Paris, their uncle, who coveted the kingdom of Orléans, their inheritance, invited Clotaire, king of Soissons, to share his infamous design. The question was whether to put their nephews to death or shut them up in a cloister. Clotaire voted for death. These barbarous uncles slaughtered the two elder boys, Theodoald and Gunthar, with their own hands. Cloud, by a special protection of Providence, escaped the massacre. Soon

afterwards he cut off his own hair, a ceremony by which he declared that he renounced the kingship. Later he found various opportunities of recovering his father's states, but he would not take advantage of them. Grace had opened his eyes to the vanity of earthly greatness. He preferred a humble and quiet life amid the rigours of solitude to a brilliant but perilous life in a royal palace among a crowd of courtiers; he consecrated himself entirely to the service of God. His only study now was the reading of the sacred books; his pleasure, to lie on haircloth; and his joy, to mortify his body by continual austerities.

After distributing to the churches and the poor the goods his uncles had not been able to take from him, he withdrew to a holy religious named Severinus, who was leading a solitary and contemplative life in a hermitage at the gates of Paris. The young prince received the religious habit from his hands and stayed some time in his company, to be trained in all the monastic virtues. Childebert and Clotaire could not fail to know that it was he; but, seeing him without ambition, they left him at liberty and even gave him some estates so that he might live more comfortably in his place of retreat. However, not thinking himself solitary enough, or for some reasons his history does not record, he left the neighbourhood of Paris and withdrew secretly to Provence, out of sight and out of reach of all who knew him. While he was building himself a little cell with his own hands, a poor man came before him and asked for alms. He was himself so poor that he had neither gold, nor silver, nor provisions to give him; but he generously stripped off his own cowl and made him a present of it. This act of charity was so pleasing to God that, to make its merit known, the following night He made the cowl shine with light in the hands of the poor man who had received it. The people of the neighbourhood witnessed this miracle and recognized by it that Saint Cloud was an excellent servant of Christ. So they came to him to honour his holiness and receive his instruction; but their excessive deference made them lose so precious a treasure, for Saint Cloud, seeing that he was no more hidden in Provence than in Paris, went back to his first hermitage. Perhaps fear of being raised to a prelacy had made him flee, and the cause of his fear had passed with the election of another to that dignity.

Scarcely had he returned when Eusebius, then bishop of Paris, ordained him priest at the request of the people, who could not bear to see so holy a man in an inferior Order. The examples of virtue he displayed in this dignity made him even more respected than before. People admired in him the power of grace, which from a prince, or rather from a lawful king, had made a humble servant of the house of God. His humility, his modesty, his detachment from the things of the world, his love of penance and his incomparable charity were loudly praised. This great man could not long bear these honours, and to avoid them he withdrew to a hill along the Seine, two leagues below Paris, to a place then called Nogent, which has since changed its name to that of Saint-Cloud. After living there for some time as a solitary, he had a monastery built there, which he endowed with the goods that the kings his uncles gave him. He made it dependent, with its church and all its revenues, on the cathedral church of Paris, of which he was a priest, as they still were in 1685. There he won several persons to Jesus Christ, who were delighted to live there as religious under his direction. At last he died there in holiness on 7 September, about the year 560. His death, which he had foretold before it came, was followed by several miracles. His body was buried in the same monastery, which was later changed into a collegiate church. This church is now a parish church, and some of the Saint's relics are still kept there.

The four ordinary martyrologies make honourable mention of this blessed prince. The people of Paris celebrate his feast with great devotion, and throughout its octave a great crowd of people visits his church.

We may see throughout his history that what the world calls misfortune is often the road to true happiness, and that God knows wonderfully how to draw good out of evil and exaltation out of the deepest humiliation. Thus true prudence lies in abandoning ourselves entirely to the guidance of his divine Providence and in loving even the lowest and most humbled states in which it pleases him to place us.

He is represented here and there as a solitary, kneeling before a cross, with the crown on the ground beside him.

Saint Gregory of Tours, Hist. Franc.; *Mabillon.*

Saint Madelberta[1] or Amalberta, Abbess of the Monastery of Maubeuge, in the Diocese of Cambrai

705. — Pope: John VI. — King of France: Childebert III.

> *It is a prayer most pleasing to God to acknowledge that we owe to his mercy whatever good we have been able to do.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Madelberta was the youngest of the daughters of Saint Mauger, surnamed Vincent, and of Saint Waudru. She withdrew with her aunt, Saint Aldegund, to Maubeuge when the latter went there to found a monastery. There, while still quite small, she completed her formation under the direction of so wise a mistress, already so experienced in the ways of salvation. The budding virtues the child had practised until then in her family now grew further, so that she inspired in all her companions a kind of respect and religious veneration. “She prepared and trimmed her lamp,” says the author of her life, “so that when the Bridegroom of souls came knocking at the door he should not have to wait, and she might enter with him into the glory of heaven.” “For,” the virgin Aldegund also used to tell her niece, “when God finds souls filled with his love and burning with the desire to please him, he draws them gently to himself by the attractions of his grace, so that they may grow ever more and more in fervour, strive with unceasing ardour towards heavenly goods, and, despising the vain delights of the world, walk with a firm and unshakable step along the road that leads to heaven.”

The young and devout Madelberta showed herself docile to these wise instructions, and they always inspired in her a keener ardour for good. Scarcely had she entered the monastery of Maubeuge when she was already distinguished by her perfect regularity, her gentleness, her kindness and her spirit of obedience. It was above all by continual watchfulness over herself that she overcame the usual outbursts of childhood and youth, and always showed in her conduct an amiable and modest gravity.

Her charity towards the poor and the unfortunate also showed itself very often in the most touching acts. She could refuse them nothing, and she counted it a happiness to be able to bring some relief to their troubles or privations. This feeling had already grown greatly in her heart within her family, in the presence of her parents, who were the first to give her the example of compassion for the needy and the afflicted; but it seemed to increase still more as age gave Madelberta a more exact understanding of the needs of the poor. These holy and meritorious works of the venerable virgin had already shone brightly, but they shone above all in the eyes of everyone when, at the death of her sister Saint Aldetrude, or Adeltrude, she was put in charge of the monastery. She then truly became the model as well as the superior of her companions, who could recognize in all her conduct the example of the virtues that lead to the perfection of their holy state. Ever recollected in the presence of God, Madelberta let herself be guided in all things by his inspirations and his will. Her prayer was, so to speak, continual, and her mortifications as great as they were many. A gentle cheerfulness shone in the features of her face, on which innocence, gentleness and kindness were reflected. When the spirit of darkness sought to trouble her with his attacks, she had recourse with confidence to Jesus Christ and, shedding tears in his presence, cried out with the Prophet: “O my God, direct my steps in the way of thy commandments, that I may not be shaken. I will offer thee with all my heart a sacrifice of praise, and I will bless thy holy name without ceasing.” When she was busy with good works, God sometimes also allowed the devil to try to disquiet her with vain terrors, but she always knew how to repel his attacks and uncover the snares he laid for her. These struggles and victories further increased the holy abbess’s merits, made her more experienced in the direction of souls, and gave her a perfect knowledge of the means of advancing in the spiritual life. Saint Madelberta governed her community for nine years and died about the

year 705 in the most admirable sentiments of piety.

Saint Madelberta is represented in a group with Saint Vincent of Soignies, her father; Saint Waudru, her mother; Saint Adeltrude, her sister; and her two brothers, Saint Landry, bishop of Meaux, and Saint Dentlin.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Her body, laid with honour in the church of the monastery, at once became an object of veneration for the people of the district, who had great confidence in the power of her prayers. Some extraordinary cures further increased the devotion of the faithful to their new patroness. The authors relate one among others, which happened shortly after the Saint's death and caused a great stir throughout the country. A very religious man from near Maubeuge had become completely deaf in the right ear. This infirmity grieved him greatly, and he often asked God to deign to heal him. One night, in his sleep, he thought he heard a voice saying to him: "Get up and go to the monastery of Maubeuge, to the church of Saint-Pierre, where the body of the virgin Madelberta rests; you will be healed at her tomb." When morning came, the man hastened to carry out the order he had been given and went to the monastery, where the holy sacrifice had just begun. There he prostrates himself devoutly and follows the prayers of the Mass with devotion. Suddenly, at the moment when the priest was singing the Gospel, he begins to feel an extraordinary sweat. His face grows pale, his limbs tremble and a watery fluid runs from his diseased ear. At the same instant he feels himself cured of his infirmity, which never returned afterwards.

The relics of Saint Madelberta remained at Maubeuge until 722. At that date they were carried to Liège by Saint Hubert, the first bishop of that see, which continued that of Maastricht. They were placed in the cathedral church after being enclosed in a shrine which also held those of Saint Theodard, one of Saint Hubert's predecessors. They were still very well preserved in the year 1489, when they were inspected. The churches of Liège and Mons had a proper office and Mass for the feast of this Saint, whose name is also found in a great many martyrologies. She was honoured above all on 7 September.

Taken from the Vie des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras *by the abbé Destombes.*

Saint Stephen of Châtillon, Bishop of the Former See of Die, in Dauphiné

1208. — Pope: Innocent III. — King of France: Philip II.

> *Non est bonus qui bonum facit, sed qui incessabiliter facit.*
>
> *The good man is not he who does good, but he who never ceases to do it.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Saint Stephen was born about 1155, of an illustrious family, at Châtillon, chief town of the little province of the Dombes, which was then in the diocese of Lyon. From his early years he showed himself gentle, modest, affectionate and obliging, and even in childhood displayed the prudence and reserve of an old man. He brought excellent gifts to his studies and made such progress in learning that he soon rose above those who taught him; but at the same time he listened to another master, who spoke to his heart and inspired in him an ardent love of true wisdom. It was to follow His counsels that he despised the pleasures of life, the goods of the earth and all that the world has most specious for captivating men. On this narrow way he was seen to walk humble, chaste and sober. From then on, above all, he practised abstinence very rigorously: not content with fasting often, he vowed never to eat meat. Prayer was his chief occupation, and the rest of his time was spent in meditating on holy truths and in the works of mercy.

Everyone admired the young Stephen, and the admiration was all the greater because such fine models were rarely met in the midst of the world, and above all amid riches and opulence. Opinions about him then

became divided. Wise people praised his conduct, but worldly people, who have always contradicted virtue, saw in his way of acting nothing but a blameworthy misanthropy. As for him, without troubling about what was said of him, and despising both the applause and the blame of men, he took counsel only from this oracle of the Prophet: “It is good for a man to bear the yoke of the Lord from his youth.” Driven by the desire to live for God alone, and disgusted with secular life by all he had observed in the world, he resolved to renounce it entirely so as to free himself from the snares it laid for him. At the age of twenty-six he withdrew to the Charterhouse of Portes, in Bugey, a place already made famous by several notable men.

His virtue, finding itself safe in this refuge, grew so greatly that it soon seemed to equal that of those holy religious. Offering himself every day as a holocaust, he strove, like those models, to die to the world so that Jesus Christ alone might live in his heart. He brought his body into subjection by vigils, fasts and mortifications. According to the custom of the Carthusians he wore the hair shirt and practised many other austerities permitted by the Rule or authorized by the example of the superiors. The Rule laid down that on three days of the week the only food should be bread, water and salt. Stephen, going further still on this point, scarcely ever wanted anything else on his table; and even then, beside this piece of bread, there lay a manuscript on which his eyes were always fixed, so that he fed body and soul at the same time. His love and devotion for the adorable Sacrament of our altars were so great that when he celebrated the holy mysteries his face was flooded with tears of gratitude. His preparation and thanksgiving took up his whole life, since it was to make himself worthy to receive his God in communion, and to thank Him for having given Himself to him, that he spent night and day in prayer and meditation and in singing the praises of the Lord. It was in the depths of this solitude that he made silence, prayer and mortification serve his holiness, whose brightness he took care to hide from the other religious by his humility. What first brought him to notice outside was the need of the Carthusians of Portes for a prior to govern them in place of the one who had just died. They cast their eyes on Stephen and, to overcome the reluctance that made him resist their choice, all joined their entreaties and compelled him to give way. They had not been mistaken in their judgement of his holiness and his gifts, for it would be hard to describe all the prudence, firmness and zeal he displayed in his office of prior, which, under the Carthusian institute, required even more holiness than learning. So his renown, mingled with the sweet odour of his virtues, filled not only the surrounding country but spread very far; for he was useful not only to those under his direction but strove to be so to many others as well. A great concourse of strangers, moved by the desire of their salvation, came continually to the Charterhouse of Portes, where the holy prior distributed to them the bread of life with tender solicitude. And so a good number of straying Christians owed their return to the path of virtue to his wise counsels.

Providence was imperceptibly training him by the duties of this office for the episcopate to which it destined him; and God soon placed this burning light on the candlestick, so that it might shine throughout the Church.

The diocese of Die, in Dauphiné, had just lost its pastor; the cathedral chapter and the people gathered to name a successor. Opinions were divided, and the choice was falling on various candidates, some of whom were no strangers to intrigue. The wisest cast their eyes on Stephen and united the votes in his favour by the praise they gave of his holiness, his prudence, his discernment and his piety. But as they had foreseen that only force could tear him from his beloved solitude, they hastened to send to the Pope to obtain the bull of confirmation, while the man concerned, withdrawn into the depths of the desert, knew absolutely nothing of what was going on about him. The sovereign Pontiff, informed of this choice, showed great joy, congratulating the diocese of Die and declaring aloud that such an election could come only from God. We see from this that Stephen’s reputation for holiness had crossed many other mountains than those of Bugey and had reached the sovereign Pontiff. The Pope, having set the seal of apostolic authority on this election, gave orders that the new pastor should take charge of his flock without delay. The canons, armed with this order, flew to the humble Carthusian, showed him the letters of the Vicar of Jesus Christ and implored him, in the name of the Church that had elected him, to yield to their wishes. Stephen, having read these letters

and heard the deputies from Die, spoke to them in these humble words: “I am astonished that men as wise as you are should have cast their eyes on an ignorant and unknown religious, without experience, brought up in the desert, who knows nothing of the affairs either of the Church or of the world, who possesses none of the virtues necessary to a bishop, and who owes all his time to penance; I am astonished that you should wish to lay so heavy a burden upon him. Change your minds, I beg you; cease to do me violence; I will never consent to your request.” As they pressed and implored him still more urgently, he answered them in the words of Blessed Hugh, formerly a Carthusian like himself, then bishop of Lincoln, who had died two years before in the odour of sanctity: “Be assured that it is not in my power to fall in with your plans; I am a religious, subject to the will of another whom I must obey until death. Now it is not fitting that I should abandon the care of this house to take in hand the government of your Church.” After this answer the canons, seeing that they could gain nothing with him, withdrew without further argument and obtained new letters from the Pope ordering the prior of the Grande-Chartreuse to oblige the prior of Portes to submit. Thereupon the deputies of the Church of Die came back to Stephen; but, informed of their arrival, he took flight and went to hide in the desert. The venerable Guigo, prior of the Grande-Chartreuse, gave orders for him to be sought out and compelled him, by virtue of holy obedience, to yield to the request of the clergy and people of Die and to the orders of the sovereign Pontiff. The canons, delighted and full of joy, took him to Vienne, and three archbishops gave him episcopal anointing in that city in the year 1202.

From Vienne the new bishop hastened to Die, where he was received with the most striking signs of joy. Installed in the episcopal palace, he lived there with the same simplicity as in his cell, following as far as possible the devout exercises of his Order and even seeking to perform them still more perfectly; he regularly attended choir with his canons and celebrated holy Mass every day with a devotion that astonished as much as it edified.

Following the example of the Saviour, Stephen from the first days of his episcopate made it a rule to practise himself the things he was to teach others, and people were extremely surprised to see one whom they had thought only a religious and a man of piety fulfil all the episcopal functions with such wisdom and dignity: his vigilance and zeal extended to everything.

The visitations he made in his diocese brought him the sad conviction that the people habitually profaned the holy day of Sunday, consecrating it to the devil by trade, dancing, gaming, frequenting taverns and the shows most dangerous to morals. Stephen, grieved by these abuses, applied himself in fatherly but solid discourses to showing the enormity of such a transgression and the insult it offered to God. But part of this blind and coarse population, far from yielding to his exhortations, despised them to the point of refusing to listen to them any more. The zealous prelate did not lose heart; he remembered that he was a shepherd and not a hireling, and resolved to preach in season and out of season. But he had recourse to a weapon even more effective than words for conquering the devil and bringing his people back to their duties: prayer. This prayer worked wonders; morals were reformed, vices ceased, and the diocese of Die offered nothing but the spectacle of the virtues admired among the first Christians.

The greatness and cares of the episcopate did not make Stephen forget the Charterhouse of Portes, where he had spent such happy days. He went back there often and lived there like the other religious, withdrawn in his cell and giving himself wholly to prayer and contemplation. The insignia of his dignity never went with him to that peaceful place; instead the Rule found in him a humble disciple of Saint Bruno, who bent gladly to the holy laws of obedience. He wore no other clothing there than the habit of the Order; his bed, his table and his furniture were no different from those of the least of the religious. He often took pleasure in going to the houses of piety he knew and there, gathering all the brethren, he addressed to them words full of gentleness and unction. This tender charity extended to all the unfortunate, and the devout authors of his life relate countless incidents proving that God gave him a share in His power to heal the sick miraculously, cast out devils and relieve the poor. He loved them and treated them as brothers; he saw in them the suffering Jesus

Christ; so he never left them at his door, but had them come into his house and even served them food himself, talked with them, instructed and consoled them, and sent them away only after loading them with his kindness and his gifts.

The measure of the labours prescribed for him was filled in a short time. God, wishing to end his laborious pilgrimage and bring him into the inheritance of the heavenly homeland, sent him an illness that changed into sorrow the joy his Church had in possessing him. The love that his clergy and laity bore him appeared in the care that each one wished to lavish on him, and it softened the sufferings this holy pastor endured. He had foretold the hour of his death and, awaiting it with admirable calm, he blessed his people and his clergy, exhorted them to live in great concord, prayed fervently and gave his advice on what would have to be done when he was no longer among them. While the last sacraments were being administered to him, which he received with the most touching piety, a sick woman whom the doctors had given up asked him for a special blessing. The dying man stretched out a failing hand towards her and called down upon her head the gifts of heaven that she was asking for her cure. To the great astonishment of all present, this woman, full of faith, went away like the one who had been so eager to touch the garments of Jesus Christ. Thus this man of God gave health to others while he himself, weakened by illness, was dying; but he did not ask the same favour for himself, for his wishes showed his desire to go soon and finish in heaven that long prayer he had begun on earth. This moment, so happy for him, came on 7 September 1208. He was fifty-three years old and had spent twenty-one years in the Charterhouse of Portes and six in the episcopate. His mortal remains were buried in the chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin in his cathedral.

Saint Stephen is usually represented in the pulpit, and while he preaches devils are seen appearing in the midst of the congregation. The Saint had forced them to come and bear witness by their presence to his words on the sanctification of Sunday, which the people despised and profaned.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Immediately after his death, miraculous cures took place every day at his tomb and led the archbishop of Vienne and his suffragans to write to Pope Gregory IX asking that the holy bishop be enrolled in the catalogue of the Saints. The sovereign Pontiff allowed public worship to be paid to the holy wonder-worker and his protection to be implored. From then on the crowd of petitioners redoubled, and the holy Bishop’s tomb became so famous that each new bishop of Die went there to pray before taking possession and swore on the relic to respect the exemptions of the chapter. However, Calvinism, having entered Dauphiné, penetrated into the city of Die, and from then on devotion to Saint Stephen declined together with faith in the holy truths. The rage of the Huguenots led them to destroy the churches and burn the relics of the Saints. Masters of Die, they opened the tomb of Saint Stephen; his body, which they found still whole as at the moment of his death, could not command their respect. They took it away and threw it into the fire in the year 1561.

Mgr Devie, wishing to have so powerful a protector, who belongs to his diocese by birth, honoured in it, has had his name inserted in the calendar and ordered that his office be said henceforth on the 7th of September.

Taken from the Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Belley *by Mgr Depéry. — Cf. Surius;* Acta Sanctorum; Gallia Christiana; De rebus gestis episcoporum Diensium, *by Jean Colombi;* Chronicum chartusianum, *by Pierre Dorland, Carthusian;* Éphémérides de l’Ordre des Chartreux, *by Dom Levasseur; and the* Histoire de Bresse *by Samuel Guichenon.*

Saint Eustace, Abbot of Flay, Now Saint-Germer, in the Diocese of Beauvais

1211. — Pope: Innocent III. — King of France: Philip II.

A man must be regarded as the more perfect, the deeper and purer his hatred of evil.

Saint Bonaventure.

Eustace was born in the Beauvaisis and gave early and unmistakable signs of the holiness he was to attain. His learning and his virtues, and in particular the purity and touching simplicity of his life, earned him admission, while still young, to the ranks of the clergy. Philippe de Dreux, bishop of Beauvais, a just judge of his merit, gave him his goodwill and friendship, made him his secretary and conferred the priesthood on him. Devout, learned, of good counsel and strongly attached to his duties, the Saint grew dearer to the Pontiff day by day. He also won the esteem and affection of the monks of Flay. They often had recourse to his counsel and, after the death of Hugh the Poor, they elected him their abbot. A historian has preserved for us the letter they wrote on that occasion to Philippe de Dreux, asking him to ratify their choice. “After imploring,” they said, “the clemency of the Holy Spirit, without whose help all prayer is vain, we have elected your secretary, an honourable, simple and upright man, to whom good witness is borne on every side. We present him to you, venerable father, that you may deign to stretch out your hand over him and bless him.”

Although it cost the bishop of Beauvais a great deal to part with Eustace, knowing how useful his election would be to the Church, he agreed to ratify it. According to the custom of those times, the newly elected abbot promised submission and obedience to Philippe, to his successors and to the Church of Beauvais, and received canonical institution from the prelate.

Our Saint governed his abbey with as much prudence as kindness. His charity and gentleness made him regarded less as a superior than as a father. But the monks of Flay did not long enjoy his presence among them. To call her children to a new crusade against the infidels, to combat the monstrous heresy of the Albigensians, and to destroy the vices and disorders of which many Christians were giving a sad example, the Church was asking for the help of priests filled with holy zeal and gifted with eloquence. Eustace’s courage, devotion and eloquence did not fail her. He went to share the apostolic labours of the celebrated Fulk of Neuilly and of several other preachers chosen from among the Premonstratensians and Cistercians. Brilliant successes crowned his efforts: wherever he raised his voice he awakened the fear of God’s judgements and gave birth to generous resolutions. The fruits the Church gathered from Eustace’s preaching led the illustrious pontiff Innocent III to send the Blessed man to England with the title of apostolic legate. There too religion had great evils to deplore. A sad mixture of corruption and ignorance was to be seen: the holy day of Sunday was profaned; pitiless usury devoured the substance of the poor; the cemeteries and church porches were used for trading.

Eustace appeared among this people like an apostle of the first centuries: he had their faith, their zeal and their charity; he worked ardently to reform the morals of Christians and to inspire in them the love of chastity. His example and his sermons, often accompanied by miracles, brought about many conversions. Not far from Canterbury the Saint blessed a spring at a place called Vui; from that moment a great number of sick people found healing there. In our own day the memory of these miracles is still alive in that district. Even the heretics call the spring of Vui Saint Eustace’s Well or the Holy Well. They go and draw water there, which they keep in their homes for the healing of the eyes and the relief of sick children and of persons suffering from fever. At Rumesnel, a place not far from Vui, Eustace gave a new proof of the power God had granted him. As wholesome water was lacking there, he made a spring of living water gush from a rock with his staff; it still flows and so bears lasting witness to the holiness of the glorious minister of Jesus Christ.

However, our holy preacher was stopped in his labours at the very moment when he was producing the happiest fruits of salvation. Some members of the clergy, instead of rejoicing at his successes, made a crime of his zeal and accused him of putting his sickle into another man’s harvest. Eustace, no longer having the freedom an apostle needs, found himself in the sad and painful necessity of returning to his monastery before finishing a mission begun under such favourable auspices. Innocent III learned with sorrow of the trials his legate had just undergone; but, wishing this mission to bear all the fruit he expected of it, he soon ordered the

Saint to return to England. Eustace, obedient to the Pontiff's voice, went and resumed his preaching at York. He applied himself above all to recalling Sabbath-breakers to their duty, promising pardon to the repentant and threatening hardened hearts with the severest punishments. Several times the vengeance of heaven pursued the guilty who, despising his salutary warnings, persisted in their sacrilegious conduct. When a sinner came to confess his faults to him, before admitting him to penance he required of him a promise to cease all work from Saturday at the hour of None until sunrise on Monday. May we not believe that Eustace's missions and miracles contributed in large part to engraving deeply in the hearts of the English that respect for Sunday which has survived even the invasion of heresy?

To give the piety of the faithful nourishment and consolation, Eustace urged them strongly to keep a lamp burning in every church to recall the presence of Jesus Christ in their midst. He had no difficulty in obtaining this sacrifice from the gratitude and faith of Christians who had just returned to God's grace; they also agreed to devote part of their revenues and earnings to the burial of the poor. But when Eustace wished to take advantage of these good dispositions to give these works a lasting character, Richard I, king of England, under the specious pretext of protecting the ancient customs of his kingdom, raised obstacles and opposition against him on every side. Eustace did not draw back before these new difficulties. His zeal growing with the obstacles, he spoke with new force against those who despised the law of Sunday. He reminded impenitent sinners of the severity of divine justice, until the day when he knew, from the exhaustion of his strength, that the end of his life was not far off. The Saint could go and await in peace in his abbey the day of eternal reward, for he had valiantly fought the battles of the Lord.

Reunited, never again to be parted, with his beloved monks, Eustace led them to the perfection of their state by his lively and frequent exhortations, but still more by his holy example. After leaving them the edifying spectacle of his humility, his continual prayers, his austerities and his vigils, he entered, full of merits, into the joy of his God. His death took place in the year 1211, on the day of the Nativity of the Mother of God, for whom he had always had a tender devotion.

The body of the virtuous abbot was first buried in the middle of the nave of the abbey church of Flay. Some time later it was taken from there and laid in a vault of the elegant chapel built by Pierre de Vessencourt, one of his successors.

The name of Eustace is found in several martyrologies: he is mentioned with honour among the chief Saints of the Order of Cîteaux.

Vies des Saints de Beauvais, by the abbé Sabatier.

Blessed Dierry or Thierry I, Bishop of Metz and Confessor (984)

Thierry was born in Saxony; he was the son of Count Evrard and of Amalrada, sister of Saint Matilda, wife of Henry the Fowler, king of Germany. Through his mother he was first cousin of the emperor Otto the Great and of Saint Bruno, archbishop of Cologne. Thierry brought with him at birth all the excellent dispositions that could be wished for in a child of his rank. After receiving from his mother his first lessons in wisdom and piety, he was sent to Saint-Gall, where he studied for ten years under the celebrated Kerold, a monk of that abbey. From Saint-Gall Thierry went on to continue his studies at the cathedral of Halberstadt, of which he became a canon. Bruno, archbishop of Cologne, his kinsman, called him to his side to perfect him in learning and virtue. The progress he made there led the holy prelate to have him appointed to the bishopric of Metz in 961. The devout bishop did much good during his long episcopate. One of the first things he thought it his duty to do was to form an association between his cathedral and that of Halberstadt, in gratitude for having received part of his education in the latter and having held a prebend there. Having accompanied his cousin Bruno in 965 to the court of Lothair, king of France, he received the last breath of the holy prelate, who died at Reims, and brought his body back to Cologne. After Bruno's death the emperor Otto I, who

valued Thierry's talents and virtue, chose him as one of his chief counsellors and wished always to have him at his side, even on his journeys. The bishop of Metz accompanied the monarch to Italy several times.

It was on these journeys that Blessed Thierry collected the great number of relics with which he enriched his church, and in particular the abbey of Saint-Vincent, which he had founded in 968 on an island in the Moselle, close to his episcopal city. In 970 he received from Corfu the body of Saint Lucy, which he placed in a separate oratory of the abbey church of Saint-Vincent. He also translated there the relics of Saint Livier, a martyr of Metz. It was he too who translated to Épinal, in the Vosges, the body of Saint Goëric, one of his predecessors, and so gave occasion to the growth of that town. But what always occupied him most was his abbey of Saint-Vincent. He endowed it richly and peopled it with monks taken from Gorze and Saint-Arnould. The love of study reigned in those two houses, and his school became one of the most famous in the country under the able direction of Adalbert and of Sigebert of Gembloux. Thierry did good to the other monasteries of his diocese and also took part in the foundation of several, in particular Vergaville, Bouxières and Chaligny. He worked zealously for the reform of the famous abbeys of Saint-Gall and Senones.

In 980 Thierry accompanied Otto II to Italy and followed him on all his expeditions. He was of great help to him above all in the unfortunate Calabrian campaign, in which the emperor, carried away by his courage, rashly fell into the midst of the Greeks and Saracens. The holy bishop of Metz was charged by the empress Theophano with delivering him from the hands of the enemy. In 983, when Otto fell ill at Rome, Thierry attended him at his death and paid him the last honours. He himself died the following year amid the exercises of the most rigorous penance, and was buried in the church of the abbey of Saint-Vincent.

When his body was raised from the ground, more than three hundred years after his death, the violet cope and chasuble in which he had been wrapped were found intact. They were still kept at the end of the last century. For a long time the chasuble was used on the feast of Blessed Thierry, which was kept at the abbey of Saint-Vincent on 7 September.

Notice kindly supplied by M. l'abbé Noël, parish priest and archpriest of Briey.

Saint John of Lodi, Bishop of Gubbio, in Italy, of the Camaldolese Order (1106)

Blessed John of Lodi, so called because he was born in that Italian city, was brought up by his parents in the practice of virtue. He despised the world early, devoted himself to the service of the poor and the sick, and from then on trained himself in mortification. For some time he lived in a hut he had built near a church and gave himself up there to great austerities. The desire for greater perfection led him to the monastery of Fonte Avellana, of which the celebrated Saint Peter Damian was then superior. Under the direction of this able master John made such progress on the way of salvation that Saint Peter thought it right to have him raised to holy orders. His virtue shone so brightly that, at the death of the devout abbot, the monks of Fonte Avellana thought it right, in spite of his resistance, to choose him to succeed the blessed doctor as prior. In this office he showed such great prudence joined to such perfect charity that the clergy and people of the city of Gubbio, whose episcopal see was vacant, thought of asking the Pope's legate for him as bishop. The legate gladly agreed and ordered John to accept this burden, which alarmed his humility. Having become a shepherd of souls, the servant of God devoted himself wholly to their sanctification, while keeping all the practices of the religious life. His episcopate was not of long duration, for he died in the year following his consecration, that is, on 7 September 1106, at the age of eighty. Pope Paschal II placed him among the Saints, and his feast is kept in the Camaldolese Order on the day of his death. His body is preserved incorrupt in the cathedral of Gubbio.

Acta Sanctorum.

[1] It was only in the eighth century that this martyr began to be given the name of John; it is not known on what Acts. The learned Bollandist Papebroch thought (*Acta Sanctorum*, vol. III of April) that he was none other than the famous martyr Saint George; but later one of his successors, Jean Stilting, rejected this opinion (*Acta Sanctorum*, vol. III of September). The Roman martyrology names him on 7 September, although he suffered on 24 or at the latest 25 February 303. — Godescard and Baillet.

[2] The Bollandists say: "At Salona in Dalmatia (Western Illyria)."

[3] The Bollandists say: "At Arles."

[4] The abbé Guillaume, canon of Nancy, in his *Histoire de l'Église de Toul et de Nancy* (5 vols. 8vo), absolutely disowns Saint Hilduard as a bishop of Toul.

[5] Saint Alpin was born of noble Christian parents at Baye, in the arrondissement of Épernay. He was brought up in the school of Saint Lupus of Troyes and under so skilful a master made rapid progress in piety and letters. Everywhere the highest idea of his holiness was soon formed, and when Provinctus, bishop of Châlons, died, clergy and people chose him to succeed him. At this news he took flight and yielded only to the authority of Saint Lupus, his master. He had to govern his Church in very difficult times and showed rare skill. Attila had invaded France and was threatening the plains of Châlons. Grieved at the thought of the evils that awaited his people, he turned to heaven with fervour and obtained that his flock should be spared. He died in the middle of the Vth century and was buried at his birthplace. In 860 his body was carried to Saint-André outside the walls. This church, later enclosed within the walls of Châlons, took the name of the Saint whose ashes it possessed. The bones of Saint Alpin, raised in 1326 and found and authenticated anew in 1756, were profaned during the Revolution and devoured by swine, seven hundred of which had been shut up in that church. — *Local notes.*

[6] We have given her life on 4 September.

[7] See his life on 4 September.

[8] See 5 September.

[9] We have given his life on 31 August.

[10] The name Alise means "source of salvation". The people of the Mandubii formed part of the Aeduan republic. Alise is today a village of the Côte-d'Or, twelve kilometres north-east of Semur.

[11] Alias: Euverte, Evurce, Evorce, Emirte, Emirce.

[12] Alias: Ansard, Hansard.

[13] Alias: Mauberte.

8 September

Martyrologies

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

THE NATIVITY of the blessed and ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of God. — At Nicomedia, Saint ADRIAN, with twenty-three other holy Martyrs, who, after many tortures, had their legs broken under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian and consummated their martyrdom on 4 March. The Christians carried their relics to Byzantium and gave them honourable burial. Later the body of Saint Adrian was carried to Rome on this same day, which is the one the Church has particularly devoted to honouring his memory. 306. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Ammon, Theophilus, Neoterius and several others, twenty-two in number.[1] — At Antioch, Saints Timothy and Faustus, martyrs. — At Gaza in Palestine, the holy martyrs Eusebius, Nestabus and Zeno, brothers, who, in the time of Julian the Apostate, were torn to pieces and slaughtered by a mob of pagans that fell upon them. About 362. — In the same city and under the same emperor, Saint Nestor, martyr, who, having been cruelly ill-treated by those same raging pagans, gave up the ghost. — At Valencia in Spain, Saint Thomas of Villanova, archbishop, notable for his burning charity towards the poor. He was canonized by Pope Alexander VII; his feast is kept on the 22nd of this month.[2] 1555. — At Freising (Bavaria), Saint Corbinian, first bishop of that see; ordained by Pope Gregory II and sent to preach the Gospel, he produced abundant fruit in France and Germany; at last, having become famous for his virtues and miracles, he died in peace.[3] 730.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Troyes, Saint Béline, virgin and martyr. She was born at Landreville (Aube, arrondissement of Bar-sur-Seine, canton of Essoyes) of a family of honest farmers, and was distinguished by great piety and tireless charity. The lord of the place, Jean de Pradines, came upon her while she was keeping her father's flock and, when she refused to yield to his guilty desires, cut off her head. Béline was canonized fifty years after her death with extraordinary pomp; her head, enclosed in a rich reliquary of enamelled silver set with precious stones, was carried with great solemnity to the abbey of Mares, in the original diocese of Langres. About four hundred paces from Landreville there is a chapel built in honour of the virgin martyr; some distance away is a spring that bears her name, whose miraculous water has cured several infirmities. Landreville possesses a bust of the Saint containing, it is believed, some of her sacred bones. 1153. — At Martres, in the diocese of Toulouse, Saint Vidian, martyr, whose notice we gave on 27 August. viiith c. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Disenberg or Disibodenberg, between Kreuznach and Sobernheim, in the diocese of Trier, Saint Disen or Disibod, founder of that abbey and regionary bishop. About 700. — In the diocese of Viviers, Saint ADRIAN of Nicomedia, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Dijon, OUR LADY OF BON-ESPOIR. — At Longpont (Seine-et-Oise), in the diocese of Versailles, Our Lady of Bonne-Garde or of Longpont. Its origin is so ancient that no certain date can be assigned to it. A respectable tradition attributes its foundation to the glorious martyr Saint Yon, priest, disciple of Saint Denis. On 7 June 1851 the bishop of Versailles canonically erected in this sanctuary an association under the title of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Bonne-Garde; Pius IX enriched it with many indulgences. On 9 October 1850 the church, repaired at the expense of the State, was consecrated through the care of the bishop of Versailles. — At Tourzel (canton of Neschers), in the diocese of Clermont, Our Lady of Ronzières: this sanctuary, of eleventh-century Romanesque architecture, possesses a miraculous statue larger than life, representing a seated Virgin holding the child Jesus in her arms. — Close to Bellac, in the diocese of Limoges, Our Lady of Loreto or of Vadat, a sanctuary dating from 1621, to which many pilgrims flock. — East of Bellac, a quarter of a league from Châteauponsat, in the diocese of Limoges, Our Lady of Châteauponsat, a sanctuary set on the top of the slope on whose side the town stands, whose origin goes back to the year 1212. People go there on pilgrimage to ask to be cured of fever or preserved from it. — In the canton of Massiac (arrondissement of Saint-Flour), in the diocese of Saint-Flour, Our Lady of Vauclaire, so called from the multitude of blind people who have seen the light of day there. The sanctuary, described as ancient by the historians of the seventeenth century, is dear to the piety of the people, who throng to it. — In the canton of Mercœur, diocese of Tulle, Our Lady of Belpeuch (*Bellum podium*), whose sanctuary, on the highest point of a mountain, goes back at least to the eleventh century. — At Servières, in the diocese of Tulle, Our Lady of the Rock, whose sanctuary, built on the side of a crag, dates from 1691. — At Corrèze, in the diocese of Tulle, Our Lady of the Bridge of Salvation, pointed out by the Fathers of the Council of Bourges (1852) as one of the most remarkable sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin in the diocese: it goes back to the fifteenth century. — At Lestards, in the diocese of Tulle, Our Lady of La Bissière, whose sanctuary belongs to the first half of the fifteenth century. — In the arrondissement of Ussel, in the diocese of Tulle, Our Lady of Eygurande, whose sanctuary dates from 1720. Fifty paces from the chapel is a spring, where some go to drink to be cured of fever, others to bathe their suffering limbs, and where sick little children are sometimes even dipped; very often the Blessed Virgin has given this water, drunk with confidence, the power of healing. — At Ennetières, arrondissement of Lille, diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of Peace, so called because people had recourse to her to obtain peace between nations and peace in the home. This sanctuary goes back beyond the fifteenth century. — At Dunkirk, in the diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of the Dunes, whose sanctuary owes its origin to a little statue of the Blessed Virgin found in the ground at the beginning of the fifteenth century near the dunes, when the fortifications of the town, which the English had just razed, were being rebuilt. — In the diocese of Orléans, Our Lady of Cléry, which Philip VI of Valois built at his own expense and whose first stone he laid in 1320. This sanctuary has seen Louis XI, Charles VIII, Anne of Brittany, Louis XII, Henry III

and Louis XIV kneel on its pavement. It is a remarkable building, full of interest: eighty metres long, it has three naves with a great tower, two bell turrets, vigorous buttresses that clasp it without crushing it, and an elegant portal. Its main nave, lit by twenty-three windows, unfolds majestically over a length of seventy-one metres and a width of ten metres; each of the side aisles is nearly six metres wide, and the vault is twenty-five metres high. In 1854 Mgr Dupanloup, bishop of Orléans, had the happy idea of founding a community of Oblates to replace the former collegiate chapter, and came there himself on pilgrimage on 8 September. — In the diocese of Versailles, Our Lady of Pontoise, a sanctuary that goes back beyond the thirteenth century. Saint Louis came there to mingle his fervent prayers with those of his subjects. — At Clichy-en-l'Aunois, in the forest of Bondy, diocese of Versailles, Our Lady of the Angels, whose sanctuary dates from 1212. The new chapel was inaugurated on 8 September. 1808. — At Faverolles, diocese of Blois, Our Lady of Aigues-Vives, of which only ruins remain, but which pilgrims still visit. — At Blois, in the faubourg of Vienne, Our Lady of Help, where in public and private calamities the faithful go to ask for Mary's protection. Pius IX has just given new lustre to this chapel by authorizing the crowning of the statue venerated there. — At Salbris, diocese of Blois, Our Lady of Pity, where people come on pilgrimage to commend to Mary children about to be born, or newborn babies subject to convulsions. — At Albert, in the diocese of Amiens, Our Lady of Brébières, so called probably from the place where a shepherd found the statue that is venerated there, and where many sheep (*brebis*) grazed. The sanctuary seems to date from the fourteenth century. On 27 April 1862 the town of Albert set up a monumental statue of Our Lady over the south portal of this church. Three bishops and at least twenty-five thousand people took part in the ceremony. — At Saint-Michel-des-Andaines, in the diocese of Séez, Our Lady of Les Prises, a chapel of great antiquity, built, says the legend, on a spot pointed out by the Blessed Virgin herself: it was restored at the beginning of the eighteenth century. — At Longny, in the diocese of Séez, Our Lady of Longny, whose sanctuary dates from the sixteenth century. — At Saint-Cyr-la-Rosière, in the diocese of Séez, Our Lady of Clémencé, a chapel going back to the fifteenth century. — At Marquaix, near Roisel, in the diocese of Amiens, Our Lady of Moyen-Pont, so called from the bridge leading to the little island on which it stands, between the two arms of the river Coulonge. This sanctuary dates from the time of the Crusades. — In the canton of Songeons, diocese of Beauvais, Our Lady of Ville-en-Bray, a sanctuary placed at the top of a hill, which local tradition carries back to the ninth century. Its fame earned it, in 1627, the honour of becoming the seat of a confraternity of the Rosary. Every year it draws about fifteen thousand pilgrims. — At Saint-Marcouf, in the canton of Montebourg, diocese of Coutances, Our Lady of Les Gougins, a chapel put up in the fourth century by sailors who, about to be swallowed up in a storm, had vowed, if they escaped the danger, to raise a sanctuary to the Blessed Virgin wherever the raging waves should cast them. — At Brain, two leagues from Angers, Our Lady of La Réale or La Royale, founded by Richard the Lionheart, king of England, on 4 August 1189: it is one of the most frequented pilgrimages of Anjou. — At Angers, Notre-Dame l'Angevine. The faithful give this name to the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, because it was at Angers, about the year 430, that this feast was celebrated for the first time in the Church, in consequence of a revelation received on the subject by Maurilius, bishop of Angers. — At Villaine, two leagues from La Flèche, in the diocese of Le Mans, Our Lady of L'Aubinière. Tradition relates that the venerated statue of this sanctuary was found at a very early period in a flowering hawthorn bush (*aubépine*): it is black, of a hard wood, a hand high, enclosed in a shrine glazed at the front and placed on the tabernacle of the altar. — At Saint-Remy-du-Plain, in the diocese of Le Mans, Our Lady of All Help, a chapel set on the crest of a hillock, which dates from the first days of Christianity. It was restored in 1837 and since then has counted more than three thousand pilgrims a year. — In the parish of Les Gardes, diocese of Angers, Our Lady of Les Gardes, a chapel built in the fifteenth century by Antoine de l'Éperonnière, lord of Le Pineau, in consequence of a vow he made to the Blessed Virgin, through whose intercession he had been delivered from the hands of corsairs. — At Évron, in the diocese of Laval, Our Lady of the Thorn or of Évron, a very ancient sanctuary that possesses a fine statue of Mary given by Robert I, viscount of Blois, and besides an outstanding relic, a few drops of the milk of the Blessed Virgin. — At Lescouët, diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of Mount

Carmel, a quite recent creation dating only from 1821; the chapel was blessed on 8 September 1829. — At Le Quillio, diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of Loreto, a little chapel in the Gothic style, built a few years ago on the highest point of a hill, which possesses a piece of the veil of the Blessed Virgin. — At Saint-Guéno, diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of the Hillock (*du Tertre*) or of the Seven Sorrows, whose sanctuary was restored in 1824: people come to pray there in times of calamity and to ask for the health of the infirm or of the sick in danger. — Two kilometres from the village of Dolo, diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of the Oak, whose oratory is nothing but the statue of Mary in the trunk of an old oak partly eaten away by time. Mothers come there to pray for their children who are slow to speak or to walk. — In the parish of Saint-Aubin, at Rennes, Our Lady of Good News, whose sanctuary dates from the fourteenth century. In 1634 the inhabitants of Rennes, miraculously delivered from the plague, enriched this oratory with a silver model weighing one hundred and nineteen marks, representing the city with its walls, its towers, its churches or most remarkable buildings, and above it the image of Our Lady. The Revolution seized this treasure; but in 1861 a new model, a reproduction of that of 1634, came to enrich the venerated sanctuary. — At Vion, in the diocese of Le Mans, Our Lady of the Oak, a sanctuary dating from the fifteenth century. The ever-growing number of pilgrims led the ecclesiastical authorities to build, in 1860, near the chapel, a fine large house for the missionaries charged with serving it. — At Lestelle, in the diocese of Bayonne, Our Lady of Bétharram or of the Fair Branch (*Beau-Rameau*), so called from a branch with golden leaves which a young girl, who had fallen into the waters of the Gave and been saved through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, laid in gratitude on Mary's altar. This chapel has always been the most frequented place of devotion in all Béarn. Pius IX, by an indult of 28 March 1852, enriched this sanctuary with many indulgences. — At Nouillan de Montoussé, in the valley of the Neste, diocese of Tarbes, Our Lady of Nestès, a very ancient sanctuary. In 1848 the chapel destroyed by the Revolution was rebuilt; in September 1856 the bishop of Tarbes blessed it, and the worship of Mary there regained its former splendour. — Five kilometres from Albi, Our Lady of La Drèche (*de dexterâ*), so called because it stands on the right bank of the Tarn. As the old sanctuary was falling into ruin, the bishop of Albi blessed, on 20 May 1861, the first stone of the new building being raised on the site of the original oratory. — In the diocese of Mende, Our Lady of Fournels, whose sanctuary, according to tradition, dates from the eleventh century. This very old devotion still continues. — At Odeillo, in the diocese of Perpignan, Our Lady of Font-Romeu (the Pilgrim's Fountain), whose sanctuary dates from the twelfth century. Behind the high altar of the oratory is a spring that runs under the floor of the church and pours its waters outside into a pool in which the sick bathe to obtain the cure of their infirmities. — At Combret, in the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Consolation, a confraternity founded in 1483, lapsed during the Revolution and restored by the bishop of Rodez in 1846 at the request of the inhabitants. — Near Saint-Sernin, in the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Orient (*Auriens*, an abbreviation of *aures habens*), so called to signify that Mary, who was invoked there, listened to all the requests laid at her feet. Its origin goes back beyond the thirteenth century. — On the former site of the parish of Le Peyrat, in the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Le Lez, built by the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem. The chapel has just been restored through the zeal of a good priest, with the help of a collection in the neighbouring parishes, and since then this devotion has recovered its former lustre. — In the canton of Caylus, diocese of Montauban, Our Lady of Livron (that is, of Deliverance), an ancient chapel at the bottom of a little valley, whose origin seems to go back to the time of the Crusades; nearby gushes a spring of remarkable clearness and marvellous abundance, which works many cures. — At Saint-Nazaire, arrondissement of Moissac, diocese of Montauban, Our Lady of Belle-Cassagne, whose origin goes back to the thirteenth century and whose original statue was replaced by a new one on 8 September 1858. — In the arrondissement of Castelsarrasin, diocese of Montauban, Our Lady of Alem, founded by the constable Louis de Sancerre, friend and companion of Bertrand du Guesclin. Demolished in '93, the chapel was rebuilt in 1808 through the piety of an inhabitant of Castelsarrasin. — In the neighbourhood of Narbonne, diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Fonfroide, founded at the beginning of the twelfth century by Ermengarde, viscountess of Narbonne. Bernardine monks are established in the adjoining monastery and exercise hospitality towards pilgrims. —

At Fleury, canton of

Durban, diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Joy (*de Liesse*), a very ancient oratory, rebuilt in the pointed style towards the end of the sixteenth century. — At Cuxac, diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Magrie (*de matre Dei*), which goes back to great antiquity. People pray there for the cure of the sick, especially of children. — At Fabrezan (canton of Lézignan), diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Consolation, a country chapel set on a knoll from which the view is lost in a boundless horizon. Sold and given over to profane uses from ’93, it was bought back in 1840 and perfectly restored through the piety of the pastor and faithful of Fabrezan. — At Tuchan, diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Faste or of Good News (*de faustâ*), founded by sailors whom the Blessed Virgin had delivered from a frightful storm. — In the middle of the cemetery of the parish of Villardonnel, canton of Mas-Cabardès, diocese of Carcassonne, Our Lady of Canabès, a chapel built by Charlemagne in memory of a famous victory he won through Mary’s intercession. People come to pray there for those struck with blindness, or crippled in their limbs, or afflicted with madness. — At Gourdan, canton of Saint-Bertrand, archdiocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Polignan, a sanctuary dating from the Renaissance: beside the chapel stands the diocesan minor seminary, a former Franciscan monastery. — At Montgiscard, archdiocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Roqueville, a sanctuary of great antiquity, enriched with many indulgences by the sovereign pontiffs Innocent X, Clement XI, Clement XIII and Pius VII, and restored in 1851 through the care of the parish priest of Montgiscard. — In the canton of Caraman, archdiocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Saussens, visited from time immemorial by many pilgrims, where mothers are accustomed to come and consecrate their newborn children. — At Bruguières, canton of Fronton, archdiocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Grace, built on the top of a fine hill, in a solitude conducive to recollection and piety. This sanctuary goes back at least to the beginning of the fifteenth century; Gregory XVI enriched it with indulgences. — In the canton of Montégut, archdiocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Alet, a chapel dating from the end of the eleventh century. — In the diocese of Troyes, OUR LADY OF VALSUZENAY. — Near Périgueux, OUR LADY OF VERTUS. — In the canton of Brando, diocese of Ajaccio, in Corsica, Our Lady of La Vasina, one of the most famous pilgrimages of that island. — Near Sierck, in the diocese of Metz, Our Lady of Rustroff, a chapel dating from the fifteenth century. It is a very frequented pilgrimage: in 1842 as many as twenty-three processions were seen there in a single day. — At Lyon, Our Lady of Fourvière (*Forum vetus*), a sanctuary built on the site of a once splendid building put up by the emperor Trajan on a hill near the city. It dates from 840; every century has delighted to enlarge it. In 1853 the bell tower was crowned with a colossal statue of the Virgin in gilded bronze, stretching out over the city her hands full of blessings. The unfortunate Pius VII, passing through Lyon during his captivity, blessed this sanctuary. — Two kilometres from Poligny, diocese of Saint-Claude, Our Lady of Vaux (*de Vallibus*), a former priory of the Order of Saint Benedict. The first fruits of the earth are consecrated to her. — In the Beaujolais, diocese of Lyon, Our Lady of Brouilly, raised on the mountain of that name by the people of the district to ward off the oidium that was ravaging the rich vineyards of the region. The chapel was blessed on 8 September 1857. — In the canton of Orgelet, diocese of Saint-Claude, Our Lady of Onoz, a sanctuary of great antiquity that every year draws many pilgrims from the Jura, Bresse, Bugey, the Lyonnais and Burgundy. — In the canton of Clelles, diocese of Grenoble, Our Lady of Esparron, kept by a hermit who receives weary travellers or guides them through the forests, the rocks, the dark defiles and the deep gorges of those parts. — Near Cuisery, in the diocese of Autun, Our Lady of La Chaux, a sanctuary whose origin is lost in the night of time. — In the arrondissement of Lure, diocese of Besançon, Our Lady of Haut, which tradition carries back to the very beginning of Christianity. It takes its name from the mountain on which it stands. — At Montpellier, Our Lady of the Tables, whose sanctuary was consecrated about 817 by Ricuin I, bishop of Maguelone. It has been visited by the most exalted persons: nine popes, Urban II, Gelasius II, Callistus II, Innocent II, Adrian IV, Alexander III, Clement IV, Clement V and Urban V, have knelt on its pavement. — In the canton of Claret, diocese of Montpellier, Our Lady of Lanteyrargues. Gregory XVI attached a plenary indulgence to a visit to this holy chapel. — At Saint-Guiraud, diocese of Montpellier, Our

Lady the Black, a sanctuary earlier than the tenth century, whose altar was declared privileged in perpetuity by a brief of Pius IX dated 4 May 1855. — In the diocese of Verdun, OUR LADY OF BENOÎTE-VAUX. — At Fontanès, canton of Sommières, diocese of Nîmes, Our Lady of Prime-Combe, whose original sanctuary, which went back to the ninth century, was restored in 1853 and 1865 by the major seminary of Nîmes. — In the canton of Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, diocese of Digne, Our Lady of Beauvoir (*de bello visu*), whose origin seems to go back to the year 433. This chapel is as it were suspended between two mountains; the path by which one climbs to it forms a kind of wide corridor containing the fourteen Stations of the Way of the Cross and as many oratories. — Six kilometres from Bonifacio, diocese of Ajaccio, Our Lady of the Trinity or of the Aubergines, so called because on the feast of 8 September cakes made with aubergines are eaten there. The sanctuary backs on to a Capuchin convent, whose friars watch over it. — In the diocese of Chambéry, Our Lady of Myans, whose sanctuary existed as early as the eleventh century. The chapel was entrusted a few years ago to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. — In the diocese of Viviers, Our Lady of Châlons, a chapel built in a clearing of the forest of Laws, on the bank of the Rhône, west of Bourg-Saint-Andéol. It dates from the twelfth century. — At Chapias, diocese of Viviers, Our Lady of Deliverance, founded by two priests whom the Blessed Virgin had saved during the Terror from the swords of the soldiers sent to look for them. — In the diocese of Perpignan, Our Lady of Força-Réal or of the Seven Sorrows, a hermitage built on the ruins of a fortified castle put up in 1258 by the kings of Aragon. Ravaged in ’93, the sanctuary was restored in 1819 and blessed on 13 October 1822. — In the canton of Gramat, diocese of Cahors, Our Lady of Roc-Amadour, whose original sanctuary was built, it is said, by the very hands of the Zacchaeus of the Gospel. It is the most curious and perhaps the most picturesque in the whole world: it stands at the top of an enormous mountain. The Protestants of the sixteenth century and the Vandals of the eighteenth reduced it to a most deplorable state; but the ancient pilgrimage is still alive, and as many as forty thousand pilgrims are counted there during the octave of the Nativity. — At Allauch, near Marseilles, OUR LADY OF THE CASTLE. — Near Apt, in the diocese of Avignon, OUR LADY OF LIGHTS. — In the diocese of Digne, OUR LADY OF LURE. — Near Limoux, diocese of Carcassonne, OUR LADY OF MARCEILLE. — At Cadouin (Dordogne, arrondissement of Bergerac), the feast of the HOLY SHROUD.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — The Nativity of Blessed Mary, Mother of God, ever Virgin. On this day our Father Saint Felix obtained from the Mother of God the signal favour of going to sing the praises of God with her and all the inhabitants of heaven.

ADDITIONS FAITES D’APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Volterra (*Volaterrae*), a fortified town of Tuscany in the province of Pisa, Saint Ugo, bishop of that see and confessor. Of a princely family of Volterra, he studied at the University of Padua. His virtues and learning soon opened to him the door of honours, and he became successively canon of Padua, canon of Volterra, and then bishop of the latter city. He occupied that see for twenty-two years and always managed to keep the treasure of the orthodox faith amid the troubles and schisms that afflicted his diocese at that period, chiefly as a result of the struggle between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. He died at a very advanced age and was buried in his cathedral church. It is said that for many years a balsamic liquid flowed from his tomb and filled the church with a marvellous fragrance. In 1540 and 1631 there were recognitions and translations of his precious relics. 1184. — At Venice in Italy (Venetia), Blessed Countess (*Comtesse*) of Tagliapetra. From her early years she was forestalled by the gifts of grace and advanced with great strides along the way of perfection. She had reached the summit of holiness by the age of thirteen, when God, seeing her ripe for

heaven, called her to himself to adorn her head with the crown of virginity. Her body was laid in the basilica of Saint-Vite at Venice, where she has a chapel dedicated in her name. 1308. — At Pesaro, a fortified town of Italy, Blessed Seraphina, widow, abbess of the Order of Saint Clare. She was of the illustrious family of the Colonna and had married François-Alexandre Sforza, duke of Pesaro. He, a proud and arrogant young man and moreover utterly debauched, soon conceived a criminal passion for a young woman of Pesaro. After making his lawful wife suffer a thousand ill-treatments, he forced her to withdraw into a monastery of Poor Clares, having slanderously accused her of adultery. Seraphina shone there for eighteen years with the brightness of every virtue, and above all by her humility and her charity towards the poor. Elected abbess, she was the model of the true religious and won for her community a great reputation for regularity and holiness. Her body is still shown today at Pesaro, free of all sign of corruption. 1478. — In Japan, the blessed martyrs Anthony of Saint Bonaventure, a Spaniard, priest of the Order of Friars Minor; Dominic Mangazaki, a Japanese, professed lay brother of the Order of Friars Minor; Dominic Castellet, a Spaniard, priest of the Order of Friars Preachers; Thomas of Saint Hyacinth and Anthony of Saint Dominic, Japanese and lay brothers of the Order of Friars Preachers; John Tonaki, Dominic, Michael, Thomas, Paul, John Smamura, Paul Aibara, Romanus, Leo, James Faiascida, Matthew Alvarez, Michael Jamada, Lawrence, Louis Nisaci, Francis, Dominic and Louis, all Japanese and of the Third Order of Saint Dominic. 1628.

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Jerusalem,[4] in the House by the Sheep Pool

Quae est ista quae progreditur quasi aurora consurgens?

Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising?

Canticle of Canticles, vi, 9.

Mary is born to become: 1° the instrument of the world's salvation; 2° the mediatrix of angels and men; 3° the restorer of the universe.

The abbé Combalot, Conf. sur les grand. de Marie.

It is with very good reason that the Church, addressing the glorious Virgin today, says to her with a thrill of joy: "Thy birth, O Virgin Mother of God, has filled the whole world with consolation and gladness, because from thee arose the Sun of Justice, Christ our God, who delivered us from the curse in which we were plunged and filled us with blessings, and who, having destroyed the empire of death, has brought us into eternal life." Indeed, who should not rejoice on the day and at the moment of the birth of this lovable princess? If the angel Gabriel assured Zachary that many would rejoice at the birth of Saint John the Baptist, his son, who was to be only the angel, the prophet and the forerunner of the Messiah, with how much more reason should we thrill with gladness at the birth of Mary, who is soon to be His mother? This feast is not for one city or one people only: it is for the whole world. It is for Jews and Gentiles, for sinners and the just, for the living and the dead. It is for the ages that have been and that will be; it is for time and for eternity. In short, it is a universal feast, because the good it promises and announces is not a particular and limited good, but a good that extends to every kind of age, condition and person. The eternal Father takes part in it, because a spouse is born to him who, representing his fruitfulness, will give a new nature and a new birth to his only Son. The divine Word takes part in it, because a Mother is born to him who will clothe him with a mortal body, that he may be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. The Holy Spirit takes part in it, because a living temple is born to him, which will be the worthiest subject of the influences and operations of his grace. Angels and men take part in it, because a Lady, a Mistress and a Queen is born to them, who will contribute her substance and her blood to bring forth a redeemer for them. The Fathers in limbo take part in it, because a Dawn is born to them, assuring them that the time of their deliverance is near. Finally, all the ages past and to come take part in it, because a Sovereign is born to them who will be, through her Son, the God-Man, the source of their restoration and their happiness.

The princes and great ones of the earth have always celebrated the anniversary of their birth with much solemnity, bestowing great largesse on the people and giving games and public shows: this is what the sacred writings tell us of Pharaoh, Antiochus and Herod; Macrobius, of the ancient Romans; Herodotus, of the kings of Persia; and ecclesiastical history, of most of the Caesars and Augusti. The wisest have condemned this custom and proclaimed its error and vanity. Jeremiah, far from blessing the day of his birth, gives it nothing but curses; Job wishes that the day on which he was born might be blotted out of the number of days and never counted; and Solomon prefers the day on which we die to the day that gave us life. The Church herself, speaking of the Saints in her Martyrology, takes the name of birthday from the day on which they came into the world to give it to the day of their death. But, however just and reasonable this devout sentiment may be in general, with regard to our lovable Sovereign the birth of Mary is, neither for her nor for anyone else, a subject of affliction and regret, but rather of consolation and joy. For what led Job, as well as other Saints, to regret the day of his birth was that they were born sinners and objects of God's hatred and indignation; that they were born wretched and subject to the rigorous punishments of divine justice; that they were born frail, with a continual leaning and inclination to sin. None of these reasons applies to Mary. She was not born guilty and hated by God, but all holy and cherished by his divine Majesty. She was not born wretched and covered with curses, but perfectly happy and filled with graces and blessings. She was not born frail, weak and inclined to sin, but strong, vigorous and incapable of committing any sin.

Mary never contracted original sin, and her soul, at the moment of its union with her body, was preserved from every stain. From this principle we must infer that from the time of her birth she was the object of God's love and good pleasure; for as in men there is no middle term between sin and grace, so in God, in their regard, there is no middle term between love and hatred. He loves all those whom he does not hate, and he hates all those whom he does not love; since, then, Mary was not the object of God's hatred and aversion, we must necessarily say that she was the object of his love. But it is saying little that she was the object of his love: let us say that God, from that moment, loved her excellently, loved her singularly, loved her supremely. The Bridegroom in the Canticle of Canticles expresses this mystery to us by a wonderful gradation: he calls her his friend and his beloved. *Surge,* he says to her, *amica mea, speciosa mea, et veni, columba mea, in foraminibus petrae, in caverna maceriae:* "Arise, dearest as well as fairest of my loves; it is enough, my dove, to be shut up in the clefts of the rock and in the hollow of the wall," that is, in the womb of your mother, until now barren: come, make haste, and appear in the light of day. He gives her the same name in a hundred other places of the same canticle; but he is not content to call her his Beloved, he also calls her absolutely the Beloved. We must note that among the names of Our Lord one of the most charming is *dilectus*, the Beloved. The Bride in the canticle often calls him her Beloved. The eternal Father on Mount Tabor also honours him with the same title: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But the Royal Prophet twice calls him absolutely the beloved: *Rex virtutum dilecti, dilecti:* the beloved according to his divine Person because, as Saint Paul says, he is the Son of the Father's love, *Filius dilectionis*; the beloved according to his human nature, because he is the fairest and most lovable of the children of men; the beloved with regard to God, the beloved with regard to creatures capable of love: *Dilectus, dilectus.* But he does not keep this name so much to himself as not to share it with his bride also: "I adjure you," he says to the daughters of Jerusalem, "not to awaken the beloved till she please." And note that according to the Hebrew there is not *Dilectam*, the beloved, but *Dilectionem, amorem, delicias*, love itself, affection itself and delight itself, to make us understand that Mary was the love and the delight of God, and that, as it is impossible for love to be without love, so it could not be that Mary should be a single moment without being loved. Finally the Bridegroom calls her *Carissimam in deliciis*, that is, the one whom he loves above all others and in whom he takes his greatest pleasure. The holy Fathers speak of her in the same way. Saint Bonaventure, in his book entitled *De Speculo*, says excellently: *Quid mirum si prae omnibus diligat quae prae omnibus est dilecta!* "What wonder that this admirable Virgin should love God more than all others, she who was loved above all others!" And Saint Anselm calls God's love for her immense, ineffable,

unfathomable.

But why has the Lord had so much love for her? He gives the reason himself in the same canticle, by another gradation no less remarkable than the first. “Thou art fair,” he says to her first, “thou art comely, thou art lovely”: *Pulchra es, speciosa, formosa.* And do not doubt that he speaks of both kinds of beauty, of the body and of the soul. Mary possessed them both. She was beautiful with bodily beauty: although she had been conceived in the way of ordinary generation, the Holy Spirit had nevertheless applied himself to forming for her a perfectly beautiful body. That is why she is compared to what is most beautiful in the bodily world: to the dawn at its rising, to the moon at its full and to the sun at its noon. Saint Denis, in one of his letters, assures us that “she was so beautiful that, but for the faith which teaches us that there is only one God, she would have been taken for a divinity.” And Saint Ambrose adds that “her charms were so pure that they inspired chastity in those who looked at her.” She was beautiful with spiritual beauty, for beauty is born of order and variety. Now in Mary’s soul everything was wonderfully well ordered: the mind was subject to God, sense was subject to the mind, and the flesh obeyed both with a just dependence; the will did not run ahead of judgement, appetite did not run ahead of reason, and the passions rose only so far as wise discretion allowed them to appear. There was also in it an excellent variety of every kind of virtue: the whiteness of a more than angelic purity, the crimson of an all-burning charity and the shadows of a very deep humility.

But the Bridegroom is not content to say that she is beautiful; he adds “that she is all beautiful”: *Tota pulchra es.* Beautiful at every age and in every state of her life, beautiful in all the faculties of her body and her soul, beautiful in all her thoughts, desires and actions; beautiful in her understanding by the gifts of wisdom and counsel, beautiful in her will by her inviolable attachment to God, beautiful in her appetite by the virtues of fortitude and temperance; beautiful in everything, and universally beautiful. Finally, he says that “her beauty surpasses all other beauties, and that she is the most pleasing of all women”: *Pulcherrima inter mulieres.* A learned author expresses this in these words: *Omnium pulchritudinum pulcherrima pulchritudo*, “the fairest and most charming beauty of all beauties.” This, then, is what made her, from the moment of her birth, the object of God’s love; and it is also what should oblige us to pay her our humble respects at this moment and to offer her our heart and our love, so that, loving her, we may be loved by her, according to what she says in chapter viii of Proverbs: *Ego diligentes me diligo*, “I love those who love me.”

If the Blessed Virgin was not born guilty and an object of God’s hatred, neither was she born wretched and subject to the punishment of justice. It is true that, according to the word of her Bridegroom, “she was a lily among thorns,” that is, she spent her whole life amid the thorns of every kind of pain and affliction. But that does not mean she can be called “wretched.” The thorns that surrounded her were not the effects of the curse God gave Adam when he told him that the earth would be cursed in his work and would bring forth thorns and thistles for him; they were, on the contrary, the effects of a gentle and loving providence, which willed that Mary should suffer in order to merit greater rewards, to co-operate more nobly in our Redemption and to give us finer examples of virtue. Let us say rather that Mary was born blessed, the precious vessel into which the divine Goodness poured its greatest treasures. Indeed, the love of God cannot be barren, and the theologians themselves, considering its property, say that although by its nature it is effective, it nevertheless reaches the creature only in an efficient way, by doing it good; since, then, it is certain that God had an immense love for Mary at the moment of her birth, let us not doubt that from then on he filled her with an infinity of good things. I find that he communicated three fullnesses to her: a fullness of grace and holiness in the essence of her soul; a fullness of light and wisdom in her understanding; and a fullness of virtue and perfection in her will. He communicated to her a fullness of grace and holiness: the angel Gabriel later told her that she was full of grace, *Gratia plena*; Saint Epiphanius, in a book he wrote in her praise, and Saint Anselm, in a treatise on her excellences, declare that her grace was immense, ineffable and worthy of the astonishment of all ages. This must not be limited to the time of her death, of her childbearing and of her annunciation; it can and should be extended to every moment of her life, for as she was destined to be the

Queen of the Saints and the Mother of the Holy of Holies, she had to be prepared early by a surpassing grace for so lofty a dignity. And this too is why the same Fathers and many others call her a spiritual Sea, an Abyss and an Ocean of grace, a Treasury of holiness and a great Miracle, and even the greatest miracle in the order of creatures that ever came from the hands of the Almighty. God also communicated to her a fullness of light and wisdom; for it is she who says in the book of Proverbs, chapter viii, according to the application the Church makes of it to her in her offices: “I am wisdom, and counsel is my dwelling: I am present at the most studied deliberations, and the most judicious advice comes from me.” So Denis the Carthusian recognizes in her a most luminous and abundant infused wisdom; Saint Bernardine of Siena declares that even in her first sanctification she received a knowledge so clear and penetrating that she knew creatures and the Creator perfectly; and the same Saint Anselm prefers her light on our divine mysteries to that of all the Apostles, and says that it surpasses theirs in merit and clearness beyond all comparison. Finally, God communicated to her a fullness of virtue, for she possessed all the virtues at the moment she came into the world, and as she already had the light of reason and the use of her intellectual faculties, she made the most eminent and heroic acts of them. Thus she adored God in the unity of his essence and in the trinity of his persons; she abased herself before his majesty to the very centre of her own nothingness; she consecrated herself to his service with the whole extent of her soul; she thanked him with all her strength for the graces she had received from his goodness; she abandoned herself to his guidance in all the dispositions of his providence; she offered herself to every kind of pain and suffering for his glory; finally, she rose towards him by the great efforts of her love. She was only a child of a day, of an hour, of a moment; but her supernatural acts were already holier and more perfect than those of all the Cherubim and Seraphim, and she alone had more virtues than all other creatures together.

The Blessed Virgin was not born frail and subject to sin, but in a happy incapacity of committing it. Not that she was impeccable by nature, like Jesus Christ, her only Son, who, being God, could not sin; nor that she was so by the glorious vision, which was granted her in this life for a few moments at most; but she was so, on the one hand, by the perfect integrity of her nature, which had nothing to turn her from good or incline her to evil; on the other, by the strength and eminence of her grace, which filled and possessed her so that she acted only by its movements; by the abundance and efficacy of the divine helps, which carried her in all things to what was most perfect; and by a gentle guidance of divine Providence, which kept far from her whatever could tempt her to sin. This impeccability is no doubt far below that of the Son of God; but it suffices to exclude every kind of sin and fault, and in fact the Council of Trent, session vi, chapter ii, teaches that the Blessed Virgin never committed any, and that she kept her innocence spotless and without any fault to the end of her life.

So the reasons the Saints had for cursing the day of their birth are in no way found in Mary; on the contrary, she has every reason to bless the moment at which she appeared on earth. For the same reason we too must make a great feast of it and rejoice with her at the graces with which she was filled at that moment, all the more because she received them no less for us than for herself, and the most precious gifts conferred on her were conferred in view of the great work of our Redemption.

For more details on this illustrious nativity of the Blessed Virgin we refer the reader to her life, in volume xvi of this work, and to the discourse on her Conception. We shall say only a word or two of it. Having been conceived in the womb of Saint Anne after a long barrenness, and having remained nine months within her like other children, she was born on 8 September in the hill country of Judea, in the house by the sheepfolds of Saint Joachim, her father. Shortly afterwards the prescribed sacrifice for the remission of original sin was offered for her, although she had not contracted it, and she was given the name of Mary; at the end of eighty days Saint Anne, in obedience to the law, carried her to the temple to perform the ceremonies of her purification; but she did not leave her there that time, waiting to dedicate her to the holy altars until she should be able to walk by herself. God, for his part, gave her a guardian angel, who, according to Ildefonsus

and Blessed Peter Damian, was Saint Gabriel; for, as the former says in the sermon on the Assumption: *Tota Virginis causa ei a Domino commissa praedicatur:* "Everything concerning the Blessed Virgin was entrusted to Saint Gabriel by the wise providence of God."

The Church has not always celebrated this feast. No trace of it is found in French authors before Blessed Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, who lived at the beginning of the eleventh century; it is mentioned neither in the Council of Mainz, held in the year 813, nor in the Capitularies of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, nor in the ecclesiastical books of that time. But the same Fulbert, in the first volume on the Nativity, Saint Bernard in his Epistle clxxiv, and Peter, abbot of Celle, in the sixth book, Epistle xxiii, mention it as a feast celebrated with great solemnity. For other countries, too, it is not certain when its solemn celebration began. Saint Augustine, in sermons xx and xxi *on the Saints*, shows clearly enough that it was unknown to him and was not yet celebrated in the Church in his time, since he says that no other birth was celebrated than that of Our Lord and that of Saint John the Baptist; this was because Holy Scripture speaks only of these two, and the first feasts of the Church were established to honour the mysteries recorded in the books of the New Testament. It is true that in the office of this day a sermon of the same Saint Augustine is read, which is the eighteenth *on the Saints*, with these words: *Gaudeat terra nostra tantae Virginis illustrata natali:* "Let our land rejoice, ennobled by the birth of so great a Virgin." But we must note that Saint Augustine did not compose this sermon for the day of Our Lady's Nativity but for that of her Annunciation, and that he did not write *natali*, birth, but *solemni*, solemnity. So it is the Church which, by a devout adaptation, changed the word *solemni* to *natali*. Some authors have written that the institution should be attributed to Pope Innocent IV, who lived in the year 1250: he is said to have been led to do so by a vow the cardinals had made before his election for the happy outcome of so great an affair, when the Church had been troubled for nearly two years by a most dangerous schism. But there is no likelihood that this feast, already so celebrated in France, as appears from what we have just said of Fulbert of Chartres, Saint Bernard and Peter of Celle, should not yet have been received and authorized in Italy. What Innocent IV did, then, was to give it an octave, as Pope Gregory XI later gave it a vigil.

The Roman *Ordo* and the Sacramentary of Saint Gregory, which must be assigned to the sixth and seventh centuries, mention it; but it is not certain that these are not additions made in the course of time, as have often been made to the rituals and the books of the divine office. We also have a notable mention of it in the book *On Virginity* of Saint Ildefonsus, who lived in 667; but many believe that this book is not his; at least it is not among his undoubted works. Thus we cannot fix precisely the time and the century in which this feast began. Baronius thinks it was shortly after the Council of Ephesus: once the heresy of Nestorius had been condemned and the glorious Virgin authoritatively recognized and declared Mother of God, devotion to her grew wonderfully in the hearts of the faithful; but it was not universal at first, and it is likely that, having been instituted in some particular church, it spread to the others only in the course of time. Father Thomassin, however, in his book on the institution of feasts, believes that it began in France and spread from there to Spain, Italy and the other nations; as he dates its beginning in France only a little before Fulbert of Chartres, he does not make it any older in all the other countries of Christendom.

According to Du Saussay, in his Martyrology, Saint Maurilius, bishop of Angers, who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries, was its author. And indeed this feast was formerly called *l'Angevine*; but it would have had to remain confined to his diocese for a long time without being received elsewhere, since, as we have said, the calendars of the divine office of the ninth century make no mention of it. However that may be, we do not doubt that the faithful have always rejoiced at the birth of this divine Dawn, who appeared on this earth only to announce to us the rising of the Sun of Justice. Let us show her our love too by sharing in this joy; but as she asks of us our sanctification rather than our applause, let us imitate her readiness in consecrating herself to the service of her God. She did not wait to do so until she was advanced in age; she did it from her birth, she did it even from the moment of her conception. Let us not wait either until the time of our death to do it,

but let us do it from now on. Our days and our years are not too long to render to God what we owe him. He has loved us from all eternity; he has done us good from the moment of our formation in our mothers' wombs, and he never ceases to do so: let us respond to so many graces by an inviolable attachment to his service, and let nothing be able to turn us from it.

For this notice we have kept the account of Father Giry.

Saint Adrian, Martyr at Nicomedia

306. — Pope: Saint Marcellus. — Roman Emperor: Galerius.

> *The virtue of fortitude consists in defying all fear in danger, in dreading nothing but shame and baseness, and in bearing adversity with courage.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

Adrian, an officer of the imperial armies, was one of those whom the emperor Maximian Galerius charged with persecuting the Christians. He was about twenty-eight years old, and had been married for only thirteen months to Natalia, a young woman of excellent beauty and of a nobility equal to his own. She was a Christian, but still hid her religion so as not to expose herself to the tyrant's fury. Adrian admired the joy the martyrs showed amid their tortures, their contempt for their bodies and their lives, the praises they gave to Jesus Christ, the descriptions they gave of the glory of the Saints in heaven and of the pains of the damned in hell, and their invincible courage, which neither fine promises nor the most terrible threats could bend. All this seemed to him so extraordinary that, unable to understand the reasons for it, he resolved to ask the martyrs themselves to explain it. So he asked them the motives that made them so steadfast and fearless amid their torments. The holy confessors told him such moving things that the grace accompanying their words opened his eyes completely; he at once called the clerks who had orders to write down all that took place, and said to them: "Write down my confession too, and put me among the number of these noble Martyrs; for I am a Christian like them, and I wish to die with them for the love of Jesus Christ." The clerks ran at once to the palace to tell Maximian that Adrian had had himself entered in their registers. "Let us see what he says," said the emperor; "no doubt it is some accusation he is making against the Christians." "Far from it," the officers replied; "he accuses no one but himself, and declares openly that he professes the Christian religion."

The tyrant, greatly surprised at this news, sent for him that very hour, and as soon as he saw him said to him: "What madness is this that I am told of you, Adrian? Do you want to perish miserably like these mad Christians? Ask my pardon for your fault, and admit before all who are here that you did not know what you were doing when you ordered the officers to write your name among those of the enemies of our gods." "I have committed no madness, O emperor," answered Adrian; "rather, I have come back from the madness in which I was, of worshipping idols that deserve only our loathing. It is not of you but of the true God that I must ask pardon for all the crimes I have committed against him and for the idolatry in which I have lived until now." Maximian could hear this noble confession only with the utmost impatience. He sent him loaded with chains to prison, there to await his orders in the company of the other martyrs.

A servant of the new Confessor hurried to tell Natalia of his imprisonment. At first she almost died of grief; but when she learned that he had been arrested not for doing anything against the prince's service but for confessing Jesus Christ, her grief changed into a joy beyond words. She ran at once to his cell and threw herself at his feet, which she now looked on only as the feet of a martyr. "How happy you are, Adrian," she said to him, kissing the chains with which he was bound; "you have found today a treasure your parents did not leave you; in your youth you possess immense riches that you might not have acquired in your old age. You have Jesus Christ in your heart; do not lose him through cowardice: it is he who will reward you for all the pains you endure here for the glory of his name. You have already triumphed over hell by your confession; nothing remains but to receive the crown prepared for you in heaven. Do not fear the tortures of

men; they will last only a moment and will be rewarded with eternal delights. Stand firm on the cross you have embraced; let neither the sight of the honours you might hope for in this world, nor the love of your relatives who will plead with you, nor the desire for the goods of the earth that will tempt you, be able to separate you from Jesus Christ. All these things are perishable, and you would enjoy them only during your life, which will pass in an instant. Ah! would you, for advantages so fragile, lose a good that will never end and of which no one can rob you? Do not listen to the flattery of your friends, who will do all they can to steal your faith from you; loathe their empty caresses and despise the pernicious advice they will want to give you. Look at these noble confessors beside you; imitate their patience, and have no less firmness than they to bear the tyrant's fury and the violence of the tortures to which you are about to be exposed."

Then, prostrating herself at the feet of the other martyrs, she said to them as she kissed their fetters: "I implore you, servants of God, to confirm in the faith this believer whom you have won for Jesus Christ. Exhort him to perseverance; remind him often of the glory that will follow his martyrdom. He is the fruit of your torments; you are his fathers according to the spirit; do not let his relatives according to the flesh snatch him from you. Stir up his courage by your devout exhortations and make him invincible like yourselves, so that he may triumph over all the enemies of his salvation." When she took leave of this illustrious company, she made Adrian promise to let her know of everything that happened, so that she could be present at all the tortures they would make him undergo. A few days later they were informed that they were shortly to appear before the emperor's tribunal. Adrian wished to tell his wife of it, according to his promise; and, having won over the gaoler, he obtained his permission, on his word, to go home for a little while. As he was on his way, one of his friends, recognizing him, ran on ahead and, thinking he was bringing Natalia very welcome news, went quickly to tell her that her husband was free and that she would soon have the consolation of seeing him at home. And indeed she caught sight of him almost at the same moment; but, imagining that he had obtained his release only at the cost of his faith, she shut the door on him, saying: "Go away from here, traitor that you are! Is this how you have deceived the true God, abandoning him after confessing him? I will not listen to a man who has used his tongue to deny his Creator. What faith shall I put in words that have served to renounce Jesus Christ? Ah, wretched Adrian, why did you not finish the good work you had begun so nobly? Who has broken the sacred bonds that held you fast to the other holy martyrs? Who has seduced you to part you from the company of the angels? You have fled before you have even fought; you have laid down your arms before seeing the enemy. Where are the wounds you have received? I see no mark on your body; it is neither pierced with arrows nor bruised by torture. I am not surprised at your cowardice: your parents brought you up in idolatry and by their abominations made you unworthy to be a victim offered to Jesus Christ. How unfortunate I am to have married an idolater! Alas! a few hours ago I thought I was the wife of a martyr; but now I see myself the wife of a traitor to his God, an apostate and a blasphemer. My joy has been short, and my grief at your treachery will last long."

After these reproaches, which delighted him and strengthened his faith, Adrian explained to her how he had come out of prison for a moment and told her the news of his approaching martyrdom. Natalia, beside herself with joy, went with him to his prison. On the way he asked her what she would do with the great wealth he was leaving her. "Banish these earthly thoughts from your mind," she said with her usual zeal; "think only of the grace you are about to receive. The riches you leave in my hands are only short-lived amusements; soon you will possess eternal ones that men will not be able to take from you. Be unshakable in your resolve, and let the violence of the tortures not make you lose the fear of the judgements of God, who will be the witness and the judge of all you do."

As soon as they reached the prison, Natalia prostrated herself at the feet of the holy martyrs, kissed their chains, and cleaned and dressed their wounds; then, having the finest linen of her house brought, she bound them up with admirable devotion. Several ladies of noble rank imitated her in these devout offices, and she continued them for the seven days she stayed with these noble confessors, awaiting her husband's

martyrdom. At the end of that time the emperor summoned them before his tribunal, where they were led all bound with the same chain. But their weakness was so great because of their earlier tortures that they could hardly stand, and they had to be carried. Adrian followed them with his hands tied behind his back. The tyrant did not see fit to put them to the question, because they were no longer able to bear it on account of the wounds they had already received; they were more like hideous skeletons than men made of flesh and bone. He had them kept back, so that their torments might be prolonged with their lives. As for Adrian, who was young and had as yet suffered nothing but prison, he had him beaten with heavy blows of a cudgel; the executioners carried out this order with such cruelty that the martyr's entrails could be seen.

During this torture all the other martyrs were at prayer, asking God for the grace of perseverance for Adrian, whose birth, youth and delicacy still made them fear that he might give way; and the virtuous Natalia for her part encouraged him unceasingly to stand firm in the faith. All the martyrs were then taken back to prison. Natalia, unable to contain the joy that filled her heart because her husband came forth glorious from the place of torture, laid her hand on his head and said to him: "How happy you are, Adrian, to have been found worthy to suffer in the company of the Saints! What a satisfaction for you to have shed your blood in honour of Jesus Christ, for the blood he shed for you! Be at peace now, awaiting the crown he has prepared for you." Then, wiping away the blood still flowing from his wounds, she devoutly applied it to herself. The other confessors also praised Adrian's constancy and gave him the kiss of peace. "I am the fruit of your sufferings," he said to them, "and it is you who have begotten me in the faith; go on praying for me, that the devil may not triumph over my weakness, which you see is already extreme for the little I have suffered." "Trust in God," the holy martyrs answered; "Satan, with all his malice, will be able to do nothing against you; your patience will force him to withdraw into hell. We had some fear while you were only a man, but now that you are raised above nature we no longer fear anything from your enemies; so fear no more; Jesus Christ will make your victory sure." During these divine conversations the deaconesses and other devout women were dressing their wounds. But their charity was soon thwarted by the cruelty of the tyrant, who had them forbidden entry to the prison. Natalia, the most zealous of them all, who could not bring herself to abandon her husband and so many illustrious servants of God, cut off her hair and put on men's clothing so as to be able to visit them and give them the help they needed. As soon as the other ladies learned of it they followed her example; and so the martyrs, in spite of the emperor's harshness, were perfectly cared for in their sufferings. But this devout device was not needed for long; for Maximian, fearing that they might die in their chains without having felt the utmost efforts of his rage, condemned them to have their legs and arms cut off. Adrian and his companions expired in the agonies of this torture on 4 March, about the year 306.

He is represented with his hands and feet cut off, and this torture has caused him to be chosen as patron of executioners. Sometimes a lion is placed beside him to symbolize magnanimity. Gaolers too having taken him for their patron, he is here and there represented with keys in allusion to this patronage. In the church of Cany, arrondissement of Yvetot (Seine-Inférieure), there is a statue of Saint Adrian carved in the seventeenth century and dressed as a Roman soldier.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The faithful took up the holy bodies and had them carried to Byzantium, now Constantinople, to save them from the tyrants' profanations. Later these precious relics were brought back to Rome: this is why the Greeks mark the memory of Saint Adrian on 26 August, the day of the first translation, and, for the same reason, the Roman Church mentions him in its breviary and martyrology on 8 September, because it was on that day that his body was translated from

Constantinople to Rome. They were later carried to Flanders. In the year 1110 a large part of his relics, which had been brought to Raulincourt, were translated to Grammont, a town of Flanders, to the abbey of

Saint-Pierre, which took the name of Saint-Adrien, as the learned Aubert Le Mire notes in his collection of the Saints of Flanders. He is commonly invoked, with Saint Sebastian and Saint Roch, against contagious diseases. In various places in Christendom, particularly in France, many churches and chapels are dedicated in his honour. Christian princes still implore his help, so as to have him as protector in their armies. We have seen a fine example of this in the life of Saint Henry, emperor: he wished to use the sword of this holy Martyr, which is kept in the town of Walbeck in Germany, when he was obliged to fight the enemies of religion and of his State.

Acta Sanctorum; les Églises de l'arrondissement d'Yvetot, *by the abbé Cochet.*

Our Lady of Bon-Espoir, at Dijon

The church of Notre-Dame at Dijon is, in the eyes of the artist, a masterpiece of architecture. Nothing is more elegant than its porch, once peopled with statues, adorned with emblems and inscriptions, painted and gilded; nothing bolder than its airy vault, "which holds itself up and seems to disdain any other support." One would say it hung from the hands of angels. Nothing is more graceful than its slender colonnettes, which cut out the galleries of the choir, the nave and the portal, or soar in clusters to the vault and there curve into delicate ribs. It is a jewel. In the eyes of the Christian it is still more: it is a monument to the piety of our fathers and their devotion to the miraculous image of the Black Virgin, Our Lady of Bon-Espoir (Good Hope).

This image, venerated from the eleventh century under the title of Our Lady of Bon-Apport in the chapel of Notre-Dame du Marché (*de Foro*), outside the walls of Dijon, drew so many pilgrims that some canons of Saint-Étienne did a pious work by building a hospice to lodge them. In 1252, whether because that sanctuary had become too small to hold the crowd or because it threatened to fall, the people of Dijon raised the present church of Notre-Dame to replace it and arranged in it, to receive the holy image, a vaulted chapel without windows, twenty feet high and crowned with a circular gallery. This chapel at once became the most frequented: the people followed their Queen there, crowded at the foot of her throne of graces and covered the walls with ex-votos, tokens growing more numerous every day of their gratitude and of Mary's goodness. There were lamps of silver gilt and silver burning night and day; torches, symbols of ardent devotion; pictures recalling graces obtained; hands and arms of silver or wax; crutches without number… From the columns that held up the vault, as from the tower of David, hung shields, escutcheons, swords, arms of every kind, and standards consecrated to the Blessed Virgin by heroes and dukes of Burgundy, like trophies raised to her by gratitude.

One of the pictures represented Philippe Pot, lord of La Roche-Nolay, grand chamberlain of Burgundy and knight of the Golden Fleece, kneeling before Our Lady of Bon-Espoir with his motto *Tant L vaut*, in memory of a wonderful grace he believed he owed to Our Lady. Carried away by zeal for religion and the love of glory so natural to noble hearts, he had gone to the help of Constantinople, besieged by the Turks. Betrayed by fortune, he fell into the hands of the janissaries, who led him to Mehmed II and told him how valiantly this gentleman had fought. The sultan admired his noble bearing, his courage and his pride, and tried to draw him into his service. Philippe, like a true Christian knight, resisted promises and threats, kindness and ill-treatment. Mehmed, vexed, said to him: "If you can overcome the enemy I set against you, I will send you back to your own country." Philippe, overjoyed, invokes Our Lady of Bon-Espoir, whose image he carries on him, and awaits the combat. When the day comes he is led into a sort of circus in the presence of the sultan surrounded by his court; he is given a scimitar, and a furious, starving lion is let loose against him. At the sight of this adversary the Christian hero raises his eyes to heaven, invokes the Blessed Virgin and cries: *Tant L vaut.* The lion roars and springs; but with one stroke of the scimitar he cuts off its two forefeet, with another takes off its tongue, and pierces it to the heart, repeating his cry of victory: *Tant L vaut!*… Mehmed kept his word and sent him back free.

Another picture, a tapestry that now adorns the Hôtel de Ville, bears witness to the protection with which the Blessed Virgin surrounded Dijon in 1513. Besieged by forty thousand Swiss, the city had sent a cry of distress to Louis XII; but the king, obliged to defend his northern frontiers against the emperor and the king of England and to watch over Guyenne, threatened by the Spaniards, could send only six thousand men under the command of La Trémoille. The place was not in a state of defence and, despite prodigies of valour, was about to fall. La Trémoille asked for terms; the conditions offered him were unacceptable… In this distress the whole population runs to Notre-Dame, takes down the miraculous image and carries it in procession round the ramparts; and the next day, 13 September, the day of the general assault, peace is concluded and the siege is raised! In the enthusiasm of their gratitude all the corporations of the city asked that a solemn procession of thanksgiving be held that very day and every year on the same day. This event led to the re-establishment of the confraternity founded in honour of Our Lady. Restored to the piety of the faithful after the Revolution, it flourishes today as fervently as at its beginning. It also gave a wonderful impetus to the worship of Mary throughout the duchy. In 1603 the inhabitants of Flavigny, distressed by a drought that was devouring their crops and vines, came in procession to Our Lady of Bon-Espoir, and their harvests were saved. A few days later came those of Saint-Seine, led by their pastor and the monks of the abbey. In 1693 the province was threatened by the opposite scourge: torrential rains were drowning the fields and preventing the seed from coming up; the whole countryside was in despair, the domestic animals were dying and famine threatened. On 27 May the miraculous image of the Black Virgin was taken down and carried in procession to the church of the Ursulines: as in the days after the Flood, the rainbow at once appeared, and the sun came to ripen the corn and the grapes. A solemn Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated on 4 June in all the parishes of the city, and the novena was closed by a general procession whose magnificence and fervour cannot be described.

The devotion and gratitude of our forefathers towards “their holy patroness and mistress” showed themselves continually in rich offerings and pious foundations. Philip the Bold, after the battle of Roosebeke, gave the famous clock of the Fleming Jacques Marc. Philip the Good founded in 1402 the singing of the *Salve Regina*: every day at nightfall the bells of Notre-Dame called the faithful; the priests gathered round the altar of the Black Virgin and sang the sacred antiphon, after the example of the sons of Saint Bernard and Saint Dominic. The sovereign pontiff Pius II, anxious to encourage this devotion, granted fifty days’ indulgence to all who attended the singing of the *Salve* on ordinary days, and a hundred and fifty on the principal feasts of the year.

The lords, the priests, the faithful, the guilds and the religious followed the example of their noble dukes, and there was a holy rivalry among all the orders of the city. Now Our Lady received a silver statue weighing a hundred and twenty marks, now silver crosses supported by cherubim and adorned with precious stones, lamps, crowns, hearts enamelled with gold, bas-reliefs or paintings. One of the most popular foundations was that of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, sung every Saturday after Benediction.

At the end of the sixteenth century it was thought that the chapel of Our Lady, where the darkness was deliberately kept to aid recollection, had a bad effect and spoiled the harmonious unity of the church, and it was pulled down; it was then that the monuments of piety which the centuries had gathered and respected were scattered here and there.

During the Revolution the portal was hammered with infernal skill and its statues broken. If the Black Virgin escaped sacrilegious hands, it was thanks to the stratagem of a devout woman, who asked for it in order, she said, to keep herself warm with it during the winter. When worship was restored she gave it back to the church. Our Lady of Bon-Espoir, set again on her throne in the transept of her church, preserved Dijon from the invasion of cholera in 1832 and 1854; and every day, surrounded by a fervent court, she blesses the children as she blesses the mothers, smiles on the plans of youth, calms troubled hearts, and shows all the immortal crown due to perseverance.

Taken from the Saints de Dijon *by the abbé Duplus.*

Our Lady of Valsuzenay, in the Diocese of Troyes

On the edge of the ancient forest of the *Der* lies a pleasant valley called the *Valsuzenay*. This Celtic name (*Val-sur-Zeneth*, that is, valley of the spring of the Priestess or of the Virgin), only gallicized in the last century, seems to show that before Christianity was established this place was defiled by druidic worship, and that a Gaulish priestess or virgin dwelt there.

Today the august Queen of this place, She whose name fills the whole countryside with the fame of her power and her benefits, is the Mother of God herself, the Virgin Mary; and for several centuries a humble building has sheltered her miraculous image.

In the course of the year many of the faithful are often seen, led by their venerable pastors, going to offer Our Lady of Valsuzenay their homage and their prayers. Devout pilgrims are often seen carrying home the holy water of the nearby spring, or having a blessed candle burned before Mary's altar, a symbol of their ardent faith and lively confidence. But it is above all on 8

September that the crowd is great. On that day three or four thousand people enter the old chapel, kneel devoutly before the miraculous image and go to drink at the spring.

The origin of this pilgrimage goes back several centuries. Here is the tradition preserved in the district, as it is recorded in a *Notice historique sur Vendeuvre et ses environs*:

"The old high road from Bar-sur-Seine to Brienne by way of Vendeuvre passed near the place where the chapel still seen today was built. A poor man got his cart and horses stuck in the mire there. He had recourse to the Virgin Mary. At that very instant an image of the Mother of God appeared to him. Helped in his misfortune, he built a chapel over the clear spring that took the place of the pit in which he had nearly perished, and placed the miraculous image in it. The place became the object of great devotion, and a village grew up around the modest chapel."

The village disappeared in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, and the chapel was left isolated; but the people have not forgotten the way to it. The divine protectress of the district has always known how to draw them to her altar by the signal benefits she has generously dispensed. Oral tradition has preserved the memory of certain marvellous events that have helped to maintain the fame which the Virgin of Valsuzenay still enjoys today. A devout mother of a family at Vendeuvre gave birth to a child who died without baptism. Great was her desolation at this sad news: her beloved son would never see God! But her faith, and above all her confidence in Mary, made her find a remedy for her grief. She insisted that the innocent creature be laid at the feet of the Madonna of Valsuzenay; she raised her heart and her prayer to the Comforter of the Afflicted, and suddenly the child gave signs of life, could be baptized, and at once flew away to the company of the angels.

Since then mothers have had recourse to Our Lady of Valsuzenay in similar circumstances, and it is affirmed that the mercy of the Mother of God has several times shown itself by wonders. Even today children are carried to the chapel from their birth, and novenas are made there to place them under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin.

The holy image, the object of the veneration of the inhabitants of Valsuzenay, Vendeuvre and the neighbourhood, is of wood; it represents the divine Mother standing and holding the Child God in her arms. Paintings heightened with gold, in the medieval taste, decorate the little statue, about forty centimetres high, to which the people are very attached. They love to cover it with ornaments, and on feast days royal crowns are placed on the head of the Child and on that of his Mother.

A plenary indulgence has just been granted to those who visit the chapel of Valsuzenay on the days of the Conception, the Nativity, the Annunciation, the Purification and the Assumption, and a partial indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to those who visit it once a month (3 February 1865).

Taken from the Vie des Saints de Troyes *by the abbé Defer.*

Our Lady of Vertus, near Périgueux

The city of Périgueux has on its outskirts a pilgrimage to Our Lady whose date is unknown, which has long been frequented not only by the inhabitants of the city but also by the people of the neighbourhood. People have come to it from very distant parts, and if Our Lady of Vertus has not achieved the renown of other well-known sanctuaries, she nevertheless has a glory of her own, and within the narrow circle in which she has been placed she has very often justified her name by many benefits and signal wonders.

When, leaving Périgueux, one takes the road to Bergerac, one must, a short distance out, cross the steep hill of La Rampinsole, and one comes into a little valley: it is here, turning a little to the left, that the sanctuary of the pilgrimage of Our Lady of Vertus is found. The church seen today is not very old; it has replaced an original chapel.

Unfortunately we do not know when this pilgrimage began, and we know only through oral tradition the event that gave rise to it. Here is the story. Let no one be astonished at the simplicity of the things we have to relate; most pilgrimages, even the most illustrious, began in no other way.

A poor shepherd girl, leading her master's sheep in the most fertile part of this valley, noticed that they preferred to climb up beside a thick clump of brushwood that did not seem likely to give them the food they needed; in spite of her efforts they kept coming back to this place they had chosen. Tired of trying, she let them go freely where they would, the more so as the animals were not wasting away at all; on the contrary, they looked very fine. The owner of the flock had several times blamed the girl for not taking the sheep to better pasture and, in spite of her protests, kept on reproaching her. At last he sent her away from his house, saying he wanted a shepherdess more obedient to his orders. She was therefore replaced by another girl, who faithfully carried out the orders she received. But what happened? The sheep, which had been fine and fat, soon became thin and puny. The astonished master did not know how to explain what he saw; he thought he could do no better than recall his first shepherdess and entrust his flock to her entirely, without any remark. She came back and, as before, led the sheep where they wished to go, without constraining them in anything; they went back to the thick clump of brambles and bushes, and in a few days they were fat and fine as at first.

Here evidently was something astonishing and marvellous. People wanted to know what it meant; the place was examined, the brambles were cleared away to look more closely at the grass, and it was then that a little statue of Our Lady was discovered. This stone statue represented the Blessed Virgin seated, holding on her knees the lifeless body of her Son. It is the one we still possess. The news soon spread through the district; the whole neighbourhood came to look at this image, which was recognized as that of the Mother of God, and it was at once carried in triumph to the nearby church of Sanilhac.

The miraculous finding of Mary's statue was not the only wonder that took place on this occasion. Tradition tells us that the statue, carried triumphantly into the church of Sanilhac, did not stay there long; for the next day the people, eager to see the precious image again, came back in crowds to the holy place, but the image had disappeared and returned to its first place in the middle of the bush that had hidden it. It was carried back again to the parish church, but as the same thing kept happening, it was easy to understand that it was Mary's will to be honoured elsewhere than in the church where the people usually gathered. Yet they tried another expedient and carried the statue to the church of the neighbouring parish of Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens, which lay on the opposite side from Sanilhac, towards Périgueux. The miraculous image went back to the spot where it had been found; once again the bush miraculously regained its treasure, and it was shown to the eyes of all that the Mother of God wished to be honoured in this place which she had chosen herself. They hastened to build there a little chapel to keep the divine image, so that the people might prostrate themselves and pay their homage where Mary had stopped: *Adorabimus in loco ubi steterunt pedes ejus.*

This first chapel no longer exists; for two centuries it has been replaced by a large church, and while the parishes of Sanilhac and Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens have disappeared, Our Lady of Vertus remains alone, having inherited the parochial title it had not had before. The two old churches are in ruins; scarcely a trace of them can be found; the new one succeeds them gloriously.

We must now ask to what period the events we have related probably go back. Unfortunately we are reduced to conjecture. The first chapel was rebuilt and enlarged in the middle of the seventeenth century; we know this not only from the appearance of the building before our eyes but from a written tradition that is beyond question. If this rebuilding was made necessary by the bad state and near ruin of the first chapel, we should have to conclude that this pilgrimage is very old and goes back at least to the Romanesque period; for the churches of that time were beginning to deteriorate and grow old two centuries ago, and they are today almost the oldest buildings we possess.

The statue of Our Lady of Vertus bears the marks of great antiquity: its severe character, its somewhat stiff outlines and its plain, ungraceful garments carry it back to the period before Gothic art, and a few more centuries may be attributed to it without difficulty. We offer only conjectures. In all probability the first chapel must have stood for three or four centuries; we should thus come to the thirteenth century and perhaps the twelfth. Nothing authorizes us to think that more than two buildings were erected on this spot.

So for six or seven centuries Our Lady of Vertus has been honoured among the people of Périgord. Many generations have come to kneel before Mary's miraculous image; they have come there led by fear, repentance or hope, and this little spot, chosen among so many others, has been the meeting place of the whole district. These devout souls came to invoke the Mother of God and were happy to pour out before her their prayers with their tears.

Little children have been the special objects of the favours of Our Lady of Vertus. When they are ill they are consecrated to Mary before her altar, and the Gospel of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin is read over them. The parents place them on the altar itself; there they dress them in new clothes and leave the old ones behind, as a sure token that the illness will have gone. Rickety children are brought there by preference, and those who are not growing well or who suddenly waste away. How many afflicted mothers have gone home happy at having invoked Mary here, and have seen their prayers answered!

The pilgrims of Our Lady of Vertus show their devotion chiefly by having candles burned before Mary's statue. This wax consumed by the flame is an image of the Christian heart, which also burns and is consumed with love. At the September feasts the church is often quite full of these candles; the faithful hold them in their hands, put them on candlesticks or set them on the flagstones. Generally these candles are small and often renewed; they are the offering of the poor man, his mite as it were.

The custom has grown up of writing letters, which are placed at the foot of Mary's image. These letters express the graces asked of God through the intercession of his Mother.

Flowers, vases, crowns, hearts of gold and silver and other objects are also offered at Mary's altar; the Madonna is dressed in fine garments given by grateful pilgrims and made by devout hands. When the crowd is great the divine image is taken down from the high place where it stands, its robes of silk and gold are removed, and it is set on a little throne within reach of the faithful, so that they may satisfy their devotion by kissing the body of the Son and the garments of the Mother. Some places can be seen where the stone is worn by the lips of the pilgrims. This token of popular piety is very frequent; each one wants to come in turn to look closely at the sweet image, kiss it and then make an offering. Finally, people never fail to have objects of piety touched to the Madonna, and they keep them carefully.

The pilgrimage of Our Lady of Vertus has never ceased to be frequented; but popular devotion, once so general, had greatly declined, and the number of pilgrims was noticeably falling. The ecclesiastical

authorities were concerned and seriously considered restoring the old traditions. In 1853 Mgr George had a retreat preached at Notre-Dame to renew the people's feeling for this sanctuary, and expressed the wish to restore the pilgrimage; but he did not have time to carry out his plans. Providence reserved this new glory for Mgr Dabert. In 1866 he sent to Notre-Dame the abbé Van Hesteren, a former missionary, and entrusted to his intelligent zeal the task of reviving the ancient pilgrimage of Périgord. This tireless priest set to work at once; he founded an association, established daily prayers in the sanctuary, sought help and, after various works and several journeys, has carried out part of the plans he has in mind. A very fine house, admirably situated, has been built beside the church; it is intended to receive the ladies who come to make their pilgrimage or who wish to make a retreat of a few days there.

Taken from the Pèlerinage de Notre-Dame des Vertus *by the Rev. Fr. Carles of Toulouse.*

Our Lady of Marceille, near Limoux, in the Diocese of Carcassonne

A kilometre from the town of Limoux, on a hill overlooking the right bank of the Aude, stands a country church dedicated to the Mother of God. Nothing is more charming and picturesque than the approaches to this sanctuary. From the Limoux side the pilgrims reach it by a fine road that winds between two lines of shade trees through meadows and gardens bordered with acacias and hawthorns. From the other sides they come through the hilly country of the Corbières, which offers a mixture of wild peaks, smiling slopes and cool valleys.

The origin of the pilgrimage of Marceille is lost in the night of time. According to an ancient tradition it is due to the miraculous intervention of Mary. A ploughman, working his field, suddenly sees his oxen stopped by an obstacle. In vain he urges them on; they put up an invincible resistance. Astonished, he makes the sign of the cross and kneels down. Then he digs the earth, and soon there appears before his eyes a wooden Madonna with a dark face but a winning smile. Happy at his good fortune, he carries the image to his family, who receive it with joy. The next day, what is his surprise! The Virgin had disappeared. Going back to his field, he finds her again at the spot where he had discovered her the day before. In vain he carries her off once more; the following day the wonder is repeated: the statue disappears again to return to the place of its choice. The news of this marvellous event soon spread through the district. The piety of the people saw in it a striking proof of Mary's power and goodness, and soon, to fulfil wishes so plainly shown, they enthusiastically raised a modest sanctuary to the miraculous statue. A picture kept until the Revolution commemorated this legend. It perished then, together with historical documents that proved its foundation.

As far back as one can go into the past, one cannot but be struck by the ardent devotion of the faithful to Our Lady of Marceille; yet since the restoration of worship and in the course of the nineteenth century this devotion has gradually acquired greater energy. In 1835, when cholera invaded Europe and laid waste our capital before dying away at the foot of the Pyrenees, the piety of the faithful showed itself with extraordinary fervour. At the September feasts processions were seen flocking to Marceille from all the neighbouring villages. On the second Sunday as many as thirty thousand people could have been counted. It was a magnificent sight. In the morning the crowd pressed into the church, and in the evening the town was flooded with strangers. In 1855, when the same scourge, having returned to our parts, had ceased its ravages, more than sixty thousand people came during the feasts to implore Mary on behalf of its victims and to thank her for having protected them from its terrible effects.

Of all the pilgrimages of the South, that of Limoux is the most frequented, so much so that the diocesan authorities, wishing to encourage such touching demonstrations of piety, have had to allow the September feast, once limited to the octave, to be extended to the end of the month. It draws not only the ordinary faithful; all the priests of the district, to the far end of the diocese and from the neighbouring dioceses, come to offer the holy mysteries there and add by their presence to the splendour of the ceremonies. Their number allows even the latest pilgrims to hear Mass, since the holy sacrifice is renewed on all the altars without

interruption from the first hour of the day until noon.

Before entering the church one must climb the hill by the sacred way, a paved and very steep path about two hundred metres long, divided by fifty-two bands of dressed stone that serve the pilgrims as stations for their prayers. About halfway up, an unfailing spring works miraculous cures. Above it stretches a terrace, pleasant for those who wish to rest and enjoy a magnificent view. On arrival, a porch deserves attention. It was built in 1488, as the date carved on the stone and the style of its architecture show. From each of its corners clusters of colonnettes spring gracefully up and lose themselves in the keystone of a pointed vault. The door of the church has two leaves. In the middle, on a bracket, stands the life-size stone statue of the Virgin. A man of the people knocked off its head in 1793 and threw it into the well; it has been recovered and put back in place.

As soon as one crosses the threshold, one is struck by the vast proportions of the building, in the form of a Latin cross running from east to west, forty metres long by seventeen wide. Not long ago its walls were covered with pilasters, capitals and cornices that hid the true stone architecture of the end of the fourteenth century. The colonnettes of the nave have been restored and painted as they were formerly; the vault, built in 1783 by Bernard Rippa, an Italian artist, is now decorated; all round it, medallions represent the Litany of the Blessed Virgin by allegories; the carved Stations of the Cross have been given colouring that heightens their effect and harmonizes them with the rest of the church. The pulpit, set in the wall like the lantern of old law courts, has been renewed and embellished with paintings and stained glass. All these works give the whole great elegance.

A most edifying practice, peculiar to this pilgrimage and able to move those who witness it to tears, is the ascent of the slope or sacred way. On 7 September, at about eight in the evening, a multitude of pilgrims of every age and both sexes drag themselves painfully on their knees towards the church, reciting prayers. At the entrance of the way, as a reminder of the road to Calvary, stands a cross at whose foot they come to recollect themselves and arm themselves with the strength needed to make this painful journey. Halfway up they stop at the miraculous spring which, in every season, flows only drop by drop and heals a thousand kinds of ills, according to the inscription engraved in letters of gold on the marble: *Mille mali species Virgo levavit aquâ.* There they wash and draw the wonderful water for relatives and friends kept at home by old age or infirmity. Inspired with new confidence, they take up with more courage the road that leads them to the blessed image. Their wishes are at last fulfilled; here they are under the sweet gaze of this good Mother. Like the child whom a mother’s caresses make forget the cause of his pain, they too, in the outpourings of love and gratitude, no longer think of the fatigue of this painful ascent. During this night and those before the following Sundays, the church, decked as on a solemn feast, remains open to the faithful, whose piety would count as lost the time given to sleep. Some, recollected near the Statue, pray devoutly; others make the Way of the Cross; while visiting choirs of young girls sing hymns and canticles in turn to the glory of Mary.

On 8 September the sight is more magnificent still; the crowd arrives more numerous and more lively. Waves of people pour in by every road and every path. When one looks down from the top of the plateau on these lines across the countryside, one would think them streamers of a thousand colours standing out against the green of the fields. Meanwhile a far more touching ceremony is taking place inside the church. At the end of Mass the faithful crowd round the niche to kiss the venerated Statue. Rich and poor vie with one another in their offerings. The gifts usually consist of gold and silver coins. These touching scenes do not take place only on the day of the Nativity of the Virgin, on the Sundays and throughout September; they are renewed, with less splendour no doubt, throughout the year. Whole families from the town, from the villages and even from the neighbouring dioceses frequently come, accompanied by a priest, to ask for Our Lady’s protection.

From his promotion to the see of Carcassonne Mgr de la Bouillerie showed a special devotion to this pilgrimage. By fixing the feast of the perpetual adoration on 15 September and presiding each year, assisted by his chief ministers, at this august ceremony, His Lordship has added to its splendour. This, however, was

only the prelude to his favours. There are in Christendom very few churches dedicated to the Virgin whose image is crowned by a grant of the Holy See. One may cite, at Paris, Notre-Dame des Victoires; at Rome, Saint Mary Major; in Italy, Our Lady of Loreto. In 1862 the Holy Father, yielding to the filial piety of the bishop of Carcassonne during his stay in Rome, granted this privilege to Our Lady of Marceille. It was His Lordship himself who presented the crown, who by a pastoral letter full of unction invited the faithful to the ceremony, and who presided over it on 14 September of the same year, amid his chapter, a numerous clergy, representatives of the religious communities, the magistrates of the city and a great multitude of the faithful.

Taken from a Notice sur le pèlerinage de Notre-Dame de Marceille, *Limoux, 1864.*

The Holy Shroud of Cadouin, in the Diocese of Périgueux

For several centuries Périgord has possessed a venerable Relic in the abbey church of Cadouin: one of the shrouds that wrapped the body of our Lord Jesus Christ in His tomb. We know from the Gospel that there were several cloths or shrouds used in the burial of the Saviour. The one of which we speak was placed on His head and lay directly on His limbs; it is a shroud of honour which, according to tradition, the Virgin Mary wove with her own hands. Those who have seen it close at hand have admired the fineness of the fabric and the special beauty of its two many-coloured borders, which are oriental work of very great delicacy. This Relic is as precious as the true cross, the nails and the crown of thorns, for it was dyed with the blood of Jesus Christ.

After the Ascension of the Son of God, a Jew converted to the Christian faith took away the Shroud from the head of our Lord Jesus Christ and kept it all his life, with an abundance of riches. When he was about to die he divided his inheritance into two parts and asked his sons which of them would take the Shroud and which the riches. The elder preferred the money, and in a short time was reduced to extreme poverty; the younger took the Shroud, and with faith increased his fortune. His faithful descendants kept it down to the seventh generation. It then passed into the hands of unbelieving Jews, who kept it with respect and also became very rich, and remained so for a long time. But after many disputes and quarrels between the Christians and the Jews, the former claiming that the Shroud belonged to them as heirs of Jesus Christ, the latter claiming it as an inheritance from their fathers, they at last had recourse to Mahuvias, king of the Saracens, as their judge. He had a great pyre lit and prayed Jesus Christ Himself to decide the case, since He had been pleased to wear this sacred Shroud upon His head for the salvation of His own. The Shroud is thrown into the fire; but behold, it quickly flies up far above the flames, from which, after hovering for a long while as if at play, it at last comes down in the sight of all and settles slowly in the hands of a Christian lost in the crowd. Then all raised their hands to heaven and, having humbled themselves and prostrated on the ground, they carried it in triumph into the city of Jerusalem singing hymns of praise, and at last laid it with respect in the presses of the church. This first account is taken from the Venerable Bede, who wrote it from the report of Arculf: “The Shroud,” he adds, “was eight feet long; it was seen and kissed by our brother Arculf, who has borne witness to it.”

After the history of its finding, let us tell that of its transfer to Périgord.

“Adhémar de Monteil, bishop of Le Puy and legate of the Holy See in the first crusade, came upon the holy Shroud at Antioch, where it had been taken with many other relics to save it from profanation by the Moslems, who were masters of the holy city. He acquired it in 1098; but, being about to be carried off by the sickness that killed so many warriors, he handed his treasure to a priest of his Church. This priest hastened to take ship; struck down in his turn during the crossing, he left his charge to a cleric attached to his person who came from the neighbourhood of Cadouin. Here is how the priest of Périgord went about saving the relic by hiding it from the burning covetousness of his Christian companions. He took a cask and put a piece of wood across the middle of it, dividing it in two. In one of the parts he put the sacred cloth, and in the other his drink. In this way he carried it to his native country. Back in Périgord, he hid the Shroud, with its history, in a

church which he served and which was near Cadouin. Very soon afterwards, while the priest was away, a violent fire consumed the village and the church; but the holy Shroud, placed in a casket near the altar, remained intact. The religious who had lately come to live at Cadouin learned of this marvel; they hastened there and carried it off to their monastery. This was in the year 1117. But the priest, having returned and not finding his precious treasure, came to the monks to recover it. As they would not give it up, he begged them most humbly to receive him among them, so that he might remain all his life the guardian of the relic that had been in his possession."

He died at Cadouin and was buried beneath the floor of the chapel of Saint Magdalen, not far from the Shroud he had loved so dearly.

If one wished to know how and where the holy Shroud was kept from the Resurrection of Jesus Christ to the seventh century, when it was saved from the flames, it would be enough to note that, according to Saint Athanasius, two years before the Romans took Jerusalem the faithful, warned by heavenly revelations, left the city in great numbers and withdrew into other provinces, taking with them the holy relics and other precious objects; and that later, on the testimony of Eusebius, they returned there under the empire of Trajan. In the year 636 the Mahometans entered the holy city, but it surrendered only on the condition, made by the bishop Sophronius, that the Christians might freely practise their religion there. In fact, says Baronius (year 643), the faithful kept their churches, and pilgrims came there from all sides. The holy Shroud was therefore faithfully kept, and the details of its history could be followed without difficulty. Lastly, from the time it was miraculously saved from the flames under king Mahuvias until the first crusade, when it was bought by the bishop Adhémar, we have four centuries. What became of the holy Shroud during that time? We know that the Christians of Jerusalem kept it in a church; later it was moved to Antioch, and one must suppose that this was about the year 1000, at the time when the faithful were afflicted by the Mahometans, who in hatred of religion destroyed the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The tradition of the holy Shroud must have been carefully preserved, since the bishop Adhémar recognized it, procured it, and would entrust it only at his death to a priest of his church, who in his turn bequeathed it, with its history, to a cleric of Périgord.

Hardly had it arrived in Périgord when it drew considerable crowds, and the religious of Cadouin built in its honour the fine church that can still be seen. From the twelfth century the history of Cadouin becomes truly magnificent. Popes, kings and bishops take an interest in this abbey that possesses so great a treasure; they come there from the four corners of Europe; King Louis visits it on setting out for the last crusade, and together with the great of society the people flock there in large crowds. The throng was such that a hospital and more than sixty houses for strangers had to be built at Cadouin. This devotion shone with great splendour for four hundred years and was one of the greatest devotions in the world.

Many striking honours were paid to the holy Shroud. Countless miracles took place; a famous confraternity was established at Cadouin, which spread over the whole of Europe. We shall not speak of the journeys of the holy shroud to Toulouse, where it remained for many years, to Paris, to Poitiers, to Obazine, nor of the extraordinary honours it received everywhere on its way. This odyssey is marvellous. Lively disputes arose about it; towns and monasteries, popes and kings took part in them; they evidently saw in this shroud something other than a common cloth. But the seventeenth century brings a fact that dominates the whole of this history and sets on it a supreme seal of authenticity: the official report of Mgr de Lingendes, bishop of Sarlat. Let this important document be read attentively; let the character of the bishop be studied, and the circumstances and persons involved in this act; let its smallest details be noted, and one will see in it the Providence of God carefully preserving the memory of so precious a relic. At the same time the religious of Cadouin write its history and dedicate it to the queen regent, Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV. They do not hesitate to call the holy shroud of Cadouin the richest jewel of the first kingdom of the world and the finest appanage of the royal domain.

The ill wind that never ceased to blow in the eighteenth century lessened, without interrupting, the stream of faithful visitors. The Revolution profaned the church without destroying it, murdered the prior, and burned in the public square the history of the convent, its title-deeds and its manuscripts. The chief thing, the essential thing, the holy Shroud, was happily hidden and so escaped the fury of the impious. Cadouin is quite near the station of Le Buisson, on the railway line from Périgueux to Agen.

The expositions of the holy relic take place regularly three times a year: on the second Sunday after Easter, called Good Shepherd Sunday; on Whit Sunday; and on 8 September. They last eight days each time, and the sovereign pontiff Pius IX has granted a plenary indulgence on each of these days. By a special arrangement of the bishop of Périgueux, the great feast of Cadouin and the most solemn exposition take place every year in the month of September.

The Shroud of Cadouin is eight feet long and four feet wide. It measures two metres eighty-four centimetres in length and one metre twenty-four centimetres in width.

Besides small particles of the holy Cross, the diocese of Périgueux possesses two other very precious relics of the Passion, two thorns of the holy Crown. The first is in the church of Saint-Cyprien; the other belongs to M. de Montferrand and is in the chapel of his château of Montréal. This one is broken and tied together with a thread. Besides the Shroud from the Saviour's head, Cadouin also possesses a small fragment, the size of a fingertip, of the band with which the Jews veiled the Saviour's eyes at the time of the Passion, when they struck Him, saying: "Prophesy; tell us who struck thee." The holy band came to Cadouin with the Shroud and has always accompanied it.

Great festivities took place on 5 September 1866 on the occasion of the translation of the holy Shroud into the precious reliquary bought in its honour.

Taken from an interesting pamphlet entitled Histoire du saint Suaire de Cadouin, *by the Rev. Fr. Carles, missionary of the Calvaire of Toulouse.*

Our Lady of the Castle, at Allauch, in the Diocese of Marseilles

The sanctuary of Our Lady of the Castle stands almost on the summit of a rocky mass whose sides support the ancient village of Allauch. At the foot of the rocks begins a small plain, very irregular in shape, broken here and there by slopes of pines or olives, and enclosed on either side by two lines of hills, mostly bare and bald, which run down to the sea. At the other end of the plain appears Marseilles, seated on the shores of the Mediterranean, whose blue waves, like the sky of Provence, come to die at her feet. Our Lady of the Castle thus looks at once towards the magnificent sanctuary of Notre-Dame de la Garde and the tower of Notre-Dame de Sainte-Espérance; to the right one sees, as if leaning against the rocks that overlook it, the old pilgrimage of Our Lady of the Angels; while to the left one makes out, lost in a clump of pines, the graceful oratory dedicated to Our Lady of La Salette.

Tradition holds that this sanctuary goes back to an earlier time than that of Notre-Dame de la Garde. But the destruction of the archives of the commune of Allauch, towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, does not allow us to give in support of this assertion the rigorous proofs that one would be entitled to demand. Worse still, through unpardonable negligence the complete history of this chapel escapes us no less than its origin. Yet this history exists, composed by the faith of our fathers and the merciful power of our Mother in heaven. The Angels know it. As for us, reduced to conjectures that are still full of charm, we wish at least to tell what we have retained of the ancient traditions of our district, and what we have learned from a few rare documents and above all from a precious manuscript of 1713, due to the pious learning of a venerable parish priest of Allauch.

From the earliest ages of the Church the Cassianite religious came and established a monastery in the quarter of Saint-Pierre, round which they soon drew a number of husbandmen who cleared the land of the locality. The sons of Saint Cassian, struck by the beauty of the site where the sanctuary of Our Lady of the Castle now stands, founded a modest oratory on these heights in honour of the most holy Virgin. Thither they went at certain times of the year with all their dependants, to offer the Queen of heaven, with the tribute of their faith and love, humble but sincere offerings.

Little by little the inhabitants of Saint-Pierre, and the peasants of the valley of the Huveaune or quarter of Laza, following their tastes or yielding to the necessities of those still barbarous times, abandoned the plain and came to settle at the foot of Mary's chapel. In changing their position they were also to change masters. The venerable chapter of the Major did in fact soon succeed the religious of Saint-Pierre in the possession of this territory. The new lord built on the mountain a castle flanked with towers and surrounded with ramparts, of which half-effaced traces can still be found today. This grand and formidable dwelling, where the members of the sacred Chapter came to take shelter in holiday time, was placed under the protection of her whom the Church calls the Tower of David. The modest oratory of the Cassianites was replaced by the present chapel, which overlooked the castle and the whole surrounding country. Since that time Mary has always been invoked in this sanctuary under the title of Our Lady of the Castle, and her feast has remained fixed on 8 September, the day on which the Church celebrates her glorious Nativity.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. Antoine Ricard, honorary canon of Marseilles.

Our Lady of Benoîte-Vaux, in the Diocese of Verdun

Benoîte-Vaux (*Benedicta Vallis*), in the department of the Meuse, is a little hamlet lost in the midst of the forests, belonging to the commune of Rambluzin (arrondissement of Verdun, canton of Souilly). There was formerly a monastery of Premonstratensians there, founded in 1138 or 1140 partly by Albero of Chiny, bishop of Verdun, and partly by Bertrand and Albert le Loup, his nephew, lords of Faverolles, which is the original name of this abbey. Neither revolutions nor the changes undergone by the church of Benoîte-Vaux have lessened the confidence of the people in the Virgin invoked there: even today it is the goal of a pilgrimage that is tending to be the more frequented as the marks of the protection of the immaculate Advocate show themselves there more sensibly and more often.

Near the chapel there is a spring whose unfailing and miraculous water has cured many infirmities. The sanctuary is served by religious of the Congregation of Our Saviour, child of the good father of Mattaincourt. Mgr Rossat, bishop of Verdun, has also made the present abbey a house of retreat for his clergy.

It is especially on 8 September that the pilgrims flock to Benoîte-Vaux; processions from all the surrounding country have gone there at all periods, and these Catholic demonstrations still continue in our own day.

The foreign invasion of 1870–1871 impoverished the religious of Benoîte-Vaux; but the insatiable greed of the enemy went no further: the chapel was neither pillaged nor profaned. On the morrow of the peace the people of the Meuse hastened gratefully to their venerated Madonna and asked her for better days for France; the months of May, June, July, August and September 1871 saw a prodigious concourse of pilgrims.

Cf. Notre-Dame de Benoîte-Vaux, *by the Rev. Fr. Chevreux, of the Congregation of Our Saviour.*

Our Lady of Lure, in the Diocese of Digne

Towards the middle of the fifth century Saint Donatus, a disciple of Saint Marius or Mary, abbot of Benvon or Val-Benoît, withdrew into a gorge of the mountain of Lure (Basses-Alpes), where he founded the first abbey of Our Lady of Lure. This Benedictine monk died in 490 and was buried in the abbey.

It is probable that the abbey of the first anchorites was built not far from the present chapel of Our Lady of Lure, as the ruins scattered round about seem to indicate. The monastery was ruined by the Saracens, and the chapel rebuilt by some great lords who made a gift of it to Guignes, abbot of Boscodon and of Chalais or Chales. Nothing has remained of the monastery of Lure but the pilgrimage and the oratory of Our Lady of Lure, the only present trace of the various foundations that have succeeded one another on this spot.

The statue of Our Lady of Lure, carved, it is said, by the unskilled chisel of Saint Donatus, is venerated by the pilgrims and invoked especially in time of drought. It is on Whit Monday, on 15 August and on 8 September that the people of the surrounding country flock to this sanctuary of the Basses-Alpes. Great lime trees shade the open space in front of the chapel. There the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, and especially those of Reillanne, camp and light great fires to warm themselves, so keen is the air in these mountains.

Notice due to the kindness of M. Antoine Ricard, honorary canon of Marseilles.

Our Lady of the Lights, near Apt, in the Diocese of Avignon

In 1661 a wealthy landowner of Goult, a village near the town of Apt (Vaucluse), while visiting the ruins of an ancient chapel once dedicated to Our Lady, saw a bright light surrounding a young child of great beauty. At the same moment he was miraculously cured of a serious infirmity that had tormented him for twelve years. Other notable and serious persons having seen the same lights in the dark night, the bishop of Cavaillon authorized the rebuilding of the sanctuary, which was blessed on 1 June 1663. Eight years later the Carmelites built a monastery on the ruins of another chapel near by, dedicated to Saint Michael. Soon there was a plan to build a larger church to hold the throng of pilgrims. It was consecrated on 13 September 1669 by the bishop of Cavaillon. After the Revolution the pilgrimage regained its former popularity, now made secure by the ministry of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who have had a residence there since 1837. A hostelry receives the many pilgrims, who are especially numerous at the time of the gatherings, which begin on 8 September each year and continue through the octave, amid the simple liveliness of Provençal piety. Pius IX enriched this pilgrimage with several indulgences; he even granted Our Lady of the Lights the honour of a crowning.

Notice due to the kindness of M. Antoine Ricard, honorary canon of Marseilles.

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[1] According to the Bollandists they are Saints Faustus, Serapion, Pius, Theophilus, Nemesius, Arion, Ammon, Peter, Sabinus, Demetrius, Didymus, Mitisore, Panete, Achilles, Isidore, Magit, Orosée, Silvanus, Arapion, Severus, another Demetrius and another Severus.

[2] We shall give his life on 22 September.

[3] Corbinian was born at Châtres, now Arpagon (Seine-et-Oise), in the diocese of Versailles, and for fourteen years, half a league from his native town, led the life of a recluse in a cell he had had built near a chapel called Saint-Germain de Paris (now the parish of Saint-Germain-lès-Châtres). The reputation of his holiness drew a crowd of disciples to him, and so Corbinian founded a religious community. Having made a pilgrimage to Rome, he was consecrated bishop by the Pope, whose blessing he had asked; he fixed his episcopal see at Freising, carried out his apostolic mission successfully, and fell asleep in the Lord on 8 September 730. His body was laid in the cathedral of Freising; his relics later passed to Mais (Tyrol) and to Trent, and finally returned to Freising, where they still are. — Cf. *Continuators of Godescard.*

[4] Four cities dispute the honour of having seen the birth of Mary: Jerusalem, Nazareth, Sepphoris and Bethlehem. After carefully examining and weighing the evidence, we incline to believe that the blessed nativity of Mary took place in the house by the Sheep Pool at Jerusalem. — The abbé Bourassé, canon of Tours. — For more details, see our *Life of the Blessed Virgin.*

9 September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Nicomedia, the holy martyrs DOROTHEUS and GORGONIUS, who, having risen to the highest dignities at the court of Diocletian, did not fail to show their horror of the persecution that emperor was waging against the Christians; he therefore had them hung up in the air and torn all over the body with whips in his presence; then, having had them flayed, he ordered salt and vinegar to be poured on their bared flesh, had them roasted on a gridiron, and finally strangled with a cord. Long afterwards the body of Saint Gorgonius was brought to Rome and buried on the Latin Way, and from there moved to the basilica of Saint Peter. 304. — In the country of the Sabines, thirty miles from Rome, the holy martyrs Hyacinth, Alexander and Tiburtius. — At Sebaste in Armenia, Saint Severian, a soldier in the army of the emperor Licinius. Because he often visited forty martyrs held in prison, he was hung up with a stone at his feet by order of the governor Lysias and torn with whips, a torment in which he breathed his last. 4th c. — The same day, Saint Straton, who, tied to two trees and torn limb from limb for Jesus Christ, thus completed his martyrdom. — Also the holy martyrs Rufinus and Rufinianus, brothers.[1] — At Rome, Saint SERGIUS I, pope and confessor. 701. — In the territory of Thérouanne, Saint OMER, bishop. 670. — In Ireland, Saint Queran or Kiaran, abbot.[2] 548.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Versailles, Saint Gorgonius, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, Saint Adrian of Nicomedia, soldier and martyr, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 306. — In the former diocese of Rieux, now the diocese of Toulouse, Saint Vidian, martyr at Martres, whose life we gave on 27 August. 8th c. — At Saint-Nectaire, in the diocese of Clermont-Ferrand, Saint Auditor, brother of Saints Baudimius and Nectarius, who like him were companions in the apostolate of Saint Austremonius.[3] — In the dioceses of Paris, Saint-Brieuc and Le Mans, Saint Argariarga or Osmane, virgin, a princess of Ireland. Her parents, still idolaters, wished to marry her to a pagan prince: Osmane escaped the watch of her father's house and, accompanied by one of her women, honoured in the diocese of Le Mans (22 June) under the name of Saint Cérotte, took ship on a vessel sailing for Gaul and landed on the coast of Saint-Brieuc, where she built herself a hut of leaves and long led a life of contemplation and penance. After her death her tomb became famous for the miracles worked there. In the ninth century a church was built on the site of her cell; later another oratory was built some distance away, and this was the origin of the parish of Sainte-Osmane (Sarthe, arrondissement and canton of Saint-Calais). During the ravages of the Northmen her body was taken to Saint-Denis near Paris and placed in a shrine of gilded iron; '93 profaned and scattered these precious relics. 7th c. — In the diocese of Le Puy, Saint Peter of Pibrac, abbot, named in the martyrology of France of 5 September, on which day we gave some details of his life. 1080. — At Poitiers, Blessed PETER CLAVER, apostle of the negroes. 1654. — In the solitudes of Maine, Saint Ulface, companion of Saints Almire and Bomer and friend of Saint Innocent, bishop of Le Mans. Born in Auvergne, he was first a monk of Micy or Saint-Mesmin; later he came into the wilds of Maine and settled on the river Braye, where he became superior of a flourishing abbey that gave rise to the present town of Saint-Ulface (Sarthe, arrondissement of Mamers, canton of Montmirail). His relics are kept at Tulle. 7th c. — In the diocese of Saint-Malo, Saint Onnein, religious of the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Méen de Gaël (*S. Melanus*, founded about 565 by Judicaël, lord of the country), in the diocese of Rennes. 10th c. — At Vence (Alpes-Maritimes), in the diocese of Nice, Saint Veranus, bishop of that former see and confessor. Son of Saint Eucherius, bishop of Lyons, he was first a monk of Lérins. His body was laid in his cathedral church and raised from the ground in 1495. Today his head is kept there in a bust of gilded bronze. About 480. — At Sées, Saint Frogent, bishop. 763.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — At Rome, Saint Sergius, pope and confessor, first a regular cleric of the church of the Lateran, through whose holiness the Saxons were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ. 702.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Pesaro in Italy, Blessed Seraphina, widow, of the Order of Saint Clare, illustrious for the nobility of her birth, her virtues, her admirable patience, above all in adversity, and the glory of her miracles; she passed to heaven on the eve of this day.[4] 471.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Lima, in the kingdom of Peru, Saint Rose of Saint Mary, virgin, of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, whose feast is kept on 30 August and is celebrated today in our Order.[5] 1617.

Martyrology of the Order of Capuchin Minors of Saint Francis. — The same as among the Friars Minor.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Jerome Emiliani, confessor, whose feast is kept on 20 July.[6] 1537. — In the States of the Church and in Etruria, Saint Alexis, confessor, whose feast is celebrated on 17 July.[7] 404.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

The feast of the most holy Name of Mary. — In Castile, a region of Spain between the Asturias and Andalusia, Saint Maria Torribia or de la Cabesa, wife of Saint Isidore the Husbandman.[8] About 1175. — In Egypt, Saint Dorotheus the Theban, anchorite. While giving himself to prayer, he spent the whole day gathering stones along the shore to build cells for those who could not do so; at night he made baskets or ropes from palm leaves and bark and sold them for his living. In spite of his austerities he reached a very great age. Palladius, the ecclesiastical writer, bishop of Helenopolis and friend of Saint John Chrysostom, was his disciple. Towards the end of the 4th c. — In Palestine, another Saint Dorotheus, archimandrite. He was first a monk of Saint-Léride, near Gaza (today Gazzah); after the death of his abbot, the venerable John, he left that monastery, built another himself between Gaza and Maiuma, and took charge of it. Towards the end of the 6th c. — On the shore of the Euxine, Saint Dorotheus of Trebizond, called the Younger, monk of Genne (kingdom of Pontus), then founder and abbot of the monastery of Chiliocum, under the Rule of Saint Arsenius. 11th c. — Among the Greeks, Saint Theophanes, confessor, who according to the Greek Menaea spent seventy-five years in solitude, receiving his food from the hand of an angel. About 300. — Among the Greeks, Saint Severus, martyr, who died by the sword. — Among the Greeks again, Saint Chariton, who was beheaded in hatred of religion. — Among the Greeks again, Saint Artemidorus, who died in the flames. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia, today Kaisarieh, on the Halys, the holy martyrs Donatus, Cleasus or Eleassus, Fortunatus and Ammon. — Among the Parthians (probably), Saint Mark and his two companions, martyrs. — At Alcalá del Río in Andalusia, Saint Gregory, confessor. There is in that town a church dedicated under his invocation and founded by Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella of Castile. His tomb is to be seen there, and also a gilded shrine containing his precious remains. About 504. — At Stafford, a town of England, chief town of the county of that name, Saint Bertellin or Beccelin, commonly called Bertaume (*Bertelmus*), hermit and confessor. His body, laid in the church of Stafford, has always been an object of the veneration of the faithful there. 8th c. — In the diocese of Aquila, on the Aterno, in Further Abruzzo II, Saint Tuce (*Tutius*), hermit and confessor. His relics are kept in the collegiate and parish church of Saint Mark at Aquila. Boniface VIII granted many indulgences for visiting his tomb. Date uncertain. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Barking, in the county of Essex in England, Saint Wulfhilda, also called Wilfrida and Wulfrida, abbess, of whom we shall speak on 9 December. 990.

Saint Gorgonius and Saint Dorotheus, Martyrs at Nicomedia, in Bithynia

304. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman emperor: Diocletian.

C’est un devoir de l’homme sage et juste de ne placer ses richesses que dans la justice.

It is the duty of the wise and just man to place his riches in justice alone.

Lactantius.

Saint Gorgonius was general steward of the offices of the palace and of the emperor’s chamber, and Saint Dorotheus zealously held the same posts under the authority of Gorgonius, to whom he yielded nothing either in greatness of virtue or in firmness of faith. These two faithful worshippers of Jesus Christ neglected no opportunity of spreading the truth, of which they were irreproachable witnesses. They shone in the prince’s palace like bright torches, and by their wise exhortations they kept almost all the officers of the imperial household in the love and ardent zeal of the Christian faith. One might well believe that among them was fulfilled the word of King David: “How sweet, how pleasant it is for brethren to live together in peace!” Diocletian, roaring with anger against the servants of God whom he held in irons, ordered a throne to be prepared in the great hall of the palace and the confessors who were in chains to be brought before him. He also had the statues of his gods brought in, with the incense that the Christians were to burn before these idols. The holy martyrs then came in, putting all their trust in the Lord; they despised as dung all these empty images that they were to be made to worship, and began to sing again and again: “The gods of the nations are devils; it is the Lord alone who made the heavens.”

Carried away with rage, Diocletian ordered some to be beaten with leather thongs and leaded whips, others to be torn with iron combs, these to be hung on the rack, those to be flayed alive. Then, noticing one of the confessors who seemed to resist his sacrilegious orders with more firmness, he wished still crueller torments to be inflicted on him. At this sight the blessed Gorgonius could not keep from crying out boldly to the emperor: “Caesar, why do you inflict a heavier penalty on our companion than on ourselves? Are we not all condemned by the same sentence? The crime of which he is accused, have we not all committed and confessed it? Yes, our faith, our worship, our sentiments are one. Until now, O emperor, we have served you faithfully; let us henceforth serve our God, who created us. We belonged to you until this hour; now, whether you will or not, we belong to God. Yes, we have enlisted under His standards; we have received the mark of His service; take back, if you will, the military belt you had given us; we shall even be able then to follow Christ our King more freely. One word more, Caesar: I exhort you to calm this senseless fury, if you do not wish, wretched man, to be given over to eternal punishment. The torments you inflict on the servants of God will have an end; but the punishments you are preparing for yourself will never cease.”

Diocletian, hearing these words of the blessed Gorgonius, was troubled to the depths of his soul; he did not know what to answer, so great was his anger. Yet what course was he to take with an officer of this rank, who had lived in his intimacy and had always dwelt in the imperial palace since childhood? One could not destroy a man so distinguished by virtue and high wisdom, a personage born of the noblest blood of the empire. The emperor therefore had him come near with his colleague Dorotheus, and tried to win them both by gentleness. He even promised them greater honours and a very high rank in the army if they would return to the old worship. But the blessed men, having addressed a fervent prayer to God from the depths of their hearts, firmly rejected the emperor’s offers. He then ordered them to be loaded with chains and thrown into a dark dungeon until he had decided what was to be done with them. But the very next day he ordered his tribunal to be set up again and the executioners to be summoned with all their instruments of torture. The blessed Gorgonius and Dorotheus are brought in and warned that their lives are at stake. “Consider,” the emperor said to them, “how to save your honour and your lives; for, according to the course you take, you are about to suffer a shameful death or to obtain great favours. If you obey my orders and wish to live, you will have the first rank among the great men of the empire; if you prefer to die, your lives will be torn from you in

the most frightful torments. Your obstinacy and the insult done to the immortal gods could not remain unpunished." The blessed Gorgonius then answered for both: "Christ, who called us to the faith, will sustain us by His grace in the trial you are preparing. Behold, Christ is waiting for us, to lead us to eternal glory. The suffering we are about to face by your order will soon pass; but the reward promised to our labours will never end."

The emperor, without answering them, orders them to be hung on the rack and then has them torn with blows; their skin is ripped off with iron hooks, and these raw wounds are then sprinkled with vinegar mixed with salt. During this frightful torture the holy martyrs looked up to heaven with smiling faces and said: "Thanks be to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, who hast deigned to strengthen us in the midst of torments; our hearts go out to Thee, and we hope soon to behold Thee face to face, and to enjoy Thy holy presence, which is the joy of the angels and which alone is eternal life and eternal happiness." Diocletian, seeing this gladness of the Blessed, felt his rage redouble and no longer knew what to do to torment them further. While his cruel ministers were savaging their victims, these rejoiced in the Lord and seemed to feel no pain. At last the executioners, after long consultation, resolved to place them on a gridiron over burning coals, so that the parts of their bodies that were still unhurt might be exposed to the fire one after another, and the pain be the keener as the burning was slower.

The holy martyrs, seeing these preparations, felt their gladness increase; and when they had been placed on the burning coals, they cried out: "Glory be to Thee, O Lord, who hast deigned to receive Thy servants as living victims; the smoke that rises from our bodies and goes up to Thee obtains for us the pardon of our sins; it will earn us a seat in paradise beside Thy faithful martyrs, whose sufferings we share. Remember, O Lord, our frailty and Thy merciful goodness; strengthen us in this last trial. Let Thy hand be lifted up and protect us against the assaults of the devil; come, Lord, help us, and for Thy name's sake deliver Thy servants." Hardly had they finished this prayer when all the heat of the fire that was consuming them died away; their faces shone like the light of the sun, and it seemed to all the bystanders that their limbs were resting on a bed of flowers, without feeling the least pain.

They were then taken off the gridiron and raised up. The faithful who had been present at their torture, and who until then had hidden their faith, felt their courage renewed on seeing the constancy of the generous martyrs. The martyrs meanwhile went on singing to the Lord with the Psalmist: "It is better to trust in the God of heaven than in the princes of the earth." As for Diocletian, he groaned to see himself vanquished by their invincible firmness; and, no longer hoping to overcome them by torments, he passed sentence of death against them. The executioners then seized them; but when they reached the place of execution the martyrs obtained leave to pray for a few moments; their prayer ended, they gave the kiss of peace to the Christians around them and gave themselves up to the executioners. They were at once bound; and the cord having been passed round their necks, they were cruelly put to death.

They are represented as a group; sometimes Saint Peter, also a martyr at Nicomedia, is added to them, because all three were chamberlains of Diocletian.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The faithful gathered up the glorious remains of our holy Martyrs and gave them honourable burial, and at once many miracles took place at their tombs: the sick recovered their health there, and the possessed obtained deliverance, through the merits of the blessed Martyrs, all-powerful with God. Some years later the body of Saint Gorgonius was carried to Rome and laid on the Latin Way, "between the two Laurels," where it was surrounded with the most magnificent honours. By this Christ willed to entrust the blessed Martyrs with a more glorious patronage, and, after their entry into the eternal home, to divide their bodies, so that one should protect Greece and the other the holy Roman Church; but although they are thus separated, their

presence is felt entire at each of the tombs that people come to honour. In Greece the help of Dorotheus is implored, and his divine companion who rests at Rome comes with him to grant the prayers of the suppliants; the Romans in their turn flock to pray at the tomb of Saint Gorgonius, and the blessed Dorotheus hastens there with him to favour the inhabitants of the great city. The relics of Saint Gorgonius were translated in 766 by the venerable Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, to the monastery of Gorze. Later they were given to the venerable Philippa of Guelders, a nun in the monastery of Saint Clare at Pont-à-Mousson, by her son the cardinal of Lorraine, abbot of Gorze and bishop of Metz, probably in 1542, after the ruin of the abbey by William of Fürstenberg. On 11 November 1595 the Poor Clares gave back two bones, one from a shoulder and the other from an arm, to the parish church of Gorze, which no longer had any; these must have perished during the great Revolution.

In 1791 the last abbess of the Poor Clares, Marie-Charlotte Barbel, took to Essey-en-Woëvre, canton of Thiaucourt, where she died in 1815, the shrine called that of Saint Gorgonius, which has remained in the parish church. On 20 November 1796, 8 July 1805 and 28 April 1807 the relics it contains were visited, recognized and canonically approved. They consist of more than twenty large bones with many fragments, belonging to seven different persons, several of them female. Here is the explanation of this extraordinary fact. When the abbey church of Gorze was pillaged, probably in 1542, all the relics were thrown out of their shrines and reliquaries onto the pavement, then gathered up and put together by the religious, as is shown by this note on parchment kept in the shrine of Enez: *Relics of Gorze which were taken up about the church when it was pillaged by the men-at- arms*; it has been altered by the following addition, betraying a different hand and a later date: *Relics of the body of Saint Gourgon.* Thus this shrine contains not only some relics of Saint Gorgonius but other relics venerated in the church of Gorze, and all are mixed together and venerated under the same name. A fragment of an ulna was taken from it and placed in the neighbouring church of Euvezin on 18 August 1849; a fragment of skull had already been taken from the same shrine by the Poor Clares and given to the parish church of Feys-en-Haye, in the same district, where it still is. Whether it is more certainly from the holy Martyr than most of the bones in the shrine of Enez, we should not dare to say; but if the head, which was formerly in the church of Metz and is probably mixed up in the sort of ossuary in the sacristy of Sainte-Glossinde (the bishop's chapel), where many relics are gathered pell-mell, could be produced, it would be interesting to compare the fragment venerated in the church of Feys with it.

We have taken this biography from the Acts of the Martyrs *by the Reverend Benedictine Fathers, and completed it with Notes due to the kindness of M. Noël, parish priest of Briey, and M. J.-F. de Blaye, parish priest of Imling.*

Saint Omer or Audomar, Monk of Luxeuil and Bishop of the Former See of Thérouanne, in the Diocese of Arras

670. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of France: Clotaire III.

> *Le Christ est la vérité, et celui qui suit le Christ aime la vérité et toute vertu.*
>
> *Christ is the truth, and he who follows Christ loves the truth and every virtue.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

Saint Omer was born towards the end of the sixth century at Guldindal or Goldenthal (the Golden Valley), near Constance, of parents equally distinguished for their piety and their birth. His father was called Friulph and his mother Domitta. They took great care to form in learning and virtue this dear son, the only fruit of their marriage. After Domitta's death, grace growing in him with age, he resolved to renounce the world and become a religious; he even persuaded his father to follow him. They therefore sold their goods to give the money to the needy; and thus, poor in the goods of earth but rich in those of heaven, dead to the world and living only in Jesus Christ, faithful to grace and enemies of the devil, they went to the monastery of Luxeuil

in Franche-Comté, where they were cordially received by the abbot Saint Eustace (612 or 615), who, after putting them through hard trials to free them from every earthly tie and above all from their attachment to each other, admitted them to profession together. Friulph persevered there to the end and died a holy death. Saint Omer soon became the model of the other brethren. He was chaste in body and mind, first in obedience and in the practice of humility, the most enlightened in the knowledge of Jesus crucified, the most lovable for his charity and gentleness, and the most exact in the austerity of fasts and vigils. This fervour did not slacken with the passing years, as happens only too often with young men who begin to serve God with great ardour and afterwards grow slack through negligence; it increased so much that his reputation spread throughout France. King Dagobert, being informed of it, had him elected bishop of Thérouanne by the free votes of the clergy and people; Saint Acharius, bishop of Noyon, contributed much to this.

Saint Omer found in his diocese work worthy of his apostolic zeal. The Morini (as the peoples of the diocese of Thérouanne were called) had unhappily fallen back into idolatry, from which they had been drawn by the preaching of Saint Victoric and Saint Fuscian, illustrious martyrs of Jesus Christ at Amiens, where they were put to death by the cruelty of the prefect Rictiovarus. He laboured so diligently to bring his flock back to the Christian religion that, after enlightening them with the light of the Gospel, he had their idols burned and entirely banished the worship of false gods from his diocese. In this holy undertaking he was helped by Saint Bertin, Saint Mommolin and Saint Bertrand, who all three seconded his zeal wonderfully as his faithful disciples. A surprising event is related of Saint Omer that happened when he was at Boulogne, a small town of his diocese; and as it may serve as a great example to show the obedience owed to superiors, we have thought we should not leave it out here. A cleric asked his leave to go and amuse himself on the seashore. The Saint, to whom God had revealed the misfortune that would befall him if he went, expressly forbade him to do so. The cleric went nevertheless, and finding a little boat used for crossing the river where it flows into the sea, he got into it to go along the shore; but a furious storm suddenly arose, and he soon found himself in danger of shipwreck. The peril brought him to himself; he repented of his fault and, seeing himself at the mercy of the winds without knowing where he was, he implored the help of the holy Bishop. After his prayer he came to land; but he was greatly surprised to find himself on the coast of England. Fear of falling into the hands of pirates in so distant a country made him redouble his prayers; he again begged the Saint not to abandon him. Trusting in his pastoral goodness, which he well knew was informed by a prophetic spirit of the danger he was in, he gets back into his boat and, making a happy voyage, arrives almost in a moment at the very place from which he had set out. He at once ran to the Saint, threw himself at his feet to ask pardon for his disobedience, told him all that had happened, and thanked him for the grace obtained by the merit of his intercession. Saint Omer rebuked him severely for his fault and, having made him reflect on the punishment God inflicts on those who despise the orders of their superiors, forbade him to tell anyone whatever of the marvel that had happened; the young man faithfully obeyed, revealing it only after the holy Bishop’s death.

But although he did all he could to remain hidden from the eyes of men, heaven made known by the following wonder how pleasing he was to God. During the visitation of his diocese he rested under a tree near a village called Jernac (now Journi), to recover a little from the fatigue of the road. On waking, he had a wooden cross set up on the very spot where he had sat, and the following night a wonderful brightness was seen upon it. Ever since, the faithful have greatly honoured this spot as having been consecrated by the presence of so holy a man. All the sick who visit it out of devotion receive there the cure of their ills.

Among the conversions he made, that of Adroald is especially noted. He was one of the most considerable lords of the country by birth and wealth, but he waged a cruel war on the

Christians and was so given to the worship of false gods that all hope of winning him to Jesus Christ had been lost. Saint Omer undertook this conversion, which was entirely successful. From then on Adroald generously practised the evangelical counsels: having no children, he gave all his goods to the Church, and in

particular the estate of Sithiu, where the Saint built a fine monastery in honour of the holy Virgin. “How praiseworthy and happy you are, Adroald,” cries the historian of this life, “to have stripped yourself of the goods of earth in order to clothe Jesus Christ with them! You have renounced a temporal inheritance to make yourself heir of heaven; you had no posterity, and by your liberality you have gained one so numerous that it will last to the end of the ages.”

After he had governed the church of Thérouanne with a truly pastoral vigilance for nearly thirty years, divine Providence deprived him of bodily sight, so that, being spiritually enlightened by the light of faith, he might draw nearer to heaven, where he was soon to receive the reward of all his labours. This blindness, however, did not prevent him from attending, with several other bishops, the translation of the body of Saint Vedast, which took place about the year 667, and there he recovered his sight by touching the holy relics. But our Saint, who had already tasted how good it was to have the eyes closed to all the things of the world, so as to contemplate the perfections of the divinity with less disturbance, begged the same Saint Vedast to send him back his infirmity, so that nothing might distract him from the consideration of heavenly things. Happy state, in which, no longer able to see the bodily light, one may gaze steadily on the light of heaven, converse with the angels, consider at leisure the ravishing beauties of paradise, and feed, so to speak, on the continual sight of Jesus Christ!

In 667 according to some, 670 according to others, Saint Omer, while on a journey, was taken with fever at a place called Wavrans or Wauvrans (some distance from Saint-Omer, three miles from Saint-Bertin): he then understood that his last hour was approaching. He had himself carried to the church, where, melting into tears, he offered to God the incense of his prayers and received the body and blood of the Saviour with feelings of the most touching piety. After communion he lay down, and there, amid the strains of a heavenly melody, his soul left its dwelling to go and present itself before the majesty of God. At that moment there came from his body so sweet a fragrance that it surpassed that of the finest perfumes.

On the seals of the town of Saint-Omer he often holds a shield charged with the cross with two cross-bars, which is the city’s coat of arms. As will be seen, this attribute indicates the Saint’s patronage and not an event of his life. — He is represented making a spring gush forth to baptize a sickly and blind child brought to him, who recovered his sight with his health on receiving the sacrament. He is also seen sometimes holding a little church in his hands, with a child at his feet who seems to be coming out of the ground; sometimes standing, holding his crozier and two bunches of grapes, with a shrine at his feet.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The abbot Bertin, told of his death by revelation, hastened to Wavrans at the head of all his religious. Omer had specially charged him to bury him in the church of the Holy Virgin, which he had built for that purpose. The funeral was held with great pomp, but amid universal mourning; everyone wept for a guide, a friend, a father. The church where he was buried later became the cathedral of Saint-Omer. His body was kept there, apart from some portions granted to various churches. In the seventeenth century the pluvial of Saint Omer could still be seen at the monastery of Saint-Bertin, a kind of cloak so called because of the hood that was raised to protect against the rain. Hugh, abbot of Saint-Quentin, having tried to carry off the Saint’s body to enrich his monastery, could get no further than the village of Lisbourg: for suddenly the coffin became so heavy that no human strength could lift it from the ground; this gave Folquin, bishop of Thérouanne, time to come and take back the sacred relics. On this occasion the prelate even established a feast which was celebrated in the month of June. And to prevent such an accident in future, he buried the sacred body in a secret place. It was discovered in 955, and the authenticity of these holy relics was several times recognized in the church of Notre-Dame. In 1269 the Saint’s head was set apart. Before the French Revolution this head was enclosed in a very rich bust given by Mahaut or Matilda, countess of Flanders. It was behind a grille to

which the chapter and the aldermen each had a key. It was brought down on certain feasts with great solemnity, and was then guarded by two canons in copes and two aldermen. The Saint's body was placed on the high altar in a shrine as precious for the richness of its material as for the beauty of its workmanship. The former cathedral of Saint-Omer still possesses a considerable part of its patron's head. A goldsmith who bought during the Revolution the silver-gilt reliquary containing this precious relic handed it over to respectable persons, and its authenticity was recognized on 3 September 1803; it is now enclosed in a bust representing a bishop. Part of this head was taken to Arras by Cardinal de La Tour d'Auvergne, bishop of that city, who gave the church of Saint-Omer in exchange a portion of the relics of Saint Vedast.

Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras, by the abbé Destombes; Légendaire de la Morinie; Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté; *the continuators of Godescard.*

Blessed Peter Claver, Apostle of the Negroes

1654. — Pope: Innocent X. — King of Spain: Philip IV.

> *Dans la vie religieuse, la route la plus courte et la plus sûre pour arriver à la perfection, est celle de l'obéissance aux supérieurs.*
>
> *In the religious life the shortest and surest road to perfection is obedience to superiors.*
>
> *Maxim of Blessed Peter Claver.*

Don Pedro Claver and Doña Anna, his wife, belonged to two of the noblest families of Spain. But what distinguished them above all was an eminent piety. They lived in the town of Verdú in Catalonia, far from the world and its noisy pleasures. Though still young, they were beginning to grieve over the barrenness of their union, and their most fervent prayers to God were for a son. "If you had no objection," the young wife said one day to Don Pedro, "I would promise God to consecrate to Him the son He might give us… perhaps then He would hear us?" — "If God grants us a son, dear Anna," answered Don Pedro, "he will be His before he is ours: I shall never, I hope, oppose His designs for him; He is the master: if He calls him to His service, I shall bless Him for it." These holy prayers were granted: God gave them a son, who received the name of Peter. His pious parents offered him to God and made him drink in with his milk the tender piety with which they were filled; the blessed child answered their care beyond all their hopes. One would have said that he loved virtue before he knew it; he guessed its worth, so to speak, and the better his reason made him understand it, the more his soul clung to it. When he was of an age to study, it was decided to send him to Barcelona: it was a much greater sacrifice for his mother; but she loved him more for God than for herself, and this journey was within the designs of Providence, which destined the young Peter for the Society of Jesus.

And indeed, on arriving at Barcelona, the pious schoolboy, to avoid the snares laid under a young man's feet in great cities, confined all his pleasures to the company of the Jesuit Fathers. It was to their college that he went for relaxation after study; it was there that he had chosen the director of his conscience; it was there that he liked to receive counsel; it was there that he studied the models of the perfection to which he felt himself called. Only his body left that holy Society; his heart, his hopes, his spiritual future remained there. His parents, whom he asked for leave thus to bury in a monastery the honour and support of their house and the consolation of their old age, were at first as if crushed under the weight of this overwhelming news. They had counted on sharing him with God in the clerical state, but not on giving him up to Him entirely and bound by monastic vows! But this first movement of nature was soon checked with the help of grace; they gave their consent and even sent their blessing to this beloved son, who entered the novitiate at Tarragona. His first feelings were of joy and gratitude towards God; he looked on himself as a traveller who has just escaped shipwreck and touches the land on which he will henceforth be safe.

From the very first day the exercises of the religious life seemed as familiar to him as if he had practised them all his life; it was said of him that the spirit which had dictated the Rules of the Society to its holy founder had passed into the young Claver to make him practise them. Even then his maxims were: 1. to seek God in all things and try to find Him in everything; 2. to do everything for the greater glory of God; 3. to use all one's strength to reach an obedience so perfect that one submits one's will and judgement to the superior as to the very person of Jesus Christ; 4. to seek nothing in this world but what Jesus Christ Himself sought there, that is, to sanctify souls, and to labour, suffer and even die for their salvation.

Peter Claver was so holy that after he had made his vows his superiors kept him another two months for the edification of the novitiate. His humility persuaded him that this delay was necessary for him to perfect himself in the religious virtues. At the end of that time he was sent, as was the custom, to Gerona to finish his studies. He made such progress there that in a short time he was able to deliver two discourses, one in Latin and the other in Greek; they drew applause on him that covered him with confusion. He studied only from duty. Desire and curiosity to know had no part in his work: the spirit of obedience and the good pleasure of God alone guided all his actions. "Study," says Fr. Pleuriau, "never made him omit any of his exercises of piety; his very work was a prayer. He began it by addressing himself to God; he continued it with God; he finished it absorbed in God, asking Him to teach him above all to love Him sovereignly and solely."

How great, then, was his joy when he was sent to study philosophy at Majorca, where he hoped above all to receive lessons in holiness from Brother Alphonsus Rodriguez, who was then porter of the college, and whom God enlightened with interior lights all the more abundant as he buried himself in the most obscure of offices. As soon as he arrived, Peter Claver went to find him. These two angels of earth recognized each other on sight. Inwardly enlightened as to each other's worth, they were both seized with the same respect, the same confidence, the same love. They prostrated themselves at the same moment one before the other; they understood each other without speaking; their souls had just joined and united in God never to part again! They asked the superior for leave to meet every day at a fixed hour to talk of spiritual things. In these heavenly conversations the soul of Rodriguez passed entire into that of his beloved disciple.

To reward and at the same time encourage Brother Alphonsus's zeal towards his disciple, God revealed to the holy old man the glory He destined for our blessed one, and showed him the thrones shining with glory and majesty spoken of in the Apocalypse. All these thrones were occupied by the Saints who had gained the most merit during their life on earth. Brother Alphonsus was admiring this glory; his eyes were dazzled by it, his soul charmed; he was enjoying these divine splendours that ravished him, when his angel pointed out to him an empty throne, higher and more brilliant than those around it. Encouraged by the kindness of his heavenly guide, the holy religious said to him: "This throne is surely waiting for someone! For whom, then, is it prepared?" — "For your disciple Claver," the angel answered. "He will merit it by heroic virtues and by the prodigious zeal that will make him win a multitude of souls for Jesus Christ in the West Indies."

With what veneration was the same old man thenceforth filled for the Apostle who was to save so great a number of souls and procure so much glory for God! He thought he should let him foresee God's great designs before they parted; he went to find him and said to him: "My dear brother, I cannot tell you enough the grief of my heart at the thought that God is unknown in the greater part of the earth because His ministers are lacking for these distant missions. What tears does not the sight call for of so many peoples who go astray because no light is shown them to guide them, who perish not because they wish to be lost, but because no effort is made to save them! One sees so many idle labourers where there is little harvest!… And where it is abundant, there are so few labourers!… What a multitude of souls would not so many ministers who live in Europe in a sort of idleness send to heaven if they went to America! People dread the fatigue there would be in seeking them, and do not fear the peril and the crime of abandoning them; they despise the riches of those countries, they despise the men!

“Can charity, then, not go upon those seas that greed has furrowed for so long? Whole fleets laden with their treasures arrive in the ports of Spain: how many souls might not be brought from there to the port of eternal happiness! Why must the love of the world be more ardent for the gaining of the one than the love of Jesus Christ for the gaining of the other? Barbarous as these men seem, they are diamonds, still rough indeed, but whose beauty well repays the trouble it costs to polish them.

“O holy brother of my soul! what a vast field for your zeal! If the glory of the house of God touches you, go to the Indies! Go and win there so many thousands of souls who are being lost! If you love Jesus Christ, go, oh go and gather up His blood shed on nations that do not know its worth; labour with Him until death for the salvation of men…!” Peter Claver followed the counsels of his holy friend. He received from him a gift very dear to his heart: some books written in the hand of his spiritual father. After two years of theology he obtained leave to go and work for the glory of God in the West Indies.

To go from Barcelona to Seville, the place of embarkation, he passed so near Verdú that he had only a league more to go to see his parents, whose great tenderness for him he knew, to take leave of them and bid them a last farewell; for he was never to see them again in this world. It would have satisfied a very legitimate feeling and given those dear parents a consolation that was certainly allowed; but it was also the occasion of a merit that would not come again, and our Saint would not lose it. He had not laboured so hard until then to conquer nature only to let it triumph at that moment. He knew besides that the grief of his pious parents would also become one more merit for them. He passed by without seeing them and took ship in the course of April 1610. The voyage was to be long. Peter Claver wished to sanctify every moment of it and use it for the glory of God.

He took charge of the sick among the crew and nursed them with the devotion of the tenderest charity; he prepared their medicines and made them take them, wiped their faces, fed the convalescent with his own hands, prepared the sickest to receive the Sacraments, and left them neither day nor night. Obliged to eat at the captain’s table, he tried to make up for this honour by keeping the daintiest things served him for his dear sick, who were less well served than he.

His touching kindness had so won all hearts that he could dispose of everyone. He had fixed an hour at which all the sailors gathered to hear the explanation of the catechism, followed by the recitation of the rosary. There was no more swearing; no one would have dared to say an unseemly word in his presence; and if a sailor lost his temper while the Blessed was absent, it was enough to calm him to say that Fr. Claver would be told of it.

In spite of the harshness of the climate, the port of Cartagena was the meeting-place of all the sea trade. It was there that the slave-merchants landed the slaves and put them up for sale. It was there that other merchants came to buy them and sell them again in all the surrounding countries, speculating without pity, as on vile beasts, on these poor negroes, sprung from the same father as themselves and like themselves redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Our Saint could not see these unfortunates without feeling a father’s heart for them. He first obtained the favour of working for their salvation under the direction of Fr. de Sandoval, who died after carrying on this holy ministry with the greatest fruit, worn out with fatigue, covered with ulcers, overwhelmed with pain, but still fuller of merits, and happy to leave the apostolate of the negroes as a holy inheritance in the hands of Fr. Claver. Finding himself alone in charge of this fine mission, our Saint devoted his whole life to it. With alms that he goes begging from door to door he procures interpreters, and goes with them to the shore as soon as he learns of the arrival of a slave-ship; and he always learns of it very quickly, for he has promised to offer the holy sacrifice several times for those who should be the first to bring him this happy news, and everyone burned to obtain such a benefit. Most of the wretched negroes believed that they had been torn from their country and their families so that their blood might dye the flags and their fat be used to careen the ships. What happiness for them to meet a friend among these Europeans who treated them with such inhumanity!

They all seemed moved to see this holy Priest so tenderly busy with them, handing out the little provisions he had brought, helping them ashore with his own hand, taking the sick in his arms and carrying them to the carts he had had made ready for them. He did not leave them until he had brought them all to the negro-sheds or the lodgings intended for them. When they were all housed, the good father went back to see them in their huts one after another and, having commended them to their masters, promised to come back as soon as possible.

He inquired about the children born during the voyage and baptized them; then he attended to the sickest, whom he prepared to receive the sacraments if they were Christians, or to receive baptism if they had not received it. This ministry fulfilled, he passed on to the less urgent sick and gave them care that may be called motherly. He was seen doing them the lowest services, those most repugnant to nature, and then, holding them against his breast, he embraced them with the most compassionate affection. He went to seek these poor slaves in the negro-sheds and in the huts. These negro-sheds were vast warehouses, dark and damp, where the slaves were heaped together pell-mell, as one would not heap the filthiest animals. There was no bed there, no seat, not a plank, not a blanket, nothing: the four walls, the bare earth, and on that damp ground, in this sort of cellar barely lit by a few rare openings that seemed to let in only grudgingly a feeble current of air, quite insufficient for so many lungs, one saw hundreds of negroes with barely room to stretch out their bodies, exhausted by excessive labour. Men and women, old men and children, the sick and the infirm, all were thrown in there without the least feeling of pity, and in such destitution of everything that they cried aloud for death, until the charity of the holy Missionary taught them to hope and to suffer. To this situation, so desolating for these unfortunates, must be added the fetid smell that rose from those breasts, those bodies, those sores, and one will have the measure of the repugnance our heroic Apostle had to bear in entering these places of misery and sorrow, of which we can give only a very imperfect idea.

There was no device that his charity did not use to win these poor souls for our Lord: he knew that he could make himself understood only by speaking to their senses. That is why he had made some pictures suited to represent our mysteries to them. Before setting out, he gave himself to rigorous penances and then went before the Blessed Sacrament to implore the divine mercy and the light of the Holy Ghost. After his prayer he took his staff ending in the form of a cross, with a bronze crucifix on his breast and on his shoulder a wallet holding on one side his usual little provisions for the sick and on the other a surplice, the holy oils and everything necessary to set up an altar, and he set off with the brother who was to accompany him and who could hardly keep up with him, so much did the ardour of his charity quicken his pace.

On arriving, he first attended to the sick, whose faces he washed with scented water to lessen the strength of the foul exhalations that infected the air; after which he gave them all the care we have seen him lavish on the newly landed, gave the last sacraments to those in danger, and left them all filled with this excess of charity, which brought them such sweet consolation. The Blessed then went to the appointed place to teach the catechism to those not kept away by work or sickness.

It sometimes happened that among the slaves there were some whose ulcers made them an object of disgust to the others; then the charitable Apostle put them together and covered them with his own cloak. And when he had no occasion to use it in this way, he made a seat of it for the infirm, so that they might sit less hard. Often he got it back in so disgusting a state that it had to be washed several times to get it imperfectly clean. Even then permission to do so was hard to obtain. The Blessed’s mortification was such that he would have put his cloak back on in the state in which it was returned to him, if his interpreters had not prevented him.

The holy Apostle was not content with snatching souls from the devil; he worked with the same care to keep them for Jesus Christ; he watched over them continually, as a good father does with his family. He would stay whole hours in the public square collecting alms; then, the wallet on his back, he went to distribute them in the negro-sheds or the huts, relieving souls even more than bodies. On feast days he went himself to fetch his dear children and led them to the college church to hear Mass. He never met any in the streets without

speaking words of edification to them. He often said to the old men, with a tone of authority: “Remember, my friend, that the house is already old and threatens to fall! Go to confession while you have the time and the opportunity.” To sinners he threw out in passing these fearful words: “God is counting your sins! The next one you commit may be the last!” No more was needed to convert a great number; others were won for God by the mere sight of him; seized with irresistible remorse, they were seen running to him, throwing themselves at his feet, asking his blessing, begging him to forgive them and promising to live more Christian lives. The negroes always went first to Fr. Claver’s confessional; he gently sent away persons of rank: “Señor,” he would say to the men, “you will not lack confessors in the town; I am the confessor of the poor.” And to the women: “Señora, look at my confessional; it is much too narrow for the fullness of your dresses; only poor negro women can get into it; go to another; I am the confessor of the slaves.” But many were not discouraged and, counting on the Blessed’s charity, waited patiently until the crowd of negroes had gone, and then obtained the favour they wanted. The fatigue of this unremitting work, the smell and heat from such a press of negroes, the bites of the mosquitoes, by which he let himself be devoured without ever driving them off, the rough hair shirt that covered him entirely, all these sufferings together overwhelmed the tireless Apostle; he often fell unconscious. In the evening he had to be caught in someone’s arms and carried to the refectory, where to restore his strength he took only a piece of bread with a few roasted potatoes. Back in his room, he rested from his day of labour with bloody disciplines and at least two hours of prayer, often much more. He had been working thus for six years when, towards the end of the year 1622, he received the order to prepare to make his last vows. At first he was covered with confusion, because he regarded himself as unworthy of the dignity of a professed father; but he soon saw in it a means of binding himself for ever to his dear negroes; he went and threw himself at the superior’s feet and told him of his desire to add to the ordinary vows that of serving the slaves until death. This favour was granted him, to second God’s designs for him. He signed the formula of these vows: “Peter, slave of the negroes for ever.” Thus from then on he has no right to a heart except to love them, nor strength except to serve them. Let us look at some instances of all the virtues that he carried to the highest heroism during the forty years of his admirable apostolate. His greatest charity was for the sick and the dying; if someone came at night asking for a Father to assist them at the last moment, he always wanted it to be himself: “Call me at whatever hour it may be,” he said to the porter; “those who work hard need rest; but I, who do so little here, have no need of it.”

However long the illness, his zeal never tired. A poor negro remained infirm for fourteen years, and for fourteen years the charitable Father lavished the tenderest care on him: he took him in his arms and laid him gently on his cloak; he made his bed, then put him back to bed with the same care, after embracing him affectionately. God helped or consoled his zeal by revealing to him the danger of his dear negroes near death, or the fate of their souls after they had left this world. A poor Indian woman, abandoned in a hut, was breathing her last; the Father arrives and finds her without pulse or movement: she was cold. He begins to pray; his fatherly heart was bleeding cruelly!… Soon the sick woman revives, but only as much as the holy Apostle needed to prepare her to receive baptism; as soon as she had been thus purified, her soul left the earth to return to God.

One day the Blessed had just spent a whole afternoon visiting the sick and was returning to the college, worn out with fatigue, when suddenly he stops and heaves a deep sigh: “Brother,” he says to his companion, “let us go this way; let us go into this house; we shall not be long there.” He goes and enters a dwelling where two poor women, in floods of tears, receive him with the gratitude they would have shown a rescuing angel. “Where is the sick woman?” asks the good Father. He is led into a little room, where he finds a woman at the point of death. He exhorts her, hears her confession, gives her absolution, and she dies. Called to a sick woman whom he used to visit, Fr. Claver learns that she has just died. Deeply grieved at not having arrived in time to hear her confession, he prays with tears, begging the divine mercy to forgive him this involuntary delay and asking grace for the soul to which he had not been able to give the last help. But suddenly he rises, his face radiant with happiness: “Such a death,” he says to the weeping family around him, “such a death is

more worthy of our envy than of our tears. This soul is condemned to only twenty-four hours of purgatory; let us try to shorten her suffering by the fervour of our prayers." And, quite astonished at what he had just said, the humble Father hastened out, confused at the opinion of himself he was leaving behind.

The objects of his preference were the sick who inspired an invincible repugnance in others. Living only to make nature die in himself, he eagerly seized every means of conquering it, or rather of keeping it under the rule of grace, which he received the more abundantly the more he seconded it. He stayed in places where, for want of breathable air, because of the fetid and noxious miasmas given off by smallpox, sores and a host of other diseases, several Jesuits could only pass through or fainted after a moment; and when nature threatened to give way, this is how he crushed it without pity. Called one day to the house of Don Ignatio Torme, a rich shipowner, to hear the confession of a negro entirely covered with ulcers, who had been thrown into the most remote corner so that neither his smell nor his sight might be endured, the holy Jesuit was watched in this work of sublime devotion by the shipowner and four Spaniards, his friends, eager to see the extraordinary charity of which they had heard so much. Placed at a distance where they could not be seen, they missed none of the Blessed's movements.

At first sight the holy Apostle is seized with horror!… He was about to draw back!… But at once he stops, ashamed of his cowardice… He goes away from the sick man, goes and prostrates himself and groans before God for not knowing how to serve a brother redeemed at the price of the blood of Jesus Christ. He gives himself a hard discipline and goes back to the sick man. He advances on his knees to him, kisses all his sores, hears the poor negro's confession and spends some moments beside him, consoling him with expressions of the tenderest affection. The heroic Apostle withdraws more humbled than ever at his lack of virtue, and fully convinced that he had failed in charity at the first moment. The shipowner and his friends, filled with veneration for the Blessed, would have gone that moment to throw themselves at his feet and ask his blessing, had they not feared to admit their pious indiscretion.

God rewarded with miracles this charity, which was itself like a permanent miracle. The brother and the interpreter who accompanied him could not bear the repulsive smell that filled a hut; they fled. What was their surprise, on going back in, to breathe pure, fresh air beside a dying man covered with ulcers!

He cured a negro woman by laying his cloak on her: the savages landed that morning asked to know a religion that works such wonders, and received the grace of baptism. In his hands baptism also became a means of healing. A young slave who was dangerously ill had been told that if, while the good Father was hearing his confession, he could only touch his rosary, asking God to cure him because of all the good the good Father did to the negroes, he would be cured. He did so, and was cured. Several slaves having been struck by lightning, Fr. Claver arrives, led by a heavenly inspiration; and, seeing the unfortunates lying lifeless, he raises his eyes and hands to heaven and obtains their restoration to life from the Father of mercies.

One day the whole household of Don Francisco de Sylva was in great commotion: a slave woman had been found lying on the ground without movement; the doctor, like everyone else, judged that she had died of a sudden apoplexy. Fr. Claver, learning of this event, hastens to Don Francisco, who says on seeing him: "Ah, Father, she was not baptized! What a misfortune! And who could have foreseen it!" — "What!" said the Blessed, "is the arm of God shortened, then? He is a good Father! Come, a little faith and confidence in Him!… Where is the slave?" — "Come, Father." And Don Francisco leads him to the body. Fr. Claver addresses a short and fervent prayer to God; then he calls the dead woman and asks her whether she wishes to be baptized. At once she opens her eyes: "Oh yes, Father, I wish it with all my heart!" The good Father baptized her, and at once she rose up in full health.

Another wonder followed in a way from this one. Fr. Claver had forbidden the water used for the negro woman's baptism to be thrown away. A servant, not knowing of this prohibition, threw it into a pot where some plants had been withered for from one to six months. A few days later these plants grew green again

and produced flowers of rare beauty and the most exquisite fragrance.

Peter Claver's astonishing labours were never an obstacle to his regularity in the house to which he was attached. He was the model of the most perfect observance within, as he was without the model of the apostolic virtues. This is what made the rector of the college wish to have him as minister. His humility was alarmed at this choice. Seeing himself as inferior to all his brethren, whom he judged infinitely more perfect than himself, he was astonished at the confidence shown him and ventured to point out to his superiors the insufficiency of his merit and capacity. But all his pleading was in vain; he had to obey. Soon the greatest regularity was seen to reign in the family of which he was the father; so that no one should on any pretext be dispensed from the observance, he saw to it that everyone was provided with what was necessary.

Fearing that the Brothers, because of their duties, might not be able to avoid lateness and lapses, he did part of their work. He swept, tidied, cleaned, helped the cook, the infirmarian, the secretary: he was everywhere, put his hand to everything, and sought above all to humble himself and serve everyone. The sick were, so to speak, his spoiled children; he made himself their servant and their nurse. The Father rector, seeing that in giving Fr. Claver the office of minister he had given him all the offices of the house, thought he should take it from him; but the Society of Jesus could not resign itself to leaving so shining a holiness under a bushel: he was named master of novices at Cartagena. The Blessed submitted as always to the will of his superiors; but, as always, he humbled himself deeply before God at this mark of esteem, which he thought he so little deserved. He increased the rigour of his penances and lengthened his prayers to prepare himself to bear this new charge of master of novices. It was a question of forming Saints, and Fr. Claver found himself so imperfect! Yet, encouraged by the thought that in forming others to perfection he would be able to work more at perfecting himself, and that he would find a spur in the need to back the lessons he would have to give with his own example, he entered on his duties, relying on his confidence in God.

His first care was to teach his disciples to live by recollection, prayer, humility, mortification and blind obedience to the orders of superiors. The most usual subjects of his instructions were then: complete detachment from everything that can hold the soul to earth and prevent it from going to God and uniting itself with Him; ardent desire for all that can raise it to the most sublime perfection; the means of conquering oneself, of taming oneself, of breaking one's own will until one has no other than God's.

These teachings were admirably supported by the master's example: the novices declared that Fr. Claver had never required of them anything that he did not practise in the most perfect manner. But our holy Apostle cut out nothing of his outside occupations: he therefore had to be relieved of the novitiate so that he might give himself wholly to his charity and his zeal. The sick of the hospital of Saint Sebastian were no longer enough for him. He went to nurse and console the lepers of the hospice of Saint Lazarus. During the carnival days a Spanish officer met him outside the town, running along joyfully: "Eh, good Father, where are you going so merrily?" he said to him. — "Dear señor, I am going to keep my carnival with my lepers of Saint Lazarus," this other Vincent de Paul gaily replied. He gathered them at the church door and exhorted them to avoid the leprosy of sin, a thousand times more horrible in the eyes of God than theirs could be in the eyes of men; then, sitting on a stone, he heard their confessions. If the weather was cold, he covered the penitent with his cloak; if he saw him in too much pain or too tired, he had him rest his head on his knees, held him up with his arm, or kept him gently leaning against his breast. He had a marked predilection for the lepers whose more hideous sores had caused them to be shut away in separate cells. These poor wretches, who no longer had arms, the good, heroic Father fed; and if suffering took away their appetite or the courage to accept the food he offered them, he went so far, to rouse and encourage them, as to take a morsel from the same dish and eat it before them. He did what a mother does for her little son.

The hospice church was falling into ruin; he managed to find workmen, materials and money to rebuild it. He did more: he worked on it himself, carrying wood, stones, earth, whatever was heaviest. His meals were sent to him from the Jesuit college; but as he did not wish, among his sick, to be better fed than they were

themselves, he shared out what was brought him among them in turn; and, to satisfy his spirit of mortification as well as his charity, when his lepers had finished, he took back the dish and ate their leavings!

A Spanish fleet brought English and Dutch prisoners before Cartagena, with orders that they were not to land or leave the galleon on any pretext. Fr. Claver, who ran after souls to be saved as after a holy prey, asks and obtains leave to work for the conversion of the heretics. He soon wins the heart of an English prelate, who had the happiness and courage to be converted; his example is soon followed. Some heretics, it is true, rebelling against the grace that enlightens them, for want of arguments heap insults on the holy Apostle, strike him and tear his clothes. But their very violence becomes an occasion of salvation for them; for they see something supernatural in Fr. Claver's gentleness; his patience amid outrages has conquered them: more than six hundred abandon error. The Dutch found health of soul in sickness of body. An epidemic having broken out among them, they were taken to the hospital of Saint Sebastian; there they were caught in the nets of our Blessed's charity. Seeing themselves nursed as they would have been by a mother's hands, all asked to become Catholics; all kept repeating that Fr. Claver's religion was the best, since it did so much good.

With the same weapons he made the same conquests among the many Moslems who were at Cartagena. Some of them, however, cost him very hard mortifications, very long prayers, very bitter tears! But God always ended by granting him the salvation of the souls he bought at this price, and often He worked wonders to give him this consolation, after sometimes making him wait for it several years. Among the poor who came to the college door to receive the alms distributed by Fr. Claver was a Turk of an intractable nature, insensible to kindness, harsh, even cruel: Ahmet answered the good Father's care only with insult and outrage, and yet the best share of the alms was always for Ahmet. Ahmet was the holy Jesuit's favourite beggar, because he was a source of merit to him and because his was a soul very hard to win. This struggle between Ahmet's ingratitude and Fr. Claver's charity had lasted many years, when one morning, long before the distribution of alms, the poor Moslem came and fell at the holy Jesuit's feet: "Father, forgive me; I cannot resist so much kindness! Instruct me, Father; make me a Christian. Your religion makes men better than the Prophet's!" The most desperate souls, the most impious, madmen, apostates, could not resist our Blessed's tender charity. It is true that his incomparable compassion shrank from nothing, not even from miracles. One of his sick having a craving for fruit whose season was past, Fr. Claver brought him the freshest and finest ever seen in the country: the prior had inquiries made throughout the town and its surroundings, and became convinced that the Saint could have obtained the fruit from God alone. One day when he was distributing his alms in a ward of the hospice of Saint Sebastian, heaven chose to glorify him on the very scene of his virtues: a dazzling light was seen to surround his head and spread over his face with marvellous brilliance; when, filled with veneration, people came near to kiss the hand that, in doing so much good, deserved so much glory, he had disappeared: his humility had obtained a second miracle to escape the applause the first drew upon him. His zeal could not be satisfied as long as there remained a soul to save, a misery to relieve, a heart to console. He wished also to take up the prisons of Cartagena, to go into every dungeon and visit every prisoner.

There, as everywhere, he made wonderful conquests for God. The most formidable criminals he brought under his irresistible and gentle influence; the most hardened sinners he converted; the most rebellious natures he overcame. All the prisoners loved him dearly: there was no more blasphemy, impiety or swearing to be heard in the prisons of Cartagena. The Blessed had banished all that; all went to confession regularly, and prayers were said in common every day.

The Blessed had a special grace for softening to criminals the horror of the sentence of death that hung over them. They went up to the gallows with joy, blessing the divine Mercy that gave them such a means of expiation: their death seemed something to be envied. When their souls had gone to the eternal reward due to their repentance, instruments of penance were found on their bodies, which they had used to expiate their crimes themselves; this was a source of great edification.

These immense labours, which would have been enough to wear out and sanctify many persons at once, never made Fr. Claver neglect his beloved negroes, whose slave he had made himself, and slave for ever. He redoubled his care for those who were to leave Cartagena, and whose grief could not be greater than his own. He was continually with them, consoling them. On the day of embarkation this good Father went with them to the harbour, renewed his counsels, embraced them one after another, gave them his blessing and commended them to the captain; and these poor children parted from him with cries of grief that broke his heart. He stayed on the shore until the ships weighed anchor. Then the Indians, still on deck, made him signs of tender farewell, to which he answered with tears; for he saw their souls exposed to the dangers of a sea far more terrible than that which swallows bodies, and he feared that the devil might prevent some of them from reaching the haven of eternal happiness. Those who were taken into the interior of the country he went to see almost every year; torrential rains, violent storms, burning heat, nothing could stop him.

The city of Cartagena contained not only pagans, heretics and Mahometans; there were Catholics whose bad example was well fitted to hinder the conversion of those who were not yet Catholics. From the first days of September to the last of December a crowd of strangers poured into the town and seemed to bring all the passions with them, kindle them by their presence and leave them behind. Fr. Claver undertook to stir them to penance during their stay and, when they had gone, to heal the wounds they had made. Quarrels, gambling and blasphemy seemed to flee before him: he pursued them everywhere, in the tent, in the workshop, in the warehouses. One of the disorders that grieved him most was the immodesty of women in the fashion of their dress. This is how he fought it: he carried everywhere with him a little picture that he had had made according to the lights he received in prayer; this picture showed several devils tormenting a woman dressed as the world requires. When Fr. Claver met a woman whom he knew to follow this fashion, he simply went up to her, took the little picture out of his pocket and held it before her eyes, promising her on behalf of God, whom she was thus offending without scruple, just such treatment hereafter if she went on preferring the law of the world to the law of the Gospel. This means, which might have been imprudent and indiscreet in another’s hands, had in his the happiest results. He was not content with correcting disorders of every kind; he worked also to prevent them by taking great pains with the children. He went into houses and asked to see the children, to whom he always gave a short instruction suited to their age, and he inspired them with a tender devotion to the holy Virgin.

All the persons of rank in Cartagena would have liked to receive his private counsel and put themselves entirely under his direction; a very small number obtained this favour: he always gave preference to his dear slaves. The masters were obliged to let them go before them. He went to the houses of persons of rank only to hear their confessions in case of sickness or to ask them for alms; apart from these two cases he never went to them.

Among the supernatural gifts with which God favoured him, the most remarkable is perhaps that of saving souls from despair. He delivered a woman from a violent temptation to suicide with a crucifix which he told her to put on her heart during Mass. He met another in the streets of Cartagena and stopped her with these words, said very gently: “Where are you going?” She is troubled and does not answer. “Give me what you are carrying,” the holy Apostle adds. The young woman obeys, trembling. She takes from her pocket a piece of rope with which she meant to hang herself from the first tree she should find well away from the road outside the town, and hands it to Fr. Claver, telling him the cause of her despair. He laid the balm of heavenly consolation on this wound and healed it. Being continually united with God, he shared in His knowledge of the future. Dom Gabriella de Mendez, governor of Santa Marta, was to make a voyage to Spain with his family; Theodora, his wife, went to see Fr. Claver and asked for his blessing and his prayers. “Señora,” he said to her, “go with God’s blessing; this voyage will be a happy one; but soon afterwards you will have to make a much more important one.” — “What voyage do you mean, Father?” she asked. “Señora,” he said, “I mean the great voyage…” — “But, Father…” — “Yes, señora, soon after your arrival in Spain you will have

to go into another life: prepare yourself, then, for this great voyage." This prediction was fulfilled in every point: Theodora died a holy death after a happy crossing.

It would take a whole book to tell his miracles; we shall be content to add two to those we have already related. One day he went to the house of a sick man to whom he had been called. It was too late; the sick man was dead. The Blessed takes his crucifix, lays it on the body, and says to the family as he hurries out: "Do not despair; God can cure him." He had not gone ten steps down the street when they ran to call him back. He goes in again to the dead man and finds him in perfect health. God seemed pleased to refuse nothing to this heart so tender and compassionate. A young negro woman was carrying on her head a basket full of eggs that she was going to sell at the market. A Spaniard met her on her way, while the slave's attention was elsewhere and kept her from seeing him so close to her. The Spaniard, furious to see a negro woman not stepping aside to make way for him, gave her so violent a slap that the basket fell, and all the eggs with it. The poor negro woman, in despair at the sight of her broken eggs, raised cries that set the whole neighbourhood astir; she was inconsolable. Fr. Claver was passing at that moment; he comes up, asks the cause of the commotion and, touched to the heart by the young slave's misfortune, goes up to her to console her. "Eh, my poor child, what is the matter? What makes you cry like this?" — "What is the matter? Look, Father! Look, that was all I had!" — "Well, my daughter," the good Father replied, "put your eggs back in your basket and cry no more." As he said these words he touched the eggs one after another with the tip of his staff, and as his staff touched them, the eggs returned to their former state. The slave picked them up, thinking she was dreaming! When she had finished, she turned to thank the good Father: he had disappeared.

But it is time to go to the source of so much holiness and to enter the soul of our Blessed, which was like the sanctuary of all the virtues. We cannot better paint his love for God than by saying that he was continually united with Him; passing through the streets, he saw nothing, heard nothing. He followed the voice, the inner light that led him; he went where God called him. Every moment at his disposal was for prayer, which made Fr. Sebastian de Morillo, rector of the college, say: "I have never been able to learn when Fr. Claver finishes his prayer. At whatever hour I go into his room, I find him at prayer and so lost in God that he neither sees nor hears me." He took two or three hours of sleep, never more; and even this rest was broken by burning aspirations towards God.

He often appeared surrounded by a halo of light whose brightness eyes could not bear. Once, when someone went into his room after bedtime, it was found full of a dazzling brightness. They look for the Saint in vain; at last they see him in the air, his knees bent as though they were resting on the ground, and his crucifix in his hands. He came gently down to the floor with the daylight.

His dearest attraction was the Passion of our Lord; he had little pictures representing its mysteries; he pressed in his hands the one recalling the mystery he wished to meditate, and from this consideration he rose imperceptibly to the most sublime contemplation. On days when his outside occupations left him a few moments of freedom, he went to make a station before a great crucifix placed in the most retired part of the house, and several times he was heard there uttering burning words of love, when he thought himself entirely unobserved by all the religious. It was established that every Friday he went secretly out of his room in the middle of the night with a rope round his neck, a crown of thorns on his head and a cross on his shoulders; he went to the most solitary parts of the house to make as many stations as our Lord made during His passion before reaching Calvary. Our Blessed loved to speak of the unspeakable sufferings of the divine Saviour; he spoke of them often, and always with tears of gratitude and love that delighted those who had the happiness of hearing him. During Holy Week his face bore the mark of so great a sorrow that the most indifferent were deeply impressed by it and saw in him the living image of Jesus going to Calvary to expiate all the sins of the world.

When the negroes were sick and the Blessed was to bring them the holy Viaticum, he first went and swept and cleaned their hut himself; he perfumed it and put on their bed a silk coverlet that he had had given him

for this purpose, in order to show more respect for the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and to make all the negroes present better understand the need of this respect. And in spite of his immense occupations he went to confession every morning with great sorrow and an abundance of tears; then he spent half an hour before the altar to prepare himself to go up to it. He offered the holy Sacrifice with a seraphic fervour that moved those present to tears.

After God, it was the divine Mary whom the Blessed loved most tenderly. He carried on his breast a little book of meditations on the mysteries of the life of the holy Virgin, with little engravings representing each of these mysteries. The Blessed often looked at them lovingly, kissed them, pressed them to his heart and habitually meditated on them; he called Mary the Mother of fair love. He was often heard repeating in his raptures: “O good Mother, teach me, I beg you, teach me to love your divine Son! Obtain for me a spark of that pure love with which your heart ever burns for Him!… Or lend me yours, so that I may receive Him worthily into myself!” On the eve of the feasts of the holy Virgin, Peter Claver prepared to celebrate them by increasing his bodily penances. In the afternoon he heard the confessions of the schoolchildren, to inspire them early with the love of Mary. On the day itself he took part in the dinner he served to his poor beggars at the college door, during which he had music played to cheer them, he said, in honour of Mary; after the dinner, or his poor people’s little feast as he called it, he gave them an exhortation on the feast and then recited the rosary, to which all responded.

Our Blessed had so great a devotion to the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the holy Virgin that he often congratulated her, with tears of consolation, on these two privileges; he loved to speak of them to those who had the happiness of enjoying his confidence, and once, in a friend’s house, he even forgot himself so far as to be rapt in ecstasy. Not content with imploring the protection of his guardian angel, of Saint Peter his patron and of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, whom he called his father, he had also chosen twenty-four Saints to protect him at each hour of the day and night, so that, he said, there should not be a single hour of his life in which he did not feel himself supported before God by a particular advocate.

His charity towards his neighbour followed him beyond this life. He offered the holy Sacrifice, increased his penances and devised new mortifications for the relief of the souls in purgatory; he asked the prayers of devout people for them, and tried to make his negroes understand well the need to pray for their dead brethren.

His life might be called a continual martyrdom. Every part of his life was a suffering that he united with that of his Saviour on the cross. During the forty-four years that he lived in the Society of Jesus he never allowed himself a single glance of curiosity. The beauty of the countryside, even the adornment of the altars, such innocent sights, he denied to his eyes. His room looked out on the harbour: he never once opened it; he did not even dare look through the panes at the arrival of the fleets that brought the whole town running, for he recognized no country but heaven. News from Spain could only be indifferent to him; he asked only whether there were sick on the arriving ships, and sometimes also whether the Christian princes were at peace. His meals were like the light collation taken on the strictest fasts. He refused meat, saying it was too nourishing for his constitution; he slept on a simple mat or on an ox-hide; a piece of wood served him for a pillow. For several years he was even content with the bare ground, and when he was ill he got out of bed at night to lie on the floor. He regularly took the discipline three times, to the drawing of blood. He wore two roughly cut wooden crosses, one on his back and the other on his breast; every part of his body had its own instrument of penance. This garment of pain was completed by a crown of thorns and gloves he had made himself from little horsehair cords; it was always thus that he recited his breviary; and, to humble himself further before the divine Majesty, he then added a rope round his neck, as a criminal condemned by human justice wears it.

Nothing equalled his angelic patience in bearing all that might be painful or disagreeable to him. Some young Spaniards, angered by his reforms, threatened the holy Apostle’s life; they carried their fury so far as to fall upon him dagger in hand. “If it is God’s will that I should die,” he said to them gently, “here is my life; you

may take it." They were at once disarmed and were converted. One of his superiors never ceased testing him to make sure of his virtue; he went so far as to tell him that he was an ignoramus who did not even know Latin. The holy Religious kept silent; and when the charge was pressed, he opened his mouth only to admit that it was right, that he was an ignoramus. Later he was asked why he had not said a word to justify himself, he whose ability was well known. "It matters little," he answered, "whether one passes for learned or ignorant; but it matters greatly to be humble and obedient." Everything in Fr. Claver and around him showed how much he loved holy poverty, which he called his mother. For some years he had no other room than a dark, narrow, inconvenient closet, which he had to leave in order to write. Ever conforming himself to his divine Master, who had not even a stone to rest His head on, he always contrived to take for his own use what was regarded as no longer serviceable. The most worn and most patched clothes were for him; an order from his superior was needed to make him change them. He showed a studied care even in the smallest things to satisfy his love of poverty.

He took all the candle-ends, even the shortest, for his own use; he would never have a whole candle. He wrote on the backs of waste papers and used only stumps of pens already worn down by the other Fathers. He gathered up the scraps of bread to feed on by preference. Often in the afternoon he came in still fasting and worn out with fatigue, finding nothing to eat because the cook had forgotten him. This forgetfulness seemed to him quite natural, and he excused the Brother to anyone who blamed him.

Our Blessed carried the practice of obedience as far as that of poverty. Quite sure of doing God's will in doing that of his superiors, he was happy to obey with the most complete abandonment. After his death all his thoughts on holy obedience were found among his papers, contained in these few lines: "In the religious life the shortest and surest road to perfection is obedience to superiors. I rely more on a single word of theirs than on a hundred private revelations."

He said also: "One cannot decide well for oneself, one cannot see oneself well, one cannot judge oneself well. One therefore needs the eyes and judgement of another." A superior, to test his obedience, though he was very old and infirm, rebuked him severely for an insignificant matter and ordered him to remain on his knees. The Saint obeyed and waited more than an hour for leave to rise. He never did his own will, but always what he could regard as the will of God. In the absence of real superiors, he obeyed equals and even inferiors. If he had work to do in the kitchen, he uncovered his head before the cook and humbly asked for his orders. If he had only a simple negro as companion on his missions, he obeyed him in everything. All these virtues drew their lustre from humility, which freed them of all that might be earthly in them. "The humble man," he says in a few words written in his own hand and found after his death, "desires that those who make him suffer should be convinced, not that he is humble, but that he is in fact contemptible."

All his life he had the lowest opinion of himself, as was seen on a thousand occasions; when he was asked for advice on an important matter, he would answer: "I am not capable of giving an opinion on that; see the Fathers of the college; they have more learning and wisdom than I. I am good only for the slaves and the poor." When he was asked to pray for some business, he would answer: "A good way to make it fail!" Perhaps, says his historian, he might be accused of lacking dignity. That is true, very true; he entirely lacked the feeling that the world adorns with that name, which is nothing but one of the thousand disguises of pride. Fr. Claver knew no other dignity for the Christian than his likeness to the divine Model, whose adorable face was covered with ignominy, whose crown was made of thorns, whose sceptre was a reed, whose throne was a cross.

So many virtues, practised heroically for forty years, had won for Peter Claver a veneration that laid the whole city of Cartagena at his feet. His reputation for holiness spread far through the Indies and reached the various ends of the world through the strangers he converted each year; and as the veneration he inspired grew every day, all Orders, all ranks, all ages hastened to show it to him.

The bishops who came to that city would not have wished to leave it without seeing him and asking his prayers for their dioceses. The generals of the army, the commanders of the fleets, the most prominent persons went to see him on their arrival, undertook nothing important without asking his prayers, and did not leave without obtaining his blessing and taking leave of him.

The governors of Cartagena often came to commend the welfare of the city to him. Everyone, in a word, consulted him in difficult cases, and his advice was received as if God Himself had spoken through His holy Apostle. What might perhaps not be believed, had it not been certified by thousands of witnesses, is that at the times of fitting-out and of the arrival of the fleets, when everyone was busy with his own interests before all else, if Fr. Claver was seen, everything was forgotten for him. People left their business to run to the Saint, throw themselves at his feet, ask his blessing and kiss his hands. He was surrounded and could go no further until he had blessed everyone. Even the children crowded round him, all crying at once: “Holy Father Claver, pray for me!” Such was the affectionate veneration he inspired in all.

Everyone wanted to have relics of him; people went so far as to keep the hair the barber cut off him.

In an illness he suffered in 1634 it was necessary to bleed him: the superior ordered his blood to be collected and kept; all the Fathers of the college wished to have a few drops of it; cloths were soaked in the Blessed’s blood and given to each religious of the house, and all kept them with the respect due only to the relics of the Saints.

The Spouse of souls, holy as Fr. Claver’s soul was, willed to purify it still further by quite special sufferings before calling it to Himself. Having been attacked by the plague that was ravaging Cartagena, the Blessed remained infirm to the end of his earthly life. His greatest suffering was no doubt to be no longer able to spend himself in the service of his neighbour: he was reduced to being served himself. He had to be fed by putting the food to his mouth; he had to be got up, put to bed, dressed; he had to be held up to walk. But this did not prevent him from having himself carried to the confessional, where he stayed until he fell exhausted and unconscious. He still visited the hospitals; when he felt it was for the last time, he embraced his dear lepers, bade them the tenderest farewell and commended himself to their prayers. The negro who had been given him as attendant was of a savage nature, almost without heart or intelligence; he was the instrument God used to try His servant’s patience at every moment: his temper and roughness became a torment to the holy Apostle, who answered his excesses of harshness only with excesses of tenderness. When the negro brought only one candle for the night instead of two, a miracle made it last until dawn. For the Saint hardly slept any more and, spending every night in converse with God, wished to have light in his room so as to give himself the sweet consolation of seeing his crucifix and the objects of piety around him.

Towards the middle of the year 1654 Fr. Claver said to Brother Gonzalès, who was much attached to him: “I shall die soon, and it will most certainly be on a feast of the holy Virgin.” He sent to ask Doña Isabella d’Urbina, his spiritual daughter, whom he associated in all his good works, to send him her sedan chair so that he might go and see her. When he reached her house he said to her: “My daughter, this is the last time I come to hear your confession; I am going to die soon. Our Lord has been good enough to promise me that I shall die on the day of the Nativity of the holy Virgin.”

Two days before that fair feast, as our Blessed was talking of his death with Brother Gonzalès, he told him of his wish to be buried at the church door in front of his confessional, so as to be trodden underfoot, so to speak, after his death, as he would have wished to be during his life. The brother put his humility to a hard test by asking him how many negroes he had baptized during his apostolate. Fr. Claver reflected for a moment and could not help saying with a kind of embarrassment: “I think I have baptized more than three hundred thousand.” On 7 September, when the infirmarian came in, he found the holy Jesuit motionless. The calm of his face, the serenity of the smile that remained on his lips, the heavenly expression of his whole appearance, made them think at first that he was plunged in a sweet ecstasy; but it was soon seen that he was

about to leave the earth. The Community presses round him to see how Saints die; the whole city of Cartagena asks to witness this fine spectacle; at first the intention was to let in only the chief personages, but the door is besieged by the crowd, which redoubled its cries: “We want to see the Saint! We want to see him before he dies! He is our father, he belongs to us, we want to see him!” The room was invaded and pillaged, for everyone wanted a relic of the Blessed. Nothing was left him but the blanket that covered him and the portrait of his holy friend Brother Rodriguez, which a religious defended to the end. People kissed his hands and invoked him aloud amid tears and sobs. The negroes uncovered his sacred feet and, kissing them with inexpressible tenderness, kept saying that they lost everything in losing “the good father of the negroes, who was going away with the good God and not taking them with him.” After midnight the Blessed sank perceptibly. The commendation of the soul was said, and as soon as it was finished, while those present repeated in tears the names of Jesus and Mary, between one and two in the morning on Tuesday 8 September, the feast of the Nativity of the holy Virgin, the holy Apostle departed to take in heaven the place that had been shown to Fr. Rodriguez. His body seemed to regain the colour of life immediately after his death; it gave off so sweet and extraordinary a fragrance that it penetrated the soul.

The city of Cartagena bore the cost of the funeral: there was a concourse such as is perhaps not met with in the life of any other Saint. The public force had to be called on to prevent the holy body from being torn to pieces.

He worked two miracles in favour of those he had loved most on earth. His dear spiritual son, the duke of Estrada, brother-in-law of Doña Isabella d’Urbina, having obtained the favour of placing the palm in the Blessed’s hand, the hand opened of itself and grasped it; and when his beloved negroes came round him in tears, asking him not to forget them, to bless them, to pray for them and always to be their good father, a fragrant sweat spread over his face. “It is for us,” they cried, “it is for us that the good Father is sweating! He wants us to have relics of him. No one would have given us any! But he loves us! Thank you, good Father!” Saying this, they gathered the sweat like a heavenly dew with cloths, which they shared among themselves as the greatest of treasures.

In the first month of the year 1657 the coffin in which Fr. Claver’s precious remains had been enclosed was opened. In spite of the damp and the lime with which it had been surrounded, the body was found entirely sound. The flesh had the firmness and freshness of life. He was declared venerable in 1747 by Benedict XIV; finally, on 16 July 1850, the sovereign pontiff Pius IX placed him among the Blessed. The ceremony of beatification took place in the church of Saint Peter’s in the Vatican on 21 September 1851.

He is painted surrounded by negroes whom he baptizes, catechizes, directs, blesses or gives the sacraments to, because his great occupation at Cartagena was teaching the principles and practice of religion to the poor African slaves.

We have taken this account from the Histoire du bienheureux Père Claver *by M. d’Aurignac.*

Feast of the Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1683. — Pope: Innocent XI. — King of France: Louis XIV.

> *Le nom de Marie, qui signifie étoile de la mer, convient parfaitement à la très-sainte Vierge qui est l’astre glorieux dont la lumière remplit le monde.*
>
> *The name of Mary, which means star of the sea, perfectly suits the most holy Virgin, who is the glorious star whose light fills the world.*
>
> *Roman Breviary.*

The feast of the name of Mary was already celebrated in several places when Pope Innocent XI ordered, by a decree of 20 November 1683, that this same feast should be universally received throughout the Church, in

memory of and in thanksgiving for the signal victory we are about to relate.

The city of Vienna, capital of Austria, was besieged by the Turks and Tartars in the year 1683 with an army of nearly two hundred thousand men. They hoped to make themselves masters of this city, which they regarded as the key of Germany, and then to push on to the heart of Christendom. Never were troops seen prouder or more ready for victory. They had already wrought great havoc and committed unheard-of cruelties in the places they had passed through: all the surroundings of the city and more than fifty leagues of country round about were completely ruined. At the approach of this formidable army the emperor fled with the empress his wife. The Turks opened the trenches on 14 July. After two months of siege they had so far advanced their works that the city was at last reduced to extremity and could hold out only four or five days more, for it was poorly fortified.

While things were going thus at Vienna, public prayers were being offered at Rome, in France and throughout the rest of the Christian world for the success of the Christian arms. Special vows were made above all to the holy Virgin, to obtain from her goodness a particular protection. The hope and expectation of the faithful were not in vain; so many prayers, made with such perfect confidence, for so just a cause and to so powerful a Protectress, were heard: when everything seemed to favour the designs of the besiegers and the city was on the point of surrendering, swift help was seen to come from heaven. The king of Poland, John Sobieski, appeared on a height with a flourishing army of picked troops, marching in fine order and ready either to give their blood and their lives or to bring freedom to the Christians shut up in the city of Vienna.

On the morning of 12 September John Sobieski first went with Prince Charles of Lorraine to the chapel of Saint Leopold to hear and himself serve Mass, during which he held his arms stretched out to heaven; he received communion there and had the priest give the blessing to the whole army; and then this intrepid hero, full of zeal for the glory of the true God, said aloud: “Let us march against the enemy with entire confidence under the protection of heaven and with the help of the holy Virgin.” The army came down from the mountains where it was and advanced towards the camp of the Turks. It attacked them so opportunely and with such vigour that the enemy, after some resistance, was forced to give way; the Turks fled shamefully, abandoning their camp, their tents, their artillery and their munitions. Sobieski, having entered Vienna, went to thank God for the victory at the foot of the altars, and while the *Te Deum* was being sung he showed as much humility as gratitude and devotion. Amid the applause he received on all sides he attributed the success of his arms to God alone. During the siege the city had experienced the effects of the special protection of the holy Virgin. Among the dangers from which it was thus saved we shall speak only of this one. The magnificent church of the Scots had been burned, and the fire was about to reach the arsenal, where the powder and other munitions were. Had the arsenal blown up, a breach would have been made in the ramparts, and the city would have been lost; but the flames suddenly stopped, and there was time to remove the powder and the other munitions. This happened on the feast of the Assumption, a day on which the faithful were imploring the protection of the holy Virgin against the enemies of the Christian name, as Pope Pius V had done before the battle of Lepanto. The Pope, having learned the news of this victory, had solemn thanksgiving offered to God for it in all the churches of the Christian world; and, to perpetuate the memory of so great a benefit, due to the intercession of the holy Virgin, he instituted in perpetuity a feast in honour of the Name of Mary, so that this feast, which was formerly kept only in a few particular churches, is now universal, in accordance with the decree of Innocent XI dated 20 November 1683, and another of 5 February 1684 ordering the recitation of a proper office composed expressly for the purpose. This feast is celebrated on the Sunday falling within the octave of the Nativity of the holy Virgin.

It is therefore very fitting that, following the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff, we should try to help to make the glorious Name of Mary respected, a name so favourable to those who invoke it with confidence in their needs; to this end we shall consult what the holy Evangelists and the Doctors of the Church who have written on this subject tell us. The Holy Ghost tells us plainly by the mouth of an Evangelist that the name of

the Virgin is Mary: *Nomen Virginis Maria*. The Jews once said, speaking of Jesus: "Is not His Mother called Mary?" We must therefore agree with Saint Ambrose, Saint Bernard and Saint Anselm that this name was chosen by God and comes from heaven. Indeed, the parents of the holy Virgin gave her this name only after receiving a revelation about it. But to know all its meanings better, let us examine the interpretation the holy Doctors give of it, since Saint Chrysostom, writing on the Epistle to the Romans, declares that names alone, and especially those in the holy Scriptures, hide great treasures from us and sometimes reveal to us the nature and properties of things.

The name of Mary in the Hebrew tongue means Lady or Mistress; so Saint Peter Chrysologus explains it in his 142nd sermon, on the Annunciation: *Maria hebraeo sermone, latine Domina nuncupatur.* Saint John Damascene, speaking of the birth of the same holy Virgin, says: "Grace, that is, Anne, which means grace, gives the world a mistress, that is, Mary, which means mistress; for," this Father adds, "she becomes with full right the Sovereign of the universe when she becomes the mother of the Creator of the world." Indeed, she doubtless enters into the rights of her Son, who declares that all power has been given Him in heaven and on earth: *Data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra.* The dominion of this divine Mistress is so wide that Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all things, willed in a manner to submit Himself to her authority, according to this word of Saint Luke: *Erat subditus illis*, "Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary." Let Calvin, then, no longer say that it is wrong to give the name of Queen and Mistress to this holy Virgin on the pretext that she calls herself only the Handmaid of the Lord; as if Abigail, who out of virtue also took the humble title of servant of the servants of David, had for that reason deserved any less the dignity of wife of that great king; and as if Esther, who called herself the vassal of the kingdom of the Persians and Medes, had been for that reason less worthy to be acknowledged as the sovereign of those peoples. It is therefore with reason that the divine Mary is called Queen and Mistress, according to the interpretation of this name.

Saint Bernard, Saint Bonaventure, Saint Isidore, the Venerable Bede and several other holy Doctors say that the name of Mary means to be enlightened and to enlighten others: *Maria idem est quod illuminata et illuminatrix.* Indeed, can one doubt that the holy Virgin is filled with light, since the angel Gabriel declares that she is full of grace: *Ave Maria, gratia plena*? "Mary," says Albert the Great, "received the abundance of her lights in the continual reading of the holy Scriptures, in the good use she made of her judgement, in the exercise of the highest contemplation, in the familiar converse she had with the heavenly spirits, in the habitual revelations she received from God, in the experience and taste of the sweetest divine and supernatural operations, which taught her how good it is to keep up a sweet intercourse with her God, in the conversation she had with the angel Gabriel, who announced to her the highest of mysteries, and above all in the moment when the Holy Ghost came to work in her to form the body of the Saviour." In short, all these favours and all these lights were granted her by the liberality of the three adorable Persons of the most holy Trinity, who seem to have willed to unite in the holy Virgin all the graces that are granted to the other Saints only by measure. If the name of Mary means that she is filled with light, we must add that she spreads this light on others: *Maria idem est quod illuminatrix.* Indeed, one may say that if God at the beginning of the world created two lights, the greater, which we call the sun, to rule the day, and the lesser, which we call the moon, to rule the night, so too we may recognize in the Church two other mysterious torches: Jesus Christ, the sun of justice, who by a light that is His own enlightens all men who come into the world, as Saint John teaches us; and the other, the divine Mary, whose beauty is compared to that of the moon, *Pulchra ut luna*, because she borrows her light from Jesus Christ, as the moon receives its light from the sun, but then communicates it and spreads it kindly over the whole mystical body of the Church. Indeed, this fair star is always at the full and communicates of its fullness to all the world: *Plena sibi,* says Saint Bernard, *et superplena nobis.* This is what made Saint Bonaventure say that the glorious life of Mary has brought light to all ages and that it is a shining torch that God has set on the candlestick so that all the world might be enlightened by it; so we sing in her office that her life, most admirable, gives great lustre to all the Churches: *Cujus vita inclyta cunctas illustrat ecclesias*; and in this thought it is often said to her that she alone has

dispelled the darkness of all heresies: *Cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo.* Saint Bernard gives a good reason for this when he says that she is a ray of the divinity: *Radius divinitatis.* It is not without reason, then, that the name of Mary signifies her who brings light everywhere.

It is again in this same sense that the Church in one of her hymns calls the holy Virgin Star of the sea: *Maris Stella.* Saint Bernard says that the name of Mary bears this in its meaning: "She is truly that Star of Jacob which had been foretold and which was to serve as a guide to all men." So in the Litanies she is given the title of Morning Star, *Stella matutina*, because she appears without delay, comes before us, and brings great joy to all who are in danger on the waves of the stormy sea of this world, which is full of darkness. The same Saint Bernard also says these words full of piety and unction, which the Church uses in the office of the feast of the holy Name of which we are speaking: "If the winds of temptation rise against you, if you find yourself among the reefs and rocks of tribulation, look at this Star, call on Mary: *Respice stellam, voca Mariam*; if you are tossed by the waves of pride, ambition, envy, detraction, turn to this Star, invoke the name of Mary; if anger, avarice and incontinence shake the ship of your soul, cast your eyes on this Star and have recourse to Mary; if the enormity of your sins and the most dangerous state of your conscience trouble you and throw you into confusion, and if, thinking of the dreadful judgements of God, you begin to be overcome by a sadness that drives you to despair, think at once of Mary: *Cogita Mariam*. Remember Mary," this Father continues, "in all the perils in which you find yourself, in all the anguish that presses you and in all the doubts you are in: *In periculis, in angustiis, in rebus dubiis, Mariam cogita, Mariam invoca*; let this name be always in your mouth; let it never leave your heart: *Non recedat ab ore, non recedat a corde*; and at once you will experience," this Father concludes, "how justly it is said that the name of the Virgin is Mary: *Et sic in temetipso experieris quam merito dictum sit: Et nomen Virginis Maria.*" Saint Bonaventure says something similar, speaking of the frequent dangers met in the stormy sea of this world: "We must," says this Father, "cast our eyes on Mary as on a favourable star whose light will guide us unfailingly in the ship of innocence or of penance on the sea of this world, and will bring us to the harbour of the heavenly country towards which we are bound."

Here are some other meanings that the holy Fathers of the Church also give us, which we shall report only briefly so as not to dwell too long on this subject. Saint Jerome says that the word *Maria* bears in its interpretation *Mare amarum*, "a sea full of bitterness"; and Saint Bonaventure explains this thought when he says that "Mary is filled with bitterness through the compassion she feels for the most piercing sorrows her dear Son suffers in His passion." Saint Ambrose says that this venerable name of Mary contains this meaning: *Dominus ex genere meo*, "It is of my family that the Lord is to be born"; it is plain enough how true this interpretation is, since Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of lords. A famous interpreter, Placidus Nigidius, adds that the word *Maria* also means *Mare amoris*, "Ocean of love," which he supports with these words of the Church, who, addressing the holy Virgin in one of her canticles, says to her: *Eia, Mater, fons amoris*, "Have pity on us, most worthy Mother of the Saviour, you who are a fountain of holy love"; whence she is also called "the Mother of fair love": *Mater pulchrae dilectionis.* Let us go on examining with the holy doctors the sweetness and the influence of this sacred name. "One cannot even," says Saint Bonaventure, addressing the holy Virgin, "utter the syllables of which your name is made without receiving some reward, according to the testimony of your favourite Saint Bernard, who says to you on this point: 'O most great, O most loving, O most praiseworthy Virgin Mary, your name is never uttered but you inflame hearts with a holy love, and one cannot think of you but you at the same time inspire feelings of joy in the souls of those who cherish you!'" — "This name is so powerful, so profitable and of such great worth," says the learned Idiota, "that when it is uttered heaven finds satisfaction in it, earth feels joy, and the angels receive pleasure. Do we wish to know the reasons?" this author adds. "Mary explains them herself when she says, in the words of the Wise Man that are applied to her: The sweetness of honey is nothing beside the sweetness of my spirit, and the good things I possess and communicate surpass all that is most sweet and pleasant." The Church, in the Antiphons and Hymns she addresses to her, says to her: *O clemens, o*

pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria! She is told that she is the gentlest of all virgins: *Virgo singularis, inter omnes mitis*; that she is the Mother of mercy, the life, the sweetness and the hope of all the faithful: *Mater misericordiae, vita, dulcedo et spes nostra.* "Indeed," Saint Bernard continues, writing on the *Salve Regina*, "Mary is lovable to all; she brings delight to all hearts; she is the throne of sweetness, a river of goodness, and no one leaves her without being favoured with her benefits."

We must therefore admit that the memory or remembrance of the name of Mary, far more than that of King Josias, is among the faithful like the pleasant composition of a sweet odour given off by precious perfumes that the skill of the workman has blended together: *Memoria Josiae* (let us say here, *Mariae*) *in compositione odoris facta, opus pigmentarii; in omni ore quasi mel indulcabitur ejus memoria.* Not without reason is this worthy Virgin called Mystical Rose in the Litanies, a Rose that Peter Damian calls *Rosam redolentissimam* and Saint John Climacus *Odoriferam*, "the sweetest of Roses." Her companions, says the Canticle, ran after the Bride, drawn by the odour of her precious perfumes; these flowers are the virtues that adorn the divine Mary: *Fulcite me floribus*; and so the Church declares that she was always surrounded with roses and lilies: *Circumdabant eam flores rosarum et lilia convallium.*

But if we recognize so much sweetness in the name of Mary, this name is none the less most terrible to the enemies of glory. "Not only does all hell tremble under the dominion of this august Princess," says Saint Bernard, "but her name alone puts all the devils to flight"; and writing on the Canticle of Canticles he says that "the mere invocation of the name of Mary dispels in a moment all the evil works of the wicked spirits: *Ubi nomen Mariae invocatur, daemonum nocumentum effugatur, quia Maria terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.*" — "Visible enemies," says Saint Bonaventure, "do not fear armies drawn up in battle as much as the rebel angels suffer at the mere utterance of the name of Mary: they are forced to withdraw, to see themselves robbed of all their strength and to lose all firmness, like wax before the fire, as soon as anyone remembers her name, or invokes it, or tries to imitate some virtue of her who bears it." It is in this connection that the Church tells her that she is terrible as an army set in array: *Terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.* Indeed, the power of the name of Mary over the infernal powers appears especially in the exorcisms of the Church, where the force of this name is very frequently used, and countless examples have shown by experience how formidable it is to those spirits of darkness when it is uttered with devotion. But if this venerable name strikes such terror into the rebel angels, it gives rise to unspeakable joy in the minds of the faithful angels, who, like the Church militant, regard it as the name of their true queen and mistress: *Regina caelorum, Domina angelorum.* So the Church, in the office of her glorious assumption, proclaims aloud that she has deserved to be raised to a throne above all the choirs of angels: *Exaltata est sancta Dei Genitrix super choros angelorum.* Some Fathers of the Church say that it was out of singular respect that the archangel Gabriel, announcing the mystery of the Incarnation to the holy Virgin, did not dare to pronounce her name, but was content to say: *Ave, gratia plena*, "Hail, full of grace!"

If the rebel angels and the heavenly spirits have respect for the name of Mary, the Church militant on earth is also bound to acknowledge every day the excellence and power of this august name; for, without speaking in detail of all the help that countless individuals have received by uttering this venerable name in their need, we have only to recall to the minds of the faithful so many victories, so many conquests and so many other such advantages won by Christians over infidels by invoking the sacred name and powerful protection of Mary.

The invocation of this venerable name brings us help so prompt and so singular that we need not fear to assert, after Saint Anselm, that we are sometimes helped sooner by remembering the name of Mary than by invoking that of Jesus, her only Son: *Velocior est nonnunquam salus, memorato nomine Mariae, quam invocato nomine Jesu unici Filii sui*; and he at once explains his thought. "It is not," says this Father, "that Mary is more powerful than her Son or above Him, since it is not from her that He holds His greatness and authority; on the contrary, it is she who borrows hers from Him. But it happens thus because the Son of

Mary, being the master and invested with the office of judge, must weigh the merits or demerits of the one who invokes Him; so when He is invoked in His own name He does not always grant at once what is asked of Him, and He acts justly in doing so. But when the name of the Mother is invoked, even if the unworthiness and demerits of the one who prays prevent him from being heard, the merits of this worthy Mother nevertheless cause him to be heard favourably, because," says this Father, "God has willed thus to honour Mary, so that all the world might know that all things can be obtained from Him through her."

It is again in this thought that Saint Bernard, in one of his sermons, addressing the holy Virgin, speaks to her thus: "O blessed Mary, he who loves you honours his God, and he who remains constantly in your service is never abandoned by God; he who invokes your name with a good heart obtains all that he confidently believes he can obtain: *Qui nomen tuum puro corde invocat, quidquid postulat, indubitanter consequitur*."

"Are you afraid," this holy Doctor says again, "to approach God the Father, whose voice alone dismays you? Remember that you have a mediator, who is Jesus! Does the majesty of Jesus still strike terror into your heart? Have recourse to Mary; she will become your advocate with Him." Hugh of Saint Victor gives a fine reason for this perfect confidence we should have in the protection of the holy Virgin when he says that "we can have very easy access to her without fear, because we see in her person a nature very like our own: *Respice ad Mariam; non illic invenies quod timeas; genus tuum vides.*"

For the history of this feast we have kept the account of Fr. Giry.

Saint Sergius I, Pope and Confessor (701)

Sergius, of a Syrian family from the province of Antioch, was born at Palermo in Sicily; his father was called Tiberius. Coming to Rome in the time of the pontiff Adeodatus (672–676), he was first admitted among the clergy. His aptitude for sacred chant led to his being chosen as teacher of the first class of music. Promoted to the rank of acolyte, he passed through the various degrees of the hierarchy in turn and was ordained priest by Pope Leo, who gave him the parish title of Saint Susanna. During the seven years of his priestly ministry Sergius, in his devotion to the cult of the martyrs, never failed to celebrate Mass in the catacombs on the anniversaries of the principal Saints who rest there.

At the death of the sovereign pontiff Conon, the people of Rome split into two factions: one chose the archpriest Theodore, the other the archdeacon Paschal. The struggle went on with cruel obstinacy; at last the votes went to the venerable priest Sergius. He was taken from the midst of the crowd and led to the oratory of the blessed martyr Caesarius, where he was proclaimed pontiff. The archpriest Theodore humbly made his submission; the archdeacon Paschal resisted: he was deposed and shut up in a monastery, where he died five years later (692) in final impenitence. In the time of Sergius the emperor Justinian assembled a council at Constantinople, at which the apocrisiarii of the apostolic see were present; their signature was obtained by deceiving their good faith. Then Sergius's signature was wanted; but he firmly refused it, because a number of canons contrary to all the rules of the Church had been fraudulently added. This council has been called *in Trullo* because it was held under the dome of the emperor's palace; it has also been called the Quinisext, as it was to be a kind of supplement to the fifth and sixth general councils.

On the pontifical throne Sergius did not remain idle. A notable portion of the wood of the true cross, enclosed in a silver shrine and until then relegated to the sacristy of Saint Peter's, was placed by him in the Constantinian basilica, where every year, on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, it is offered to the adoration and kisses of the faithful people. Sergius gave the Vatican basilica the great golden statue of the blessed apostle Peter; the silver chair, weighing a hundred and twenty pounds, which is admired in the apse of the church, is also a gift of this pontiff, as are the six candelabra of the same metal that adorn the entrance of the confession. The body of the blessed pontiff Leo I, which had remained until then in its original tomb at the entrance of the Secretarium, was moved by him into the interior of the basilica, into a fine mausoleum.

He ordered by a pontifical constitution that the *Agnus Dei* should be sung alternately by the clergy and the people before communion; and for the feasts of the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Assumption and the Purification he instituted a litany procession, which was to set out from the church of Saint Hadrian and go to Saint Mary Major.

After still other works, all undertaken for the greater glory of God, Sergius fell asleep in the Lord after a pontificate of thirteen years, eight months and twenty-three days, and was buried in the Vatican.

Taken from the Liber Pontificalis. — *Cf. Darras,* Histoire générale de l'Église, *vol. xvi, p. 444.*

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[1] The Bollandists call them Rufus and Rufianus, and say that they died by the sword.

[2] Saint Kiaran, called *the Younger* to distinguish him from another Saint of the same name who was a contemporary of Saint Patrick, apostle of Ireland (372– 464), was of low birth in the eyes of the world: he was converted on hearing a passage of the Gospel read in church. Two monasteries, one on the island of Inis-Aingean and the other in West Meath, owe their foundation to him. — Godescard.

[3] See 2 January and 9 December.

[4] We said a word about her in the additions of the Bollandists on 8 September.

[5] We gave her life on 30 August.

[6] See his life on 20 July.

[7] See 17 July.

[8] She is shown holding a lantern in one hand and a cruet of oil in the other, recalling that she went every day, very early in the morning, to a chapel whose lamps she kept. — She is also shown crossing a river (the Xamara) on her apron, which serves her as a boat. The explanation of this emblem and other details about our Saint can be found in the life of Saint Isidore the Husbandman, volume v, page 432.