

**THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

by

JOHN FOXE

Commonly known as

FOXES' BOOK OF MARTYRS

Volume 1

From the Death of Jesus Christ to Frederic Barbarossa

Published by the Ex-classics Project, 2009

<http://www.exclassics.com>

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The emperor Commodus casting a dart at the wild beasts

— "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy." — HEB. xi 36-38.

— "their blood is shed
in confirmation of the noblest claim
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies." — COWPER.

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Introduction to the Ex-Classics Edition

The Times

There was never a worse place or time to be religious than Europe in the 16th Century. These were cruel times. There was the death penalty for all but the most petty offences, and hangings were a popular spectator sport. Indeed, hanging was a lenient punishment: flaying, impaling, breaking on the wheel, and being hung upside down and sawn through from groin to scalp were alternatives. Lesser crimes such as begging were punished with flogging, branding or mutilation. Torture was widespread and trials, if held at all, often a travesty of justice. Warfare, too, was conducted with the utmost brutality; massacre, rape and pillage of the civilian population were standard practice, and the slaughter of enemy prisoners was common, sometimes even including those who had been promised their lives if they surrendered.

Religious hatred made things even worse. Reading Foxe, or other authors of the time, whether Protestant or Catholic, it is striking how absolutely certain everyone was that not only were they right, but that their opponents were the agents of Satan. Foxe knew that the Pope was the Antichrist predicted by the Bible in the same way as he knew that water was wet or that the sun went round the earth. From this certainty sprang the intolerance from which persecution arises. It was argued, that if a murderer, who only slew the body, deserved death; how much more deserving of death was a heretic, whose evil falsehoods could destroy the victim's soul. This being so, it was clear that any means could and should be used to stamp out these devil's spawn. Both sides believed that there was only one true religion and all deviation from it was hellish; they only differed about which religion it was. Catholics persecuted Protestants and vice versa; each side persecuted its own heretics with equal vigour. In Eastern Europe, the Orthodox faith was both perpetrator and victim. In England, the official religion changed four times in less than thirty years, and each change was accompanied by persecution of those who would not change with it. The division of Europe into Catholic and Protestant powers, often at war with one another, meant that in some countries (especially England) preaching the wrong religion was regarded as supporting the enemy and punished as treason.

The Book

John Foxe or Fox (1518-1587), a staunchly Protestant divine, wrote his book as this story seen from the Protestant point of view. *The Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church*, better known as Foxe's Book of Martyrs, was first published in English in 1563. (see the Bibliographic Note). In this enormously long history of the Church from the death of Christ to the accession of Queen Elizabeth I, he is anxious to prove firstly the complete hatefulness, evil and corruption of the Catholic church, the papacy and the monastic orders, and secondly to assert the right of the monarch to appoint bishops and clergy, and to dispose of church property and income at will.

Everything (and that means *everything*) which supports this view goes in; everything which does not is either left out, glossed over, or rejected as *ipso facto* untrue because asserted by his opponents. For example, his treatment of Savonarola is breathtaking in its omissions. To read Foxe's account, one would think that

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Savonarola was a humble monk, plucked from his cell and burned for preaching a few sermons – there is not a word about his capture of the government of Florence, theocratic rule (with bonfires of vanities,) nor of his inciting a French army to invade Italy and occupy Florence; still less of his claims to possess miraculous powers.

When Foxe's sources support his prejudices, however, his credulity knows no bounds; he is as ready to peddle the myth of Jewish blood-sacrifices of Christian children as he is to believe in the foundation of the church in England by Joseph of Arimathea. When he gets closer to his own times, however, his accounts are in most cases taken from eye-witness evidence or official documents and must be accepted as basically factual in most cases. There is no doubt that Protestants were savagely persecuted by Henry VIII and especially by Mary I and that this contributed to the fear and hatred which animates the book. The gruesome and enormously detailed accounts of the trials and martyrdoms of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer and all the other victims of Bloody Mary's tyranny are sober fact. Nonetheless, any students tempted to regard the book as a work of history are warned to check anything Foxe says with some more even-handed historian before reproducing it. We recommend *Reformation: Europe's House Divided* by Diarmaid MacCulloch for a general overview or *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* by Eamon Duffy for a more detailed account of the Marian persecutions.

Influence

Foxe's Book of Martyrs was very widely read and had a deep influence on English thinking for centuries. In the Seventeenth century, it contributed to what historians have called the "Catholic myth"; that is the belief that English Catholics, in reality a powerless and beleaguered minority, were a vast conspiracy ready to seize any opportunity to overthrow the state, enslave the people, introduce the Inquisition etc. It is arguable that this belief was one of the principal causes of the English Civil War, and quite certain that it was a cause of the rebellion of Monmouth and the "Popish Plot" conspiracy, not to mention the expulsion of James II in the "Glorious Revolution". A century later, the Gordon riots of 1780 drew most of their strength from it; in the words of Dickens in *Barnaby Rudge*:

. . . the air was filled with whispers of a confederacy among the Popish powers to degrade and enslave England, establish an inquisition in London, and turn the pens of Smithfield market into stakes and cauldrons; when terrors and alarms which no man understood were perpetually broached, both in and out of Parliament, by one enthusiast who did not understand himself, and bygone bugbears which had lain quietly in their graves for centuries, were raised again to haunt the ignorant and credulous.

Well into the Nineteenth century these ideas were widespread. In vulgar form they were held among the less educated. George Eliot refers to this often, though of course she was too sensible to share them. Among the more educated and civilised, they were believed in a more educated and civilised way – see the editor's introduction . William Cobbett, in his equally but oppositely biased *History of the Protestant Reformation* (pub. 1826) devotes some space to refuting Foxe.

And today? Ian Paisley and his followers certainly sleep with it under the pillow, as do some Scottish Presbyterians and US Deep South fundamentalists, and the religion described in Philip Pullman's *Dark Materials* series bears a close

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resemblance to the Catholic church as imagined by Foxe. Most modern opponents of the Catholic church, however, have entirely different reasons for their views. In his splendid book *The English*, Jeremy Paxman makes the case that Foxe, more than anyone else, is responsible for the half-fearful, half-contemptuous attitude of many English people towards their fellow-Europeans:

This sense of being uniquely persecuted and uniquely guarded must, obviously, be connected with religious belief. But the relevant text is not in the Bible. It is John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, a lurid piece of propaganda detailing the suffering and death of Protestants executed during Queen Mary's attempt to turn England back to Rome. It ought to be taken as the third Testament of the English Church. The book first appeared in 1563. It had expanded by 1570, the year of Elizabeth's excommunication, to 2,300 pages of often gory descriptions of the oppression of English Protestants at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church. Anglican authorities ordered it to be displayed in churches across the country, and the illiterate had it read to them. It stayed on show in many churches for centuries, a ready reference for anyone who doubted the willingness of English-men and -women to die for their beliefs. By the end of the seventeenth century, perhaps 10,000 copies were in circulation. Throughout much of the following hundred years, new editions were produced, often in the form of serializations: after the Bible, it was the most widely available book in the land.

John Foxe's purpose in describing the executions of the victims of persecution was to demonstrate the Church of England as "the renewing of the ancient church of Christ." It was the church in Rome that was deviant. Christianity, Foxe suggested, had arrived in England in the reign of King Lucius of Colchester, and only later with missionaries from Rome. (Another fable, the Glastonbury Legend, tells, of course, that Joseph of Arimathea brought Christianity — and the Holy Grail — to England soon after the crucifixion.) The accession of Mary to the throne, and the reign of terror that followed as she tried to restore the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church, was, therefore, some mad aberration. . . .

The influence of this great tract must have been profound. At a religious level, the historian Owen Chadwick believes that

"the steadfastness of the victims, from Ridley and Latimer downwards, baptized the English Reformation in blood and drove into English minds the fatal association of ecclesiastical tyranny with the See of Rome ... Five years before, the Protestant cause was identified with church robbery, destruction, irreverence, religious anarchy. It was now beginning to be identified with virtue, honesty, and loyal English resistance to a half-foreign government."

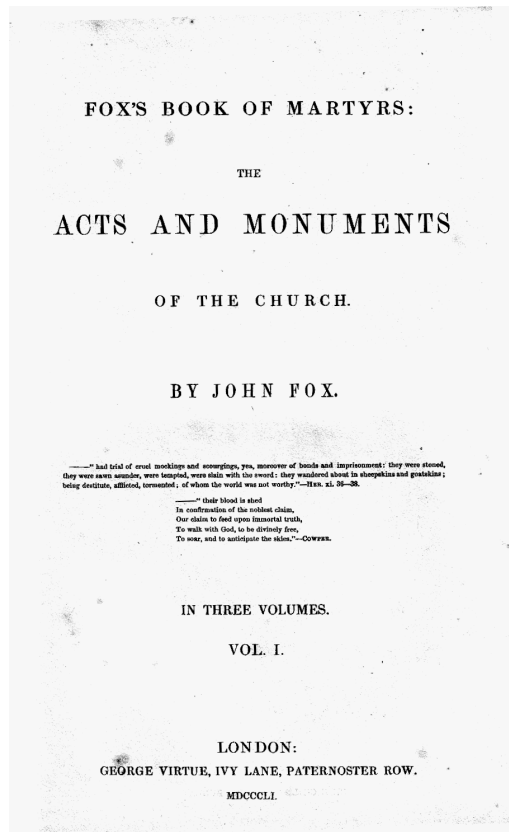
Not only did *The Book of Martyrs* identify the Roman Catholic Church with tyranny, it associated the English with valour. Any citizen could enter almost any church and discover for themselves the ruthlessness of foreign powers. They learned at the same time of the unbending courage of the English casualties. The effect of the book was not merely to dignify English Protestantism and demonize Roman Catholicism, but to hammer home the idea of themselves as a people alone. Being embattled had a moral purpose.

It sometimes seems that the English need to think of themselves like this
(Extract from pp. 89-91 of the 1st edition, Michael Joseph, London, 1999. Copyright, and quoted by Mr. Paxman's permission, which is gratefully acknowledged)

Bibliographic Note

The Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church by John Foxe (or Fox), better known as Foxe's Book of Martyrs, was first published in Latin in 1550 and subsequently in an English translation, revised and expanded by the author, in 1563, with subsequent versions in 1570, 1576 and 1583. See the Introduction (below, p. 10) for the detailed publishing history of the early editions. The book was extremely popular and went into very many editions, often abridged and revised almost beyond recognition. There are editions still in print, and available on the internet, which resemble the original so little that one thinks of Robert Bruce's axe which had had two new heads and three new handles since his death.

This version is taken from the edition by John Cumming, published in 1851, which is a slightly abridged reprint of the 1563 edition with the language and spelling modernised.



Title Page

The divisions into parts and chapters have been made by us for the convenience of the readers. The glossary is also our work. Otherwise the text is as close to the original as possible.

Editor's Introduction.

REVERERE VULTUS ET VULNERA TOT FORTIUM VIROILUM,
 QUOTQUOT PRO LIBERTATE TAM STRENUE DECERTARUNT,
 MANES ETIAM EORUM QUI IN IPSO CERTAININE OCCUEUERUNT.
 — MILTON'S DEFENSIO SEGUNDA.

No book, with the exception of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, has been so extensively, and at the same time so deservedly, popular as Fox's Book of Martyrs. It has almost invariably made its appearance under the auspices of some discerning spirit, at the moment its lessons needed to be most widely learnt, and its truths most profoundly felt. No sooner has popery begun to lift its head, like Marius of old, amid the marshes of Minturnæ, aiming even from its ruins at supremacy and making proselytes, than the Acts and Monuments have come forth to resist its spread and crush its hopes. It is here literally true, "he being dead yet speaketh." Nor is this to be wondered at. The scenes which Fox so graphically depicts, the tragedies he records, very often from personal knowledge, to have been acted upon them, the names of the holy men who fell victims to the emissaries of the papacy, the truths taught at the stake, which superstitious priests hoped to annihilate in the flames that consumed their advocates, and the Bibles they tried to bury in the graves that contained the ashes of the "noble army of martyrs;" — - these and other stirring facts are well fitted to arouse long dead recollections, to lead us to pity, not to proscribe, the poor Romanist, who is the victim of a cruel sacerdotal tyranny, and to bless and praise the Lord our God, who gave to our fathers grace to labour, and to us the high privilege of entering into their labours. The volumes of Fox are the faithful registers of the awful deeds of the Church of Rome, the transcripts of those dreadful principles which have made every country in which they have obtained the ascendancy, from the wilds of the Arab to the steppes of the Cossack, a very Aceldama. The numerous editions through which the Acts and Monuments have passed show plainly that the martyrologist speaks a tongue that finds an echo in the hearts of the people. They feel his volumes to be the comments only on a sacred cause, to which were devoted the strength of manhood and the grey hairs of age. They reverence the martyrs that sealed it by their blood. May they draw from the earth that contains their honoured ashes motives to persevere in the paths they travelled. May we never forget that husbands, wives, brethren, sisters, sons, and fathers fell, like the beauty of Israel, in their high places, "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints." Our sweetest and most precious privileges are, under God, the fruits of their travail, the price of their lives, freely given, that we, their offspring, may live free.

Originally Fox's Martyrs appeared in Latin, and bore the following title:—
 Commentarii rerum in Ecclesiâ gestarum a Wiclefi temporibus usque ad annum AND, 8vo. 1554; or, An Account of Transactions in the Church from the times of Wycliff to the year 1500. Five years after this a much larger volume was issued, bearing the following title:— Rerum in Ecclesiâ gestarum, maximarumque per Europam persecutionum, ac sanctorum Dei Martyrum Commentarii, in folio, Basileæ, 1559; or, Records of Transactions in the Church, and of the leading Persecutions of the Saints and Martyrs of God throughout Europe. About four years after the appearance of this edition, i. e. about A.D. 1563, one Henry Pantaleon published at Basle a continuation of the Acts and Monuments, which seems to have been subsequently incorporated with

the original. The date of the first edition in English is, according to Dr. Dibdin, A.D.1563, Its title is as follows:—ACTS AND MONUMENTS of these latter and perilous Days, touching Matters of THE CHURCH; wherein are Comprehended and described the great Persecutions and horrible Troubles that have been wrought and practised by the Roman Prelates, especially in these Realms of ENGLAND and SCOTLAND, from the Year of our Lord a thousand, unto the time now present. Gathered and collected according to the true Copies and Writings, Certificatory as well of the parties themselves that suffered, as also out of the Bishops' Registers who were the Doers thereof, By JOHN FOX. London, 1562-3, from the press of JOHN DAY.

A second edition also in English was printed and issued by Day in 1570, with additional wood cuts and illustrations.

A third edition appeared in 1576, entitled, The first Volume of Ecclesiastical History. The Sufferings of the Martyrs newly recognised and enlarged by the Author, J. Fox. 2 vols, folio, 1576.

The fourth edition appeared in 1583. Its title is as follows:—"ACTS AND MONUMENTS of Matters, most special and memorable, happening in THE CHURCH, with an Universal History of the same; wherein is set forth at large the whole Race and Course of the CHURCH, from the primitive Age to these latter Times of ours, with the bloody Times, horrible Troubles, and great Persecutions against the true Martyrs of CHRIST, sought and wrought as well by Heathen Emperors, and now lately practised by ROMISH PRELATES, especially in the Realm of ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND. Newly revised, and now the fourth time again published.

By JOHN Fox. 1583.

The last edition of the sixteenth Century appeared in 1596, and bore the following title:— ACTS AND MONUMENTS of Matters happening in THE CHURCH, with an Universal History, &c., as it was recognised by the AUTHOR, Maister JOHN Fox. The fifth time newly imprinted. Anno 1596.

All these editions are in black letter. The best and most authentic is understood to be that of 1563. Accordingly, it has been selected as the basis of the present edition. From 1684 to the present time every edition has been in the Roman letter.

We cannot afford space to enumerate recent editions. Their great number is proof of the universal esteem and value of the work. But it may probably be asked, What necessity is there for another edition, seeing there have been already so many? Our answer is the reason of our labours. Almost every edition has been either a collection of all the extraneous and irrelevant matter by which Fox's narratives are frequently cumbered, of great bulk, and of greater expense; or mere abridgements, fit for fashionable circulating libraries, but unnerved, and despoiled of the greatest excellences and most precious chapters of the hoary martyrologist. Seeley's noble reprint is fit for the libraries of universities, the archives of museums, the tables of scholars. It is a literal and exact reprint. But its price and its shape repel the ordinary reader. The compilations that have preceded and followed it are entitled to the name of Fox's Acts and Monuments for no other reason than that the main facts and incidents have been gathered from the pages of the venerable chronicler. It does therefore seem to be most desirable that a complete and yet popular edition of the Acts and Monuments of Fox should appear. Such an edition we now profess to lay before the public. In this it will be found that Latin quotations and references, including extracts and letters to and sometimes from the martyrs, and repetitions in the shape of

headings, are substantially all that have been removed. The bulk of the work is thus reduced, while the original matter remains almost unaltered and unimpaired. We have extracted only a few weeds, in order that those plants which our heavenly Father planted may appear in all their goodly proportions. The features of the martyrs themselves are not touched or altered in the least; incrustations only are removed. The present edition is in all respects fitted to instruct the learned, to interest the ordinary reader, and to present to both neither a dull nor a deficient edition of the Acts and Monuments of Fox.

All the early editions were illustrated by frequent but rude wood cuts. The engines of perverted mind for torturing the confessors of the faith were so intricate, the modes of martyrdom so varied, but all in the infliction of pain exquisite, and some of the scenes at the same time so extraordinary, that these illustrations became almost essentially necessary. All that was historically and topographically correct in the wood cuts of the early and authentic editions will be retained in the present. The manipulation, style, and execution only will be of the first excellence. Other subjects arising out of the body of the work will be illustrated; and thus an edition of Fox will be got up that will be an acquisition to the libraries of the learned and unlearned.

Something must be said of the veracity and faithfulness of our martyrologist. Since his records came to occupy a large share of patronage and popularity, objections have been urged, not only from papal sources, as was to be expected, but from professing protestants. One of the most bitter papal opponents of Fox was the wily Harding. The following are some of the chaste and indigenous terms in which this Jesuit speaks of our author: "There have not so many thousands of your brethren been burned for heresy in these last twenty years as ye pretend; and this is the chief argument ye make in all that huge dunghill of your stinking martyrs, which ye have entitled Acts and Monuments." To this Bishop Jewel makes the following free and faithful reply: "Ye have imprisoned your brethren; ye have stript them naked; ye have scourged them with rods; ye have burned their hands and arms with flaming torches; ye have famished them; ye have drowned them; ye have summoned them, being dead, to appear before you; ye have taken up their buried carcasses and burned them; ye have thrown them out unto the dunghill; ye took a poor babe newly born, and in a most cruel and barbarous manner threw him into the fire. All these things are true, they are no lies. The eyes and consciences of thousands can witness to your doings. Ye slew your brethren so cruelly, not for murder, or robbery, or any other grievous crime they had committed, BUT ONLY THAT THEY TRUSTED IN THE LIVING GOD. The worst word that proceeded from their lips was, 'O Lord, forgive them; they know not what they do: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' In the mean while, ye stood by and delighted your eyes with the sight. Oh! Mr. Harding, your conscience knoweth these be no lies; they are written in the eyes and hearts of many thousands. These be the marks of your religion. Oh what reckoning will ye yield, when so much innocent blood will be required at your hands!"

Milner, a zealous and subtle Romanist, in his work entitled *The End of Controversy*, declares that "Cranmer and others of the protestants were consigned to the flames because they had been guilty of high treason. Fox is a liar, and not to be believed even when he speaks the truth." All this may be exceedingly convenient to the champions of the papal hierarchy, but they know well that the martyrs in the days of Queen Mary, who, Lingard the Romish historian says "was one of the best of the English princesses," suffered not for infringement of civil law, but for the maintenance of gospel truth. The policy of the Jesuits is always to father on protestants the very

crimes of which they themselves are guilty. Milner and Lingard show how well they have studied in the school of Ignatius Loyala. The protestants burned in the days of Queen Mary were burned, as legal and civil documents still accessible demonstrate, simply for disclaiming transubstantiation, the supremacy of the pope, and the assumed right of the Romish priesthood to debar the laity from reading the sacred Scriptures. But, on the other hand, the papists who suffered in the days of Elizabeth were, as the indictments and other authentic records show, executed for high treason, for regicide principles, and for open or disguised, but clearly proved, opposition to the dynasty and sceptre of Elizabeth. A convicted murderer of unrenewed heart will of course naturally impeach judge, jury, and evidence. The papacy however has not put down the gospel, which embosoms the glory and the functions of Christ; and it shall not crush the humbler records, which stamp his true character on the exploits of antichrist. Neale, a far abler and purer witness than Milner, or Lingard, or Harding, confirms the testimony of Jewel in these words: "Fox was a person of indefatigable labour and industry, and an exile for religion in Queen Mary's days; he spent all his time abroad in compiling the Acts and Monuments; which were published first in Latin, and afterwards when he returned to his native country with enlargements. Vast were the pains he took in searching records and collecting materials for his work; and SUCH WAS ITS ESTEEM, THAT IT WAS ORDERED TO BE SET UP IN ALL THE PARISH CHURCHES IN ENGLAND." "No book," continues the historian of the puritans, "ever gave such a mortal wound to popery as this."

It may be objected, that the same necessity does not now exist for the republication of this celebrated work. This is a great mistake. If the Romish hierarchy had renounced the canons, decretals, bulls, and rescripts, that embody the worst elements of persecution, it would be ungenerous to upbraid them with the deeds of their predecessors. But they neither have renounced, nor can, as Romanists, renounce, the principles that received the stamp of infallibility in days that are passed. The Church of Rome cannot recede one jot from her ancient pretensions without renouncing the ground on which she stands. It would be suicide to admit that her most sanguinary canons were sinful and erroneous. Nor does she wish to make any such concession. She may cast dust in the eyes of protestants, she may profess all meek and merciful things; but this is designedly, and for a specific end. Depressed, she arrays herself in all the pomp and splendour of universal liberality and good will; but upon an uncontested throne, in Spain, in Italy, and in Britain too, if she were what she would be, these attractive assumptions drop off, and the woman drunk with the blood of martyrs trampling on the name of Christ, and on the hopes and happiness of believers, starts into bold and prominent relief.

Persecution, it is only fair to admit, has certainly been practised by individuals claiming to be the children of the protestant faith, but never has the principle that originated it been incorporated in any of the creeds of the protestant churches. This is precisely the difference between papal persecution, and such instances of severity as have been ascribed to protestant reformers and ministers. Persecution is embosomed in the canons of the Romish Church, whereas it is abjured and reprobated in the creeds of the protestant church. If a Roman catholic persecutes, he acts in full accordance with the principles to which he has subscribed; if a protestant persecutes, he acts in diametrical opposition to the articles he professes to adhere to. When a Roman catholic disclaims persecution, he thereby impugns the infallibility and retreats from the ground occupied by his Church; when a protestant persecutes, he thereby renounces his faith, and enters on territory infamously sacred to Rome. The rule of

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faith and conduct held by the Roman catholic is, "The Bible or written word, and tradition or the unwritten word, and both propounded and expounded by the Church." Now the two last limbs of this triple rule have been dyed in blood, They have been the fountain-heads out of which the Inquisition drew numerous precedents, Dominic most ample instruction, and the fourth Lateran its anti-social canons. The rule of faith held by protestants, on the other hand, is, THE BIBLE ALONE, in which we defy the acutest sceptic or bitterest papist to extract one precept to persecute, or one precedent for ecclesiastical extirpation of heretics. When, therefore, Roman catholics persecute, their rule of faith applauds them; when protestants persecute, their rule of faith condemns them. The former rule is the nurse of persecution, the latter the extinguisher of it. The one carries the faggot, lights the flames, and cheers the actors in the auto-da-fe; the other brings living waters from life's most merciful fountain, to quench the fire and to refresh the martyr, and, it may be, to convert the murderer. Hence in the papal Church Pius V. and Dominic are canonized and beatified; and to keep their sanguinary conduct fresh in the minds of their descendants, there are collects with special reference to these persecutors in the English Missal for the use of the Roman catholic laity, used on the proper Sundays in every papal chapel in England. What can be clearer evidence of the animus of the Roman catholic hierarchy, or of the justice of our charge against these principles, than the following reference to a *canonized!* or *beatified!* persecutor in the English Missal for the use of the laity: "O God, who has enlightened thy church by the eminent virtues and preaching of blessed Dominic, thy confessor, grant that by his prayers we may be provided against all temporal necessities, and daily improve in all spiritual good." Again, "Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts we have offered thee, and by the merits of blessed Dominic thy confessor, grant that they may be healing to us."

This man was employed by Pope Innocent III. to trace out and punish those heretics the pious and holy Albigenses. His weapons were persecution, the blood of saints is on his robes, and were the papacy improved such a collect as that we have extracted would be expunged from the Missal.

In the protestant church such men are branded as guilty persecutors, and thanks and glory rendered unanimously to Him who has made us to differ. If it may be replied, that some of the protestant Reformers persecuted, we admit it. This ought not to be denied, as some with more enthusiasm than discretion have done, May we not ask, Is this to be wondered at? The Reformers had been nursed at the bosom of a Church in which persecution is incorporated as a vital and essential element, and applauded in precedent and urged in precept. The earliest lesson they had been taught was the propriety of extirpating heretics in order to put down heresy; and the wonder is not that they used carnal weapons in one or two isolated instances, but that they so soon abjured the unholy spirit, exorcised it from the creeds they drew up, and abandoned it, rejoicing in a holier faith in their after-conduct. The Church of Rome never can in her corporate character renounce persecution. She must let go her assumption of immutability and infallibility, if she disclaim the principles or abjure the patrons of persecution. Some of the most illustrious councils of the Roman Church enacted persecuting canons. The Councils of Tours, Narbonne, Beziers, and Thoulouse passed a variety of anti-social and cruel laws against those witnesses for Christ, the Albigenses and the Waldenses. The third Council of the Lateran, and above all the fourth, and subsequently the fifth, issued decrees that stain the history of man, and present the papal hierarchy to future ages visibly with blood upon its most gorgeous robes. Ultimately the scattered efforts of the Romish hierarchy were concentrated and

systematized in the institution of the Inquisition. Languedoc, Spain, Portugal, and Goa all testify to the deeds of this dreadful incubus on freedom, faith, and happiness. The soil of those lands, it is true, bears no traces of the innocent blood shed upon it.

Vineyards, and golden harvests, and rural hamlets now meet the eye, where murder and falsehood, cruelty and bloodshed, fused into one, composed the character of the murderer, and where mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, blended into one, made up the temper of the martyrs; but the wounds inflicted on Christianity, on man, and on the glory of God, are fresh and bleeding, and will re-open, should we ever prove forgetful of the deep debt of obligation we owe the "noble army of martyrs," or become dead to the yet profounder gratitude we must now feel to that gracious God, who, in his mercy, has cast our lot in better, even in halcyon days.

It is almost supererogation to furnish proofs of these assertions. Romanists must smile at the scepticism of some protestants. We might refer to the massacre on the eve of St. Bartholomew, as a proof not merely of the sanguinary spirit then cherished by the Romish apostacy, but of their yet unabandoned adherence to it at this day. At Paris, in 1572, the poor Hugonots, who had been decoyed and deceived by false professions, were murdered to the number of five thousand according to Mezerai, six thousand according to Bossuet, and ten thousand according to Davila. "The streets of Paris flowed with blood. Charles IX. and his queen feasted their eyes on the dead that floated down the Seine. The day-light, which discovered so many crimes, which the darkness of an eternal night ought for ever to have concealed, did not soften their ardour by these objects of pity, but exasperated them the more. The populace and more dastardly, being warmed by the smell of blood, sixty thousand men, transported with this fury and armed in different ways, ran about wherever example, vengeance, rage, and the desire of plunder transported them. The air resounded with a horrible tempest of the engines, blasphemies, and oaths of the murderers, of the breaking open of doors and windows, of the firing of pistols and guns, of the pitiable cries of the dying, of the lamentations of the women whom they dragged by the hair, of the noise of carts, some loaded with the booty of the houses they pillaged, others with the dead bodies they cast into the Seine; so that in the confusion they could not hear each other speak in the streets; or if they distinguished certain words, they were those furious expressions, "Kill, stab, throw them out of the window." Some were shot on the roofs of houses, others were cast out of the windows; some were cast into the water, and knocked on the head with blows of iron bars; some were killed in their beds — wives in the arms of husbands, husbands in the bosoms of their wives, and sons at the feet of their fathers. They neither spared the aged, nor women great with child, nor even infants." Mezerai's History of France. See vol. ii. p. 1098. Paris, 1646.

The question naturally occurs, How would our blessed Lord have looked on such a scene? What verdict would he have uttered over such a record? He would have wept over the wickedness of man, and deplored the dreadful catastrophe that so cruelly overtook the innocent and the helpless. His professed successor and representative, the pope, however, "went in procession," according to the testimony of Mezerai, "to the church of St. Lewis, to render thanks to God for so happy a victory;" and his legate, in the pope's name, congratulated the French king on his exploits; and in the Roman Missal or Prayer Book, used in every Roman catholic chapel throughout the kingdom, this poor people are taught to pray on the festival of Pius V., who urged Charles IX. to the murderous massacre, in the following words:

"O God, who wast pleased to raise blessed Pius to the dignity of chief bishop, in order to depress (i. e. crush) the enemies of the church."

FOXES' BOOK OF MARTYRS

This keeps persecution fresh before the people. Pope Gregory XIII., only regarding the good which he thought likely to result from this to the catholic religion in France, and to perpetuate the memory of this event, caused several medals to be struck; whereon he himself is represented on the one side, and on the other side an angel, carrying a cross in one hand, and a sword in the other, exterminating the heretics, and more particularly the Admiral Coligné. In Spain the same deed was praised in the presence of King Philip, and they dared to call it the triumph of the church militant. See *Fleuri's Eccles. Hist.* vol. xxiii. Book 173, p. 557. Nismes, 1780.

The BULL UNIGENITUS, which, according to the evidence of Dr. Murray, the Roman catholic archbishop of Dublin, is received by the Romish Church throughout all Ireland, decrees that, if required, the secular arm is to be called in to compel and coerce those who hold the truths of the gospel to recant and renounce them. Its words are, "We moreover charge our venerable brethren, the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, and other ordinaries of districts, and the inquisitors of heretical wickedness, utterly to coerce and compel, by the above-mentioned censures and penalties, and by the other remedies of law and deed, THE AID OF THE SECULAR ARM BEING INVOKED FOR THIS PURPOSE IF IT BE NECESSARY, all who oppose and resist."

The Catechism of the Council of Trent asserts, that those who quit the Church of Rome may "be judged, *punished*, and anathematized."

Dr. Delahogue in his Class Book for the instruction of the priests educated at Maynooth, states that the Church retains her jurisdiction over all baptized persons, as a commander retains authority over deserters, and may denounce and decree for them similar and severe punishments.

The worst and bitterest persecutors in the past history of the Romish Church are, we find, canonized and beatified as saints. St. Dominic, the harbinger, if not the founder, of the Inquisition, St. Thomas Aquinas, whose *secunda secundæ* are replete with persecuting principles, St. Ferdinand of Castile, a burner of heretics, and Pius V., are embalmed in the devotions, and presented as models to the imitation, of the Roman catholics of Great Britain.

We do not so much condemn the laity of the Church of Rome. They do not know the full extent of the wickedness of that apostacy of which they are the victims. We pray for them. We pity them. Our present work is for them as for ourselves. It is another warning cry to come out of Babylon. Fox's Book of Martyrs is republished in its present popular form, not only to warn protestants against the subdued pretences of this awful and unchanged superstition, and thereby to prepare them to resist and repel it by Scripture, fact, and argument; but also to stir up Roman catholics to abjure a Church so branded in the tablets of universal history, and so doomed in the pages of the word of God. We here enter on no crusade against their rights or privileges as citizens. We seek higher and nobler objects. We thus beseech them to flee from Babylon as from a crumbling ruin, replete with the prestiges of approaching destruction. It is our heart's desire and prayer unto God for them that they may be saved. But our affection to them, however intense, must not induce us to compromise our faithfulness to protestants. We desire to awaken and impress them especially. We desire to resuscitate and nourish in their hearts a more thrilling sense of the privileges they enjoy, a profounder impression of the gratitude they ought to cherish toward their martyred fathers, and of the responsibilities, the solemn and weighty responsibilities, that devolve on them.

The loudest boast made at the present day by the Church of Rome is her UNITY, and with the exhibition of this she expatiates at no ordinary length on the dissensions of professing Protestants. We do not in these few observations attempt to vindicate the unity of protestants, but rather to show that the Romish assumption of unity is totally devoid of truth. We must not forget that the value of unity depends on the nature of the things of which it is composed. Concord becomes conspiracy when it is against the truth of God and the rights of humanity. Aaron the high priest, and a vast multitude besides, were united to a man in the worship of the golden calf. Korah and his people, and the ten tribes at Beth-el, were each thoroughly united, but are one and all Scripturally and justly condemned. The Samaritans were more united than the Jews, having no sects or divisions. Satan and his angels are as united as Michael and his. Hell is the site of unbroken unity; for unity is an essential mark of the kingdom of Satan, who knows, and acts upon the knowledge, that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. We must therefore look at the things in which men are united, in order to elicit a just estimate of the value of their union. If we apply this test to the Church of Rome, we shall find it a gigantic conspiracy against the Prince of peace — the concord of unenlightened minds and unsanctified spirits, to raise the creature to a level with the Creator, and to exalt the church above Christ.

It will be found that the unity of which the Church of Rome so repeatedly boasts springs from one of two sources, IGNORANCE or COMPULSION. It arises first from *ignorance*, and is dissolved the moment that the light of truth shines upon it. The Ephesians enjoyed uninterrupted unity when they, ignorant of the one living and true God, simultaneously shouted, "Great is Diana of Ephesus." The Jews almost unanimously concurred in the dreadful sentiment, "Not this man, but Barabbas." During the middle ages all the doctors of Christendom were perfectly united in holding that the earth stood still, and that sun, moon, and stars revolved around it; and so the Church of Rome is perfectly united in the worship she pays the Virgin Mary, and the implicit faith she cherishes in the sacrifice of the mass. But in her case, as in the others referred to, light introduced breaks up the false harmony, and evolves a powerful discord. Paul threw a handful of living sunbeams on Ephesus; the gospel was made to bear on the population of Jerusalem by the apostle of the circumcision; and the demonstrations of Galileo descended on the dogged resistance of the Vatican, and unity gave way to division at the moment that error gave way to truth.

The unity of the Church of Rome is, in the next place, the product of *compulsion*. It is that of the iceberg. All heterogeneous substances are compressed into one mass, not by the sweet attractions of homogeneous elements *ab intra*, but by the compression of all antagonist materials *ab extra*. It lasts as long as it is unvisited by light and warmth, but dissolves and separates as soon as the genial sunbeams fall upon it. In Spain no other faith dare be professed. In Rome protestantism is treason. No wonder there is an external and apparent unity. Bayonets are far more effective quellers of discord than the Thirty-nine Articles. Hands are therefore united, while the hearts they belong to are at the antipodes of each other. The Church of Rome in fact confounds unity and uniformity; and for this latter, which never has been, and never can be secured in the physical, moral, or spiritual world, she has sacrificed hecatombs of holy men, and furnished the elements of that solemn and ever-resuscitated testimony against her, FOX'S BOOK OF MARTYRS.

The Apocalyptic cage of unclean beasts and birds is the meet symbol of the Church of Rome. These are merely coercion without, and corruption within; a scene

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, unutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire."

Let me here avail myself of the opportunity of impressing upon all protestants the necessity of greater and more cordial unanimity. Never was Christian union more urgently required. Never were the prospects of such concord more brilliant. United truth must prevail against conspiring heresy; but divided brethren will barely maintain their ground. We do not ask protestants to compromise principles in order to secure concord. This were wrong, as it is unnecessary. But we do beseech them to concede prejudices. This is Christian. Let us look more intensely at the truths wherein we agree, and less censoriously at the points wherein we differ. The former are weighty as gold, the latter lighter than chaff. Our points of coincidence and compact are as the great mountains; our points of divergence as molehills. The differences are jots and tittles, and positively microscopic. Our common faith, common hope, common creed, are mighty and majestic, as the God that gave them. The sweetest sounds in the Vatican are our quarrels; the greatest barrier to the conversion of Roman catholics is our strifes. Let us show them, that though there are tabernacles, we have yet but one city; that though there are many streams, we have yet but one river. There are many baskets, but one bread. There is ONE BODY, and ONE SPIRIT, ONE HOPE, ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE GOD and FATHER OF ALL.

Such is the apostolic church. Such let pray and labour to be now.

Another very lofty pretension put forward by the Roman catholic Church is her ANTIQUITY. She proclaims all protestants to be mere upstarts, and their church throughout all its sections to lie offshoots from her.

This objection is specious, but false. Certainly one circumstance is very presumptive against the claims of the Romish Church, viz. those doctrines peculiar to her, and in which she differs from us, are not in the Bible, whereas the very truths she condemns in our creed as novelties are wholly in the Bible. She withholds the cup from the laity; we give it: which side is Scriptural? "Drink ye ALL of it," is a decisive reply. Here, at least, we keep to the ancient practice, and in this point our faith is the old and apostolic, and that of Rome the modern. The Church of Rome has determined that the clergy shall live in perpetual celibacy. The protestant church leaves it optional. How does Scripture decide? "Peter's WIFE'S mother." "Marriage is honourable in ALL." "A bishop the husband of one wife." The very name, "husband bishop," would be an abomination in the eyes of the Romish hierarchy. Whether worse things do not universally obtain among them we do not at present inquire. We might go over every tenet of the papacy, and laying it side by side with a protestant tenet, demonstrate that our articles and creeds are coeval and coincident with the Scriptures, and that those of the Church of Rome are all posthumous to the apostles, and very many of them not older than the Council of Trent. This assumption also of the Romish Church, and her assault upon us, presumes that the Reformers constructed a new church. This is a misapprehension. They merely corrected and purified the old one. They removed the accumulated layers of rubbish that concealed the beauties of the pearl of great price. They purified and healed, under God, a leprous church, by bringing her to her long-lost birth-right, the true Bethesda, the blood of Jesus. The Reformers did with the papal Church as our Lord did with the Jewish. They drove out the moneychangers, overturned their tables, took down the symbols and the records of idolatry, and hung

up visibly before all the everlasting record, "My house shall be called the house of prayer." We admire not the Reformation for its own sake, but for the transcendent benefits even its most tempestuous storms wafted to all lands, and deposited as germs of life and rudiments of a new and holier faith. Let us never forget that the Church of Rome received its present shape at the Council of Trent; and so true is this, that if we were to profess all the ancient creeds, the Apostolic and the Nicene, and cleave to these alone, we should be denounced by the Romanists as heretics and schismatics. If we were to adopt all the articles in the creed of Pope Pius IV. except papal infallibility, we should yet be heretics. Nay, if we were to sign that creed to-day, and the pope to-morrow to send forth a new article of faith, we should still be heretics, unless we received the last with the same faith and confidence with which we receive the gospel. Nothing short of our frustrating judgment, conscience, senses, and all we are and have, at the footstool of a deified hierarch, will be tolerated. The Church of Rome is a new and upstart communion, built up of the spoils of religion, reason, human right, and social affection. In the protestant churches alone, we hail and revere the grey hairs of age and of ancient times, and we rise and venerate the august and holy form. All that our Reformers did, and all we desire to do, is to detach the meretricious finery and fantastic rags wherewith the Lady of Babylon has decked out the church, and marred her fair aspect, and present her as the apostles did, bright with the signatures of primeval truth, arrayed in the robes and adorned by the likeness of Jesus, and inlaid with the inner glories of the Holy Spirit.

The Church of Rome will twit us with the question, If our articles be erroneous, tell us when and where they were introduced. We can tell when they were not, and pretty clearly when they were introduced. But if we were unable to lay down the dates of their rise, this inability would not prove they were Scriptural. Was the Nile non-existent when geographers could not state the longitude, latitude, and locality of its spring-head. Who can tell what Rabbi introduced the successive superstitions of the Jews? The Reformation had respect not to the date of the error, but to the error itself.

Let it also be observed that error does not flash upon the world, broad, palpable, and at once. It creeps in by stealth, under a variety of shapes and ever-adjusting chameleon colours. Truth, like the fabled Minerva, comes at once and in full glory from above; error dares not do so. Hence it is easy to mark the introduction of a great truth, but it is not so easy to trace the commencement of an ultimately overshadowing heresy. It is sufficient for us to know that these dogmas, on which popes and councils have struck, with their mightiest pressure, the counterpart of infallibility, never bore the image and the superscription of the Son of God. But it is unnecessary to enter into elaborate proofs that ours is the primeval faith. History with its thousand tongues attests it; revelation with its one, but decisive, voice attests it.

It may not be, in closing these remarks, an uninteresting or unimportant inquiry, What has been the result of all the persecutions the church has endured from the first martyr Abel to the present time? We venture to assert, that in every instance it has been proved that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. Persecution purifies, never mars the church.

That we may obtain a satisfactory view of the successive combats which have taken place, let us take a retrospective glance at the records of their time and their locality, and we shall find that not only has the wholesale result of the past been favourable to the cause of Heaven, but that in every single struggle the serpent's head has received an additional bruise, though the heel of the woman's seed may not have

got off unscathed. We shall find that the kingdom of Jesus in consequence of persecution has been impeded in its march athwart the length and breadth of the world, but at the same time that blows have been dealt to the tempter's sway and prospects, from which he has not easily rallied. What makes the upshot of every onset with the persecutor more delightful to the Christian soldier, is the fact that the very schemes which the serpent devised and set in operation for the overthrow of the kingdom of heaven have been inverted, and made to hasten the ruin of his own. Let us allude to some proofs of this, furnished by the word of God.

When Cain, the first papal hierarch, hurried on by the author of evil, lifted up his hand and slew his righteous and believing brother, the first protestant martyr, the readiest presumption is, that the cause of God and its advocate suffered, while that of Satan and his servant prevailed. Death, the curse and the consequence of sin, fastens first on a child of God, and passes by a child of the devil. But from this persecution, so painful, two important lessons were deduced. Adam and Eve were convinced that sin was a much more fearful thing than they had previously supposed it to be, and were thereby led to appreciate and admire more fully that promise of mercy and those typical indices of a coming Saviour which had been revealed. The keener our perception of guilt, the deeper is our admiration of the blood that washes it

away. But a tangible instance was also given of God's punishment of sin. It would have been mercy to Cain had the knife that entered the bosom of his brother started upward, and buried itself in his own; but a severer doom descended on his head; he was branded as a criminal, and driven with restless and reluctant foot to proclaim to the gathering multitudes of posterity the Almighty's hatred of iniquity, and his immovable purpose to visit with severe chastisement them that perpetrate it. While the promise, on the one hand, whispered in the ears of mankind that there was mercy in heaven, and thus prevented despair, Cain, the wandering herald of wrath, the visible proof of punishment following the footsteps of guilt, proclaimed that in heaven there was holiness, and justice, and truth, and thereby made men careful not to presume. From this scene there arose a fore-reflected shadow of that righteous One, who came to his own, and his own received him not; whose blood, nevertheless, speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; for while the latter cried to Heaven for vengeance, the former cries at this moment for mercy upon them who have shed it, and "crucified the Lord of glory, and put him to an open shame."

Satan, the determined persecutor, did not account his discomfiture ground of despair. He began the work of contagion with increased vigour; and so successful were his desolating efforts, that all who dwelt upon the earth became subject to his sway, and apostates from Heaven, with the exception of eight "faithful among the faithful few." But here his victory was not destined to yield much or abiding joy; for by the righteous judgments of God his myrmidons were swept from the bosom of the earth, and the followers of holiness and truth alone were left. From this occurrence a new lesson respecting the mode of God's dealings with men was elicited, namely, that there is an accepted time and a day of salvation, at the close of which mercy retires, and judgment occupies her place. There was also presented to the believer a type of that better Ark, Jesus Christ the Saviour. in whom the church is to be borne in safety across the turmoils and troubles of earth, the billows of Satan's wrath, and the descending showers of judgment, which shall overwhelm a guilty and a godless world. In this matter the heel of the woman's seed was wounded, but the head of the serpent was bruised.

In the history of Joseph and his brethren we have truth amid persecution exhibiting again.

Just because the image of his God shone forth in him with conspicuous splendour, because his words, and works, and ways were ordered according to the will of his heavenly Father, his wicked and envious brethren, acting as the missionaries of Satan, conspired against his life. His trials and temptations were strong as his integrity was great. He was abandoned by his brothers, sold as a slave, consigned to a dungeon, tempted by a sensual woman, and after all these thrustings of Satan at him, and through him at righteousness and truth, he came forth more than conqueror through Him that loved him. The firmness of Joseph amid his sore temptations proved that in the true child of God there is a principle superior to all the charms of earth, and even in this estranged world a prosperous termination to a life of virtue, which never applies to a life of vice. The very machinations which Satan instituted, with a view to destroy Joseph, were made conducive to the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the people of God, and, more surprising issue still, to the conquest, but the saving conquest, of those his brethren who had so unmercifully dealt with him. The patriarch Joseph was, by Satan's instrumentality, made an illustrious type of Jesus Christ, who gave his life for those who condemned him to die, and fed with the bread of life his brethren who denied him a place whereon to lay his head. In this case the heel of the woman's seed was bruised a little, in consequence of Joseph's early sufferings; but the head of the serpent was bruised by the felicitous end to which all things connected with him came. When in the providence of God the children of Israel were subjected to the bondage of Egypt, and when Satan had been permitted to lord it over Pharaoh so far as to drive him to the most barbarous measures, that he might extirpate the seed of the woman, as contained in the church of Israel, we find that the very plans which tended ostensibly to accomplish the destruction of the people of God contributed really to their ultimate advancement and well-being. The cause of God appeared to be in the utmost jeopardy, for it depended on a babe persecuted by Pharaoh, committed to an ark of bulrushes, and left to float upon the waves of the Nile; but what was the result? The household of Pharaoh, the flower of Satan's chivalry, were, contrary to their expectation or desire, made the instruments of bruising their master's head, and touching scarcely their adversary's heel; for the daughter of Pharaoh rescued and educated the child that was to be the minister of judgment to the first-born of their native land, and eventually to bury in the Red Sea the chariots, and horse, and men of war. The infatuated pursuers of the children of God were overwhelmed by the collapse of the waters of the Red Sea, and driven to the regions of eternal darkness, to bear the tidings of defeat to its despot, and to present another instance of the fruitlessness of coping with Omnipotence. But Satan was not to be discouraged; he followed them through the wilderness, and made an extensive havoc. But if the church's sufferings were great, her hopes were proportionably bright; her course was onward, amid the most exhilarating promises and the most expressive types. If we proceed adown the stream of time, we shall discern in the biography of David another illustration of the church's bruised heel, and of the serpent's bruised head. The shepherd king put forth to do battle with opposing principalities, and to bring down spiritual wickedness on high places, anointed, sealed, and separated, was made, in a peculiar manner, the object of Satan's attacks, as he was in a high degree the subject of God's grace. He was persecuted to the edge of ruin. He fell once and again; but "greater was He that was for him than all that could be against him." He proved himself, notwithstanding, a polished shaft in the hands of Heaven, a monument of mercy possible to the chiefest of repentant sinners, and a most striking type of that best "Beloved," who summed up in

his single character the scattered excellences, and excluded all the blemishes, of those that went before him. If we were to go over the lives of the ancient men who were commissioned in succession to add their respective light to the brightening dawn that ultimately burst forth into noon-day, we should find that the sins and short-comings, into which the serpent dragged them, so far from furthering the cause of spiritual darkness, contributed to its overthrow, in virtue of that sleepless superintendency of the great Head of the church, which has ever made the wrath of man to praise him. The weapons which the enemy brought into the field turned their points against himself, and disabled them that brandished them. The heel of the woman's seed was no doubt bruised, for the march of truth was retarded, and the terminating conquests of its advocates put a little further off in the world's history; but what the Redeemer's kingdom lost in time it gained in extent, what it lost in speed it gained in glory; and the longer still its progress is opposed, the more comprehensive and brilliant its final triumphs will assuredly be.

It is the peculiar characteristic of great and true principles to advance slowly and firmly, and to strike their roots deeply before they spread their branches. But the never to be forgotten field on which Satan's head received its direst bruise, and his cause its most desolating shock, was the field of the most formidable persecution, viz., Bethlehem, Gethsemane, and Calvary. Little did the devil imagine that all his attacks were to be stepping-stones to Christ; little did he dream that the apparatus he had prepared for the extirpation of the church was to be wrenched from its intended scope, and to be made subservient to the cause he hated and struggled to overwhelm. Little did he anticipate that the blight he had superinduced upon the spiritual and physical creation, and the eclipse he had brought on the glory of God, as far as it shone on this remote planet, was destined to be made the basis of a more magnificent and felt exhibition of all the attributes of Heaven, and of a more exalted elevation of the fallen creature. Jesus Christ, the Root and the Offspring of David, the eternal Son of God, came down from the hills of the heavenly land, where the tear of sorrow never dropped, where the cry of want was never heard, and dwelt in flesh as in a tabernacle, and wandered on this polluted earth, and wept, a pilgrim and a stranger, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Yet did he present himself also as a Leader and a Captain on that battle field, on which the destinies of unborn millions were gathered, to rise or to sink as he should conquer or give way. He entered on the scene of action through the varieties of being which usher in the multitudes of human kind. He was in the womb, and dandled on the knees of a mother; he was a boy and a stripling like one of us; and out of all these estates of life he came into that of perfect manhood, untouched even by the instantaneous transit of a sinful feeling or imagination. Oh what a contrast was there between the young Messiah and Adam's young descendants, his coevals! In the one was inherent infinitely more than Adam's loftiest excellence, but in the others were developed the accumulated consequences of Adam's guilt. Here was one whom no sinful pursuits could seduce, whose heart was impervious to the devil's temptations and the world's guilt, whose conformity to his Father's will was not to be lessened by any sublunary force. No doubt Satan knew that the great bruiser of his head was come, and if he remained inactive, it was the inactivity of wonder and dismay; it was the fearful pause that intervenes between the strong resolve and the contingency of irretrievable ruin, the agonizing interlude of conflicting motives, which tear the heart in opposite directions. At last he decided to present the front of a persevering opposition, and to improve every probability of victory the instant it should appear. He saw Jesus led out in the arrangements of Heaven to that wilderness which had witnessed the fastings of Moses and Elijah of old, and here he resolved to

track his footsteps, and to try his constancy in every practicable way. Here was presented the sacred arena of a second spiritual contest, on the issues of which the fate of humanity hung. In the first assault which Satan made on Adam, amid the loveliness of Eden, and with the right to its fruits and flowers, and countless immunities, with no sensations of hunger, and no possibility of want, with little incentive to disobey, and every motive to obey, our first progenitor fell, and entailed on his posterity the numerous "ills that flesh is heir to;" but the Son of God, suffering the gnawings of protracted hunger, and bearing all along, from his Cradle upward, the imputed guilt and deserved penalties of man, stood untarnished, and upheld himself in infinite spotlessness. Before the Son the old serpent stood; and by calling in question his omnipotence, and appealing to the faintness of his bodily frame, endeavoured to involve in doubts the faithfulness and the providence of his heavenly Father. Jesus, however, repelled the temptation as soon as it was presented, by merging all present sensations, and directing even the fallen angel's attention to the protestant's rule of faith, the word of God: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." Satan seeing that the Son of Joseph was set on a high design, and superior to the urgency of nature's calls when they might not be lawfully answered, shifts the points of attack, and plies him with such arguments as his apparent destitution of means and his meditated enterprise could naturally suggest. He offered him the kingdoms of this world and their glory, the wealth of Rome, the experience of her courts and the prowess of her ablest Champions, to enable him to become the worlds emperor. He showed him many a fair champaign, and many a glebe, productive of oil and wine, the necessaries and luxuries of life; and with these he invited him to contrast the fountainless desert and the barren earth, his present and only possession; and all he asked in return for these gifts was, what so great resources seemed justly to challenge, the recognition of his lordship, and right to the homage of men and the territories of the world, "Get thee behind me, Satan; it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," was the reply of the Son of God. Satan was overcome, and the Redeemer, pained, it is true, by the very hearing of the tempter's blasphemy, was undisputed victor. Abaddon fell like lightning from heaven. Hell felt her empire narrowing, and gathering inward to the Centre, and Jesus proceeded to follow up the conquest he had won, by expelling the devils from the bosoms of men, controlling the winds and waves, the troubles and diseases of the human family, and inculcating the principles of love, and mercy, and truth. But the powers of darkness concentrated again their wiles, and by the instrumentality of the Jews put in operation every conceivable design against the life and growing influence of the Son of Joseph. All the sophistry of the lawyers was enlisted on the side of Satan, and many a perplexing case of casuistry propounded. "Is it lawful to give tribute to Calsar?" The reply was as admirable as the question was involved. "Moses in the law commanded us that such as this woman, who was taken in adultery, should be stoned; but what sayest thou?" These and many more were the meshes in which they endeavoured to entangle the Redeemer. At length they got Judas, one of the twelve, to betray him; Peter, another of the twelve, to deny him; Pilate, the Roman governor, to deliver him up; and his countrymen, the Jews, to put him to a painful and ignominious death. No doubt, when the Divine antagonist of the powers of evil hung on the accursed tree, in agony of soul and body inconceivable, the gloom of hell was lightened by a transient gleam of malignant hope, and the countenances of the damned smoothed with a momentary smile, as there was now an expectancy that he who had the keys of hell, and death, and the grave was crushed, and the power of going in and coming out permitted them for ever. Satan, racked on the wheel, because of former

failures and discomfiture, gathered courage yet again, and felt almost sure that the reins of universal sovereignty were lodged in his hands; and when he saw the Redeemer taken from the cross to the tomb, when he saw the sun set and the sepulchre sealed, and the fearless warriors of Rome appointed to sentinel the spot, he doubted not that all was his own; though the remembrance of ancient prophecies fulfilled, and the Saviour's exertion of supernatural power in the last tremors of dissolution, shaded at intervals his brightest hopes. The second day dawned and closed, and all was still; but scarcely had the sun of the succeeding day reached the horizon, when the hearts of the Roman veterans quailed, and helplessness fell upon them and made them as dead men. The massive stone was rolled aside from the sepulchre, and the grave's long grasp of man was relaxed; the winding-sheet, the napkins, and the other pale insignia of death, were left behind, to demonstrate his reign at length terminated, and the Redeemer rose and ascended on high, leading captivity captive, and ready to give gifts unto men. Satan's schemes were baffled, his hopes were blasted, death and the grave, his ancient allies, were stripped of their sting and their triumph, and bitter remorse and fell despair were his only company. What made the devil's defeat trebly galling and disastrous, the very plans he had devised and put in operation were made to recoil upon himself, and to expedite the very results which he feared and struggled to avert. The machinery he set in motion to perpetuate darkness evolved more glorious light; the emissaries he employed to add to death, and all our woe, unwittingly diffused life and immortality, and more enduring joys. From Jesus' sufferings man's salvation sprung, and from his death our eternal life, and from his resurrection our destined mastery of all the powers of earth and hell, and entrance into everlasting blessedness. Hell's gloom grew deeper, and the despair of its fallen spirits more fearful; its worm that never dies began to make wider havoc, and its fire which is never quenched to burn with more intensity.

Satan, though driven to the verge of utter despair, determined not to remain inactive. He felt that if he could not entirely destroy the Son of God, and the children whom the Father had given him, he might vex them, and impair their peace. After he had raised the Jews, from Dan to Beersheba, against the unbefriended preachers of the cross, and driven the first converts before him to the remotest provinces of the Roman empire, he found that this dispersion, instead of arresting, hastened the march of Christianity over the surface of the world, and struck its doctrines deeper in the hearts of its persecuted sticklers. Anxious, therefore, to suppress the gospel in provinces beyond the boundaries of Judea, he enlisted in this his foreign service a bold and a reckless missionary, whose name was Saul of Tarsus. His hot passions, his fervid eloquence, and his determination to do and to dare to any extent in the service of error, and in opposition to the truth, seemed to the serpent to prognosticate no ordinary havoc among the unresisting "men of the way," as the disciples were frequently called. Little did Satan know that he was in this matter deepening his own catastrophe; little did he expect that this polished shaft, which he had culled from the ranks of intellect, would be inverted and made to quiver in his own bosom; little did he expect that the powers of reasoning and impassioned oratory which Paul possessed would soon play against the bulwarks of the kingdom of darkness, and contribute mainly to its overthrow. But such was the issue. Paul was snatched from the service of hell, and arrayed under the banners of heaven; and was more instrumental in shaking idols on their pedestals, and idolaters even on their thrones, than all the college of apostles besides. Satan was foiled again. The heel of the woman's seed was wounded, but the head of the serpent was severely bruised. He did not yet give over, but marshalled his devoted bands, and placed them on the battle field. He saw the apostles and the other

preachers of the truth going forth with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and the shield of faith, and the helmet of hope, and the other spiritual weapons of a spiritual warfare, to make new conquests over sin, and fresh accessions to the gospel of Christ. Against them he brought out a phalanx sufficient to abash all but those who know that God is on their side; a phalanx composed of the 'learned philosophers of Greece, to grapple with the untutored fishermen of Galilee; the wealthy potentates and magistrates of Rome, to confront the needy and naked preachers of the cross; and the eagle ensign of the western empire, that had flapped its victorious wings over thousands of the fallen brave, and the colours that had waved in the four winds of the earth, to meet the banner of the cross, the motto of which was, "My kingdom is not of this world." His phalanx was composed of malignant Jews, ready to burn the servants as they had crucified the Master; of debased voluptuaries, who could not bear the streams of their enjoyment to be stemmed; and of interested craftsmen, who were ready to shout with greater or less intensity, according to the risk their craft was exposed to, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The records of Christianity declare what numbers sealed their testimony with their blood, and entered into their rest from excruciating pains and bitterest bereavements. Here the serpent seemed to prevail; but what was the ultimate effect? The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church. From the momentary victory of Satan, from the thousands he dragged to the altars of superstition, and immolated there, we deduce the most satisfactory proofs of the sincerity of the first apostles of the truth and of the Divine origin of those principles they taught. No second causes are sufficient to account for the rapid diffusion of Christianity, or for the fact that it remained, like the burning bush on Horeb, unconsumed by the flames that surrounded it. Our holy faith descends to us impressed with a tenfold more powerful demonstration than any system, or history, or circumstance in the world's annals; and, admirable instrumentality! Satan, its most bitter adversary, has been the unexpected means of accomplishing this result. The storm he raised, while indeed it disturbed the followers of the Lamb, whistled nevertheless with most disastrous fury amid the habitations, the temples, and the shrines which were dearest to him; and the streams of blood he shed undermined his kingdom, and sapped the deepest foundations of his throne. Satan, unable to crush Christianity in its cradle, determined to harass its professors and its preachers to the uttermost, He therefore went the round of all the churches in Asia Minor, and sowed among them the most pestilent errors and destructive heresies; and when he saw the extensive success with which his efforts were crowned, he imagined that the scale was for ever turned in his favour. If he could not stem the streams of living waters, he resolved to intermix with them the most fatal poisons. But here again he failed, and here again the antidote administered by Heaven proved more extensively useful than the poison proved deleterious. The apostles saw the thickening delusions in which their converts were enveloped, and with a view to dissipate them wrote those admirable Epistles which are now embodied in the records of inspired truth. Satan had induced the Roman brethren to corrupt the fundamental article of the Christian creed, justification by faith; but Paul, to vindicate its value, and to open up its nature, wrote the Epistle to the Romans. Again, the efforts of Judaizing teachers to leaven the doctrines of the gospel with the obsolete rites of Moses, and to make the mixture essential to salvation, drew forth the Epistle to the Galatians, in which the apostle strips the truth of every earthy accretion, and places the distinctive features of the Christian scheme in the most satisfactory and triumphant light. Again, Satan engaged his servants to persecute and vex the Christian brethren scattered throughout the Roman empire; but the consequence was the composition of those rich and

consolatory Epistles of Peter, and John, and James, which have ever been the exhaustless well-springs of the sweetest comfort to the suffering children of God. The devil made way for God's abounding joys to his people. Hell prepared this fittest opportunity for Heaven to shower down blessings co-extensive with the wants and existence of the human race. It is delightful to see the arrows shot by Satan against the children of God rebound and penetrate himself, and every step he took against the woman's seed increase his own discomfiture, and every stone he brought to build withal the temple of darkness, taken from him, cut and prepared for a place in the temple of light, and every weapon he brought into the field wrenched from his hands, and added to the arinoury of heaven.

Had Satan never vexed the churches with heresy and cruel havoc, we had not, humanly speaking, been favoured with the most important books of the Bible. The wrath of hell, as well as the wrath of man, shall be restrained, and the remainder of it made to praise God. Let the powers of earth and darkness combine together against the Lord, and against his Anointed; let all their energies be summoned into play, and all their plans brought into operation; and at that very moment when the wreath of victory is ready to encircle them, and the seal of success ready to be set, the scene shall be changed, and the foreordained purposes of God shall evolve, and twist the apparatus and machinery of Satan so entirely to their subserviency and accomplishments, that uninformed spectators cannot help supposing that Satan has all along been lending his best efforts to the cause of God, and to the furtherance of every Christian virtue. At length Constantine threw the shield of temporal and imperial power around and above Christianity, throughout the Roman territories. The devil felt that this state provision for the clergy might lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes of Zion, and contribute to the more speedy dissolution of his kingdom. He therefore meditated deeply and long, with a view to neutralize such good effects as must flow from the new recognition which the church had received. After much meditation and conference, he hit upon his masterpiece, the papacy. Persecution was a blunder in Satan's policy; Arianism was also a blunder; for these, instead of benefiting, injured his cause. He now resolved to uproot Christianity no longer by an open and ingenuous warfare, but by stratagem, and deep manœuvring within the camp, he determined to deal his bitterest stabs in the garb of a friend. Being convinced that the Pantheon could no longer be filled with the statues of Jupiter, and Mars, and Venus, he zealously emptied their niches, and placed in their stead those of Paul, and Peter, and the Virgin Mary, and many more saints, who never had a local habitation and a name before. He baptized the idols, the rites and temples of pagan Rome, and found for them a welcome reception in the Vatican, and among the bishops, priests, and monks, and friars that acted under its power. He just coloured over paganism with the outward tints of Christianity, and thereby formed popery; a religion which bears less relationship to true Christianity, than the gilded bauble to articles composed of pure and solid gold. It was indeed a cunning contrivance. Satan took the temples, and the shrines, and the priests set up to propagate Christian truth, and anointed them to destroy and debase it. Under the covert of zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of men he reared the Inquisition, and martyred saints in every land. With hands reeking with the blood of holy men, he went to the house of prayer with attendant and professed ministers of Jesus, and gave thanks to God that he had fulfilled his promise, "Lo! I am with you to the end of the world;" and, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against you."

Nothing indicates the deceit of Satan or the blindness of men more clearly, than the fact that the devil was allowed to seal up the Bible under the pretence of its tendency to mislead men, and to keep them in the most palpable darkness, lest peradventure they should die through the excess of the light and the wisdom of God. Has Satan nevertheless triumphed here, and escaped unscathed? We say no. The Book of Martyrs is a living witness that the power of religion, during the iron reign of the papacy, was exemplified most gloriously in the sufferings of faithful men; and the constancy, to death, of the Albigenses and the Waldenses showed, that even in the last extremities of darkness and desolation, light is sown for the righteous. As the manna that descended from heaven, and the waters that gushed from the riven rock, bespoke to the children of Israel the love and the presence of God even in the wilderness; in like manner the refreshment of the spiritual heritage, in the midst of Babylon, proclaimed most clearly that a mother may forget the child she bare, but that his church never can be forgotten nor forsaken of Jehovah, that she is engraven on the palms of his hands, and nearest and dearest to him. But we believe that the bondage of the church in mystic Babylon, during the middle ages, was a meant punishment, inflicted perhaps for her pride and forgetfulness of her Deliverer when the sword of persecution was sheathed. At all events, there cannot be a doubt that the church has learned lessons from her fearful condition at that time which will not be soon erased from her memory. Experience teaches communities, as well as individuals, best. We are now armed at all points against the evils of hell. We know him alike in the garb of a friend and in the garb of a foe. We will now prize more highly that blessed book which he shut so widely. We will now value and cherish those pure truths which apostles instituted, and the venerable Reformers revived. A season of darkness is often the precursor of a season of more glorious light. The long day of moral paralysis is followed often by a more vigorous and uninterrupted period of exertion. Perhaps the church must live under the same law as individual members of it. The smile will appear only where mourning has been. The waters of life roll only in the channels that have been made by a flood of tears. At all events, at the period of the Reformation, the church came forth from her wilderness condition "bright as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners," enriched with additional experience of the enmity of Satan and the plans he pursues to destroy her. We grant that Satan prevailed awhile during the reign of the papacy; but we assert that the Reformation quashed his power and bruised his head, and brought the church from her imprisonment, with her heel bruised very sore to be sure, but soon again to be healed, and her pace athwart the regions of the globe to be accelerated in an unprecedented degree. The pressure being removed, Christianity rose up with an elasticity and onward movement that astonished and confounded Satan, while it delighted all its advocates. With one simultaneous burst printing was discovered, Bible Societies organized, and the universe made eloquent again with the mighty motives and appeals of uncorrupted truth; missionaries were sent forth, and the whole Christian church animated with a spirit of exertion more than proportionate to its former apathy. Thus baffled, he had recourse again to the assistance of undisguised infidelity, and has succeeded in gaining to his side the subtle powers of Hume and Diderot, and the sarcastic genius of Voltaire, and the splendid but hollow descriptions of Gibbon. But the misrepresentations and the sophistry with which these men have without exception essayed to overthrow the doctrines of the Bible have all been met and repelled, and the truth has come forth like fine gold from the furnace, more brilliant than before its trials and testings began, and Satan's machinations have again been made to recoil and destroy his cause. The sun in the firmament, by the intensity of his beams, draws between him and us vapours and

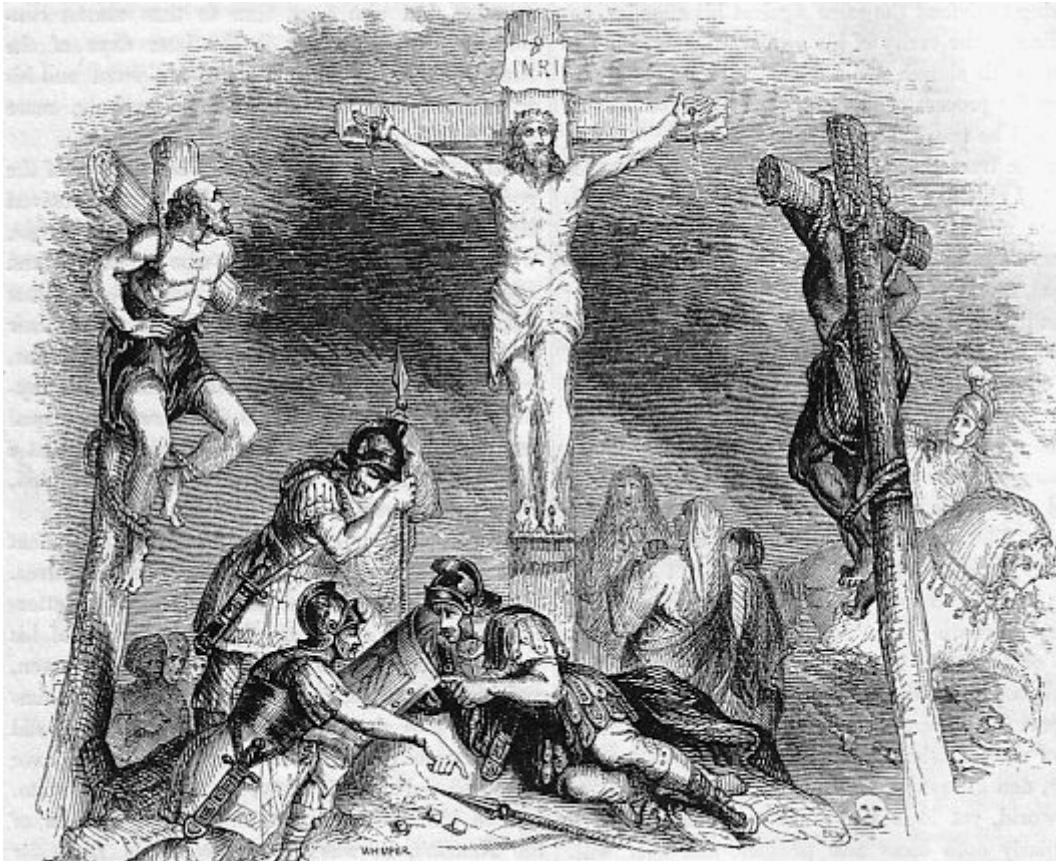
clouds, which seem for a while to intercept his influences, and to threaten the earth with barrenness and darkness; but presently the same sun dissolves them into gentle showers, which fertilize the soil, and cool the air, and promote the growth of vegetation on all sides. In the same way the Sun of righteousness, by his very brilliancy, exhales clouds of infidels, and atheists, and sceptics, whose writings are met by mightier arguments, and the truths thus called into question are exhibited in clearer light, and cherished with warmer feelings of regard. Since the Reformation Satan has brought no new stratagem into the field. In fact, hisingenuity seems entirely exhausted, his imagination paralyzed, and his resources done, and this bitter conviction left him, — that all he has achieved has served but to hasten and to deepen his final catastrophe.

We gather this consolation from the review we have laid before you, and from the serpent's recent recurrence to obsolete and defeated schemes, that he can bring no new device against us, that he can discover no vantage ground which he has not already occupied. He looks at his quiver, it is empty. He looks to his counsellors, they are in despair. He looks at death, its sting is gone. He looks at the grave, its strength and its triumph are dissipated. He looks to the past, and he sees only blasted hopes and foiled attempts, and fountains of pain, and sorrow, and remorse. He looks to the future, and he espies a gathering glory he cannot tarnish, and an approaching victory he cannot impede, and in his own case a fearful inheritance of burning, and blackness, and agony he cannot avert. All he can do at present is to ply the old instruments, and bait his hook with former seductions. His head is deeply bruised. He is giddy, on the edge of inevitable ruin. Let us go forward, fellow Christians; a gulf of ruin will soon entomb our foe, and a land of bliss imbosom our spirits. Let us lift our eyes and our hearts towards the hills from whence comes our aid, and towards the God of battles, unto whom the shields of the earth do belong, and resist boldly, and Satan will flee; for he is a vanquished enemy, he bites the dust. Never more shall he lord it over the Messiah's heritage. The distant isles of the ocean, and the far-spread continents of the world, and all kindreds, and tribes, and tongues, shall yet come forth from the darkness of spiritual death, and from the fetters of the devil's despotism, and subscribe themselves by the name of Jesus. The symptoms of the ruin of Satan's kingdom already appear. The crescent of the Ottoman wanes fast. The triple crown sits loosely on the head of the man of sin, and the thunder stamp of revolution is heard at the doors of the Vatican, and the lightning gleams of truth, made more vivid by long opposition, are seen and felt in the darkest chambers of the Inquisition. A spirit of awakening seems to have arrested the Jew, and a wider and more cordial welcome of the cross to have touched the heart of the Gentile. We tread upon the fallen, though yet unextinguished, body of the enemy. We have only to read the venerable annals of Fox to see that we move across the ground that is strewed with the trophies of former victories, and consecrated by the blood of holy martyrs, and hallowed by the resting-places of their earthly remains, and smoothed and made even by the pioneers of the cross that have preceded us to glory. Jesus, the Captain of our faith, and the noble army of martyrs that took up their cross and followed him, have already borne the brunt of the battle, and formed a rampart by their graves, that we may stand behind their shelter and gather the remaining laurels of spiritual conquest. From the first century even to the present, the successive ranks of believers have undergone vicarious substitution for them that have followed, "each stepping where his comrade stood the instant that he fell," and have thus, at the expense of their blood and comfort, left us less opposition to be met in our course to glory. Let us therefore wrap around us the mantles they have left behind them in their flight to immortality, and, animated by

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their example, and above all by the example of the Author and the Finisher of our faith, let us neither slacken our efforts nor curb our zeal till the church shine forth in her millennial glory, or we individually enter into "the rest that remains for the people of God." Only let us remember, that besides the conflict that is waged in the world without, there must be a stiffer tug of battle carried on in the bosom within. We must remember that none can enter the ranks of the redeemed warriors around, who cannot exhibit the unquestionable proofs of victory gained in the bosom within. While Satan battles it out in the open arena of earth against the prevalence and progress of Heaven's truth, his zeal is also as hot and his struggles as incessant for the mastery of a single heart, as for the mastery of the whole church. To us personally it matters little whether the cross or the crescent is uppermost, whether hell or heaven triumphs, if we are yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. We must bruise the serpent's head in our own bosoms before we can contribute to bruise his head in the world. Our life is not a life of peace, nor ease, nor retirement; but a life of conflict, and of struggle, and of watchfulness. Time is the hour of battle, and eternity is the hour of triumph; earth is the battlefield, and heaven is the victor's home; the cross is our companion now, and the crown our prize hereafter. We feel the serpent's life within, but feel we not the Spirit's life more powerful still? We must feel the foul current of poisoned waters coming in contact with the streams of purity and love, but thanks be to God through Jesus Christ we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. Let us break the fetters that bind to the ways and works of earth, for the Spirit and strength of Omnipotence are with us; let us be slaves no more. Be ye freemen whom the truth makes free. Soon the struggle will be done, and the head of the serpent will be bruised, and amid the opening climes of heaven we shall see our glorified relations, and friends, and long-lost comrades in the contest, stretching forth their hands to welcome us to the mansions which the Saviour has prepared in his Father's house. "Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." Amen.

**THE FIRST BOOK
THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS, CONTAINING THE
THREE HUNDRED YEARS NEXT AFTER CHRIST,
WITH THE TEN PERSECUTIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE
CHURCH.**



The Crucifixion of Christ

1. Foreword

BY THE GRACE AND SPEED OF CHRIST OUR LORD, WE WOULD DISCOURSE, IN PARTICULAR SORT, THE ACTS AND DOINGS OF EVERY AGE BY ITSELF, IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:



to declare, first, the suffering time of the church, which containeth about the space of three hundred years after Christ.

Secondly, The flourishing and growing time of the same, containing other three hundred years.

Thirdly, The declining time of the church, and of true religion, other three hundred years.

Fourthly, Of the time of antichrist, reigning and raging in the church since the loosing of Satan.

Lastly, of the reforming time of Christ's church, in these latter three hundred years.

In the tractation of all which things our chief purpose and endeavour shall be, (so near as the Lord will give us grace,) not so much to intermeddle withoutward affairs of princes, or matters civil, (except sometimes for example of life,) as specially minding (by the help of the Lord) to prosecute such things only which to the ecclesiastical state of the church are appertaining: as, first, to intreat of the stablishing of Christian faith; then of the persecutions of tyrants; the constancy and patience of God's saints; the first conversion of Christian realms to the faith of Christ, namely, of this realm of England and Scotland; first beginning with king Lucius and so forward, following the order of our English kings here in this land; to declare the maintenance of true doctrine; the false practice of prelates; the creeping in of superstition and hypocrisy; the manifold assaults, wars, and tumults of the princes of this world against the people of God. Wherein may appear the wonderful operation of Christ's mighty hand, ever working in his church, and never ceasing to defend the same against his enemies, according to the verity of his own word, promising to be with his church while the world shall stand; so as by the process of this story may well be proved, and will be testified in the sequel thereof.

[Footnote: This purpose of Fox, not to intermeddle with civil and political questions, many would do well to observe in the present day. The question between the Church of Rome and the Church of Christ relates emphatically to souls, to Christ, and to eternity.]

In the tractation of all which things two special points I chiefly commend to the reader, as most requisite and necessary for every Christian man to observe and to note for his own experience and profit: as, first, the disposition and nature of this world; secondly, the nature and condition of the kingdom of Christ: the vanity of the one, and establishment of the other: the unprosperous and unquiet state of the one, ruled by man's violence and wisdom; and the happy success of the other, ever ruled by God's blessing and providence: the wrath and revenging hand of God in the one, and his

mercy upon the other. The world I call all such as be without or against Christ; either by ignorance, not knowing him; or by heathenish life, not following him; or by violence, resisting him. On the other side, the kingdom of Christ in this world I take to be all them which belong to the faith of Christ, and here take his part in this world against the world; the number of whom, although it be much smaller than the other, and always lightly is hated and molested of the world, yet it is the number which the Lord peculiarly doth bless and prosper, and ever will. And this number of Christ's subjects is it which we call the visible church here in earth. Which visible church, having in itself a difference of two sorts of people, so is it to be divided in two parts, of which the one standeth of such as be of outward profession only, the other which by election inwardly are joined to Christ: the first in words and lips seem to honour Christ, and are in the visible church only, but not in the church invisible, and partake the outward sacraments of Christ, but not the inward blessing of Christ; the other are both in the visible and also in the invisible church of Christ, which not in words only and outward profession, but also in heart do truly serve and honour Christ, partaking not only the sacraments, but also the heavenly blessings and grace of Christ.

And many times it happeneth, that as between the world and the kingdom of Christ there is a continual repugnance; so between these two parts of this visible church aforesaid oftentimes groweth great variance and mortal persecution, insomuch that sometimes the true church of Christ hath no greater enemies than of their own profession and company, as happened not only in the time of Christ and his apostles, but also from time to time almost continually; but especially in the later days of the church under the persecution of antichrist and his retinue, as by the reading of this volume more manifestly hereafter may appear.

At the first preaching of Christ and coming of the gospel, who should rather have known and received him than the Pharisees and scribes of that people, which had his law? And yet who persecuted and rejected him more than they themselves? What followed? They, in refusing Christ to be their King, and choosing rather to be subject unto Cæsar, were by the said their own Cæsar at length destroyed; whenas Christ's subjects the same time escaped the danger. Whereby it is to be learned what a dangerous thing it is to refuse the gospel of God, when it is so gently offered.

The like example of God's wrathful punishment is to be noted no less in the Romans also themselves. For when Tiberius Cæsar, having received by letters from Pontius Pilate of the doings of Christ, of his miracles, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, and how he was received as God of many, was himself also moved with belief of the same, and did confer thereof with the whole senate of Rome to have Christ adored as God; they, not agreeing thereunto, refused him, because that, contrary to the law of the Romans, he was consecrated (said they) for God before the senate of Rome had so decreed and approved him, &c. Thus the vain senate, following rather the law of man than of God, and which were contented with the emperor to reign over them, and were not contented with the meek King of glory, the Son of God, to be their King, were after much like sort to the Jews scourged and entrapped for their unjust refusing, by the same way which they themselves did prefer. For as they preferred the emperor and rejected Christ, so the just permission of God did stir up their own emperors against them in such sort, that both the senators themselves were almost all devoured, and the whole city most horribly afflicted for the space almost of three hundred years together. For, first, the same Tiberius, which for a great part of his reign was a moderate and a tolerable prince, afterward was to them a sharp and heavy tyrant, who neither favoured his own mother, nor spared his own nephews, nor the princes of the

city, such as were his own counsellors, of whom, to the number of twenty, he left not past two or three alive. Suetonius reporteth him to be so stern of nature and tyrannical, that in time of his reign very many were accused and condemned with their wives and chilthen; maids also first defloured, then put to death, In one day he recordeth twenty persons to be drawn to the place of execution. By whom also, through the just punishment of God, Pilate, under whom Christ was crucified, was apprehended and accused at Rome, deposed, then banished to the town of Lyons, and at length did slay himself. Neither did Herod and Caiaphas long escape, of whom more followeth hereafter. Agrippa also by him was east into prison; albeit afterward he was restored. In the reign of Tiberius, the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, in the three and thirtieth year of his age, which was the seventeenth of this emperor, by the malice of the Jews suffered his blessed passion for the conquering of sin, death, and Satan, the prince of this world, and rose again the third day. After whose blessed passion and resurrection this foresaid Tiberius Nero lived six years, during which time no persecution was yet stirring in Rome against the Christians, through the commandment of the emperor.

In the reign also of this emperor, and the year which was the next after the passion of our Saviour, or somewhat more, anno 35, St. Paul was converted to the faith. After the death of Tiberius, when he had reigned three and twenty years, succeeded C. Cæsar Caligula, Claudius Nero, and Domitius Nero, anno 39; which three were likewise such scourges to the senate and people of Rome, that the first not only took other men's wives violently from them, but also defloured three of his own sisters, and afterward banished them. So wicked he was, that he commanded himself to be worshipped as God, and temples to be erected in his name, and used to sit in the temple among the gods, requiring his images to be set up in all temples, and also in the temple of Jerusalem, which caused great disturbance among the Jews, and then began the abomination of desolation to be set up in the holy place, spoken of in the gospel. His cruel conduct, or else displeasure, was such towards the Romans, that he wished that all the people of Rome had but one neck, that he at his pleasure might destroy such a multitude. By this said Caligula, Herod, the murderer of John Baptist and condemner of Christ, was condemned to perpetual banishment, where he died miserably. Caiaphas also, which wickedly sat upon Christ, was the same time removed from the high priest's room, and Jonathan set in his place. The raging fierceness of this Caligula incensed against the Romans had not thus ceased, had not he been cut off by the hands of a tribune and other gentlemen, which slew him in the fourth year of his reign. After whose death were found in his closet two little labels, one called a sword, the other the dagger; in the which labels were contained the names of those senators and noblemen of Rome whom he had purposed to put to death. Besides this sword and dagger, there was found also a coffer, wherein divers kinds of poison were kept in glasses and vessels for the purpose to destroy a wonderful number of people; which poisons afterward, being thrown into the sea, destroyed a great number of fish.

But that which this Caligula had only conceived, the same did the other two which came after bring to pass; Claudius Nero, who reigned thirteen years with no little cruelty; but especially the third of these Neros, called Domitius Nero, which, succeeding after Claudius, reigned fourteen years with such fury and tyranny, that he slew the most part of the senators, and destroyed the whole order of knighthood in Rome. So prodigious a monster of nature was he, more like a beast, yea, rather a devil, than a man, that he seemed to be born to the destruction of men. Such was his monstrous uncleanness, that he abstained not from his own mother, his natural sister, nor from any degree of kindred. Such was his wretched cruelty, that he caused to be

put to death his mother, his brother-in-law, his sister, his wife great with child, all his instructors, Seneca and Lucan, with divers more of his own kindred and consanguinity. Moreover, he commanded Rome to be set on fire in twelve places, and so continued it five days and seven nights in burning, while that he, to see the example how Troy burned, sung the verses of Homer. And to avoid the infamy thereof, he laid the fault upon the Christian men, and caused them to be persecuted. And so continued this miserable emperor in his reign fourteen years, till at last the senate proclaiming him a public enemy unto mankind, condemned him to be drawn through the city, and to be whipped to death. For the fear whereof, he, flying the hands of his enemies, in the night fled to a manor of his servant's in the country, where he was forced to slay himself, complaining that he had then neither friend nor enemy left that would do so much for him. In the latter end of this Domitius Nero Peter and Paul were put to death for the testimony and faith of Christ.

[Footnote: Some chronologists place the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul two years later, and some even four.]

Thus ye see, which is worthy to be marked, how the just scourge and heavy indignation of God from time to time ever followeth there, and how all things there go to ruin, neither doth any thing well prosper, where Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is contemned and not received, as by these examples may appear, both of Romans, which not only were thus consumed and plagued by their own emperors, but also by civil wars, whereof three happened in two years at Rome, after the death of Nero, anno 69, and other casualties, (as in Sueton. is testified,) so that in the days of Tiberius aforesaid five thousand Romans were hurt and slain at one time by the fall of a theatre. And also most especially by the destruction of the Jews, which about this same time, in the year threescore and ten, and nearly forty years after the passion of Christ, and the third year after the suffering of St. Peter and Paul, were destroyed by Titus and Vespasian his father (who succeeded after Nero in the empire) to the number of eleven hundred thousand, besides them which Vespasian slew in subduing the country of Galilee, over and beside them also which were sold and sent into Egypt and other provinces to vile slavery, to the number of seventeen thousand. Two thousand were brought with Titus in his triumph; of which, part he gave to be devoured of the wild beasts, part otherwise most cruelly were slain. By whose case all nations and realms may take example, what it is to reject the visitation of God's verity being sent, and much more to persecute them which be sent of God for their salvation.

And as this wrathful vengeance of God thus hath been showed upon this rebellious people, both of the Jews and of the Romans, for their contempt of Christ, whom God so punished by their own emperors; so neither the emperors themselves, for persecuting Christ in his members, escaped without their just reward. For among so many emperors which put so many Christian martyrs to death, during the space of these first three hundred years, few or none of them scaped either not slain themselves, or by some miserable end or other worthily revenged. First, of the poisoning of Tiberius, and of the slaughter of the other three Neros after him, sufficiently is declared before. After Nero, Domitius Galba within seven months was slain by Otho. And so did Otho afterward slay himself, being overcome by Vitellus. And was not Vitellus shortly after drawn through the city of Rome, and after he was tormented was thrown into Tiber? Titus, a good emperor, is thought to be poisoned of Domitian, his brother. The said Domitian, after he had been a persecutor of the Christians, was slain in his chamber, not without the consent of his wife. Likewise Commodus was murdered of Narcissus. The like end was of Pertinax and Julianus. Moreover, after that

Severus was slain here in England, (and lieth at York,) did not his son Bassianus slay his brother Geta, and he after slain of Martialis? Macrinus with his son Diadumenus were both slain of their own soldiers. After whom Heliogabalus, that monstrous belly-paunch, was of his own people slain, and drawn through the city and cast into Tiber. Alexander Severus, that worthy and learned emperor, which said he would not feed his servants doing nothing with the bowels of the commonwealth, although in life and virtues he was much unlike other emperors, yet proved the like end, being slain at Mentz, with his godly mother Mammaea, by Maximinus, whom the emperor before of a muleteer had advanced to great dignities. The which Maximinus also after three years was slain himself of his soldiers. What should I speak of Maximus and Balbinus in like sort both slain in Rome? of Gordian slain by Philip? of Philip, the first christened emperor, slain, or rather martyred, for the same cause? of wicked Decius drowned, and his son slain the same time in battle? of Gallus and Volusianus his son, emperors after Decius, both slain by conspiracy of Æmilianus, who rose against them both in war, and within three months after was slain himself? Next to Æmilianus succeeded Valerianus, and Galienus his son; of whom Valerianus (who was a persecutor of the Christians) was taken prisoner of the Persians, and there made a riding fool of Sapore's their king, who used him for a stool to leap upon his horse; while his son Galienus, sleeping at Rome, either would not or could not once proffer to revenge his father's ignominy. For after the taking of Valerian, so many emperors rose up as were provinces in the Roman monarchy. At length Galienus also was killed by Aureolus which warred against him. It were too long here to speak of Aurelianus, another persecutor, slain of his secretary; of Tacitus and Florinus his brother, of whom the first reigned five months, and was slain at Pontus; the other reigned two months, and was murdered at Tarsis: of Probus, who, although a good civil emperor, yet was he destroyed by his soldiers. After whom Carus, the next emperor, was slain by lightning. Next to Carus followed the impious and wicked persecutor Dioclesian, with his fellows Maximian, Valerius, Maximinus, Maxentius, and Licinius, under whom, all at one time, (during the time of Dioclesian,) the greatest and most grievous persecution was moved against the Christians ten years together. After which, Dioclesian and Maximian deposed themselves from the empire. Galerius, the chiefest minister of the persecution, after his terrible persecutions, fell into a wonderful sickness, having such a sore risen in the nether part of his body, which consumed his members, and so did swarm with worms, that being curable neither by surgery nor physic, he confessed that it happened for his cruelty towards the Christians, and so called in his proclamations against them. Notwithstanding, he not able to sustain (as some say) his sore, slew himself. Maximinus in his war, being tormented with pain in his guts, there died, Maxentius was vanquished by Constantine, and drowned in Tiber. Licinius likewise, being overcome by the said Constantine the Great, was deposed from his empire, and afterward slain of his soldiers. But, on the other side, after the time of Constantine, whenas the faith of Christ was received into the imperial seat, we read of no emperor after the like sort destroyed or molested, except it were Julianus, or Basilius, (which expelled one Zeno, and was afterward expelled himself,) or Valens. Beside these we read of no emperor to come to ruin and decay, as the others before mentioned.

And thus have we in brief sum collected out of the chronicles the unquiet and miserable state of the emperors of Rome, until the time of Christian Constantine, with the examples, no less terrible than manifest, of God's severe justice upon them for their contemptuous refusing and persecuting the faith and name of Christ their Lord.

Moreover, in much like sort and condition, if leisure of time or haste of matter would suffer me a little to digress unto more lower times, and to come more near home, the like examples I could also infer of this our country of England, concerning the terrible plagues of God against the churlish and unthankful refusing or abusing the benefit of his truth. First, we read how that God stirred up Gildas to preach to the old Britons, and to exhort them unto repentance and amendment of life, and afore to warn them of plagues to come if they repented not. What availed it? Gildas was laughed to scorn, and taken for a false prophet and a malicious preacher. The Britons, with lusty courages, shameless faces, and unrepentant hearts, went forth to sin and to offend the Lord their God. What followed? God sent in their enemies on every side and destroyed them, and gave the land to other nations, Not many years past, God seeing idolatry, superstition, hypocrisy, and wicked living used in this realm, raised up that godly learned man John Wickliffe to preach unto our fathers repentance, and to exhort them to amend their lives, to forsake their papistry and idolatry, their hypocrisy and superstition, and to walk in the fear of God. His exhortations were not regarded, he with his sermons was despised, his books and he himself after his death were burnt. What followed? They slew their right king, and set up three wrong kings on a row; under whom all the noble blood was slain up, and half the commons thereto, what in France, and with their own sword in fighting among themselves for the crown; and the cities and towns were decayed, and the land brought half to a wilderness, in respect of that it was before. Oh extreme plagues of God's vengeance! Since that time, even of late years, God, once again having pity of this realm of England, raised up his prophets, namely, William Tindall, Thomas Bilney, John Frith, Doctor Barnes, Jerome Garret, Anthony Person, with divers others, which both with their writings and sermons earnestly laboured to call us unto repentance, that by this means the fierce wrath of God might be turned away from us. But how were they entreated? how, were their painful labours regarded? They themselves were condemned and burnt as heretics, and their books condemned and burnt as heretical. The time shall come, saith Christ, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God high good service, John xvi. 2. Whether any thing since that time hath chanced to this realm worthy the name of a plague, let the godly wise judge. If God hath deferred his punishment, or forgiven us these our wicked deeds, as I trust he hath, let us not therefore be proud and high-minded, but most humbly thank him for his tender mercies, and beware of the like ungodly enterprises hereafter. Neither is it here any need to speak of these our lower and later times, which have been in king Henry's and king Edward's days, seeing the memory thereof is yet fresh and cannot be forgotten. But let this pass; of this I am sure, that God yet once again is come on visitation to this church of England, yea, and that more lovingly and beneficially than ever he did before. For in this visitation he hath redressed many abuses, and cleansed his church of much ungodliness and superstition, and made it a glorious church, if it be compared to the old form and state. And now how grateful receivers we be, with what heart, study, and reverence we embrace that which he hath given, that I refer either to them that see our fruits, or to the sequel, which peradventure will declare it.

2. The Early Persecution of the Apostles

But this by the way of digression. Now to regress again to the state of the first former times. It remaineth, that as I have set forth the justice of God upon these Roman persecutors, so now we declare their persecutions raised up against the people and servants of Christ, within the space of three hundred years after Christ. Which persecutions in number commonly are counted to be ten, besides their persecutions first moved by the Jews in Jerusalem and other places against the apostles. In the which, first St. Stephen the deacon was put to death, with divers others more, in the same rage of time either slain or cast into prison. At the doing whereof Saul the same time played the doughty Pharisee, being not yet converted to the faith of Christ, whereof the history is plain in the Acts of the Apostles, set forth at large by St. Luke.



The martyrdom of St. Stephen

After the martyrdom of this blessed Stephen, suffered next James the holy apostle of Christ, and brother of John. Of which James mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, the twelfth chapter; where is declared, how that not long after the stoning of Stephen, king Herod stretched forth his hand to take and afflict certain of the congregation; among whom James was one, whom he slew with the sword, &c. Of this James Eusebius also inferreth mention, alleging Clement thus writing a memorable story of him. This James, (saith Clement,) when he was brought to the tribunal seat, he that brought him, (and was the cause of his trouble,) seeing him to be condemned, and that he should suffer death, as he went to the execution, he being moved therewith in heart and conscience. confessed himself also of his own accord to be a Christian. And so were they led forth together, where in the way he desired of James to forgive him that he had done. After that James had a little paused with himself upon the matter,

turning to him, Peace (saith he) be to thee, brother, and kissed him, and both were beheaded together, in the year of our Lord thirty and six.

Dorotheus in his book named Synopsis testifieth, that Nicanor, one of the seven deacons, with two thousand others, which believed in Christ, suffered also the same day whereon Stephen did suffer.

The said Dorotheus witnesseth also that Simon, another of the deacons, bishop afterward of Bostrum in Arabia, was there burned. Parmenas also, another of the deacons, suffered.

Thomas preached to the Parthians, Medes, and Persians; also to the Germans, Hiraconies, Bactries, and Magies. He suffered in Calamina, a city of Judah, being slain with a dart.

Simon Zelotes preached at Mauritania, and in the countries of Africa, and in Britain; he was likewise crucified.

Judas, brother of James, called also Thaddeus and Lebbeus, preached to the Edessenes, and to all Mesopotamia: he was slain under Augarus, king of the Edessenes, in Berito.

Simon called Cananeus, which was brother to Jude above mentioned, and to James the younger, which all were the sons of Mary Cleophas, and of Alpheus, was bishop of Jerusalem after James, and was crucified in a city of Egypt in the time of Trajanus the emperor, as Dorotheus recordeth, But Abdias writeth, that he with his brother Jude were both slain by a tumult of the people in Suanir, a city of Parsidis.

Mark the evangelist, and first bishop of Alexandria, preached the gospel in Egypt, and there, drawn with ropes unto the fire, was burned, and afterward buried in a place called there Bucolus, under the reign of Trajanus the emperor.

Bartholomeus is said also to preach to the Indians, and to have converted the Gospel of St. Matthew into their tongue, where he continued a great space doing many miracles. At last in Albania, a city of Greater Armenia, after divers persecutions, he was beaten down with staves, then crucified, and after being excoriated, he was at length beheaded.

Of Andrew the apostle and brother to Peter thus writeth Hieroni in his Catalogue of ecclesiastical Writers. Andrew the brother of Peter (in the time and reign of Vespasianus, as our ancestors have reported) did preach in the eightieth year after our Lord Jesus Christ to the Scythians, Sogdians, to the Saxons, and in a city which is called Angustia, where theethiopians do now inhabit. He was buried in Patnis, a city of Achaia, being crucified of Egeas the governor of the Edessenes. Hitherto writeth Hierom, although in the number of years he seemeth a little to miss; for Vespasianus reached not to the eightieth year after Christ. But Bernard in his second sermon, and St. Cyprian, do make mention of the confession and martyrdom of this blessed apostle; whereof partly out of these, partly out of other credible writers, we have collected after this manner: that whenas Andrew, being conversant in a city of Achaia called Patris, through his diligent preaching had brought many to the faith of Christ, Egeas the governor knowing this, resorted thither, to the intent he might constrain as many as did believe Christ to be God, by the whole consent of the senate, to do sacrifice unto the idols, and so give divine honour unto them. Andrew thinking good at the beginning to resist the wicked counsel and the doings of Egeas, went unto him, saying to this effect unto him: That it behoved him which was judge of men, first to know his Judge which

dwelleth in heaven, and then to worship him being known, and so in worshipping the true God, to revoke his mind from false gods and blind idols. These words spake Andrew to the consul.

But he, greatly therewith discontented, demanded of him whether he was the same Andrew that did overthrow the temple of the gods, and persuaded men of that superstitious sect, which the Romans of late had commanded to be abolished and rejected. Andrew did plainly affirm, that the princes of the Romans did not understand the truth, and that the Son of God, coming from heaven into the world for man's sake, hath taught and declared how those idols, whom they so honoured as gods, were not only not gods, but also most cruel devils, enemies to mankind, teaching the people nothing else but that wherewith God is offended, and being offended, turneth away and regardeth them not; and so by the wicked service of the devil they do fall head long into all wickedness, and after their departing nothing remaineth unto them but their evil deeds.

But the proconsul esteeming these things to be as vain especially seeing the Jews (as he said) had crucified Christ before, therefore charged and commanded Andrew not to teach and preach such things any more; or if he did, that he should be fastened to the cross with all speed.



The Martyrdom of St. Andrew

Andrew abiding in his former mind very constant, answered thus concerning the punishment which he threatened: He would not have preached the honour and glory of the cross, if he had feared the death of the cross. Whereupon sentence of condemnation was pronounced, that Andrew, teaching and enterprising a new sect, and taking away the religion of their gods, ought to be crucified. Andrew coming to the place, and seeing afar off the cross prepared, did change neither countenance nor colour, as the imbecility of mortal men is wont to do, neither did his blood shrink, neither did he fail in his speech; his body fainted not, neither was his mind molested;

his understanding did not fail him, as it is the manner of men to do, but out of the abundance of his heart his mouth did speak; and fervent charity did appear in his words as kindled sparks: he said, O cross, most welcome and long looked for; with a willing mind joyfully and desirously I come to thee, being the scholar of Him which did hang on thee; because I have been always thy lover, and have coveted to embrace thee. So being crucified, he yielded up the ghost and fell on sleep, the day before the kalends of December.

Matthew, otherwise named Levi, first of a publican made an apostle, wrote his Gospel to the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, according to Eusebius and Irenæus.

Matthias, after he had preached to the Jews, at length was stoned and beheaded. Some others record that he died inethiopia.

Philippus the holy apostle, after he had much laboured among the barbarous nations in preaching the word of salvation to them, at length suffered as the other apostles did, in Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia, being there crucified and stoned to death, where also he was buried, and his daughters also with him.

After that Festus had sent the apostle Paul to Rome after his appellation made at Cesarea, and that the Jews by the means thereof had left their hope of performing their malicious vow against him conceived, they fell upon James the brother of our Lord, who was bishop at Jerusalem, against whom they, being bent with like malice, brought him forth before them, and required him to deny before all the people the faith of Christ. But he, otherwise than they all looked for, freely and with a greater constancy before all the multitude confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, our Saviour, and our Lord. Whereupon, they not being able to abide the testimony of this man any longer, because he was thought to be the justest among them all, for the highness of Divine wisdom and godliness which in living he declared, they killed him, finding the more opportunity to accomplish their mischief, because the kingdom the same time was vacant. For Festus being dead in Jewry, the administration of that province was destitute of a ruler and a deputy. But after what manner James was killed the words of Clement do declare, which writeth that he was cast down from the pinnacle of the temple, and, being smitten with the instrument of a fuller, was slain; but Egesippus, which lived in the time next after the apostles, described the cause diligently in his fifth commentary, after this manner as followeth.

James the brother of our Lord took in hand to govern the church after the apostles, being counted of all men from the time of our Lord to be a just and perfect man. Many and divers other Jameses there were beside him, but this was born holy from his mother's womb; he drunk no wine, nor any strong drink; neither did he eat any living creature; the razor never came up on his head; he was not anointed with oil, neither did he use bath; to him only was it lawful to enter into the holy place; neither was he clothed with woollen cloth, but with silk; and he only entered into the temple, falling upon his knees, asking remission for the people; so that his knees by oft kneeling lost the sense of feeling, being benumbed and hardened like the knees of a camel. He was (for worshipping God and craving forgiveness for the people) called just, and for the excellency of his just life named Oblias, which (if you do interpret it) is the safeguard and justice of the people, as the prophets declare of him: therefore whenas many of the heretics which were among the people asked him what manner of gift Jesus should be, he answered that he was the Saviour. Whereof some do believe him to be Jesus Christ; but the aforesaid heretics neither believe the resurrection, neither that any shall come which shall render unto every man according to his works,

but as many as believe, they believed for James's cause. Whenas many therefore of the princes did believe, there was a tumult made of the scribes, Jews, and Pharisees, saying, It is dangerous, lest that all the people do look for this Jesus as for Christ. Therefore they gathered themselves together, and said to James, We beseech thee, restrain the people, for they believe in Jesus as though he were Christ; we pray thee, persuade them all which come unto the feast of the passover of Jesus; for we are all obedient unto thee, and all the people do testify of thee that thou art just, neither that thou dost accept the person of any man; therefore persuade the people that they be not deceived in Jesus, and all the people and we will obey thee: therefore stand upon the pillar of the temple, that thou mayst be seen from above, and that thy words may be perceived of all the people, for to this pass over all the tribes do come with all the country. And thus the forenamed scribes and Pharisees did set James upon the battlements of the church, and they cried unto him and said, Thou just man, whom all we ought to obey, because this people is led after Jesus, which is crucified, tell what is the gift of Jesus crucified. And he answered with a great voice, What do you ask me of Jesus the Son of man, seeing that he sitteth on the right hand of God in heaven, and shall come in the clouds of the sky? But when many were persuaded of this, they glorified God upon the witness of James, and said, Hosanna in the highest to the Son of David. Then the scribes and the Pharisees said among themselves, We have done evil that we have caused such a testimony of Jesus, but let us go up, and let us take him, that they, being compelled with fear, may deny that faith. And they cried out, saying, Oh, oh, this just man also is seduced. Therefore they went up to throw down the just man, and said among themselves, Let us stone this just man James; and they took him to smite him with stones, for he was not yet dead when he was cast down. But he turning, fell down upon his knees, saying, O Lord God, Father, I beseech thee to forgive them, for they know not what they do.

But when they had smitten him with stones, one of the priests of the children of Rechas, the son of Charobim, spake to them the testimony which is in Jeremiah the prophet: Leave off; what do ye? The just man prayeth for you. And one of those which were present took a fuller's instrument, wherewith they did use to beat and purge cloth, and smote the just man on his head; and so he finished his martyrdom, and they buried him in the same place, and his pillar abideth still by the temple. He was a true testimony to the Jews and the Gentiles. And shortly after Vespasianus the emperor, destroying the land of Jewry, brought them into captivity. These things being thus written at large of Egesippus, do well agree to those which Clement did write of him. This James was so notable a man, that for his justice, he was had in honour of all men, insomuch that the wise men of the Jews, shortly after his martyrdom, did impute the cause of the besieging of Jerusalem, and other calamities which happened unto them, to no other cause, but unto the violence and injury done to this man. Also Josephus hath not left this out of his history, where he speaketh of him after this manner: These things so chanced unto the Jews for a vengeance, because of that just man James, which was the brother of Jesus, whom they called Christ; for the Jews killed him, although he was a righteous man.

The same Josephus declareth his death in the same book and chapter, saying, Cæsar hearing of the death of Festus, sent Albinus the lieutenant into Jewry; but Ananus the younger being bishop, and of the sect of the Sadducees, trusting that he had obtained a convenient time, seeing that Festus was dead, and Albinus entered on his journey, he called a council, and calling many unto him, among whom was James,

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by name, the brother of Jesus which is called Christ, he stoned them, accusing them as breakers of the law.

Whereby it appeareth that many other besides James also at the same time were martyred and put to death among the Jews, for the faith of Christ.



THESE things being thus declared for the martyrdom of the apostles, and the persecution of the Jews; now let us (by the grace of Christ our Lord) comprehend, with like brevity, the persecutions raised by the Romans against the Christians in the primitive age of the church during the space of three hundred years, till the coming of godly Constantine: which persecutions are reckoned of Eusebius, and by the most part of writers, to the number of ten most special.

Wherein marvellous it is to see and read the numbers incredible of Christian innocents that were slain and tormented, some one way, some another, is Rabanus saith, and saith truly. Some slain with sword; some burnt with fire; some with whips scourged; some stabbed with forks of iron; some fastened to the cross or gibbet; some drowned in the sea; some their skins plucked off; some their tongues cut off; some stoned to death; some killed with cold; some starved with hunger: some their hands cut off, or otherwise dismembered, have been so left naked to the open shame of the world, &c. Their kinds of punishments, although they were divers, yet the manner of constancy in all these martyrs was one. And yet notwithstanding the sharpness of these so many and sundry torments, and like cruelties of the tormentors, yet such was the number of these constant saints that suffered, or rather such was the power of the Lord in his saints, that there is no day in the whole year unto which the number of five thousand martyrs cannot be ascribed, except only the first day of January.

3. The First Persecution under Nero

The first of these ten persecutions was stirred up by Nero Domitius, the sixth emperor before mentioned, about the year of our Lord threescore and seven. The tyrannous rage of which emperor was so fierce against the Christians, as Eusebius recordeth, that a man might then see cities lie full of men's bodies, the old there lying together with the young, and the dead bodies of women cast out naked, without all reverence of that sex, in the open streets, &c. Likewise Orosius, writing of the said Nero, saith, that he was the first which in Rome did raise up persecution against the Christians; and not only in Rome, but also through all the provinces thereof; thinking to abolish and to destroy the whole name of Christians in all places, &c. Whereunto accordeth moreover the testimony of Hierom upon Daniel, saying, that many there were of the Christians in those days, which, seeing the filthy abominations and intolerable cruelty of Nero, thought that he should be antichrist.



The Martyrdom of St. Peter

In this persecution, among many other saints, the blessed apostle Peter was condemned to death, and crucified, as some do write, at Rome; albeit other some, and not without cause, do doubt thereof; concerning whose life and history, because it is sufficiently described in the text of the Gospel, and in the Acts of the Apostles, I need not here to make any great repetition thereof. As touching the cause and maimer of his death, divers there be which make relation, as Hierom, Egesippus, Eusebius, Abdias, and others, although they do not all precisely agree in the time. The words of Hierom be these: Simon Peter, the son of Jona, of the province of Galilee, and of the town of Bethsaida, the brother of Andrew, &c., after he had been bishop of the church of Antioch, and had preached to the dispersion of them that believed, of the circumcision, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, in the second year of Claudius the

emperor, (which was the year of our Lord forty and four,) came to Rome to withstand Simon Magus, and there kept the priestly chair the space of five and twenty years, until the last year of the aforesaid Nero, which was the fourteenth year of his reign, of whom he was crucified, his head being down, and his feet upward; himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was, &c. Egesippus prosecuting this matter something more at large, and Abdias also, (if any authority is to be given to his book, who following not only the sense, but also the very form of words of Egesippus in this history, seemeth to be extracted out of him, and of other authors,) saith, that Simon Magus being then a great man with Nero, and his president and keeper of his life, was required upon a time to be present at the raising up of a certain noble young man in Rome, of Nero's kindred, lately departed; whereas Peter also was desired to come to the re viving of the said personage. But when Magus, in the presence of Peter, could not do it, then Peter, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus, did raise him up, and restored him to his mother; Whereby the estimation of Simon Magus began greatly to decay, and to be detested in Rome. Not long after the said Magus threatened the Romans that he would leave the city, and in their sight fly away from them into heaven. So the day being appointed, Magus taking his wings in the mount Capitolinus, began to fly in the air; but Peter, by the power of the Lord Jesus, brought him down with his wings headlong to the ground, by the which fall his legs and joints were broken, and he thereupon died. Then Nero, sorrowing for the death of him, sought matter against Peter to put him to death. Which, when the people perceived, they entreated Peter with much ado that he would fly the city. Peter, through their importunity at length persuaded, prepared himself to avoid. But coming to the gate, he saw the Lord Christ come to meet him, to whom he, worshipping, said, Lord, whither dost thou go? To whom he answered and said, I am come again to be crucified. By this Peter, perceiving his suffering to be understood, returned back into the city again, and so was he crucified in manner as is before declared. And this out of Egesippus.

Eusebius, moreover, writing of the death, not only of Peter, but also of his wife, affirmeth that Peter, seeing his wife going to her martyrdom, (belike as he was yet hanging upon the cross,) was greatly joyous and glad thereof, who, crying unto her with a loud voice, and calling her by her name, bade her remember the Lord Jesus. Such was then, (saith Eusebius,) the blessed bond of marriage among the saints of God. And thus much of Peter.

Paul the apostle, which before was called Saul, after his great travail and unspeakable labours in promoting the gospel of Christ, suffered also in this first persecution under Nero, and was beheaded.

Among his other manifold labours and travails in spreading the doctrine of Christ, he won Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, to the faith of Christ: whereupon he took his name, as some suppose, turned from Saulus to Paulus. After he had passed through divers places and countries in his laborious peregrinations, he took to him Barnabas, and went up to Jerusalem to Peter, James, and John, where he was ordained and sent out with Barnabas to preach unto the Gentiles.

And because it is in the Acts of the Apostles sufficiently comprehended, concerning the admirable conversion and conversation of this most worthy apostle, that which remaineth of the rest of his history, I will here add, how the said apostle Paul, Acts xxviii., the five and twentieth year after the passion of the Lord, in the second year of Nero, at what time Festus ruled in Jewry, was sent up in bonds to

Rome, where he, remaining in his own lodgings two years together, disputed daily against the Jews, proving Christ to be come. And here is to be noted, that after his first answer or purgation there made at Rome, the emperor Nero, not yet fully confirmed in his empire, and yet not bursting out into those mischiefs which histories report of him, he was at that time by Nero discharged and dismissed to preach the gospel in the west parts, and about the coasts of Italy, as he himself writing unto Timothy afterward, in his second apprehension, in his Second Epistle, chap. iv. 16, 17, witnesseth: "At my first answer no man stood with rue, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." In which place, by the lion, he plainly meaneth Nero. And afterwards, likewise, he saith, I was delivered from the mouth of the lion, &c. And again, The Lord hath delivered me out from all evil works, and hath saved me unto his heavenly kingdom, &c.; speaking this, because he perceived then the time of his martyrdom to be near at hand. For in the same Epistle before, he saith, I am now offered up, and the time of my dissolution draweth on.

Thus, then, this worthy preacher and messenger of the Lord, in the fourteenth year of Nero, and the same day in which Peter was crucified, (although not in the same year, as some write, but in the next year following,) was beheaded at Rome for the testimony of Christ, and was buried in the way of Ostia, the seven and thirtieth year after the passion of the Lord. He wrote nine Epistles to seven churches: to the Romans, one; to the Corinthians, two; to the Galatians, one; to the Ephesians, one; to the Philippians, one; to the Colossians, one; to the Thessalonians, two. Moreover, he wrote to his disciples: to Timothy, two; to Titus, one; to Philemon, one; to the Hebrews, one.

As touching the time and order of the death and martyrdom of Saint Paul, as Eusebius, Hierom, Maximus, and other authors do but briefly pass it over; so Abdias, (if his book be of any substantial authority,) speaking more largely of the same, doth say, that after the crucifying of Peter, and the ruin of Simon Magus, Paul yet remaining in free custody, was dismissed and delivered at that time from martyrdom by God's permission, that all the Gentiles might be replenished with preaching of the gospel by him.

And the same Abdias proceeding in his story, declareth moreover, that as Paul was thus occupied at Rome, he was accused to the emperor, not only for teaching new doctrine, but also for stirring up sedition against the empire. For this he being called before Nero, and demanded to show the order and manner of his doctrine, there declared what his doctrine was: To teach all men peace and charity, how to love one another, how to prevent one another in honour; rich men not to be puffed up in pride, nor to put their trust in their treasures, but in the living God; mean men to be contented with food and raiment, and with their present state; poor men to rejoice in their poverty with hope; fathers to bring up their children in the fear of God; children to obey their parents; husbands to love their wives; wives to be subject to their husbands; citizens and subjects to give their tribute unto Cæsar, and to be subject to their magistrates; masters to be courteous, not churlish, to their servants; servants to deal faithfully with their masters: and this to be the sum of his teaching. Which his doctrine he received not of men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ, and the Father of glory, which spake to him from heaven; the Lord Jesus saying to him, that he should go and preach his name, and that he would be with him, and would be the Spirit of life to all that believed in him, and that whatsoever he did or said he would justify it, &c. After that Paul had thus declared unto the emperor, shortly after sentence of death was pronounced against him, that he should be beheaded. Unto whose execution then Nero

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sent two of his esquires, Ferega and Parthemius, to bring him word of his death. They coming to Paul, instructing then the people, desired him to pray for them, that they might believe. This done, the soldiers came and led him out of the city to the place of execution, where he, after his prayers made, gave his neck to the sword.

4. The Second Persecution under Domitian

The first Roman persecution beginning under Nero, as is aforesaid, ceased under Vespasianus, who gave some rest to the poor Christians. After whose reign was moved, not long after, the second persecution by the emperor Domitian, brother of Titus. Of whom Eusebius and Orosius so write, that he first beginning mildly, afterward did so far outrage in pride intolerable, that he commanded himself to be worshipped as God, and that images of gold and silver in his honour should be set up in Capitolio. The chiefest nobles of the senators, either upon envy, or for their goods, he caused to be put to death, some openly, and some he sent into banishment, there causing them to be slain privily.

And as his tyranny was unmeasurable, so the intemperancy of his life was no less. He put to death all the nephews of Jude, called the Lord's brother, and caused to be sought out and to be slain all that could be found of the stock of David, (as Vespasian also did before him,) for fear lest he were yet to come of the house of David which should enjoy the kingdom. In the time of this persecution, Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, after other torments, was crucified to death, whom Justus afterward succeeded in that bishopric.

In this persecution John the apostle and evangelist was exiled by the said Domitianus into Patmos. Of whom divers and sundry memorable acts be reported in sundry chronicles. As, first, how he was put in a vessel of boiling oil by the proconsul of Ephesus. The legend and Perionius say it was done at Rome. Isidorus also writing of him, and comprehending many things in few words, declareth that he turned certain places of wood into gold, and stones by the sea-side into margarites, to satisfy the desire of two, whom he had before persuaded to renounce their riches; and afterward they repenting that for worldly treasure they had lost heaven, for their sakes again he changed the same into their former substance. Also how he raised up a widow and a certain young man from death to life; how he drank poison and it hurt him not, raising also to life two which had drunk the same before. These and such other miracles, although they may be true, and are found in Isidorus, and other writers more, yet because they are no articles of our Christian belief, I let them pass, and only content myself with that which I read in Eusebius, declaring of him in this wise: that in the fourteenth year after Nero, in the second persecution, in the days of Domitian, John was banished into Patmos for the testimony of the word, in the year fourscore and twelve. And after the death of the aforesaid Domitian, he being slain, and his acts repealed by the senate, John was again released under Pertinax the emperor, and came to Ephesus in the year one hundred; where he continued until the time of Trajanus, and there governed the churches in Asia; where also he wrote his Gospel, and so lived till the year after the passion of our Lord threescore and eight, which was the year of his age one hundred and twenty.

Moreover, in the aforesaid ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, we read that John the apostle and evangelist, whom the Lord did love, was in Asia, where he being returned out of Patmos, after the death of Domitian, governed the churches and congregations. Irenæus in his second book thus writeth: And of him all the elders do witness, which were with John the disciple of the Lord in Asia, that he spake and wrote these things, &c.; for there he continued with them unto the time of Trajanus,

&c. Also the said Irenæus in like words declareth, saying, The church of the Ephesians being first founded by Paul, afterward being confirmed of John, (who continued in the same city unto the time of Trajanus the emperor,) is a true Witness of this apostolical tradition, &c. Clemens Alexandrinus moreover noteth both the time of this holy apostle, and also addeth to the same a certain history of him, not unworthy to be remembered of such which delight in things honest and profitable. Of the which history Sozomenus also in his commentaries maketh mention. The words of the author setting forth this history be these: Hear a fable, and not a fable, but a true report, which is told us of John the apostle, delivered and commended to our remembrance.

After the death of the tyrant, when John was returned to Ephesus, from the Isle of Patmos, he was desired to resort to the places bordering near unto him, partly to constitute bishops, partly to dispose the causes and matters of the church, partly to ordain and set such of the clergy in office whom the Holy Ghost should elect. Whereupon, when he was come to a certain city not far off, the name of which also many do yet remember, and had among other things comforted the brethren, he, looking more earnestly upon him which was the chief bishop among them, beheld a young man mighty in body, and of beautiful countenance, and of a fervent mind: I commend this man (saith he) to thee with great diligence, in witness here of Christ and of the church.

When the bishop had received of him this charge, and had promised his faithful diligence therein; again, the second time John spake unto him, and desired him in like manner and contestation as before. This done, John returned again to Ephesus. The bishop receiving the young man commended and committed to his charge, brought him home, kept him, and nourished him, and at length also did illuminate (that is, he baptized) him, and in short time through his diligence brought him into such order and towardness, that he committed unto him the oversight of a certain cure in the Lord's behalf. The young man thus having more his liberty, it chanced that certain of his companions and old familiars being idle, dissolute, and accustomed of old time to wickedness, did join in company with him, who first brought him to sumptuous and riotous banquets; then incited him forth with them in the night to rob and steal; after that he was allured by them unto greater mischief and wickedness. Where in by custom of time, by little and little, he being more practised, and being of a good wit and a stout courage, like unto a wild or an unbroken horse, leaving the right way, and running at large without bridle, was carried headlong to the profundity of all disorder and outrage. And thus, being past all hope of grace, utterly forgetting and rejecting the wholesome doctrine of salvation, which he had learned before, began to set his mind upon no small matters. And forasmuch as he was entered so far in the way of perdition, he cared not how much farther he proceeded in the same. And so, associating unto him the company of his companions and fellow thieves, took upon him to be as head and captain among them in committing all kind of murder and felony.

In the mean time, it chanced that of necessity John was sent for to those quarters again, and came. The causes being decided, and his business ended for the which he came, by the way meeting with the bishop afore specified, he requireth of him the pledge, which in the witness of Christ and of the Congregation then present he left in his hands to keep. The bishop, something amazed at the words of John, supposing he had meant of some money Committed to his Custody which he had not received, (and yet durst not mistrust John, nor contrary his words,) could not tell what to answer. Then John perceiving his doubting, and uttering his mind more plainly, The

young man, (saith he,) and the soul of our brother committed to your custody, I do require. Then the bishop with a loud voice sorrowing and weeping said, He is dead, To whom John said, How, and by what death? The other said, He is dead to God; for he is become an evil man and pernicious; to be brief, a thief; and now he doth frequent this mountain with a company of villains and thieves like unto himself against the church. But the apostle rent his garments, and with a great lamentation said, I have left a good keeper of my brother's soul; get me a horse, and let me have a guide with me; which being done, his horse and man procured, he hasted from the church as much as he could, and coming to the same place, was taken of thieves that watched. But he, neither flying nor refusing, said, I came for this same cause hither; lead me, said he, to your captain. So he being brought, the captain, all armed, fiercely began to look upon him; and eftsoons coming to the knowledge of him, was stricken with confusion and shame, and began to fly. But the old man followed him as much as he might, forgetting his age, and crying, My son, why dost thou fly from thy father? an armed man from one naked, a young man from an old man? Have pity on me, my son, and fear not, for there is yet hope of salvation; I will make answer for thee unto Christ; I will die for thee, if need be; as Christ hath died for us, I will give my life for thee; believe me, Christ hath sent me. He hearing these things, first as in a maze stood still, and therewith his courage was abated. After that he had cast down his weapons, by and by he trembled, yea, and wept bitterly; and coming to the old man, embraced him, and spake unto him with weeping, (as well as he could,) being even then baptized afresh with tears, only his right hand being hid and covered. Then the apostle, after that he had promised and firmly ascertained him that he should obtain remission of our Saviour, and also prayed, falling down upon his knees, and kissed his murdering right hand, which for shame he durst not show before, as now purged through repentance, brought him to the congregation. And when he had prayed for him with continual prayer and daily fastings, and had comforted and confirmed his mind with many sentences, went not from him (as the author reported) before he had restored him to the congregation again, and made him a great example and trial of regeneration, and a token of the visible resurrection.

Moreover, the aforesaid Irenæus and Eusebius, prosecuting the history of John, declare in these words, saying, that there were certain which heard Polycarpus say, that John the disciple of our Lord, going into Ephesus to be washed, seeing Cerinthus within, he leaped out of the bath unbathed, because he feared the bath should have fallen, seeing that Cerinthus an enemy to the truth was within. Such fear had the apostles, (saith Irenæus,) that they would not communicate a word with them that adulterate the truth.

In this persecution, besides these afore mentioned, and many other innumerable godly martyrs, suffering for the like testimony of the Lord Jesus, was Flavia the daughter of Flavius Clemens, one of the Roman consuls; which Flavia, with many others, was banished out of Rome into the isle Pontia, for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, by the emperor Domitianus.

This Domitianus feared the coming of Christ as Herod did, and therefore commanded them to be killed which were of the stock of David in Jewry. There were remaining alive at that time certain of the Lord's kindred, which were the nephews of Jude, that was called the Lord's brother after the flesh. These, when the lieutenant of Jewry had brought up to Domitian to be slain, the emperor demanded of them whether they were of the stock of David; which when they had granted, he asked again what possessions and what substance they had. They answered, that they both had no more

between them in all but nine and thirty acres of ground; and how they got their living, and sustained their families, with the hard labours of their hands, showing forth their hands unto the emperor, being hard and rough, worn with labours, to witness that to be true which they had spoken. Then the emperor, inquiring of them concerning the kingdom of Christ, what manner of kingdom it was, how and when it should appear; they answered that his kingdom was no worldly nor terrene thing, but a heavenly and angelical kingdom, and that it should appear in the consummation and end of the world, what time he coming in glory should judge the quick and the dead, and render to every one according to his deservings. Domitian the emperor hearing this, (as the saying is,) did not condemn them; but despising them as vile persons let them go, and also staid the persecution then moved against the Christians. They, being thus discharged and dismissed, afterward had the government of churches, being taken for martyrs, and as of the Lord's stock, and so continued in good peace till the time of Trajanus.

By this story here recited may appear what were the causes why the emperors of the Roman monarchy did so persecute the Christians; which causes were chiefly these: fear and hatred. First, fear, for that the emperors and senate, of blind ignorance, not knowing the manner of Christ's kingdom, feared and misdoubted lest the same would subvert their empire (like as the pope thinketh now that this gospel will overthrow his kingdom of majesty); and therefore sought they all means possible, how, by death and all kinds of torments, utterly to extinguish the name and memory of the Christians. And thereupon seemeth to spring the old law of the Roman senate, That the Christians should not be let go which were once brought to the judgment-seat, except they changed their purpose. Secondly, hatred, partly for that this world, of his own natural condition, hath ever hated and maliced the people of God, from the first beginning of the world. Partly, again, for that the Christians, being of a contrary nature and religion, serving only the true living God, despised their false gods, spake against their idolatrous worshippings, and many times stopped the power of Satan working in their idols; and therefore Satan, the prince of this world, stirred up the Roman princes and blind idolaters to bear the more hatred and spite against them.

Upon these causes, and such like, rose up these malicious slanders, false surmises, infamous lies, and slanderous accusations of the heathen idolaters against the Christian servants of God, which incited the princes of this world the more to persecute them; for what crimes soever malice could invent, or rash suspicion could minister, that was imputed to the Christians; as that they were a people incestuous, that in the night in their concourses, putting out their candles, they ran together in all filthy manner, that they killed their own children, that they used to eat man's flesh, that they were seditious and rebellious, that they would not swear by the fortune and prosperity of Cæsar, that they would not adore the image of Cæsar in the market-place, that they were pernicious to the empire of Rome. Briefly, whatsoever mishappened to the city or provinces of Rome, either famine, pestilence, earthquake, wars, wonders, unseasonableness of weather, or what other evils soever happened, it was imputed to the Christians, as Justinus recordeth. Over and beside all these, a great occasion that stirred up the emperors against the Christians came by one Publius Tarquinius, the chief prelate of the idolatrous sacrifices, and Mamertinus, the chief governor of the city in the time of Trajanus; who partly with money, partly with sinister and pestilent counsel, partly with infamous accusations, (as witnesseth Nauclerus,) incensed the mind of the emperor so much against God's people.

Also among these other causes above said, crept in some piece of covetousness withal, (as in all other things it doth,) in that the wicked promoters and accusers, for lucre' sake, to have the possessions of the Christians, were the more ready to accuse them to have the spoil of their goods.

Thus hast thou, (Christian reader,) first, the causes declared of these persecutions; secondly, the cruel law of their condemnation; thirdly, now hear more what was the form of inquisition, which was (as is witnessed in the second apology of Justinus) to this effect: that they should swear to declare the truth, whether they were in very deed Christians or not: and if they confessed, then by the law the sentence of death proceeded.

Neither yet were these tyrants and organs of Satan thus contented with death only, to bereave the life from the body. The kinds of death were divers, and no less horrible than divers. Whatsoever the cruelty of man's invention could devise for the punishment of man's body was practised against the Christians, as partly I have mentioned before, and more appeareth by the epistle sent from the brethren of France hereafter following: Crafty trains, outeries of enemies, imprisonment, stripes and scourgings, drawings, tearings, stonings, plates of iron laid unto them burning hot, deep dungeons, racks, strangling in prisons, the teeth of wild beasts, gridirons, gibbets and gallows, tossing upon the horns of bulls: moreover, when they were thus killed, their bodies were laid in heaps, and dogs there left to keep them, that no man might come to bury them; neither would any prayer obtain them to be interred and buried.

And yet, notwithstanding for all these continual persecutions and horrible punishments, the church of the Christians daily increased, deeply rooted in the doctrine of the apostles, and of men apostolical, and watered plenteously with the blood of saints. Whereof let us hear the worthy testimony of Justinus Martyr in his Dialogue with Tripheus. And that none (saith he) can terrify or remove us which believe in Jesus, by this it daily appeareth; for when we are slain, crucified, cast to wild beasts, into the fire, or given to other torments, yet we go not from our confession: but, contrary, the more cruelty and slaughter is wrought against us, the more they be that come to piety and faith by the name of Jesus; no otherwise than if a man cut the vine tree, the better the branches grow. For the vine tree, planted by God and Christ our Saviour, is his people.

To comprehend the names and number of all the martyrs that suffered in all these ten persecutions, (which are innumerable,) as it is impossible, so it is hard in such a variety and diversity of matter to keep such a perfect order and course of years and times, that either some be not left out, or that every one be reduced into hitright place, especially seeing the authors themselves, whom in this present work we follow, do diversly disagree, both in the times, in the names, and also in the kind of martyrdom of them that suffered. As, for example, where the common reading and opinion of the church and epistles decretal do take Anacletus to succeed after Clement, next before Euaristus; contrary, Eusebius, making no mention of Cletus, but of Anacletus, saith that Euaristus succeeded next to Clement. Likewise Ruffinus and Epiphanius, speaking nothing of Anacletus, make mention of Linus and of Cletus next before Clement, but say nothing of Anacletus; whereby it may appear that Cletus and Anacletus were both one. Sabellicus speaketh of Linus and of Cletus, and saith that they were ordained helpers under Peter, while he laboured in his apostleship abroad; and so saith also Marianus Scotus: contrary, Irenæus speaketh of Anacletus, making no mention of Cletus. Whereby it may appear, by the way, what credit is to be given to

the decretal epistles, whom all the later histories of the pope's church do follow on this behalf, &c. Moreover, where Antoninus, Vincentius, Jacobus, Simoneta, Aloisius, with others, declare of Linus, Cletus, Clement, Anacletus, Euaristus, Alexander, bishops of Rome, that they died martyrs; Eusebius, in his ecclesiastical history, writing of them, maketh thereof no mention.

And, first, as touching Clement, (whom Marianus Scotus calleth the first bishop of Rome after Peter,) they say that he was sent out into banishment of Trajanus, beyond Ponticus, with two thousand Christians, where he opened a well-spring to them which in the wilderness were condemned to the mines. Afterward, being accused to the emperor, he was thrown into the sea with a millstone fastened about his neck, and not long after his body was cast up and buried (as Platina saith) at the place where the well was made. Some say it was found first in the days of Pope Nicholas the First. But forasmuch as I find of his martyrdom no firm relation in the ancient authors, but only in such new writers of later times which are wont to paint out the lives and histories of good men with feigned additions of forged miracles; therefore I count the same of less credit, as I do also certain decretal epistles untruly (as may seem) ascribed and entitled to his name. Eusebius in his third book, writing of Clement, giveth no more of him but thus: After he had governed the church of Rome nine years, the said Clement left the succession thereof to Euaristus.

Of which Euaristus, next bishop of Rome, thus we find in Irenæus: Peter and Paul (saith he) committed the charge of that church to Linus; after whom came Anacletus; then succeeded Clemens; next to Clemens followed Euaristus; after whom came Alexander; and then Sixtus, the sixth bishop of Rome after the apostles; after Sixtus sat Telesphorus; then Higinus, then Pius, then Anicetus; and when Soter took the place after him, then the twelfth bishop of Rome was Eleutherius. Thus after Clement followed (as is said) Euaristus in the second or third year of Trajanus, as saith Eusebius; or, as Nicephorus saith, the fourth year of the said emperor. But howsoever the count of years standeth, little or nothing remaineth of the acts and monuments either of this or of other bishops of Rome in those days. Whereby it may appear that no great account was then made of Roman bishops in those days, whose acts and deeds were then either so lightly reputed, or so slenderly committed to history. Notwithstanding, certain decretal epistles are remaining, or rather thrust upon us in their names, containing in them little substance of any doctrine, but altogether stuffed with laws, injunctions, and stately decrees, little to the purpose, and less savouring of the nature of that time then present. Amongst whom also are numbered the two epistles of this Euaristus.

And when he had given these orders, and had made six priests, two deacons, and five bishops for sundry places, (saith the story,) he suffered martyrdom. But what kind of death, for what cause he suffered, what constancy he showed, what was the order or conversation of his life, is nothing touched, and seemeth therefore the more to be doubted that which our new histories do say; because the old ancient writers have no remembrance thereof, which otherwise would not have passed such things over in silence, if they had been true. Again, neither do the authors fully agree in the time of his martyrdom, which Nauclerus witnesseth to be in the last year of Trajanus; but Platina thinketh rather that he suffered under Hadrianus. Fascicul. Temporum referreth it to the third year of Hadrian; Volateranus to the beginning of the reign of Hadrian. Contrary, Eusebius coming near to the simple truth, (as seemeth,) doth affirm that Euaristus succeeded Clement in the third year of Trajanus, and so giving to him nine years, it should follow thereby that Euaristus deceased the twelfth year of Trajanus.

After whom succeeded next Alexander in the governance of that church, of whose time and death the like discrepance is among the writers. Marianus Scotus saith he was the fourth bishop from Peter; but that could not be. Some say he was the sixth, and some the seventh; but they likewise were deceived; for the most part all do grant Sixtus to be the sixth. Damasus affirmeth that he was in the reign of Trajan: and how can that be, when the said Damasus affirmed before that Euaristus's predecessor suffered in the last year of Trajan, and then the bishopric stood at least a month void, except he mean that the said Alexander succeeded Euaristus in the last year of Trajanus? But then how can that stand with Bede and Marianus Scotus, which say that he suffered under Trajanus? or with Otho Frisingensis, which saith he suffered the fourth year of Hadrian, when he had been bishop ten years by the general consent of most writers?

They which write of the deeds and doings of this blessed bishop, as Bergomensis Antoninus, Equilinus, and such as follow them, declare that he had converted a great part of the senators to the faith of Christ, amongst whom was Hermes, a great man in Rome, whose son being dead Alexander raised again to life, and likewise restored sight to his maid being blind. Hadrian the emperor, then absent, hearing this, sent word to Aurelianus, governor of Rome, to apprehend Alexander, with Euentius and Theodulus, otherwise called Theodorus, as Platina saith, his two deacons, and Hermes, and to commit them to ward with Quirinus the tribune: which being done, as their story recordeth, Alexander, enclosed in a diverse prison from Hermes, notwithstanding, by the guiding of an angel through three doors with three locks apiece, was brought with candle-light to the lodging of Hermes; and so returning to the prison again cured the daughter of Quirinus his keeper, named Balbina; by reason whereof the said Quirinus, with his whole household, were all baptized, and suffered also for the faith of Christ.

Thus, then, (saith the story,) about the second year of Hadrian, Aurelianus the ruler took Alexander the bishop, with Hermes, his wife, children, and his whole household, to the number of one thousand two hundred and fifty, and threw them in prison. And not long after the said Alexander, with Euentius his deacon, and Hermes, and the rest were burned in a furnace. Theodulus, another deacon of Alexander, seeing and rebuking the cruelty of the tyrant, suffered also the same martyrdom.

Quirinus also the same time, (as saith Antoninus,) having first his tongue cut out, then his hands and feet, afterward was beheaded and cast to the dogs: Equilinus saith that he was beheaded and cast into Tiber in the reign of the emperor Claudius; but that cannot be: albeit Platina maketh relation but only of Alexander with his two deacons aforesaid, declaring, moreover, that in the time of this bishop Saphira of Antioch, and Sabina a Roman, suffered martyrdom.

Florilegus, the author of Flores Historiarum, affirmeth that Alexander bishop of Rome was beheaded seven miles out of Rome, (where he lieth buried,) in the year one hundred and five; but that agreeth not with the chronicles above recited. Eusebius recordeth of him no more, but that in the third year of Hadrian he ended his life and office, after he had been bishop ten years.

Divers miracles are reported of this Alexander, in the canon legends, and lives of saints; which as I deny not but they may be true, so because I cannot avouch them by any grave testimony of ancient writers, therefore I dare not affirm them, but do refer them to the authors and patrons thereof, where they are found. Notwithstanding,

whatsoever is to be thought of his miracles, this is to be affirmed and not doubted, but that he was a godly and virtuous bishop.

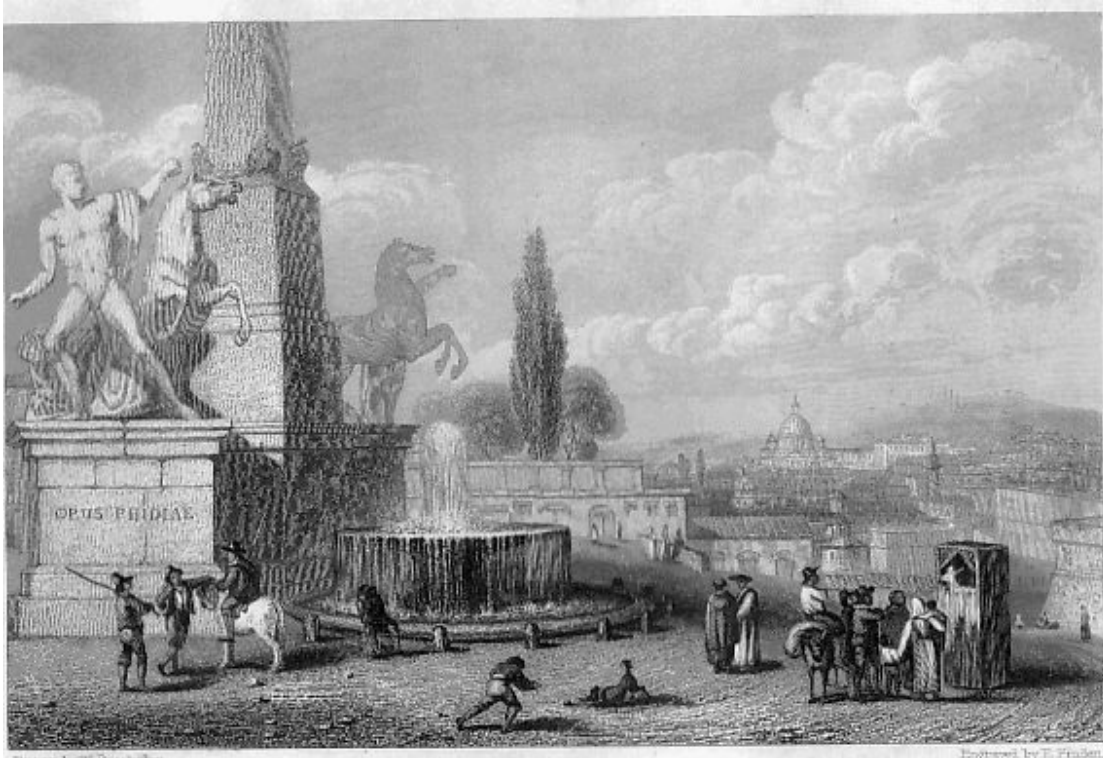
And as I say of his miracles, the like judgment also I have of the ordinances both of him and of Euaristus his predecessor, testified in the pope's decrees by Gratianus, where is said that Euaristus divided divers titles in the city of Rome to the priests, also ordained in every city seven deacons to associate and assist the bishop in his preaching, both for his defence, and for the witness of truth. Notwithstanding, if probable conjectures might stand against the authority of Gratianus and his decrees, here might be doubted whether this absolute ordination of priests was first forbidden by Euaristus, and whether the intitulation of priests was first by him brought in or not; wherein an instance may be given to the contrary, that this intitulation seemeth to take his first beginning at the council of Chalcedon, and of Pope Urban in the council of Placentia. In the which council of Chalcedon the words of the canon (making no mention of Euaristus at all) do expressly forbid, that any ecclesiastical person, either priest or deacon, should be ordained absolutely; otherwise the imposition of hands, without some proper title of the party ordained, to stand void and frustrate, &c. And likewise Urbanus in the council of Placentia doth decree the same, alleging no name of Euaristus, but the statutes of former councils.

Moreover, in the time of Euaristus, the church, then being under terrible persecutions, was divided into no peculiar parishes or cures, whereby any title might rise, but was scattered rather in corners and deserts, where they could best hide themselves. And

as the Church of Rome in those days was not divided into several parishes or cures, (as I suppose,) so neither was then any such open or solemn preaching in churches, that the assistance or testimony of seven deacons either could avail among the multitude of the heathen, or else needed amongst the Christian secret congregations. Again, the constitution of seven deacons seemeth rather to spring out of the council of Neocesarea long after Euaristus, where it was appointed that in every city, were it never so small, there should be seven deacons after the rule. And this rule the said council taketh out of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, making no word or mention of Euaristus at all. But these (as is said) be but only conjectures, not denying that which is commonly received, but only showing what may be doubted in their epistles decretal.

More unlike it seemeth to be true that is recorded and reported of Alexander, that he should be the first founder and finder of holy water mixed with salt, to purge and sanctify them upon whom it is sprinkled.

5. The Third Persecution under Trajan and Hadrian



Rome

Between the second Roman persecution and the third was but one year, under the emperor Nerva, after whom succeeded Trajanus; and after him followed the third persecution. So the second and the third are noted of some to be both one, having no more difference but one year between them. This Trajanus, if we look well upon his politic and civil governance, might seem (in comparison of others) a right worthy and commendable prince, much familiar with inferiors, and so be having himself towards his subjects as he himself would have the prince to be to him if he himself were a subject. Also he was noted to be a great observer of justice, insomuch that when he ordained any pretor, giving to him the sword, he would bid him use the sword against his enemies in just causes; and if he himself did otherwise than justice, to use then his power against him also. But for all these virtues, toward Christian religion he was impious and cruel, who caused the third persecution of the church. In the which persecution Pliny the second, a man learned and famous, seeing the lamentable slaughter of Christians, and moved therewith to pity, wrote to Trajanus of the pitiful persecution; certifying him that there were many thousands of them daily put to death, of which none did any thing contrary to the Roman laws worthy persecution, saving that they used to gather together in the morning before day, and sing hymns to a certain God whom they worshipped, called Christ. In all other their ordinances they were godly and honest. Where by the persecution by commandment of the emperor was greatly staid and diminished. The form and copy of which epistle of Pliny, anno 107, I thought here not inconvenient to set down as followeth:

"It is my property and manner (my sovereign) to make relation of all those things unto you wherein I doubt. For who can better either correct my slackness or instruct mine ignorance than you? I was never yet present myself at the examination and execution of these Christians; and therefore what punishment is to be administered, and how far, or how to proceed in such inquisitions, I am plain ignorant; not able to resolve in the matter whether any difference is to be had in age and person; whether the young and tender ought to be with like cruelty entreated as the elder and stronger; whether repentance may have any pardon, or whether it may profit him or not to deny which hath been a Christian; whether the name only of Christians without other offences, or whether the offences joined with the name of a Christian, ought to be punished. In the mean season, as touching such Christians as have been presented unto me, I have kept this order: I have inquired the second and third time of them whether they were Christians, menacing them with fear of punishment; and such as did persevere, I commanded to execution. For thus I thought, that whatsoever their profession was, yet their stubbornness and obstinacy ought to be punished. Whether they were also of the same madness, whom, because they were citizens of Rome, I thought to send them back again to the city. Afterward, in further process and handling of this matter, as the sect did further spread, so the more cases did thereof ensue.

"There was a libel offered to me bearing no name, wherein were contained the names of many which denied themselves to be Christians, contented to do sacrifice with incense and wine to the gods, and to your image, (which image I for that purpose caused to be brought,) and to blaspheme Christ; whereunto none such as were true Christians indeed could be compelled, and those I did discharge and let go. Other some confessed that they had been Christians, but afterward denied the same, &c, affirming unto me the whole sum of that sect or error to consist in this, that they were wont at certain times appointed to convent before day, and to sing certain hymns to one Christ, their God, and to confederate among themselves, to abstain from all theft, murder, and adultery, to keep their faith, and to defraud no man; which done, then to depart for that time, and afterward to resort again to take meat in companies together, both men and women one with another, and yet without any act of evil.

"In the truth whereof, to be further certified whether it were so or not, I caused two maidens to be laid on the rack, and with torments to be examined of the same. But finding no other thing in them but only lewd and immoderate superstition, I thought to cease further inquiry, till time that I might be further advertised in the matter from you; for so the matter seemed unto me worthy and needful of advisement, especially for the great number of those that were in danger of your statute. For very many there were of all ages and states, both men and women, which then were, and more are like hereafter to incur the same peril of condemnation. For that infection hath crept not only in cities, but villages also and boroughs about, which seemeth that it may be stayed and reformed. Forasmuch as we see in many places that the temples of our gods, which were wont to be desolate, begin now to be frequented, and that they bring sacrifices from every part to be sold, which before very few were found willing to buy. Whereby it may easily be conjectured what multitudes of men may be amended, if space and time be given them wherein they may be reclaimed."

To this Trajan replied as follows: "The act and statute, my Secundus, concerning the causes of the Christians, which ye ought to follow, ye have rightly executed. For no such general law can be enacted, wherein all special cases particularly can be comprehended. Let them not be sought for; but if they be brought and convicted, then let them suffer execution: notwithstanding, whosoever shall deny

himself to be a Christian, and do it unfeignedly in open audience, and do sacrifice to our gods, howsoever he hath been suspected before, let him be released upon promise of amendment. Such libels as have no names suffice not to any just crime or accusation; for that should give both an evil precedent, neither doth it agree with the example of our time."

Tertullian writing upon this letter of Trajan above prefixed, thus saith: O sentence of a confused necessity! He would not have them to be sought for as men innocent, and yet causeth them to be punished as persons guilty. And thus the rage of that persecution ceased for a time, although notwithstanding many naughty disposed men and cruel officers there were, which upon false pretence, to accomplish their wicked minds, ceased not to afflict the Christians in divers provinces; and especially if any occasion were given never so little for the enemies to take hold of, or if any commotion were raised in the provinces abroad, by and by the fault was laid upon the Christians. As in Jerusalem, after that the emperor Trajan had sent down his commandment, that whosoever could be found of the stock of David, he should be inquired out and put to death; upon this Egesippus writing, saith that certain sectaries there were of the Jewish nation, that accused Simeon, the bishop then of Jerusalem and son of Cleophas, to come of the stock of David, and that he was a Christian. of the which his accusers it happened also (saith the said Egesippus) that certain of them likewise were apprehended and taken to be of the stock of David, and so right justly were put to execution themselves which sought the destruction of others. As concerning Simeon the blessed bishop, the aforesaid Egesippus thus writeth: that Simeon the Lord's nephew, when he was accused to Attalus the proconsul, by the malicious sect of the Jews, to be of the line of David, and to be a Christian, was scourged during the space of many days together, being of age a hundred and twenty years. In which his martyrdom he endured so constant, that both the consul and all the multitude did marvel to see him of that age so constantly to suffer; and so at last being crucified, finished his course in the Lord, for whom he suffered, as partly before also is recorded.

In this persecution of Trajan, above specified, (which Trajan next followed after Nerva,) besides the other aforementioned, also suffered Phocas, bishop of Pontus, whom Trajan, because he would not do sacrifice to Neptune, caused to be cast into a hot lime-kiln, and afterward to be put into a scalding bath, where the constant godly martyr, in the testimony of Christ, ended his life, or rather entered into life.

In the same persecution suffered also Sulpitius and Servilianus, two Romans; whose wives are said to be Euphrosina and Theodora, whom Sabina did convert to the faith of Christ, and after were also martyred. Of which Sabina Jacobus Philippus reporteth that, in the Mount of Aventine in Rome, she was beheaded of Clepidus the governor, in the days of Hadrian. Under whom also suffered Seraphia, a virgin of Antioch, as Hermannus witnesseth.

The forenamed authors, Antoninus and Equilius, make mention moreover of Nereus and Achilleus, who, in this persecution of Trajan, had the crown of martyrdom, being put to death at Rome. Eusebius in his fourth book maketh mention of one Sagaris, who about the same time suffered martyrdom in Asia, Servilius Paulus being then proconsul in that province.

In this persecution, beside many others, suffered the blessed martyr of Christ Ignatius, who unto this day is had in famous reverence among very many. This Ignatius was appointed to the bishopric of Antioch next after Peter in succession.

Some do say, that he being sent from Syria to Rome, because he professed Christ, was given to the wild beasts to be devoured. It is also said of him, that when he passed through Asia, being under the most strict custody of his guarders, he strengthened and confirmed the parishes through all the cities as he went, both with his exhortations and preaching of the word of God; and admonished them especially and before all other things to beware and shun those heresies risen up and sprung newly among them, and that they should cleave and stick fast to the tradition of the apostles; which he, for their better safeguard, being about to denounce or put in writing, thought it a thing very necessary to travail in, And thus when he came to Smyrna, where Polycarp was, he wrote one epistle to the congregation of Ephesus, wherein he made mention of Onesimus their pastor; and another he wrote to the congregation of Magnesia, being at Meandre, wherein also he forgetteth not Dama their bishop. Also another he wrote to the congregation of Trallis, the governor of which city at that time he noteth to be one Polybius; unto which congregation he made an exhortation, lest they, refusing martyrdom, should lose the hope that they desired.

But it shall be very requisite that I allege some what thereof to the declaration of this matter. He wrote, therefore, as the words lie, in this sort: From Syria, (saith he,) even till I came to Rome, had I a battle with beasts, as well by sea as land, both day and night, being bound in the midst of ten cruel libards (that is, the company or band of the soldiers) which, the more benefits that they received at my hands, became so much the worse unto me. But I, being exercised and now well acquainted with their injuries, am taught every day more and more; but hereby am I not yet justified. And would to God I were once come to the beasts which are prepared for me, which also I wish with gaping mouths were ready to come upon me, whom also I will provoke, that they without delay may devour me, and forbear me nothing at all, as those whom before they have not touched or hurt for fear. And if they will not unless they be provoked, I will then enforce them against myself. Pardon me, I pray you. How much beneficial it is to me, I know. Now begin I to be a scholar; I force or esteem no visible things, nor yet invisible, so that I may get or obtain Christ Jesus. Let the fire, the gallows, the devouring of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the pulling asunder of my members, the bruising or pressing of my whole body, and the torments of the devil or hell itself, come upon me, so that I may win Christ Jesus.

And these things wrote he from the foresaid city unto the congregations which we have recited. And when he was even now judged to be thrown to the beasts, he spake, for the burning desire that he had to suffer, what time he heard the lions roaring: I am the wheat or grain (saith he) of Christ, I shall be ground with the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread. He suffered in the eleventh year of Trajan the emperor.

Besides this godly Ignatius, many thousands also were put to death in the same persecution, as appeareth by the letter of Plinius Secundus above recited, written unto the emperor.

Next after this Trajan succeeded Hadrian the emperor, under whom suffered Alexander the bishop of Rome, with his two deacons Euentius and Theodoros; also Hermes and Quirinus, with their families, as late before was declared.

It is signified, moreover, in the histories, that in the time of Hadrian, Zenon, a nobleman of Rome, with ten thousand two hundred and three, were slain for Christ. Henricus and Bergomensis make mention of ten thousand in the days of this Hadrian to be crucified in the Mount Hararath, crowned with crowns of thorn, and thrust into

the sides with sharp darts, after the example of the Lord's passion, whose captains were Achaicus, Heliades, Theodorus, and Carcerius, &c. Whether this story be the same with the other above of Zenon or not, it is doubted. As touching the miracles done, and the speaking of the angel, I refer the certainty thereof to Vincentius, and such other like authors, where more things seem to be told than to be true.

There was one Eustachius, a captain, whom Trajan in time past had sent out to war against the barbarians. After he had, by God's grace, valiantly subdued his enemies, and now was returning home with victory, Hadrian, for joy, meeting him in his journey to bring him home with triumph, by the way, first would do sacrifice to Apollo for the victory gotten, willing also Eustachius to do the same with him. But when Eustachius could by no means thereto be enforced, being brought to Rome, there with his wife and children he suffered martyrdom under the foresaid Hadrian. It were a long process here to recite all the miracles contained, or rather suspected, in this story of this Eustachius concerning his conversion and death: how the crucifix appeared to him between the horns of a hart; of the saving of his wife from the shipmen; of one of his sons saved from the lion, the other saved from the wolf; of their miraculous preservation from the wild beasts, from the torments of fire mentioned in Bergomensis, Vincentius, and others. All which, as I find them in no ancient records, so I leave them to their authors and compilers of the legends.

We read also of Faustinus and Jobita, citizens of Lhe city of Brixia, which suffered martyrdom with like grievous torments. At the sight whereof one Galocerius, seeing their so great patience in so great torments, cried out with these words, Verily, great is the God of Christians! Which words being heard, forthwith he was apprehended, and being brought to the place of their execution, was made partaker of their martyrdom.

The history of Nicephorus maketh mention of Anthia, a godly woman, who committed her son Eleutherius to Anicetus, bishop of Rome, to be brought up in the doctrine of Christian faith, who, afterwards being bishop in Apulia, was there beheaded with his foresaid mother Anthia.

Justus also, and Pastor, two brethren, with like martyrdom ended their lives in a city of Spain, called Complutum, under the said Hadrian the emperor.

Likewise Symphorissa, the wife of Getulus the martyr, with her seven children, is said about the same time to suffer; who first was much and often beaten and scourged, afterwards was hanged up by the hair of her head; at last having a huge stone fastened unto her, was thrown headlong into the river; and after that her seven children, in like manner, with sundry and divers kinds of punishment diversly martyred by the tyrant.

The story of M. Hermannus, and Antoninus, and others, report of Sophia, with her three children also, also of Seraphia and Sabina, to suffer under the said emperor, about the year of our Lord one hundred and thirty.

As concerning Alexander, bishop of Rome, with his two deacons, also with Hermes, Quirinus, Saphira, and Sabina, some writers, as Bede and Marianus Scotus, record that they suffered under Trajan. Others again, as Otto, Frisingensis, with like more, report that they suffered in the fourth year of this emperor Hadrian; but of these martyrs sufficiently hath been said before.

While Hadrian the emperor was at Athens, he purposed to visit the country of Elusina, and so did; where he sacrificing to the Gentiles' gods, after the manner of the

Grecians, had given free leave and liberty, whosoever would, to persecute the Christians. Whereupon Quadratus, a man of no less excellent zeal than of famous learning, being then bishop of Athens, and disciple of the apostles, or at least succeeding incontinent the age of the apostles, and following after Publius, (who a little before was martyred for the testimony of Christ,) did offer up and exhibit unto Hadrian the emperor a learned and excellent apology in the defence of the Christian religion. Wherein he declared the Christians, without all just cause or desert, to be so cruelly entreated and persecuted, &c. The like also did Aristides, another no less excellent philosopher in Athens, who for his singular learning and eloquence being notified to the emperor, and coming to his presence, there made before him an eloquent oration. Moreover, he did exhibit unto the said emperor a memorable apology for the Christians, so full of learning and eloquence, that, as Hierom saith, it was a spectacle and admiration to men in his time, that loved to see wit and learning. Over and besides these, there was also another named Serenus Granius, a man of great nobility, who likewise did write very pithy and grave letters to Hadrian the emperor, showing and declaring therein that it was consonant with no right nor reason for the blood of innocents to be given to the rage and fury of the people, and so to be condemned for no fault, only for the name and sect that they followed.

Thus the goodness of God being moved with the prayers and constant labour of these so excellent men, so turned the heart of the emperor, that he being better informed concerning the order and profession of the Christians, became more favourable unto them; and immediately upon the same directed his letters to Minutius Fundanus, (as is partly before mentioned,) proconsul of Asia, willing him from henceforth to exercise no more such extremity against the Christians, as to condemn any of them, having no other crime objected against them but only their name. The copy of which his letter, because that Justin in his apology doth allege it, I thought therefore to express the same in his own words, as followeth.

"I have received an epistle written unto me from Serenus Granius, our right worthy and well-beloved, whose office you do now execute. Therefore I think it not good to leave this matter without further advisement and circumspection to pass, lest our subjects be molested, and malicious sycophants boldened and supported in their evil. Wherefore if the subjects of our provinces do bring forth any accusation before the judge against the Christians, and can prove the thing they object against them, let them do the same, and no more, and otherwise, for the name only, not to impeach them, nor to cry out against them. For so, more convenient it is, that, if any man will be an accuser, you take the accusation quietly, and judge upon the same. Therefore, if any shall accuse the Christians, and complain of them as malefactors, doing contrary to the law, then give you judgment according to the quality of the crime. But, notwithstanding, whosoever upon spite and maliciousness shall commence or cavil against them, see you correct and punish that man for his inordinate and malicious dealing."

Thus by the merciful providence of God some more quiet and rest was given to the church, although Hermannus thinketh these halcyon days did not very long continue, but that the emperor changing his edict, began to renew again persecution of God's people; albeit this soundeth not to be so by the words of Melito in his apology to Antoninus hereafter ensuing. In the mean time this is certain, that in the days of this Hadrian the Jews rebelled again and spoiled the country of Palestina. Against whom the emperor sent Julius Severus, who overthrew in Jewry fifty castles, and burnt and

destroyed nine hundred and fourscore villages and towns, and slew of the Jews fifty thousand

with famine, sickness, sword, and fire. Judah was almost desolate. But at length Hadrian the emperor, which otherwise was named Ælius, repaired and enlarged the city of Jerusalem. which was called after his name Æliopolis, or Ælia Capitolina, the inhabitation whereof he granted only to the Gentiles and to the Christians, forbidding the Jews utterly to enter into the city.

After the death of Hadrian, who died by bleeding at the nose, succeeded Antoninus Pius, about the year of our Lord one hundred and thirty-eight, and reigned twenty and three years, who, for his clemency and modest behaviour, had the name of Pius, and is for the same in histories commended. His saying was, that he had rather save one citizen than destroy a thousand of his adversaries. At the beginning of his reign, such was the state of the church, as Hadrian his predecessor had left it, that although there was no edict set forth to persecute the Christians, yet the tumultuous rage of the heathen multitude, for the causes above specified, did not cease to disquiet and afflict the quiet people of God, imputing and ascribing to the Christians whatsoever misfortune happened contrary unto their desires; moreover, inventing against them all false crimes and contumelies whereof to accuse them. By reason whereof divers there were in sundry places much molested, and some put to death; albeit, as it is to be supposed, not by the consent of the emperor, who of nature was so mild and gentle, that either he raised up no persecution against the Christians, or else he soon stayed the same being moved; as well may appear by his letter sent down to the countries of Asia, the tenor whereof here ensueth.

"Emperor and Cæsar, Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, Armenicus, Pontifex Maximus, tribune eleven times, consul thrice, unto the commons of Asia, greeting. I am very certain that the gods have a care of this, that they which be such shall be known, and not lie hid. For they do punish them that will not worship them more than you, which so sore vex and trouble them, confirming thereby the opinion which they have conceived and do conceive of you, that is, to be wicked men. For this is their joy and desire, that when they are accused, rather they covet to die for their God than to live. Whereby they are victors, and do overcome you; giving rather their lives than to be obedient to you, in doing that which you require of them. And here it shall not be inconvenient to advertise you of the earthquakes which have and do happen among us, that when at the sight of them you tremble and are afraid, then you may confer your case with them. For they, upon a sure confidence of their God, are bold and fearless, much more than you; who in all the time of this your ignorance both do worship other gods and neglect the religion of immortality, and such Christians as worship him, them you do drive out, and persecute them unto death. Of these and such-like matters many presidents of our provinces did write to our father of famous memory heretofore. To whom he directed his answer again, willing them in no case to molest the Christians, except they were found in some trespass prejudicial against the empire of Rome. And to me also many there be which write, signifying their mind in like manner; to whom I have answered again to the same effect and manner as my father did. Wherefore if any hereafter shall offer any vexation or trouble to such, having no other cause but only for that they are such, let him that is appeached be released and discharged free, yea, although he be found to be such, (that is, a Christian,) and let the accuser sustain the punishment," &c.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

This godly edict of the emperor was proclaimed at Ephesus, in the public assembly of all Asia; whereof Melito, also bishop of Sardis, who flourished in the same time, maketh mention in his apology written in defence of our doctrine to M. Antoninus Verus, as hereafter (Christ willing) shall appear. By this means, then, the tempest of persecution in those days began to be appeased, through the merciful providence of God, which would not have his church utterly to be overthrown, though hardly yet to grow.

6. THE FOURTH PERSECUTION UNDER ANTONINUS VERUS

After the decease of the foresaid quiet and mild prince Aurelius Antoninus Pius (who, among all other emperors of that time, made the most quiet end) followed his son M. Antoninus Verus, with Lucius his brother, about the year of our Lord one hundred threescore and one, a man of nature more stern and severe. And although in study of philosophy and in civil government no less commendable, yet toward the Christians sharp and fierce; by whom was moved the fourth persecution after Nero. In whose time a great number of them which truly professed Christ suffered most

cruel torments and punishments, both in Asia and France. In the number of whom was Polycarp, the worthy bishop of Smyrna, who in the great rage of this persecution in Asia, among many other most constant saints, was also martyred. Of whose end and martyrdom I thought it here not inexpedient to commit to history, so much as Eusebius declareth to be taken out of a certain letter or epistle, written by them of his own church to the brethren of Pontus; the tenor of which epistle here followeth.

The congregation which is at Smyrna, to the congregation which is at Philomilium, and to all the congregations throughout Pontus, mercy to you, peace, and the love of God our Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ. be multiplied. Amen. We have written unto you, brethren, of those men which have suffered martyrdom. and of blessed Polycarp, which hath ended and appeased this persecution, as it were, by the shedding of his own blood. And in the same epistle, before they enter into further matter of Polycarp, they discourse of other martyrs, describing what patience they abode and showed in suffering their torments; which was so great and admirable, (saith the epistle,) that the lookers on were amazed, seeing and beholding how they were so scourged and whipped, that the inward veins and arteries appeared. yea, even so much that the very entrails of their bodies, their bowels and members, were seen; and after that were set upon sharp shells taken out of the sea, edged and sharp. and certain nails and thorns for the martyrs to go upon, which were sharpened and pointed, called *obelisci*. Thus suffered they all kind of punishment and torment that might be devised; and lastly were thrown unto the wild beasts to be devoured. But especially, in the aforesaid epistle mention is made of one Germanicus, how he most worthily persevered and overcame, by the grace of God, that fear of death which is ingrafted in the common nature of all men, whose notable patience and sufferance was so notable, that the whole multitude wondering at this beloved martyr of God, for this his so bold constancy, and also for the singular strength and virtue proceeding of the whole multitude of the Christians, began suddenly to cry with a loud voice, saying, Destroy the wicked men, let Polycarp be sought for. And whilst a great up roar and tumult began thus to be raised upon those cries, a certain Phrygian named Quintus, lately come out of Phrygia, seeing and abhorring the wild beasts, and the fierce rage of them, of an over-light mind betrayed his own safety. For so the same letter of him doth report, that he, not reverently, but more malapertly than was requisite, together with others, rushed into the judgment place, and so being taken, was made a manifest example to all the beholders, that no man ought rashly and unreverently with such boldness to thrust in himself, to intermeddle in matters wherewith he hath not to do.

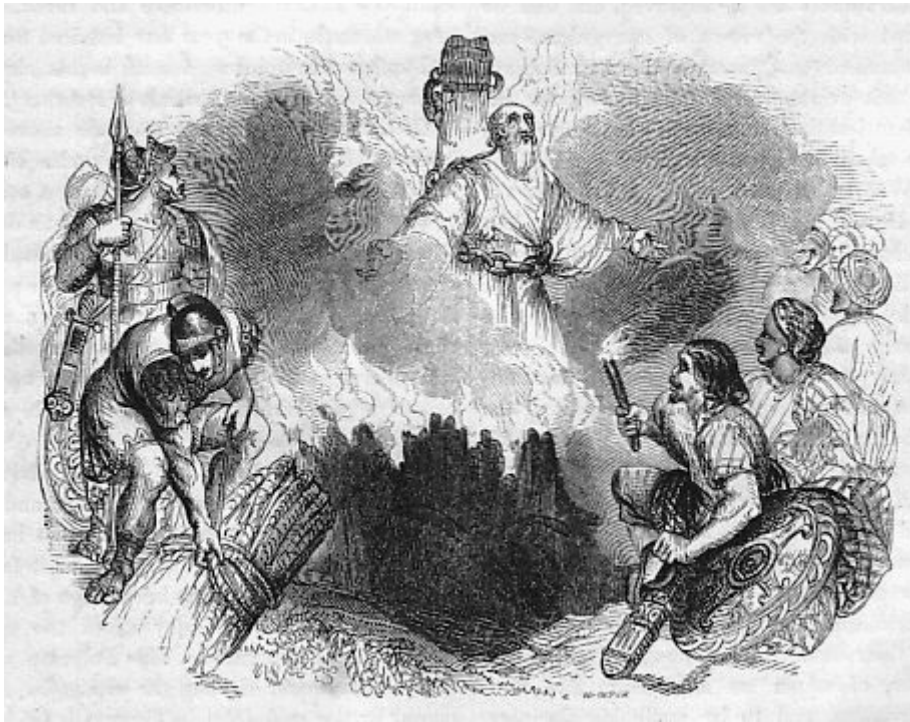
But now we will surcease to speak more of them, and return to Polycarp, of whom the foresaid letter consequently declareth as followeth: How that in the

beginning, when he heard of these things, was nothing at all afraid nor disquieted in mind, but purposed to have tarried still in the city, till being persuaded by the entreaty of them that were about him, (which desired him instantly that he would convey himself away,) hid himself in a grange or village not far off from the city, and there abiding, with a few more in his company, did nothing else (night nor day) but abode in supplication, wherein he made his humble petition for the obtaining of peace unto all the congregations throughout the world, for that was his accustomed manner so to do. And as he was thus making his prayers three days before he was apprehended, in a vision by night, he saw the bed set on fire under his head, and suddenly to be consumed. And when he awaked, he told by and by, and expounded unto them that were present, his vision, and told them before what thing should come to pass; that is, how that in the fire he should lose his life for Christ's cause. It is further mentioned, that when they were hard at hand which so narrowly sought for him, that he was enforced for the affection and love of his brethren to fly into another village, to which place notwithstanding, within a little while after, the pursuers came; and when they had taken a couple of children that dwelt thereabouts, they so beat one of them with whips, that by the bewraying or confession of him they were brought unto the inn where Polycarp was. And they say that the pursuers, making no great haste to enter, found him in the uppermost place of the house, from whence he might have escaped into other houses, if he would; but this he would not do, saying, The will of God be done. Furthermore, when he knew that they were come, as the said history showeth, he came down, and spake unto them with a cheerful and pleasant countenance; so that it was a wonder to see those which a while ago knew not the man, now beholding and viewing his comely age, and his grave and constant countenance, lamented that they had so much employed their labour, that so aged a man should be apprehended. To conclude, he commanded that straightway, without any delay, the table should be laid for them, and persuaded them that they would eat and dine well, and required of them boldly that he might have an hour's respite to make his prayers. Which thing, after it was granted, he arose and went to pray, so being replenished with the grace of God, that they which were present, and hearing the prayers that he made, were astonished at it, and now many of them were sorry that so honest and godly an aged man should be put to death.

After this, the aforesaid epistle or letter, prosecuting the history, addeth more, as followeth: After he had made an end of his prayers, and had called to his remembrance all those things which ever happened unto him, and to the universal catholic church throughout all the world, (whether they were small or great, glorious or elseinglorious,) and that the hour was now come in which they ought to set forward, they set him upon an ass, and brought him to the city upon a solemn feast day. And there met him Irenæus Herodes, and his father Nicetes, which causing him to come up into the chariot where they sat, persuaded him, and said, What hurt, I pray thee, shall come thereof to thee, if thou say, (by the way of salutation,) My Lord Cæsar, and do sacrifice, and thus to save thyself? But he at the beginning made them none answer, till that when they enforced him to speak, he said, I will not do as ye counsel me I should. When, as they saw he could not be persuaded, they gave him very rough language, and of purpose molested him that in going down the chariot from them he might hurt or break his legs. But he forcing very light of the matter, as though he had felt no hurt, went merrily and, diligently forward, making haste unto the place appointed. And when there was such uproar in the place of execution, that he could not be heard but of very few, there came a voice from heaven to Polycarp, as he was going into the stage, or appointed place of judgment, saying, Be of good cheer, Polycarp, and play the man.

No man there was which saw him that spake, but very many of us heard his voice. And when he was brought in, there was a great noise made by them which understood that Polycarp was apprehended. The proconsul asked him, when he was come, whether his name was Polycarp or not. And when he said, Yea, it was, he gave him counsel to deny his name, and said unto him, Be good unto thyself, and favour thine old age; and many other such-like words which they accustom to speak. Swear, saith he, by the emperor's good fortune; look upon this matter; say thou with us, Destroy these naughty men. Then Polycarp, beholding with constant countenance the whole multitude which was in the place appointed, and giving a great sigh, looked up to heaven, saying, Thou, thou it is that wilt destroy these wicked, naughty men. And the proconsul thus being earnestly in hand with him, said, Take thine oath, and I will discharge thee; defy Christ. Polycarp answered, Fourscore and six years have I been his servant, yet in all this time hath he not so much as once hurt me; how then may I speak evil of my King and sovereign Lord, which hath thus preserved me? Then the proconsul again enforced him, and said, Swear thou, I advise thee, by Cæsar's prosperity. Polycarp replieth, If thou require of me this fond word of vain boasting, feigning not to know (as thou sayest) who I am, I do thee to wit that I am a Christian; and if thou desire to know the doctrine of Christianity, appoint a day, and thou shalt hear. Persuade the people unto this, said the proconsul. Truly, saith Polycarp, I have thought it my part thus to say unto you, for so much as we are commanded to give unto the governors and powers ordained of God the honour meet and due to them, and not hurtful unto us; but as for those, I do judge them unworthy to purge myself unto them. Hereupon the proconsul stood up; I have, saith he, wild beasts, to whom I will throw thee, unless thou take a better way. Whereunto Polycarp answered, Let them come; we have determined with ourselves that we will not by repentance turn us from the better way to the worse, but rather convenient it is that a man turn from things that be evil unto that which is good and just. Again, saith the proconsul, I will tame thee with fire, if that thou set not by the wild beasts, nor yet repent. Then said Polycarp, You threaten me with fire which shall burn for the space of an hour, and shall be within a little while after put out and extinguished; but thou knowest not the fire of the judgment that is to come, and of everlasting punishment, which is reserved for the wicked and ungodly. But why make you all these delays? Give me what death soever ye list. These, and many other such-like things being by him spoken, he was replenished with joy and boldness; and his countenance appeared so full of grace and favour, that not only he was not troubled with those things which the proconsul spake unto him, but contrarily the proconsul himself began to be amazed, and sent for the crier, which in the middle of the stage was commanded to cry three times, Polycarp hath confessed himself to be a Christian; which words of the crier were no sooner spoken, but all the whole multitude, both of Gentiles and Jews inhabiting at Smyrna, with a vehement rage and loud voice, cried, This is that doctor or teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the destroyer of our gods, which hath instructed a great number that our gods are not to be worshipped. And after this they cried unto Philip the governor of Asia, and required him that he would let loose the lion to Polycarp. To whom he made answer, that he might not so do, because he had already his prey. Then they cried again all together with one voice, that he would burn Polycarp alive. For it was requisite that the vision which he saw, as concerning his pillow or bolster, should be fulfilled; which when he had seen burnt, as he was in his prayer, he turned himself unto the faithful sort which were with him, saying, by the way of prophecy, It will so come that I shall be burned alive. And the proconsul had no sooner spoken but it was out of hand performed. For why? The multitude by and by brought out of their shops, work-houses, and barns, wood and

other dry matter for that purpose; and especially the Jews were most serviceable for that matter, after their wonted manner.



The martyrdom of St. Polycarp

And thus the pile being laid, and when he had now put off his garments, and undone his girdle, and was about to pull off his shoes, which he had not done before, for that all the faithful sort among themselves strived as it were who should first touch his body at their farewell, because for the good conversation of his life, even from his younger age, he was had in great estimation of all men. Therefore straightway those instruments which are requisite to such a bonfire were brought unto him;

and when they would have nailed him to the stake with iron hoops, he said, Let me alone as I am, for he that hath given me strength to suffer and abide the fire, shall also give power, that without this your provision of nails I shall abide, and not stir in the midst of this fire or pile of wood. Which thing when they heard, they did not nail him, but bound him. Therefore when his hands were bound behind him, even as the chiefest ram taken out of the flock, he was sacrificed as an acceptable burnt offering to God, saying, O Father of thy well-beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have attained the knowledge of thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of all just men which live before thee, I give thee thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to grant me this day, that I may have my part among the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life, both of body and soul, through the operation of thy Holy Spirit; among whom I shall this day be received into thy sight for an acceptable sacrifice: and as thou hast prepared and revealed the same before this time, so thou hast accomplished the same, O thou most true God, which canst not lie. Wherefore I in like case for all things praise thee, and bless thee, and glorify thee by our ever lasting Bishop, Jesus Christ, to whom be glory evermore. Amen.

And as soon as he had ended this word Amen, and finished his prayer, the tormentors began to kindle the fire; and as the flame flashed out vehemently, we, to whom it was given to discern the same, saw a marvellous matter; which were also to this purpose preserved, that we might show the same to others, For the fire being made like unto a roof or vault of a house, and after the manner of a shipman's sail, filled with wind, compassed about the body of the martyr, as with a certain wall, and he, in the middle of the same, not as flesh that burned, but as gold and silver when it is tried in the fire. And surely we smelt a savour so sweet, as if myrrh or some other precious balm had given a scent, at the last, when those wicked persons saw that his body could not be consumed by fire, they commanded one of the tormentors to come unto him, and thrust him through with his sword; which being done, so great a quantity of blood ran out of his body, that the fire was quenched therewith, and the whole multitude marvelled that there was so much diversity between the infidels and the elect, of whom this Polycarp was one, being a disciple of the apostles, and a prophetic instructor of our times, and bishop of the catholic church of Smyrna; for what word soever he spake, both it was and shall be accomplished. But the subtle and envious adversary, when he saw the worthiness of his martyrdom, and that his conversation even from his younger years could not be reprov'd, and that he was adorned with the crown of martyrdom, and had now obtained that incomparable benefit, gave in charge that we should not take and divide his body, for fear lest the remnants of the dead corpse should be taken away, and so worshipped of the people. Whereupon divers whispered Niceta the father of Herod, and his brother Dalces, in the ear, to admonish the proconsul that in no case he should deliver his body, lest (saith he) they leave Christ and begin to worship him. And this spake they, because the Jews had given them secret warning, and provoked them thereunto; who also watched us, that we should not take him out of the fire; not being ignorant how that we meant at no time to forsake Christ, which gave his life for the salvation of the whole world, (as many I mean as are elected to salvation by him,) neither yet that we could worship any other. For why? Him we worship as the Son of God, but the martyrs do we love as disciples of the Lord, (and that worthily,) for their abundant love towards their King and Master, of whom we also desire and wish to be companions, and to be made his disciples. When therefore the centurion saw and perceived the labour of the Jews, the corpse being laid abroad, they burnt the same, as was their manner to do.

Thus good Polycarp, with twelve others that came from Philadelphia, suffered martyrdom at Smyrna; which Polycarp, specially above the rest, is had in memory, so that he in all places among the Gentiles is most famous. And this was the end of this worthy disciple of the apostles, whose history the brethren of the congregation of Smyrna have written in this their epistle, as is above recited.

Irenæus, in his third book against Heresies, the third chapter, and Eusebius, in his fourth book and fourteenth chapter of his Ecclesiastical History, reporteth this worthy saying of Polycarp: This Polycarp (saith he) meeting at a certain time Marcion, the heretic, who said to him, Dost thou not know me? made answer, I know that thou art the first begotten of Satan. So little fear what evil might ensue thereof had the disciples of the apostles, that they would not speak to them whom they knew to be the depravers of the verity, even as Paul saith, The heretic, after the first and second admonition, shun and avoid, knowing that he which is such a one is perverse or froward, and damneth himself. This most holy confessor and martyr of Christ, Polycarp, suffered death in the fourth persecution after Nero, when Marcus Antoninus, and Lucius Aurelius Commodus reigned, in the year of our Lord one hundred

threescore and seven, as Ursperg affirmeth, in the year one hundred threescore and ten, as Eusebius witnesseth in his chronicles, the seventh before the kalends of February.

Of Germanicus mention is made above in the story of Polycarp, of whom writeth Eusebius, noting him to be a young man, and most constantly to persevere in the profession of Christ's doctrine; whom when the proconsul went to persuade to remember his age, and to favour himself, being in the flower of his age, he would not be allured, but constantly and boldly, and of his own accord, incited and provoked the wild beasts to come upon him, and to devour him, to be delivered more speedily out of this wretched life.

Thus have you heard out of the epistle of the brethren of Smyrna the whole order and life of Polycarp, whereby it may appear that he was a very aged man, who had served Christ fourscore and six years since the first knowledge of him, and served also in the ministry about the space of threescore and ten years. This Polycarp was the scholar and hearer of John the evangelist, and was placed by the said John in Smyrna. Of him also Ignatius maketh mention in his epistle which he wrote in his journey to Rome, going toward his martyrdom, and commendeth to him the government of his church at Antioch, whereby it appeareth that Polycarp was then in the ministry. Likewise Irenæus writeth of the said Polycarp after this manner: He always taught (said he) those things which he learned of the apostles (leaving them to the church) and are only true. Whereunto also all the churches that be in Asia, and all they which succeeded after Polycarp, to this day bear witness. And the same Irenæus witnesseth also that the said Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which whether it be the same that is now extant and read in the name of Polycarp, it is doubted of some; notwithstanding, in the said epistle divers things are found very wholesome and apostolic; as where he teacheth of Christ, of judgment, and of the resurrection. Also he writeth of faith very worthily, thus declaring, that by grace we are saved, and not by works, but in the will of God by Jesus Christ.

In Eusebius we read in like manner a part of an epistle written by Irenæus to Florinus, wherein is declared how that the said Irenæus being yet young, was with Polycarp in Asia; at what time he saw and well remembered what Polycarp did, and the place where he sat teaching, his whole order of life and proportion of his body, with the sermons and words which he said to the people. And furthermore, he perfectly remembered how that the said Polycarp oftentimes reported unto him those things which he learned and heard them speak of the Lord's doings, power, and doctrine, who heard the word of life with their own ears, all which were more constant and agreeable to the Holy Scripture. This, with much more, hath Irenæus concerning Polycarp.

Hierom also, writing of the same Polycarp, hath, how he was in great estimation throughout all Asia, for that he was scholar to the apostles, and to them which did see and were conversant with Christ himself; whereby it is to be conjectured his authority to be much, not only with them of his own church, but with all other churches about him.

Over and besides, it is witnessed by the said Irenæus, that Polycarp came to Rome in the time of Anicetus bishop of Rome, about the year of our Lord one hundred fifty and seven, in the reign of Antoninus Pius, whose cause of his coming thither appeareth to be about the controversy of Easter day; wherein the Asians and the Romans some thing disagreed among themselves. And therefore the said Polycarp, in the behalf of the brethren and church of Asia, took his long journey thither, to come

and confer with Anicetus. Whereof writeth also Nicephorus, declaring that Polycarp and Anicetus something varied in opinions and judgment about that matter, and that, notwithstanding, yet both friendly communicated either with the other, insomuch that Anicetus in his church gave place to Polycarp to minister the communion and sacrament of the Lord's supper, for honour sake. Which may be a notable testimony now to us, that the doctrine concerning the free use and liberty of ceremonies was at that time retained in the church without any offence of stomach, or breach of Christian peace in the church.

This Polycarp (as is above mentioned) suffered his martyrdom even in his own church at Smyrna, where he had laboured so many years in planting of the gospel of Christ, which was about the year of our Lord a hundred threescore and ten, as Eusebius reckoneth in his Chronicle, and in the seventh year of Antoninus Verus's reign; whereby it appeareth that Socrates was much deceived, saying that Polycarp suffered in the time of Gordianus.

In this fourth persecution, besides Polycarp and others mentioned before, we read also in Eusebius of divers others, who at the same time likewise did suffer at Smyrna.

Over and besides, in the same persecution suffered moreover Metrodorus, a minister, who was given to the fire, and so consumed. Another was worthy Pionius, which after much boldness of speech, with his apologies exhibited, and his sermons made to the people in the defence of Christian faith, and after much relieving and comforting of such as were in prisons, and otherwise discomforted, at last was put to cruel torments and afflictions, then given likewise to the fire, and so finished his blessed martyrdom.

After these also suffered Carpus, Papilus, and Agathonica, a woman, who, after their most constant and worthy confessions, were put to death at Pergamopolis in Asia.

And as these suffered in Asia, so in Rome suffered Felicitas with her seven children, who under this M. Antoninus Verus sustained also the cruelty of this persecution. The names of whose children Bergomensis and other histories do thus recite:

Januarius, Felix, Philip, Silvanus, Alexander, Vitalis, Martialis. Of whom her first and eldest son, Januarius, after he was whipped and scourged with rods, was pressed to death with leaden weights. Felix and Philip had their brains beaten out with mauls. Silvanus was cast down headlong, and had his neck broken. Furthermore, Alexander, Vitalis, and Martialis were beheaded. Last of all Felicitas, the mother, (otherwise than the accustomed manner was for such as had borne children,) was slain with the sword.

In the rage of this persecution suffered also good Justin, a man in learning and philosophy excellent, and a great defender of Christian religion, who first exhibited unto the emperor, and to the senate, a book or apology in the defence of the Christians, and afterward himself also died a martyr. Of whom in the history of Eusebius it is thus recorded: that about what time, or a little before, that Polycarp with divers other saints suffered martyrdom in Pergamopolis, a city of Asia, this Justin (as is aforesaid) presented a book in defence of our doctrine to the emperor, to wit, unto Antoninus, and to the senate. After which he was also crowned with like martyrdom unto those whom he in his book had defended, through the malicious means and crafty circumvention of Crescens.

This Crescens was a philosopher, conforming his life and manners to the cynical sect, whom because this Justin had reproved in open audience, and had borne away the victory of the truth which he defended; he, therefore, as much as in him lay, did work and procure unto him this crown of martyrdom. And this did also Justin himself, a philosopher no less famous by his profession, foresee and declare in his foresaid Apology; telling almost all those things beforehand which should happen unto him by these words, saying, And I look after this good turn, that I be slain going by the way, either of some of those whom I have named, and to have my brains beaten out with a bat, or else of Crescens, whom I cannot call a philosopher, but rather a vain boaster. For it is not convenient to call him a philosopher, which openly professeth things to him unknown, and whereof he hath no skill, saying and reporting of us that the Christians be ungodly and irreligious; and all to please and flatter them which are seduced by error.

For whether he objecteth against us the doctrine of the Christians which he hath not read, yet is he very malicious, and worse than the unlearned idiots, who for the most part use not to dispute or judge of things they know not, and to bear witness of the same. Or put the case that he had read it, yet understandeth he not the majesty of the matters therein contained: or, if peradventure he understandeth them, and doth it for this purpose, that he would not be counted as one of them; then is he so much the more wicked and malicious, and the bondslave of vile and beastly both fame and fear. For this I testify of him, giving you truly to understand that for a truth which I declare unto you, how that I have opposed him, and have put unto him many questions, whereby I know and perceive that he understandeth nothing. But if so be that this our disputation with him hath not come unto your ears, I am ready to communicate unto you again those questions which I demanded of him, which things shall not be unfit for your princely honour to hear. But if ye know and understand both what things I have examined him of, as also what answer he hath made, it shall be apparent unto you that he is altogether ignorant of our doctrine and learning; or else if he knoweth the same, he dare not utter it for fear of his auditors; which thing, as I said before, is a proof that he is no philosopher, but a slave to vain-glory, which maketh none account of that which his own master Socrates had in so great estimation. And thus much of Justin out of Justin himself.

Now, to verify that which Justin here of himself doth prophesy, that Crescens would and did procure his death, Tacianus (a man brought up of a child in the institutions of the Gentiles, and obtained in the same not a little fame, and which also left behind him many good monuments and commentaries) writeth in his book against the Gentiles in this sort: And Justin, (saith he,) that most excellent learned man, full well spake and uttered his mind, that the afore-recited men were like unto thieves or liars by the highway side. And in the said book, speaking afterward of certain philosophers, the said Tacianus inferreth thus: Crescens therefore, (saith he,) when he came first into that great city, passed all others in the vicious love of children, and was very much given to covetousness; and where he taught that men ought not to regard death, he himself doth fear death, and he did all his endeavour to oppress Justin with death, as with the most greatest evil that was, and all because that Justin, speaking truth, reproved the philosophers to be men only for the belly, and deceivers: and this was the cause of Justin's martyrdom. Hierom in his Ecclesiastical Catalogue thus writeth: Justin, when in the city of Rome he had his disputations, and had reproved Crescens the cynic for a great blasphemer of the Christians, for a belly-god, and a man fearing death, and also a follower of lust and lechery; at last by his endeavour and

conspiracy was accused to be a Christian, and for Christ shed his blood, in the year of our Lord one hundred fifty and four, under Marcus Antoninus, as the Chronicles do witness, Abbas Urspergensis, and Eusebius in his Chronicle, in the thirteenth year of the emperor Antoninus.

Among these above recited is also to be numbered Praxedis, a blessed virgin, the daughter of a citizen of Rome, who in the time of Anicetus, there bishop, was so brought up in the doctrine of Christ, and so affected to his religion, that she, with her sister Potentiana, bestowed all her patrimony upon the relieving of poor Christians, giving all her time to fasting and prayer, and to the burying of the bodies of the martyrs. And after she had made free all her family, with her servants, after the death of her sister, she also departed, and was buried in peace.

Under the same Antoninus also suffered Ptolomeus and Lucius, for the confession of Christ, in a city of Egypt, called Alexandrina; whose history, because it is decribed in the Apology of Justin Martyr, I thought therefore so to set forth the same, as it is alleged in Eusebius, declaring the manner and occasion thereof, in words and effect as followeth, &c.

There was (saith he) a certain woman married unto a husband, who was given much to lasciviousness, whereunto she herself in times past was also addicted. But she, afterward being instructed in the Christian religion, became chaste herself, and also persuaded her husband to live chastely; oftentimes telling him that it was written in the precepts of the Christians, that they should be punished eternally which lived not chastely and justly in this life. But he still continuing in his filthiness, thereby caused his wife to estrange herself from his company. For why? The woman thought it not convenient to continue in her husband's company, which, contemning the law of nature, sought otherwise to satisfy his filthy appetite. Therefore she was purposed to be divorced from him. But her neighbours and kinsfolk provoked her, by promising his amendment, to keep company again with him, and so she did. But he after this took his journey into Alexandria; and when it was showed her that there he lived more licentiously than at any time before, for that she would not be counted partaker of his incestuous life, by coupling herself any longer with him, she gave him a letter of divorce, and so departed from him. Then her husband, who ought rather to have rejoiced to have so honest and chaste a wife, which not only would not commit any dishonest thing her self, but also could not abide any lewd or misordered behaviour in her husband; and that by this her separation she went about to reclaim him from his incest and wickedness to better amendment of life; he, in recompence to his wife again, accused her to be a Christian, which at that time was no less than death. Whereupon she, being in great peril and danger, delivered up unto the emperor (as Justin in his Apology, writing to the emperor himself, declareth) a supplication, desiring and craving of his majesty, first, to grant her so much licence as to set her family in order; and, that done, afterward to come again and make answer to all that might or should be laid against her: whereunto the emperor condescended. Then her husband, seeing that he could have no advantage against her, devised with himself how he might bring Ptolomeus (which was her instructor in the faith of Christ) in trouble and accusation; using the means of a certain centurion, who was his very friend, whom he persuaded to examine Ptolomeus, whether he were a Christian or not. Ptolomeus (as one that loved the truth, and not thinking good to hide his profession) confessed no less than to the examiner, openly declaring that he had (as truth was) taught and professed the verity of Christian doctrine. For whoso denieth himself to be that he is, either condemneth in denying the thing that he is, or maketh himself

unworthy of that the confession whereof he flieth, which thing is never found in a true and sincere Christian. Thus then he being brought before Urbicius the judge, and by him condemned to suffer, one Lucius, being also a Christian, standing by, and seeing the wrong judgment and hasty sentence of the judge, said to Urbicius, What reason, I pray you, or equity is this, that this man, who is neither adulterer, nor fornicator, nor homicide, nor felon, neither hath committed any such crime, wherewith he may be charged, is thus condemned only for his name and confession of a Christian? This condemnation, and this manner of judgments, (O Urbicius,) are neither seemly for the virtuous emperor, nor to the philosopher his son, nor yet for the estate of his senate of Rome.

Which words being heard, Urbicius making no further examination of the matter, said unto Lucius, Me thinketh thou art also a Christian. And when Lucius had given him to understand that he was also a Christian, the judge, without further delay, commanded him to be had away to the place of execution. To whom he answered, I thank you, with all my heart, that you release me from most wicked governors, and send me unto my good and most loving Father, being also the King of all gods. And in like manner the third man also, coming unto him, and using the like liberty of speech, had also the like sentence of death and condemnation, and was crowned also with the same crown of martyrdom. And thus much out of the Apology of Justin; by the which story it may appear not to be true that Gratianus attributeth unto Higinus, bishop of Rome, the deciding of causes matrimonial, seeing that in Justin's time (who was in the same age of Higinus) the divorcement of this woman in this history above touched was not decided by any ecclesiastical law, or brought before any bishop, but was brought before a heathen prince, and determined by the law civil.

Henricus de Erfordia recordeth out of the Martyrology of Isuardus, of one Concordus, a minister of the city of Spolet, who in the reign of this Antoninus Verus, because he would not sacrifice unto Jupiter, but did spit in the face of the idol, after divers and sundry punishments sustained, at last with the sword was beheaded. Vincentius, in his tenth book, chap. 108, reciteth a long story of his acts and life, whereof some part perhaps may seem tolerable. But this verily appeareth to be false and fabulous, concerning the water flowing beside his sepulchre, in the forenamed city of Spolet; unto the which water was given, (saith Vincentius,) by the virtue of Him for whose name he suffered, to restore sight to the blind, to heal the sick, and to cast out devils, &c. Which kind of virtue, to open the eyes of the blind and to expel devils, neither doth God give to any creature of water, neither is it like that Concordus, the blessed martyr, did or would require any such thing at the hands of God.

Isuardus, and Bede, Vincentius, and Henricus de Erfordia, with other authors more, make relation of divers other martyrs that, by sundry kinds of torments, were put to death under the aforesaid Antoninus Verus; the names of whom be Symmetrius, Florellus, Pontianus, Alexander, Caius, Epipodus, Victor, Corona, Marcellus, Valerianus. The cause of whose martyrdom was the reprehending of idolatry; and because, at the emperor's commandment, they would not sacrifice to idols. Many sorts of punishments and miracles are told of them: but at length the end of them all is this, that they were beheaded. Whereby it may be the more suspected the histories of these writers not to be certain or true, as well touching these as also other martyrs, as may appear in Vincentius, in Petrus de Natalibus, and other authors of like sort. In which authors they which list to read more of their miracles there may find them.

A little before mention was made of Symphorissa, otherwise named Symphorosa, wife of Getulus, with her seven sons. This Getulus or Getulius was a minister, or teacher, (as witnesseth Martyrol. Adonis,) in the city of Tiber; which Getulus, with Cerealis, Amantius, and Primitivus, by the commandment of Hadrian, were condemned to the fire, wherein they were martyred and put to death. The names moreover of the seven sons of this Symphorosa I find to be Crescens, Julianus, Nemesius, Primitivus, Justinus, Statteus, and Eugenius, whom the Chronicle of Ado declareth to be put to death at the commandment of Hadrian, being fastened to seven stakes, and so racked up with a pulley, and at last were thrust through; Crescens in the neck, Julianus in the breast, Nemesius in the heart, Primitivus about the navel, Justinus cut in every joint of his body, Statteus run through with spears, Eugenius cut asunder from the breast to the lower parts, and then cast into a deep pit, having the name by the idolatrous priests, entitled *Ad septem Biothanatos*. After the martyrdom of whom also Symphorosa the mother did likewise suffer, as is before declared.

Under the said Antoninus Verus, and in the same persecution, which raged not in Rome and Asia only, but in other countries also, suffered the glorious and most constant martyrs of Lyons and Vienna, two cities in France, giving to Christ a glorious testimony, and to all Christian men a spectacle or example of singular constancy and fortitude in Christ our Saviour. The history of whom, because it is written and set forth by their own churches, where they did suffer, mentioned in Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 2, I thought here to express the same in the form and effect of their own words, as there is to be seen. The title of which their epistle written to the brethren of Asia and Phrygia thus beginneth.

"The servants of Christ inhabiting the cities of Vienna and Lyons, to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, having the same faith and hope of redemption with us; peace, grace, and glory from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord." The greatness of this our tribulation, the furious rage of the Gentiles against us, and the torments which the blessed martyrs suffered; neither can we in words, not yet in writing exactly, as they deserve, set forth. For the adversary, with all his force, gave his endeavour to the working of such preparatives as he himself listed against his tyrannous coming, and in every place practised he and instructed his ministers how in most spiteful manner to set them against the servants of God; so that not only in our houses, shops, and markets we were restrained, but also were universally commanded, that none (so hardy) should be seen in any place. But God hath always mercy in store, and took out of their hands such as were weak amongst them, and other some did he set up as firm and immovable pillars, which by sufferance were able to abide all violent force, and valiantly to withstand the enemy, enduring all their opprobrious punishment they could devise: to conclude, they fought this battle for that intent to come unto Christ, esteeming their great troubles but as light; thereby showing that all that may be suffered in this present life is not able to countervail the great glory which shall be showed upon us after this life. And, first, they patiently suffered whatsoever the multitude of frantic people running upon head did unto them, as railings, scourgings, drawings, and halings, flinging of stones, imprisonings, and what other thing soever the rage of the multitude is wont to use and practise against their professed enemies. Then afterward they being led into the market-place, and there judged of the captain and rest of the potentates of the city, after their confession made openly before the multitude, were commanded again to prison until the return of their chief governor. After this, they being brought before him, and he using all extremity that possibly he might against them, one Vetius Epagathus, one of the brethren,

replenished with fervent zeal, both towards God and his brethren (whose conversation, although he were a young man, was counted as perfect as was the life of Zachary the priest; for he walked diligently in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord, and in all obedience towards his brethren, blameless); he having within him the fervent zeal of love and Spirit of God, could not suffer that wicked judgment which was given upon the Christians; but being vehemently displeased, desired that the judge would hear the excuse which he was minded to make in the behalf of the Christians, in whom (saith he) is no impiety found. But the people cried again to those that were assistants with the chief justice that it might not be so (for, indeed, he was a nobleman born); neither did the justice grant him his lawful request, but only asked him whether he himself was a Christian or not. And he immediately, with a loud and bold voice, answered and said, I am a Christian. And thus was he received into the fellowship of the martyrs, and called the advocate of the Christians. And he having the Spirit of God more plentifully in time than had Zachary, the abundance thereof he declared, in that he gave his life in the defence of his brethren, being a true disciple of Christ, following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth.

By this man's example the rest of the martyrs were the more animated to martyrdom, and made more joyous with all courage of mind to accomplish the same. Some other there were unready and not so well prepared, and as yet weak, not well able to bear the vehemency of so great a conflict; of whom ten there were in number that fainted, ministering to us much heaviness and lamentation, who by their example caused the rest which were not yet apprehended to be less willing thereunto. Then were we all for the variableness of confession not a little astonished; not that we feared the punishment intended against us, but rather as having respect to the end, and fearing lest any should fall. Every day there were apprehended such as were worthy to fulfil the number of them which were fallen; insomuch that, of two churches, such as were chiefest, and which were the principal governors of our churches, were apprehended. With these also certain of the ethnics, being our men-servants, were apprehended; (for so the governor commanded, that all of us in general without any respect should be taken;) which servants being overcome by Satan, and fearing the torments which they saw the saints to suffer, being also compelled thereunto by the means of the soldiers, feigned against us that we kept the feastings of Thiestes, and incest of Œdipus, and many such other crimes, which are neither to be remembered nor named by us, nor yet to be thought that ever any man would commit the like.

These things being now bruited abroad, every man began to show cruelty against us, insomuch that those which before for familiarity sake were more gentle towards us, now vehemently disdained us, and waxed mad against us. And thus was now fulfilled that which was spoken by Christ, saying, The time will come, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he doth God great good service. Then suffered the martyrs of God such bitter persecution as is passing to be told; Satan still shooting at this mark, to make them to utter some blasphemy, by all means possible. Marvellous therefore was the rage both of the people and prince, especially against one Sanctus, which was deacon of the congregation of Vienna; and against Maturus, being but a little before baptized, but yet a worthy follower of Christ; and also against Attalus, being born in Pergama, which was the foundation and pillar of that congregation; and also against Blandina; by whom Christ showeth those things, which the world esteemed vile and abject, to be glorious in God's sight, for the very love which in heart and deed they bare unto him, not in outward face only. For when all we were afraid, and especially her mistress in the flesh, who also was herself one of the number of the

aforesaid martyrs, lest haply for the weakness of body she would not stand strongly to her confession, the foresaid Blandina was so replenished with strength and boldness, that they which had the tormenting of her by course, from morning to night, for very weariness gave over, and fell down, and were themselves overcome, confessing that they could do no more against her, and marvelled that yet she lived, having her body so torn and rent; and testified that any one of those torments alone, without any more, had been enough to have plucked the life from her body. But that blessed woman, fighting this worthy battle, became stronger and stronger; and as often as she spake these words, "I am a Christian, neither have we committed any evil," it was to her a marvellous comfort and boldening to abide the torments.

Sanctus also, another of the martyrs, who in the midst of his torments endured more pains than the nature of a man might away with, at what time the wicked supposed to have heard him utter some blasphemous words, for the greatness and intolerableness of his torments and pains that he was in, abode notwithstanding in such constancy of mind, that neither he told them his name, nor what countryman he was, nor in what city brought up, neither whether he was a free man or a servant; but unto every question that was asked him, he answered in the Latin tongue, I am a Christian, and this was all that he confessed, both of his name, city, kindred, and all other things in the place of execution; neither yet could the Gentiles get any more of him; whereupon both the governor and tormentors were the more vehemently bent against him. And when they had nothing to vex him withal, they clapped plates of brass red hot to the most tenderest parts of his body; wherewith his body indeed being scorched, yet he never shrunk for the matter, but was bold and constant in his confession, being strengthened and moistened with the fountain of lively water flowing out of Christ's side. Truly his body was a sufficient witness what torments he suffered; for it was all drawn together and most pitifully wounded and scorched, so that it had therewith lost the proper shape of a man; in whose suffering Christ obtained unspeakable glory, for that he overcame his adversaries, and, to the instruction of others, declared that nothing else is terrible, or ought to be feared, where the love of God is, and nothing grievous wherein the glory of Christ is manifested.

And when those wicked men began after a certain time again to torment the martyr, and hoped well to bring it to pass, that either they should overcome him in causing him to recant, by reiterating his torments, now when his body was so sore and swollen, that he might not suffer a man to touch him with his hand; or else that if he died under their hands, yet that thereby they should strike such fear into the hearts of the rest, as to cause them to deny Christ; they were not only disappointed herein, but also, contrary to the expectation of men, his body was in the latter punishment and torments suppld and restored, and took the first shape and use of the members of the same, so that the same his second torment was by the grace of Christ (instead of punishment) a safe medicine.

Also Satan, now thinking to have settled himself in the heart of one Biblides, being one of them which had denied Christ, and thinking to have caused her, being a weak and feeble woman in faith, to have damned her soul, in blaspheming the name of God, brought her to the place of execution, enforcing to wrest some wicked thing out of the mouth of the Christians. But she in the middle of her torments, returning to herself, and waked as it were out of her dead sleep by that temporal pain, called to her remembrance the pains of hell-fire, and against all men's expectations reviled the tormentors, saying, How should we Christians eat young infants, (as ye reported of us,) for whom it is not lawful to eat the blood of any beast. Upon that, so soon as she

had confessed herself to be a Christian, she was martyred with the rest. Thus when Christ had ended those tyrannical torments, by the patience and sufferance of our saints, the devil yet invented other engines and instruments. For when the Christians were cast into prison, they were shut up in dark and ugly dungeons, and were drawn by the feet in a rack, or engine, made for that purpose. And many other such punishments suffered they, which the furious ministers, stirred up with devilish fury, are wont to put men unto; so that very many of them were strangled and killed in prisons, whom the Lord in this manner would have to enjoy everlasting life, and set forth his glory. And surely these good men were so pitifully tormented, that if they had had all the helps and medicines in the world, it was thought impossible for them to live and to be restored. And thus they remaining in prison, destitute of all human help, were so strengthened of the Lord, and both in body and mind confirmed, that they comforted and stirred up the minds of the rest; the younger sort of them, which were later apprehended, and put in prison, whose bodies had not yet felt the lash of the whip, were not able to endure the sharpness of their imprisonment, but died for the same.

The blessed Photinus, who was deacon to the bishop of Lyons, about fourscore and nine years old, and a very feeble or weak man, and could scarcely draw breath for the imbecility of his body, yet was he of a lively courage and spirit; and for the great desire he had of martyrdom, when he was brought unto the judgment-seat, although his body was feeble and weak, both because of his old age, and also through sickness, yet was his soul or life preserved to this purpose, that by the same Christ might triumph and be glorified. He being by the soldiers brought to the place of judgment, many citizens and men of great ability following him, and the whole multitude crying upon him diversely, as though he had been Christ himself, gave a good testimony. For being demanded of the chief ruler what was the Christian man's God, he answered, If thou be worthy to know, thou shalt know. He, being with these words somewhat near touched, caused him to be very sore beaten. For those that stood next him did him all the spite and displeasure that they could, both with hand and foot, having no regard at all to his old age or white hairs. And they which were farther off, whatso ever came next to hand they threw at him, and every man thought that he did very wickedly refrain that withheld his hand from doing the like. For by this means they thought that they did revenge the quarrel of their gods. Photinus now, even as it were gasping after life, was thrown into prison, and within two days after died.

And here is the mighty providence of God and the unspeakable mercy of Jesus Christ declared, which providence, being assured amongst others, is never destitute of the aid of Jesus Christ. For those which in their first persecution denied Christ, they also were put in prison, and made partakers of the others' affliction. Neither yet did it any whit at all at that time help them that had denied Christ, but they which confessed him were imprisoned as Christians, neither was there any other crime objected against them; but the other sort, taken like homicides and wicked doers, were laid hand on, and had double more punishment than the others had. These men were refreshed with the joy of martyrdom, the hope of God's promises, the love towards Christ, and the Spirit of God; the others, their consciences accused them, and that very sore, insomuch that, by their gait, their countenances bewrayed unto the rest their guilty consciences. For the Christians went forth having cheerful countenances, very much adorned with glory and grace, in somuch that the very bonds wherewith they were tied set them out as men in seemly apparel, and like as brides when they be decked in gorgeous and gay garments, and therewithal savoured as of the redolent smell of Christ, so that it might

be supposed them to be anointed with some sweet balm; whereas the others were doubtful and sad, abject, ill favoured, filled with all shame, and furthermore reviled of the Gentiles themselves, as wretches degenerate, having the crime of homicide, and destitute of the most precious, glorious, and lively calling of the Christian name. And truly by these sights the rest were confirmed, and, being apprehended, confessed Christ without any staggering, not having so much as the thought of any such devilish mind of denial. And in the same epistle of the foresaid brethren of France, writing to the brethren of Asia, it followeth in this manner: After these things done, the martyrdom of these holy saints was divided diversly into divers kinds and forms, as the offering to God the Father a garland decked with divers and sundry kinds of colours and flowers. For it so behoved the worthy champions of God, after they had suffered divers kinds of torments, and so won a triumphant victory, to obtain great reward of immortality.

Then Maturus, Blandina, and Attalus were brought together to the common scaffold, there in the face of the people to be cast and devoured of the beasts. And Maturus, with Sanctus, being brought the second time to the scaffold, suffered again all kind of torments, as though hitherto they had suffered nothing at all; yea, rather the adversary being oftentimes put to the worst, they, as striving for the crown, suffered again more scourgings, the tearing of wild beasts, and what thing else soever the frantic people on every side cried for and willed. And above all the rest they brought an iron chair, in the which their bodies being set, were so fried and scorched as on a gridiron fried on the coals, and filled with the savour of the frying all the people that stood by. And yet for all that the torments ceased not, but waxed more fierce and mad against them, labouring to overcome the patience of the saints. Notwithstanding all this, they could not get out of Sanctus's mouth any other thing but the confession which at the beginning he declared. And thus these holy men, after they had long continued alive in this their most horrible conflict, at the length were slain, being made all that whole day a spectacle unto the world, in place and instead of the games and sights which were wont to be exhibited to the people. And thus much concerning Maturus and Sanctus.

Now concerning Blandina, she, being fastened upon a stake, was cast to the ravening beasts to be devoured; which thing was not done without the determinate will of God; to this end, that while she seemed to hang as it were upon a cross, by the ferventness of her prayer she might comfort the rest of the saints, as beholding their Christ with their bodily eyes, which in that agony suffered for them all, and that all which believe in him and suffer for the glory of Christ might be assured to live with him for ever. And when they saw that no beast would come near her thus hanging, they took her down from the tree, and cast her again into prison till another time, that she, having the victory of many battles, might triumph over that ugly serpent the devil; and that she, being a weak and silly woman, and not regarded, armed with Christ, the invincible Conqueror, might encourage her brethren, and by the enduring of this battle might win a crown of incorruptible glory.

Now to Attalus; who, being also required and called for of the people to punishment already prepared, (for his conscience sake,) cometh forth to the sight. For he being worthily exercised in the Christian profession, was always a witness and a maintainer of our doctrine. Therefore when the press of people was about the scaffold, and the table carried before him, wherein was written in the Roman tongue, This is Attalus the Christian; then the people were in a marvellous rage against him. But the governor, understanding that he was a Roman, commanded him again to prison, with

the rest of his prison fellows; whereof he wrote to the emperor, and waited for answer what his pleasure herein was. The prisoners were not idle in the mean season, nor unprofitable to their brethren, but by their patience the unspeakable mercy of Christ shined out. For those which were dead before were now revived by them that lived, and they which were martyrs profited them which were none, and the church did much rejoice, as receiving them again alive whom she had lost before as dead. For many of them which before had denied, now by their denial were restored and stirred up, and learned to be confessors. And now being revived and strengthened, and tasting the sweetness of Him which desireth not the death of a sinner, but is merciful to the penitent, came of their own accord to the judgment-seat again, that they might be examined of the judge. And for that the emperor had written back again to him, that all the confessors should be punished and the other let go, and that the sessions or assizes were now begun, which, for the multitude that had repaired thither out of every quarter, was marvellous great; he caused all the holy martyrs to be brought thither, that the multitude might behold them, and once again examined them; and as many of them as he thought had the Roman freedom he beheaded, the residue he gave to the beasts to be devoured. And truly Christ was much glorified by those which a little before had denied him, which again, contrary to the expectation of the infidels, confessed him even unto the death. For they were examined apart from the rest, because of their delivery; which, being found confessors, were joined to the company of the martyrs, and had with them their part. But there were then some abroad which had no faith at all, neither yet so much as the feeling of the wedding garment, nor any cogitation at all of the fear of God; but blasphemed his ways by the lewd conversation of their life, even such as were the children of damnation. All the residue joined themselves to the congregation; which when they were examined, one Alexander, a Phrygian born, and a physician which had dwelt long in France, and known almost of all, for the love he had to God, and boldness of speaking (neither was he void of the apostolical love); one Alexander, I say, standing somewhat near to the bar, by signs and becks persuaded such as were examined to confess Christ; so that by his countenance sometime rejoicing, some other while sorrowing, he was descried of the standers-by. The people not taking in good part to see those which now recanted by and by again to stick to their first confession, they cried out against Alexander as one that was the cause of all this matter. And when he was enforced by the judge, and demanded what religion he was of, he answered, I am a Christian. He had no sooner spoken the word, but he was judged to the beasts, of them to be devoured.

The next day following, Attalus, of whom I made mention a little before, and Alexander, were brought forth together, for the governor granting Attalus unto the people, he was baited again of the beasts. When these men were brought to the scaffold, and had taken a taste of all the instruments that there were prepared for their execution, and had suffered the greatest agony they could put them to, they were also at the length slain; of whom Alexander never gave so much as a sigh, nor held his peace, but from the bottom of his heart praised and prayed to the Lord. But Attalus, when he was set in the iron chair, and began to fry, and the frying savour of his burning body began to smell, he spake to the multitude in the Roman language: Behold, (saith he,) this which you do is to eat man's flesh; for we neither eat men, nor yet commit any other wickedness. And being demanded what was the name of their God; Our God (saith he) hath no such name as men have. Then said they, Now let us see whether your God can help you, and take you out of our hands or not.

After this, being the last day of the spectacle, Blandina again, and one Ponticus, a child of fifteen years old, was brought forth, and this was every day, to the intent that they seeing the punishment of their fellows might be compelled thereby to swear by their idols. But because they constantly abode in their purpose, and defied their idols, the whole multitude was in a rage with them, neither sparing the age of the child, nor favouring the sex of the woman, but put them to all the punishment and pain they could devise, and oftentimes enforced them to swear, and yet were not able to compel them thereunto. For Ponticus, being so animated of his sister, as the ethnics standing by did see, after that he had suffered, all torments and pains, gave up the ghost. This blessed Blandina therefore being the last that suffered, after she had, like a worthy mother, given exhortations unto her children, and had sent them before as conquerors to their heavenly King, and had called to her remembrance all their battles and conflicts, so much rejoiced of her children's death, and so hastened her own, as though she had been bidden to a bridal, and not in case to be thrown to the wild beasts. After this her pitiful whipping, her delivery to the beasts, and her torments upon the gridiron, at the length she was put in a net, and thrown to the wild bull; and when she had been sufficiently gored and wounded with the horns of the same beast, and felt nothing of all that chanced to her, for the great hope and consolation she had in Christ and heavenly things, was thus slain, inso much that the very heathen men themselves confessed that there was never woman put to death of them that suffered so much as this woman did. Neither yet was their furious cruelty thus assuaged against the Christians. For the cruel, barbarous people, like wild beasts, when they be moved, knew not when the time was to make an end, but invented new and sundry torments every day against our bodies. Neither yet did it content them when they had put the Christians to death, for that they wanted the sense of men; for which cause both the magistrate and people were vexed at the very hearts, that the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, He that is wicked, let him be wicked still; and he that is just, let him be more just. For those which in their prisons they strangled, they threw after to the dogs, setting keepers both day and night to watch them, that they should not be buried, and bringing forth the remnant of their bones and bodies, some half burned, some left of the wild beasts, and some all to be mangled, also bringing forth heads of others which were cut off, and in like manner committed by them to the charge of the keepers to see them remain unburied.

The Gentiles grinded and gnashed at the Christians with their teeth, seeking which way they might amplify their punishment: some other flouted and mocked them, extolling their idols, attributing unto them the cause of this cruelty and vengeance showed to us. Such as were of the meeker sort, and seemed to be moved with some pity, did hit us in the teeth, saying, Where is your God that you so much boast of? and what helpeth this your religion for which you give your lives? These were the sundry passions and effects of the Gentiles; but the Christians in the mean while were in great heaviness, that they might not bury the bodies and relics of the holy martyrs. Neither could the dark night serve them to that purpose, nor any entreaty nor waging them with money, which were appointed for watchmen; but they so narrowly looked unto the matter, as though they should have gotten great benefit and profit thereby.

Thus were the bodies of the martyrs made a wondering-stock, and lay six days in the open streets; at the length they burned them, and threw their ashes into the river, so that there might appear no remnant of them upon the earth. And this did they, as though they had been able to have pulled God out of his seat, and to have let the

regeneration of the saints, and taken from them the hope of the resurrection, whereof they being persuaded (said they) bring in this new and strange religion, and set thus light by death and punishment.

Among others that suffered under Antoninus, mention was made also of Justinus, who (as it is said before) exhibited two Apologies, concerning the defence of Christian doctrine; the one to the senate of Rome, and the other to Antoninus Pius the emperor; concerning whose suffering and the causes thereof is partly before declared. This Justin was born in Neapoli, in the country of Palestine, whose father was Priscus Bachius, as he himself doth testify, by whom in his youth he was set to school to learn, where in process of time he became a famous and worthy philosopher, of whose excellency many learned and notable men do record. For, first, he being altogether inflamed and ravished with desire of knowledge, would in no wise be satisfied in his mind, before he had gotten instructors singularly seen in all kind of philosophy; whereupon he writeth of himself in the beginning of his dialogue with Tripho, thus, declaring that in the beginning he, being desirous of that sect and society, applied himself to be the scholar to a certain Stoic; and remaining with him a time, when he nothing profited in Divine knowledge, (whereof the Stoic had no skill, and affirmed the knowledge thereof not to be necessary,) he forsook him, and went to another of the sect of the Peripatetics, a sharp-witted man, as he thought; with whom after he had been a while, he demanded of him a stipend for his teaching, for the better confirmation of their familiarity. Whereupon Justin, accounting him as no philosopher, left him, and departed. And yet not satisfied in mind, but desirous to hear of further learning in philosophy, adjoined himself to one that professed the Pythagorean sect, a man of great fame, and one who made no small account of himself; whom after he had followed a time, his master demanded of him whether he had any sight in music, astronomy, and geometry, without the sight of which sci ence he said he could not be apt to receive the knowledge of virtue and felicity, unless before he had used to apply his mind from sensible matters to the contemplation of things intelligible. And speaking much in the commendation of these sci ences, how profitable and necessary they were, after that Justin had declared himself not to be seen therein, the philosopher gave him over, which grieved Justin not a little, and so much the more, because he thought his master to have some knowledge in those sciences. After this Justin considering with himself what time was requisite to the learning of these sciences, and thinking not to defer any longer, thought best to resort to the sect of the Platonists, for the great fame that ran of them: wherefore he chose unto him a singular learned man of that sect, which lately was come to those parts, and so remaining with him seemed to profit not a little in contemplation of supernal things, and invisible forms, insomuch that he thought shortly to aspire to such sharpness of wit and wis dom, that out of hand he might achieve to the co prehension and contemplation of God, which is the end of Plato's philosophy. And in this manner he bestowed his youth; but afterward, he growing to a riper age, how and by what means the said Justin came to the knowledge and profession of Christianity, it followeth likewise in his said first Apology; where he affirmeth of himself, (as witnesseth Eusebius in his fourth book,) that when he did behold the Christians in their torments and sufferings to be so constant in their profession, was therewith marvellously moved: after this manner reasoning with himself, that it was impossible for that kind of people to be subject to any vice or carnality, which vices of their own nature are not able to sustain any sharp adversity, much less the bitterness of death. The sight whereof helped him not a little (being of his own nature inclined to the searching of true knowledge and virtue) to begin thereby to love and embrace Christian religion, for so he doth witness of himself in the end of

the first Apology; signifying there how it was his seeking and endeavour to attain to Christianity; understanding how the Christians by malice of wicked persons were compelled to suffer wrong and torments, and to be evil spoken of. By sight whereof, as he saith himself, he became a Christian, through this occasion. For being thus afflicted in his mind, as is aforesaid, it came in his head for his more quietness to go aside to some desert and solitary place void of concourse of people, unto a village or grange near to the sea-side: whither as he approached, thinking there to be all alone, there meeteth with him an old ancient father of a comely visage and seemly behaviour, who following him a little off, began to reason with him; where after long disputation, when the old man had declared unto him that there was no knowledge of truth amongst the philosophers, which neither knew God, neither were aided by the Holy Ghost; and further had reasoned with him of the immortality of the soul, of the reward of the godly and punishment of the wicked: then Justin being confirmed with his reasons and arguments, yielded to him of his own accord, and demanded of him by what means he might attain to that true knowledge of God whereof he had spoken; who then counselled him to read and search the prophets, adjoining therewith prayer. But what, master, (quoth Justin,) should I use for the instruction thereof, and who shall be able to help us, if these philosophers (as you say) lack the truth, and are void of the same? To whom the old father answering, There have been (said he) many years before these philosophers other more ancient than all these, which being accounted for philosophers were just and beloved of God; who spake by the Spirit of God, foreseeing and prophesying these things which we see now come to pass, and therefore they are called prophets. These only have known the truth, and revealed it to men, neither fearing nor passing for any; who were seduced with no opinions of man's invention, but only spake and taught those things which they themselves both heard and saw, being inspired with the Holy Spirit of God; whose writings and works yet to this day remain, out of which the reader may receive great profit and knowledge of things, as concerning the first creation of the world, and end of the same, with all other things necessary to be known of every true philosopher which will give credit unto them. Neither in their teaching do they use any demonstration, as being more certain of themselves than that they need any such demonstration to be made, forasmuch as the accomplishing and the end of things, both past and now present, constraineth us of necessity to believe the words and doctrine which they taught; which men not only therefore are to be believed, but also for their miracles and wonders done are worthy of credit; for that they both preached of God the Maker and Creator of all things, and also did prophesy before of Christ his Son to be sent of him; the which, the false prophets being seduced with false and wicked spirits, neither have done, nor do, but only take upon them to work certain prodigious wonders for men to gaze at, setting out thereby to the world false and unclean spirits. But then, afore all things, make thy prayer that the gate of light may be opened unto thee; for otherwise these things cannot be attained unto of every man, but only of such to whom God and his Christ giveth understanding.

These things, with much more, (which now leisure serveth not to prosecute,) after the foresaid old father had declared unto him, he departed, exhorting him well to follow the things which he had spoken; and after that Justin (as he himself witnesseth) saw

him no more. Immediately after this, Justin being all inflamed as with fire kindled in his breast, began to conceive a love and zeal towards the prophets, and all such as were favoured of Christ: and thus he, revolving in his mind more and more these

words, found only this philosophy among all other professions both sure and profitable, and so became he a philosopher, and in time by these means afterwards he was made a Christian and baptized. But where he received this holy sacrament of baptism it is not read of, nor yet by what occasion he left his country and came to Rome. This only we read in Jerome, that he was in Rome, and there used certain exercises which he called diatribes; disputing there with Crescens, a cynical philosopher, as is before touched. But this is certain, how that Justin, after he had received the profession of Christian religion, became an earnest defender of the same; travelling and disputing against all the adversaries thereof, fearing neither peril of life nor danger of death, whereby he might maintain the doctrine of Christ against the malicious blasphemers, and also augment the number of Christian believers, as may appear by his vehement disputations against the heathen philosophers; also, moreover, it well appeareth in that long disputation which he had with one Tripho at Ephesus, as also in his Confutations of Heretics. Furthermore, his conflicts and Apologies which with great courage and security he exhibited against the persecutors of the Christians, both to the emperor and the magistrates, yea, and the whole senate of Rome, do testify the same.

Of the which Apologies, the first he wrote to the senate of Rome, and after to Antoninus Pius the emperor, as is before mentioned; where in the first writing with great liberty to the senate, he declared that of necessity he was compelled to write and utter his mind and conscience to them. For that in persecuting of the Christians they did neglect their duty, and highly offended God, and therefore need they had to be admonished. And further writing to Urbicius, lieutenant of the city, said that he put men to death and torments for no offence committed, but for the confession only of the name of Christ; which proceedings and judgments neither became the emperor, nor his son, nor the senate: defending, moreover, in the said Apology, and purging the Christians of such crimes as falsely were laid and objected against them by the Ethnics.

And likewise in his second Apology, writing to Antoninus the emperor, and his successors, with like gravity and free liberty declareth unto them how they had the name, commonly being reputed and taken as virtuous philosophers, maintainers of justice, lovers of learning; but whether they were so their acts declared. As for him, neither for flattery nor favour at their hands he was constrained thus to write unto them, but only to sue unto them, and desire a serious and righteous kind of dealing in their judgments and sentences; (for it becometh princes to follow uprightness and piety in their judgments, not tyranny and violence;) and also in plain words chargeth as well the emperor as the senate with manifest wrong, for that they did not grant the Christians that which is not denied to all other malefactors, judging men to death not convicted, but only for the hatred of the name. Other men which be appeached (said he) in judgment are not condemned before they are convicted; but on us you take our name only for the crime, whenas indeed you ought to see justice done upon our accusers. And again, (saith he,) if a Christian, being accused, only deny that name, him you release, being not able to charge him with any other offence; but if he stand to his name, only for his confession you cast him, where indeed it were your duty rather to examine their manner of life, what thing they confess or deny, and according to their demerits to see justice done.

And in the same, further, he saith, You examine not the causes, but, incensed with rash affections, as with the spur of fury, ye slay and murder them not convicted, without any respect of justice. And further, he addeth, Some, peradventure, will say

certain of them have been apprehended and taken in evil doings, as though (saith he) you used to inquire upon them being brought afore you, and not commonly to condemn them before due examination of their offence for the cause above mentioned. Where also, in the end of the said Apology, after this manner he reprehendeth them: You do degenerate (quoth he) from the goodness of your predecessors, whose example you follow not; for your father Hadrian, of famous memory, caused to be proclaimed, that Christians accused before the judge should not be condemned, unless they were found guilty of some notorious crime. I find that all his vehement and grave Apology standeth upon most strong and firm probations, denying that the Christians ought by conscience, at the will and commandment of the emperor and senate, to do sacrifice to the idols; for the which they being condemned, affirm that they suffer open wrong; affirming, moreover, that the true and only religion is the religion of the Christians, whose doctrine and conversation hath no fault. Justinus, although with these and such-like persuasions he did not so prevail with the emperor to cause him to love his religion and become a Christian, (for that is not written,) yet thus much he obtained, that Antoninus, writing to his officers in Asia in the behalf

of the Christians, required and commanded them, that those Christians only which were found guilty of any trespass should suffer, and such as were not convicted should not therefore only for the name be punished, because they were called Christians. By these it is apparent with what zeal and faith this Justinus did strive against the persecutors, which (as he said) could kill only, but could not hurt.

This Justinus, by the means and malice of Crescens the philosopher, (as is before declared,) suffered martyrdom under Marcus Antoninus Verus, a little after that Polycarp was martyred in Asia, as witnesseth Eusebius. Here is to be gathered how Epiphanius was deceived in the time of his death, saying that he suffered under Rusticus the president, and Hadrian the emperor, being of thirty years of age; which, indeed, agreeth neither with Eusebius, nor Hierom, nor Suide, nor others more; which manifestly declare and testify how he exhibited his Apology unto Antoninus Pius, which came after Hadrian. Thus hast thou (good reader) the life of this learned and blessed martyr, although partly touched before, yet now more fully and amply discoursed for the better commendation of his excellent and notable virtues; of whose final end thus writeth Photius, saying that he, suffering for Christ, died cheerfully and with honour.

Thus have ye heard the whole discourse of Justinus and of the blessed saints of France, Vetius, Zacharias, Sanctus, Maturus, Attalus, Blandina, Alexander, Alcibiades, with others, recorded and set forth by the writing of certain Christian brethren of the same church and place of France. In the which foresaid writings of theirs, moreover, appeareth the great meekness and modest constancy of the said martyrs described in these words: Such followers were they of Christ, (who when he was in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, being in the same glory with him,) that they not once nor twice, but oftentimes suffered martyrdom; and taken again from the beasts, and bearing wounds, tearings, and scars in their bodies, yet neither would count themselves martyrs, neither would they suffer us so to call them: but if any of us either by word or letter would call them martyrs, they did vehemently rebuke them, saying that the name of martyrdom was to be given to Christ the faithful and true Martyr, the First-born of the dead, and the Captain of life; testifying, moreover, that martyrdom belongeth to such, who, by their martyrdom, were already passed out of this life, and whom Christ, by their worthy confession, hath received unto himself, and hath sealed up their martyrdom by their end finished: as for them which were not yet

consummated, they (said they) were not worthy the names of martyrs, but only were humble and worthy confessors, desiring also their brethren with tears to pray without ceasing for their confirmation. Thus they performing indeed that which belongeth to true martyrs, in resisting the heathen with much liberty and great patience, without all fear of man, being replenished with the fear of God, refused to be named of their brethren for martyrs. And after in the said writing it followeth more: They humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God, by which they were greatly exalted; then they rendered to all men a reason of their faith; they accused no man, they loosed all, they bound none; and for them which so evil did entreat them they prayed, following the example of Stephen the perfect martyr, which said, O Lord, impute not their sin to them. And after again, neither did they proudly disdain against them which fell; but of such as they had they imparted to them that lacked, bearing toward them a motherly affection, shedding their plentiful tears for them to God the Father, and prayed for their life and salvation; and as God gave it them, they also did communicate to their neighbours; and thus they as conquerors of all things departed to God, They loved peace, and leaving the same to us, they went to God, neither leaving any molestation to their mother, nor sedition or trouble to their brethren, but joy, peace, concord, and love to all.

Out of the same writing, moreover, concerning these martyrs of France aforementioned, is recorded also another history not unworthy to be noted, taken out of the same book of Eusebius, which history is this.

There was among these constant and blessed martyrs one Alcibiades, as is above specified; which Alcibiades ever used a very strict diet, receiving for his food and sustenance nothing else but only bread and water. When this Alcibiades, now being cast into prison, went about to accustom the same strictness of diet, after his usual manner, it was before revealed by God to Attalus aforementioned, one of the said company, being also the same time imprisoned after his first conflict upon the scaffold, that Alcibiades did not well in that he refused to use and take the creatures of God, and also thereby ministered to other a pernicious occasion of offensive example. Whereupon Alcibiades being advertised, and reformed, began to take all things boldly and with giving thanks. Whereby may appear to all scrupulous consciences, not only a wholesome instruction of the Holy Ghost, but also here is to be noted how in those days they were not destitute of the grace of God, but had the Holy Spirit of God to be their Instructor.

The foresaid martyrs of France at the same time commended Irenæus, newly then made minister, with their letters unto Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, as witnesseth Eusebius, in the tenth chapter of the said book, which Irenæus first was the hearer of Polycarp, then made minister (as is said) under these martyrs; and after their death made bishop afterward of Lyons in France, and succeeded after Photinus. Besides this Justin, there was also the same time in Asia Claudius Apollinaris, or Apollinarius, bishop of Hieropolis; and also Melito, bishop of Sanlis, an eloquent and learned man, much commended of Tertullian, who succeeding after the time of the apostles, in the reign of this Antoninus Verus, exhibited unto him learned and eloquent Apologies in defence of Christ's religion, like as Quadratus and Aristides above mentioned did unto the emperor Hadrian; whereby they moved him somewhat to stay the rage of his persecution. In like manner did this Apollinaris and Melito (stirred up by God) adventure to defend in writing the cause of the Christians unto this Antoninus. Of this Melito Eusebius in his fourth book making mention, excerpteth certain places of his Apology in these words, as followeth: Now, saith he, which was never seen before, the

godly suffer persecution by occasion of certain proclamations and edicts proclaimed throughout Asia; for villanous sycophants, robbers, and spoilers of other men's goods, grounding themselves upon those proclamations, and taking occasion of them, rob openly night and day, and spoil those which do no harm. And it followeth after, which if it be done by your commandment, be it so, well done; for a good prince will never command but good things, and so we will be contented to sustain the honour of this death. This only we most humbly beseech your Majesty, that calling before you and examining the authors of this tumult and contention, then your Grace would justly judge whether we are worthy of cruel death or quiet life. And then, if it be not your pleasure, and that it proceedeth not by your occasion, (which indeed against your barbarous enemies were too bad,) the more a great deal we are petitioners to your Highness, that here after you will vouchsafe to hear us thus so vexed and oppressed with these kind of villianous robberies. And verily our philosophy and doctrine did first among the barbarous take place, which doctrine first in the days of Augustus, your predecessor, when it did reign and flourish, thereby your empire became most famous and fortunate; and from that time more and more the state of the Roman empire increased in honour, whereof you most happily were made successor, and so shall your son too. Honour therefore this philosophy which with your empire sprang up, and came in with Augustus, which your progenitors above all other honoured and most esteemed. And verily this is no small argument of a good beginning, that since our doctrine flourished in the empire no misfortune or loss happened from Augustus's time; but, contrary, always victory, good and honourable years as ever any man would wish: only among all, and of all, Nero and Domitian, being kindled by divers naughty and spiteful persons, cavillingly objected against our doctrine; of whom this sycophantical slandering of us by naughty custom first came and sprang up. But your godly fathers, espying the ignorance of these, oftentimes by their writing corrected their temerarious attempts in that behalf; among whom your grandfather Hadrian, with many others, is read of to have written to Fundane, the proconsul and lieutenant of Asia; and your father, your own father, I say, with whom you ruled in all things, wrote to the cities under his signet, as the Laersens, Thessalonicenses, Athenienses, and Grecians, rashly to innovate or alter nothing. Of your Highness, therefore, who in this case is of that sect as your predecessors were, yea, and of a more benign and philosophical mind, we are in good hope to obtain our petition and request.

Thus much out of the Apology of Melito, who, writing to Onesimus, giveth to us this benefit, to know the true catalogue and the names of all the authentic books of the Old Testament received in the ancient time of the primitive church. Concerning the number and names whereof, the said Melito in his letter to Onesimus declareth, how that he returning into the parts where these things were done and preached, there he diligently inquired out the books approved of the Old Testament, the names whereof in order he subscribeth, and sendeth unto him as followeth: The five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomi, Jesus Nave, The Judges, Ruth, Four books of Kings, Two books Paralipomenon, The Psalms, Proverbs of Salomon, The book of Wisdom, The Preacher, The Song of Songs, Job, The Prophets, Esay, Hieremy, Twelve Prophets in one book, Daniel, Ezechiel, Esdras. And thus much of this matter which I thought here to record, for that it is not unprofitable for these later times to understand what in the first times was received and admitted as authentic, and what otherwise.

But from this little digression to return to our matter omitted, that is, to the Apologies of Apollinarius and Melito, in the story so it followeth, that whether it was

by the occasion of these two Apologies, or whether it was through the writing of Athenagoras a philosopher, and a legate of the Christians, it is uncertain; but this is certain, that the persecution the same time was stayed. Some do think, which most probably seems to touch the truth, that the cause of staying this persecution did rise upon a wonderful miracle of God, showed in the emperor's camp by the Christians, the story whereof is this: At what time the two brethren, Marcus Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius Commodus, emperors, joining together, warred against the Quades, Vandals, Sarmates, and Germans, in the expedition against them, their army, by reason of the imminent assault of their enemies, was cooped and shut in within the straits and hot dry places, where their soldiers, besides other difficulties of battle, being destitute of water five days, were like to have perished, which dread not a little discomfited them, and abated their courage; where, in this so great distress and jeopardy, suddenly withdrew from the army a legion of the Christian soldiers for their succour, who, falling prostrate upon the earth, by ardent prayer, by and by, obtained of God double relief: by means of whom God gave certain pleasant showers from the element; whereby as their soldiers quenched their thirst, so were a great number of their enemies discomfited and put to flight by continual lightnings which shoot out of the air. This miracle so pleased and won the emperor, that ever after he waxed gentler and gentler to the Christians, and directed his letters to divers of his rulers, (as Tertullian in his Apology witnesseth,) commanding them therein to give thanks to the Christians, no less for his victory, than for the preservation of him and all his men. The copy of which letter ensueth:

"I give you hereby to understand what I intend to do, as also what success I have had in my wars in Germany, and with how much difficulty I have victualled my camp; being compassed about with seventy and four fierce dragons, whom my scouts descried to be within nine miles of us, and Pompeianus, our lieutenant, hath viewed, as he signified unto us by his letters. Wherefore I thought no less but to be overrun, and all my bands, of so great multitude, as well my vaward, mainward, as rereward, with all my soldiers of Ephrata; in whose host there were numbered of fighting men nine hundred seventy and five thousand. But when I saw myself not able to encounter with the enemy, I craved aid of our country gods; at whose hands I finding no comfort, and being driven of the enemy into an exigent, I caused to be sent for those men which we call Christians, who being mustered were found a good indifferent number, with whom I was in further rage than I had good cause, as afterwards I had experience by their marvellous power; who forthwith did their endeavour, but without either weapon, munition, armour, or trumpets, as men abhorring such preparation and furniture, but only satisfied in trust of their God, whom they carry about with them in their consciences. It is therefore to be credited, although we call them wicked men, that they worship God in their hearts. For they, falling prostrate upon the ground, prayed not only for me, but for the host also which was with me, beseeching their God for help in that our extremity of victuals and fresh water; for we had been now five days without water, and were in our enemy's land, even in the midst of Germany; who thus falling upon their faces, made their prayer to a God unknown of me. And there fell amongst us from heaven a most pleasant and cold shower, but amongst our enemies a great storm of hail mixed with lightning, so that immediately we perceived the invincible aid of the most mighty God to be with us; therefore we give those men leave to profess Christianity, lest, perhaps, by their prayer we be punished with the like, and thereby I make myself the author of such hurt as shall be received by the Christian profession. And if any shall apprehend one that is a Christian only for that cause, I will that he being apprehended, without punishment may have leave to confess the same, so that

there be none other cause objected against him more than that he is a Christian; but let his accuser be burned alive. Neither will I that he, confessing and being found a Christian, shall be enforced to alter the same his opinion by the governor of any of our provinces, but left to his own choice. And this decree of mine I will to be ratified in the senate house, and command the same publicly to be proclaimed and read in the court of Trajan; and that, further, from thence it may be sent into all our provinces by the diligence of Veratius, governor of our city Polione. And further, we give leave to all men to use and write, out this our decree, taking the same out of our copy publicly in the common hall set forth."

Thus the tempestuous rage of persecution against the Christians began for a time to assuage, partly by the occasion hereof, partly also upon other causes incident, compelling the enemies to surcease their persecution, as great plagues and pestilence lying upon the country of Italy; likewise great wars, as well in the east parts, as also in Italy and France, terrible earthquakes, great floods, noisome swarms of flies and vermin devouring their corn fields, &c. And thus much of things done under Antoninus Verus, which Antoninus, in the beginning of his reign, joined with him in the government of the empire his brother Marcus Aurelius Commodus, who also was with him at the miraculous victory gotten by the Christians, as Eusebius recordeth. Contrary, Platina, in his Life of Soter, refer the same to the time of Antoninus Verus, and his son Lucius Antoninus Commodus, and not of Marcus Aurelius Commodus, his brother. But howsoever the truth of years doth stand, certain it is, that after the death of Antoninus Verus, and of Aurelius Commodus, succeeded Lucius Antoninus Commodus, the son of Verus, who reigned thirty years.

In the time of this Commodus, although he was an incommodious prince to the senators of Rome, yet notwithstanding there was some quietness universally through the whole church of Christ from persecution, by what occasion it is not certain. Some think, of whom is Xiphilinus, that it came through Marcia, the emperor's concubine, which favoured the Christians; but howsoever it came, (saith Eusebius,) the fury of the raging enemies was then somewhat mitigated, and peace was given by the grace of Christ unto the church throughout the whole world; at what time the wholesome doctrine of the gospel allured and reduced the hearts of all sorts of people unto the true religion of God, insomuch that many, both rich and noble personages of Rome, with their whole families and households, to their salvation, adjoined themselves to the church of Christ.

Among whom there was one Apollonius, a nobleman, and a senator of Rome, who being maliciously accused unto the senate by one whom Hierom writeth to be the servant of the said Apollonius, and nameth him Severus; but whose servant soever he was, the wretched man came soon enough before the judge, being condignly rewarded for that his malicious diligence; for by a law which the emperor made, that no man upon pain of death should falsely accuse the Christians, he was put to execution, and had his legs broken forthwith by the sentence of Perenninus the judge, which being a heathen man, he pronounced against him: but the beloved martyr of God, when the judge with much ado had obtained of him to render an account, before the honourable senate, of His faith, under whose defence and warrant of life he did the same, delivered unto them an eloquent apology of the Christian belief: but the former warrant notwithstanding, he by the decree of the senate was beheaded, and so ended His life; for that there was an ancient law among them decreed, that none that professed Christ, and therefore arraigned, should be released without recantation, or altering his opinion.

This Commodus is said in stories to be so sure and steady-handed in casting the dart, that in the open theatre before the people he would encounter with the wild beasts, and be sure to hit them in place where he appointed. Among divers other his vicious and wild parts, he was so far surprised in pride and arrogancy, that he would be called Hercules, and many times would show himself to the people in the skin of a lion, to be counted thereby the king of men, like as the lion is of the beasts.

Upon a certain time, being his birth-day, this Commodus calling the people of Rome together, in a great royalty, having his lion's skin upon him, made sacrifice to Hercules and Jupiter, causing it to be cried through the city, that Hercules was the patron and defender of the city. There was the same time at Rome Vincentius, Eusebius, Peregrinus, Potentianus, learned men, and instructors of the people, who, following the steps of the apostles, went about from place to place where the gospel was not yet preached, converting the Gentiles to the faith of Christ. These, hearing the madness of the emperor, and of the people, began to reprove their idolatrous blindness; teaching in villages and towns all that heard them to believe upon the true and only God, and to come away from such worshipping of devils, and to give honour to God alone, which only is to be worshipped, willing them to repent and to be baptized, lest they perished with Commodus. With this their preaching they converted one Julius, a senator, and others, to the religion of Christ. The emperor hearing thereof, caused them to be apprehended of Vitellus his captain, and to be compelled to sacrifice unto Hercules; which when they stoutly refused, after divers grievous torments and great miracles by them done, at last they were pressed with leaden weights to death.

This Peregrinus above mentioned had been sent before by Xistus, bishop of Rome, into the parts of France, to supply there the room of a bishop and teacher, by reason that for the continual and horrible persecutions thereabout touched, those places were left desolate and destitute of ministers and instructors; whereafter he had occupied himself with much fruit among the flock of Christ, and had stablished the congregation there, returning home again to Rome, there he finished at last (as it is said) his martyrdom.

Now remaineth likewise to speak of Julius; which Julius being (as is afore described,) a senator of Rome, and now won by the preaching of these blessed men to the faith of Christ, did speedily invite them and brought them home to his house, where being fully instructed in Christian religion, he believed the gospel. And sending for one Ruffinus, a priest, was with all his family by him baptized, who not (as the common sort was wont to do) kept close and secret his faith, but, incensed with a marvellous and sincere zeal, openly professed the same, altogether wishing and praying to be given to him by God, not only to believe in Christ, but also to hazard his life for him. Which thing the emperor hearing how that Julius had forsaken his old religion, and become a Christian, forthwith sent for him to come before him, unto whom he spake on this wise: O Julius, what madness hath possessed thee, that thus thou dost fall from the old and common religion of thy forefathers, who acknowledged and worshipped Jupiter and Hercules their gods, and now dost embrace a new and fond kind of religion of the Christians? At which time Julius, having good occasion to show and open his faith, gave straightway account thereof to him, and affirmed that Hercules and Jupiter were false gods, and how the worshippers of them should perish with eternal damnation and punishments. Which the emperor hearing how that he condemned and despised his gods, being then inflamed with a great wrath, (as he was by nature very choleric,) committed him forthwith to Vitellus, the master of the soldiers, a very cruel and fierce man, to see Julius either to sacrifice to mighty

Hercules, or, refusing the same, to slay him. Vitellus (as he was commanded) exhorted Julius to obey the emperor's commandment, and to worship his gods; alleging how that the whole empire of Rome was not only constituted, but also preserved and maintained, by them: which Julius denied utterly to do, admonishing sharply in like manner Vitellus to acknowledge the true God, and obey his commandments, lest he with his master should die some grievous death: whereat Vitellus being moved, caused Julius with cudgels to be beaten unto death.

These things being thus briefly recited, touching such holy martyrs as hitherto have suffered, now remaineth that we return again to the order of the Roman bishops, such as followed next after Alexander, at whom we left, whose succeder next was Xistus or Sixtus, the sixth bishop counted after Peter, who governed that ministry the space of ten years, as Damasus and others do write. Uspergensis maketh mention but of nine years. Platina recordeth that he died a martyr, and was buried at the Vatican. But Eusebius speaking of his decease, maketh no word or mention of any martyrdom. In the second tome of the Councils certain epistles be attributed to him, whereof Eusebius, Damasus, Hierom, and other old authors, as they make no relation, so seem they to have no intelligence nor knowledge of any such matter. In these counterfeit epistles, and in Platina, it appeareth that Xistus was the first author of these ordinances. First, that the holy mysteries and holy vessels should be touched but only of persons holy and consecrated, especially of no woman. Item, that the corporal cloth should be made of no other cloth but of fine linen. Item, that such bishops as were called up to the apostolic see, returning home again, should not be received at their return, unless they brought with them letters from the bishop of Rome saluting the people. Item, at the celebration he ordained to be sung this verse, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts," Where, moreover, it is to be noted, that the said Platina, in the Life of this Xistus, doth testify that Peter ministered the celebration of the communion only with the Lord's prayer. These trifling ordinances of Xistus, who is so rude that seeth not, or may not easily conjecture to be falsely fathered on Xistus, or on any father of that time? first by the uniform rudeness and style of all those decretal letters, nothing savouring of that age, but rather of the later foolish times that followed; also by the matter and argument in those letters contained, nothing agreeing with the state of those troublesome days. Neither again is it to be supposed that any such recourse of bishops was then to the apostolic see of Rome, that it was not lawful to return without their letters; whenas the persecution against the Christians was then so hot, in the days of Hadrian, that the bishops of Rome themselves were more glad to fly out of the city, than other bishops were to come to them unto Rome. And if Xistus added the Sanctus unto the mass canon, what piece then of the canon went before it, when they which put to the other patches came after Xistus? And if they came after Xistus that added the rest, why did they set their pieces before his, seeing they that began the first piece of the canon came after him?

The same likewise is to be judged of the epistles and ordinances of Telesphorus, who succeeded next unto Xistus, and being bishop of that congregation the term of eleven years, the first year of the reign of Antoninus Pius, died martyr about the year of our Lord one hundred thirty and eight. His epistle, like unto the rest, containing in it no great matter of doctrine, hath these ordinances. First he commandeth all that were of the clergy to fast and abstain from flesh-eating seven weeks before Easter. That three masses should be said upon the nativity day of the Lord. That no laymen should accuse either bishop or priest. He ordained, moreover, Gloria in excelsis, to be added to the mass, &c. But that these things falsely are

feigned upon him may easily be conjectured. For as touching the seven weeks' fast, neither doth it agree with the old Roman term commonly received, calling it Quadragesima, that is, the forty days' fast; neither with the example of our Saviour, who fasted not seven weeks, but only forty days. Moreover, as concerning this forty days' fast, we read of the same in the epistle of Ignatius, which was long before Telesphorus; whereby it may appear that this Telesphorus was not the first inventor thereof. And if it be true that is lately come out in the name of Abdias, (but untruly, as by many conjectures may be proved,) there it is read, that in the days of St. Matthew this Lent fast of forty days was observed long before Telesphorus, by these words that follow: In the days (said he) either of Lent, or in the time of other lawful fastings, he that abstaineth not as well from eating meat as also from the mixture of bodies doth incur in so doing, not only pollution, but also committeth offence, which must be washed away with the tears of repentance. Again, Apollonius affirmeth, that Montanus the heretic was the first deviser and bringer in of these laws of fasting into the church, which before was used to be free, But especially by Socrates, writer of the ecclesiastical story, who lived after the days of Theodosius, it may be argued, that this seven weeks' fast is falsely imputed to Telesphorus. For Socrates in his first book, speaking of this time, hath these words: The Romans (saith he) do fast three weeks continually before Easter, beside the sabbath and the Sunday. And, moreover, speaking of the divers and sundry fastings of Lent in sundry and divers churches, he addeth these words: And because that no man can bring forth any commandment written of this matter, it is therefore apparent that the apostles left this kind of fast free to every man's will and judgment, lest any should be constrained by fear and necessity to do that which is good, &c. With this of Socrates agree also the words of Sozomenus, living much about the same time, in his seventh book, where he thus writeth: The whole fast of Lent (saith he) some comprehend in five weeks, as do the Illyrians, and the west churches, with all Libya, Egypt, and Palestina; some in seven weeks, as at Constantinople, and the parts bordering to Phœnicia; other some in three weeks, next before the day of Easter; and some again in two weeks, &c. By the which it may be collected, that Telesphorus never ordained any such fast of seven weeks; which otherwise neither would have been neglected in Rome, and in the west churches; neither again would have been unremembered of these ancient ecclesiastical writers, if any such thing had been. The like is to be thought also of the rest, not only of his constitutions, but also of the other ancient bishops and martyrs which followed after him, as of Higinus in the year of our Lord one hundred forty and two, who succeeding him, and dying also a martyr, is said, or rather feigned, to bring in the cream, one godfather and godmother in baptism, to ordain the dedication of churches, whenas in his time so far it was off that any solemn churches were standing in Rome, that unneeth the Christians could safely convent in their own houses. Likewise the distinguishing the orders of metropolitans, bishops, and other degrees, savour nothing less than of that time.

After Higinus followed Pius, who, as Platina reporteth, was so precisely devout about the holy mysteries of the Lord's table, that if any one crumb thereof did fall down to the ground, he ordained that the priest should do penance forty days; if any fell upon the super-altar, he should do penance three days; if upon the linen corporal cloth, four days; if upon any other linen cloth, nine days. And if any drop of the blood (saith he) should chance to be spilled, wheresoever it fell, it should be licked up, if it were possible; if not, the place should be washed or pared, and so being washed or pared, should be burned and laid in the vestry. All which toys may seem to a wise man more vain and trifling, than to savour of those pure and strict times of those holy

martyrs. This Pius (as is reported) was much conversant with Hermes, called otherwise Pastor. Darnasus saith he was his brother. But how is that like, that Hermes being the disciple of Paul, or one of the threescore disciples, could be the brother of this Pius? Of this Hermes, and of the Revelations, the foresaid Pius in his epistle decretal (if it be not forged) maketh mention; declaring that unto him appeared the angel of God in the habit of a shepherd, commanding him that Easter-day should be celebrated of all men upon no other day but on a Sunday; whereupon, saith the epistle, Pius the bishop, by his authority apostolical, decreed and commanded the same to be observed of all men.

Then succeeded Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, about the year of our Lord one hundred and fourscore. This Eleutherius, at the request of Lucius, king of Britain, sent to him Damianus and Fugatius, by whom the king was converted to Christ's faith, and baptized, about the year of our Lord one hundred threescore and nineteen. Nauclerus saith it was in the year one hundred fifty and five. Henr. de Erfordia saith it was in the year one hundred threescore and nine, in the nineteenth year of Verus the emperor. Some say it was in the sixth year of Commodus, which should be about the year of our Lord one hundred fourscore and five. Timotheus in his story thinketh that Eleutherius came himself; but that is not like. And as there is a variance among the writers for the count of years, so doth there rise a question among some, whether Eleutherius was the first that brought the faith from Rome into this land or not. Nicephorus saith that Simon Zelotes came into Britain. Some other allege out of Gildas, that Joseph of Arimathea, after the dispersion of the Jews, was sent by Philip the apostle from France to Britain, about the year of our Lord threescore and three, and here remained in this land all his time, and so with his fellows laid the first foundation of Christian faith among the British people. Whereupon other preachers and teachers coming afterward confirmed the same, and increased it more. And therefore doth Petrus Cluniacensis call the Scottish men, and so doth count them as more ancient Christians. For the confirmation hereof might be alleged the testimony of Origen, of Tertullian, and the words also of the letter of Eleutherius, which import no less but that the faith of Christ was here in England among the British people before Eleutherius's time, and before the king was converted; but hereof more shall be spoken hereafter, (Christ willing,) when, after the tractation of these ten persecutions, we shall enter into the matter of our English stories.

About this time of Commodus afore mentioned, among divers other learned men and famous teachers whom God stirred up at that time (as he doth at all other times raise up some) in his church, to confound the persecutors by learning and writing, as the martyrs to confirm the truth with their blood, was Serapion, bishop of Antioch, Egesippus, a writer of the ecclesiastical history from Christ's passion to his time; and those that be remaining (which be five) be not mentioned, neither Hierom, Eusebius, nor Miltiades, which also wrote his Apology in defence of Christian religion, as did Melito, Quadratus, and Aristides before mentioned. About the same time also wrote Heraclitus, who first began to write annotations and enarrations upon the New Testament, and Epistles of the apostles. Also Theophilus, bishop of Cesarea, Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, a man famously learned, which wrote divers epistles to divers churches, and among others writeth, exhorting Penitus, a certain bishop, that he would lay no yoke of chastity of any necessity upon his brethren; but that he would consider the infirmity of others, and bear with it. Moreover, the said Dionysius, in his epistles, writing of Dionysius Areopagita, declareth of him how that he was first converted to the Christian faith by St. Paul, according as in the Acts is recorded, and afterward was made the first bishop of Athens, but maketh there no mention of his

book concerning the hierarchy. Whereby it may easily appear what is to be judged of that book. Furthermore, by the epistles of the said Dionysius of Corinth, this we have to understand to be the use at that time in churches, to read the letters and epistles, such as were sent by learned bishops and teachers unto the congregations, as may appear by these words of Dionysius, who, writing to the church of the Romans and to Soter, saith, This day we celebrate the holy dominical day, in which we have read your epistle, which always we will read for our exhortation, like as we do read also the epistle of Clement sent to us before, &c. Where also mention is made of keeping of Sunday holy, whereof we find no mention made in ancient authors before his time, except only in Justin Martyr, who, in his description, declareth two times most especially used for Christian men to congregate together: first, when any convert was to be baptized; the second was upon the Sunday, which was wont for two causes then to be hallowed: first, because (saith he) upon that day God made the world; secondly, because that Christ upon that day first showed himself after his resurrection to his disciples, &c.

Over and beside these above named, about the days of Commodus wrote also Clemens Alexandrinus, a man of notable and singular learning, whose books, although for a great part be lost, yet certain of them yet remain, wherein is declared, among other things, the order and number of the books and Gospels of the New Testament, &c.

The same time, moreover, lived Pantenus, which was the first in Alexandria that professed in open school to read, of whom is thought first to proceed the order and manner among the Christians to read and profess in universities. This Pantenus, for his excellency of learning, was sent by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, to preach to the Indians, where he found the Gospel of St. Matthew written in Hebrew, left there by St. Bartholomew, which book afterward he brought with him from thence to the library of Alexandria.

During all the reign of Commodus, God granted rest and tranquillity, although not without some bloodshed of certain holy martyrs, as is above declared unto his church. In the which time of tranquillity, the Christians having now some leisure from the foreign enemy, began to have a little contention among themselves about the ceremony of Easter; which contention albeit of long time before had been stirring in the church, as is before mentioned of Polycarp and Anicetus; yet the variance and difference of that ceremony brought no breach of Christian concord and society among them: neither as yet did the matter exceed so far, but that the bond of love and communion of brotherly life continued, although they differed in the ceremony of the day. For they of the west church pretending the tradition of Paul and Peter, but indeed being the tradition of Hermes and of Pius, kept one day, which was upon the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the first month. The church of Asia, following the ordinance of John the apostle, observed another, as more shall be declared (the Lord willing) when we come to the time of Victor, bishop of Rome. In the mean time, as concerning the fourth persecution, let this hitherto suffice.

7. The Fifth Persecution under Severus

After the death of Commodus reigned Pertinax but few months, after whom succeeded Severus, under whom was raised the fifth persecution against the Christian saints; who reigning the term of eighteen years, the first ten years of the same was very favourable and courteous to the Christians; afterward, through sinister suggestions and malicious accusations of the malignant, was so incensed against them, that by proclamations he commanded no Christians any more to be suffered. Thus the rage of the emperor being inflamed against them, great persecution was stirred up on every side, whereby an infinite number of martyrs were slain, as Eusebius in his sixth book recordeth, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred and five. The crimes and false accusations objected against the Christians are partly touched before; as sedition and rebellion against the emperor, sacrilege, murdering of infants, incestuous pollution, eating raw flesh, libidinous commixture, whereof certain indeed, called then Gnostici, were infamed. Item, it was objected against them for worshipping the head of an ass; which whereof it should rise I find no certain Cause, except it were, perhaps, by the Jews. Also they were charged for worshipping the sun, for that peradventure before the sun did rise they convented together, singing their morning hymns unto the Lord, or else because they prayed toward the east; but specially for that they would not with them worship their idolatrous gods, and were counted as enemies to all men, &c.

The captains and presidents of this persecution under the emperor were Hilerianus, Vigellius, Claudius, Hermianus, ruler of Cappadocia, Cecilius, Capella, Vespronius, also Demetrius, mentioned of Cyprian, and Aquila, judge of Alexandria, of whom Eusebius maketh relation.

The places where the force of this persecution most raged were Africa, Alexandria, Cappadocia, and Carthage. The number of them that suffered in this persecution, by the report of the ecclesiastical story, was innumerable. Of whom the first was Leonides, the father of Origen, who was beheaded; with whom also Origen his son, being of the age then of seventeen years, should have suffered, (such a fervent desire he had to be martyred for Christ,) had not his mother privily in the night season conveyed away his clothes and his shirt. Whereupon more for shame to be seen, than for

Lear to die, he was constrained to remain at home; and when he could do nothing else, yet he writeth to his father a letter with these words: Take heed to yourself that you turn not your thought and purpose for our sake, &c. Such a fervency had this Origen, being yet young, to the doctrine of Christ's faith, by the operation of God's heavenly providence, and partly also by the diligent education of his father, who brought him up from his youth most studiously in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of Holy Scripture, wherein he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would move questions to his father of the meaning of this place or that place in the Scripture. Insomuch that his father divers times would uncover his breast, being asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God which had made him so happy a father of such a happy child. After the death of his father, and all his goods confiscated to the emperor, he with his poor mother, and five brethren, were brought to such extreme poverty, that he did sustain both himself and them by teaching a school; till at length, being weary of the profession, he transferred his study only to the knowledge and

seeking of Divine Scripture, and such other learning conducive to the same. So much he profited both in the Hebrew and other tongues, that he conferred the Hebrew text with the translation of the threescore; and, moreover, did confer and find out the other translations which we call the common translation of Aquila, of Symmachus, and Theodotion. Also he adjoined to these aforesaid other four translations, whereof more is in the story of Eusebius expressed.

They that write of the life of Origen, testify of him that he was of wit quick and sharp, much patient of labour, a great traveller in the tongues, of a spare diet, of a strict life, a great faster; his teaching and his living were both one; his going was much barefoot; a strict observer of that saying of the Lord, bidding to have but one coat, &c. He is said to have written so much as seven notaries and so many maids every day could pen. The number of his books, by the account of Hierom, came to seven thousand volumes, the copies whereof he used to sell for three pence, or a little more, for the sustentation of his living. But of him more shall be touched hereafter. So zealous he was in the cause of Christ, and of Christ's martyrs, that he, nothing fearing his own peril, would assist and exhort them going to their death, and kiss them, insomuch that he was oft in jeopardy to be stoned of the multitude; and sometimes by the provision of Christian men had his house guarded about with soldiers, for the safety of them which daily resorted to hear his readings. And many times he was compelled to shift places and houses, for such as laid wait for him in all places; but great was the providence of God to preserve him in the midst of all this tempest of Severus. Among others which resorted unto him, and were his hearers, Plutarchus was one, and died a martyr; and with him Serenus his brother, who was burned. The third after these was Heraclides, the fourth Heron, who were both beheaded. The fifth was another Serenus, also beheaded, Rhais, and Potamiena, who was tormented with pitch poured upon her, and martyred with her mother Marcella, who died also in the fire. This Potamiena was of a fresh and flourishing beauty, who, because she could not be removed from her profession, was committed to Basilides, one of the captains there in the army, to see the execution done. Basilides receiving her at the judge's hand, and leading her to the place, showed her some compassion in repressing the rebukes and railings of the wicked adversaries: for the which Potamiena the virgin, to requite again his kindness, bade him be of good comfort, saying that she would pray the Lord to show mercy upon him; and so went she to her martyrdom, which she both strongly and quietly did sustain.

Not long after it happened that Basilides was required to give an oath in a matter concerning his fellow soldiers, which thing he denied to do, plainly affirming that he was a Christian; for their oath then was wont to be by the idols and the emperor. At the first he was thought dissemblingly to jest; but after, when he was heard constantly and in earnest to confirm the same, he was had before the judge, and so by him committed to ward. The Christians marvelling thereat, as they came to him in the prison, inquired of him the cause of that his sudden conversion; to whom he answered again, and said, that Potamiena had prayed for him to the Lord, and so he saw a crown put upon his head; adding, moreover, that it should not be long but he should be received. Which things thus done, the next day following he was had to the place of execution, and there beheaded. Albeit the said Eusebius giveth this story of no credit, but only of hearsay, as he there expresseth.

As divers and many there were that suffered in the days of this Severus, so some there were again, which, through the protection of God's providence, being put to great torments, yet escaped with life; of whom was one Alexander, who, for his

constant confession and torments suffered, was made bishop afterward of Jerusalem, together with Narcissus; who being then an old man of a hundred and threescore years and three, as saith Eusebius, was unwieldy for his age to govern that function alone.

Of this Narcissus it is reported, in the Ecclesiastical History, that certain miracles by him were wrought, very notable, if they be true. First of water by him turned into oil, at the solemn vigil of Easter, what time the congregation wanted oil for their lamps. Another miracle is also told of him, which is this: There were three evil-disposed persons, who seeing the soundness and grave constancy of his virtuous life, and fearing their own punishment, as a conscience that is guilty is always fearful, thought to prevent his accusations, in accusing him first, and laying a heinous crime unto his charge. And to make their accusation more probable before the people, they bound their accusation with a great oath; one wishing to be destroyed with fire, if he said not true; the other to be consumed with a grievous sickness; the third to lose both his eyes, if they did lie. Narcissus, although having his conscience clear, yet not able, being but one man, to withstand their accusation, bound with such oaths, gave place, and removed himself from the multitude into a solitary desert by himself, where he continued the space of many years. In the mean time, to them which so willingly and wickedly forswore themselves this happened: the first, by casualty of one little small spark of fire, was burnt with his goods and all his family. The second was taken with a great sickness, from the top to the toe, and devoured with the same. The third, hearing and seeing the punishment of the other, confessed his fault, but through great repentance poured out such tears that he lost both his eyes: and thus was their false perjury punished. Narcissus, after long absence returning home again, was by this means both cleared of the fact, and received into his bishopric again; to whom, as is said, for impotency of his age, Alexander was joined in execution of the function. Of this Alexander is recorded in the said Ecclesiastical History, that after his agonies and constancy of his confession showed in the persecution of Severus, he was admonished by a vision in the night season to make his journey up to Jerusalem and Palestine, (for that place remained free from this persecution,) to see there the congregation and to pray. Thus he, taking his journey, and drawing near to the city, a vision with plain words was given to certain chief heads of Jerusalem to go out of the gate of the city, there to receive the bishop appointed to them of God. And so was Alexander met and received, and joined partner with aged Narcissus, as is before expressed, in the city of Jerusalem, where he continued bishop above forty years, until the persecution of Decius, and there erected a famous library, where Eusebius had his chiefest help in writing his Ecclesiastical History. He wrote also divers epistles to divers churches, and licensed Origen openly to teach in his church. At length, being very aged, he was brought from Jerusalem to Cesarea before the judge under Decius, where after his constant confession the second time, he was committed to prison, and there died.

Besides these that suffered in this persecution of Severus, recited of Eusebius, Vincentius also speaketh of one Andoclus, whom Polycarp before had sent into France; which Andoclus, because he spread there the doctrine of Christ, was apprehended of Severus, and first beaten with staves and bats, and after was beheaded.

To these above named may also be added Asclepiades, who, although he was not put to death in this persecution of Severus, yet constantly he did abide the trial of his confession, and suffered much for the same, as Alexander before mentioned did. Wherefore afterward he was ordained bishop of Antioch, where he continued the space of seven years, of whom Alexander writes unto the church of Antioch out of prison, much rejoicing and giving thanks to God to hear that he was their bishop.

About the same time, during the reign of Severus, died Irenæus. Ado, and other martyr writers, do hold, that he was martyred with a great multitude of others more, for the confession and doctrine of Christ, about the fourth or fifth year of Severus. This Irenæus, as he was a great writer, so was he greatly commended of Tertullian for his learning, whom he calleth a great searcher of all kind of learning. He was first scholar and hearer of Polycarp; from thence either was sent or came to France, and there, by Photinus, and the rest of the martyrs, was instituted into the ministry, and commended by their letter to Eleutherius, as is before premonished. At length, after the martyrdom of Photinus, he was appointed bishop of Lyons, where he continued about the space of three and twenty years. In the time of this Irenæus the state of the church was much troubled, not only for the outward persecution of the foreign enemy, but also for divers sects and errors then stirring, against which he diligently laboured and wrote much, although but few books be now remaining. The nature of this man, well agreeing with his name, was such, that he ever loved peace, and sought to set agreement when any controversy rose in the church. And therefore, when the question of keeping the Easter-day was renewed in the church between Victor, bishop of Rome, and the churches of Asia, and when Victor would have excommunicated them as schismatics, for disagreeing from him therein; Irenæus, with other brethren of the French church, sorry to see such a contention among brethren for such a trifle, convented themselves together in a common council, and directing their letter with their common consent subscribed, sent unto Victor, entreating him to stay his purpose, and not to proceed in excommunicating his brethren for that matter. Although they themselves agreed with him in observing the Sunday Easter as he did; yet with great reasons and arguments they exhorted him not to deal so rigorously with his other brethren, following the ancient custom of their country manner in that behalf. And besides this, he wrote divers other letters abroad concerning the same contention, declaring the excommunication of Victor to be of no force.

Not long after Irenæus followed also Tertullian about the time of this Severus, and Antoninus Caracalla his son, a man both in Greek and Latin well expert, having great gifts in disputing, and in writing eloquent, as his books declare, and as the commendation of all learned men doth testify no less. To whom Vincentius Liriensis giveth such praise, that he calleth him the flower of all Latin writers; and of the eloquence of his style he thus writeth: that with the force of his reasons, he saith, whom he could not persuade, them he compelled to consent unto him. How many words, so many sentences, and how many sentences, so many victories, he had, &c.

Such men of doing and writing God raised up from time to time, as pillars and stays for his poor church, as he did this Tertullian, in these dangerous days of persecution; for when the Christians were vexed with wrongs, and falsely accused of the Gentiles, Tertullian taking their cause in hand, defendeth them against the persecutors, and against their slanderous accusations. First, that they never minded any stir or rebellion, either against the empire or emperors of Rome; for so much as the use of Christians was to pray for the state of their emperors and governors. And whereas they were accused falsely to be enemies to all man kind, how could that be, (saith Tertullian to Scapula,) seeing the proper office of the Christians is by their profession to pray for all men, to love their enemies, never requiting evil for evil, whenas all other do love but only their friends, and scarcely them? As touching the horrible slander of murdering infants, how can that be true in the Christians, (saith he,) whose order is to abstain from all blood and strangled, insomuch that it is not lawful for them to touch the blood of any beast at their tables when they feed? From filthy copulation no sort

more free than they, which are, and ever have been, the greatest observers of chastity, of whom, such as may, live in perpetual virginity all their life; such as cannot, contract matrimony, for avoiding all whoredom and fornication. Neither can it be proved that the Christians do worship the sun; which false surmise Tertullian declareth to rise hereof, for that the manner of the Christians was to pray toward the east. Much less was there any of them so mad as to worship an ass's head; whereof the occasion being taken only of the Jews, the slander thereof therefore he proveth to be falsely and wrongfully laid to the charge of the Christians.

And likewise against all other lies and slanders, objected of the heathen against the Christians, the said Tertullian purgeth the Christians, declaring them falsely to be belied, and wrongfully persecuted, not for any desert of theirs, but only for the hatred of their name, And yet, notwithstanding, by the same persecutions, he proveth in the same Apology the religion of the Christians nothing to be impaired, but rather increased. The more (saith he) we are mown down of you, the more rise up. The blood of Christians is seed. For what man, (saith he,) in beholding the painful torments and the perfect patience of them, will not search and inquire what is the cause? and when he hath found it out, who will not agree unto it? and when he agreeth to it, who will not desire to suffer for it? Thus (saith he) this sect will never die, which the more it is cut down, the more it groweth. For every man seeing and wondering at the sufferance of the saints, is moved the more thereby to search the cause; in searching he findeth it, and finding he followeth it.

Thus Tertullian, in this dangerous time of persecution, being stirred up of God, defended the innocency of the Christians against the blasphemy of the adversaries; and, moreover, for the instruction of the church, he compiled many fruitful works, Whereof some are extant, some are not to be found. Notwithstanding the great learning and famous virtues of this worthy man, certain errors and blemishes are noted in his doctrine, as were before both of Origen and Irenæus, and likewise of them, were they never so excellent, that followed them. Which errors, all here in order to note and comprehend, were too long a matter for this story to prosecute. This, by the way, shall be sufficient, to admonish the reader never to look for any such perfection of any man in this world, how singular soever he be (Christ only excepted); but some blemish or other joineth itself withal, whereof more, perchance, shall be said when we come to Cyprian.

And now to return again to the order of bishops of Rome intermitted. After Eleutherius afore mentioned, next in the bishopric of Rome succeed Victor, who, as Platina saith, died quietly in the days of Severus. But Damasus, and such as do follow the common chronicles, affirm that he died a martyr, after he had sat ten (or, as some say, twelve) years. This Victor was a great stirrer (as partly before is signified) in the controversy and contention of Easter-day, for the which he would have proceeded in excommunication against the churches of Asia, had not Irenæus, then bishop of Lyons, with the counsel of other his brethren there assembled, repressed his intended violence. As touching that controversy of Easter in those days of the primitive church, the original thereof was this, as Eusebius, Socrates, Platina, and others, record. First, certain it is that the apostles, being only intente and attendant to the doctrine of salvation, gave no heed nor regard to the observation of days and times, neither bound the church to any ceremonies and rites, except those things necessary mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as strangled and blood, which was ordained then of the Holy Ghost, not without a most urgent and necessary cause, touched partly in the history before. For when the murdering and blood of infants was commonly objected by the

heathen persecutors against the Christians, they had no other argument to help themselves, nor to refell the adversary, but only their own law, by the which they were commanded to abstain, not only from all men's blood, but also from the blood of all common beasts. And therefore that law seemeth by the Holy Ghost to be given, and also to the same end continued in the church, so long as the cause, that is, the persecutions of the heathen Gentiles, continued. Besides these, we read of no other ceremonies or rites which the apostles greatly regarded, but left such things free to the liberty of Christians, every man to use therein his own discretion, for the using or not using thereof. Whereupon, as concerning all the ceremonial observation of days, times, places, meats, drinks, vestures, and such others; of all these things neither was the diversity among men greatly noted, nor any uniformity greatly required. Insomuch that Irenæus, writing to Victor of the tradition of days, and of fastings, and of the diversity of these things then used among the primitive fathers, saith, Notwithstanding all this variety, all they kept peace among themselves, and yet we keep it still, and this difference of fasting among us commendeth more the concord of faith. And so long did the doctrine of Christian liberty remain whole and sound in the church till the time of Victor, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred; although the diversity of these usages began before also in the days of Pius and Anicetus, about the year of Christ one hundred sixty and three, to be misliked; yet restraint hereof was not so much urged before as in the time of Victor. And yet neither did the violence of Victor take such place, but that the doctrine of Christian liberty was defended and maintained by means of Irenæus and others, and so continued in the church till after the Council of Nice. And thus much concerning the doctrine of Christian liberty, and of the differences of rites and ceremonies.

Now to return to Victor again, to show what diversity there was in observing the day of Easter, and how it came, thus is the story. First, in the time of Pius and Anicetus, in the year of Christ one hundred sixty and three, the question of Easter-day began first to be moved; at what time Pius, by the revelation of Hermes, decreed the observation of that day to be changed from the wonted manner of the fourteenth day of the moon in the first month unto the next Sunday after. After him came Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, bishops of Rome, which also determined the same. Against these stood Melito, bishop of Sardis, Polycarp, and, as some think, Egesippus, with other learned men of Asia. Which Polycarp, being sent by the brethren of Asia, came to Rome, as is aforesaid, to confer with Anicetus in that matter; wherein, when they could not agree after long debating, yet, notwithstanding, they did both communicate together with reverence, and departed in peace. And so the celebration of Easter-day remained as a thing indifferent in the church, till the time of Victor; who, following after Anicetus and his fellows, and chiefly stirring in this matter, endeavoured by all means and might to draw, or rather subdue, the churches of Asia unto his opinion; thinking, moreover, to excommunicate all those bishops and churches of Asia as heretics and schismatics which disagreed from the Roman order; had not Irenæus otherwise restrained him from that doing, as is aforesaid, which was about the year of our Lord one hundred four score and eleven, in the reign of Commodus. Thus then began the uniformity of keeping that holy day to be first required as a thing necessary, and all they accounted as heretics and schismatics which dissented from the bishop and tradition of Rome.

With Victor stood Theophilus, bishop of Cesarea, Narcissus of Jerusalem, Irenæus of Lyons, Palmas of Pontus, Banchillus of Corinth, the bishop of Ostroena, and others more. All which condescended to have the celebration of Easter upon the

Sunday, because they would differ from the Jews in all things as near as they might; and partly, because the resurrection of the Lord fell on the same day.

On the contrary side, divers bishops were in Asia, of whom the principal was Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who being assembled with a great multitude of bishops and brethren of those parts, by the common assent of the rest, wrote again to Victor, and to the church of Rome, declaring that they had ever from the beginning observed that day according to the rule of Scripture unchanged, neither adding nor altering any thing from the same; alleging, moreover, for them the examples of the apostles and holy fathers, their predecessors, as Philip the apostle, with his three daughters, at Hieropolis; also John the apostle and evangelist at Ephesus, Polycarp at Smyrna, Thraseas at Eumenia, bishop and martyr; likewise of Sagaris at Laodicea, bishop and martyr, holy Papius, and Melito at Sardis. Besides these, bishops also of his own kindred, and his own ancestors, to the number of seven, which all were bishops before him, and he the eighth, now after them. All which observed (saith he) the solemnity of the same day, after the same wise and sort as we do now.

Victor, being not a little moved herewith, by letters again denounceth against them (more bold upon authority than wise in his commission) violent excommunication; albeit, by the wise handling of Irenæus and other learned men, that matter was stayed, and Victor otherwise persuaded. That the variance and difference of ceremonies is no strange matter in the church of Christ, whenas this variety is not only in the day of Easter, but also in the manner of fasting, and in divers other uses among the Christians. For some fast one day, some two days, some others fast more. Others there be, which, counting forty hours, both day and night, take that for a full day's fast. And this so divers fashion of fasting in the church of Christ began not only in this our time, but was before among our fore-elders. And yet notwithstanding they with all this diversity were in unity among themselves, and so be we; neither doth this difference of ceremonies any thing hinder, but rather commendeth the concord of faith. And he bringeth forth the examples of the fathers, of Telesphorus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, and such others, who neither observed the same usage themselves, nor prescribed it to others, and yet notwithstanding kept Christian charity with such as came to communicate with them, not observing the same form of things which they observed, as well appeared by Polycarp and Anicetus, which although they agreed not in one uniform custom of rites, yet refused not to communicate together, the one giving reverence unto the other. Thus the controversy, being taken up between Irenæus and Victor, remained free to the time of the Nicene Council. And thus much concerning the controversy of that matter, and concerning the doings of Victor.

After Victor succeeded in the see of Rome Zephirinus, in the days of the foresaid Severus, about the year of our Lord two hundred and three. To this Zephirinus be ascribed two epistles, in the first tome of the Councils. But as I have said before of the decretal epistles of other Roman bishops, so I say and verily suppose of this, that neither the countenance of the style, nor the matter therein contained, nor the condition of the time, doth otherwise give to think of these letters but that they be verily bastard letters, not written by these fathers, nor in these times, but craftily and wickedly packed in by some, which, to set up the primacy of Rome, have most pestilently abused the authority of these holy and ancient fathers, to deceive the simple church. For who is so rude but that in considering only the state of those terrible times he may easily understand, (except affection blind him,) beside a number of other probable conjectures to lead him, that the poor persecuted bishops in that time would have been glad to have any safe covert to put their heads in? so far was it off that they had any

lust or leisure then to seek for any primacy or patriarchship, or to drive all other churches to appeal to the see of Rome, or to exempt all priests from the accusation of any layman; as in the first epistle of Zephyrinus is to be seen, written to the bishops of Sicilia; and likewise the second epistle of his to the bishops of the province of Egypt, containing no manner of doctrine nor consolation necessary for that time, but only certain ritual decrees to no purpose, argueth no less but the said epistles neither to savour of that man, nor to taste of that time.

Of like credit also seemeth the constitution of the patins of glass, which Damasus saith that the same Zephyrinus ordained to be carried before the priest at the celebration of the mass. Again, Platina writeth that he ordained the administration of the sacrament to be no more used in vessels of wood, or of glass, or of any other metal, except only silver, gold, and tin, &c. But how these two testimonies of Damasus and Platina join together, let the reader judge; especially seeing the same decree is referred to Urbanus, that came after him. Again, what needed this decree of golden chalices to be established afterward in the Council of Tiber and Rhens, if it had been enacted before by Zephyrinus? How long this Zephyrinus sat our writers do vary. Eusebius saith he died in the reign of Caracalla, and sat seventeen years. Platina writeth that he died under Severus, and sat eight years, and so saith also Naucicrus. Damasus affirmeth that he sat sixteen years and two months.

Matheus, author of the story entitled Flores Historiarum, with other later chronicles, maketh mention of Perpetua, and Felicitas, and Revocatus her brother, also of Saturninus and Satyrus, brethren, and Secundulus, which in the persecution of this Severus gave over their lives to martyrdom for Christ, being thrown to wild beasts, and devoured of the same in Carthage and in Africa; save that Saturninus, brought again from the beasts, was beheaded, and Secundulus died in prison about the year of our Lord two hundred and two, as writeth Florilegus.

This Severus the persecutor reigned, as the most part of writers accord, the term of eighteen years, who about the later time of his reign came with his army hither into Britain, where after many conflicts had with the Britons, in the borders of the north, he cast up a ditch with a mighty wall, made of earth, and turfs, and strong stakes, to the length of one hundred thirty and two miles, from the one side of the sea to the other, beginning at Tine, and reaching to the Scottish sea; which done he removed to York, and there by the breaking in of the northern men and the Scots was besieged and slain, about the year of our Lord two hundred and eleven, leaving behind him two sons, Bassianus and Geta. Which Bassianus, surnamed Caracalla, after he had slain his brother Geta here in Britain, governed the empire alone, the space of six years. After whose death, he being slain also of his servants, (as he had slain his brother before,) succeeded Macrinus, with his son Diadumenus, to be emperor, who, after they had reigned one year, were both slain of their own people.

After them followed Varius Heliogabalus in the empire, rather to be called a monster than a man, so prodigious was his life in all gluttony, filthiness, and ribaldry. Such was his pomp, that in his lamps he used balm, and filled his fishponds with rose water. To let pass his sumptuous vestures, which he would not wear but only of gold, and most costly silks, his shoes glistening with precious stones finely engraved, he was never two days served with one kind of meat; he never wore one garment twice. And likewise for his fleshly wickedness, some days his company was served at meal with the brains of ostriches, and a strange fowl called phenocoptery; another day with the tongues of popinjays, and other sweet singing birds. Being nigh to the sea, he never

used fish; in places far distant from the sea, all his house was served with most delicate fishes: at one supper he was served with seven thousand fishes and five thousand fowls. At his removing in his progress, often there followed him six hundred chariots laden only with bawds, common harlots, and ribalds. He sacrificed young children, and preferred to the best advancements in the commonweal most light personages, as minstrels, carters, and such-like; in one word, he was an enemy to all honesty and good order. And when he was foretold by his sorcerers and astronomers that he should die a violent death, he provided ropes of silk to hang himself, swords of gold to kill himself, and strong poison in hyacinths and emeralds to poison himself, if needs he must thereto be forced; moreover, he made a high tower, having the floor of boards covered with gold plate, bordered with precious stones, from the which tower he would throw himself down, if he should be pursued of his enemies. But notwithstanding all his provision, he was slain of the soldiers, drawn through the city, and cast into Tiber, after he had reigned two years and eight months, as witnesseth Eutropius; others say four years.

This Heliogabalus, having no issue, adopted to his son and heir Aurelius Alexander Severus, the son of Mammea, who entering his reign the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and four, continued thirteen years, well commended for virtuous, wise, gentle, liberal, and to no man hurtful. And as he was not unlearned himself, through the diligent education of Mammea his mother; so he was a great favourer of men wise and learned. Neither did he any thing in the commonweal without the assistance of learned and sage counsellors. It is reported of him to bear such stomachs against corrupt judges, that when he chanced to meet with any of them, by the commotion of his mind he would cast up choler, being so moved with them that he could not speak, and was ready with his two fingers to put out their eyes. From his court he dismissed all superfluous and unnecessary servants, saying that he was no good pupil which fed idle servants with the bowels of his commonweal.

Among his other good virtues, it appeareth also that he was friendly and favourable unto the Christians, as by this act may be gathered; for when the Christians had occupied a certain public place in some good use, belike for the assembling and conventing together of the congregation, the company of the cooks or tipplers made challenge of that place to belong unto them. The matter being brought before the emperor, he judged it more honest the place to be continued to the worship of God, howsoever it were, than the dirty slubbering of cooks and scullions.

By this it may be understood that in Rome no Christian churches were erected unto this time, when as yet (notwithstanding this favour of the emperor) no public house could quietly be obtained for the Christians. So that by the reason hereof may appear the decretal epistle and ordinance of Pope Higinus. concerning the dedication of churches above mentioned, to be falsified. And likewise the ordinance of Pius his successor, concerning the altar, or high altar, to be also false. For what high altar was it like they had in the time of Higinus and Pius, whenas at this time, which was long after, no public place almost could be granted them for the Christians to assemble together?

Of this Alexander Platina writeth, that as he was a great hater of all boasters and flatterers, so he was of such prudence, that no deceit could escape him; and bringeth in a story of one Turinus, who had gotten craftily many great bribes and gifts, in making the people believe that he was of great authority with the emperor, and that he could help them to have whatsoever they sued for. Whereof the emperor being

certified, caused him in the open market to be fastened to a stake, and there killed with smoke, where the crier stood thus crying to the people: Smoke he sold, and with smoke he is punished.

Mammea, the mother of this Alexander above mentioned, (whom Hierom calleth a devout and religious woman,) hearing of the fame and the excellent learning of Origen, being then at Alexandria, sent for him to Antioch, desirous to hear and see him; unto whom the foresaid Origen according to her request resorted, and after that he had there remained a space with the emperor and his mother, returned again to Alexandria.

And thus continued this good emperor his reign the space of thirteen years; at length at a commotion in Germany, with his mother Mammea, he was slain. After whom succeeded Maximinus, contrary to the mind of the senate, only appointed by the soldiers to be emperor. During all this time, between Severus and this Maximinus, the church of Christ, although it had not perfect peace, yet it had some mean tranquillity from persecution. Albeit some martyrs there were at this time that suffered, whereof Nauclerus giveth this reason: For although (saith he) Alexander, being persuaded through the entreating of his mother Mammea, did favour the Christians; yet notwithstanding there was no public edict or proclamation provided for their safeguard. By reason whereof divers there were which suffered martyrdom under Almachius and other judges. In the number of whom, after some stories, was Calixtus, bishop of Rome, who succeeded next unto Zephirinus above mentioned; and after him Urbanus also; which both being bishops of Rome, did both suffer, by the opinion of some writers, under Alexander Severus.

This Calixtus in his two decretal epistles, written to Benedictus, and to the bishops of France, giveth these ordinances: that no actions or accusations against the prelates or teachers of the church should be received; that no secret conspiracies should be made against bishops; item, no man to communicate with persons excommunicate; also, no bishop to excommunicate or to deal in another's diocess. And here he expoundeth the diocess, or the parish, of any bishop or minister to be his wife. The wife (saith the apostle) is bound to the law as long as the husband liveth; when he is dead, she is free from the law: so (saith Calixtus) the wife of a bishop (which is his church) so long as he liveth is bound only to him, neither ought to be judged or disposed by any other man without his will and judgment; after his death she is free from the law to marry to whom she will, so it be in the Lord, that is, regularly. In the end of the said his epistle decretal, he confuteth the error of them which hold, that they which are fallen are not to be received again. Which heresy, after the time of Calixtus or Calistus, came in first by Novatus, in the days of Cornelius. Moreover, in his said first epistle decretal is contained the fast of the four times, commonly called the ember fast, whereof also Marianus Scotus maketh mention. But Damasus, speaking of the same fast, saith he ordained the fast but of three times, which was for the increase of corn, wine, and oil.

By these hitherto promised, it is not hard for a quick reader to smell out the crafty juggling of that person or persons, whosoever they were, that falsely have ascribed these decretal institutions to those holy fathers. For, first, what leisure had the Christians to lay in their accusations against their bishops, when we never read or find in any story any kind of variance in those days among them, but all love, mutual compassion, and hearty communion among the saints? And as we read of no variance among the people in those days, nor of any fault or back sliding among the bishops,

who for the most part then died all constant martyrs; so neither do we read of any tribunal seat or consistory used or frequented then about any such matters. Again, if a man examine well the dangers of those busy days, he shall see the poor flock of the Christians so occupied and piteously oppressed by the cruel accusations of the heathen infidels, that though the cause did, yet the time would not, serve them to commence any law against their bishops. Secondly, as touching their conspiracy against bishops, what conspiracy either would they then practise against them, which always gave their lives for their defence? Or how could they then conspire in any companies together, when never a true Christian man durst once put his head out of his doors? neither was there in the church any Christian man in those perilous days, except he were a true man indeed, such as was far from all false conspiracies. And when as all the world almost in all places conspired against them, what time, what cause, or what heart, trow ye, could they have to conspire against their instructors? Thirdly, concerning the confutation of that heresy, how standeth the confutation with the time of Calixtus, when Novatus, the author of that heresy, was after him in the time of Cornelius? Fourthly, if by the law of Calixtus every diocess be the proper wife of every bishop or minister, then how many bishops' wives, and parsons' wives, had the adulterous pope of Rome defloured in these later days of the church, which so proudly and impudently hath intermeddled and taken his pleasure and his own profit in every diocess and parish almost through all Christendom, without all leave and licence of the good man, who hath been in the mean time, and yet is compelled still, wheresoever the pope's holiness cometh, to give him leave unasked to do what he list! Wherefore, if this canon decretal be truly his, why is it not observed, so as it doth stand without exception? If it be not, why is it then falsely forged upon him, and the church of Christ deceived? and certes, lamentable it is, that this falsifying of such trifling traditions, under the false pretence of antiquity, either was begun in the church to deceive the people, or that it hath remained so long undetected. For, as I think, the church of Christ will never be perfectly reformed before these decretal constitutions and epistles, which have so long put on the visor of antiquity, shall be fully detected, and appear in their own colour, wherein they were first painted.

And yet neither do I say this, or think contrary, but that it may be that bishops of Rome and of the same name have been the true authors of these traditions. But here cometh in the error, (as I credibly suppose,) that when other later bishops of the like name have devised these ceremonial inventions, the vulgar opinion of men hath transferred them to the first primitive fathers, although being of another time, yet bearing the same name with the true inventors thereof.

After Calixtus followed Urbanus, about the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and seven, who in his epistle decretal, (coming out of the same forge,) which he wrote in common to all bishops, making no mention of the heavy persecutions of the church, nor ministering any exhortation of comfort or constancy to the brethen, only giveth many strict precepts for not transporting or alienating the goods of the church, and to pay truly their offerings which they vow; also to have all common among the clergy. Moreover, about the end of his epistle, he instituteth the confirmation of children after baptism (which the papists be wont to take into the number of their seven sacraments); affirming and denouncing more than Scripture will bear, that the imposition of the bishop's hand bringeth the Holy Ghost, and that thereby men be made full Christians, &c. But of these decretal epistles enough is said before, more may be considered of the discreet reader. Marianus Scotus, Sabellicus, Nauclerus, and other late story writers, do hold, as is aforesaid, that he died a martyr in

the days of Alexander Severus, after he had governed that seat four years, as Damasus and Platina do witness, as Marianus saith, eight years.

The same Damasus and Platina do testify of him, that he by his preaching and holiness of life converted divers Ethnics to the faith; among whom were Tiburtius, and Valerianus, the husband of Cecilia; which both, being noblemen of Rome, remained constant in the faith unto the end and martyrdom. Of this Cecilia thus it is written in the martyrology by Ado: that Cecilia the virgin, after she had brought Valerian, her husband espoused, and Tiburtius his brother, to the knowledge and faith of Christ, and with her exhortations had made them constant unto martyrdom, after the suffering of them, she was also apprehended by Almachius the ruler, and brought to the idols to do sacrifice; which thing when she abhorred to do, she should be presented before the judge to have the condemnation of death. In the mean time, the serjeants and officers which were about her, beholding her comely beauty, and the prudent behaviour in her conversation, began with many persuasions of words to solicit her mind to favour herself, and that so excellent beauty, and not to cast herself away, &c. But she again so replied to them with reasons and godly exhortations, that by the grace of Almighty God their hearts began to kindle, and at length to yield to that religion which before they did persecute. Which thing she perceiving, desired of the judge Almachius a little respite; which being granted, she sendeth for Urbanus the bishop home to her house, to establish and ground them in the faith of Christ: and so were they with divers others at the same time baptized, both men and women, to the number (as the story saith) of four hundred persons, among whom was one Gordianus, a nobleman. This done, this blessed martyr was brought before the judge, where she was condemned; then after was brought to the house of the judge, where she was enclosed in a hot bath; but she remaining there a whole day and night without any hurt, as in a cold place, was brought out again, and commaundment given, that in the bath she should be beheaded. The executioner is said to have dealt four strokes at her neck; and yet her head being cut off, she (as the story giveth) lived three days after; and so died this holy virgin martyr, whose body in the night season Urbanus the bishop took and buried among the other bishops. Ado, the compiler of this martyrology, addeth, that this was done in the time of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. But that cannot be, forsomuch as Urbanus by all histories was long after those emperors, and lived in the days of this Alexander, as is above declared. Antoninus, Bergomensis, Equilinus, with such other writers, set forth this history with many strange miracles wrought by the said Cecilia, in converting her husband Valerianus and his brother, in showing them the angel which was the keeper of her virginity, and of the angel putting on crowns upon their heads. But as touching these miracles, as I do not dispute whether they be true or fabulous; so because they have no ground upon any ancient or grave authors, but am taken out of certain new legends, I do therefore refer them thither from whence they came.

Under the same Alexander divers other there be whom Bergomensis mentioned to have suffered martyrdom, as one Agapetus, of the age of fifteen years, who, being apprehended and condemned at Preneste at Italy, because he would not sacrifice to idols, was assailed with sundry torments; first, with whips scourged; then hanged up by the feet; after having hot water poured upon him, at the last cast to the wild beasts; with all which torments, when he could not be hurt, finally, with sword was beheaded. The executioner of these punishments (as by Henricus Erford. may be gathered) was one Antiochus, who, in the executing of the foresaid torments, suddenly fell down from his judicial seat, crying out, that all his inward bowels burned with in him, and so gave up the breath.

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Also with the same Agapetus is numbered Calepodius, a minister of Rome, whose body first was drawn through the city of Rome, and after cast into Tiber.

Then followeth Pammachius, a senator of Rome, with his wife and children, and others, both men and women, to the number of forty and two.

Item, another noble senator of Rome, named Simplicius, all which together in one day had their heads smitten off, and their heads after hanged up in divers gates of the city, for a terror of others, that none should profess the name of Christ.

Besides these suffered also Quiritius, a nobleman of Rome, who, with his mother Julia, and a great number more, were put likewise to death.

Also Tiberius and Valerianus, citizens of Rome, and brethren, suffered (as Bergomensis saith) the same time, who, first being bruised and broken with bats, after were beheaded.

Also Vincentius, Bergomensis, and Erfordiensis make mention of Martina, a Christian virgin, which, after divers bitter punishments being constant in her faith, suffered in like manner by the sword.

Albeit as touching the time of these forenamed matters, as I find them not in older writers, so do I suppose them to suffer under Maximinus or Decius, rather than under Alexander.

8. The Sixth Persecution under Maximinus

After the death of Alexander the emperor, who, with his mother Mammea, (as is said,) was murdered in Germany, followed Maximinus, chosen by the will of the soldiers, rather than by the authority of the senate, about the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and seven; who, for the hatred he had to the house of Alexander, (as Eusebius recordeth,) raised up the sixth persecution against the Christians, especially against the teachers and leaders of the church, thinking thereby the sooner to vanquish the rest, if the captains of them were removed out of the way. Whereby I suppose the martyrdom of Urbanus the bishop, and of the rest above specified, to have happened rather under the tyranny of this Maximinus than under Alexander. In the time of this persecution Origen wrote his book on martyrdom; which book, if it were extant, would give us some knowledge, I doubt not, of such as in this persecution did suffer, which now lie in silence unknown; and no doubt but a great number they were, and more should have been, had not the provident mercy of God shortened his days and bridled his tyranny, for he reigned but three years. After whom succeeded Gordianus, in the year of our Lord two hundred and thirty-eight, a man no less studious for the utility of the commonwealth than mild and gentle to the Christians. This Gordianus, after he had governed with much peace and tranquillity the monarchy of Rome the space of six years, was slain of Philip, emperor after him.

In the days of these emperors above recited was Pontianus, bishop of Rome, who succeeded next after Urbanus above rehearsed, about the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and six, in the twelfth year of Alexander, declaring him to sit six years. Contrary. Damasus and Platina write, that he was bishop nine years and a half; and that in the time of Alexander, he, with Philippus his priest, was banished into Sardinia, and there died. But it seemeth more credible that he was banished rather under Maximinus, and died in the beginning of the reign of Gordianus. In his epistles deCretal (which seem likewise to be feigned) he appeareth very devout, after the common example of other bishops, to uphold the dignity of priests, and of clergymen; saying that God hath them so familiar with him, that by them he accepteth the offerings and oblations of others, and forgiveth their sins, and reconcileth them unto him; also, that they do make the body of the Lord with their own mouth, and give it to others, &c.; which doctrine, how it standeth with the testament of God and glory of Christ, let the reader use his own judgment.

Other notable fathers also in the same time were raised up in the church, as Philetus, bishop of Antioch, which succeeded after Asclepiades aforementioned, in the year of our Lord two hundred and twenty; and after him Zebennus, bishop of the same place, in the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and one.

To these also may be added Ammonius, the schoolmaster of Origen, as Suidas supposeth; also the kinsmen of Porphyry, the great enemy of Christ: notwithstanding, this Ammonius, endued with better grace, as he left divers books in defence of Christ's religion, so did he constantly persevere (as Eusebius reporteth) in the doctrine of Christ, which he had in the beginning received, who was about the days of Alexander.

Julius Africanus also, about the time of Gordianus aforesaid, is numbered among the old and ancient writers, of whom Nicephorus writeth that he was the scholar of Origen, and a great writer of histories of that time.

Unto these doctors and confessors may be adjoined the story of Natalius, mentioned in the first book of Eusebius. This Natalius had suffered persecution before like a constant confessor, and was seduced and persuaded by Asclepiodotus and Theodorus (which were the disciples of Theodocus) to take upon him to be bishop of their sect, promising to give him every month a hundred and fifty pieces of silver: and so he joining himself to them was admonished by vision and revelation from the Lord; for such was the great mercy of God, and of our Lord Christ Jesus, that he would not have his martyr, which had suffered so much for his name before, now to perish out of his church: for the which cause (saith Eusebius) God by certain visions did admonish him; but he not taking great heed thereunto, being blinded partly with lucre, partly with honour, was at length all the night long scourged of the angels, insomuch that he being made thereby very sore; and early on the morrow putting on sackcloth, with much weeping and lamentation went to Zephirinus, the bishop above mentioned, where he falling down before him and all the Christian congregation, showed them the stripes of his body, and prayed them for the mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again, from which he had sequestered himself before, and so was admitted according as he desired.

After the decease of Pontianus, bishop of Rome, aforementioned, succeeded next in that place Anterius, of whom Isuardus writeth, that Pontianus departing away did substitute him in his room; but Eusebius writeth that he succeeded immediately after him. Damasus saith, that because he caused the acts and deaths of the martyrs to be written, therefore he was put to martyrdom himself by Maximinus the judge. Concerning the time of this bishop our writers do greatly jar. Eusebius and Marianus Scotus affirm that he was bishop but one month; Sabellicus saith that not to be so. Damasus assigneth to him twelve years and one month. Volateranus, Bergomensis, and Henricus Erford give to him three years and one month. Naclerus writeth that he sat one year and one month. All which are so far discrepant one from another, that which of them most agreeth with truth it lieth in doubt. Next to this bishop was Fabianus, of whom more is to be said hereafter.

Of Hippolytus also both Eusebius and Hieronymus make mention that he was a bishop; but where they make no relation. And so likewise doth Theodoretus witness him to be a bishop, and also a martyr, but naming no place. Gelatius saith he died a martyr, and that he was bishop of a head city in Arabia. Nicephorus writeth that he was bishop of Ostia, a port town near to Rome. Certain it is he was a great writer, and left many works in the church, which Eusebius and Jerome do recite: by the calculation of Eusebius, he was about the year of our Lord two hundred and thirty.

Prudentius, making mention of great heaps of martyrs buried by threescore together, speaketh also of Hippolytus, and saith that he was drawn with wild horses through fields, dales, and bushes, and describeth thereof a pitiful story.

After the emperor Gordianus, the empire fell to Philippus, who with Philip his son governed the space of seven years, in the year of our Lord two hundred forty and four. This Philippus, with his son and all his family, was christened and converted by Fabianus and Origen, who by letters exhorted him and Severa his wife to be baptized, being the first of all the emperors that brought in Christianity into the imperial seat. Howsoever Pomponius Letus reporteth him to be a dissembling prince, this is certain, that for his Christianity he with his son was slain of Decius, one of his captains. Sabellicus showeth this hatred of Decius against Philippus to be conceived, for that the

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emperor Philip, both the father and the son, had committed their treasures unto Fabianus, then bishop of Rome.

9. The Seventh Persecution under Decius

Thus Philippus being slain, after him Decius invaded the crown about the year of our Lord two hundred and fifty; by whom was moved a terrible persecution against the Christians, which Orosius noteth to be the seventh persecution. The first occasion of this hatred and persecution of this tyrant, conceived against the Christians, was chiefly (as is before touched) because of the treasures of the emperor which were committed to Fabian the bishop.

This Fabian, first being a married man, (as Platin writeth,) was made bishop of Rome after Anterius above mentioned, by the miraculous appointment of God, which Eusebius doth thus describe in his sixth book. When the brethren (saith he) were together in the congregation about the election of their bishop, and had purposed among themselves upon the nomination of some noble and worthy personage of Rome, it chanced that Fabianus among others was there present, who of late before was newly come out of the country to inhabit in the city. This Fabian, (as is said,) thinking nothing less than of any such matter, there suddenly cometh a dove flying from above, and sitteth upon his head; where upon all the congregation being moved with one mind and one voice to choose him for their bishop, in the which function he remained the space of thirteen years, as Eusebius writeth; Damasus, Marianus, and Sabellicus say fourteen years, unto the time of Decius; who, whether for that Philippus had committed to him his treasures, or whether for the hatred he bare to Philippus, in the beginning of his reign, caused him to be put to death; sending out, moreover, his proclamation into all quarters, that all which professed the name of Christ should be slain.

To this Fabian be ascribed certain ordinances; as of consecrating new oil once every year, and burning the old; of accusations against bishops; of appealing to the see apostolic; of not marrying within the fifth degree; of communicating thrice a year; of offering every Sunday; with such other things more in his three epistles decretal: the which epistles, as by divers other evidences, may be supposed to be untruly named upon him, giving no signification of any matter agreeing to that time; so do I find the most part of the third epistle, word for word, standing in the epistle of Sixtus the Third, which followed almost two hundred years after him; beside the unseemly doctrine also in the end of the said epistles contained, where he, contrary to the tenor of the gospel, applieth remission of sins (only due to the blood of Christ) unto the offerings of bread and wine by men and women every Sunday in the church.

To this Fabian wrote Origen, Of the Righteousness of his Faith; whereby is to be understood that he continued to the time of Decius; some say also, to the time of Gallus. Of this Origen partly mention is touched before, declaring how bold and fervent he was in the days of Severus in assisting, comforting, exhorting, and kissing the martyrs that were imprisoned and suffered for the name of Christ, with such danger of his own life, that had it not been the singular protection of God, he had been stoned to death many times of the heathen multitude. Such great concourse of men and women was daily at his house to be catechised and instructed in the Christian faith by him, that soldiers were hired of purpose to defend the place where he taught them. Again, such search sometime was set for him, that scarce any shifting of place or country could cover him. In whose laborious travails and affairs of the church, in teaching, writing, confuting, exhorting, and expounding, he continued about the space of fifty-two years, unto the time of Decius and Gallus. Divers and great persecutions

he sustained, but especially under Decius, as testifieth Eusebius in his sixth book; declaring that for the doctrine of Christ he sustained bonds and torments in his body, rackings with bars of iron, dungeons, besides terrible threats of death and burning. All this he suffered in the persecution of Decius, as Eusebius recordeth of him, and maketh no relation of any further matter. But Suidas and Nicephorus following the same, saith further concerning him, that the said Origen, after divers and sundry other torments, which he manfully and constantly suffered for Christ, at length was brought to an altar, where a foul, filthy Ethiop was appointed to be, and there this option or choice was offered unto him, whether he would sacrifice to the idols, or have his body polluted with that foul and ugly Ethiop. Then Origen, (saith he,) who with a philosophical mind ever kept his chastity undefiled, much abhorring that filthy villany to be done to his body, condescended to their request: whereupon the judge, putting incense in his hand, caused him to set it to the fire upon the altar; for the which impiety he afterward was excommunicated of the church. Epiphanius writeth, that he being urged to sacrifice to idols, and taking the boughs in his hand, wherewith the heathen were wont to honour their gods, called upon the Christians to carry them in the honour of Christ. The which fact the church of Alexandria misliking removed him from their communion whereupon Origen, driven away with shame and sorrow out of Alexandria, went into Jewry, where being in Jerusalem among the congregation, and there requested of the priests and ministers (he being also a priest) to make some exhortation in the church, he refused a great while to do. At length, by importunate petition being constrained thereunto, he rose up, and turning the book, as though he would have expounded some place of the Scripture, he only read the verse of the forty-ninth Psalm, But God said to the sinner, Why dost thou preach my justifications, and why dost thou take my testament in thy mouth? &c. Which verse being read, he shut the book, and sat down weeping and wailing, the whole congregation also weeping and lamenting with him. More what became of Origen it is not found in history, but only that Suidas addeth, he died and was buried at Tyrus. Eusebius affirmeth, that he departed unto the emperor Gallus, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and five, and the seventieth year of his age, in great misery (as appeareth) and poverty.

In this Origen divers blemishes of doctrine be noted, whereupon Hierom sometimes doth inveigh against him; albeit in some places again he doth extol and commend him for his excellent learning, as in his Apology against Ruffinus, and in his Epistle to Pammachius and Ocean, where he praiseth Origen, although not for the perfection of his faith and doctrine, nor for an apostle, yet for an excellent interpreter, for his wit, and for a philosopher: and yet in his Prologue upon the Homilies of Origen on Ezekiel, he calleth him another master of the churches after the apostles. And in another preface upon his Questions upon Genesis, he wisheth to himself the knowledge of the Scriptures which Origen had, also with the envy of his name. Athanasius moreover calleth him singular and laborious, and useth also his Testimonies against the Arians.

After Origen, the due order of history requireth next to speak of Heraclas his usher; a man singularly commended for his knowledge, not only in philosophy, but also in such faculties as to a Christian divine do appertain. This great towardness of wit and learning when Origen perceived in him, he appointed him above all others to be his usher or under-teacher, to help in his school or university of Alexandria, in the reign of Antoninus Caracalla, son of Severus. And after, in the tenth year of Alexander, Origen departing unto Cesarea, he succeeded in his room to govern the school in Alexandria. Further also, in the time of Gordianus, after the decease of

Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, this Heraclas succeeded to be bishop of the said city; in the which function he ministered the term of sixteen years. Of this Hereclas writeth Origen himself, that he, although being priest, yet ceased not to read over and peruse the books of the Gentiles, to the intent he might the better out of their own books confute their error, &c.

After Heraclas succeeded Dionysius Alexandrinus in the bishopric of Alexandria, like as he succeeded him in the school before; which Dionysius also writeth of the same Heraclas unto Philemon, a priest of Rome, thus saying, This canon and type I received of blessed Heraclas, our pope, &c. This Heraclas was no martyr, which died three years before Decius, about the year of our Lord two hundred and fifty. After whom succeeded next in the same seat of Alexandria Dionysius Alexandrinus, who also suffered much under the tyranny of Decius, as hereafter shall be showed, (Christ willing,) when we come to the time of Valerian.

Nicephorus in his first book, and others which write of this persecution under Decius, declare the horribleness thereof to be so great, and so innumerable martyrs to suffer in the same, that he saith it is as easy to number the sands of the sea, as to recite the particular names of them whom this persecution did devour. In the which persecution the chiefest doers and tormentors under the emperor appear in the history of Vincentius to be these:

Optimus the under-consul, Secundianus, Verianus, and Marcellianus, &c. Although therefore it be hard here to infer all and singular persons in order that died in this persecution, yet such as remain most notable in stories I will briefly touch by the grace of Him for whose cause they suffered.

In the former tractation of the first persecution, mention was made before of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and of his troubles suffered under Severus, and how afterward by the miracle of God he was appointed bishop of Jerusalem, where he continued, a very aged man, above the term of forty years governor of that church, till the time of the first year of Decius, at what time he being brought from Jerusalem to Cesarea into the judgment place, after a constant and evident confession of his faith made before the judge, was committed unto prison, and there finished his life, as testifieth Dionysius Alexandrinus in the sixth book of Eusebius. After whom succeeded in that seat Mezabanes, the thirty and sixth bishop of that city after James the apostle.

Mention was made also before of Asclepiades, bishop of Antioch, who succeeded after Serapion, and in the persecution of Severus did likewise persevere a constant confessor, and, as Vincentius testifieth in his eleventh book, suffered martyrdom at last under this Decius. But this computation of Vincentius can in no wise agree with the truth of time: forsomuch as by probable writers, as Zonaras, Nicephorus, and others, the said Asclepiades after Serapion entered the bishop's seat of Antioch, in the year of our Lord two hundred and fourteen, and sat seven years before the time of Gordianus, after whom succeeded Philetus, in the year of our Lord two hundred twenty and one, governing the function twelve years. And after him Zebinus followed, in the year of our Lord two hundred thirty and two; and so after him Babyllas; which Babyllas, if he died in this persecution of Decius, then could not Asclepiades also suffer in the same time, who died so long before him, as is declared.

Of this Babyllas, bishop of Antioch, Eusebius and Zonaras record, that under Decius he died in prison, as did Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, above rehearsed.

We read in a certain treatise of Chrysostom, entitled *Contra Gentiles*, a notable and long history of one Babylas, a martyr, who about these times was put to death for resisting a certain emperor, not suffering him to enter into the temple of the Christians after a cruel murder committed, the story of which murder is this: There was a certain emperor, who, upon conclusion of peace made with a certain nation, had received for hostage or surety of peace the son of the king, being of young and tender age, with conditions upon the same, that neither he should be molested of them, nor that they should ever be vexed of him. Upon this, the king's son was delivered, not without great care and fear of the father, unto the emperor, whom the cruel emperor, contrary to promise, caused, in short time, without all just cause, to be slain. This fact so horrible being committed, the tyrant, with all haste, would enter into the temple of the Christians, where Babylas, being bishop or minister, withstood him that he should not approach into that place. The emperor, therewith not a little incensed, in great rage had him forthwith to be laid in prison with as many irons as he could bear, and from thence, shortly after, to be brought forth to death and execution. Babylas going constantly and boldly to his martyrdom, desired, after his death, to be buried with his irons and bands, and so he was. The story proceedeth, moreover, and saith, that in continuance of time, in the reign of Constantinus, Gallus, then made the overseer of the east parts, caused his body to be translated into the suburbs of Antioch, called Daphnes, where was a temple of Apollo, famous with devilish oracles and answers given by that idol, or by the devil rather, in that place. In the which temple, after the bringing of the body of Babylas, the idol ceased to give any more oracles, saying, that for the body of Babylas he could give no more answers, and complaining that that place was wont to be consecrated unto him, but now it was full of dead men's bodies. And thus the oracles there ceased for that time till the coming of Julianus, who, inquiring out the cause why the oracles ceased, caused the bones of the holy martyr to be removed again from thence by the Christians, whom he then called Galileans. They, coming in a great multitude, both men, maidens, and children. to the tomb of Babylas, transported his bones according to the commandment of the emperor, singing by the way as they went the seventh verse of the ninety-seventh Psalm in words as followeth: "Confounded be all they that serve graven images," &c. Which coming to the emperor's ear, set him in great rage against the Christians, stirring up persecution against them. Albeit Zonaras declareth the cause something otherwise. saying that so soon as the body of him and other martyrs were removed away, incontinent the temple of the idol with the image in the night was consumed with fire; for the which cause (saith Zonaras) Julian, stirred up with anger, persecuted the Christians, as shall be showed (Christ willing) in his order and place hereafter.

And thus much of Babylas, which whether it was the same Babylas, bishop then of Antioch, or an other of the same name, it appeareth not by Chrysostom, which neither maketh mention of the emperor's name, nor of the place where this Babylas was bishop. Again, the stopping of the emperor out of the church importeth as much as that emperor to have been a Christian; for otherwise, if he had come in as a heathen and as a persecutor, it was not then the manner of Christian bishops violently to withstand the emperors, or to stop them out. Over and beside the testimony of Eusebius, Zonaras doth witness contrary in his sixth book, that this Babylas, which was then bishop of Antioch after Zebinus, was not put to death by the tormentors, but died in prison; wherefore it is not impossible but this Babylas and this emperor which Chrysostom speaketh of may be another Bahylas than that which suffered under Decius. Nicephorus in his fifth book maketh mention of another Babylas beside this that suffered under Decius, which was bishop of Nicomedia.

In the forenamed city of Antioch. Vincentius speaketh of forty virgins martyrs which suffered in this persecution of Decius.

In the country of Phrygia, and in the town of Lampsar, the same Vincentius also speaketh of one Peter which there was apprehended, and suffered bitter torments for Christ's name, under Optimus the proconsul; and in Troada, likewise, of other martyrs that there suffered, whose names were Andrew, Paul, Nicomachus, and Dionysia, a virgin.

Also in Babylon (saith he) divers Christian confessors were found of Decius, which were led away into Spain, there to be executed.

In the country of Cappadocia, at the city of Cesarea, in like manner of the said author is testified, that Germanus, Theophilus, Cæsarius, and Vitalis suffered martyrdom for Christ; and in the same book mention is also made of Polychronius, bishop of Babylon; and in Pamphylia of Nestor, there bishop, that died martyr.

At Perside, in the town of Cardala, Olympiades and Maximus; in Tyrus also Anatolia, virgin, and Audax, gave their lives likewise to death for the testimony of Christ's name.

Eusebius, moreover, in his sixth book reciteth out of the Epistles of Dionysius Alexandrinus divers that suffered diversly at Alexandria; the which places of Dionysius, as they be cited in Eusebius, I thought here good, for the ancientness of the author, to insert and notify in his own words, and in our language, as he wrote them to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, as followeth.

This persecution (saith he) began not with the proclamation set forth by the emperor, but began a whole year before, by the occasion and means of a wicked person, a soothsayer, and a follower of wicked arts; who, coming to our city here, stirred up the multitude of the heathen against us, and incited them to maintain their own old superstition and gentility of their country; whereby they being set **agog**, and obtaining full power to prosecute their wicked purpose, so thought, and no less declared, all their piety and religion to consist only in the idolatrous worship of devils, and in our destruction. And first flying upon a certain priest of ours, named Metra, they apprehended him, and brought him forth to make him speak after their wicked blasphemy; which, when he would not do, they laid upon him with staves and clubs, and with sharp reeds pricked his face and eyes; and afterward bringing him out into the suburbs, there they stoned him to death. Then they took a faithful woman, called Quinta, and brought her to the temple of their idols, to compel her to worship with them; which when she refused to do, and abhorred their idols, they bound her feet, and drew her through the whole street of the city upon the hard stones; and so dashing her against millstones, and scourging her with whips, brought her to the same place of the suburbs as they did the other before, where she likewise ended her life. This done, in a great outrage, and with a multitude running together, they burst into houses of the religious and godly Christians, spoiling, sacking, and carrying away all that they could find of any price. The rest of things, such as were of less value and of wood, they brought into the open market and set them on fire. In the mean time, the brethren voided aside, and withdrew themselves, taking patiently and no less joyfully the spoiling of their goods, than did they of whom St. Paul doth testify; neither do I know any of them all (only excepted) apprehended of them which, revolting from his profession, denied the Lord yet to this present day.

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Amongst the rest that there were taken, there was a certain virgin well stricken in years, named Apollinia, whom they brought forth, and dashing all her teeth out of her jaws, made a great fire before the city, threatening to cast her into the same, unless she would blaspheme with them and deny Christ; whereat she staying a little with herself, as one that would take a pause, suddenly leaped into the midst of the fire, and there was burned.

There was also one Serapion, whom they took in his own house; and after they had assailed him with sundry kinds of torments, and had broken almost all the joints of his body, they cast him down from an upper loft, and so did he complete his martyrdom. Thus was there no way, neither privy nor public, nor corner, nor alley, left for us, neither by day nor by night, to escape; all the people making an outcry against us, that unless we uttered words of blasphemy, we should be drawn to the fire and burned. And this outrageous tumult endured a certain space; but at length, as the Lord would, the miserable wretches fell at dissension among themselves, which turned the cruelty they exercised against us upon their own heads. And so had we a little breathing time for a season, while the fury of the heathen people by this occasion assuaged.

Shortly then after this word was brought unto us that the state of the empire, which before was something favourable to us, was altered and changed against us, putting us in great fear. And consequently upon the same followed the edict of the emperor so terrible and cruel, that, according to the forewarning of the Lord, the elect (if it had been possible) might have been thereby subverted. Upon that edict such fear came over us all, that many there were, especially of the richer sort, of whom some for fear came running, some were led by the occasion of time, some were drawn by their neighbours being cited by name, to those impure and idolatrous sacrifices. Other some came trembling and shaking, as men not which should do sacrifice, but which should be sacrificed themselves, the multitude laughing them to scorn. Some again came boldly to the altars, declaring themselves never to have been of that profession, of whom it is said that hardly they shall be saved. Of the residue, some followed one part, some another; some ran away, some were taken; of whom certain continued to bands and torments constant; others again, after long imprisonment, before they should come before the judge, renounced their faith. Some also, after they suffered torments, yet after revolted. But others being as strong as blessed, and valiant pillars of the Lord's, fortified with constancy agreeing to their faith, were made faithful martyrs of the kingdom of God.

Of whom the first was Julianus, a man diseased with the gout, and not able to go, being carried of two men, of whom the one quickly denied; the other, Cronion, surnamed Eunus, with the foresaid Julianus the old man, confessing the Lord with a perfect faith, were laid upon camels, and there scourged, at length cast into the fire, and with great constancy were so consumed.

As these aforesaid were going to their martyrdom, there was a certain soldier, who in their defence took part against them that railed upon them. For the which cause the people crying out against him, he also was apprehended; and being constant in his profession, was forthwith beheaded.

Likewise one Macar, a man born in Libya, being admonished and exhorted of the judge to deny his faith, and not agreeing to his persuasions, was burned alive.

After these suffered Epimachus, and one Alexander, who being long detained in prison and in bands, after innumerable pains and torments with razors and scourges, were also cast into the burning fire, with four other women with them, which all there ended their martyrdom.

Also Ammonarion, a holy virgin, whom the cruel judge had long and bitterly tormented, for that she promising the judge before, that for no punishment she would yield to his request, and constantly performing the same, suffered likewise martyrdom with two other women, of whom there was an aged matron, named Mercuria; the other was called Dionysia, being a mother of many fair children, whom yet notwithstanding she loved not above the Lord. These, after they could not be overcome by any torments of the cruel judge, but he, rather ashamed and confounded to be overcome of silly women, at length being past feeling of all torments, were slain with the sword; first Ammonarion, like a valiant captain, suffering before them.

Heron, Ater, and Isidorus, Egyptians, and with them Dioscorus, also a child of fifteen years, were crowned with the same crown of martyrdom. And first the judge began with the child, thinking him more easy to be won with words to entice him, than with torments to constrain him; but he persisted immovable, giving neither place to persuasions nor punishments. The rest, after he had grievously tormented them, being constant in their profession, he committed to the fire. The judge greatly marvelling at Dioscorus, for his wise answers and grave constancy, dismissed him, sparing (as he said) his age to a longer respite; which Dioscorus is yet also with us at this present, waiting for a long trial.

Nemesion, being also an Egyptian, first was accused for a companion of thieves; but being purged thereof before the centurion, was then accused of Christianity, and for that cause being in bands, was brought to the president; who most unrighteously tormenting and scourging him double to all other thieves and felons, at length among the thieves burned him to death, making him a blessed martyr.

There were standing before the tribunal seat certain of the warriors or knights, whose names were Ammon, Zenon, Ptolomeus, Jngenuus, and with them a certain aged man, called Theophilus, who standing by at what time a certain Christian man was before the judge examined, and there seeing him for fear ready to decline and fall away, did burst almost for sorrow within themselves, making signs to him with their hands, and all gestures of their body, to be constant. This being noted of all the standers-by, they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they preventing the matter, pressed up of their own accord before to the bench of the judge, professing themselves to be Christians. Insomuch that both the president with the benchers were all astonished, the Christians which were judged more imboldened to suffer, and the judges thereby terrified. This done, they departed away from the place, glad and rejoicing for the testimony that they had given of their faith. Many other besides were in other cities and towns rent and torn asunder by the heathen, among whom one I will speak of, for cause worthy of memory.

Ischirion, one that was in service with a certain nobleman, was commanded of his master to make sacrifice, who for not obeying was therefore rebuked; after persisting in the same, was grievously threatened with sharp and menacing words. At last his master, when he could not prevail against him, taking a stake or pike in his hands, ran him through in the body and slew him.

What shall I speak of the multitude of them which, wandering in deserts and mountains, were consumed with hunger, thirst, cold, sickness, thieves, or wild beasts, of whose blessed victory they which be alive are yet witnesses; in the number of whom one I will speak of, among divers others, named Cheremon, bishop of the city called Nilus, an aged man: he with his wife, flying to the mountain of Arabia, never returned again, nor ever could be seen after; and though they were sought for diligently by their brethren, yet neither they nor their bodies were found. Many others there were which, flying to these mountains of Arabia, were taken of the barbarous Arabians; of whom some with much money could scarce be ransomed, some were never heard of yet to this present day. Thus much out of the Epistles of Dionysius in Eusebius.

Moreover, the foresaid Dionysius in another place writing to Germanus of his own dangers, and of others, sustained in this persecution, and before this persecution of Decius, thus inferreth as followeth: I, (saith he,) behold, before the sight of God, I lie not, and he knoweth I lie not, how that I having no regard of mine own life, and not without the motion of God, did fly and avoid the danger of this persecution. Yea, and also before that this persecution of Decius did rage against us, Sabinus the same hour sent a farmer to seek me, at what time I remaining at home waited three days for his coming. But he searching narrowly for me by all ways, fields, floods, and corners, where he thought I might best have hid myself or have passed by, was stricken with such blindness, that he could not find my house, thinking with himself nothing less than that I would abide at home in such and so dangerous persecution. Thus these three days being past, upon the fourth day, the Lord God so willing and commanding me to fly, and also marvellously opening to me the way, I, with my children, and many other brethren, went out together. And this not to come of myself, but to be the work of God's providence, the sequel of those things declared, wherein afterward I was not unprofitable peradventure to some, &c.

Again, in another place, shortly after, the aforesaid Dionysius, proceeding in the narration of himself, thus inferreth: Then I coming to Jerusalem with them which were with me, was brought by soldiers unto Taposixis, whereas Timotheus (by the providence of God) neither was present, nor yet taken; who then returning home, found his house desert, and officers watching about the same, and us within taken, &c. And again, shortly after, it followeth: And to see (saith he) the admirable disposing of God's works, as Timotheus was thus flying with much haste and great fear, a certain man, as happened, a dweller near by, met him by the way, and asked whither he went so hastily; to whom Timotheus answering, declared all the matter simply as it was. Which done, the man proceedeth on his journey, whither he was purposed to go, which was to a marriage; the manner of which marriages then was to sit up all the night long feasting and drinking. Thus, as he was come, sitting with them at the feast, he telleth his companions what was done, and what he heard by the way. This was no sooner told, but all they forth with upon a head, as stricken with a sudden fury, rushing out together, made toward us as fast as they could, with such crying and noise as might seem very terrible. At the first hearing whereof, the soldiers that had us in keeping being afraid, ran away, by reason whereof we were left alone, and found as we were lying upon forms and benches, I then (the Lord knoweth) thinking with myself that they had been thieves, which came to spoil and rob, being in my couch, lay still in my shirt only as I was, the rest of my garments lying by me I offered to them: they then willed me in all haste to rise and get away, whereby I then, perceiving the cause of their coming, cried unto them, desiring that they would suffer us so to do; and if they

would do any benefit for me, forso much as I could not escape the hands of them which would pursue me and carry me away, I prayed them that they would prevent them, and cut off my head before. And as I was crying thus unto them, casting myself grovelling upon the pavement, as my companions can testify, who were partakers of all these things, they burst forth violently, taking me by the hands and feet, and carried me out of the doors, and led me away. There followed me Gaius, Faustus, Petrus, Paulus, (who were witnesses of all the same,) which brought me also out of the city, and so setting me upon a bare ass, conveyed me away. Thus much writeth Dionysius of himself, the example of whose epistle is cited in the ecclesiastical story of Eusebius.

Nicephorus, in his first book, cap. 27, maketh mention of one named Christophorus, which also suffered in this persecution of Decius. Of which Christophorus, whether the fable riseth of that mighty giant set up in churches, wading through the seas with Christ on his shoulder, and a tree in his hand for a walking staff, &c., it is uncertain. Georgius Wicelius allegeth out of Ruggerus Fuldens., and mentioneth of one Christophorus, born of the nation of Canaanites, which suffered under Decius, being, as he saith, of twelve cubits high. But the rest of the history painted in churches the said Wicelius derideth as fables of Centaurus, or other poetical fictions.

Bergomensis, in his eighth book, maketh relation of divers martyred under Decius; as Meniatus, which suffered at Florence; of Agatha, a holy virgin of Sicily, who is said to suffer divers and bitter torments under Quintilianus, the proconsul, with prisonment, with beatings, with famine, with racking, rolled also upon sharp shells and hot coals, having, moreover, her breasts cut from her body, as Bergomensis and the martyrology of Ado record. In the which authors, as I deny not but that the rest of the story may be true, so again, concerning the miracles of the aged man appearing to her, and of the young man clothed in a silken vesture, with a hundred young men after him, and of the marble table with the inscription, I doubt.

Hard it is to recite all that suffered in this persecution, whenas whole multitudes went in to wildernesses and mountains, wandering without succour or comfort; some starved with hunger and cold, some with sickness consumed, some devoured of beasts, some with barbarous thieves taken and carried away. Vincentius, in his eleventh book, speaking of Asclepiades, writeth also of forty virgins and martyrs which, by sundry kinds of torments, were put to death about the same time, in the persecution of this tyrant.

Likewise in the said Vincentius mention is made of Triphon, a man of great holiness, and constant in his suffering, who, being brought to the city of Nice, before the president Aquilus, for his constant confession of Christ's name, was afflicted with divers and grievous torments, and at length with the sword put to death.

At what time Decius had erected a temple in the midst of the city of Ephesus, compelling all that were in the city there to sacrifice to the idols, seven Christians were found, whose names were Maximianus, Malchus, Martianus, Dionysius, Joannes, Serapion, and Constantinus, who, refusing the idolatrous worship, were accused for the same unto the emperor to be Christians. Which, when they constantly professed and did not deny, notwithstanding, because they were soldiers, retaining to the emperor's service, respite was given them for a certain space to deliberate with themselves, till the return again of the emperor, which then was going to war. In the mean space, the emperor being departed, they taking counsel together, went and hid themselves in secret caves of the Mount Celius. The emperor returning again, after



Christians Wandering in the Wilderness

great inquisition made for them, hearing where they were, caused the mouth of the place where they were to be closed up with heaps of stones, that they, not able to get out, should be famished within. And thus were those good men martyred. The story (if it be true) goeth further, that they, between fear and sorrow, fell asleep, in which sleep they continued the space of certain ages after, till the time of Theodosius the emperor, before they did awake, as reporteth Vincentius, Nicephorus, and partly also Henricus Erfordiens. But of their awaking, that I refer to them that list to believe it. Certain it is that at the last day they shall awake indeed without any fable.

Hieronimus, in the Life of Paulus the hermit, reciteth a story of a certain soldier, whom when the prætor could not otherwise with torments remove from his Christianity, he devised another way, which was this: he commanded the soldier to be laid upon a soft bed in a pleasant garden among the flourishing lilies and red roses; which done, all others being removed away, and himself there left alone, a beautiful harlot came to him, who embraced him, and with all other incitements of a harlot laboured to provoke him to her naughtiness. But the godly soldier fearing God more than obeying flesh, bit off his own tongue with his teeth, and spit it in the face of the

harlot, as she was kissing him; and so got he the victory, by the constant grace of the Lord assisting him.

Another like example of singular chastity is written of the virgin Theodora, and another soldier. At Antioch, this Theodora refusing to do sacrifice to the idols, was condemned by the judge to the stews, and notwithstanding, by the singular providence of God, was well delivered. For as there was a great company of wanton young men ready at the door to press into the house where she was, one of the brethren named Didymus, (as Ado saith,) moved with faith and motion of God, putting on a soldier's habit, made himself one of the first that came in, who rounding her in the ear told her the cause and purpose of his coming, being a Christian as she was: his counsel was, that she should put on the soldier's habit, and so slip away; and he putting on her garments would there remain to abide their force, and so did, whereby the virgin escaped unknown. Didymus, left unto the rage and wondering of the people, being a man instead of a woman, was presented unto the president, unto whom without delay he uttered all the whole matter as it was done, professing him, so as he was, to be a Christian, and thereupon was condemned to suffer. Theodora, understanding thereof, and thinking to excuse him by accusing herself, offered herself as the party guilty unto the judge, claiming and requiring the condemnation to light upon her, the other, as innocent, to be discharged. But the cruel judge, (crueller than Dionysius, which spared Damon and Pithias,) neither considering the virtue of the persons, nor the innocency of the cause, unjustly and inhumanly proceeded in execution against them both, who, first having their heads cut off, after were cast into the fire. Although what time or in what persecution these did suffer, in the authors of this narration it doth not appear.

Agathon, a man of arms in the city of Alexandria, for rebuking certain lewd persons scornfully deriding the dead bodies of the Christians, was cried out of and railed on of the people, and afterward, accused to the judge, was condemned to lose his head.

The said Erfordiensis also maketh mention of Paulus, Andreas, whom the proconsul of Troada gave to the people; who being scourged, and after drawn out of the city, were trodden to death with the feet of the people.

Among others that suffered under this wicked Decius, Bergomensis also maketh mention of one Justinus, a priest of Rome, and of another Nicostratus, a deacon. To these Vincentius also addeth Portius, a priest of Rome, whom he reporteth to be the converter of Philip the emperor afore mentioned.

Of Abdon and Sennas we read also in the foresaid Bergomensis and Vincentius, two noble men, who, because they had buried the Christians, whom Decius had brought from Babylon to Corduba, and there put them to death, were therefore accused to Decius, and brought to Rome; where they, being commanded to sacrifice to dead idols, would not obey, and for the same were given to the wild beasts to be devoured; but when the wild beasts, more gentle than the men, would not touch them, they were at length with the sword beheaded. Albeit to me it seemeth not impossible nor unlike this Abdon and Sennas to be the same whom in other stories we find, and before have mentioned, to be Ammon and Zenon.

One Secundianus was accused to Valerian, a captain of Decius, to be a Christian, which profession, when he stoutly did maintain, he was commanded to prison. By the way, as the soldiers were leading him to the gaol, Verianus and Marcellianus seeing the matter cried to the soldiers, asking them whither they drew the

innocent. At the which word, when they also confessed themselves to be Christians, they were likewise apprehended, and brought to a city named Centumcellas; where being willed to sacrifice, they did spit upon the idols, and so after sentence and judgment given, first they were beaten with wasters or truncheons, after that hanged and tormented upon the gibbet, having fire set to their sides. Vincentius addeth, moreover, that some of the tormentors falling suddenly dead, other some being taken with wicked spirits, the martyrs with the sword at length were beheaded.

To prosecute in length of history the lives and sufferings of all them which in this terrible persecution were martyred, it were too long, and almost infinite; briefly therefore to rehearse the names of such as we find alleged out of a certain brief treatise of Bede, entitled *De Temporibus*, cited by Henricus de Erford., it shall be at this time sufficient. Under Decius suffered Hippolitus and Concordia, Hiereneus and Abundus, Victoria, a virgin, being noble personages of Antioch; Bellias, bishop of the city of Apollonia; Leacus, Tirsus, and Gallinetus, Nazanzo, Triphon, in the city of Egypt called Tamas; Phileas, bishop, Philocornus, with many other in Perside; Philcronius, bishop of Babylon, Thesiphon, bishop of Parnphylia, Nestor, bishop in Corduba, Parmenius, priest, with divers more. In the province called Colonia, Circensis, Marianus, and Jacobus. In Africa, Nemesianus, Felix, Rogatianus, priest, Felicissitnus. At Rome, Jovinus, Basileus, also Ruffina and Secunda, vir gins, Tertullianus, Valerianus, Nemesius, Sem pronianus, and Olympius. In Spain, Teragon. At Verona, Zeno, bishop at Cesarea, Marinus and Archemius. In the town of Milan, Privatus, bishop, Theodorus, surnamed Gregorius, bishop of Pontus.

Vincentius, in his eleventh book, maketh mention, citing of certain children suffering martyrdom under the same persecution, in a city of Tuscia, called Aretium, whose names I find not, except they be Pergentius and Laurentius, mentioned in Equilius.

Now that I have recorded sufficiently of them who under this tempest of Decius constantly gave their lives to martyrdom for the testimony of Christ, it remaineth that a few words also be spoken of such as for fear or frailty in this persecution did shrink and slide from the truth of their confession. In the number of whom first cometh in the remembrance of Serapion an aged old man. Of whom writeth Dionysius Alexandrinus unto Fabius, declaring that this Serapion was an old man, which lived amongst them a sincere and upright life of long time, but at length fell. This Serapion oft and many times desired to be received again; but no man listened to him, for he had sacrificed before. After this, not long after, he fell into sickness, where he remained three days dumb and benumbed of all senses. The fourth day following, beginning a little to recover, he called to him his sister's son, and said, How long, how long (my son) do ye hold me here? make haste, I pray you, that I were absolved. Call hither some of the ministers to me; and so, saying no more, held his peace, as dumb and speechless. The boy ran (it was then night) unto the minister, who, at the same time being sick, could not come with the messenger; but said, for so much as he willed heretofore, (as he said,) that such as lay a dying, if they covet to be received and reconciled, and especially if they required it earnestly, should be admitted, whereby with the better hope and confidence they may depart hence; therefore he gave to the boy a little of the eucharist, willing him to crumble it into the cup, and so to drop it into the mouth of the old man. With this the boy returned, bringing with him the holy eucharist. As he was now near at hand, before he had entered in, Serapion, the old man, speaking again, Comest thou, (said he,) my son? The priest, quoth the messenger, is sick and cannot come; but do as he willeth you, and let me go. And the boy immixed

the eucharist, and dropped it in softly into the mouth of the old man, who after he had tasted a little immediately gave up the ghost, &c.

In the city of Troad, as the proconsul was grievously tormenting one Nicomachus, he cried out that he was no Christian, and so was let down again. And after, when he had sacrificed, he was taken speedily with a wicked spirit, and so thrown down upon the ground, where he, biting off his tongue with his teeth, so departed.

Dionysius in his epistles also writing to Fabius, and lamenting the great terror of this persecution, declareth how that many worthy and notable Christians, for fear and horror of the great tyranny thereof, did show themselves feeble and weak men. Of whom some for dread, some of their own accord, others after great torments suffered, yet after revolted from the constancy of their profession. Also St. Cyprian, in his treatise *De Lapsis*, reciteth with great sorrow, and testifieth how that a great number at the first threatening of the adversary, neither being compelled nor thrown down with any violence of the enemy, but of their voluntary weakness fell down themselves. Neither (saith he) tarrying while the judge should put incense in their hands, but before any stroke stricken in the field, turned their backs and played the cowards; not only coming to their sacrifices, but preventing the same, and pretending to come without compulsion, bringing moreover their infants and children either put into their hands, or taking them with them of their own accord, and exhorting moreover others to do the like after their example.

Of this weakness and falling the said author showeth two causes; either love of their goods and patrimony, or fear of torments; and addeth, moreover, examples of the punishments of them which revolted, affirming that many of them were taken and vexed with wicked spirits; and that one man among other, after his voluntary denial, was suddenly struck dumb. Again, another, after his abjuration, as he should communicate with others, instead of bread received ashes in his hand. Item, a certain maiden being taken and vexed with a spirit, did tear her own tongue with her teeth, and, tormented with pain in her belly and inward parts, so deceased.

Amongst others of this sort St. Cyprian maketh also mention of one Guaristus, a bishop in Africa, who leaving his charge, and making shipwreck of his faith, went wandering about in other countries, forsaking his own flock. In like manner, he maketh also mention of Nicostratus, a deacon, who forsaking his deaconship, and taking the goods of the church with him, fled away into other countries, &c, Albeit Bergomensis affirmeth that this Nicostratus the deacon afterward died a martyr. Thus then, although some did relent, yet a very great number (saith he) there was whom neither fear could remove, nor pain could overthrow, to cause them to betray their confession; but they stood like glorious martyrs unto the end.

The same Cyprian also, in another book, *On Mortality*, reciteth a notable story of one of his own colleagues and fellow priests, who being oppressed with weakness, and greatly afraid with death drawing at hand, desired leave to depart, and to be discharged. As he was thus entreating, and almost now dying, there appeared by him a young man, of an honourable and reverend majesty, of a tall stature, and comely behaviour, so bright and clear to behold, that scarce man's carnal eyes were able so to do, which was now ready to depart this world. To whom this young man, speaking with a certain indignation of mind and voice, thus said, To suffer ye dare not, to go out ye will not; what would ye have me to do unto you?

Upon the occasion of these and such others, which were a great number, that fell and did renounce, as is aforesaid, in this persecution of Decius, rose up first the quarrel and heresy of Novatus, who in these days made a great disturbance in the church, holding this opinion, that they which once renounced the faith, and, for fear of torments, had offered incense to the idols, although they repented therefore, yet could not afterward be reconciled, nor admitted to the church of Christ. This Novatus being first priest under Cyprian, at Carthage, afterward, by stirring up discord and factions, began to disturb the bishopric of Cyprian, to appoint there a deacon called Felicissimus, against the bishop's mind or knowledge; also to allure and separate certain of the brethren from the bishop. After this, the said Novatus going to Rome, kept there the like stir with Cornelius; setting himself up as bishop of Rome against Cornelius, which was the lawful bishop of Rome before. The which to bring to pass he used this practice. First he had allured to him, to be his adherents, three or four good men and holy confessors, which had suffered before great torments for their confession, whose names, were Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Celerinus. After this he enticed three simple bishops about the coasts of Italy to repair to Rome, under pretence to make an end of certain controversies then in hand. This done, he caused the same, whether by making them drunk, or by other crafty counsel, to lay their hands upon him, and to make him bishop; and so they did. Wherefore the one of those three bishops hardly was received to the communion, by the great intercession of his people; the other two by discipline of the church were displaced from their bishoprics, and others possessed with their rooms. Thus then were there two bishops together in one church of Rome, Novatus and Cornelius, which was unseemly, and contrary to the discipline of the church. And hereupon riseth the true cause and meaning of St. Cyprian writing in his Epistles so much of one bishop, and of the unity to be kept in ecclesiastical regiment. And in like sort writeth also Cornelius himself of one bishop, saying he knew not that there ought to be one bishop in a catholic church, &c. This by the way, not out of the way, I trust, I have touched briefly, to detect or refute the cavilling wresting of the papists, which falsely apply these places of Cyprian and Cornelius to maintain the pope's supreme mastership alone, over the whole universal church of Christ in all places, when their meaning is otherwise, how that every one catholic church or diocess ought to have one bishop over it, not that the whole world ought to be subject to the dominion of him only that is bishop of Rome. Now to the story again. Novatus being thus bishop, took not a little upon him; going about by all means to defeat Cornelius, and to allure the people from him. Insomuch that (as in the foresaid book of Eusebius appeareth) when Novatus came to the distributing of the offerings, and should give every man his part, he compelled the simple persons every man to swear, before they should receive of the benediction, and of the collects or oblations, holding both their hands in his, and holding them so long, speaking these words unto them, "Swear to me, by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou wilt not leave me and go to Cornelius," till that they, swearing unto him, instead of Amen, (to be said at the receiving of the bread,) should answer, I will not return to Cornelius, &c. Where note by the way, that the Latin book of Christoferson's translation, in this place, craftily leaveth out the name of bread. This story being written in Eusebius, also contained in Nicephorus, although not in the same order of words, yet in effect drawn out of him, doth declare, in plain words, in both the authors, (whoso will mark the same,) that the sacrament of the body of Christ is termed with the plain name of bread, after the consecration.

It followeth more in the story, that Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Celerinus, before mentioned, perceiving at length the crafty dissimulation and arrogancy of Novatus, left him, and with great repentance returned again to the church, and were reconciled to Cornelius, as they themselves, writing to Cyprian, and Cyprian likewise writing to them an epistle gratulatory, doth declare; and Cornelius also in his epistle to Fabius witnesseth the same. In this epistle the said Cornelius, moreover, writeth of one Moses, a worthy martyr, which once being also a follower of Novatus, after perceiving his wickedness, forsook him, and did excommunicate him. Of him Cyprian also maketh mention, and calleth him a blessed confessor. Damasus in his pontifical saith that he was apprehended with Maximus and Nicostratus above mentioned, and was put with them in prison, where he ended his life. And thus much of Novatus, against whom (as Eusebius testifieth) a synod was holden at Rome of threescore sundry bishops in the time of Cornelius, and under the reign of Decius; whereby it may be supposed that the heat of the persecution at that time was somewhat calmed.

After Fabianus (or, as Zonaras calleth him, Flavianus) next succeeded into the bishopric of Rome, Cornelius, whom Cyprian noteth to be a worthy bishop, and for his great virtue and maidenly continency much commendable; chosen to that room not so much by his own consent, as by the full agreement, both of the clergymen, and also of the people. Hierom addeth also that he was a man of great eloquence; whereby it may appear those two epistles decretal, which go in his name, not to be his, both for the rudeness of the barbarous and gross style, and also for the matter therein contained, nothing tasting of that time, nor of that age, nor doings then of the church. Whereof in the first he writeth to all ministers and brethren of the church, concerning the lifting up of the bodies and bones of Peter and Paul, and transposed to Vaticanum, at the instance of a certain devout woman named Lucina; having no great argument or cause to write thereof unto the churches, but only that he in that letter doth desire them to pray unto the Lord, that through the intercession of those apostolical saints their sins might be forgiven them, &c. In the second epistle written to Ruffus, a bishop of the east church, he decreeth and ordaineth that no oath ought to be required or exacted of any head or chief bishop, for any cause, or by any power. Also that no cause of priests or ministers ought to be handled in any strange or foreign court without his precinct, except only in the court of Rome by appellation; whereby who seeth not the train of our later bishops, going about craftily to advance the dignity of the court of Rome, under and by the pretended title of Cornelius, and of ancient bishops? If Cornelius did write any epistles to any indeed in those turbulent times of persecution, no doubt but some signification thereof he would have touched in the said his letters, either in ministering consolation to his brethren, or in requiring consolation and prayers of others. Neither is there any doubt but he would have given some touch also of the matter of Novatus, with whom he had so much to do, as indeed he did; for so we find it recorded both in Eusebius and in Hierom, that he wrote unto Fabius, bishop of Antioch, of the decrements of the Council of Rome, and another letter of the manner of the Council, the third also of the cause of Novatus, and again of the repentance of such as fell, whereof there is no word touched at all in these foresaid epistles decretal.

What trouble this Cornelius had with Novatus sufficiently is before signified. In this persecution of Decius, he demeaned himself very constantly and faithfully, which sustained great conflicts with the adversaries, as St. Cyprian giveth witness. Hierom testifieth that he remained bishop after the death of Decius to the time of Gallus. But Damasus and Sabellicus, his followers, affirm that he was both exiled and

also martyred under the tyrannous reign of Decius. Of whom Sabellicus writeth this story, taken out (as it seemeth) of Damasus, and saith, That Cornelius, by the commandment of Decius, was banished to a town called Centumeellas, bordering on Hetruria, from whence he sent his letters to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and Cyprian again to him. This coming to the ears of Decius the emperor, he sendeth for Cornelius, asking him how he durst be so bold to show such stubbornness, that he, neither caring for the gods, nor fearing the displeasure of his prince, durst against the commonwealth give and receive letters from others? To whom Cornelius answering again, thus purged himself, declaring to the emperor that letters indeed he had written, and received again, concerning the praises and honouring of Christ, and the salvation of souls, but nothing as touching any matter of the commonwealth. And it followeth in the story, Then Decius, moved with anger, commanded him to be beaten with plumbats, (which, as saith Sabellicus, is a kind of scourging,) and so to be brought to the temple of Mars, either there to do sacrifice, or to suffer the extremity. But he, rather willing to die than to commit such iniquity, prepared himself to martyrdom, being sure that he should die. And so commending the charge of the church unto Stephanus his archdeacon, was brought to the way of Appius, where he ended his life in faithful martyrdom. Eusebius in one place saith that he sat two years, in another place he saith that he sat three years, and so doth Marianus Scotus, following also the diversity of the said Eusebius. Damasus giveth him only two years.

In this foresaid persecution of Decius, it seemeth by some writers also that Cyprian was banished; but I suppose rather his banishment to be referred to the reign of Gallus, next emperor after Decius, whereof more shall be said (Christ willing) in his place hereafter. In the mean time, the said Cyprian in his second book maketh mention of two that suffered, either in the time of this Decius, or much about the same time. Of whom one was Aurelius, a worthy and valiant young man, who was twice in torments for his confession, which he never denied, but manfully and boldly withstood the adversary till he was banished, and also after; and therefore was commended of Cyprian to certain brethren to have him for their lecturer, as in the forenamed epistle of Cyprian appeareth. The other was named Mappalicus, who in the day before he suffered, declaring to the proconsul in the midst of his torments, and saying, Tomorrow you shall see the running for a wager, &c., was brought forth, according as he forespoke, to martyrdom, and there with no less constancy than patience did suffer.

And thus much of the tyranny of this wicked Decius against God's saints. Now to touch also the power of God's vengeance and punishment against him. Like as we see commonly a tempest that is vehement not long to continue; so it happened with this tyrannical tormentor, who reigning but two years, as saith Eusebius, or three at most, as writeth Orosius, among the middle of the barbarians, with whom he did war, was there slain with his son. Like as he had slain Philippus and his son, his predecessors, before, so was he with his son slain by the righteous judgment of God himself. Eusebius affirmeth that he, warring against the Gotthians, and being by them overcome, lest he should fall into their hands, ran into a whirlpit, where he was drowned, and his body never found after.

Neither did the just hand of God plague the emperor only, but also revenged as well the heathen Gentiles and persecutors of his word throughout all provinces and dominions of the Roman monarchy; amongst whom the Lord immediately after the death of Decius, sent such a plague and pestilence, lasting for the space of ten years together, that horrible it is to hear, and almost incredible to believe. Of this plague or pestilence testifieth Dionysius to Hierax, a bishop in Egypt, where he declareth the

mortality of this plague to be so great in Alexandria, where he was bishop, that there was no house in the whole city free. And although the greatness of the plague touched also the Christians somewhat, yet it scourged the heathen idolaters much more; beside that the order of their behaviour in the one and in the other was much diverse. For, as the foresaid Dionysius doth record, the Christians, through brotherly love and piety, did not refuse one to visit and comfort another, and to minister to him what need required, notwithstanding it was to them great danger; for divers there were who, in closing up their eyes, in washing their bodies, and interring them in the ground, were next themselves which followed them to their graves. Yet all this stayed not them from doing their duty, and showing mercy one to another; whereas the Gentiles, contrarily, being extremely visited by the hand of God, felt the plague, but considered not the striker, neither yet considered they their neighbour; but every man shifting for himself neither cared one for another; but such as were infected, some they would cast out of the doors half dead to be devoured of dogs and wild beasts, some they let die within their houses without all succour, some they suffered to lie unburied, for that no man durst come near them: and yet notwithstanding, for all their voiding and shifting, the pestilence followed them whithersoever they went, and miserably consumed them. Insomuch that Dionysius, bishop the same time of Alexandria, thus reporteth of his own city: that such a mortality was then among them, that the said city of Alexandria had not in number so many of all together, both old and young, as it was wont to contain before of the old men only from the age of threescore to seventy, and as were found in time past commonly almost in that city. Pomponius Letus and other Latin writers also making mention of the said pestilence, declare how the beginning thereof first came (as they think) out of ethiope, and from the hot countries, and so invading and wasting first the south parts, from thence spread into the east; and so further running and increasing into all other quarters of the world, especially wheresoever the edicts of the emperor went against the Christians, it followed after and consumed the most part of the inhabitants, whereby many places became desolate and void of all concourse, and so continued the term of ten years together.

This pestiferous mortality (by the occasion whereof Cyprian took the ground to write his book *On Mortality*) began, as is said, immediately after the death of Decius the persecutor, in the beginning of the reign of Vibius Gallus, and Volusianus his son, who succeeded through treason next unto Decius, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and one, and continued their reign but two years.

This Gallus, although the first beginning of his reign was something quiet, yet shortly after following the steps of Decius, by whom rather he should have taken better heed, set forth edicts in like manner for the persecution of Christians, albeit in this edict we find no number of martyrs to have suffered, but only all this persecution to rest only in the exilement of bishops or guides of the flock. Of other sufferings or executions we do not read, for the terrible pestilence following immediately, kept the barbarous heathen otherwise occupied. Unto this time of Gallus, rather than to the time of Decius, I refer the banishment of Cyprian, who was then bishop of Carthage; of the which banishment he himself testifieth in divers of his epistles, declaring the cause thereof to rise upon a commotion or sedition among the people, out of the which he withdrew himself, lest the sedition should grow greater; notwithstanding the said Cyprian, though being absent, yet had no less care of his flock, and of the whole church, than if he had been present with them, and therefore never ceased in his epistles continually to exhort and call upon them to be constant in their profession, and patient in their afflictions. Amongst divers others whom he doth comfort in his

banishment, although he was in that case to be comforted himself, writing to certain that were condemned to mining for metals, whose names were Nemesianus, Felix, Lucius, with other bishops, priests, and deacons, he declareth unto them, "How it is no shame, but a glory, not to be feared, but to be rejoiced at, to suffer banishment or other pains for Christ; and confirming them in the same, or rather commending them, signifieth how worthily they do show themselves to be as valiant captains of virtue, provoking both by the confessions of their mouth, and by the suffering of their bodies, the hearts of the brethren to Christian martyrdom, whose example was and is a great confirmation to many, both maids and children, to follow the like. As for punishment and suffering, it is (saith he) a thing not execrable to a Christian; for a Christian man's breast, whose hope doth wholly consist in the tree, dreadeth neither bat nor club. Wounds and scars of the body be ornaments to a Christian man, such as bring no shame nor dishonesty to the party, but rather preferreth and freeth him with the Lord. And although in the mines where the metals be digged there be no beds for Christian men's bodies to take their rest, yet they have their rest in Christ; and though their weary bones lie upon the cold ground, yet it is no pain to lie with Christ. Their feet have been fettered with bands and chains, but happily he is bound of man whom the Lord Christ doth loose: happily doth he lie tied in the stocks, whose feet thereby are made swifter to run to heaven. Neither can any man tie a Christian so fast, but he runneth so much the faster for his garland of life. They have no garments to save them from cold, but he that putteth on Christ is sufficiently coated. Doth bread lack to their hungry bodies? But man liveth not only by bread, but by every word proceeding from the mouth of God. Your deformity (saith he) shall be turned to honour, your mourning to joy, your pain to pleasure and felicity infinite. And if this do grieve you, that ye cannot now employ your sacrifices and oblations after your wonted manner, yet your daily sacrifice ceaseth not, which is a contrite and humble heart, as when you offer up daily your bodies a lively and a glorious sacrifice unto the Lord, which is the sacrifice that pleaseth God. And though your travail be great, yet is the reward greater, which is most certain to follow; for God beholding and looking down upon them that confess his name, in their willing mind approveth them, in their striving helpeth them, in their victory crowneth them; rewarding that in us which he hath performed, and crowning that which he hath in us perfected. With these and such-like comfortable words he doth animate his brethren, admonishing them that they are now in a joyful journey, hasting apace to the mansions of the martyrs, there to enjoy after this darkness a stable light and brightness greater than all their passions, according to the apostle's saying, "These sufferings of this present time be nothing like comparable to the brightness of the glory that shall be revealed in us," &c.

And after the like words of sweet comfort and consolation, writing to Seagrius and Rogatianus, which were in prison and bonds for the testimony of truth, doth encourage them to "continue stedfast and patient in the way wherein they have begun to run; for that they have the Lord with them their helper and defender, who promiseth to be with us to the world's end; and therefore willeth them to set before their eyes in their death immortality, in their pain everlasting glory; of the which it is written, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' Item, although before men they suffered torments, yet their hope is full of immortality; and being vexed in small things, they shall be well requited in great matters; for the Lord hath tried them as gold in the fire. And writeth moreover, admonishing them that it is appointed from the beginning of the world, that righteousness here should suffer in secular conflicts; for so just Abel was slain in the beginning of the world, and after him all just and good men; the prophets also, and the apostles sent of the Lord himself; unto whom all the

Lord first gave an example in himself, teaching that there is no coming to his kingdom but by that way which he entered himself, saying by these words, 'He that loveth his life in this world shall lose it,' &c. And again, 'Fear ye not them that slay the body, but have no power to slay the soul.' And St. Paul likewise admonishing all them whosoever covet to be partakers of the promises of the Lord to follow the Lord, saith, 'If we suffer together with him, we shall reign together,' &c.

Furthermore, as the same Cyprian doth encourage here the holy martyrs which were in captivity to persist, so likewise, writing to the priests and deacons which were free, he exhorteth them to be serviceable and obsequious with all care and love, to cherish and embrace them that were in bonds. Cyprian, lib. iii. epist. 6. Whereby may appear the fervent zeal and care of this good bishop toward the church of Christ, although being now in exile in the time of this emperor Gallus.

In the same time, and under the said Gallus, reigning with his son Volusianus, was also Lucius, bishop of Rome, sent to banishment, who next succeeded after Cornelius in that bishopric, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and three. Albeit in this banishment he did not long continue, but returned home to his church, as by the epistle of St. Cyprian may appear. As to all other bishops of Rome in those primitive days, certain decretal epistles, with several ordinances, be ascribed, bearing their names and titles, as hath been before declared; so also hath Lucius one epistle fathered upon him, in the which epistle he, writing to the brethren of France and of Spain, appointeth such an order and form of the church as seemeth not to agree with the time then present; for so he declareth in that epistle, that a bishop in all places, whithersoever he goeth, should have two priests with three deacons waiting upon him, to be witnesses of all his ways and doings. Which ordinance, although I deny not but it may be and is convenient, yet I see not how that time of Lucius could serve then for a bishop to carry such a pomp of priests and deacons about him, or to study for any such matter; forso much as bishops commonly in those days were seldom free to go abroad, went they never so secret, but either were in houses close and secret, or in prison, or else in banishment. Moreover, in the said epistle, how pompously writeth he to the church of Rome! "This holy and apostolical Church of Rome, (saith he,) the mother of all churches of Christ, by the grace of God omnipotent, hath never been proved to swerve out of the path of apostolical tradition, neither hath ever fallen or been depraved with heretical innovations; but even as in the first beginning it received the rule of the apostolical faith by his first instructors, the princes of the apostles, so it continueth ever immaculate and undefiled unto the end."

Unto this Lucius also is referred in the decrees of Gratian this constitution, that no minister whatsoever after his ordination would at any time re-enter into the chamber of his own wife in pain of losing his ministry in the church, &c. Eusebius in his seventh book making mention of the death of Lucius, and not of his martyrdom, saith that he sat but eight months; but Damasus in his Martyrology holdeth that he sat three years, and was beheaded the second year of Valerian and Galienus, emperors; and so doth also Marianus Scotus and Nauclerus, with other that follow Damasus, affirm the same.

After him came Stephanus, next bishop of Rome following Lucius, whom Damasus, Platina, and Sabellicus affirm to have sat seven years and five months, and to die a martyr. Contrary, Eusebius and Volatennus, holding with him, give him but two years: which part cometh most near to the truth I leave to the reader's judgment. Of his two epistles decretal, and of his ordinances out of the same collected, I need not

much to say for two respects; either for that concerning these decretal epistles suspiciously entitled to the names of the fathers of the primitive church sufficiently hath been said before; or else because both the phrase barbarous and incongruous, and also the matter itself therein contained, is such, that, although no testimony came against it, yet it easily refelleth itself. As where in the second epistle he decreeth, "That no bishop being expulsed out of his seat, or deprived of his goods, ought to be accused of any, or is bound to answer for himself, before that by the law regularly he be restored again fully to his former state, and that the primates and the synod render unto him again all such possessions and fruits as were taken from him before his accusation, as is agreeing both to the laws canon and also secular." First, here I would desire the reader a little to stay, and this to consider with himself, who be these here meant which either used or might despoil these bishops of their goods, and expel them from their seats for such wrongful causes, but only kings and emperors, which at this time were not yet christened, nor used any such proceedings against these bishops, in such sort as either primates or synods could restore them again to their places and possessions. Again, what private goods or possessions had bishops then to be taken from them, whenas churches yet neither were endowed with patrimonies nor possessions? And if any treasures were committed to the church, it pertained not properly to the bishop, but went in general to the subvention of the poor in the church, as in the epistle of Cornelius to Fabius may appear, alleged in Eusebius, where he, speaking of his church, and declaring how there ought to be but one bishop in the same, inferreth mention of forty and six priests, seven deacons, with seven subdeacons, forty-two Acoluthes, of widows and poor afflicted persons to the number of fifteen hundred and above, found and nourished in the same by the merciful benignity and providence of God. It followeth more in the end of the said canon, "Which thing is forbidden both by the laws ecclesiastical, and also secular," &c. Now what laws secular were in the time of Stephen for bishops not to be charged with any accusation before they were restored again to their state, let any reader, marking well the state of the heathen laws that then were, judge; and in judging I doubt not but this matter alone, though there were no other, will be enough to descry the untruth hereof.

Moreover, by divers other probable notes and arguments in the said second epistle of Stephanus, it may be easily espied this epistle to be feigned and misauthorized, especially by the fifth canon of the said epistle, where he so solemnly treateth of the difference between primates, metropolitans, and archbishops; which distinction of degrees and titles, savouring more of ambition than of persecution, giveth me verily to suppose this epistle not to be written by this Stephen, but by some other man either of that name, or of some other time when the church began to be settled in more prosperity, and orders therein to be taken, for every man to know his degree and limits of his authority, according as is specified by the sixth and seventh canon of the Nicene Council, decreeing of the same matter.

The like estimation may be conceived also of the seventh canon of the said epistle, where he willeth and appointeth all causes judiciary to be decided and determined within the precinct of their own proper province, and not to pass over the bounds thereof, unless (saith he) the appeal be made to the apostolical see of Rome; which savoureth in my nose rather of a smack of popery, than of the vein of Christianity, especially in these times, during this terrible persecution among the bishops of Christ. And thus much of the second decretal epistle of Stephanus, although of the first epistle also, written to Hilarius, something may be said; as where he speaketh in the said epistle of holy vestments, and holy vessels, and other ornaments

of the altar serving to Divine worship, and therefore not to be touched nor handled of any man, saving of priests alone. Concerning all which implements my opinion is this; I think the Church of Rome not to have been in so good state then, that either Stephanus, or Sixtus before him, being occupied about other more earnest matters, and scarce able to hide their own heads, had any mind or cogitation to study upon such unnecessary inventions serving in public churches; neither do I see how the heathen in those days would have suffered these ornaments to be unconsumed, which would not suffer the bishops themselves to live amongst them, notwithstanding Isidorus and Polydorus judge the contrary. Between this Stephanus and Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was a great contention about rebaptizing of heretics, whereof more hereafter (Christ willing) shall be said.

Besides these bishops above specified, divers other there were also sent into banishment under the forenamed emperors Gallus and Volusianus, as appeareth by Dionysius writing to Hermannus on this wise: That Gallus, not seeing the evil of Decius, nor foreseeing the occasion of his seduction and ruin, stumbled himself also at the same stone, lying open before his eyes; for when at the first beginning his empire went prosperously forward, and all things went luckily with him, afterward he drave out holy men, which prayed for his peace and safeguard, and so with them rejected also the prayers which they made for him. Otherwise, of any bloodshed or any martyrs that in the time of this emperor were put to death, we do not read.

After the reign of which emperor Gallus and of his son Volusianus being expired, (who reigned but two years,) Emilianus, which slew them both by civil sedition, succeeded in their place, who reigned but three months, and was also slain. Next to whom Valerianus and his son Galienus were advanced to the empire.

About the changing of these emperors the persecution which first began at Decius, and afterward slacked in the time of Gallus, was now extinguished for a time, partly for the great plague reigning in all places, partly by the change of the emperors, although it was not very long. For Valerianus in the first entrance of the empire, for the space of three or four years, was right courteous and gentle to the people of God, and well accepted of the senate. Neither was there any of all the emperors before him, no, not of them which openly professed Christ, that showed himself so loving and familiar toward the Christians as he did; insomuch that (as Dionysius writing to Herman doth testify) all his whole court was replenished with holy saints, and servants of Christ and godly persons, so that his house might seem to be made a church of God. But by the malice of Satan, through wicked counsel, these quiet days endured not very long. For in process of time this Valerian being charmed or incensed by a certain Egyptian, a chief ruler of the heathen synagogue of the Egyptians, a master of the charmers or enchanters, who indeed was troubled for that he could not do his magical feats for the Christians, was so far infatuated and bewitched, that through the detestable provocations of that devilish Egyptian, he was wholly turned unto abominable idols, and to execrable impiety, in sacrificing young infants, and quartering bodies, and dividing the entrails of children new born; and so, proceeding in his fury, he moved the eighth persecution against the Christians, whom the wicked Egyptian could not abide, as being the hinderers and destroyers of his magical enchantings, about the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and nine.

10. The Eighth Persecution under Valerian

In the which persecution the chief administrators and actors were Emilianus, president of Egypt, Paternus and Galerius Maximus, proconsuls in Africa. Bergomensis also maketh mention of Paternus, vicegerent of Rome, and of Perennius. Vincentius speaketh also of Nicerius and Claudius, presidents, &c.

What was the chief original cause of this persecution partly is signified before, where mention was made of the wicked Egyptian; but as this was the outward and political cause, so St. Cyprian showeth other causes more special and ecclesiastical in his fourth book, whose words be these: "But we (saith he) must understand and confess, that this turbulent oppression and calamity, which hath wasted for the most part all our whole company, and doth daily consume it, riseth chiefly of our own wickedness and sins, while we walk not in the way of the Lord, nor observe his precepts left unto us for our institution. The Lord observed the will of his Father in all points, but we observe not the will of the Lord, having all our mind and study set upon lucre and possessions, given to pride, full of emulation and dissension, void of simplicity and faithful dealing, renouncing this world in word only, but nothing in deed, every man pleasing himself, and displeasing all others. And therefore are we thus scourged, and worthily; for what stripes and scourges do we not deserve, when the confessors themselves, (such as have bid the trial of their confession,) and such as ought to be an example to the rest of well-doing, do keep no discipline? And therefore because some such there be, proudly puffed up with this swelling and unmannerly bragging of their confession, these torments come, such as do not easily send us to the crown, except by the mercy of God; some, being taken away by quickness of death, do prevent the tediousness of punishment. These things do we suffer for our sins and deserts, as by the Lord's censure we have been forewarned, saying, If they shall forsake my law, and will not walk in my judgments; if they shall profane my institutions, and will not observe my precepts; I will visit their iniquities with the rod, and their transgressions with scourges. These rods and scourges (saith he) we feel, which neither please God in our good deeds, nor repent in our evil deeds." Wherefore the said Cyprian adding this exhortation withal, exhorted them to pray and entreat from the bottom of their heart and whole mind the mercy of God, which promiseth, saying, But yet my mercy I will not scatter from them, &c. Let us ask, and we shall obtain; and though (saith Cyprian) it be with tarrance, yet, forsomuch as we have grievously offended, let us continue knocking; for to him that knocketh it shall be opened, if our prayers, sighings, and weepings knock still at the door with continuance, and if our prayers be joined together with brotherly agreement. Moreover, what vices were then principally reigning among the Christians he further specifieth in the said epistle, which chiefly were "division and dissension among the brethren. For when it was spoken to them in a vision by these words, Pray, and ye shall obtain; afterward it was required of the congregation there present to direct their prayers for certain persons assigned to them by name: but they could not agree and condescend together on the names and persons of them which they should pray for, but were dissonant in their consent and petition; which thing (saith Cyprian) did greatly displease him that spake unto them, Pray, and ye shall obtain, for that there was no uniform equality of voice and heart, nor one simple and joint concord among the brethren, whereof it is written in the sixty-seventh Psalm, God which maketh to dwell

in the house together men of one accord." And so by the occasion hereof he writeth unto them in the foresaid epistle, and moveth them to prayer and mutual agreement. "For (saith he) if it be promised in the gospel to be granted whatsoever any two consenting together shall ask, what shall then the whole church do agreeing together? Or what if this unanimity were among the whole fraternity? Which unanimity, (saith Cyprian,) if it had been amongst the brethren, these evils had not happened to the brethren, if the brethren had joined together in brotherly unanimity."

After the causes thus declared of this and other persecution, the said St. Cyprian, moreover, in the forenamed epistle, (worthy to be read of all men,) describeth likewise a certain vision, wherein was showed unto him by the Lord before the persecution came what should happen. The vision was this: "There was a certain aged father sitting, at whose right hand sat a young man very sad and pensive, as one with an indignation sorrowful, holding his hand upon his breast, his countenance heavy and uncheerful. On the left hand sat another person, having in his hand a net, which he threatened to lay to catch the people that stood about. And as he was marvelling that saw the sight thereof, it was said unto him, The young man whom thou seest sit on the right hand is sad and sorry that his precepts be not observed. But he on the left hand danceth and is merry, for that occasion is given him to have power of the aged father to afflict men. And this vision was seen long before this tempest of persecution happened, wherein is declared the same that before is said, The sins of the people to be the cause why Satan in this persecution, and all others, hath had, and hath still, such power with his net of destruction to rage against the blood of Christian men, and all because saith Cyprian we foreslack our praying, or he not so vigilant therein as we should; wherefore the Lord, because he loveth us, correcteth us; correcteth us to amend us, amendeth us to save us."

Furthermore, the same Cyprian, and in the same epistle, writing of his own revelation or message sent to him, thus saith: "And to his least servant. both sinful and unworthy, (meaning himself,) God of his tender goodness hath vouchsafed to direct this word: Tell him (saith he) that he be quiet and of good comfort; for peace will come, albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain yet to be proved and tried, &c. And showeth also in the same place of another revelation of his, wherein he was admonished to be spare in his feeding, and sober in his drink, lest his mind, given to heavenly meditation, might be carried away with worldly allurements, or, oppressed with too much surfeit of meats and drinks, should be less apt or able to prayer and spiritual exercise."

Finally, in the latter end of the foresaid epistle mention also followeth of other revelations or showings: "Wherein the Lord (saith Cyprian) doth vouchsafe to many of his servants to foreshow to come the restoring of his church, the stable quiet of our health and safeguard; after rain fair weather, after darkness light, after stormy tempest peaceable calm, the fatherly help of his love, the wont and old glory of his Divine Majesty; whereby both the blasphemy of the persecutor shall be repressed, and the repentance of such as have fallen be reformed, and the strong and stable confidence of them that stand shall rejoice and glory." Thus much hath St. Cyprian written of these things to the clergy, lib. 4. epist. 4.

As touching now the crimes and accusations in this persecution laid to the charge of the Christians, this was the principal: first, because they refused to do worship to their idols and to the emperors; then for that they professed the name of Christ: besides, all the calamities and evils that happened in the world, as wars,

famine, and pestilence, were imputed only to the Christians. Against all which quarrelling accusations Cyprian doth eloquently defend the Christians, like as Tertullian had done before, "And first touching the objection, for not worshipping idols, he cleareth the Christians both in his book against Demetrian, and also On the Vanity of Idols, proving those idols to be no true gods; but images of certain dead kings, which neither could save themselves from death, nor such as worship them. The true God to be but one, and that by the testimony of Sosthenes, Plato, and Trismegistus, the which God the Christians do truly worship. And as concerning that the Christians were thought to be the cause of public calamities, because they worshipped not the Gentiles' idols, he purgeth the Christians thereof, proving that if there be any defect in increase of things, it is not to be ascribed to them, but rather to the decrease of nature, languishing now towards her age and latter end. Again, for that it hath been so foresaid and prophesied, that towards the end of the world should come wars, famine, and pestilence. Moreover, if there be any cause thereof more proper than other, it is most like to be imputed to their vain idolatry, and to the contempt of the true God. Also that such evils be increased by the wickedness of the people, so that, to speak in his own words, famine cometh more by avarice of men than by drought of the air, but especially the cause thereof to proceed of the cruel shedding of the innocent blood of the Christians."

Thus with many other more probations doth Cyprian defend the Christians against the barbarous exclamations of the heathen Gentiles. Of which Cyprian, for so much as he suffered in the time of this persecution, I mind (Christ willing) to recapitulate here in ample discourse the full sum, first of his life and bringing up, then of his death and martyrdom, as the worthiness of that man deserveth to be remembered. Of this Cyprian therefore, otherwise named Statius, thus write Nicephorus, Nazianzenus, Jacobus de Voragine, Henricus de Erfordia, Volateranus, Hieronymus, and others: that he, being an African, and born in Carthage, first was an idolater and Gentile, altogether given to the study and practice of the magical arts; of whose parentage and education in letters from his youth no mention is made, but that he was a worthy rhetorician in Africa; of whose conversion and baptism he himself, in his first book and second epistle, writeth a flourishing and eloquent history. Which his conversion unto the Christian faith, as Jerome affirmeth in his Commentary upon Jonas, was through the grace of God, and the means of Cecilius a priest, whose name after he bare, and through the occasion of hearing the history of the prophet Jonas. The same Jerome, moreover, testifieth how he, immediately upon his conversion, distributed among the poor all his substance, and after that, being ordained a priest, was not long after constituted bishop of the congregation of Carthage. But whether he succeeded Agrippinus, of whom he often maketh mention, (which also was the first author of rebaptization,) or some other bishop of Carthage, it remaineth uncertain. But this is most true, he himself shined in his office and dignity with such good gifts and virtues, that, as Nazianzenus writeth, he had the government of the whole east church, and church of Spain, and was called the bishop of the Christian men.

And to the further setting forth (to the praise of God) of his godly virtues wherewith he was endowed, appearing as well in His own works to them that list to peruse the same, as also described by other worthy writers; he was courteous and gentle, loving and full of patience, and therewithal sharp and severe in his office, according as the cause required, as appeareth in his first book and third epistle. Furthermore, he was most loving and kind toward his brethren, and took much pains in helping and relieving the martyrs, as appeareth by his letters to the elders and deacons

of his bishopric, that with all study and endeavour they should gently entertain and show pleasure unto the martyrs in his absence, as partly is touched before.

The third epistle of his first book doth declare of what stomach and godly courage he was in executing his office, and handling his matters. Neither was he void of prudence and circumspection, but was adorned with marvellous modesty, whereby he attempted nothing upon his own head and judgment, but with the consent of his fellow bishops and other inferior ministers; and that chiefly (among others) doth the tenth epistle of his third book witness. He was of a marvellous liberal disposition towards the poor brethren of other countries; for so often as he had cause of absence, he committed the care of those poor men to his fellow officers, and wrote unto them, that of their own proper goods they would help their banished brethren to that which was necessary for them, as witnesseth the twenty and fourth epistle of his third book. He recited among other gifts wherewith he was endued, as touching the visions and heavenly admonitions of the persecutions that should follow, and of other matters touching the government of the church, in his first book and third epistle, and fourth book and fourth epistle, where he reciteth and expoundeth the form or manner of a certain vision, which we have before sufficiently expressed.

He had, moreover, great skill in the foreknowledge of things that should chance, as may be gathered in the sixth epistle of his fourth book. Also Augustine doth attribute unto him many worthy virtues, who writeth much in setting forth his gifts of humility in his second book of Baptism, the fourth chapter, against the Donatists; and in his seventh book and eleventh chapter, of his long-sufferance and patience, also of his courtesy and meekness; by which virtues he concealed nothing that he understood, but uttered the same meekly and patiently. Also that he kept the ecclesiastical peace and concord with those that were of another opinion than he was of. Lastly, that he neither circumvented nor did prejudice any man, but followed that thing which seemed good in his judgment, it is manifest in St. Augustine's first book on Baptism against the Donatists. Neither is this to be passed with silence, that Jerome writeth that he was very diligent in reading, especially the works of Tertullian; for he saith that he saw a certain old man, whose name was Paulus, which told him he saw the notary of blessed Cyprian, being then an old man, when he himself was but a springall in the city of Rome, and told him that it was Cyprian's wont never to let one day pass without some reading of Tertullian, and that he was accustomed often-times to say unto him, Give me my master, meaning thereby Tertullian.

Now a few words touching his exile and martyrdom. Of his epistles which he wrote back to his congregation, leading his life in exile, mention is made above, wherein he showeth the virtue beseeming a faithful pastor, in that he took no less care as well of his own church, as of other bishops, being absent, than he did being present. Wherein also he himself doth signify that voluntarily he absented himself, lest he should do more hurt than good to the congregation, by reason of his presence, as is likewise declared before. Thus from the desolate places of his banishment, wherein he was oftentimes sought for, he writeth unto his brethren, as in his third book and tenth epistle is manifest, which thing seemeth to be done in the reign of Decius or Gallus. But after that he returned again out of exile in the reign of this Valerianus, he was also after that the second time banished of Paternus, the proconsul of Africa, into the city of Thurbin, as the oration of Augustine touching Cyprian showeth; or else, as Pontius the deacon saith, into a city named Furabilitana, or Curabilitana. But when Paternus the proconsul was dead, Galienus Maximus succeeded in the room and office of Paternus, who, finding Cyprian in a garden, caused him to be apprehended by his serjeants, and

to be brought before the idols to offer sacrifice; which, when he would not do, then the proconsul, breaking forth in these words, said, Long hast thou lived in a sacrilegious mind, and hast gathered together men of a wicked conspiracy, and hast showed thyself an enemy to the gods of the Romans, and to their holy laws; neither could the sacred emperors Valerianus and Galienus revoke thee to the sect of their ceremonies. At length the wicked tyrant condemning him to have his head cut off, he patiently and willingly submitted his neck to the stroke of the sword, as Jerome affirmeth. And so this blessed martyr ended this present life in the Lord, Sixtus then being bishop of Rome, as Eusebius noteth, in the year of our Lord two hundred fifty and nine. Sabellicus saith that he was martyred in the reign of Gaius and Volusianus, Lucius being bishop of Rome; but that seemeth not like.

As we have hitherto set forth the commendation of Cyprian, this blessed martyr; so must we now take heed again that we do not here incur the old and common danger which the papists are commonly accustomed to run into, whose fault is always almost to be immoderate and excessive in their proceedings, making too much almost of every thing. So, in speaking of the holy sacraments, they make more of them than doth the nature of sacraments require; not using them, but abusing them; not referring or applying them, but adoring them; not taking them in their kind for things godly, as they are, but taking them for God himself; turning religion into superstition, and the creature to the Creator, the things signifying to the things themselves signified, &c. To the church likewise, and ceremonies of the church, to general councils, to the blessed virgin Mary, mother of Christ, to the bishop of Rome, and to all other in like case; not contented to attribute that which is sufficient, they exceed moreover the bounds of judgment and verity, judging so of the church and general councils, as though they could never, or did never, err in any jot. That the blessed mother of Christ amongst all women was blessed, and a virgin full of grace, the Scripture and truth doth give; but to say that she was born without all original sin, or to make of her an advocate or mother of mercy, there they run further than truth will bear. The ceremonies were first ordained to serve but only for order's sake, unto the which they have attributed so much at length, that they have set in them a great part of our religion, yea, and also salvation. And what thing is there else almost wherein the papists have not exceeded?

Wherefore, to avoid this common error of the papists, we must beware in commending the doctors and writers of the church, and so commend them, that truth and consideration go with our commendation. For though this cannot be denied, but that holy Cyprian, and other blessed martyrs, were holy men; yet, notwithstanding, they were men, that is, such as might have and had their falls and faults; men, I say, and not angels, nor gods; saved by God, not saviours of men, nor patrons of grace. And though they were also men of excellent learning, and worthy doctors, yet with their learning they had their errors also annexed. And though their books be (as they ought to be) of great authority, yet ought they not to be equal with the Scriptures. And albeit they said well in most things, yet it is not therefore enough that what they said must stand for a truth. That pre-eminence of authority only belongeth to the word of God, and not to the pen of man. For of men and doctors, be they never so famous, there is none that is void of his reprehension. In Origen, although in his time the admiration of his learning was singular, yet how many things be there which the church now holdeth not, but examining him by Scriptures, where he said well they admit him, where otherwise, they leave him. In Polycarp, the church hath corrected and altered that which he did hold in celebrating the Easter-day after the Jews. Neither can holy and blessed Ignatius be defended in all his sayings; as where he maketh the

fasting upon the Sunday or the sabbath day as great an offence as to kill Christ himself; contrary to this saying of St. Paul, "Let no man judge you in meat and drink:" also where the said Ignatius speaketh concerning virginity, and of other things more. Irenæus did hold that man was not made perfect in the beginning. He seemeth also to defend free-will in man in those things also that be spiritual. He saith that Christ suffered after he was fifty years old, abusing this place of the Gospel," Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" John viii. 57. Tertullian (whom St. Cyprian never laid out of his hands almost) is noted to be a Chiliast; also to have been of Montanus's sect. The same did hold also, with Justin, Cyprian, and others, that the angels fell first for the concupiscence of women. He defendeth free-will of man after the corruption of nature, inclining also to the error of them which defend the possibility of keeping God's law. Concerning marriage, We know (saith he) one marriage, as we know one God; condemning the second marriage. Divers other things of like absurdity in him be noted. Justin also seemeth to have inclined unto the error of the Chiliasts, of the fall of certain angels by women, of free-will of man, of possibility of keeping the law, and such others. Neither was this our Cyprian, the great scholar of Tertullian, utterly exempt from the blot of them who, contrary to the doctrine of the church, did hold with rebaptizing of such as were before baptized of heretics, whereof speaketh St. Augustine, misliking the same error of Cyprian. Upon the which matter there was a great contention between the said Cyprian and Stephen bishop of Rome, as partly afore is noted. Of Augustine himself likewise, of Ambrose, Hierom, Chrysostom, the same may be said, that none of them all so clearly passed away, but their peculiar faults and errors went with them, whereof it were too long, and out of our purpose, at this present to treat. And thus much concerning the story of Cyprian the holy learned martyr of Christ.

Albeit here is to be noted by the way, touching the life and story of Cyprian, that this Cyprian was not he whom the narration of Nazianzen speaketh of, (as is above mentioned,) who from art magic was converted to be a Christian, which Cyprian was a citizen of Antioch, and afterward bishop of the same city, and was martyred under Dioclesian; whereas this Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, and died under Valerianus, as is said. By the decrees of Gratian, it appeareth, moreover, that there was also a third Cyprian in the time of Julianus, the emperor apostate, long after both these aforementioned; for so giveth the title prefixed before the said distinction, Cyprian to the emperor Julian; the distinction beginning, *Quoniam idem Mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus, sic actibus propriis, et dignitatibus distinctis officia potestatis utriusque discernit, &c.* Upon the which distinction the gloss cometh in with these words, saying that the popedom and the seat imperial have both one beginning of one, that is, Christ, who was both Bishop and King of kings. And that the said dignities be distinct, albeit the pope notwithstanding hath both the swords in his hand, and may exercise them both sometimes together. "And therefore although they be distinct, yet in exercise the one standeth lineally under the other; so that the imperial dignity is subject under the papal dignity, as the inferior is subject under the superior; that as there is one Ruler over the whole world, which is God; so in the church is one monarch, that is, the pope, to whom the Lord hath committed the power and lawful right both of the heavenly and terrene dominion."

Thus much I thought here to note by the way, because this distinction is fathered upon Cyprian, which is false; for this Cyprian was not in the time of Julian, not by two hundred years, and so likewise the other Cyprian, which died martyr under Dioclesian. Of any Cyprian besides these two we read not; neither is it credible, that if

there were any such Cyprian, he would ever have written of any such matter, of the difference and mutual need of Christian emperors and Christian popes; whenas that emperor, being an apostate, neither regarded Christ, nor cared for any pope.

About this time, and under the same emperor Valerianus, suffered also Xistus, or Sixtus, the second of that name, bishop of Rome, who, being accused of his adversaries to be a Christian: was brought with his six deacons to the place of execution, where he, with Nemesius, and other his deacons, were beheaded and suffered martyrdom. Laurence in the same time, being also deacon, followed after, complaining to Xistus, (as one being grieved,) that he might not also suffer with him, but to be secluded as the son from the father. To whom the bishop answering again, declared that within three days he should follow after. In the mean time he willed him to go home, and to distribute his treasures, if he had any, unto the poor. The judge, belike hearing mention to be made of treasures to be given to the poor, and thinking that Laurence had great store of treasure in his custody, commanded him to bring the same unto him, according as in the discourse of his story hereunder written more fully may appear. Which history, because it is set forth more at large in Prudentius, Ambrose, and other writers, and containeth in it more things worthy to be noted of the reader, we have therefore with the more diligence here inserted the more ample description of the same, to the further admiration of his patience, and God's glory showed in him.

Now then, as order requireth, let us enter the story of that most constant and courageous martyr of Christ St. Laurence, whose words and works deserve to be as fresh and green in Christian hearts as is the flourishing laurel tree. This thirsty heart, longing after the water of life, desirous to pass unto it through the strait door of bitter death, when on a time he saw his vigilant shepherd Xistus led as a harmless lamb of harmful tyrants to his death, cried out with open mouth and heart invincible, saying, O dear father, whither goest thou without the company of thy dear son? Whither hastenest thou, O reverend priest, without thy deacon? Never wast thou wont to offer sacrifice without thy minister. What crime is there in me that offendeth thy fatherhood? Hast thou proved me unnatural? Now try, sweet father, whether thou hast chosen a faithful minister or not. Deniest thou unto him the fellowship of thy blood, to whom thou hast committed the distribution of the Lord's blood? See that thy judgment be not misliked, whilst thy fortitude is liked and lauded. The abasing of the scholar is the disgracing of the master. What! have we not learned that worthy masters have obtained most worthy fame by the worthy acts of their disciples and scholars? Finally, Abraham sacrificed his only begotten Isaac; stoned Stephen prepared the way to preaching Peter: even so, father, declare thy manifold virtues by me thy son. Offer thou him that proffereth himself; grant that the body of thy scholar may be sacrificed, whose mind with good letters thou hast beautified. These words with tears St. Laurence uttered, not because his master should suffer, but for that he might not be suffered to taste of death's cup which he thirsted after.

Then Xistus to his son shaped this answer: I forsake thee not, O my son; I give thee to wit that a sharper conflict remaineth for thee. A feeble and weak old man am I, and therefore run the race of a lighter and easier death; but lusty and young thou art, and more lustily, yea, more gloriously, shalt thou triumph over this tyrant: thy time approacheth, cease to weep and lament, three days after thou shalt follow me; decent it is that this space of time come between the priest and the Levite. It may not beseem thee, O sweet pupil, to triumph under thy master, lest it be said he wanted a helper. Why cravest thou to be partaker with me in my passion? I bequeath unto thee the

whole inheritance. Why requirest thou to enjoy my presence? Let weak scholars go before, and the stronger come after, that those without master may get the victory, which have no need by master to be governed. So Helias left behind him his beloved Heliseus. I yield up into thy hands the succession of my virtues. Such was their contention, not unmeet for so godly a priest and so zealous a minister, striving with themselves who should first suffer for the name of Christ Jesus.

In tragical histories we have it mentioned, that through joy and admiration people clapped their hands, when Pilades named himself Orestes, Orestes (as truth it was) affirmed himself to be Orestes; Pilades wishing to die for Orestes, Orestes not suffering Pilades to lose his life for his sake; but neither of them might escape death; for both these lovers were guilty of blood, the one committing the fact, the other consenting. But this our Laurence, the martyr most constant, was by no means enforced to make this proffer, saving only by his ardent zeal and fervent spirit, who, thirsting after the cup of martyrdom, had it shortly after filled to the hard brim.



St. Lawrence being tortured

Now let us draw near to the fire of martyred Laurence, that our cold hearts may be warmed thereby. The merciless tyrant, understanding this virtuous Levite not only to be a minister of the sacraments, but a distributor also of the church riches, (whereof mention is made before in the words of Xistus,) promised to himself a double prey by the apprehension of one silly soul. First with the rake of avarice to scrape to himself the treasure of poor Christians; then with the fiery fork of tyranny so to toss and turmoil them, that they should wax weary of their profession. With furious face and cruel countenance the greedy wolf demanded where this deacon Laurence had bestowed the substance of the church? who craving three days' respite, promised to declare where the treasure might be had. In the mean time, he caused a good number of poor Christians to be congregated. So when the day of his answer was come, the persecutor strictly charged him to stand to his promise. Then valiant Laurence,

stretching out his arms over the poor, said, These are the precious treasure of the church, these are the treasure indeed, in whom the faith of Christ reigneth, in whom Jesus Christ hath his mansion-place. What more precious jewels can Christ have than those in whom he hath promised to dwell? For so it is written, I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink; I was harbourless, and ye lodged me. And again, Look what ye have done to the least of these, the same have ye done to me. What greater riches can Christ our Master possess than the poor people, in whom he loveth to be seen? Oh what tongue is able to express the fury and madness of the tyrant's heart? Now he stamped, he stared, he raged, he fared as one out of his wits; his eyes like fire glowed, his mouth like a boar foamed, his teeth like a hell-hound grinded. Now not a reasonable man, but a roaring lion, he might be called. "Kindle the fire (he cried); of wood make no spare. Hath this villain deluded the emperor? Away with him, away with him; whip him with scourges, jerk him with rods, buffet him with fists, brain him with clubs. Jesteth the traitor with the emperor? Pinch him with fiery tongs, gird him with burning plates, bring out the strongest chains, and the fire forks, and the grated bed of iron: on the fire with it, bind the rebel hand and foot; and when the bed is fire hot, on with him; roast him, broil him, toss him, turn him: on pain of our high displeasure do every man his office, O ye tormentors." The word was no sooner spoken but all was done.

After many cruel handlings, this meek lamb was laid, I will not say on his fiery bed of iron, but on his soft bed of down. So mightily God wrought with his martyr Laurence, so miraculously God tempered his element the fire, not a bed of consuming pain, but a pallet of nourishing rest, was it unto Laurence. Not Laurence, but the emperor, might seem to be tormented; the one broiling in the flesh, the other burning in the heart. When this triumphant martyr had been pressed down with firepikes for a great space, in the mighty Spirit of God he spake to the vanquished tyrant:

This side is now roasted enough, turn up, O tyrant great;
Assay whether roasted or raw thou thinkest the better meat.

O rare and unaccustomed patience! O faith invincible! that not only not burnest, but by means unspeakable dost recreate, refresh, stablish, and strengthen those that are burned, afflicted, and troubled. And why so mightily comfortest thou the persecuted? Because through thee they believe in God's promises infallible. By thee this glorious martyr overcometh his torments, vanquisheth this tyrant, confoundeth his enemies, confirmeth the

Christians, sleepeth in peace, and reigneth in glory. The God of might and mercy grant us grace, by the life of Laurence to learn in Christ to live, and by his death to learn for Christ to die. Amen.

Such is the wisdom and providence of God, that the blood of his dear saints (like good seed) never falleth in vain to the ground, but it bringeth some increase: so it pleased the Lord to work at the martyrdom of this holy Laurence, that, by the constant confession of this worthy and valiant deacon, a certain soldier of Rome, being therewith conscience stricken and converted to the same faith, desired forthwith to be baptized of him; for the which he, being called for of the judge, was scourged, and afterward beheaded.

Under the same Valerianus suffered also Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, much affliction and banishment, with certain other brethren; of the which he writeth himself, and is alleged in the ecclesiastical story of Eusebius, the words whereof tend to this effect. Dionysius, with three of his deacons, to wit, Maximus, Faustus, and

Cheremon, also with a certain brother of Rome, came to Emilianus, then president, who were declared unto them, in circumstance of words, how he had signified unto them the clemency of his lords and emperors, who had granted them pardon of life, so that they would return to them, and worship the gods and keepers (as he called them) of their empire, asking them what answer they would give him thereunto; trusting, as he said, that they would not show themselves ungrateful to the clemency of them which so gently did exhort them. To this Dionysius answering, said, All men worship not all gods, but divers men divers gods; so as every one hath in himself a mind or fantasy to worship. But we worship not many nor divers gods, but only that one God who is the Creator of all things, and hath committed to our lords, Valerianus and Gallienus, the government of their empire, making to him our prayers incessantly for their prosperous health and continuance. Then the president said, And what hurt is it, sith that you may both worship your God, what god soever he be, and these our gods also? For you are commanded to worship such gods as all men know to be gods. Dionysius answered, We worship none other but as we have said. Emilianus, the president, said, I see ye are ungrateful men, and consider not the benignity of the emperor; wherefore you shall remain no longer in this city, but shall be sent out to the parts of Libya, unto a town called Cephro; for that place by the commandment of the emperor I have chosen for you. Neither shall it be lawful for you to convent your assemblies, or to resort as ye are wont to your burial-places. And if any of you shall be found out of your places whereunto you are appointed, at your peril be it. And think not contrary but ye shall be watched well enough. Depart, therefore, to the place, as is commanded you. And it followeth more, in the said Dionysius speaking of himself, And as for me, (saith he,) although I was sick, yet he urged me so strictly to depart, that he would not give me one day's respite. And how (said he, writing to Germanus) could I congregate or not congregate any assemblies? And after a few lines it followeth, And yet neither am I altogether absent from the corporal society of the Lord's flock, but I have collected them together which were in the city, being absent, as though I had been present; absent in body, yet present in spirit. And in the same Cephro a great congregation remained with me, as well of those brethren which followed me out of the city, as also of them which were remaining there out of Egypt. And there the Lord opened to me the door of his word: although at the first entrance I was persecuted and stoned among them, yet afterward a great number of them fell from their idols, and were converted unto the Lord. And so by us the word was preached to them which before were infidels; which ministry, after that we had accomplished there, the Lord removed us to another place. For Emilianus translated us from thence to more sharp and stricter places of Libya, and commanded us to meet all together at the city Mareota; thinking there to separate us severally into sundry villages, or thinking rather to take and prevent us by the way. After we were come thither, it was assigned to me (saith Dionysius) to go to Colluthion, which place I never heard of before, which was the more grief to me; yet some solace it was to me, that the brethren told me it was near to a city named Paretonium. For as my being at Cephro got me the acquaintance of many brethren of Egypt, so my hope was, that the vicinity of that place (where I should be) to the city might procure the familiarity and concourse of certain loving brethren, which would resort and assemble with us, and so it came to pass, &c.

Moreover, the said Dionysius in his epistle, to Domitius and Dydimus, making mention of them which were afflicted in this persecution of Valerian, recordeth these words, It were superfluous (saith he) here to recite the names peculiarly of all our brethren slain in this persecution, which both were many, and to me unknown. But this

is certain, that there were men, women, young men, maidens, old wives, soldiers, simple innocents, and of all sorts and ages of men. Of whom some with scourges and fire, some with sword, obtained victory, and got the crown. Some continued a great time, and yet have been reserved. In the which number am I reserved hitherto to some other opportune time known unto the Lord, which saith, "In the time accepted I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee," &c. Now as concerning myself, in what state I am, if thou desire to know first how I, and Caius, and Faustus, Petrus and Paulus, being apprehended by the centurion, were taken away by certain of the town of Mareota, I have declared to you before. Now I, and Caius, and Petrus alone are left here included in a waste place of Libya, distant the space of three days' journey from Paretonium, &c. And in process further he addeth, In the city (saith he) were certain which privily visit the brethren; of priests, Maximus, Dioscorus, Demetrius, and Lucius. For they which were more notable in the world, Faustinus and Aquila, do wander abroad in Egypt. Of the deacons, besides them whom sickness hath consumed, Faustus, Eusebius, and Cheremon are yet alive. Eusebius hath God raised and stirred up to minister to the confessors lying in bands, and to bury the bodies of the blessed martyrs, not without great peril. Neither doth the president cease yet to this day, cruelly murdering such as be brought before him, tearing some with torments, imprisoning and keeping some in custody, commanding that no man should come to them, inquiring also who resorted unto them. Yet notwithstanding God with cheerfulness and daily resort of the brethren doth comfort the afflicted.

Concerning these deacons above recited, here is to be noted, that Eusebius afterward was made bishop of Laodicea in Syria. Maximus the priest aforesaid had the ministration of the church of Alexandria after Dionysius. Faustus long after continued in great age, unto the later persecution, where he, being a very old man, at length was beheaded, and died a martyr.

As touching Dionysius himself, thus the stories report, that he surviving all these troubles and persecutions, by the providence of God, continued after the death of Valerian unto the twelfth year of the reign of Gallienus, which was about the year of our Lord two hundred threescore and eight; and so departed in peace in great age, after that he had governed the church of Alexandria the space of seventeen years, and before that had taught the school of the said city of Alexandria the term of sixteen years, after whom succeeded Maximus, as is above specified. And thus much touching the full story of Dionysius Alexandrinus, and of other also, martyrs and confessors of Alexandria.

In Cesarea Palestine suffered also the same time Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander, the which three dwelling in the country, and good men, seeing the valiant courage of the Christians, so boldly to venture, and constantly to stand, and patiently to suffer in this persecution, as men being grieved with themselves, began to repent and accuse their so great sluggishness and cowardly negligence, to see others so zealous and valiant, and themselves so cold and faint-hearted, in labouring for the crown of Christian martyrdom; and first consulting and agreeing with themselves, they came to Cesarea, and there stepping to the judge, declared themselves what they were, and obtained the end they came for, being given to the wild beasts. After which manner also, and in the same city of Cesarea, a certain woman, whose name Eusebius expresseth not, who had been before of the sect of Marcion, was brought before the president, and likewise obtained the same martyrdom.

Neither was the city of Carthage all this while free from the stroke of this persecution, if credit should be given to the speculative glass of Vincentius, who, citing it out of Hugo, recordeth of three hundred martyrs, of which three hundred martyrs the story saith thus: that the president setting before them coals and incense to do sacrifice by a lime kiln, which was there near at hand, offered unto them this condition, either to set incense to the coals for sacrifice to Jupiter, or else to go into the furnace of lime; whereupon they all together with a general motion suddenly rushed into the kiln, and there with the dusty smoke of the lime were smothered.

In Africa also, in the city of Tuburba, the said Vicentius, out of the Martyrology, inferreth mention of three constant virgins, Maxima, Donatilla, and Secunda; who, in the persecution of this Valerian and Gallienus, first had given for their drink vinegar and gall, then with scourges were tried, after that upon the gibbet were tormented and rubbed with lime, then were scorched upon the fiery gridiron, at last were cast to the wild beasts; who, being not touched of them, finally with the sword were beheaded.

In Simela, a city in Italy, under the Alps, one Pontius, being there apprehended, by the commandment of Claudius the president, was hanged first upon the rack, then was cast to the wild beasts, of whom he being nothing hurt, was after committed to the fire; and, finally, not touched therewith, (if the story of Vincentius be true,) was beheaded by the river's side, and his body thrown into the flood; where, immediately the same hour, the foresaid Claudius, with his assistant Anabius, were taken with wicked spirits, by whom they were so miserably vexed, that they bit off their tongues, and died.

Zenon, bishop of Verona, is said also in the same persecution to sustain martyrdom.

Moreover, in the same city of Alexandria aforesaid, Bergomensis in his eighth book, writing of the story of Valerianus, emperor, maketh mention of Philippus, bishop of the said see of Alexandria, who (as he saith) was under the said Valerian beheaded. But that is not to be found in any approved story, nor standeth it with the truth of time that any such Philip was then bishop of Alexandria, or any other, except only Dionysius. After whom next succeeded Maximus, who remained eighteen years, and after him Theonas, &c. So that, by the ancient records of old writers, it appeareth not that Philippus or any other of that name was bishop of Alexandria during this time signified by Bergomensis.

Although in some other later writers, as Equilinus, Antoninus, and Bergomensis, I find a certain history of one Philippus, president of Alexandria, about the same time of Valerian and Gallienus, elected by the emperor and senate of Rome to govern those quarters, where he was at length converted to the Christian faith, and after made priest, or bishop (as they say) of Alexandria; but that not to be so the testimony of ancient writers doth manifest. The history of this Philippus, witnessed in our later chronicles, is this: Philippus being promoted to the presidentship of Alexandria, came down with his wife Claudia, and his two sons, Avitus and Sergius, and with his daughter, named Eugenia; of the which Eugenia a long history full of strange and prodigious miracles is written of Antoninus and others, whereof many things I will cut off, and briefly touch the effect of the story, leaving to the judgment of the reader the credit of mine authors, as he shall see cause.

This Eugenia, daughter of Philippus, being of singular beauty, and diligently brought up by her parents in the study of science and learning, was by occasion of hearing Christians reduced and brought up to Christianity, with two other eunuchs, her school-fellows, called Prothus and Hiacinthus; with whom she taking counsel, upon occasion (whether to avoid the danger of persecution, or refusing to marry with a pagan) unknown to her parents and friends, did fly away; and because the more boldly she might resort to hear the readings of Helenus, then an aged bishop, and of others, she changed herself into man's apparel, and named herself Eugenius, under the which name she was at length admitted unto a certain monastery, or a society of Christians in the suburbs of Alexandria, (although I hardly believe that any monastery of Christians was then in the suburbs of Alexandria permitted,) where also, at the last, for her excellency of learning and virtue, she was made head of the place.

Here, by the way, I omit the miracles of the foresaid Helenus, bishop (as the story saith) of Hieropolis; how he carried burning coals in his lap, and how he adventured himself to go in the burning fire, to refel wicked Zereas, a pagan, remaining in the same unburned. Here also I omit the careful search of her parents for her, and of the answer of the Pythoness again unto them, that she was taken up to heaven among the goddesses. I omit moreover the miracles done by the said Eugenia, in healing the diseases and sicknesses of such as came to her, &c. The story proceedeth thus: Among others which were by this Eugenius cured and restored, there was a certain matron of Alexandria, named Melancia; who, after she had used the help and acquaintance of Eugenius, supposing her to be a man, fell into an inordinate love of her, seeking by all means how to accomplish the lust of her concupiscence. Insomuch that in her daily visiting of her, at length she began secretly to break her mind, and to entice her to her lewdness. Eugenius contrarily exhorted her to virtue and honesty, showing her the miseries of this life, and the peril of that folly. Melancia seeing that by no means she would be allured, nor by force drawn to her desire, and fearing moreover that she, in detecting of her, would bring her to shame, beginneth first to make an outcry of Eugenius, declaring how that she went about corruptly to deflower her; and so presented her accusation before Philippus the president, as well against Eugenius, as also against the rest of that company. This matter being heard, and the woman well known, the crime began to seem suspicious, and so much the more, because it was objected against the Christians. By reason whereof Eugenius with her fellow Christians was now not only in great hatred, but also in danger of present death and destruction. Then Eugenius purging herself and her honesty, although with sufficient probation, yet, notwithstanding, perceiving that whatsoever she said could take no place, and seeing no time now dissemble any longer, for the danger as well of her own self, as specially of her brethren, which troubled her more; she desired of the judge place and time to make manifest to him the truth, and so showed herself what she was, and how she was his daughter, the other to be Prothus and Hiacinthus, the two eunuchs, her school-fellows, uttering, moreover, to him and to her brethren, the cause of her departing from them. At the narration whereof, Philippus her father, and her two brethren, coming to the knowledge of her, conceived no little joy, in receiving their Eugenia again, whom they thought had been lost. No less gladness was among the people, to see the evidence of the matters so plainly to try out the truth of the one, and the falseness of the other. Whereat the malignant accuser was with double shame confounded, first for her dishonesty falsely cloaked, secondly for the untruth of her accusation openly detected. Bergomensis addeth, moreover, that the said accuser was stricken presently with lightning. Thus Eugenia, trying her honesty to her parents and friends, was not only received of them again, but also, by the grace of

the Lord working with her, in the space of time did win them to Christ. Whereby Philippus, the father of her by nature, now by grace was begotten of his own daughter to a more perfect life; and whom once he thought to have been lost, not only he found again, but also with her found his own soul and his own life, which before he had lost indeed. This Philippus (saith the story) was made afterward bishop of Alexandria, and there suffered martyrdom. Concerning whose martyrdom I deny not but it may be true; but that he was bishop of Alexandria, that cannot be admitted, as is before sufficiently proved out of Eusebius and other ancient historians.

Likewise it is said, that Eugenia, after the martyrdom of her father, returning to Rome with Prothus and Hiacinthus, by occasion of converting Basilla (who should have been married to a pagan husband, and was then beheaded) to the Christian faith, was assailed with sundry kinds of death: first being tied to a great stone and cast into Tiber, where she was carried up from drowning; then put in the hot baths, which were extinguished, and she preserved; afterward by famishment in prison, where they say she was fed at the hand of our Saviour: all which legendary miracles I leave to the reader to judge of them as shall seem good unto him. At last the story saith she was with the sword beheaded.

And because in this present history mention was made of Helenus, whom Antoninus with his fellows noteth to be the bishop of Hieropolis, here is to be understood and observed, by the way, that as Philippus in the foresaid history is falsely said to be bishop of Alexandria, so likewise untrue it is that Helenus was bishop of Hieropolis. For by Eusebius it appeareth, alleging the words of Dionysius, that he was bishop of Tarsus in Cilicia, and had there oversight of that church from the time of our Lord God two hundred fifty and four, to the year of our redemption two hundred seventy and four.

Aurelius Prudentius inferreth mention of Fructuosus. bishop of Tarraconia in Spain, who, with his two deacons. Augurius and Eulogius, suffered also martyrdom, being burned after six days' imprisonment under the foresaid emperors in this persecution. The cause of their punishment was for the profession of Christ's name; their judge and condemner was Emilianus; their imprisonment endured six days; the kind of death ministered unto them was fire; wherein they being all together cast with their arms bound behind them, their bands (as Prudentius writeth) were dissolved. their hands untouched with the fire, and their bodies remaining whole. The charge of this judge unto the bishop was this, that he should worship the gods whom the emperor Gallienus worshipped. To whom Fructuosus the bishop answering, Nay, (saith he,) I worship no dumb god of stocks and blocks, whom Gallienus doth worship; but I worship the Lord and Master of Gallienus, the Father and Creator of all times, and his only Son sent down to us. of whose flock I am here the pastor and shepherd. At this word Emilianus answering again, Nay, (saith he,) say not thou art, but say thou wast. And forth with commanded them to be committed to the fire, where (as is said) their hands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of them that stood by; praying also that the element, which seemed to fly from them, might work his full force upon them, and speedily despatch them, which was after their request obtained. In mean space, as they were in the fire, there was a certain soldier in the house of Emilianus, who did see the heavens above to open, and these foresaid martyrs to enter into the same, which soldier likewise showed the sight the same time unto the daughter of Emilianus the president, who, beholding the same sight with the soldier, was a present witness of the blessedness of them whom her cruel father had condemned.

As this godly bishop was preparing to his death, (saith Prudentius,) the brethren approaching to him brought him drink, desiring him with much weeping to receive and drink with them; but that he refused to do, requiring them, moreover, to refrain their tears. With like readiness the brethren also were diligent about him to pluck off his shoes and hose, as he was addressing himself to the fire; but neither would he suffer any servants' help in that wherein he was no less willing than able to help himself. And thus this blessed and fruitful bishop Fructuosus, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, being brought to the fire, witnessed the constant confession of the name of Christ, with the shedding of their blood.

And thus far continued wicked Valerian in his tyranny against the saints of Christ. But as all the tyrants before, and oppressors of the Christians, had their deserved reward at the just hand of God, which rendereth to every man according to his works; so this cruel Valerian, after he had reigned with his son Gallienus the term of six or seven years, and about two years had afflicted the church of Christ, felt the just stroke of his hand, whose indignation before he had provoked, whereof we have to witness Eutropius, Pollio, Sabellicus, Volateranus: for making his expedition against the Persians, whether by the fraud and treason of some about him, or whether by his own rashness, it is doubtful; but this is certain, that he fell into the hands of his enemies, being about the age of fourscore years, where he led his wretched age in a more wretched captivity. Insomuch that Sapore, the king of the Persians, used him, (and well worthy,) not for his riding-fool, but for his riding-block; for whenso ever the king should light upon his horse openly in the sight of the people, Valerian, emperor, was brought forth instead of a block, for the king to tread upon his back in going to his horseback. And so continued this blockish, butcherly emperor with shame and sport enough unto his final end, as witnesseth Letus and Aurelius Victor.

Albeit Eusebius, in a certain sermon to the congregation, declareth a more cruel handling of him, affirming that he was slain, writing in these words: "And thou, Valerian, forsomuch as thou hast exercised the same crudelity in murdering of the subjects of God, therefore hast proved unto us the righteous judgment of God, in that thyself hast been bound in chains, and carried away for a captive slave with thy gorgeous purple and thy imperial attire; and at length, also, being commanded of Sapore, king of the Persians, to be slain, and powdered with salt, hast set up unto all men a perpetual monument of thine own wretchedness," &c.

The like severity of God's terrible judgment is also to be noted in Claudius, his president, and minister of his persecutions. Of which Claudius Henricus de Erfordia thus writeth: that he was possessed and vexed of the devil in such sort, that he, biting off his own tongue in many small pieces, so ended his life.

Neither did Gallienus, the son of Valerian, after the captivity of his father, utterly escape the righteous hand of God; for beside the miserable captivity of his father, whom he could not rescue, such portents, strange and out of the course of nature, such earthquakes did happen, also such tumults, commotions, and rebellions did follow, that Trebellio doth reckon up to the number of thirty together, which, in sundry places, all at one time, took upon them to be tyrants and emperors over the monarchy of Rome, by the means whereof he was not able to succour his father, though he would. Notwithstanding, the said Gallienus, being (as is thought) terrified by the example of his father, did remove. at least did moderate, the persecution stirred up by the edicts of Valerian his father, directing forth his imperial proclamation, the tenor whereof proceedeth after this effect, as is to be seen in Eusebius, lib. vii. cap. 13:

"Emperor and Cæsar, Publius Licinius, Gallienus, Pius, Fortunatus, Augustus, unto Dionysius, to Pinna, and to Demetrian, and to all other the like bishops. The bountiful benignity of my gift I have willed and commanded to be proclaimed through the whole world, to the intent that such which are detained in banishment for discipline sake may safely return home again from whence they came; and for the same cause I have here sent to you the example of my rescript for you to peruse and to enjoy, so that no man be so hardy to vex or molest you; and this, which you may now lawfully enjoy, hath been long since by me granted. And therefore, for your more warrant in the same, I have committed the exemplar hereof to the custody of Aurelianus Cirenus, my chief steward, where you may fetch the copy to see at your pleasure."

This mandate above prefixed did Gallienus send to Dionysius Alexandrinus, and other bishops, as is premised. Another rescript also the said emperor sent to other Christian bishops, permitting to them full liberty to receive again their wonted places where they were wont to associate together.

By this it may appear, that some peace was granted then under this Gallienus to the church of Christ; albeit not so, but that some there were which suffered, of whom was one Marinus, mentioned in Eusebius. This Marinus being a warrior, and a nobleman in Cesarea, stood for the dignity of a certain order, which by all order of course was next to fall upon him by right, had not the envious ambition of him that should follow next after him supplanted him both of office and life; for he accused him to be a Christian, and therefore said that he was not to be admitted unto their offices, which was against their religion. Whereupon Achaius, then being judge, examined him of his faith; who, finding him to be a Christian indeed, and constantly to stand to his profession, gave him three hours to deliberate and advise with himself. There was the same time in Cesarea a bishop named Theotechnus, otherwise called Theodistus, who, perceiving him to stand in doubtful deliberation and perplexity in himself, took him by the hand and brought him into the house or church of the Christians, laying before him a sword (which he had under his cloak for the same purpose) and a book of the New Testament, and so willed him to take his free choice which of them both he would prefer. The soldier immediately, without delay, ran to the book of the gospel, taking that before the sword. And thus he, being animated by the bishop, presented himself bodily before the judge, by whose sentence he was beheaded, and died a martyr.

Whose body, being dead, one Asyrius, a noble senator of Rome, and a man very wealthy among the chief of that order, (who in the same time was there present at his martyrdom,) took up and bare upon his own shoulders, wrapping it in a rich and sumptuous weed, and so honourably committed it to the burial.

Of which Asyrius the said author writeth moreover this story: how that in the foresaid city of Cesarea, the Gentiles used thereof an ancient custom to offer up a certain sacrifice by a fountain side, the which sacrifice by the working of the devil was wont suddenly to vanish out of their eyes, to the great admiration of the inhabitants by. Asyrius seeing this, and pitying the miserable error of the simple people, lifting up his eyes to heaven, made his prayer to Almighty God in the name of Christ, that the people might not be seduced of the devil any longer; by the virtue of whose prayer the sacrifice was seen to swim in the water of the fountain; and so the strange wonder of that sight was taken away, and no such matter could be there wrought any more.

And because mention is made here of Cesarea, there followeth in the next chapter of the same author a strange miracle, if it be true, which he there reporteth; how that out of the same city was the woman which in the Gospel came to our

Saviour, and was healed of her bloody issue, her house being in the city of Cesarea. Before the door thereof was set up a certain pillar of stone, and upon the pillar an image was made of brass, of a woman meekly kneeling on her knees, and holding up her hands as one that had some suit. Against the which there was another image also of a man proportioned of the same metal, cunningly engraven in a short seemly vesture, and stretching forth his hand to the woman. At the foot of which pillar grew up a certain herb of a strange kind, but of a more strange operation, which growing up to the hem of his vesture, and once touching the same, is said to have such virtue, that it was able to cure all manner of diseases. This picture of the man (they say) represented the image of Christ. The history is written in Eusebius, as is said; the credit whereof I refer to the reader, whether he will think it true or false. If he think it false, yet I have showed him mine author: if he think it true, then must he think withal that this miraculous operation of the herb proceeded neither by the virtue of the picture, nor by the prayer of the other, being both dumb pictures, and engraven no doubt at that time by the hand of infidels; but to be wrought by some secret permission of God's wisdom, either to reduce the infidels at that time to the belief of the story, or to admonish the Christians to consider with themselves what strength and health was to be looked for only of Christ and no other advocate; seeing the dumb picture, engraven in brass, gave his efficacy to a poor herb to cure so many diseases. This picture (saith Eusebius) remained also to his time, which was under Constantinus the Great.

As touching the line and order of the Roman bishops hitherto intermitted, after the martyrdom of Xistus above specified, the government of that church was committed next to one Dionysius, about the year of our Lord two hundred sixty and six; who continued in the same the space of nine years, as Eusebius saith; as Damasus recordeth, but only six years and two months. Of his decretal epistles, because sufficient hath been said before concerning that matter, I omit to speak. After whom succeeded Felix, in the first year of Probus the emperor, about the year of our Lord two hundred and eighty, who governed that church five years, and died, as Platina saith, a martyr. After him followed Eutychianus, and then Gaius, both martyrs, as the histories of some do record.

About the time of these bishops lived Theodorus, bishop of Neocesarea, who is otherwise called Gregorius Magnus.

Thus Gallienus, the foresaid emperor, reigned, as is declared, with his father Valerian seven years, after whose captivity he ruled the monarchy alone about nine years, with some peace and quietness granted to the church.

The days of this Gallienus being expired, followed Claudius, a quiet emperor, as most stories do record. Although Vincentius affirmeth that he was a mover of persecution against the Christians, and maketh mention of two hundred sixty and two martyrs, which in his time did suffer; but because no such record remaineth to be found in Eusebius, who would not have omitted some memorial thereof, if it had been true, therefore I refer the same to the free judgment of the reader, to find such credit as it may. This Claudius reigned but two years, after whom came Quintilianus his brother, next emperor, and a quiet prince, who continued but only seventeen days, and had to his successor Aurelianus; under whom Orosius in his seventh book doth number the ninth persecution against the Christians.

Hitherto, from the captivity of Valerian, the church of Christ was in some quietness till the death of Quintilianus, as hath been declared; after whom Aurelianus, the next successor, possessed the crown; who in the first beginning of his reign (after

the common manner of all princes) showed himself a prince moderate and discreet, much worthy of commendation, if his good beginning had continued in a constant course agreeing to the same. Of nature he was severe, and rigorous in correcting, dissolute in manners; insomuch as it was said of him in a vulgar proverb, that he was a good physician, saving that he gave too bitter medicines. This emperor being sick, never sent for physician, but cured himself with abstinence; and as his beginning was not unfruitful to the commonwealth, so neither was he any great disturber of the Christians, whom he did not only tolerate in their religion, but also in their counsels; and they being the same time assembled at Antioch, he seemed not to be against them. Notwithstanding in continuance of time, through sinister motion and instigation of certain about him, (as commonly such are never absent in all places from the ears of princes,) his nature, somewhat inclinable to severity, was altered to a plain tyranny; which tyranny first he showed, beginning with the death of his own sister's son, as witnesseth Eutropius. After that he proceeded either to move, or at least to purpose, persecution against the Christians; albeit that wicked purpose of the emperor the merciful working of God's hand did soon overthrow. For as the edict or proclamation should have been denounced for the persecuting of the Christians, and the emperor now ready to subscribe the edict with his hand, the mighty stroke of the hand of the Lord suddenly from above did stop his purpose, binding (as a man might say) the emperor's hands behind him, declaring (as Eusebius saith) to all men, how there is no power to work any violence against the servants of God, unless his permission do suffer them, and give them leave. Eutropius and Vopiscus affirm, that as the said Aurelianus was purposing to raise persecution against us, he was suddenly terrified with lightning, and so stopped from his wicked tyranny. Not long after, about the fifth or sixth year of his reign, he was slain between Bisance and Hieraclea, in the year of our Lord two hundred seventy and eight. Thus Aurelianus rather intended than moved persecution. Neither is there any more than this found concerning this persecution in ancient histories and records of the church; where fore I marvel the more that Vincentius, collecting out of the martyrologies, hath comprehended such a great catalogue of so many martyrs which in France and in Italy (saith he) suffered death and torments under this emperor Aurelianus; whereunto Orosius also seemeth to agree in numbering this to be the ninth persecution under the said Aurelian.

Next after Aurelianus the succession of the empire fell to Publius Annus Tacitus, who reigned but six months; him succeeded his brother Florianus, who reigned but threescore days; and after him followed Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Probus. Of whom more hereafter (God willing) shall appear.

In the mean time, within the compass of these emperors falleth in a story recorded of Eusebius, and not unworthy here to be noted, whereby to understand the faithful diligence of good ministers, what good it may do in a commonwealth.

Mention is made before of Eusebius, the deacon of Dionysius, whom God stirred up to visit and comfort the saints that were in prison and bonds, and to bury the bodies of the blessed martyrs departed, not without great peril of his own life, who after was made bishop (as is said) of Laodicea. But before he came to Laodicea to be bishop there, it chanced, the said Eusebius remaining as yet at Alexandria, the city to be besieged of the Romans, Pырuchius being their captain. In which siege half of the city did hold with the Romans, the other half withstood them. In that part which went with the Roman captain was Eusebius, being also in great favour with the captain, for his worthy fidelity and service showed: with the other half that resisted the Romans was Anatholius, governor or moderator then of the school of Alexandria, who also was

bishop, after the said Eusebius, of Laodicea. This Anatholius, perceiving the citizens to be in miserable distress of famine and destruction, by reason of penury and lack of sustenance, sendeth to Eusebius, being then with the Romans, and certifieth him of the lamentable penury and peril of the city, instructing him, moreover, what to do in the matter. Eusebius, understanding the case, repaireth to the captain, desiring of him so much favour, that so many as would fly out of the city from their enemies might be licensed to escape and freely to pass, which was to him speedily granted. As Eusebius was thus labouring with the captain, on the other side Anatholius for his part laboured with the citizens, moving them to assemble together, and persuading them to give themselves over, in yielding to the force and might of the Romans. But when the citizens could not abide the hearing thereof; Yet (said Anatholius) with this I trust you will be contented, if I shall counsel you in this miserable lack of things to avoid out of your city all such superfluties and unnecessary impediments unto you, as old women, young children, aged men, with such other as be feeble and impotent, and not to suffer them here to perish with famine, whose presence can do no stead to you if they die, and less if they live, for spending the victuals which otherwise might serve them that be more able to defend the city. The senate hearing this sentence, and understanding moreover the grant of the captain promising them their safety, were well consenting thereunto. Then Anatholius, having a special care to them that belonged to the church of Christ, calleth them together with the rest of the multitude, and persuading them what they should do, and what had been obtained for them, caused them to void the city, and not only them, but also a great number of other more; who persuaded by him under that pretence, changing themselves in women's apparel, or feigning some impotency, so escaped out of the city. At whose coming out, Eusebius on the other side was ready to receive them, and refreshed their hungry and pined bodies, whereby not only they, but the whole city of Alexandria, was preserved from destruction.

By this little history of Eusebius and Anatholius, described in the seventh book of Eusebius, chap. 32, and briefly here set forth to thee, (gentle reader,) thou mayst partly understand the practice of the prelates, what it was in those days in the church, which was then only employed in saving of life, and succouring the commonwealths wherein they lived, as by these two godly persons Eusebius and Anatholius may well appear. Unto the which practice, if we compare the practice of our later prelates of the Church of Rome, I suppose no little difference will appear.

The next emperor to Florianus (as is said) was Marcus Aurelius Probus, a prince both wise and virtuous, and no less valiant in martial affairs than fortunate in the success of the same. During his time we read of no persecution greatly stirring in the church, but much quietness, as well in matters of religion as also in the commonwealth. Insomuch that, after his great and many victories, such peace infused, that his saying was, there needed no more soldiers, seeing there were no more enemies to the Commonwealth to fight against. It was his saying also, that his soldiers need not to spend corn and victual, except they laboured to serve the commonwealth. And for the same cause he caused his soldiers to be set a-work about certain mountains in Smyrna and in Messia to be planted with vines, and not so much as in winter suffered them to be at rest; therefore by them at length he was slain, in the year of our Lord two hundred eighty and two.

Carus, with his two sons, Carinus and Numerianus, succeeded next after Probus in the empire; the reign of which emperors continued in all but three years. Of the which three, first Carus, warring against the Persians, was slain with lightning. Of Numerianus his son, being with his father in his wars against the Persians, we find

much commendation in Eutropius, Vopiscus, and other writers, which testified him to be a valiant warrior, and an eloquent orator, as appeared by his declamations and writings sent to the senate; thirdly, to be an excellent poet. This Numerianus, sorrowing and lamenting for the death of his father, through immoderate weeping, fell into a great soreness of his eyes; by reason whereof he, keeping close, was slain not long after of his father-in-law, named Aper; who, traitorously aspiring to the empire, dissembled his death with a false excuse to the people asking for him, saying, For the pain of his eyes he kept in from the wind and weather; till at length, by the stench of his body being carried about, his death was uttered.

In the Life of this emperor Carus aforesaid, written by Eutropius, in the later edition, set forth by Frobenius, I find (which in other editions of Eutropius doth not appear) that Numerianus, the son of this Carus, was he that slew Babylas, the holy martyr, whose history before we have comprehended. But that seemeth not to be like, both by the narration of Chrysostom, and also for that Urspergensis, declaring the same history, and in the same words as it is in Eutropius, saith that it was Cyrillus whom Numerianus killed, the story whereof is this: What time Carus the emperor, in his journey going toward the Persians, remained at Antioch, Numerianus his son would enter into the church of the Christians, to view and behold their mysteries. But Cyrillus their bishop would in nowise suffer him to enter into the church, saying that it was not lawful for him to see the mysteries of God, who was polluted with sacrifices of idols. Numerianus, full of indignation at the hearing of these words, not suffering that repulse at the hands of Cyrillus, in his fury did slay the godly martyr. And therefore justly (as it seemed) was he himself slain afterward by the hands of Aper.

Thus Carus with his son Numerianus being slain in the east parts, as is declared, Carinus, the other son, reigned alone in Italy; where he overcame Sabinus striving for the empire, and reigned there with much wickedness, till the returning home of the army again from the Persians, who then set up Dioclesian to be emperor; by whom the foresaid Carinus, for the wickedness of his life, being forsaken of his host, was overcome, and at length slain with the hand of the tribune, whose wife before he had defloured. Thus Carus with his two sons, Numerianus and Carinus, ended their lives, whose reign continued not above three years.

All this mean space we read of no great persecution stirring in the church of Christ, but it was in mean quiet state and tranquillity unto the nineteenth year of the reign of Dioclesian; so that in counting the time from the latter end of Valerian unto this aforesaid year of Dioclesian, the peace of the church; which God gave to his people, seemeth to continue above four and forty years. During the which time of peace and tranquillity the church of the Lord did mightily increase and flourish; so that the more bodies it lost by persecution, the more honour and reverence it won daily among the Gentiles in all quarters, both Greeks and barbarous; insomuch that (as Eusebius in his seventh book describeth) amongst the emperors themselves divers there were which not only bare singular good will and favour to them of our profession, but also did commit unto them offices and regiments over countries and nations; so well were they affected to our doctrine, that they privileged the same with liberty and indemnity. What needeth to speak of them which not only lived under the emperors in liberty, but also were familiar in the court with the princes themselves, entertained with great honour and special favour beyond the other servitors of the court As was Dorotheus, with his wife, children, and whole family, highly accepted and advanced in the palace of the emperor; also Gorgonius in like manner with divers others more, who, for their doctrine and learning which they professed, were with their

princes in great estimation. In like reverence also were the bishops of cities and diocesses with the presidents and rulers where they lived; who not only suffered them to live in peace, but also had them in great price and regard, so long as they kept themselves upright, and continued in God's favour. Who is able to number at that time the might and innumerable multitudes and congregations assembling together in every city, and the notable concourses of such as daily flocked to the common oratories to pray? For the which cause they, being not able to be contained in their old houses, had large and great churches, new builded from the foundation, for them to frequent together. In such increasement (saith Eusebius) by process of time did the church of Christ grow and shoot up daily more and more, profiting and spreading through all quarters, which neither envy of men could infringe, nor any devil could enchant, neither the crafty policy of man's wit could supplant, so long as the protection of God's heavenly arm went with his people, keeping them in good order, according to the rule of Christian life.

But as commonly the nature of all men, being of itself unruly and untoward, always seeketh and desireth prosperity, and yet can never well use prosperity; always would have peace, and yet having peace always abuseth the same; so here likewise it happened with these men, which through this so great liberty and prosperity of life began to degenerate and languish unto idleness and delicacy, and one to work spite and contumely against another, striving and contending amongst themselves, for every occasion, with railing words after most despiteful manner; bishops against bishops, and people against people, moving hatred and sedition one against another, besides also cursed hypocrisy and simulation with all extremity increasing more and more. By reason whereof the judgment of God, after his wonted manner, (whilst yet the congregation began to multiply,) began by a little and a little to visit our men with persecution, falling first upon our brethren which were abroad in warfare; but when that touched the other nothing or very little, neither did they seek to appease God's wrath and call for his mercy; but wickedly thinking with ourselves, that God neither regarded nor would visit our transgressions, we heaped our iniquities daily more and more one upon another; and they which seemed to be our pastors, refusing the rule of piety, were inflamed with mutual contentions one against another. And thus, whilst they were given only to the study of contentions, threatenings, emulations, mutual hatred and discord, every man seeking his own ambition, and persecuting one another after the manner of tyranny; then, then, I say, the Lord, according to the voice of Jeremy, took away the beauty of the daughter of Zion, and the glory of Israel fell down from heaven, neither did he remember the footstool of his feet in the day of his wrath. And the Lord overturned all the comely ornaments of Israel, and destroyed all her gorgeous buildings, and, according to the saying of the Psalm, subverted and extinguished the testament of his servant, and profaned his sanctuary in destruction of his churches, and in laying waste the buildings thereof, so that all passengers spoiling the multitude of the people, they were made an obloquy to all the dwellers about. For he exalted the strength of his enemies, and turned away the help of his sword from her, nor aided her in the battle, but ceased from the purging of her and her seat. He struck down to the ground and diminished her days, and over all this poured upon her confusion. All these things were fulfilled upon us, when we saw the temples razed from the top to the ground, and the sacred Scriptures to be burnt in the open market-place, and the pastors of the church to hide themselves, some here, some there; some other, taken prisoners, with great shame were mocked of their enemies; when also, according to the saying of the prophet in another place, contempt was poured out upon the princes, and they caused to go out of the way, and not to keep the straight path.

11. The Tenth Persecution under Dioclesian

By reason whereof (the wrath of God being kindled against his church) ensued the tenth and last persecution against the Christians, so horrible and grievous, that it maketh the pen almost to tremble to write upon it; so tedious, that never was any persecution before or since comparable to it for the time it continued, lasting the space of ten years together. This persecution, although it passed through the hands of divers tyrants and workers more than one or two, yet principally it beareth the name of Dioclesian, who was emperor, as is above noted, next after Carus and Numerianus. This Dioclesian, ever having an ambitious mind, aspired greatly to be emperor. To whom Druas his concubine said, that first he should kill a wild boar before he should be emperor. He, taking effect at these words, used much with hands to kill wild boars; but seeing no success to come thereof, he used this proverb, I kill the boars, but others do eat the flesh. At length the said Dioclesian being nominated to be emperor, and seeing Aper (who had killed Numerianus the emperor) standing thereby, sware to the soldiers that Numerianus was wrongfully killed, and forthwith running upon Aper with his sword slew him. After this, he being stablished in the empire, and seeing on every side divers and sundry commotions rising up against him, which he was not well able himself to sustain, in the first beginning of his reign he chooseth for his colleague Maximianus, surnamed Herculius, father of Maxentius. Which two emperors, because of divers wars that rose in many provinces, chose to them two other noblemen, Galerius and Constantius, whom they called Caesars. Of whom Galerius was sent into the east parts against the Persians. Constantius was sent over to Britain to this our country of England to recover the tribute, where he took to wife Helena the daughter of king oill, which was a maiden excelling in beauty, and no less famously brought up in the study of learning, of whom was born Constantinus, the Great.

All this while hitherto no persecution was yet stirred of these four princes against the church of Christ, but quietly and moderately they governed the commonwealth; wherefore accordingly God prospered their doings and affairs, and gave them great victories; Dioclesian in Egypt, Maximian in Africa and in France, Galerius in Persia, Constantius in England and in France also. By reason of which victories, Dioclesian and Maximian, puffed up in pride, ordained a solemn triumph at Rome, after which triumph Dioclesian gave commandment that he should be worshipped as God, saying that he was brother to the sun and moon; and, adorning his shoes with gold and precious stones, commanded the people to kiss his feet.

And not long after, by the judgment of God, for certain enormities used in the church, above touched, began the great and grievous persecution of the Christians, moved by the outrageous cruelty of Dioclesian, which was about the nineteenth year of his reign, who in the month of March, when the feast of Easter was nigh at hand, commanded all the churches of the Christians to be spoiled and cast to the earth, and the books of Holy Scripture to be burned.

Thus most violent edicts and proclamations were set forth, for the overthrowing, as is said, of the Christians' temples throughout all the Roman empire. Neither did there want in the officers any cruel execution of the same proclamations. For their temples were defaced even when they celebrated the feast of Easter. And this was the first edict given out by Dioclesian. The next proclamation that came forth was

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for the burning of the books of the Holy Scripture; which thing was done in the open market-place, as before. Then next unto that were edicts given forth for the displacing of such as were magistrates, and that with great ignominy, and all other whoever bare any office, imprisoning such as were of the common sort, if they would not abjure Christianity, and subscribe to the heathen religion. And these were the beginning of the Christians' evils.

It was not long after but that new edicts were sent forth, nothing for their cruelty inferior to the rest, for the casting of the elders and bishops into prison, and then constraining them, with sundry kinds of punishments, to offer unto their idols. By reason whereof ensued a great persecution amongst the governors of the church, amongst whom many stood manfully, passing through many exceeding bitter torments, neither were overcome therewith, being tormented and examined divers of them diversely: some scourged all their bodies over with whips and scourges; some with racks and raisings of the flesh intolerable were cruciated; some one way, some another way, put to death. Some again violently were drawn to the unpure sacrifice, and, as though they had sacrificed, when indeed they did not, were let go. Other some, neither coming at all to their altars, nor touching any piece of their sacrifices, yet were borne in hand of them that stood by that they had sacrificed, and so suffering that false infamation of their enemies quietly went away; Other, as dead men, were carried and cast away being but half dead. Some they cast down upon the pavement, and trailing them a great space by the legs, made the people believe that they had sacrificed. Furthermore, other there were which stoutly withstood them, affirming with a loud voice that they had done no such sacrifice. Of whom some said they were Christians, and gloried in the profession of that name: some cried, saying that neither they had nor would ever be partakers of that idolatry; and those, being buffeted on the face and mouth with the hands of the soldiers, were made to hold their peace, and so thrust out with violence. And if the saints did seem never so little to do what the enemies would have them, they were made much of; albeit all this purpose of the adversary did nothing prevail against the holy and constant servants of Christ Notwithstanding of the weak sort innumerable there were which for fear and infirmity fell and gave over, even at the first brunt.

At the first coming down of these edicts into Nicomedia, there chanced a deed to be done much worthy of memory, of a Christian, being a noble man born; which, moved by the zeal of God, after the proclamation made at Nicomedia was set up, by and by ran and took down the same, and openly tare and rent it in pieces, not fearing the presence of the two emperors, then being in the city. For which act he was put to a most bitter death, which death he with great faith and constancy endured even to the last gasp.

After this the furious rage of the malignant emperors, being let loose against the saints of Christ, proceeded more and more, making havoc of God's people throughout all quarters of the world. First, Dioclesian (who had purposed with himself to subvert the whole Christian religion) executed his tyranny in the east, and Maximianus in the west. But wily Dioclesian began very subtly; for he put the matter first in practice in his own camp, in which the marshal of the field put the Christian soldiers to this choice, whether they would obey the emperor's commandment in the manner of sacrifice he commanded, and thus both keep their offices and lead their bands, or else lay away from them their armour and weapons. Whereunto the Christian men courageously answered, that they were not only ready to lay away their armour

and weapons, but also to suffer death, if it should with tyranny be enforced upon them, rather than they would obey the wicked decrees and commandments of the emperor.

There might a man have seen very many which were desirous to live a simple and poor life, and which regarded no estimation and honour in comparison of true piety and godliness. And this was no more but a subtle and wily flattery in the beginning, to offer them to be at their own liberty, whether they would willingly abjure their profession or not; as also this was another, that in the beginning of the persecution there were but a few tormented with punishment, but afterward, by little and little, he began more manifestly to burst out into persecution. It can hardly be expressed with words what number of martyrs and what blood was shed throughout all cities and regions for the name of Christ. Eusebius, in his eighth book and seventh chapter, saith that he himself knew the worthy martyrs that were in Palestina. But in Tyre of Phœnicia he declareth, in the same, a marvellous martyrdom made; where certain Christians being given to most cruel wild beasts, were preserved without hurt of them, to the great admiration of the beholders; and those lions, bears, and libards (kept hungry for that purpose) had no desire to devour them; which notwithstanding most vehemently raged against those by whom they were brought into the stage, who, standing as they thought without danger of them, were first devoured. But the Christian martyrs, because they could not be hurt of the beasts, being slain with the sword, were afterward thrown into the sea. At that time was martyred the bishop of Sidon. But Sylvanus, the bishop of Gazensis, with nine and thirty others, were slain in the metal mines of Phœnicia. Pamphilus, the elder of Cesarea, being the glory of that congregation, died a most worthy martyr; whose both life and most commendable martyrdom Eusebius oftentimes declareth in his eighth book and thirteenth chapter, insomuch that he hath written the same in a book by itself. In Syria all the chief teachers of the congregation were first committed to prison, as a most heavy and cruel spectacle to behold; as also the bishops, elders, and deacons, which all were esteemed as men-killers, and perpetrators of most wicked facts. After that we read of another, whose name was Tirannion, which was made meat for the fishes of the sea; and of Zenobius, which was a very good physician, which also was slain with brickbats in the same place.

Furthermore, he maketh mention in the same place of others which were not tormented to death, but every day terrified and feared without ceasing; of some others that were brought to the sacrifices and commanded to do sacrifice, which would rather thrust their right hand into the fire than touch the profane or wicked sacrifice. Also of some others that, before they were apprehended, would cast down themselves from steep places, lest that being taken they should commit any thing against their profession. Also of two virgins very fair and proper, with their mother also, which had studiously brought them up, even from their infancy, in all godliness, being long sought for, and at the last found, and strictly kept by their keepers; who, whilst they made their excuse to do that which nature required, threw themselves down headlong into a river. Also of other two young maidens, being sisters and of a worshipful stock, endued with many goodly virtues, which were cast of the persecutors into the sea. And these things were done at Antioch, as Eusebius in his eighth book and thirteenth chapter affirmeth. But Sylvanus, the bishop of Emissa, the notable martyr, together with certain others, was thrown to the wild beasts.

Divers and sundry torments were the Christians in Mesopotamia molested with; where they were hanged up by the feet, and their heads downwards, and with the

smoke of a small fire strangled; and also in Cappadocia, where the martyrs had their legs broken.

Henricus de Erfordia maketh mention of the martyrs of Tharsus in Cilicia, as Tharatus, Probus, and Andronicus; but yet the martyrs in the region of Pontus suffered far more passing and sharper torments, whereof I will hereafter make mention. So outrageous was the beginning of the persecution which the emperor made in Nicomedia in Bithynia, as is said before, that he refrained not from the slaughter of the children of emperors, neither yet from the slaughter of the most chief princes of his court, whom a little before he made as much of as if they had been his own children. Such another was Peter, which among divers and sundry torments (among whom he being naked was lifted up, his whole body being so beaten with whips and torn, that a man might see the bare bones; and after they had mingled vinegar and salt together, they poured it upon the most tender parts of his body; and lastly, roasted him at a soft fire, as a man would roast flesh to eat) as a victorious martyr ended his life. Dorotheus and Gorgonius, being in a great authority and office under the emperor, after divers torments were strangled with a halter; both which being of the privy chamber to him, when they saw and beheld the grievous punishment of Peter their household companion, Wherefore, (say they,) O emperor, do you punish in Peter that opinion which is in all us? Why is this accounted in him an offence that we all confess? We are of that faith, religion, and judgment that he is of. Therefore he commanded them to be brought forth, and almost with like pains to be tormented as Peter was, and afterwards hanged. After whom Anthimus, the bishop of Nicomedia, after he had made a notable confession, bringing with him a great company of martyrs, was beheaded. These men being thus despatched, the emperor vainly thought that he might cause the rest to do whatever him listed. To this end came Lucianus, the elder of the congregation of Antioch, and was martyred, after he had made his apology before the emperor.

Valerianus also, that monster, caused Serena, the wife of Dioeclesian the emperor, to be martyred for the Christian religion; so much did the rage of persecution utterly forget all natural affects. Other martyrs of Nicomedia doth Nicephorus in his seventh book and fourteenth chapter recite, as Enlampus and Eulampia, Agape, Irenæus, chief officer, were bound hand and foot to a post and burnt. And also Eusebius mentioneth such another like matter full of horror and grief. There assembled together in their temple many Christian men to celebrate the memory of the nativity of Christ, of every age and sort some. There Maximianus, thinking to have been given a very fit occasion to execute his tyranny upon the poor Christians, sent thither such as should burn the temple: the doors being shut and closed round about, thither come they with fire; but first they commanded the crier with a loud voice to cry, that whosoever would have life should come out of the temple, and do sacrifice upon the next altar of Jupiter they came to; and unless they would do this, they should all be burnt with the temple. Then one, stepping up in the temple, answered in the name of all the rest, with great courage and boldness of mind, that they were all Christians, and believed that Christ was their only God and King, and that they would do sacrifice to him, with his Father and the Holy Ghost, and that they were now all ready to offer unto him. With these words the fire was kindled and compassed about the temple, and there were burnt of men, women, and children certain thousands. There were also in Arabia very many martyrs slain with axes. There was in Phrygia a city unto which the emperor sent his edicts, that they should do sacrifice to the gods and worship idols; all which citizens, the major himself, the questor, and chief captain, confessed that they were all Christians. The city upon this was besieged and set on fire, and all the people. In

Melitina, a region of Armenia, the bishops and elders were cast in prison. In Arabrace, a region near adjoining to Armenia, Eustratius was martyred. This Eustratius was that countryman born, and very skilful in the Greek tongue, executing by the emperor's commandment the sheriff's office at Lieia in the east, which also did execution there upon the Christians, and was a scribe of great estimations. This man, beholding the marvellous constancy of the martyrs, thirsted with the desire of martyrdom, for that he had privily learned the Christian religion. Therefore he, not abiding for other accusers, detected himself, and worthily professed that he was a Christian, openly execrating the madness and vanity of the wicked ethnics. He therefore, being carried away, was tied up, being first most bitterly beaten, After that he was parched with fire being put unto his bowels, and then basted with salt and vinegar, and lastly so scourged and bemangled with the shards of sharp and cutting shells, that his whole body seemed to be all one continual wound; howbeit, by God's great goodness, afterward it was restored to the first integrity. After this he was carried away to Sebastia, where, with his companion Orestes, he was burnt. At that time also suffered Eugenins, Aurentius, Mardarius. And in no less wise raged this persecution throughout all Egypt, where Eusebius in his eighth book and thirteenth chapter maketh mention of Peleus and Nilus, martyrs, and bishops in Egypt. But at Alexandria especially were declared most notable conflicts of Christian and true constant martyrs that suffered; which Phileas, the bishop of Thumitan, describeth, as after (God willing) shall be declared. In this persecution of Alexandria, the principal that then suffered was Peter, the bishop of Alexandria, with the elders of the same, most worthy martyrs; as Faustus, Didius, and Ammonius; also Phileas, Hesichius, Pachiminus, and Theodorus; which all were bishops of the congregations within Egypt; and besides them many other both famous and singular men. The whole legion of Christian soldiers, which lay at Thebes in Egypt, under the Christian captain Mauritius, when they would not obey the emperor's commandment touching the worshipping of images, were tithed to death once, and then again; and at last, through the exhortation of Mauritius, died all together like constant martyrs. Likewise at Antino divers Christian soldiers, notwithstanding they were seriously dissuaded, suffered death together, among whom were Ascla, Philemon, and Apollonius. And also in the other parts of Africa and Mauritania was great persecution. Also in Sammium, of which place Chronicon maketh mention, and Sieilia, where were seventy-nine martyrs slain for the profession of Christ.

Now let us come unto Europe. Nicephorus in his seventh book and fourteenth Chapter saith, that at Nicopolis in Thracia the martyrs were in most miserable and pitiful wise handled, where Lisias had the execution thereof. In Chalcedon suffered Euphemia under Priseus the proconsul.

Henricus de Erfordia saith, that at Rome, Johannes and Crispus, being priests, had the execution of martyrs. And at Bohemia, Agricola and Vitalis. And at Aquileia the emperor commanded every man to kill the Christians. And among those martyrs he maketh mention of Felices and Fortunatus. Reginus also writeth that in other places of Italy the persecution became great, as at Florentia, Per gamus, Naples, Campania, Beneventus, at Venusa in Apulia, and in Thuscia. In France doubtless Rectionarus, appointed to that office, played the cruel hell-hound, of whose great cruelty against the Christians many histories are full. At Mediolanus suffered Victor. And at Massilia Maximianus set forth his decree, that either they should all do sacrifice unto the gods of the Gentiles, or else be all slain with divers kinds of torments; therefore many martyrs there died for the glory of Christ. In Belnacus suffered Lucian.

Vincentius and Reginus write of many places in Spain where was great persecution, as at Emerita, where suffered Eulalia, of whom more followeth here after; and Adula, where also suffered Vincentius, Sabina, and Christina. At Toletum suffered Lencadia the virgin; at Cesarea Augusta, where were put to death eighteen, beside a great number of other martyrs which suffered under Decianus the governor, which afflicted with persecution all the coasts of Spain. The foresaid Rectionarus made such persecution at Trevers, near the river of Mosella, that the blood of the Christian men that were slain ran like small brooks, and coloured great and main rivers. Neither yet did this suffice him, but from thence he sent certain horsemen with his letters, commanding them to ride into every place, and charge all such as had taken and apprehended any Christians, that they should immediately put them to death.

Also Henricus de Erfordia and Reginus make mention great persecution to be at Colonia, where Agrippina and Augusta were martyred, as also in the province of Rhetia.

Beda also saith that this persecution reached even unto the Britons, in his book De Ratione Temporum. And the Chronicle of Martinus and the Nosegay of Time do declare, that all the Christians in Britain were utterly destroyed; furthermore, that the kinds of death and punishment were so great and horrible, as no man's tongue is able to express. In the beginning, when the emperor by his subtlety and wiliness rather dallied than showed his rigour, he threatened them with bonds and imprisonment; but within a while, when he began to work the matter in good earnest, he devised innumerable sorts of torments and punishments; as whippings and scourgings, rackings, horrible scrapings, sword, fire, and ship-boats, wherein a great number being put were sunk and drowned in the bottom of the sea. Also hanging them upon crosses, binding them to the bodies of dead trees with their heads downward, hanging them by the middles upon gallows till they died for hunger, throwing them alive to such kind of wild beasts as would devour them, as lions, bears, libards, and wild bulls; pricking and thrusting them in with bodkins and talons of beasts till they were almost dead; lifting them up on high with their heads downward, even as in Thebaide they did unto the women being naked and unclothed, one of their feet tied and lifted on high, and so hanging down with their bodies, which thing to see was very pitiful, with other devised sorts of punishments most tragical, or rather tyrannical and pitiful, to describe: as, first, the binding of them to trees, and to the boughs thereof; the pulling and tearing asunder of their members and joints, being tied to the boughs and arms of trees; the mangling of them with axes, the choking of them with smoke by small and soft fires, the dismembering of their hands, ears, and feet, with other joints; as the holy martyrs of Alexandria suffered the scorching and broiling of them with coals, not unto death, but everyday renewed. With such kind of torments the martyrs at Antioch were afflicted. But in Pontus other horrible punishments, and fearful to be heard, did the martyrs of Christ suffer; of which some had their fingers' ends under the nails thrust in with sharp bodkins; some all to be sprinkled with boiling lead, having their most necessary members cut from them; some other suffering most filthy, intolerable, and undurable torments and pains in their bowels and privy members.

To conclude, how great the outrage of the persecution which reigned in Alexandria was, and with how many and sundry kinds of new-devised punishments the martyrs were afflicted, Phileas, the bishop of the Thumitans, a man singularly well learned, hath described in his epistle to the Thumitans, the copy whereof Eusebius hath in his eighth book and tenth chapter, out of the which we mean here briefly to recite somewhat. "Because (saith he) every man might torment the holy martyrs as they

listed themselves, some beat them with cudgels, some with rods, some with whips, some with thongs, and some with cords; and this example of beating was in sundry wise executed, and with much cruelty. For some of them, having their hands bound behind their backs, were lifted up upon timber logs, and with certain instruments their members and joints were stretched forth, whereupon their whole bodies hanging were subject to the will of the tormentors, who were commanded to afflict them with all manner of torments, and not on their sides only, (like as homicides were,) but upon their bellies, thighs, and legs they scratched them with the talons and claws of wild beasts. Some others were seen to hang by one hand upon the engine, whereby they might feel the more grievous pulling out of the rest of their joints and members. Some others were in such sort bound unto pillars with their faces turned to the wall, having no stay under their feet, and were violently weighed down with the poise of their bodies, that by reason of their strict binding, they being drawn out, might be more grievously tormented. And this suffered they, not only during the time of their examination, and while the sheriff had to do with them, but also the whole day long. And whilst the judge went thus from one to another, he by his authority appointed certain officers to attend upon those he left, that they might not be let down until either through the intolerableness of the pain, or by the extremity of cold, they being near the point of death should be let down; and so were they haled upon the ground. And further, they were commanded that they should show not so much as one spark of mercy or compassion upon us; but so extremely and furiously did they deal with us, as though our souls and bodies should have died together. And therefore yet another torment our adversaries devised to augment our former plagues. After that they had most lamentably beaten them, they devised moreover a new kind of rack, wherein they lying upright were stretched by both the feet above the fourth stop or hole with sharp shells or shards strewed under them, after a strange kind of engine to us here unknown. Other some were cast down upon the pavement, where they were oppressed so thick and so grievously with torments, that it is not almost to be thought what afflictions they suffered.

" Thus lying in pains and torments, some died therewith, not a little shaming and confounding their enemies by their singular patience. Some half dead and half alive were thrust into prison, where shortly after by pains and wounds of their bodies they ended their bitter life. Some again, being cured of their wounds by their endurance in prison, were more confirmed, who being put to the choice whe ther they would come to their cursed sacrifice, and enjoy their wicked liberty, or else sustain the sentence of death, did willingly and without delay abide the extremity, remembering with themselves what is written in the Scriptures. He that sacricech (saith he) to strange gods shall be exterminated, &c. Item, Thou shalt have no strange gods beside me, &c." Thus much wrote Phileas to the congregation where he was bishop, before he received the sentence of death, being yet in bonds; and in the same he exhorteth his brethren constantly to persist after his death in the truth of Christ professed.

Sabellicus in his seventh Ennead. and eighth book saith that that christened man, which tore and pulled down the wicked edict of the emperor in Nicomedia, being stripped and beaten that the bones appeared, and after washed in salt and vinegar, was then slain with this cruel kind of torment. But Platina writeth that Dorotheus and Gorgonius exhorted him to die so constantly.

But as all their torments were for their horribleness marvellous and notable, and therewithal so studiously devised, and no less grievous and sharp; so notwithstanding, therewith were these martyrs neither dismayed nor overcome, but

rather thereby confirmed and strengthened; so merrily and joyfully sustained they whatsoever was put unto them. Eusebius saith, that he himself beheld and saw the huge and great persecution that was done in Thebaide; insomuch that the very swords of the hangmen and persecutors being blunt with the great and often slaughter, they themselves for weariness sat down to rest them, and others were fain to take their places. And yet all this notwithstanding the murdered Christians showed their marvellous readiness, willingness, and divine fortitude which they were endued with; with stout courage, joy, and smiling receiving the sentence of death pronounced upon them, and sung even unto the last gasp hymns and psalms to God. So did also the martyrs of Alexandria, as witnesseth Phileas above mentioned. The holy martyrs (saith he) keeping Christ in their minds, being led with the love of better rewards, sustained not only at one time whatsoever labour and devised punishments they had to lay upon them; but now also the second time have done the same, and have borne all the menaces of the cruel soldiers, not only in words wherewith they threatened them, but also whatsoever in deed and work they could devise to their destruction, and that with most manly stomachs, excluding all fear, with the perfection of their unspeakable love towards Christ, whose great strength and fortitude cannot by words be expressed. And Sulpitius saith in the second book of his Sacred History, that then the Christians with more greedy desire pressed and sought for martyrdom than now they do desire bishoprics.

Although some there were also, as I have said, that with fear and threatenings, and by their own infirmities, were overcome and went back; among whom Socrates nameth Miletus; and Athanasius in his second Apology nameth the bishop of Licus, a city in Little Egypt, whom Peter the bishop of Alexandria excommunicated, for that in this persecution he sacrificed unto the Gentiles' gods. Of the fall of Marcellinus, the bishop of Rome, I will speak afterwards; for he being persuaded by others, and especially of the emperor Dioclesian himself, did sacrifice, whereupon he was excommunicated; but afterwards he repenting the same, was again received into the congregation, and made martyr, as Platina and the compiler of the book of the General Councils affirm. The number of the martyrs increased daily; sometimes ten, sometimes twenty, were slain at once; some whiles thirty, and often times threescore, and other whiles a hundred in one day, men, women, and children, by divers kinds of death. Also Damasus, Beda, Orosius, Honorius, and others do witness, that there were slain in this persecution by the names of martyrs, within the space of thirty days, seventeen thousand persons, besides another great number and multitude that were condemned to the metal mines and quarries with like cruelty.

At Alexandria with Peter the bishop, of whom I have made mention before, were slain with axes three hundred and above, as Sabellius declareth. Gereon was beheaded at Colonia Agrippina, with three hundred of his fellows. Mauritius, the captain of Christian religion, with his fellows, six thousand six hundred sixty and six. Victor in the city of Troy, now called Xanthus, with his fellows, three hundred and threescore, were slain. Reginus reciteth the names of many other martyrs, to the number of one hundred and twenty.

And forsomuch as mention here hath been made of Mauritius and Victor, the particular description of the same history I thought here to insert, taken out of Ado, and other story writers, as ensueth.

Mauritius came out of Syria into France and Italy, being captain of the band of the Theban soldiers, to the number of six thousand six hundred and threescore, being

sent for of Maximianus, to go against the rebellious Bangandes; but rather, as it should seem, by the reason of the tyrant, which thought he might better in these quarters use his tyranny upon the Christians than in the east part. These Thebans, with Mauritius the captain, after that they had entered into Rome, were there of Marcellus the blessed bishop confirmed in the faith, promising by oath that they would rather be slain of their enemies than forsake that faith which they had received; who followed the emperor's host through the Alps even into France. At that time the Cesareans were encamped not far from the town called Ottodor, where Maximianus offered sacrifice to his devils, and called all the soldiers both of the east and west to the same, strictly charging them by the altars of his gods that they would fight against those rebels the Bangandes, and persecute the Christian enemies of the emperor's gods; which his commandment was showed to the Thebans' host, which were also encamped about the river of Rode, and in a place that was named Agawne; but to Ottodor they would in no wise come, for that every man did certainly appoint and persuade with themselves rather in that place to die, than either to sacrifice to the gods, or bear armour against the Christians. Which thing indeed very stoutly and valiantly they affirmed, upon their oath before taken to Maximianus, when he sent for them. Wherewith the tyrant, being wrathful and all moved, commanded every tenth man of that whole band to be put to the sword, whereto strivingly and with great rejoicing they committed their necks. To which notable thing and great force of faith Mauritius himself was a great encourager, who by and by with a most grave oration exhorted and animated his soldiers both to fortitude and constancy. Which, being again called of the emperor, answered in this wise, saying, "We are, O emperor, your soldiers, but yet also, to speak freely, the servants of God. We owe to thee service of war, to him innocency; of thee we receive for our travail wages, of him the beginning of life. But in this we may in no wise obey thee, O emperor, to deny God our author and Lord, and not only ours, but your Lord likewise, will ye nill ye. If we be not so extremely enforced that we offend him, doubtless, as we have hitherto before, we will yet obey you; but otherwise we will rather obey him than you. We offer here our hands against any other enemies; but to defile our hands with the blood of innocents, that we may not do. These right hands of ours have skill to fight against the wicked and true enemies; but to spoil and murder the godly and citizens, they have no skill at all. We have in remembrance how we took armour in hand for the defence of the citizens, and not against them. We fought always for justice sake, piety, and for the health of innocents. These have been always the rewards of our perils and travail. We have fought in the quarrel of faith, which in no wise we can keep to you, if we do not show the same to our God. We first sware upon the sacraments of our God, then afterward to the king; and do you think the second will avail us, if we break the first? By us you would plague the Christians, to do which feat we are only commanded by you. We are here ready to confess God the author of all things, and believe in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. We see before our eyes our fellows, and partakers of our labours and travails, to be put to the sword, and we sprinkled with their blood; of which our most blessed companions and brethren the end and death we have not bewailed nor mourned, but rather have been glad, and have rejoiced thereat, for that they have been counted worthy to suffer for the Lord their God. The extreme necessity of death cannot move us against your Majesty, neither yet any desperation, O emperor. which is wont in yenturous affairs to do much, shall arm us against you. Behold, here we cast down our weapons, and resist not, for that we had rather to be killed than kill, and guiltless to die than guilty to live. Whatsoever more ye will command, appoint, and enjoin us. we are here ready to suffer, yea, both fire and

sword, and whatsoever other torments. We confess ourselves to be Christians. we cannot persecute Christians, nor will do sacrifice to your devilish idols.

With which their answer. the king being altogether incensed and moved, commanded the second time the tenth man of them that were left to be in like case murdered. That cruelty also being accomplished, at length, when the Christian soldiers would in no wise condescend unto his mind, he set upon them with his whole host. both footmen and also horsemen, and charged them to kill them all. Who with all force set upon them; they making no resistance, but, throwing down their armour, yielded their lives to the persecutors, and offered to them their naked bodies.

Victor at the same time was not of that band, nor yet then any soldier; but being an old soldier, was dismissed for his age. At which time he, coming suddenly upon them as they were banqueting and making merry with the spoils of the holy martyrs, was bidden to sit down with. them; who first asking the cause of that their so great rejoicing, and understanding the truth thereof, detested the guests, and refused to eat with them. And then being demanded of them whether happily he were a Christian or no, openly confessed and denied not but that he was a Christian, and ever would be. And thereupon they rushing upon him, killed him, and made him partner of the like martyrdom and honour.

Beda in his history writeth, that this persecution, being under Diolesian, endured unto the seventh year of Constantinus. And Eusebius saith that it lasted until the tenth year of Constantinus. It was not yet one year from the day in which Dioclesian and Maximinian, joining themselves together, began their persecution, when that they saw the number of the Christians rather to increase than to diminish, notwithstanding all the cruelty that ever they could show, and now were out of all hope for the utter rooting out of them. Which thing was the cause of their first enterprise; and having now even their fill of blood, and loathing, it were, the shedding thereof, they ceased at the last of their own accord to put any more Christians to death. But yet of a great multitude they did thrust out their right eyes, and maimed their left legs at the ham with a searing iron, condemning them to the mines of metal, not so much for the use of their labour, as for the desire of afflicting them. And this was the clemency and release of the cruelty of those princes, which said that it was not meet that the cities should be defiled with the blood of citizens, and to make the emperor's highness to be stained with the name of cruelty, but to show his princely beneficence and liberality to all men.

When Dioclesian and Maximinian had reigned together emperors one and twenty years, (Nicephorus saith two and twenty years,) at length Dioclesian put himself from his imperial dignity at Nicomedia, and lived at Salona, Maximinian at Mediolanum, and led both of them a private life. This strange and marvellous alteration gave occasion and so it came to pass, that, within short space after, there were in the Roman commonwealth many emperors at one time.

In the beginning of this persecution, you heard how Dioclesian being made emperor took to him Maximinian. Also how these two, governing as emperors together, chose out other two Cæsars under them, to wit, Galerius Maximinus, and Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great. Thus then Dioclesian reigning with Maximinian, in the nineteenth year of his reign began his furious persecution against the Christians, whose reign after the same continued not long. For so it pleased God to put such a snaffle in the tyrant's mouth, that within two years after he caused both him and Maximinian (for what cause he knoweth) to give over their imperial function, and

so to remain not as emperors any more, but as private persons. So that they being now displaced and dispossessed, the imperial dominion remained with Constantius and Galerius Maximinus, which two divided the whole monarchy between them; so that Maximinus should govern the east countries, and Constantius the west parts. But Constantius, as a modest prince, only contented with the imperial title, refused Italy and Africa, contenting himself only with France, Spain, and Britain. Wherefore Galerius Maximinus chose to him his two sons, Maximinus and Severus. Likewise Constantius took Constantinus his son Cæsar under him. In the mean time, while Maximinus with his two Cæsars were in Asia, the Roman soldiers set up for their emperor Maxentius, the son of Maximinian, who had before deposed himself. Against whom Maximinus, the emperor of the east, sent his son Severus, which Severus was slain in the same voyage of Maxentius, in whose place then Maximinus took Licinius. And these were the emperors and Cæsars which, succeeding after Dioclesian and Maximinian, prosecuted the rest of that persecution, which Dioclesian and Maximinian before begun, during near the space of seven or eight years, which was to the year of our Lord three hundred and eighteen; save only that Constantius with his son Constantinus was no great doer therein, but rather a maintainer and a supporter of the Christians. Which Constantius, surnamed Clorus for his paleness, was the son of Eutropius, a man of great nobility of the Roman nation, as Letus affirmeth. He came of the line of Eneas and Claudia, the daughter of Claudius Augustus. This man had not the desire of great and mighty dominions, and therefore parted he the empire with Galerius, and would rule but in France, Britain, and Spain, refusing the other kingdoms for the troublesome and difficult government of the same. Otherwise he was a prince, as Eutropius maketh description of him, very excellent, civil, meek, gentle, liberal, and desirous to do good unto those that had any private authority under him. And as Cyrus once said, that he got treasure enough when he made his friends rich; even so it is said that Constantius would oftentimes say, that it were better that his subjects had treasure than he to have it in his treasure-house. Also he was by nature sufficed with a little, insomuch that he used to eat and drink in earthen vessels (which thing was counted in Agathocles the Sicilian a great commendation); and if at any time cause required to garnish his table, he would send for plate and other furniture to his friends. To these virtues he added yet a more worthy ornament, that is, devotion, love, and affection towards the word of God, as Eusebius in his eighth book and thirteenth chapter affirmeth; after which virtues ensued great peace and tranquillity in all his provinces. By which word he being guided, neither levied any wars contrary to piety and Christian religion, neither aided he any other that did the same, neither destroyed he the churches, but commanded that the Christians should be preserved and defended, and kept them safe from all contumelious injuries. And when that in the other jurisdictions of the empire the congregations were molested with persecution, as Sozomenus declareth in his first book and sixth chapter, he only gave licence unto the Christians to live after their accustomed manner. This wonderful act of his following, besides others, doth show that he was a sincere worshipper and of the Christian religion.



The prelates before the Cæsar Constantius

Those which bare the chief offices amongst the ethnics drove out of the emperor's court all the godly Christians; whereupon this ensued, that the emperors themselves, at the last, were destitute of help, when such were driven away, which dwelling in their courts, and living a godly life, poured out their prayers unto God for the prosperous estate and health both of the empire and emperor. Constantius therefore, minding at a certain time to try what sincere and good Christians he had yet in his court, called together all his officers and servants in the same, feigning himself to choose out such as would do sacrifice to devils, and that those only should dwell there and keep their offices, and that those which would refuse to do the same should be thrust out and banished the court. At this appointment, all the courtiers divided themselves into companies: the emperor marked which were the constantest and godliest from the rest. And when some said they would willingly do sacrifice, other some openly and boldly denied to do the same; then the emperor sharply rebuked those which were so ready to do sacrifice, and judged them as false traitors unto God, accounting them unworthy to be in his court which were such traitors to God; and forthwith commanded that they only should be banished the same. But greatly he commended them which refused to do sacrifice, and confessed God, affirming that they only were worthy to be about a prince; forthwith commanding that thenceforth they should be the trusty counsellors and defenders both of his person and kingdom; saying thus much more, that they only were worthy to be in office, whom he might make account of as his assured friends, and that he meant to have them in more estimation than the substance he had in his treasury. Eusebius maketh mention hereof in his first book of the life of Constantine, and also Sozomenus in his first book and sixth chapter.

With this Constantius was joined (as hath been aforesaid) Galerius Maximinus, a man, as Eutropius affirmeth, very civil, and a passing good soldier; furthermore, a favourer of wise and learned men, of a quiet disposition, not rigorous but in his

drunkenness, whereof he would soon after repent him, as Victor writeth; whether he meaneth Maximinus the father, or Maximinus his son, it is uncertain. But Eusebius far otherwise describeth the conditions of him in his eighth book and first chapter. For he saith he was of a tyrannical disposition, the fearfulest man that might be, and curious in all magical superstition; insomuch that without the divinations and answers of devils he durst do nothing at all; and therefore he gave great offices and dignities to enchanters. Furthermore, that he was an exactor and extortioner of the citizens, liberal to those that were flatterers, given to surfeiting and riot, a great drinker of wine, and in his furious drunkenness most like a madman, a ribald, and adulterer, which came to no city but he ravished virgins, and defiled men's wives. To conclude, he was so great an idolater, that he built up temples in every city, and repaired those that were fallen in great decay; and he chose out the most worthy of his political magistrates to be the idol's priests, and devised that they should execute that their office with great authority and dignity, and also with warlike pomp. But unto Christian piety and religion he was most incensive, and in the east churches exercised cruel persecution, and used as executioners of the same Pencetius, Quintianus, and Theotechnus, beside others.

Notwithstanding he was at length revoked from ins cruelty by the just judgment and punishment of God. For he was suddenly vexed with a fatal disease, most filthy and desperate, which disease to describe was very strange, taking the first beginning in his flesh outwardly, from thence it proceeded more and more to the inward parts of his body. For in the members of his body there happened unto him a sudden putrefaction. By reason whereof the physicians which had him in cure, not able to abide the intolerable smell, some of them were commanded to be slain. Other some, because they could not heal him, being so swollen and past hope of cure, were also cruelly put to death. At length, being put in remembrance that his disease was sent of God, he began to forethink the wickedness that he had done against the saints of God; and so coming again to himself, first confesseth to God all his offences, then calling them unto him which were about him, forthwith commanded all men to cease from the persecutions of the Christians; requiring, moreover, that they should set up his imperial proclamations for the restoring and re-edifying of their temples, and that they would obtain this of the Christians in their assemblies, (which without all fear and doubt they might be bold to make,) that they would devoutly pray to their God for the emperor. Then forthwith was the persecution stayed, and the imperial proclamations in every city were set up, containing the retraction or countermand of those things which against the Christians were before decreed, the copy whereof ensueth.

"Amongst other things, which for the benefit and commodity of the commonwealth we established, we commanded to reform all things according to the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans, and also to use this policy, that the Christians, which had forsaken the religion of their forefathers, should be brought again to the right way. For such fantastical singularity was amongst them, that those things which their elders had received and allowed they rejected and disallowed, devising every man such laws as they thought good, and observed the same, assembling in divers places great multitudes of people.

"Therefore, when our foresaid decree was proclaimed, many there were that felt the penalty thereof, and many being troubled, therefore, suffered many kinds of death. And because we see yet that there be many which persevere in the same, which neither give due worship unto the celestial gods, neither receive the God of the Christians, we having respect to our accustomed benignity, wherewith we are wont to show favour unto all men, think good in this cause also to extend our clemency, that

the Christians may be again tolerated, and appoint them places where again they may meet together, so that they do nothing contrary to public order and discipline. By another epistle we mean to prescribe unto the judges what shall be convenient for them to do. Wherefore, according as this our bountiful clemency deserveth, let them make intercession to God for our health, commonwealth, and for themselves, that in all places the state of the commonwealth may be preserved, and that they themselves may be able safely to live within their bounds."

But one of his inferior officers, whose name was also Maximinus, was not well pleased when this countermand was published throughout all Asia, and the provinces where he had to do. Yet he being qualified by this example, that it was not convenient for him to repugn the pleasure of those princes which had the chief authority, as Constantinus and Maximinus, set forth of himself no edict touching the same; but commanded his officers in the presence of others that they should somewhat stay from the persecution of the Christians; of which commandment of the inferior Maximinus each of them gave intelligence unto their fellows by their letters. But Sabinus, which then amongst them all had the chiefest office and dignity, to the substitutes of every country wrote by his letters the emperor's pleasure in this wise.

"The majesty of our most gracious and sovereign lords the emperors hath lately decreed with special diligence and devotion, to induce all men to a uniform life, so that they which seemed to dissent from the Roman custom, by a strange manner of living, should exhibit to the immortal gods their due and proper worship; but the wilful and obstinate mind of divers so much and so continually resisted the same, that by no lawful means they might be revoked from their purpose, neither made afraid by any terror or punishment. Because therefore it so came to pass, that by this means many put themselves in peril and jeopardy, the majesty of our sovereign lords the emperors, according to their noble piety, considering that it was far from the meaning of their princely majesties that such things should be, whereby so many men and much people should be destroyed, gave me in charge, that with diligence I should write unto you, that if any of the Christians from henceforth fortune to be taken in the exercise of their religion, in no wise ye molest the same, neither for that cause you do judge any man worthy of punishment; for that in all this time it hath evidently appeared that by no means they might be allured from such wilfulness. It is therefore requisite that your wisdom write unto the questors, captains, and constables of every city and village, that they may know it not to be lawful for them, or any of them, to do contrary to the prescript of this commandment, neither that they presume to attempt the same."

The governors therefore of every province, supposing this to be the determinate pleasure (and not feigned) of the emperor, did first advertise thereof the rustical and pagan multitude; after that they released and set at liberty all such prisoners as were condemned to the metal mines and to perpetual imprisonment for their faith, thinking thereby (where indeed they were deceived) that the doing thereof would please the emperor. This therefore seemed to them as unlooked for, and as light to travellers in a dark night. They gather themselves together in every city, they call their synods and councils, and much marvel at the sudden change and alteration. The infidels themselves extol the only and true God of the Christians. The Christians receive again all their former liberties; and such as fell away before in the time of persecution repent themselves, and after penance done they returned again to the congregation. Now the Christians rejoiced in every city, praising God with hymns and psalms. This was a marvellous sudden alteration of the church, from a most unhappy state into a better; but scarce suffered Maximinus the tyrant the same six months

unviolated to continue. For whatsoever seemed to make for the subversion of the same peace, (yet scarcely hatched,) that did he only meditate. And first of all he took from the Christians all liberty and leave for them to assemble and congregate in churchyards under a certain colour. After that he sent certain miscreants unto the Athenians, to solicit them against the Christians, and to provoke them to ask of him, as a recompence and great reward, that he would not suffer any Christian to inhabit in their country; and amongst them was one Theotechnus, a most wicked miscreant and enchanter, and a most deadly enemy against the Christians. He first made the way whereby the Christians were put out of credit and accused to the emperor; to which fraud also he erected a certain idol of Jupiter to be worshipped of the enchanters and conjurers, and mingled the same worship with ceremonies full of deceivable witchcraft. Lastly, he caused the same idol to give this sound out of his mouth; that is, Jupiter commandeth the Christians to be banished out of the city and suburbs of the same, as enemies unto him. And the same sentence did the rest of the governors of the provinces publish against the Christians; and thus at length persecution began to kindle against them. Maximinus appointed and instituted high priests and bishops in every city to offer sacrifice unto idols, and inveigled all those that were in great offices under him, that they should not only cease to pleasure them and to do for them, but also that they should with new-devised accusations against them, at their pleasure, put as many to death as by any means they might. They also did counterfeit certain practices of Pilate against our Saviour Christ full of blasphemy, and sent the same into all the empire of Maximinus by their letters; commanding that the same should be published and set up in every city and suburbs of the same, and that they should be delivered to the schoolmasters, to cause their scholars to learn by rote the same.

After that, one named Præfectus Castrorum, whom the Romans do call captain, allured certain light women, partly by fear, and partly by punishment, dwelling at Damascus in Phœnicia, and taken out of the court wherein they were accused, that they should openly say in writing, that they were once Christians, and that they knew what wicked and lascivious acts the Christians were wont to execute amongst themselves upon the Sundays, and what other things they thought good to make more of their own head, to the slander of the Christians. The captain showeth unto the emperor their words, as though it had been so indeed; and the emperor by and by commanded the same to be published throughout every city. Furthermore, they did hang up in the midst of every city (which was never done before) the emperor's edicts against the Christians, graven in tables of brass. And the children in the schools, with great noise and clapping of hands, did every day resound the contumelious blasphemies of Pilate unto Jesus, and what other things soever were devised of the magistrates, after a most despiteful manner. And this is the copy of the edict which Maximinus caused to be fastened to pillars, fraught with all arrogant and insolent hate against God and Christ.

"The weak and imbecile rebellion of man's mind (all obscurity and blindness of ignorance set apart, which hitherto hath wrapped the minds of impious and miserable men in the pernicious darkness of ignorance) is now at the length able to discern that the same is governed, as also corroborated by the providence of the immortal gods, the lovers of virtue; which thing, how acceptable it is to us, how pleasant and grateful, and how much proof the same hath declared of your well-disposed willing minds, is incredible to be told; although this was not unknown before, with what diligence and devotion ye served the immortal gods, whose wonderful and constant faith is not known by bare and naked words, but by your worthy and notable deeds. Wherefore

worthily is your city called the habitation and seat of the immortal gods, and by many examples it appeareth that the same flourisheth and prospereth by the presence of the celestial gods. For, behold, your city not regarding your private businesses, nor esteeming that which should have been for the special commodity thereof, when it perceived that cursed vanity to begin again to creep, and, as a fire negligently quenched, when the dead brands thereof began to kindle and make a great flame, by and by without delay, ye having recourse unto our piety, as unto the metropolitan of all Divine worship and religion, craved remedy and help; which wholesome mind, for your piety's sake, it is most manifest that the gods have endued you with. Therefore he, even that most mighty Jupiter, I say, which preserveth your most famous city, to that intent he might deliver and make free your country gods, your wives and children, your household gods and houses, from all detestable corruption, hath inspired you with this wholesome and willing mind, showing and declaring how worthy, notable, and healthful a thing it is to worship and to sacrifice to the immortal gods. For who is so void of reason and understanding, that knoweth not that this thing happeneth unto us by the careful study of the goodness of our gods, that the ground denieth not to give her timely increase, nor maketh frustrate the husbandman's hope, nor that wicked war dare show her face upon the earth, nor that the corruption of air is now cause of pestilence, neither that the sea swelleth with immoderate winds, neither that sudden storms are cause of hurtful tempest; to conclude, that the ground, which is as the nurse and mother of all things, is not swallowed up of her deep chaps and gapings by terrible earthquake; neither that the hills, made level with the earth, are not with gaping clefts devoured; all which evils, and greater than these, before this time to have happened, every man knoweth. And all these mischiefs came upon us for the pernicious error's sake of the extreme folly of those wicked men the Christians, when filthiness itself (as I may call it) so occupied their minds and overran the world. Let them behold the fields now all about full of corn, and overflown, as it were, with ears of corn. Let them view the pleasant meadows clothed with flowers, and moistened with showers from heaven, and also the pleasant and temperate weather. Therefore let all men rejoice that by your piety, sacrifices, and worshipping, the majesty of the most stern god of battle, Mars, is appeased, and that therefore we enjoy pleasant and firm peace. And how many soever have left that blind error and straying of the Christians unfeignedly, and be of a better mind, let them specially rejoice, as men delivered out of a sudden great tempest, and from a grievous disease, and have afterward obtained a delectable and pleasant life. For doubtless, if they had remained in that execrable vanity, far off had they been chased from your city and suburbs of the same, (according to your desire,) that your city by that means, according to your commendable diligence, cleansed from all impurity and impiety, may offer sacrifices according to the meaning of the same, with due reverence of the immortal gods. And that you may perceive in how good part your supplication was unto us, (yea, unasked and undesired,) we are most willing and ready to further your honest endeavours, and grant unto you, for your devotion, whatsoever ye ask of our magnificence. And that this thing may be accomplished, forthwith ask and have. And this thing with all speed endeavour you to obtain, which shall be a perpetual testimony of piety exhibited of your city to the immortal gods, and shall be a precedent to your children and posterity, and withal you shall obtain of us, for this your willing desire of reformation, condign and worthy rewards."

Thus came it to pass that at the length persecution was as great as ever it was, and the magistrates of every province were very disdainful against the Christians, which condemned some to death, and some to exile. Among whom they condemned three Christians at Emisa in Phœnicia, with whom Sylvanus the bishop, a very old

man, being forty years in the ecclesiastical function, was condemned to death. At Nicomedia Lucianus, the elder of Antioch, brought thither, after he had exhibited to the emperor his apology concerning the doctrine of the Christians, was cast in prison, and after put to death. In Amasea, a city of Cappadocia, Bringes, the lieutenant of Maximinus, had at that time the executing of that persecution. At Alexandria, Petrus, a most worthy bishop, was beheaded, with whom many other Egyptian bishops also died. Quirinus, the bishop of Scescanus, having a hand-mill tied about his neck, was thrown headlong from the bridge into the flood, and there a long while floated above the water; and when he opened his mouth to speak to the lookers on, that they should not be dismayed with that his punishment, was with much ado drowned. At Rome died Marcellus the bishop, as saith Platina; also Timotheus the elder, with many other bishops and priests, were martyred. To conclude, many in sundry places every where were martyred, whose names the book entitled Fasciculus Temporum declareth, as Victorianus, Symphorianus, Castorius with his wife, Castulus, Cæsarius, Mennas, Nobilis, Dorotheus, Gorgonius, Petrus, and other innumerable martyrs, Erasmus, Bonifacius, Juliana, Cosmas, Damianus, Basiinus, with seven others. Dorothea, Theophilus, Theodosia Vitalis, Agricola, Acha, Philemon, Hireneus, Januarius, Festus, Desiderius, Gregorius, Spoletanus, Agapes, Chionia, Hirenea, Theodora, and two hundred threescore and ten other martyrs. Florianus, Primus, and Felicianus, Vitus and Modestus, Crescentia, Albinus, Rogatianus, Donatianus, Pancratius, Catharina, Magareta, Lucia the virgin, and Antheus the king, with many thousand martyrs more. Simplicius, Faustinus, Beatrix, Panthaleon, Georgius, Justus, Leocandia, Anthonia, and other more, (to an infinite number,) suffered martyrdom in this persecution, whose names God hath written in the book of life. Also Felix, Victor with his parents, Lucia the widow, Gemenianus, with threescore and nineteen others. Sabinus, Anastasia, Chrysogonus, Felix, and Audactus, Adrianus, Natholia, Eugenia. Agnes also, when she was but thirteen years old, was martyred. Eusebius in his eighth book and fifteenth chapter rehearseth these kinds of torments and punishments; that is to say, fire, wild beasts, the sword, crucifyings, the bottom of the sea, the cutting and burning of members, the thrusting out of eyes, dismembering of the whole body, hunger, imprisonment, and whatsoever other cruelty the magistrates could devise. All which notwithstanding, the godly ones, rather than that they would do sacrifice, as they were bid, manfully endured. Neither were the women any thing at all behind them. For they, being enticed to the filthy use of their bodies, rather suffered banishment, or willingly killed themselves. Neither yet could the Christians live safely in the wilderness, but were fetched even from thence to death and torments, insomuch that this was a more grievous persecution under Maximinus the tyrant, than was the former cruel persecution under Maximianus the prince.

And forasmuch as ye have heard the cruel edict of Maximinus proclaimed against the Christians, graven in brass, which he thought perpetually should endure to the abolishing of Christ and his religion; now mark again the great handiwork of God, which immediately fell upon the same, checking the proud presumption of the tyrant, proving all to be false and contrary that in the brazen proclamation was contained. For where the foresaid edict boasted so much of the prosperity and plenty of all things in the same time of this persecution of the Christians, suddenly befell such unseasonable drought, with famine and pestilence, among the people, besides also the wars with the Annenians, that all was found untrue that he had boasted so much of before. By reason of which famine and pestilence the people were greatly consumed, insomuch that one measure of wheat was sold for two thousand and five hundred pieces of money of Athens coin, by reason whereof innumerable died in the cities, but many more in the

country and villages, so that most part of the husbandmen and countrymen died up with the famine and pestilence. Divers there were which, bringing out their best treasure, were glad to give it for any kind of sustenance, were it never so little. Others, selling away their possessions, fell by reason thereof to extreme poverty and beggary. Certain eating grass, and feeding on other unwholesome herbs, were fain to relieve themselves with such food as did hurt and poison their bodies. Also a number of women in the cities, being brought to extreme misery and penury, were constrained to depart the city, and fall to begging through the country. Some others were weak and faint, (as images without breath,) wandering up and down, and not able to stand for feebleness, fell down in the middle of the streets, and holding up their hands most pitiful, cried for some scraps or fragments of bread to be given them; and being at the last gasp, ready to give up the ghost, and not able to utter any other words, yet cried out that they were hungry. Of the richer sort divers there were, who being weary with the number of beggars and askers, after they had bestowed largely upon them, became hard-hearted, fearing lest they should fall into the same misery themselves as they which begged. By reason whereof the market-place, streets, lanes, and alleys lay full of dead and naked bodies, being cast out and unburied, to the pitiful and grievous beholding of them that saw them; wherefore many were eaten of dogs, for which cause they that lived fell to the killing of dogs, lest they, running mad, should fall upon them, and kill them also.

In like manner the pestilence, scattering through all houses and ages of men, did no less consume them, especially those which through plenty of victuals escaped famine. Wherefore the rich princes and presidents, and other innumerable of the magistrates, being the more apt to receive the infection, by reason of their plenty, were quickly despatched, and turned up their heels. Thus the miserable multitude being consumed with famine and with pestilence, all places were full of mourning, neither was there any thing else seen, but wailing and weeping in every corner. So that death, what for famine and pestilence, in short time brake up and consumed whole households, two or three dead bodies being borne out together from one house to one funeral.

These were the rewards of the vain brags of Maximinus and his edicts, which he did publish in all towns and cities against us, when it was evident, to all men how diligent and charitable the Christians were to them all in this their miserable extremity. For they only in all this time of distress, showing compassion upon them, travelled every day, some in curing the sick, and some in burying the dead, which otherwise of their own sort were forsaken. Other some of the Christians calling and gathering the multitude together, which were in jeopardy of famine, distributed bread unto them, whereby they ministered occasion to all men to glorify the God of the Christians, and to confess them to be the true worshippers of God, as appeared by their works. By the means and reason hereof, the great God and Defender of the Christians, who before had showed his anger and indignation against all men, for their wrongful afflicting of us, opened again unto us the comfortable light of his providence; so that by means thereof peace fell unto us, as light unto them that sit in darkness, to the great admiration of all men, which easily perceive God himself to be a perpetual director of our doings, who many times chasteneth his people with calamities for a time to exercise them, but after sufficient correction again showeth himself merciful and favourable to them which with trust call upon him.

By the narration of these things heretofore premised, taken out of the story of Eusebius, like as it is manifest to see, so it is wonderful to mark and note, how those

counsels and rages of the Gentiles achieved against Christ and his Christians, when they seemed most sure against them, were most against themselves. And whereby they thought most to confound the church and religion of Christ, the same turned most to their own confusion, and to the profit and praise of the Christians (God of his marvellous wisdom so ordering and disposing the end of things). For where the brazen edict of the emperor promised temperate weather, God sent drought; where it promised plenty, God immediately sent upon them famine and penury; where it promised health, God struck them, even upon the same, with grievous pestilence, and with other more calamities, in such sort that the most relief they had was chiefly by the Christians, to the great praise both of them, and to the honour of our God.

Thus most plainly and evidently was then verified the true promise of Christ to his church, affirming and assuring us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church builded upon his faith; as sufficiently may appear by these ten persecutions above specified and described. Wherein, as no man can deny but that Satan and his malignant world have assayed the uttermost of their power and might to overthrow the church of Jesus; so must all men needs grant that read these stories, that when Satan and the gates of hell have done their worst, yet have they not prevailed against this mount of Zion, nor ever shall. For else what was here to be thought, where so many emperors and tyrants together, Dioclesian, Maximinian, Galerius, Maximinus, Severus, Maxentius, Licinius, with their captains and officers, were let loose, like so many lions, upon a scattered and unarmed flock of sheep, intending nothing else but the utter subversion of all Christianity, and especially also when laws were set up in brass against the Christians, as a thing perpetually to stand; what was here to be looked for, but a final desolation of the name and religion of Christians? But what followed, partly ye have heard, partly more is to be marked, as in the story followeth.

I showed before how Maxentius, and the son of Maximinian, was set up at Rome by the pretorian soldiers to be emperor. Whereunto the senate, although they were not consenting, yet for fear they were not resisting. Maximinian his father, who had before deprived himself with Dioclesian, hearing of this, took heart again to him to resume his dignity, and so laboured to persuade Dioclesian also to do the same; but when he could not move him thereunto, he repairth to Rome, thinking to wrest the empire out of his son's hands. But when the soldiers would not suffer that, of a crafty purpose he flieth to Constantine in France, under pretence to complain of Maxentius his son, but in very deed to kill Constantine. Notwithstanding, that conspiracy being detected by Fausta the daughter of Maximinian, whom Constantine had married, so was Constantine through the grace of God preserved, and Maximinian retired back. In the which his flight by the way he was apprehended, and so put to death. And this is the end of Maximinian.

Now let us return to Maxentius again, who all this while reigned at Rome with tyranny and wickedness intolerable, much like to another Pharaoh or Nero. For he slew the most part of his noble men, and took from them their goods. And some time in his rage he would destroy great multitudes of the people of Rome by his soldiers, as Eusebius declareth. Also he left no mischievous nor lascivious act unattempted, but was the utter enemy of all womanly chastity, which used to send the honest wives whom he had adulterated with shame and dishonesty unto their husbands (being worthy senators) after that he had ravished them.

He was also much addicted to the magical art, to execute which he was more fit than for the imperial dignity. Often he would invoke devils in a secret manner,

and by the answers of them he sought to break the wars which he knew Constantine and Licinius prepared against him. And to the end he might the rather perpetrate his mischievous and wicked attempts, which in his ungracious mind he had conceived, according to his purpose, in the beginning of his reign he feigned himself to be a favourer of the Christians. In which thing doing, thinking to make the people of Rome his friends, he commanded that they should cease from persecuting of the Christians. And he himself in the mean season abstained from no contumelious vexation of them, till that he began at the last to show himself an open persecutor of them; at which time, as Zonaras writeth, he most cruelly raged against the Christians thereabouts, vexing them with all manner of injuries. Which thing he in no less wise did than Maximinus; as Eusebius in his eighth book and fifteenth chapter seemeth to affirm. And Platina declareth in the Life of Marcellus the bishop, that he banished a certain noble woman of Rome, because she gave her goods to the church.

Thus by the grievous tyranny and unspeakable wickedness of this Maxentius, the citizens and senators of Rome, being much grieved and oppressed, sent their complaints with letters unto Constantine, with much suit and most hearty petitions, desiring him to help and release their country and city of Rome; who hearing and understanding their miserable and pitiful state, and grieved therewith not a little, first sendeth by letters to Maxentius, desiring and exhorting him to refrain his corrupt doings and great cruelty. But when no letters nor exhortations would prevail, at the length, pitying the woeful case of the Romans, gathered together his power and army in Britain and France, there with to repress the violent rage of that tyrant: thus Constantine, sufficiently appointed with strength of men, but especially with strength of God, entered his journey coming towards Italy. Maxentius understanding of the coming of Constantine, and trusting more to his devilish art of magic than to the good will of his subjects, which he little deserved, durst not show himself out of the city, nor encounter with him in the open field, but with privy garrisons laid in wait for him by the way in sundry straits as he should come. With whom Constantine had divers skirmishes, and by the power of the Lord did ever vanquish them and put them to flight. Notwithstanding Constantine yet was in no great comfort, but in great care and dread in his mind, (approaching now near unto Rome,) for the magical charms and sorceries of Maxentius, wherewith he had vanquished before Severus sent by Galerius against him, as hath been declared, which made also Constantine the more afraid. Wherefore being in great doubt and perplexity in himself, and revolving many things in his mind, what help he might have against the operations of his charming, for he used to cut women great with child to take his devilish charms by the entrails of the infants, with such other like feats of devilishness which he practised: these things (I say) Constantine doubting and revolving in his mind, in his journey drawing toward the city, and casting up his eyes many times to heaven, in the south part, about the going down of the sun, saw a great brightness in heaven, appearing in the similitude of a cross, with certain stars of equal bigness, giving this inscription, IN HOC VINCE, that is, IN THIS OVERCOME. This miraculous vision to be true, for the more credit, Eusebius Pamphilus, in his first book De Vita Constantini, doth witness moreover, that he had heard the said Constantine himself oftentimes report, and also to swear this to be true and certain, which he did see with his own eyes in heaven, and also his soldiers about him. At the sight whereof when he was greatly astonished, and consulting with his men upon the meaning thereof, behold, in the night season in his sleep Christ appeared to him with the sign of the same cross which he had seen before, bidding him to make the figuration thereof, and to carry it in his wars before him, and so should he have the victory.

Wherein is to be noted (good reader) that this sign of the cross, and these letters added withal, *In hoc vince, In this conquer*, was given to him of God, not to induce any superstitious worship or opinion of the cross, as though the cross itself had any such power or strength in it to obtain victory; but only to bear the meaning of another thing, that is, to be an admonition to him, to seek and aspire to the knowledge and faith of Him which was crucified upon the cross for the salvation of him, and of all the world, and so to set forth the glory of his name, as afterward it came to pass. This by the way. Now to the matter.

The next day following after this night's vision, Constantine caused a cross after the same figuration to be made of gold and precious stone, and to be borne before him instead of his standard; and so, with much hope of victory and great confidence, as one armed from heaven, speedeth himself toward his enemy. Against whom Maxentius being constrained by force to issue out of the city, sendeth all his power to join with him in the field beyond the river of Tiber, where Maxentius craftily breaking down the bridge called Pons Miluius, caused another deceitful bridge to be made of boats and wherries, being joined together, and covered over with boards and planks in manner of a bridge, thinking therewith to take Constantine as in a trap. But here it came to pass which in the seventh Psalm is written; He digged a pit, and fell therein himself: let his working return upon his own head, and his unrighteousness upon his own pate. Which here in this Maxentius was rightly verified. For after the two hosts did meet, he being not able to sustain the force of Constantine fighting under the cross of Christ against him, was put to such a flight, and driven to such an exigent, that in retiring back, for haste thinking to get the city, upon the same bridge which he did lay for Constantine, was overturned by the fall of his horse into the bottom of the flood, and there, with the weight of his armour, he with a great part of His beaten men were drowned; representing unto us the like example of Pharaoh and his host drowned in the Red Sea, who not unaptly seemeth to bear a prophetic figuration of this Maxentius. For as the children of Israel were in long thralldom and persecution in Egypt under tyrants there, till the drowning of this Pharaoh their last persecutor; so was this Maxentius, and Maximinus, and Licinius, the last persecutors in the Roman monarchy of the Christians, whom this Constantine, fighting under the cross of Christ, did vanquish and set the Christians at liberty, who before had been persecuted now three hundred years in Rome, as hath been hitherto in this history declared.

Wherefore as the Israelites with their Moses, at the drowning of their Pharaoh, sung gloriously unto the Lord, who miraculously had cast down the horse and horsemen into the sea; so no less rejoicing and exceeding gladness was here, to see the glorious hand of the Lord Christ fighting with his people, and vanquishing his enemies and persecutors.

In histories we read of many victories and great conquests gotten; yet we never read, nor ever shall, of any victory so wholesome, so commodious, so opportune to mankind, as this was, which made an end of so much bloodshed, and obtained so much liberty and life to the posterity of so many generations. For albeit that some persecution was yet stirring in the east countries by Maximinus and Licinius, as shall be declared; yet in Rome and in all the west parts no martyr died after this heavenly victory gotten. And also in the east parts the said Constantine, with the said cross borne before him, consequently upon the same so vanquished the tyrants, and so established the peace of the church, that, for the space of a just thousand years after that, we read of no set persecution against the Christians unto the time of John Wickliffe, when the bishops of Rome began with fire to persecute the true members of

Christ, as in further process of this history (Christ granting) shall appear. So happy, so glorious (as I said) was this victory of Constantine, surnamed the Great. For the joy and gladness whereof the citizens who had sent for him before with exceeding triumph brought him into the city of Rome, where he with the cross was most honourably received and celebrated the space of seven days together, having moreover in the market-place his image set up, holding in his right hand the sign of the cross, with this inscription; With this wholesome sign, the true token of fortitude, I have rescued and delivered our city from the yoke of the tyrant.

By this heavenly victory of Constantine, and by the death of Maxentius, no little tranquillity came unto the church of Christ. Although notwithstanding in the east churches the storm of this tenth persecution was not yet altogether quieted, but that some tail thereof in those parts remained for the space of two or three years. But of this we mind to speak (Christ willing) hereafter. In the mean season, to return again to the west parts here in Europe, where Constantine then had most to do, great tranquillity followed, and long continued in the church, without any open slaughter, for a thousand years together, (to the time of John Wickliffe and Waldenses, as is before touched,) by the means of the godly beginning of good Constantine, who, with his fellow Licinius, being now established in their dominion, eftsoons set forth their general proclamation or edict, not constraining therein any man to any religion, but giving liberty to all men, both for the Christians to persist in their profession without any danger, and for other men freely to adjoin with them whosoever pleased. Which thing was very well taken and highly allowed of the Romans and all wise men. The copy of the edict or constitution here ensueth.

"Not long ago, we weighing with ourselves, that the liberty and freedom of religion ought not in any case to be prohibited, but that free leave ought to be given to every man to do therein according to his will and mind, we have given commandment to all men to qualify matters of religion as they themselves thought good, and that also the Christians should keep the opinions and faith of their religion; but because that many and sundry opinions by the same our first licence spring and increase through such liberty granted, we thought good manifestly to add thereunto, and make plain such things where by perchance some of them in time to come may, from such their observance, be let or hindered. When therefore by prosperous success I Constantinus Augustus, and I Licinius Augustus, came to Mediolanum, and there sat in council upon such things as served for the utility and profit of the commonwealth, these things amongst others we thought would be beneficial to ill men, yea, and, before all other things, we purposed to establish those things wherein the true reverence and worship of God is comprehended; that is, to give unto the Christians free choice to follow what religion they think good, and whereby the same sincerity and celestial grace which is in every place received may also be embraced and accepted of all our loving subjects. According therefore unto this our pleasure, upon good advisement and sound judgment, we have decreed, that no man so hardly be denied to choose and follow the Christian observance or religion; but that this liberty be given to every man, that he may apply his mind to what religion he thinketh meet himself, whereby God may perform upon us all his accustomed care and goodness. To the intent therefore you might know that this is our pleasure, we thought it necessary this to write unto you, whereby all such errors and opinions being removed, which in our former letters (being sent unto you in the behalf of the Christians) are contained, and which seem very indiscreet and contrary to our clemency, may be made frustrate and annihilate. Now, therefore, firmly and freely we will and command, that every man have a free

liberty to observe the Christian religion, and that without any grief or molestation he may be suffered to do the same. These things have we thought good to signify unto you by as plain words as we may, that we have given to the Christians free and absolute power to keep and use their religion. And forsomuch as this liberty is absolutely given of us unto them to use and exercise their former observance, if any be disposed, it is manifest that the same helpeth much to establish the public tranquillity of our time, every man to have licence and liberty to use and choose what kind of worshipping he list himself. And this is done of us only for the intent that we would have no man to be enforced to one religion more than another. And this thing also amongst others we have provided for the Christians, that they may have again the possession of such places in which heretofore they have been accustomed to make their assemblies; so that if any have bought or purchased the same, either of us or of any other, the same places, without either money or other recompence, forth with and without delay we will to be restored again unto the said Christians. And if any man have obtained the same by gift from us, and shall require any recompence to be made to them in that behalf, then let the Christians repair to the president, (being the judge appointed for that place,) that consideration may be had of those men by our benignity: all which things we will and command that you see to be given and restored freely, and with diligence, unto the society of the Christians, all delay set apart. And because the Christians themselves are understood to have had not only those places wherein they were accustomed to resort together, but certain other peculiar places also, not being private to any one man, but belonging to the right of their congregation and society; you shall see also all those to be restored unto the Christians, that is to say, to every fellowship and company of them, according to the decree, whereof we have made mention, all delay set apart. Provided that the order we have taken in the mean time be observed, that if any (taking no recompence) shall restore the same lands and possessions, they shall not mistrust, but be sure to be saved harmless by us. In all these things it shall be your part to employ your diligence in the behalf of the foresaid company of the Christians, whereby this our commandment may speedily be accomplished, and also in this case by our clemency the common and public peace may be preserved. For undoubtedly by this means, as before we hare said, the good will and favour of God towards us (whereof in many cases we have had good experience) shall always continue with us. And to the intent that this our constitution may be notified to all men, it shall be requisite that the copy of these our letters be set up in all places, that men may read and know the same, lest any should be ignorant thereof."

By these histories I doubt not (good reader) but thou dost right well consider and behold with thyself the marvellous working of God's mighty power; to see so many emperors at one time conspired and confederate together against the Lord, and Christ, his Anointed, whose names before we have recited, is Dioclesian, Maximinian, Galerius, Maxentius, Maximinus, Severus, Licinius, who having the subjection of the whole world under their dominion, did bend and extend their whole might and devices to extirpate the name of Christ and of all Christians. Wherein if the power of man could have prevailed, what could they not do? or what could they do more than they did? If policy or devices could have served, what policy was there lacking? If torments or pains of death could have helped, what cruelty of torment by man could be invented which was not attempted? If laws, edicts, proclamations, written not only in tables, but engraven in brass, could have stood, all this was practised against the weak Christians. And yet notwithstanding, to see how no counsel can stand against the Lord, note here how all these be gone, and yet Christ and his church doth stand. First, of the taking

away of Maximinian you have heard; also of the death of Severus; of the drowning moreover of Maxentius enough hath been said. What a terrible plague was upon Galerius, consuming his privy members with lice, hath been also described. How Dioclesian the quondam being at Salona, hearing of the proceedings of Constantine, and this edict, either for sorrow died, or, as some say, did poison himself. Only Maximinus now in the east parts remained alive, who bare a deadly hatred against the Christians, and no less expressed the same with mortal persecution, to whom Constantine and Licinius caused this constitution of theirs to be delivered. At the sight whereof, although he was somewhat appalled, and defeated of his purpose; yet for so much as he saw himself too weak to resist the authority of Constantine and Licinius, the superior princes, he dissembled his counterfeit piety, as though he himself had tendered the quiet of the Christians; directing down a certain decree in the behalf of the Christians, wherein he pretendeth to write to Sabinus afore mentioned, first repeating unto him the former decree of Dioclesian and Maximinian in few words, with the commandment therein contained touching the persecution against the Christians. After that, he reciteth the decree which he himself made against them, when he came first to the imperial dignity in the east part joined with Constantine. Then the countermand of another decree of his again, for the rescuing of the Christians, with such feigned and pretended causes, as is in the same to be seen. After that, he declareth how he, coming to Nicomedia at the suit and supplication of the citizens, (which he also feigned, as may appear before,) he applying to their suit, revoked that his former edict, and granted them that no Christian should dwell within their city or territories. Upon which Sabinus also had given forth his letters, rehearsing withal the general countermand sent forth by him for the persecution again of the Christians. Last of all now he sendeth down again another surcountermand, with the causes therein contained, touching the safety of the Christians, and tranquillity of them; commanding Sabinus to publish the same. But this surcountermand he then dissembled, as he had done in the other before. Howbeit shortly after, he making wars, and fighting a baffle with Licinius, wherein he lost the victory, coming home again, took great indignation against the priests and prophets of his gods, whom before that time he had great regard unto, and honoured; upon whose answers he trusting, and depending upon their enchantments, began his war against Licinius. But after that he perceived himself to be deceived by them, as by wicked enchanters and deceivers, and such as had betrayed his safety and person, he killed and put them to death. And he shortly after, oppressed with a certain disease, glorified the God of the Christians, and made a most absolute law for the safety and preservation of them, with franchise and liberty; the copy whereof ensueth.

"Imperator Cæsar, Gaius, Valerius, Maximinus, Germanicus, Pius, Fortunatus, Augustus: It is necessary that we always carefully provide and see unto the benefit and commodity of such as be our subjects, and to exhibit such things unto them whereby they may best obtain the same. But we suppose that there are none of you so ignorant, but know and understand what things make best for the profit and commodity of the commonwealth, and best please every man's disposition. But it is meet and convenient that every man have recourse to that which they have seen done before their eyes, and that all sorts of men consider the same, and bear it in their minds. When therefore, and that before this time, it came to our knowledge, upon the occasion that Dioclesianus and Maximinianus, our progenitors of famous memory, commanded the assemblies and meetings of the Christians to be cut off, there were many of them spoiled and robbed of our officials; which thing we also perceive is now put in practice against our subjects, that they in like case may be spoiled of their goods and substance, which

thing chiefly to prevent is our only endeavour. By our letters sent to the governors of every province the year past, we ordained that if any man were disposed to lean unto the Christian religion, he might without any injury done unto him accomplish his desire, neither to be of any man either let or molested, and that he might without any fear or suspicion do whatsoever he therein thought good. But now also we understand that there be certain judges which have neglected our commandment, and have put our subjects in doubt whether that hath been our pleasure or not, which thing they did that such men might be the better advised how they entered into such religion; wherein they followed their own fantasy. To the intent therefore that after this all suspicion, doubt, and fear may be taken away, we have thought good to publish this our edict, whereby it may be made manifest to every man, that it shall be lawful for all such as will follow that religion, by the benefit of this our grant and letters patent, to use what religion they like best. And also hereby we grant to them licence to build them oratories or temples. And furthermore, that this our grant may more amply extend unto them, we vouchsafe to appoint and ordain, that whatsoever lands and substance before belonging and appertaining to the Christians, and by the commaudment of our predecessor were transposed to our revenue and exchequer, or else be in the possession of any city by means of the franchises of the same, or else otherwise sold or given to any man; all and every parcel thereof we command shall be restored unto the proper use of the Christians again, whereby they may all have in this matter more experience of our godly devotion and providence."

Maximinus then being conquered of Licinius, and also plagued with an incurable disease sent by the hand of God, was compelled by torments and adversity to confess the true God, whom before he regarded not, and to write this edict in the favour of those Christians whom before he did persecute. Thus the Lord doth make many times his enemies, be they never so stern and stout, at length to stoop, and, maugre their hearts, to confess him, as this Maximinus here did, who, not long after, by the vehemency of his disease, ended his life. Whereby no more tyrants now were left alive to trouble the church, but only Licinius. Of which Licinius, and of his persecutions stirred up in the east parts against the saints of God, now remaineth in order of story to prosecute.

12. The Persecution under Licinius

This Licinius being a Dane born, and made first Cæsar by Galerius, as is above specified, was afterward joined with Constantine in government of the empire, and in setting forth the edicts which before we have described; although it seemeth all this to be done of him with a dissembling mind. For so is he in all histories described to be a man passing all others in desire of unsatiabie riches, given to lechery, hasty, stubborn, and furious. To learning he was such an enemy, that he named the same a poison and a common pestilence, and especially the knowledge of the laws. He thought no vice worse became a prince than learning, because he himself was unlearned.

There was between him and Constantine in the beginning great familiarity, and such agreement, that Constantine gave unto him his sister Constantia in matrimony, as Aurelius Victor writeth. Neither would any man have thought him to have been of any other religion than Constantine was of, he seemed in all things so well to agree with him. Whereupon he made a decree with Constantine in the behalf of the Christians, as we have showed. And such was Licinius in the beginning; but after arming himself with tyranny, began to conspire against the person of Constantine, of whom he had received so great benefits; neither favourable to the law of nature, nor mindful of his oaths, his blood, nor promises. But when he considered that in his conspiracies he nothing prevailed, for that he saw Constantine was preserved and safely defended of God, and partly being puffed up with the victory against Maximinus, he began vehemently to hate him, and not only to reject the Christian religion, but also deadly to hate the same. He said he would become an enemy unto the Christians, for that in their assemblies and meetings they prayed not for him, but for Constantine. Therefore, first, by little and little, and that secretly, he went about to wrong and hurt the Christians, and banished them his court, which never were by any means prejudicial to his kingdom. Then he commanded that all those should be deprived which were knights of the honourable order, unless they would do sacrifice to devils. The same persecution afterward stretched he from his court into all his provinces, which, with most wicked and devised laws, he set forth. First, that for no cause the bishops should in any matter communicate together; neither that any man should come at the churches next unto them, or to call any assemblies, and consult for the necessary matters and utility of the church.

After, that the men and women together should not come in companies to pray, nor that the women should come in those places where they used to preach and read the word of God; neither that they should be after that instructed any more of the bishops, but should choose out such women amongst them as should instruct them. The third most cruel and wickedest of all was, that none should help and succour those that were cast in prison, nor should bestow any alms or charity upon them, though they should die for hunger; and they which showed any compassion upon those that were condemned to death should be as greatly punished as they to whom they showed the same should be. These were the most horrible constitutions of Licinius, which went beyond and passed the bounds of nature.

After this he used violence against the bishops, but yet not openly, for fear of Constantine, but privily and by conspiracy; by which means he slew those that were the worthiest men amongst the doctors and prelates. And about Amasea and other

cities of Pontus he razed the churches even with the ground. Other some he shut up, that no man should come after their accustomed manner to pray and worship God; and therefore, as we said before, his conscience accusing him, all this he did, for that he suspected they prayed for Constantine, and not at all for him. And from this place in the east parts to the Libyans, which bordered upon the Egyptians, the Christians durst not assemble and come together for the displeasure of Licinius which he had conceived against them.



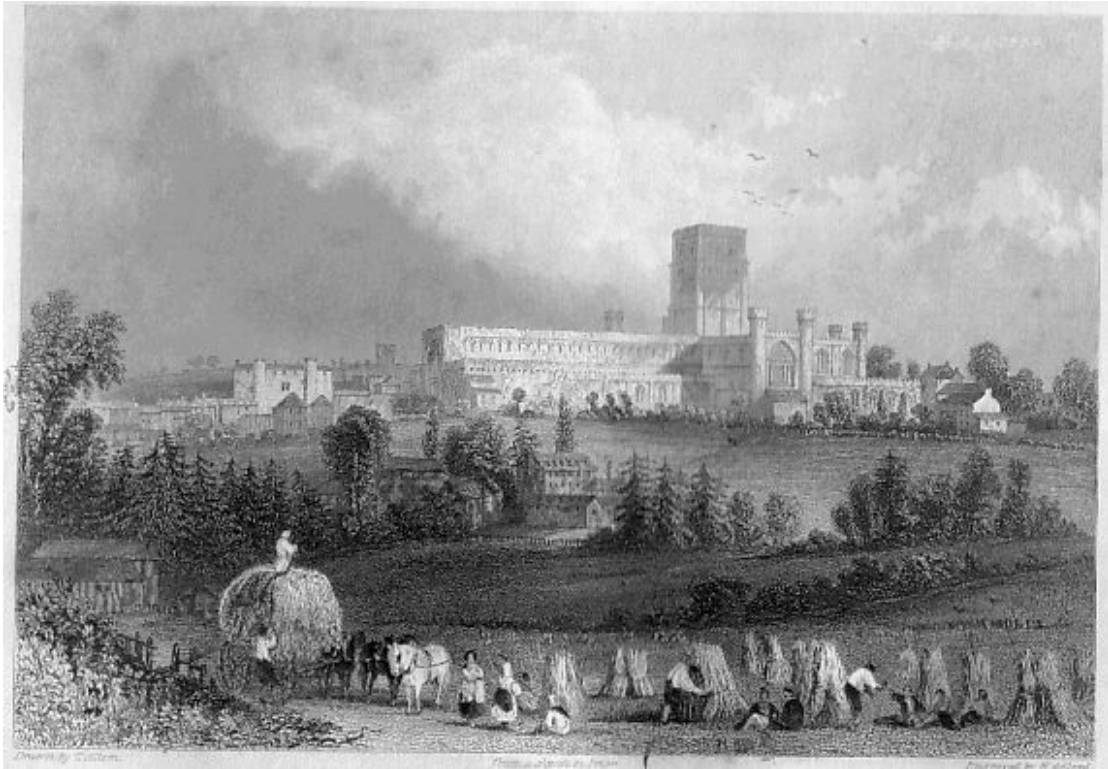
urthermore, the flattering officers that were under him, thinking by this means to please him, slew and made out of the way many bishops, and without any cause put them to death, as though they had been homicides and heinous offenders; and such rigour used they towards some of them, that they cut their bodies into gobbets and small pieces, in manner of a butcher, and after that threw them into the sea to feed the fishes. What shall we speak of the exiles and confiscations of good and virtuous men? For he took by violence every man's substance, and cared not by what means he came by the same; but threatened them with death, unless they would forego the same. He banished those which had committed none evil at all. He commanded that both gentlemen and men of honour should be made out of the way; neither yet herewith content, but gave their daughters that were unmarried to varlets and wicked ones to be deflowered. And Licinius himself, (although that by reason of his years his body was spent,) yet shamefully did he vitiate many women, men's wives and maids. Which cruel outrage of him caused many godly men of their own accord to forsake their houses; and it was also seen that the woods, fields, desert places, and mountains were fain to be the habitations and resting-places of the poor and miserable Christians. Of those worthy men and famous martyrs, which in this persecution found the way to heaven, Nicephorus first speaketh of Theodorus, who first being hanged upon the cross, had nails thrust into his armpits, and after that his head stricken off. Also of an other Theodorus, being the bishop of Tyre. The third was a man of Perga. Basilus also the bishop of Amasenus, Nicholas a bishop, Gregorius of Armenia the Great. After that Paul of Neocesaria, which, by the impious commandment of Licinius, had both his hands cut off with a searing iron. Besides these were in the city of Sebastia forty worthy men and Christian soldiers, in the vehement cold time of winter, soused and drowned in a horsepond, when Licinius as yet, of whom we spoke before, and Agricolaus, executing the sheriff's office under Licinius in the east parts, were alive, and were in great estimation for inventing of new and strange torments against the Christians. The wives of those forty good men were carried to Heraclea, a city in Thracia, and there, with a certain deacon, whose name was Amones, were (after innumerable torments by them most constantly endured) slain with the sword. These things writeth Nicephorus. Also Sozomenus, in his ninth book and second chapter, maketh mention of the same martyrs. And Basilus, in a certain oration, seemeth to treat of their history, saving that in the circumstances he somewhat varieth. And surely Licinius was determined, for that the first face of this persecution fell out according to his desire, to have overrun all the Christians; to which thing neither counsel, nor good will, nor yet opportunity, perchance wanted, unless God had brought Constantine into those parts where he governed; where, in the wars which he himself began, (knowing right well that Constantine had intelligence of his conspiracy and treason,) joining battle with him, he was overcome.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

Divers battles between them were fought: the first fought in Hungary, where Licinius was overthrown; then he fled into Macedonia, and repairing his army, was again discomfited. Finally, being vanquished both by sea and land, he lastly, at Nicomedia, yielded himself to Constantine, and was commanded to live a private life in Thessalia, where at length he was slain by the soldiers.

Thus have ye heard the end and conclusion of all the seven tyrants which were the authors and workers of this tenth and last persecution against the true people of God. The chief captain and incitor of which persecution was, first, Dioclesian, who died at Salona, as some say, by his own poison, in the year of our Lord three hundred and nineteen. The next was Maximinian, who (as is said) was hanged of Constantine at Masilia, about the year of our Lord three hundred and ten. Then died Galerius, plagued with a horrible disease sent of God. Severus was slain by Maximinian, father of Maxentius, the wicked tyrant who was overcome and vanquished of Constantine, in the year of our Lord three hundred and eighteen. Maximinus the first tyrant tarried not long after, who being overcome by Licinius, died about the year of our Lord three hundred and twenty. Lastly, how this Licinius was overcome by Constantine, and slain in the year of our Lord three hundred twenty and four, is before declared. Only Constantius, the father of Constantine, being a good and a godly emperor, died in the third year of the persecution, in the year of our Lord three hundred and ten, and was buried at York. After whom succeeded his godly father Constantine, as a second Moses, sent and set up of God to deliver his people out of this so miserable captivity into liberty most joyful.

Now remaineth, after the end of these persecutors thus described, to gather up the names and stories of certain particular martyrs, which now are to be set forth, worthy of special memory for their singular constancy and fortitude showed in their sufferings and cruel torments. The names of all which that suffered in this foresaid tenth persecution, being in number infinite, in virtue most excellent, it is impossible here to comprehend; but the most notable, and in most approved authors expressed, we thought here to insert for the more edification of other Christians, which may and ought to look upon their examples, first beginning with Albanus, the first martyr that ever in England suffered death for the name of Christ.



St. Alban's Abbey

At what time Dioclesian and Maximinian the pagan emperors had directed out their letters with all severity for the persecuting of the Christians, Alban, being then an infidel, received into his house a certain clerk flying from the persecutors' hands, whom when Alban beheld continually both day and night to persevere in watching and prayer, suddenly, by the great mercy of God, he began to imitate the example of his faith and virtuous life; whereupon, by little and little, he being instructed by his wholesome exhortation, and leaving the blindness of his idolatry, became at length a perfect Christian. And when the forenamed clerk had lodged with him a certain time, it was informed the wicked prince, that this good man and confessor of Christ (not yet condemned to death) was harboured in Alban's house, or very near unto him. Whereupon immediately he gave in charge to the soldiers to make more diligent inquisition of the matter; who, as soon as they came to the house of Alban the martyr, he, by and by, putting on the apparel where with his guest and master was apparelled, (that is, a garment at that time used, named caracalla,) offered himself in the stead of the other to the soldiers; who, binding him, brought him forthwith to the judge. It fortuned that at that instant when blessed Alban was brought unto the judge, they found the same judge at the altars offering sacrifice unto devils, who, as soon as he saw Alban, was straightways in a great rage, for that he would presume of his own voluntary will to offer himself to peril, and give himself a prisoner to the soldiers for safeguard of his guest whom he harboured, and commanded him to be brought before the images of the devils whom he worshipped, saying, For that thou hadst rather hide and convey away a rebel than to deliver him to the officers, and that (as a contemner of our gods) he should not suffer punishment and merit of his blasphemy, look what punishment he should have had, thou for him shalt suffer the same, if I perceive thee any wit to revolt from our manner of worshipping, But blessed Alban, who, of his own accord, had bewrayed to the persecutors that he was a Christian, feared not at all the

menaces of the prince, but being armed with the spiritual armour, openly pronounced that he would not obey his commandment. Then said the judge, Of what stock or kindred art thou come? Alban answered, What is that to you of what stock soever I came of? if you desire to hear the verity of my religion, I do ye to wit that I am a Christian, and apply myself altogether to that calling. Then said the judge, I would know thy name, and see thou tell me the same without delay. Then said he, My parents named me Alban, and I worship and honour the true and living God, which hath created all the world. Then said the judge, fraught with fury, If thou wilt enjoy the felicity of this present life, do sacrifice (and that out of hand) to these mighty gods. Alban replieth, These sacrifices which ye offer unto devils can neither help them that offer the same, neither yet can they accomplish the desires and prayers of their suppliants; but rather shall they, whatsoever they be, that offer sacrifice to these idols, receive for their meed everlasting pains of hell-fire. The judge, when he heard these words, was passing angry, and commanded the tormentors to whip this holy confessor of God, endeavouring to overcome the constancy of his heart with stripes, which had prevailed nothing with words. And when he was cruelly beaten, yet suffered he the same patiently, nay, rather joyfully, for the Lord's sake. Then when the judge saw that he would not with torments be overcome, nor be reduced from the worship of Christian religion, he commanded him to be beheaded.

The rest that followeth of this story in the narration of Beda, as of drying up the river, as Alban went to the place of his execution; then of making a well-spring in the top of the hill, and of the falling out of the eyes of him that did behead him, (with such other prodigious miracles mentioned in his story,) because they seem more legend-like than truth-like; again, because I see no great profit nor necessity in the relation thereof; I leave them to the free judgment of the reader, to think of them as cause shall move him.

The like estimation I have of the long story, wherein is written at large a fabulous discourse of all the doings and miracles of St. Alban, taken out of the library of St. Albans, compiled (as there is said) by a certain pagan, who (as he saith) afterward went to Rome, there to be baptized. But because in the beginning or prologue of the book the said writer maketh mention of the ruinous walls

of the town of Verolanium, containing the story of Albanus, and of his bitter punishments; which walls were then falling down for age at the writing of the said book, as he saith; thereby it seemeth this story to be written a great while after the martyrdom of Alban, either by a Briton or by an Englishman. If he were a Briton, how then did the Latin translation take it out of the English tongue, as in the prologue he himself doth testify? If he were an Englishman, how then did he go up to Rome for baptism, being a pagan, when he might have been baptized among the Christian Britons more near at home?

But among all other evidences and declarations sufficient to disprove this legendary story of St. Alban, nothing maketh more against it than the very story itself; as where he bringeth in the head of the holy martyr to speak unto the people after it was smitten off from the body. Also where he bringeth in the angels going up and coming down in a pillar of fire, and singing all the night long. Item, in the river which he saith St. Alban made dry, such as were drowned in the same before in the bottom were found alive. With other such like monkish miracles and gross fables, wherewith these abbey-monks were wont in times past to deceive the church of God, and to beguile the whole world for their own advantage. Notwithstanding this, I write not to

any derogation of the blessed and faithful martyr of God, who was the first that I did ever find in this realm to suffer martyrdom for the testimony of Christ; and worthy no doubt of condign condemnation, especially of us here in this land, whose Christian faith in the Lord, and charity towards his neighbour, I pray God all we may follow. As also I wish moreover that the stories, both of him and of all other Christian martyrs, might have been delivered to us simple as they were, without the admixture of all these abbey-like additions of monkish miracles, wherewith they were wont to paint out the glory of such saints to the most by whose offerings they were accustomed to receive most advantage.

As touching the name of the clerk mentioned in this story, whom Alban received into his house, I find in the English stories to be Amphibalus, although the Latin authors name him not, who, the same time flying into Wales, was also fetched from thence again to the same town of Verolanium, otherwise called Verlancaster, where he was martyred, having his belly opened, and made to run about a stake, while all his bowels were drawn out, then thrust in with swords and daggers, and at last was stoned to death, as the foresaid legend declareth.

Moreover, the same time with Alban suffered also two citizens of the aforesaid city of Verlancaster, whose names were Aaron and Julius; beside others, whereof a great number the same time no doubt did suffer, although our chronicles of their names do make no rehearsal.

The time of martyrdom of this blessed Alban and the other seemeth to be about the second or third year of this tenth persecution, under the tyranny of Dioclesian, and Maximinianus Herculius, bearing then the rule in England, about the year of our Lord three hundred and one, before the coming of Constantius to his government. Where, by the way, is to be noted, that this realm of Britain, being so christened before, yet never was touched with any other of the nine persecutions, before this tenth persecution of Dioclesian and Maximinian. In which persecution our stories and polychronicon do record, that all Christianity almost in the whole island was destroyed, the churches subverted, all books of the Scripture burned, many of the faithful, both men and women, were slain; amongst whom the first and chief ringleader (as hath been said) was Albanus. And thus much touching the martyrs of Britain. Now from England, to return again unto other countries, where this persecution did more vehemently rage, we will add hereunto (the Lord willing) the stories of others, although not of all that suffered in this persecution, (which were impossible,) but of certain most principal, whose singular constancy in their strong torments are chiefly renowned in later histories; beginning, first, with Romanus, the notable and admirable soldier and true servant of Christ, whose history set forth in Prudentius doth thus proceed; so lamentably by him described, that it will be hard for any man almost with dry cheeks to hear it.

Pitiless Galerius, with his grand captain Asclepiades, violently invaded the city of Antioch, in tending by force of arms to drive all Christians to renounce utterly their pure religion. The Christians, as God would, were at that time congregated together, to whom Romanus hastily ran, declaring that the wolves were at hand which would devour the Christian flock; but fear not, said he, neither let this imminent peril disturb you, my brethren. Brought was it to pass, by the great grace of God working in Romanus, that old men and matrons, fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, were all of one will and mind, most ready to shed their blood in defence of their Christian profession. Word was brought unto the captain, that the band of armed

soldiers was not able to wrest the staff of faith out of the hand of the armed congregation, and all by reason that one Romanus so mightily did encourage them, that they stick not to offer their naked throats, wishing gloriously to die for the name of their Christ. Seek out that rebel, (quoth the captain,) and bring him to me, that he may answer for the whole sect. Apprehended he was, and, bound as a sheep appointed to the slaughterhouse, was presented to the emperor, who with wrathful countenance beholding him, said, What! art thou the author of this sedition? Art thou the cause why so many shall lose their lives? By the gods I swear thou shalt smart for it, and first in thy flesh shalt thou suffer the pains whereunto thou hast encouraged the hearts of thy fellows. Romanus answered, Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace; I refuse not to be sacrificed for my brethren, and that by as cruel means as thou mayest invent; and whereas thy soldiers were repelled from the Christian congregation, that so happened, because it lay not in idolaters and worshippers of devils to enter into the holy house of God, and to pollute the place of true prayer. Then Asclepiades, wholly inflamed with this stout answer, commanded him to be trussed up, and his bowels drawn out. The executioners themselves, more pitiful in heart than the captain, said, Not so, sir; this man is of noble parentage, unlawful it is to put a nobleman to so un noble a death. Scourge him then with whips (quoth the captain) with pieces of lead at the ends. Instead of tears, sighs, and groans, Romanus sung psalms all the time of his whipping, requiring them not to favour him for nobility's sake; Not the blood of my progenitors, (saith he,) but Christian profession, maketh me noble. Then with great power of spirit he inveighed against the captain, laughing to scorn the false gods of the heathen, with the idolatrous worshipping of them, affirming the God of the Christians to be the true God that created heaven and earth, before whose judicial seat all nations shall appear. But the wholesome words of the martyr were as oil to the fire of the captain's fury. The more the martyr spake, the madder was he, insomuch that he commanded the martyr's sides to be lanced with knives, until the bones appeared white again. Sorry am I, O captain, (quoth the martyr,) not for that my flesh shall be thus cut and mangled, but for thy cause am I sorrowful, who, being corrupted with damnable errors, seducest others. The second time he preached at large the living God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, his well-beloved Son, eternal life through faith in his blood, expressing therewith the abomination of idolatry, with a vehement exhortation to worship and adore the living God. At these words Asclepiades commanded the tormentors to strike Romanus on the mouth, that his teeth being stricken out, his pronounciation at leastwise might be impaired. The commandment was obeyed, his face buffeted, his eyelids torn with their nails, his cheeks scotched with knives, the skin of his beard was plucked by little and little from the flesh; finally, his seemly face was wholly defaced. The meek martyr said, I thank thee, O captain, that thou hast opened unto me many mouths, whereby I may preach my Lord and Saviour Christ. Look how many wounds I have, so many mouths I have lauding and praising God. The captain, astonished with this singular constancy, commanded them to cease from the tortures. He threateneth cruel fire, he revileth the noble martyr, he blasphemeth God, saying, Thy crucified Christ is but a yesterday's God, the gods of the Gentiles are of most antiquity.

Here again Romanus, taking good occasion, made a long oration of the eternity of Christ, of his human nature, of the death and satisfaction of Christ for all mankind. Which done, he said, Give me a child, O captain, but seven years of age, which age is free from malice and other vices, wherewith riper age is commonly infected, and thou shalt hear what he will say His request was granted. A pretty boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him. Tell me, my babe, (quoth the martyr,) whether thou think it reason that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we

worship infinite gods? Unto whom the babe answered, That certainly, whatsoever it be that men affirm to be God, must needs be one, which with one, is one and the same; and inasmuch as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the true God; for that there be many gods, we children cannot believe. The captain, hereat clean amazed, said, Thou young villain and traitor, where and of whom learnedst thou this lesson? Of my mother, (quoth the child,) with whose milk I sucked in this lesson, that I must believe in Christ. The mother was called, and she gladly appeared. The captain commanded the child to be horsed up and scourged. The pitiful beholders of this pitiless act could not temper themselves from tears; the joyful and glad mother alone stood by with dry cheeks; yea, she rebuked her sweet babe for craving a draught of cold water; she charged him to thirst after the cup that the infants of Bethlehem once drank of, forgetting their mothers' milk and paps; she willed him to remember little Isaac, who, be holding the sword wherewith, and the altar whereon, he should be sacrificed, willingly proffered his tender neck to the dint of his father's sword. Whilst this counsel was in giving, the butcherly torturer plucked the skin from the crown of his head, hair and all. The mother cried, Suffer, my child, anon thou shalt pass to Him that will adorn thy naked head with a crown of eternal glory. The mother counselleth, the child is counselled; the mother encourageth, the babe is encouraged, and received the stripes with smiling countenance. The captain, perceiving the child invincible, and himself vanquished, committeth the silly soul, the blessed babe, the child uncherished, to the stinking prison, commanding the torments of Romanus to be renewed and increased, as chief author of this evil.

Thus was Romanus brought forth again to new stripes, the punishments to be renewed and received upon his old sores, insomuch as the bare bones appeared, the flesh all torn away.

Yea, no longer could the tyrant forbear, but needs he must draw nearer to the sentence of death. Is it painful to thee (saith he) to tarry so long alive? A flaming fire, doubt thou not, shall be prepared for thee by and by, wherein thou and that boy, thy fellow of rebellion, shall be consumed into ashes. Romanus and the babe were led to the place of execution. As they laid hands on Romanus, he looked back, saying, I appeal from this thy tyranny, O judge unjust, unto the righteous throne of Christ, that upright Judge, not because I fear thy cruel torments and merciless handlings, but that thy judgments may be known to be cruel and bloody. Now when they welcome to the place, the tormentor required the child of the mother, for she had taken it up in her arms; and she, only kissing it, delivered the babe; Farewell, she said, my sweet child. And as the hangman applied his sword to the babe's neck, she sang on this manner:

All laud and praise with heart and voice,
O Lord, we yield to thee,
To whom the death of all thy saints
We know most dear to be.

The innocent's head being cut off, the mother wrapped it up in her garment, and laid it to her breast. On the other side a mighty fire was made, whereinto Romanus was cast, who said that he should not burn; wherewith a great storm arose (if it be true) and quenched the fire. The captain gave in commandment that his tongue should be cut out. Out was it plucked by the hard roots and cut off: nevertheless he spake, saying, He that speaketh Christ shall never want a tongue; think not that the voice that uttereth Christ hath need of the tongue to be the minister. The captain at this, half out of his wits, bare in hand that the hangman deceived the sight of the people by some subtle sleight and crafty conveyance. Not so, (quoth the hangman,) if you suspect my

deed, open his mouth, and diligently search the roots of his tongue. The captain at length, being confounded with the fortitude and courage of the martyr, straitly commandeth him to be brought back into the prison, and there to be strangled; where, his sorrowful life and pains being ended, he now enjoyeth quiet rest in the Lord, with perpetual hope of his miserable body to be restored again with his soul into a better life, where no tyrant shall have any power.

Gordius was a citizen of Cesarea, a worthy soldier, and captain of a hundred men. He, in the time of extreme persecution, refusing any longer to execute his charge, did choose of his own accord willing exile, and lived in the desert many years a religious and a solitary life. But upon a certain day, when a solemn feast of Mars was celebrated in the city of Cesarea, and much people were assembled in the theatre to behold the games, he left the desert, and got him up into the chief place of the theatre, and with a loud voice uttered this saying of the apostle: Behold, I am found of them which sought me not, and to those which asked not for me have I openly appeared. By which words he let it to be understood that of his own accord he came unto those games. At this noise, the multitude little regarding the sights, looked about to see who it was that made such exclamation. As soon as it was known to be Gordius, and that the crier had commanded silence, he was brought unto the sheriff, who at that instant was present, and ordained the games. When he was asked the question who he was, from whence and for what occasion he came thither, he telleth the truth of every thing as it was: I am come, saith he, to publish, that I set nothing by your decrees against the Christian religion, but that I profess Jesus Christ to be my hope and safety; and when I understood with what cruelty you handled other men, I took this as a fit time to accomplish my desire. The sheriff with these words was greatly moved, and revenged all his displeasure upon poor Gordius, commanding the executioners to be brought out with scourges, while gibbet, and whatsoever torments else, might be devised. Whereunto Gordius answered, saying, that it should be to him a hinderance and damage if he could not suffer and endure divers torments and punishments for Christ's cause. The sheriff, being more offended with his boldness, commanded him to feel as many kind of torments as there were. With all which Gordius, notwithstanding, could not be mastered or overcome; but lifting up his eyes unto heaven, singeth this saying out of the Psalms, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear the thing that man can do to me; and also this saying, I will fear none evil, because thou, Lord, art with me.

After this he, against himself, provoketh the extremity of the tormentors, and blameth them if they favour him any thing at all. When the sheriff saw that hereby he could win but little, he goeth about by gentleness and enticing words to turn the stout and valiant mind of Gordius. He promiseth to him great and large offers if he will deny Christ; as to make him a captain of as many men as any other is, to give him riches, treasure, and what other thing soever he desireth. But in vain (as the proverb is) pipeth the minstrel to him that hath no ears to hear; for he, deriding the foolish madness of the magistrate, saith, that it lieth not in him to place any in authority which be worthy to have a place in heaven. The magistrate, with these words thoroughly angered and vexed, prepared himself to his condemnation. Whom, after that he had condemned, he caused to be had out of the city to be burnt, There run out of the city great multitudes by heaps to see him put to execution: some take him in their arms, and lovingly kiss him, persuading him to take a better way and save himself, and that with weeping tears. To whom Gordius answered, Weep not, I pray you, for me, but rather for the enemies of God, which always make war against the Christians; weep, I say, for them which prepare for us a fire, purchasing hell-fire for themselves in the day of

vengeance; and cease further, I pray you, to molest and disquiet my settled mind. Truly (saith he) I am ready, for the name of Christ, to suffer and endure a thousand deaths, if need were. Some other came unto him which persuaded him to deny Christ with his mouth, and to keep his conscience to himself. My tongue, (saith he,) which by the goodness of God I have, cannot be brought to deny the author and giver of the same; for with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the tongue we confess unto salvation. Many more such-like words he spake; but especially uttering to them such matter whereby he might persuade the beholders to death, and to the desire of martyrdom. After all which, with a merry and glad countenance, never changing so much as his colour, he willingly gave himself to be burnt.

Not much unlike to the story of Gordius is the story also of Menas, an Egyptian, who, being likewise a soldier by his profession, in this persecution of Dioclesian forsook all, and went into the desert, where a long time he gave himself to abstinence, watching, and meditation of the Scriptures. At length, returning again to the city Cotis, there, in the open theatre, as the people were occupied upon their spectacles by pastimes, he, with a loud voice, openly proclaimed himself to be a Christian, and upon the same was brought to Pyrrhus the president, of whom he being demanded of his faith, made this answer: Convenient it is that I should (saith he) confess God, in whom is light, and no darkness, forsomuch as Paul doth teach that with heart we believe to righteousness, with mouth confession is given to salvation. After this the innocent martyr was most painfully pinched and cruciated with sundry punishments. In all which, notwithstanding, he declared a constant heart, and faith invincible, having these words in his mouth being in the midst of his torments: There is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven; neither is all the world, if it were weighed in balance, able to be conferred with the price of one soul: and said, Who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? shall affliction or anguish? And, moreover, (said he,) I have thus learned of my Lord and my King, not to fear them which kill the body, and have no power to kill the soul; but to fear Him rather, who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell-fire. To make the story short, after manifold torments borne of him and suffered, when the last sentence of death was upon him pronounced, which was, to be beheaded, Menas, being then had to the place of execution, said, I give thee thanks, my Lord God, which hast so accepted me to be found a partaker of thy precious death, and hast not given me to be devoured of my fierce enemies, but hast made me to remain constant in thy pure faith unto this my latter end. And so this blessed soldier, fighting valiantly under the banner of Christ, lost his head and won his soul. Simeon Metaphrast. In the which author there followeth a long narration of the miracles of this holy man, which here for prolixity I do omit.

Basilus, in a certain sermon of forty martyrs, rehearseth this story, not unworthy to be noted. There came (saith he) into a certain place (of which place he maketh no mention) the emperor's marshal, or officer, with the edict which the emperor had set out against the Christians, that whosoever confessed Christ should, after many torments, suffer death. And, first, they did privily suborn certain which should detect and accuse the Christians whom they had found out, or had laid wait for. Upon this the sword, the gibbet, the wheel, and the whips were brought forth; at the terrible sight whereof the hearts of all the beholders did shake and tremble. Some for fear did fly, some did stand in doubt what to do, certain were so terrified at the beholding of these engines and tormenting instruments, that they denied their faith. Some others began the game, and for a time did abide the conflict and agony of

martyrdom; but, vanquished at length by the intolerable pain of their torments, made shipwreck of their consciences, and lost the glory of their confession. Among others, forty there were at that time, young gentlemen, all soldiers, which, after the marshal had showed the emperor's edict, and required of all men the obedience of the same, freely and boldly of their own accord confessed themselves to be Christians, and declared to him their names. The marshal, somewhat amazed at this their boldness of speech, standeth in doubt what was best to do. Yet forthwith he goeth about to win them with fair words, advertising them to consider their youth, neither that they should change a sweet and pleasant life for a cruel and untimely death: after that he promiseth them money and honourable offices in the emperor's name. But they, little esteeming all these things, brake forth into a long and bold oration, affirming that they did neither desire life, dignity, nor money, but only the celestial kingdom of Christ; saying, further, that they are ready, for the love and faith they have in God, to endure the affliction of the wheel, the cross, and the fire. The rude marshal, being herewith offended, devised a new kind of punishment. He spied out in the middle of the city a certain great pond, which lay full upon the cold northern wind, for it was in the winter time, wherein he caused them to be put all that night; but they being merry, and comforting one another, received this their appointed punishment, and said, as they were putting off their clothes, We put off (said they) not our clothes, but we put off the old man, corrupt with the deceit of concupiscence; we give thee thanks, O Lord, that with this our apparel we may also put off, by thy grace, the sinful man; for by means of the serpent we once put him on, and by the means of Jesus Christ we now put him off. When they had thus said, they were brought naked into the place where they left most vehement cold, insomuch that all the parts of their bodies were stark and stiff therewith. As soon as it was day, they yet having breath, were brought into the fire, wherein they were consumed, and their ashes thrown into the flood. By chance there was one of the company more lively, and not so near dead as the rest, of whom the executioners taking pity, said unto his mother standing by, that they would save his life. But she, with her own hands taking her son, brought him to the pile of wood, where the residue of his fellows (crooked for cold) did lie ready to be burnt, and admonished him to accomplish the blessed journey he had taken in hand with his companions.

In this fellowship and company of martyrs cannot be left out and forgot the story of Cyrus. This Cyrus was a physician, born in Alexandria, which, flying into Egypt in the persecution of Dioclesian and Maximian, led a solitary life in Arabia, being much spoken of for his learning and miracles, unto whose company after a certain time did Joannes, born in the city of Edessa, beyond the river Euphrates, join himself, leaving the soldier's life, which before that time he had exercised. But whilst as yet the same persecution raged in a city in Egypt called Canope, there was cast into prison, for the confession of their faith, a certain godly Christian woman, called Athanasia, and her three daughters, Theoctiste, Theodota, and Eudoxia, with whom Cyrus was well acquainted. At whose infirmities he much fearing, accompanied with his brother John, came and visited them for their better confirmation; at which time Lirianus was chief captain and lieutenant of Egypt, of whose wickedness and cruelty, especially against women and maidens, Athanasius maketh mention in his Apologies, and in his Epistle to those that lead a solitary life. This Cyrus, therefore, and Joannes, being accused and apprehended of the heathen men, as by whose persuasions the maidens and daughters of Athanasia contumeliously despised the gods and the emperor's religion, and could by no means be brought to do sacrifice, were, after the

publication of their constant confession, put to death by the sword; Athanasia also and her three daughters being condemned to death.

Sebastian, being born in the part of France called Gallia Narbonensis, was a Christian, and was lieutenant-general of the vanguard of Dioclesian the emperor, who also encouraged many martyrs of Christ by his exhortations unto constancy, and kept them in the faith. He being therefore accused to the emperor, was commanded to be apprehended, and that he should be brought into the open field, where of his own soldiers he was thrust through the body with innumerable arrows, and after that his body was thrown into a jakes or sink. Ambrosius maketh mention of this Sebastian the martyr in his Commentary upon the 118th Psalm; and Simeon Metaphrastes, amongst other martyrs that suffered with Sebastian, numbereth also these following; Nicostratus, with Zoe his wife, Tranquillinus, with Martin his wife, Traglinus, Claudius, Castor, Tibertius, Castellus, Marcus, and Marcellinus, with many others.

Basilus in another sermon also maketh mention of one Barlaam, being a noble and famous martyr, which abode all the torments of the executioners, even to the point of death; which thing when the tormentors saw, they brought him and laid him upon the altar, where they did use to offer sacrifices to their idols, and put fire and frankincense into his right hand, wherein he had yet some strength, thinking that the same his right hand, by the heat and force of the fire, would have scattered the burning incense upon the altar, and so have sacrificed. But of that their hope the pestiferous tormentors were disappointed; for the flame eat round about his hand, and the same endured as though it had been covered with hot embers, whenas Barlaam recited out of the Psalms this saying, Blessed is the Lord my God, which teacheth my hands to fight.

To this narration of Basilus, touching the martyrdom of Barlaam, we will annex consequently another story of Ambrose. He making a certain exhortation to certain virgins, in the same oration commendeth the martyrdoms of Agricola and Vitalis, who suffered also in the same persecution under Dioclesian and Maximinian (as they affirm) at Bononnie. This Vitalis was servant to Agricola, who both together between themselves had made a compact to give their lives with other martyrs for the name of Christ. Whereupon Vitalis, being sent before of his master to offer himself to martyrdom, fell first into the hands of persecutors, who laboured about him by all means to cause him to deny Christ. Which when he would in no case do, but stoutly persisted in the confession of his faith, they began to exercise him with all kind of torments, so unmercifully, that there was no whole skin left on all his body. So Vitalis in the midst of the agony and painful torments, after he had in a short prayer commended himself to God, gave up his life. After him, the tormentors set upon Agricola his master, whose virtuous manners and gentle conditions, because they were singularly well liked and known to the enemies, his suffering therefore was the longer deferred. But Agricola, not abiding the long delay and driving off, and provoking moreover the adversaries to quicker speed, at length was fastened unto the cross, and so finished his martyrdom, which he so long desired.

No less worthy of commemoration is the lamentable martyrdom of Vincentius, whose history here followeth. This Vincentius was a Spaniard, and a Levite most godly and virtuous, who at this time suffered martyrdom at Valence under Dacianus the president, as we may gather by Prudentius in his hymn. Bergomensis in his Supplement reciteth these words concerning his martyrdom, out of a certain sermon of St. Augustine: Our heart conceived not a vain and fruitless sight, (as it were in beholding of lamentable tragedies,) but certainly a great sight and marvellous, and

there with singular pleasure received it, when the painful passion of victorious Vincentius was read unto us. Is there any so heavy-hearted that will not be moved in the contemplation of this immovable martyr, so manly, or rather so godly, fighting against the craft and subtlety of that serpent, against the tyranny of Dacianus, against the horrors of death, and by the mighty Spirit of his God conquering all? But let us in few words rehearse the degrees of his torments, though the pains thereof in many words cannot be expressed. First, Dacianus caused the martyr to be laid upon the torture, and all the joints of his body to be distended and racked out, until they cracked again. This being done in most extreme and cruel manner, all the members of his painful and pitiful body were grievously indented with deadly wounds. Thirdly, (that his dolours and griefs might be augmented,) they miserably vexed his flesh with iron combs sharply filed. And to the end the tormentors might vomit out all their vengeance on the meek and mild martyr's flesh, the tormentors themselves also were vilely scourged at the president's commandment. And lest his passion, through want of pains, might seem imperfect, or else too easy, they laid his body, being all out of joint, on a grate of iron, which when they had opened with iron hooks, they seared it with fiery plates, with hot burning salt sprinkling the same. Last of all, into a vile dungeon was this mighty martyr drawn, the floor whereof first was thick spread with the sharpest shells that might be gotten, his feet then being fast locked in the stocks, there was he left alone without all worldly comfort; but the Lord his God was with him, the Holy Spirit of God (whose office is to comfort the godly afflicted) filled his heart with joy and gladness. Hast thou prepared a terrible rack, O cruel tyrant, O devouring lion, for the martyr's bed? The Lord shall make that bed soft and sweet unto him. Rackest thou his bones and joints all asunder? His bones, his joints, his hairs are all numbered. Tormentest thou his flesh with mortal wounds? The Lord shall pour abundantly into all his sores of his oil of gladness. Thy scraping combs, thy sharp fleshhooks, thy hot searing irons, thy parched salt, thy stinking prison, thy cutting shells, thy pinching stocks, shall turn to this patient martyr to the best. All together shall work contrary to thine expectation, great plenty of joy shall he reap into the barn of his soul out of this mighty harvest of pains that thou hast brought him into. Yea, thou shalt prove him Vincentius indeed; that is, a vanquisher, a triumpher, a conqueror, subduing thy madness by his meekness, thy tyranny by his patience, thy manifold means of tortures by the manifold graces of God, wherewith he is plentifully enriched.

In this catalogue or company of such holy martyrs as suffered in this foresaid tenth persecution, many more and almost innumerable there be expressed in authors beside them whom we have hitherto comprehended; as Philoromus, a man of noble birth and great possessions in Alexandria, who, being persuaded by his friends to favour himself, to respect his wife, to consider his children and family, did not only reject the counsels of them, but also neglected the threats and torments of the judge, to keep the confession of Christ inviolate unto the death, and losing of his head; of whom Eusebius beareth witness that he was there present himself.

Of like estate and dignity was also Procopius in Palestina, who after his conversion brake his images of silver and gold, and distributed the same to the poor, and after all kind of torments, of racking, of cording, of tearing his flesh, of goring and stabbing and of firing, at length had his head also smitten off.

To this may be joined also Georgius, a young man of Cappadocia, who, stoutly inveighing against the impious idolatry of the emperors, was apprehended and cast into prison, then torn with hooked irons, burnt with hot lime, stretched with cords,

after that his hands and feet, with other members of his body, being cut off, at last with a sword had his head cut off.

With these aforementioned add also Sergius and Bacchus, Panthaleon, a physician in Nicomedia, Theodorus, of the city of Amasia in Hellespont, Faustus, a martyr of Egypt, Gereon, with three hundred and eighteen fellow martyrs, who suffered at the same time. Hermogenes, the president of Athens, who, being converted by the constancy of one Menas and Eugraphus in their torments, suffered also for the like faith. Item, Samonas Gurias and Abibus, mentioned in Simeon Metaphrast. Hieron also, with certain of his confessors, under Maximinus, mentioned in Metaphrastes. Judes and Domuas, who suffered with many other martyrs above mentioned at Nicomedia, as recordeth Meta phrastes. Enelasius, Maximinus, the emperor's officers, whom Fausta the virgin in her torments converted. Also Thirsus, Lucius, Callinicius, Apollonius, Philemon, Asilas, Leonides, with Arrianus, president of Thebaide, Cyprianus likewise, a citizen of Antioch, who, after he had continued a long time a filthy magician or sorcerer, at length was converted and made a deacon, then a priest, and at last the bishop of Antioch, of whom partly we touched somewhat before. This Cyprian, with Justina, a virgin, suffered among the martyrs. Item, Glicerius at Nicomedia, Felix, a minister, Fortunatus, Achilleus, deacons in the city of Valent. Arthemius of Rome, Ciriacus, deacon to Marcellus the bishop, Carpophorus, priest at Thuscia, with Abundus his deacon. Item, Claudius, Sirinus, Antoninus, which suffered with Marcellinus the bishop. Cucusatus, in the city of Barcinona. Felix, bishop of Apulia, with Adauctus and Januarius his priest, Fortunatus and Septimus his readers, who suffered in the city Venusina under Dioclesian.

No less admirable than wonderful was the constancy also of women and maidens, who, in the same persecution, gave their bodies to the torments, and their lives for the testimony of Christ, with no less boldness of spirit than did the men themselves above specified, to whom how much more inferior they were of bodily strength, so much more worthy of praise they be, for their constant standing. Of whom some examples here we mind (Christ willing) to infer, such as in our stories and chronicles seem most notable, first beginning with Eulalia, whose story we have taken out of the foresaid Prudentius, as followeth.

In the west part of Spain, called Portugal, is a city great and populous, named Emerita, wherein dwelt and was brought up a virgin, born of noble parentage, whose name was Eulalia; which Emerita, although for the situation thereof was both rich and famous, yet more adorned and famous was the renown thereof, by the martyrdom, blood, and sepulchre of this blessed virgin Eulalia. Twelve years of age was she, and not much above, when she refused great and honourable offers in marriage, as one not skilful nor yet delighting in courtly dalliance, neither yet taking pleasure in purple and gorgeous apparel, or else in precious balms, or costly ornaments and jewels; but forsaking and despising all these and such-like pompous allurements, then showed she herself most busy in preparing her journey to her hoped inheritance and heavenly patronage. Which Eulalia, as she was modest and discreet in behaviour, sage and sober in conditions, so was she also witty and sharp in answering her enemies. But when the furious rage of persecution enforced her to join herself amongst God's children in the household of faith, and when the Christians were commanded to offer incense and sacrifice to devils or dead gods, then began the blessed spirit of Eulalia to kindle; and being of a prompt and ready wit, thought forthwith (as a courageous captain) to give a charge upon this so great and disordered a battle; and so she, silly woman, pouring out the bowels of her innocent heart before God, more provoketh thereby the force and

rage of her enemies against her. But the godly care of her parents, fearing lest the willing mind of this damsel, so ready to die for Christ's cause, might make her guilty of her own death, hid her and kept her close at their house in the country, being a great way out of the city. She yet misliking that quiet life, as also detesting to make such delay, softly stealeth out of the doors (no man knowing thereof) in the night; and in great haste leaving the common way, openeth the hedge gaps, and with weary feet (God knoweth) passed through the thorny and briery places, accompanied yet with spiritual guard; and although dark and dreadful was the silent night, yet had she with her the Lord and Giver of light. And as the children of Israel, coming out of Egypt, had, by the mighty power of God, a cloudy pillar for their guide in the day, and a flame of fire in the night; so had this godly virgin, travelling in this dark night, when she, flying and forsaking the place where all filthy idolatry abounded, and hastened her heavenly journey, was not oppressed with the dreadful darkness of the night; but yet she, before the day appeared, in this her speedy journey, with herself considered and mused on a thousand matters and more.

In the morning betime, with a bold courage, she goeth unto the tribunal or judgment-seat and in the midst of them all with a loud voice crying out, said, I pray you, what a shame is it for you thus rashly and without advisement to destroy and kill men's souls, and to throw their bodies alive against the rocks, and cause them to deny the omnipotent God! Would you know, O you unfortunate, what I am? Behold, I am one of the Christians, an enemy to your devilish sacrifices; I spurn your idols under my feet, I confess God omnipotent with my heart and mouth, Isis, Apollo, and Venus, what are they? Maximinus himself, what is he? The one a thing of nought, for that they be the works of men's hands; the other but a castaway, because he worshippeth the same work. Therefore frivolous are they both, and both not worthy to be set by. Maximinus is a lord of substance, and yet he himself falleth down before a stone, and voweth the honour of his dignity unto those that are much inferior to his vassals. Why then doth he oppress so tyrannically more worthy stomachs and courages than himself? He must needs be a good guide and an upright judge which feedeth upon innocent blood, and breathing in the bodies of godly men, doth rend and tear their bowels, and, that more is, hath his delight in destroying and subverting the faith.

Go to therefore, thou hangman, burn, cut, and mangle thou these earthly members. It is an easy matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind shalt thou not hurt for any thing thou canst do. The pretor then, or judge, with these words of hers, set in a great rage, saith, Hangman, take her and pull her out by the hair of her head, and torment her to the uttermost; let her feel the power of our country gods, and let her know what the imperial government of a prince is. But yet, O thou

sturdy girl, fain would I have thee (if it were possible) before thou die to revoke this thy wickedness. Behold what pleasures thou mayest enjoy by the honourable house thou camest of; thy fallen house and progeny followeth thee to death with lamentable tears, and the heavy nobility of thy kindred maketh doleful lamentation for thee. What meanest thou? Wilt thou kill thyself, so young a flower, and so near these honourable marriages and great dowries thou mayest enjoy? Doth not the glistening and golden pomp of the bride-bed move thee? Doth not the reverend piety of thine ancestors prick thee? Whom is it not but that this thy rashness and weakness grieveth? Behold here the furniture ready prepared for thy terrible death: either shalt thou be beheaded with this sword, or else with these wild beasts shalt thou be pulled in pieces, or else thou, being cast into the fiery flames, shalt be (although lamentably bewailed of thy friends and kinsfolks) consumed to ashes. What great matter is it for thee, I pray thee, to escape all

this? If thou wilt but take and put with thy fingers a little salt and incense into the censers, thou shalt be delivered from all these punishments. To this Eulalia made no answer, but being in a great fury, she spitteth in the tyrant's face, she throweth down the idols, and spurneth abroad with her feet the heap of incense prepared to the censers. Then, without further delay, the hangmen with both their strengths took her, and pulled one joint from another, and with the talons of wild beasts scotched her sides to the hard bones; she all this while singing and praising God in this wise: Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee: what a pleasure is it for them, O Christ, that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto these high dignities! and still called upon that holy name, all stained and imbrued with her own blood. This sang she with a bold voice, neither lamentingly nor yet weepingly, but being glad and merry, abandoning from her mind all heaviness and grief, even when out of a warm fountain and from her mangled members the fresh blood bathed her white and fair skin. Then proceeded they to the last and final torment, which was not only the goring and wounding of her mangled body with the iron grate and hurdle, and terrible harrowing of her flesh, but the burning on every side with flaming torches of her tormented breasts and sides: her hair hanging about her shoulders, in two parts divided, (wherewith her shame-faced chastity and virginity was covered,) reached down to the ground. But when the crackling flame fleeth about her face, kindled by her hair, and reacheth the crown of her head, then she, desiring swift death, openeth her mouth and swalloweth the flame, and so rested she in peace.



Martyrdom of St. Eulalia

Prudentius and Ado, also Equilinus, add moreover, writing of a white dove issuing out of her mouth at her departing, and of the fire quenched about her body, also of her body covered miraculously with snow, with other things more, whereof let every reader use his own judgment.

As ye have heard now the Christian life and constant death of Eulalia, much worthy of praise and commendation; so no less commendation is worthy to be given to blessed Agnes, that constant damsel and martyr of God, who, as she was in Rome of honourable parents begotten, so lieth she there as honourably entombed and buried. Which Agnes, for her unspotted and undefiled virginity, deserved no less praise and commendation than for her willing death and martyrdom. Some writers make of her a long discourse, more in my judgment than necessary, reciting divers and sundry strange miracles by her done in the process of her history; which, partly for tediousness, partly for the doubtfulness of the author, (whom some father upon Ambrose,) and partly for the strangeness and incredibility thereof, I omit, being satisfied with that which Prudentius briefly writeth of her, as followeth: She was (saith he) young, and not marriageable, when first she, being dedicated to Christ, boldly resisted the wicked edicts of the emperor, lest that through idolatry she might have denied and forsaken the holy faith; but yet though proved by divers and sundry policies to induce her to the same, (as now with the flattering and enticing words of the judge, now with the threatenings of the storming executioner,) she stood notwithstanding stedfast in all courageous strength, and willingly offered her body to hard and painful torments, not refusing (as she said) to suffer whatsoever it should be, yea, though it were death itself. Then said the cruel tyrant, If to suffer pain and torment be so easy a matter and lightly regarded of thee, and that thou accountest thy life nothing worth, yet the shame of thy dedicated or vowed virginity is a thing more regarded I know, and esteemed of thee. Wherefore this is determined, that unless thou wilt make obeisance unto the altar of Minerva, and ask forgiveness of her for thy arrogancy, thou shalt be sent or abandoned to the common stews or brothel-house. Agnes the virgin, with more spirit than vehemency, inveigheth against both Minerva and her virginity. The youth in crowds flock and run together, and crave that they may have Agnes their libidinous prey. Then saith Agnes, Christ is not so forgetful of those that be his, that he will suffer violently to be taken from them their golden and pure chastity, neither will he leave them so destitute of help; he is always at hand and ready to fight for such as are shame-faced and chaste virgins, neither suffereth he his gifts of holy integrity or chastity to be polluted. Thou shalt, saith she, willingly bathe thy sword in my blood if thou wilt, but thou shalt not defile my body with filthy lust for any thing thou canst do. She had no sooner spoken these words, but he commanded that she should be set naked at the corner of some street (which place at that time such as were strumpets commonly used); the greater part of the multitude, both sorrowing and shaming to see so shameless a sight, went their ways, some turning their heads, some hiding their faces. But one amongst the rest with uncircumcised eyes beholding the damsel, and that in such opprobrious wise, behold a flame of fire like unto a flash of lightning falleth upon him, and striketh his eyes out of his head; whereupon he for dead falling unto the ground, sprawleth in the kennel dirt; whose companions taking him up, and carrying him away, bewailed him as a dead man; but the virgin, for this her miraculous delivery from the danger and shame of that place, singeth praises to God and Christ.

There be (saith Prudentius) that report, how that she, being desired to pray unto Christ for the party that a little before with fire from heaven for his incontinency was stricken, was restored by her prayer both unto his perfect health and sight. But blessed Agnes, after that she had climbed this her first grief and step unto the heavenly palace, forth with began to climb another; for fury engendering now the mortal wrath of her bloody enemy, wringing his hands, he crieth out, saying, I am undone, o thou the executioner, draw out thy sword, and do thine office that the emperor hath appointed

thee. And when Agnes saw a sturdy and cruel fellow (to behold) stand behind her, or approaching near to her with a naked sword in his hand; I am now gladder, saith she, and rejoyce that such a one as thou, being a stout, fierce, strong, and sturdy soldier, art come, than one more feeble, weak, and faint should come, or else any other young man sweetly embalmed, and wearing gay apparel, that might destroy me with funeral shame. This, even this, is he, I now confess, that I do love. I will make haste to meet him, and will no longer protract my longing desire. I will willingly receive into my paps the length of his sword, and into my breast will draw the force thereof even unto the hilts, that thus I being married unto Christ my spouse, may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world, that reacheth even unto the skies, O eternal Governor, vouchsafe! to open the gates of heaven, once shut up against all the inhabitants of the earth, and receive, O Christ, my soul that seeketh thee. Thus speaking, and kneeling upon her knees, she prayeth unto Christ above in heaven, that her neck might be the readier for the sword, now hanging over the same. The executioner then with his bloody hand finished her hope, and at one stroke cutteth off her head, and by such short and swift death doth he prevent her of the pain thereof.

I have oftentimes before complained, that the stories of saints have been powdered and sauced with divers untrue additions and fabulous inventions of men, who either of a superstitious devotion, or of a subtle practice, have so mangled their stories and lives, that almost nothing remaineth in them simple and uncorrupt, as in the usual portions wont to be read for daily service is manifest and evident to be seen; wherein few legends there be able to abide the touch of history, if they were truly tried. This I write upon the occasion specially of good Katharine, whom now I have in hand; in whom although I nothing doubt but in her life was great holiness, in her knowledge excellency, in her death constancy; yet that all things be true that be storied of her, neither dare I affirm, neither am I bound so to think; so many strange fictions of her be feigned diversly of divers writers, whereof some seem incredible, some also impudent. As where Petrus de Natalibus, writing of her conversion, declareth, how that Katharine sleeping before a certain picture or table of the crucifix, Christ with his mother Mary appeared unto her; and when Mary had offered her unto Christ to be his wife, he first refused her for her blackness. The next time, she being baptized, Mary appearing again, offered her to marry with Christ, who then being liked, was espoused to him and married, having a golden ring the same time put on her finger in her sleep, &c. Bergomensis writeth thus, that because she in the sight of the people openly resisted the emperor Maxentius to his face, and rebuked him for his cruelty, therefore she was commanded and committed upon the same to prison, which seemeth hitherto not much to digress from truth. It followeth, moreover, that the same night an angel came to her, comforting and exhorting her to be strong and constant unto the martyrdom, for that she was a maid accepted in the sight of God, and that the Lord would be with her for whose honour she did fight, and that he would give her a mouth and wisdom which her enemies should not withstand; with many other things more which I here omit. As this also I omit concerning the fifty philosophers, whom she in disputation convicted and converted unto our religion, and died martyrs for the same. Item, of the converting of Porphyrius, kinsman to Maxentius, and Faustina, the emperor's wife. At length, (saith the story,) after she proved the rack, and the four sharp cutting wheels, having at last her head cut off with the sword, so she finished her martyrdom, about the year of our Lord (as Antoninus affirmeth) three hundred and ten. Simeon Metaphrastes, writing of her, discourseth the same more at large, to whom they may resort which covet more therein to be satisfied.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

Among the works of Basil a certain oration is extant concerning Julitta the martyr, who came to her martyrdom (as he witnesseth) by this occasion. A certain avaricious and greedy person of great authority, and (as it may appear) the emperor's deputy, or other like officer, (who abused the decrees and laws of the emperor against the Christians, to his own lucre and gain,) violently took from this Julitta all her goods, lands, chattels, and servants, contrary to all equity and right. She made her pitiful complaint to the judges: a day was appointed when the cause should be heard. The spoiled woman and the spoiling extortioner stood forth together; the woman lamentably declareth her cause, the man frowningly beholdeth her face. When she had proved that of good right the goods were her own, and that wrongfully he had dealt with her, the wicked and blood-thirsty wretch, preferring the worldly substance before the precious substance of a Christian body, affirmed her action to be of no force, for that she was an outlaw, in not observing the emperor's gods, since her Christian faith hath been first abjured. His allegation was allowed as good and reasonable. Whereupon incense and fire were prepared for her to worship the gods, which, unless she would do, neither the emperor's protection, nor laws, nor judgment, nor life, should she enjoy in that commonwealth. When this handmaid of the Lord heard these words, she said, Farewell life, welcome death; farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I rather lose, than to speak one wicked and blasphemous word against God my Creator. I yield thee thanks most hearty, O my God, for this gift of grace, that I can contemn and despise this frail and transitory world, esteeming Christian profession above all treasures. Henceforth when any question was demanded, her answer was, I am the servant of Jesus Christ. Her kindred and acquaintance flocking to her, advertised her to change her mind. But that vehemently she refused, with detestation of their idolatry. Forthwith the judge, with the sharp sword of sentence, not only cutteth off all her goods and possessions, but judgeth her also to the fire most cruelly. The joyful martyr embraceth the sentence as a thing most sweet and delectable. She addresseth herself to the flames in countenance, gesture, and words, declaring the joy of her heart, coupled with singular constancy. To the women beholding her, sentimentously she spake: Stick not, O sisters, to labour and travail after true piety and godliness. Cease to accuse the fragility of feminine nature. What! are not we created of the same matter that men are? Yea, after God's image and similitude are we made, as lively as they. Not flesh only God used in the creation of the woman, in sign and token of her infirmity and weakness; but bone of bones is she, in token that she must be strong in the true and living God, all false gods forsaken; constant in faith, all infidelity renounced; patient in adversity, all worldly ease refused. Wax weary, my dear sisters, of your lives led in darkness, and be in love with my Christ, my God, my Redeemer, my Comforter, which is the true Light of the world. Persuade yourselves, or rather the Spirit of the living God persuade you, that there is a world to come, wherein the worshippers of idols and devils shall be tormented perpetually, the servants of the high God shall be crowned eternally. With these words she embraced the fire, and sweetly slept in the Lord.

There have been moreover, beside these above recited, divers godly women and faithful martyrs; as Barbara, a noble woman in Thuscia, who, after miserable imprisonment, sharp cords, and burning flames put to her sides, was at last beheaded. Also Fausta, the virgin which suffered under Maximinus, by whom Euelasius, a ruler of the emperor's palace, and Maximinus the president, were both converted, and also suffered martyrdom, as witnesseth Metaphrastes. Item, Juliana, a virgin of singular beauty in Nicomedia, who, after divers agonies, suffered likewise under Maximinus. Item, Anasia, a maid of Thessalonica, who under the said Maximinus suffered. Justina,

which suffered with Cyprianus, bishop of Antioch; not to omit also Tecla, although most writers do record that she suffered under Nero. All which holy maids and virgins glorified the Lord Christ with their constant martyrdom, in this tenth and last persecution of Dioclesian.

During the time of which persecution these bishops of Rome succeeded one after another: Caius, who succeeded next after Xistus before mentioned, Marcellinus, Marcellus, (of whom Eusebius, in his story, maketh no mention,) Eusebius, and then Miltiades; all which died martyrs in the tempest of this persecution. First, Marcellinus, after the martyrdom of Caius, was ordained bishop; he, being brought by Dioclesian to the idols, first yielded to their idolatry, and was seen to sacrifice; wherefore, being excommunicated by the Christians, he fell into such repentance, that he returned again to Dioclesian, where he, standing to his former confession, and publicly condemning the idolatry of the heathen, recovered the crown of martyrdom, suffering with Claudius, Cyrinus, and Antoninus.

Marcellus likewise was urged of Maxentius to renounce his bishopric and religion, and to sacrifice with them to idols, which, when he constantly refused, was beaten with cudgels, and so expelled the city. Then he, entering into the house of Lucina, a widow, assembled there the congregation, which, when it came to the ears of Maxentius the tyrant, he turned the house of Lucina into a stable, and made Marcellus the keeper of the beasts; who, with the stink thereof and miserable handling, was put to death. Eusebius sat bishop of Rome seven months, Marianus Scotus saith eight months, Damasus affirmeth six years; Sabellicus allegeth certain authors that say that he was slain by Maximianus, but correcteth that himself, affirming that Maximianus died before him.

Miltiades, by the testimony of Platina and others that follow him, sat three years and seven months, and suffered under Maximianus. But that seemeth not to be true, as both Sabellicus doth rightly note, affirming that the same cannot stand by the supputation of time; forasmuch as the said Galerius Maximianus reigned but two years, and died before Miltiades. Also Eusebius manifestly expresseth the example of a letter of Constantine written to this Miltiades, bishop of Rome. plainly convicting that to be false which Platina affirmeth.

In the book collected of general councils, among the decretal epistles, there is a long tractation about the judgment and condemnation of Marcellinus; whereof the masters and patrons of popery in these our days take great hold to prove the supremacy of the pope to be above all general councils, and that he ought not to be subject to the condemnation of any person or persons. The circumstance and proceeding of this judgment, if rightly weighed, maketh very little to the purpose of these men. Neither is it true that the bishops of this Council of Sinuesse did not condemn Marcellinus, for the words of the council be plain: They subscribed, therefore, to his condemnation, and condemned him to be expelled out of the city. Moreover, by the said Council were brought in the forty-two witnesses against Marcellinus. In the said Council, the verdict of the same witnesses was demanded, and also received. Furthermore, Quirinus, one of the bishops, there openly protested, that he would not depart the Council before the malice of the bishops was revealed. What doth all this declare, but that the bishop of Rome was called there, and did appear before the judgment-seat of the Council, and there stood subject to their sentence and authority, by the which he was expelled out of the city? As for the words of the Council, whereupon our papists stand so much: Thou wilt be condemned not by our judgment, but by your own. With your own mouth

determine your own cause. These words import not here the authority of the Roman bishop to be above the Council; neither do they declare what the Council could not do, but what they would and wished rather to be done, that is, that he should rather acknowledge his Crime before God and them, with a voluntary yielding of his heart, than that the confession of such a heinous fact should be extorted from him through their condemnation, for that they saw to be expedient for his soul's health; otherwise their condemnation should serve him to small purpose; and so it came to pass. For he being urged of them to condemn himself, so did, prostrating himself and weeping before them. Whereupon immediately they proceeded to the sentence against him, condemning and pronouncing him to be expelled the city. Now whether by this may be gathered that the bishop of Rome ought not to be cited, accused, and condemned by any person or persons, let the indifferent reader judge simply.

As touching the decretal epistles, which he entitled under the names of these foresaid bishops, whoso well adviseth them, and with judgment will examine the stile, the time, the argument, the hanging together of the matter, and the constitutions in them contained, (little serving to any purpose, and nothing serving for those troublesome days then present,) may easily discern them either in no part to be theirs, or much of the same to be elouted and patched by the doings of others, which lived in other times, especially seeing all the constitutions in them for the most part tend to the setting up and to exalt the see of Rome above all other bishops and churches, and to reduce all causes and appeals to the said see of Rome. So the epistle of Caius, beginning with the commendation of the authority of his see, endeth after the same tenor, willing and commanding all difficult questions in all provinces whatsoever emerging to be referred to the see apostolical. Moreover, the greatest part of the said epistle is contained in the epistle of Leo unto Leo the emperor; and so rightly agreeth in all points with the style of Leo, that evident it is the same to be borrowed out of Leo, and to be patched into the epistle of Caius out of Leo.

Likewise the epistle of Marcellinus, to get more authority with the reader, is admired with a great part of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, word for word. And how it is like that Marcellinus, which died in the twentieth year of Dioclesian, could write of consubstantiality of the Divine Persons, when that controversy and term of consubstantiality was not beard of in the church before the Nicene Council, which was twenty-three years after him? But especially the two epistles of Marcellus bewray themselves, so that for the confuting thereof needeth no other probation more than only the reading of the same. Such a glorious style of ambition therein doth appear, as it is easy to be understood not to proceed either from such a humble martyr, or to savour any thing of the misery of such a time. His words of his first epistle, written unto the brethren of Antioch, and alleged in the pope's decrees by Gratianus, are these:

"We desire you, brethren, that you do not teach nor conceive any other thing but as ye have received of the blessed apostle St. Peter, and of other apostles and fathers. For of him ye were first of all instructed; wherefore you must not forsake your own father, and follow others. For he is the head of the whole church, to whom the Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church,' &c. Whose seat was first with you in Antioch, which afterward, by the commandment of the Lord, was translated from thence to Rome, of the which church of Rome I am this day placed (by the grace of God) to be the governor. From the which church of Rome neither ought you to separate yourselves, seeing to the same church all manner of causes ecclesiastical being of any importance (God's grace so disposing) are commanded to be referred; by the same to be ordered regularly, from whence they took their first

beginning," &c. And followeth consequently upon the same, "And if your church of Antioch, which was once the first, will now yield herself unto the see of Rome, there is no other church else that will not subject itself to our dominion; to whom all other bishops whosoever, as they must needs do, (according to the decrees of the apostles and their successors,) ought to fly, as to have their head, and must appeal to the same, there to have their redress and their protection, from whence they took their first instruction and consecration," &c.

Whether this be like matter to proceed from the spirit of Marcellus, that blessed martyr, in those so dreadful days, I say no more, but only desire the gentle reader to judge.

In his second epistle, moreover, the said Marcellus, writing to Maxentius the bloody tyrant, first reprehendeth him for his cruelty, sharply admonishing him how and what to do; to learn and seek the true religion of God, to maintain his church, to honour and reverence the priests of God; and especially exhorteth him to charity, and that he would cease from persecution, &c. All this is possible and like to be true. But now mark, good reader, what blanced stuff here followed withal; as where he, alleging the statutes and sanctions of his predecessors, declareth and discusseth that no bishop nor minister ought to be persecuted or deprived of his goods. And if they be, then ought they to have their possessions and places again restored by the law, before they were bound by the law to answer to their accusations laid in against them; and so after that, in convenient time, to be called to a council; the which council notwithstanding, without the authority of the holy see, cannot proceed regularly, albeit it remain in his power to assemble certain bishops together. Neither can he regularly condemn any bishop appealing to this his apostolical see before the sentence definitive do proceed from the foresaid see, &c. And it followeth after, And therefore (saith he) let no bishop, of what crime soever he be attached, come to his accusation or be heard, but in his own ordinary synod at his convenient time; the regular and apostolical authority being joined withal. Moreover, in the said epistle, writing unto Maxentius, he decreeth that no laymen, or any suspected bishop, ought to accuse prelates of the church: "So that if they be either laymen, or men of evil conversation, or proved manifest enemies, or incensed with any hatred, their accusations against any bishops ought not to stand," with other such matters, concerning the disposition of a judicial court. Which matter, if Pope Gregory the Seventh had written unto Henry the Third, emperor, or if Pope Alexander the Third had written to the Emperor Fredericus the First, it might have stood with some reason and opportunity of time, But now for Marcellus to write these decrees, in such persecution of the church, to Maxentius, the heathen and most cruel emperor, how unlike it is to be true, and how it served then to purpose, the reader may soon discern. And yet these be the epistles and constitutions decretal whereby (under the pretended title of the fathers) all churches of late time, and all ecclesiastical causes, have been, and yet are, in this realm of England to this day governed, directed, and disposed.

The like discussion and examination I might also make of the other epistles that follow of Eusebius and Miltiades, which all tend to the same scope, that no prelate or bishop ought to come to his answer before they be orderly and fully restored again to their possessions. Who, moreover, in the said their epistles still harp upon this key of the Scripture, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church." Declaring, moreover, that this privilege of judging all men, and to be judged of no man, but only to be left to the judgment of the Lord was given to this foresaid holy see of Rome from time of the apostles, and chiefly left with Peter the holy key-keeper: so

that although the election of the apostles was equal, yet this was chiefly granted to St. Peter, to have pre-eminence above the rest. Concluding in the end hereby, That always all greater causes, as be the matters of bishops, and such other cares of weighty importance, should be brought to the see of St. Peter, the blessed prince of the apostles, &c. These be the words of Miltiades and Eusebius, whereby it may partly be smelled, of him that hath any nose, what was the meaning of them which forged these writings and letters upon these ancient holy martyrs.

This I cannot but marvel at, in the third epistle of Eusebius the bishop of Rome, that whereas Marcellinus, his late predecessor before, in his own time and remembrance did fall so horribly, and was condemned for the same justly to be expelled the city by the council of three hundred bishops; yet notwithstanding the foresaid Eusebius, in his third epistle, alleging that place of *Tu es Petrus*, bringeth in for a proof of the same, and saith, For in the apostolical see always the catholic religion hath been preserved without any spot or blemish.

But howsoever the forgers of these decretal epistles have forgotten themselves, most certain it is, that these holy bishops, unto whom they were and are ascribed, lived perfect good men, and died blessed martyrs. Of whom this Miltiades was the last among all the bishops of Rome here in the west church of Europe that ever was in danger of persecution to be martyred yet to this present day.

And thus have ye heard the stories and names of such blessed saints which suffered in the time of persecution, from the nineteenth year of Dioclesian to the seventh and last year of Maxentius, described, with the deaths also and plagues upon these tormentors and cruel tyrants, which were the cap tains of the same persecution. And here cometh in (blessed be Christ) the end of these persecutions here in these west churches of Europe, so far as the dominion of blessed Constantine did chiefly extend.

Yet notwithstanding in Asia all persecution as yet ceased not for the space of four years, as above is mentioned, by the means of wicked Licinius, under whom divers there were holy and constant martyrs that suffered grievous torments; as Hermilus, a deacon, and Stratonicus, a keeper of the prison, both which, after their punishments sustained, were strangled in the flood Ister. Also Thodorus the captain, who, being sent for of Licinius, because he would not come, and because he brake his gods in pieces, and gave them to the poor, therefore was fastened to the cross, and after being pierced with sharp pricks or bodkins in the secret parts of his body, was at last beheaded. Add to these also Miles, who, being first a soldier, was afterward made bishop of a certain city in Persia, where he, seeing himself could do no good to convert them, after many tribulations and great afflictions among them, cursed the city and departed; which city shortly after, by Saporess king of Persia, was destroyed.

13. Persecutions in Persia

In the same country of Persia, about this time suffered, under Sapores the king, (as recordeth Simeon Metasthenes,) divers valiant and constant martyrs; as Acindimus, Pegasus, Anempodistus, Epidephorus, also Simeon, archbishop of Seleucia, with Ctesiphon, another bishop in Persia, with other ministers and religious men of that region, to the number of one hundred and twenty-eight. Of this Simeon and Ctesiphon thus writeth Sozomen That the idolatrous magicians in Persia, taking counsel together against the Christians, accused Simeon and Ctesiphon to Sapores the king, for that they were grateful and accepted unto the Roman emperor, and bewrayed to him such things as were done in the land of Persia. Whereupon Sapores, being moved, took great displeasure against the Christians, oppressing them with taxes and tributes unto their utter impoverishing, killing all their priests with the sword; after that calleth for Simeon the archbishop, who there before the king declared himself a worthy and a valiant captain of Christ's church. For when Sapores had commanded him to be led to suffer torments, he neither shrunk for any fear, nor showed any great humble suit of submission for any pardon; whereat the king partly marvelling, partly offended, asked why he did not kneel down as he was wont before to do. Simeon to this answered: For that, saith he, before this time I was not brought unto you in bonds to betray the true God, as I am now; and so long I refused not to accomplish that which the order and custom of the realm of me required; but now it is not lawful for me so to do, for now I come to stand in defence of our religion and true doctrine. When Simeon thus had answered, the king, persisting in his purpose, offereth to him the choice, either to worship with him after his manner, (promising to him many great gifts if he would so do,) or, if he would not, threateneth to him, and to all the other Christians within his land, destruction. But Simeon, neither allured with his promises, nor terrified with his threatenings, continued constant in his doctrine professed, so as neither he could be induced to idolatrous worship, nor yet to betray the truth of his religion. For the which cause he was committed into bonds, and there commanded to be kept to the king's pleasure further known.

It befell in the way, as he was going to the prison, there was sitting at the king's gate a certain eunuch, an old tutor or schoolmaster of the king's, named Usthazares, who had been once a Christian, and afterward, falling from his profession, fell with the heathenish multitude to their idolatry. This Usthazares, sitting at the door of the king's palace, and seeing Simeon passing by led to the prison, rose up and revered the bishop. Simeon again with sharp words (as the time would suffer) rebuked him, and in great anger cried out against him, which, being once a Christian, would so cowardly revolt from his profession, and to return again to the heathenish idolatry. At the hearing of these words the eunuch, forthwith bursting out into tears, laying away his courtly apparel, which was sumptuous and costly, and putting upon him a black and mourning weed, sitteth before the court gates weeping and bewailing, thus saying with himself: Woe is me! with what hope, with what face shall I look hereafter for my God, which have denied my God, whenas this Simeon, my familiar acquaintance, thus passing by me, so much disdaineth me, that he refuseth with one gentle word to salute me!

These words being brought to the ears of the king, (as such tale-carriers never lack in princes' courts,) procured against him no little indignation. Whereupon Sapores

the king sending for him, first with gentle words and courtly promises began to speak him fair, asking him what cause he had so to mourn, and whether there was any thing in his house which was denied him, or which he had not at his own will and asking. Whereunto Usthazares answering again, said, that there was no thing in that earthly house which was to him lacking, or whereunto his desire stood. Yea, would God, (said he.) O king, any other grief or calamity in all the world, whatsoever it were, had happened to me rather than this, for the which I do most justly mourn and sorrow. For this sorroweth me, that I am this day alive, who should rather have died long since, and that I see this sun, which, against my heart and mind, for your pleasure dissemblingly I appeared to worship; for which cause double wise I am worthy of death: first, for that I have denied Christ; secondly, because I did dissemble with you. And continuing upon these words, and swearing by Him that made both heaven and earth, he affirmed most certainly, that although he had played the fool before, he would never be so mad again, as, instead of the Creator and Maker of all things, to worship the creatures which he had made and created. Saporess the king being astonished at the so sudden alteration of this man, and doubting with himself whether to be angry with those enhancers or with him, whether to entreat him with gentleness or with rigour, at length in this mode commanded the said Usthazares, his old ancient servant, and first tutor and bringer up of his youth, to be had away, and to be beheaded. As he was going to the place of execution, he desired of the executioners a little to stay, while he might send a message unto the king, which was this, (sent in by certain of the king's most trusty eunuchs,) desiring him, that, for all the old and faithful service he had done to his father and to him, he would now requite him with this one office again, to cause to be cried openly by a public crier in these words following; That Usthazares was beheaded, not for any treachery or crime committed against the king or the realm, but only for that he was a Christian, and would not at the king's pleasure deny his God. And so according unto his request it was performed and granted. For this cause did Usthazares so much desire the cause of his death to be published, because that as his shrinking back from Christ was a great occasion to many Christians to do the like; so now the same, hearing that Usthazares died for no other cause but only for the religion of Christ, should learn likewise by his example to be fervent and constant in that which they profess. And thus this blessed eunuch did consummate his martyrdom. Of the which his said martyrdom Simeon, being in prison, hearing, was very joyful, and gave God thanks; who, in the next day following, being brought forth before the king, and constantly refusing to condescend unto the king's request, to worship visible creatures, was likewise by the commandment of the king beheaded, with a great number more, which the same day also did suffer, to the number (as is said) of a hundred and more; all which were put to death before Simeon, he standing by and exhorting them with comfortable words; admonishing them to stand firm and stedfast in the Lord; preaching and teaching them concerning death, resurrection, and true piety; and proved by the Scriptures that to be true which he had said: declaring moreover that to be true life indeed so to die, and that to be death indeed to deny or betray God for fear of punishment; and added, further, that there was no man alive but needs once must die; "Forsomuch as to all men is appointed necessarily here to have an end; but those things which after this life follow hereafter to be eternal, which neither shall come to all men after one sort. But as the condition and trade of life in divers men doth differ, and is not in all men like; so the time shall come when all men in a moment shall render and receive according to their doings in this present life immortal rewards; such as have here done well, of life and glory; such as have done contrary, of perpetual punishment. As touching therefore our well-doing, here is no

doubt but, of all other our holy actions and virtuous deeds, there is no higher or greater deed than if a man here lose his life for his Lord God." With these words of comfortable exhortation the holy martyrs, being prepared, willingly yielded up their lives to death. After whom at last followed Simeon, with two other priests or ministers of his church, Abedecalaas and Ananias, which also with him were partakers of the same martyrdom.

At the suffering of those above mentioned, it happened that Pusices, one of the king's officers, and overseer of his artificers, was there present, who seeing Ananias, being an aged old father, somewhat to shake and tremble at the sight of them that suffered, O father, (said he,) a little moment shut thine eyes, and be strong, and shortly thou shalt see the sight of God. Upon these words thus spoken, Pusices immediately was apprehended and brought unto the king, who there confessing himself constantly to be a Christian, and for that he was very bold and hardy before the king in the cause of Christ's faith, was extremely and most cruelly handled in the execution of his martyrdom. For in the upper part of his neck they made a hole to thrust in their hand, and plucked out his tongue out of his mouth; and so he was put to death. At the which time also the daughter of Pusices, a godly virgin, by the malicious accusation of the wicked, was apprehended and put to death.

The next year following, upon the same day, when the Christians did celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's passion, which we call Good Friday, before Easter, (as witnesseth the said Sozomenus,) Sapores the king directed out a cruel and sharp edict throughout all his land, condemning to death all them whosoever confessed themselves to be Christians. By reason whereof an innumerable multitude of Christians, through the wicked procuring of the malignant magicians, suffered the same time by the sword, both in city and in town; some being sought for, some offering themselves willingly, lest they should seem by their silence to deny Christ. Thus all the Christians that could be found without pity were slain, and divers also of the king's own court and household. Amongst whom was also Azades, a eunuch, one whom the king did entirely love and favour; which Azades, after that the king understood to be put to death, being greatly moved with the sorrow thereof, commanded after that no Christians to be slain but them only which were the doctors and teachers of Christian religion.

In the same time it happened that the queen fell into a certain disease; upon the occasion whereof the cruel Jews, with the wicked magicians, falsely and maliciously accused Trabula, the sister of Simeon the martyr, a godly virgin, with another sister also of hers, that they had wrought privy charms to hurt the queen, for the revenging of the death of Simeon. This accusation being received and believed, innocent Trabula, with the others, were condemned, and with a saw cut in sunder by the middle; whose quarters were then hanged upon stakes, the queen going between them, thinking thereby to be delivered of her sickness. This Trabula was a maid of a right comely beauty, and very amiable, to whom one of the magicians cast great love, much desiring and labouring by gifts and rewards sent into the prison to win her to his pleasure, promising that if she would apply to his request, she should be delivered and set at liberty. But she utterly refusing to consent unto him, or rather rebuking him for his incontinent attempt, did choose rather to die, than to betray either the religion of her mind, or the virginity of her body.

Now forso much as the king had commanded that no Christians should be put to death, but only such as were the teachers and leaders of the flock, the magicians and

arch-magicians left no diligence untried to set forward the matter. Whereby great affliction and persecution was among the bishops and teachers of the church, which in all places went to slaughter, especially in the country of Diobenor; for that part of Persia above all other was most Christian. Where Aceptsimas the bishop, with a great number of his flock and clergy, were apprehended and taken; upon the apprehension of whom the magicians, to satisfy the king's commandment, dismissed all the rest, only depriving them of their living and goods. Only Aceptsimas, the bishop, they retained, with whom one Jacobus, a minister or priest of the church, was also joined; not of any compulsion, but only as himself so desired and obtained of those magicians that he might follow him, and be coupled in the same bonds, to serve the aged bishop, and to relieve (so much as he might) his calamities, and heal his wounds. For he had been sore scourged before of the magicians, after they had apprehended him, and brought him to worship the sun; which thing, because he would not do, they cast him into prison again, where this Jacobus was waiting upon him. At the same time likewise Athalas, a priest or minister, also Azadanes and Abdiesus, deacons, were imprisoned and miserably scourged for the testimony of the Lord Jesus. After this the archimagus, espying his time, complaineth unto the king of them, having authority and commission given him (unless they would worship the sun) to punish them as he pleased. This commandment received of the king the master magus doth declare to them in prison. But they answered again plainly, that they would never be either betrayors of Christ, or worshippers of the sun; whereupon without mercy they were put to bitter torments; where Aceptsimas, strongly persisting in the confession of Christ, endured to death. The other being no less rent and wounded with scourges, yet continued marvellously alive; and because they would in no case turn from their constant sentence, were turned again into prison. Of whom Athalas, in the time of his whipping, was so drawn and racked with pulling, that both his arms, being loosed out of the joints, hanged down from his body; which he so carried about, without use of any hand to feed himself but as he was fed of others.

Miserable, and almost innumerable, were the slaughters under the reign of this Saporess, of bishops, ministers, deacons, religious men, holy virgins, and other ecclesiastical persons, such as did then cleave to the doctrine of Christ, and suffered for the same. The names of the bishops, besides the other multitude taken in the persecution, are recited in this order following: Barbasimes, Faulus, Gaddiabes, Sabinus, Mareas, Mocius, Johannes, Hormisdas, Papas, Jacobus, Romas, Maares, Agas, Bochres, Abdas, Abiesus, Joannes, Abramius, Agdelas, Sabores, Isaac, Dausas; Bicolor also, with Maureanda his fellow bishop, and the rest of his churches under him, to the number of two hundred and fifty persons, which were the same time apprehended of the Persians, &c. Briefly, to comprehend the whole multitude of them that suffered in that persecution, the manner of their apprehension, the cruelty of their torments, how and where they suffered, and in what places, it is not possible for any history to discharge. Neither are the Persians themselves (as Sozomenus recordeth) able to recite them. In sum, the multitude and number of them whom they are able to recite by name cometh to the sum of sixteen thousand men and women.

The rumour and noise of this so miserable affliction of the Christians in the kingdom of Persia, coming to the ears of Constantine the emperor, put him in great heaviness, studying and revolving with himself how to help the matter, which indeed was very hard for him to do. It so befell the same time that certain ambassadors were then at Rome from Saporess king of Persia, to whom Constantine did easily grant and consent, satisfying all their requests and demands; thinking thereby to obtain the more

friendship at the king's hands, that at his request he would be good to the Christians, to whom he writeth his epistle in their behalf, and sendeth the same by his messengers, beginning thus:

The contents whereof briefly do tend to this effect. Declaring unto him how he should stand much beholden to him, if, at his request, he would show some quiet and rest to the Christians, in whose religion there was nothing which he could justly blame. "Forsomuch as in their sacrifices they use to kill nothing, nor to shed blood, but only to offer up unbloody sacrifices, to make their prayers unto God, who delighteth not in blood-shedding, but only in the soul that loveth virtue, and followeth such doctrine and knowledge which is agreeing unto true piety. And therefore such men as do lead him, and lean so to believe and to worship God, are more to be commended. Moreover, he assureth him to find God more merciful unto him, if he would embrace the godly piety and truth of the Christians. And for example thereof bringeth in the stories of Galienus and Valerianus, who, so long as they were favourers of the Christians, did prosper and flourish. But as soon as they moved any persecution against them, it happened to them, as it did to all other emperors before them, that all went backward with them; as especially might appear by Valerianus, who, after he had raged so cruelly against the Christians, was eftsoons overcome of the Persians, the revenging hand of God falling upon him, where he led ever a miserable life in wretched captivity. Further also, for the more evidence of the same, he inferreth the examples of those emperors and tyrants in his time whom he vanquished and subdued only by his faith in Christ, for the which faith God was his helper, and gave him the victory in many battles, and triumph over great tyrants; whereby he hath so enlarged the dominion of the Roman monarchy, from the west ocean unto the uttermost parts well near of all the east. To the doing and working whereof he neither called to him the help of any charmer or divination of soothsayer, nor used the killing of any sacrifice; but only the following of the cross, and prayer made to Almighty God, without any other bloody sacrifice, was the armour wherewith he overcame," &c. And in the end of the epistle addeth these words: "What joy, (saith he,) what gladness would it be to my heart, to hear the state also of the Persians to flourish, as I wish it to do, by embracing this sort of men, the Christians I mean! So that both you with them, and they with you, in long prosperity may enjoy much felicity together, as your hearts would desire; and in so doing no doubt ye shall. For so shall you have God, which is the Author and Creator of all this universal world, to be merciful and gracious to you. These men therefore I commend unto you upon your kingly honour; and upon your clemency and piety, wherewith you are endued, I commit them unto you, desiring you to embrace and receive them according to your humanity and benignity, agreeing and convenient to your estate; who, in so doing, shall now both procure to yourself grace through your faith, and also shall declare to me a great pleasure and benefit worthy of thanks."

This example wrote Constantine to king Sapoires; such care had this godly prince for them that believed in Christ, not only in his own monarchy, but also in all places of the world: neither is it to be doubted but this intercession of the emperor did something mitigate the heat of the Persians' persecution, although thereof we read no certain thing in our histories.

Of other troubles and persecutions we read, which happened afterward in the said country of Persia, under Isdigerdes the king; but these followed long after, about the time of the emperor Theodosius. At which time suffered Andas, their bishop, and Hormisda, a great nobleman's son, and of great reputation among the Persians; whom when the king understood to be a Christian, and to deny to turn from his religion,

condemned him to keep his elephants naked. In process of time, the king looking out, and seeing him all swarthy and tanned in the sun, commanded him to have a shirt put on, and to be brought before him; whom then the king asked if he would deny Christ. Hormisda, hearing this, tore off his shirt from his body, and cast it from him, saying, If ye think that I will deny my faith to Christ for a shirt, have here your gift again, &c. And so was upon that expelled the country.

Another there was that same time, named Suenes, which had under him a hundred servants. The king taking displeasure with him for that he would not alter from his religion and godly truth, asked who was the worst of all his servants, and him the king made ruler of all the rest, and coupling him with his master's wife, brought also Suenes under his subjection, thinking thereby to subdue also the faith of Suenes; but it was builded upon a sure foundation.

Of Benjamin the deacon thus writeth the said Theodoret in his first book: that after two years of his imprisonment, at the request of the Roman legate, he was delivered; who afterward, contrary to the king's commandment, preached and taught the gospel of Christ, and was most miserably excruciated, having twenty sharp pricks of reeds thrust under his nails; but when he did laugh at that, he had a sharp reed thrust into another part with horrible pain. After that a certain long stalk, ragged and thorny, being thrust into his body by the nether part, was forced into him; with the horribleness of the pain whereof the valiant and invincible soldier of the Lord gave over his life. And thus much concerning the martyrs and persecutions among the Persians, although these persecutions belong not to this time, which came (as it is said) long after the days of Constantine, about the year of our Lord four hundred and twenty-five.

15. Persecution under Julian the Apostate

Likewise under Julian, the wicked apostate, certain there were which constantly suffered martyrdom by the heathen idolaters: as Emilianus, who was burned in Thracia, and Domitius, which was slain in his cave. Theodorus also, for singing of a psalm at the removing of the body of Babilas, (whereof mention is made before,) being apprehended, was so examined with exquisite torments, and so cruelly excruciate from morning almost to noon, that hardly he escaped with life; who, being asked afterward of his friends how he could abide so sharp torments, said that at the first beginning he felt some pain, but afterward there stood by him a young man, who, as he was sweating, wiped away his sweat, and refreshed him with cold water oftentimes; wherewith he was so delighted, that when he was let down from the engine, it grieved him more than before.

Artemius also, the captain of the Egyptian soldiers, the same time lost his head for his religion indeed; although other causes were pretended against him.

Add unto these moreover Eusebius and Nestabus, two brethren, with Nestor also, who for their Christianity were dragged through the streets and murdered of the idolatrous people of Gaza.

But especially the cruelty of the Arethusians, a people of Syria, exceeded against the Christian virgins, whom they set out naked before the multitude to be scorned; after that, being shaven, they covered them with swill and draft, wont to be given to their hogs, and so caused their bowels and flesh to be devoured of the hungry swine. This rage and fury of the wicked Arethusians Sozomenus supposeth to come of this, because that Constantine before had broken them from their country manner of setting forth and exposing their virgins filthily to whomso ever lusted, and destroyed the temple of Venus in Heliopolis, restraining the people there from their filthiness and vile whoredom.

Of the lamentable story, or rather tragedy, of Marcus Arethusius, their bishop, thus writeth the said Sozomenus, and also Theodoretus in his third book, in these words as follow.

This tragedy (saith he) of Marcus Arethusius doth require the eloquence and worthiness of Eschilus and Sophocles, which may, as the matter deserveth, set forth and beautify his great afflictions, This man, at the commandment of Constantine, pulled down a certain temple dedicated to idols, and instead thereof built up a church, where the Christians might congregate. The Arethusians, remembering the little good will that Julianus bare unto him, accused him as a traitor and enemy to him. At the first, according as the Scripture teacheth, he prepared himself to fly; but when he perceived that there were certain of his kinsmen or friends apprehended in his stead, returning again of his own accord, he offered himself to those that thirsted for his blood. Whom when they had gotten, as men neither pitying his old age and worn years, nor abashed at his virtuous conversation, being a man so adorned both with doctrine and manners, first stripped him naked, and pitifully beat him; then, within a while after, they cast him into a foul filthy sink; and from thence being brought, they caused boys to thrust him in with sharpened sticks to provoke his pain the more. Lastly, they put him in a basket; and being anointed with honey and broth, they hung him abroad in the heat of the sun, as meat for wasps and flies to feed upon. And all this

extremity they showed unto him, for that they would enforce him to do one of these things; that is, either to build up again the temple which he had destroyed, or else to give so much money as should pay for the building of the same: but even as he purposed with himself to suffer and abide their grievous torments, so refused he to do that they demanded of him. At length they, taking him to be but a poor man, and not able to pay such a sum of money, promised to forgive him the one half, so that he would be contented to pay the other half. But he, hanging in the basket, wounded pitifully with the sharpened sticks of boys and children, and all to be bitten with wasps and flies, did not only conceal his pain and grief, but also derided those wicked ones, and called them base, low, and terrene people, and he himself to be exalted and set on high. At length, they demanding of him but a small sum of money, he answered thus; It is as great wickedness to confer one halfpenny in case of impiety, as if a man should bestow the whole. Thus they, being not able to prevail against him, let him down, and leaving him, went their way, so that every man might learn at his mouth the example of true piety and faithfulness.

Although the tradition of these aforesaid stories and persecutions of Persia above premised do stray somewhat out of the order and course of time and place, as which came neither in the time of Constantine, nor be pertinent to the monarchy of Rome; yet because in this present history we are in hand with the holy martyrs and saints of Christ, forsomuch as these also gave such a faithful testimony of the Lord Jesus with their blood, I thought therefore not to pass them over without some testimony in this our catalogue of holy martyrs. And here an end of these persecutions of the primitive church.

16. Constantine the Great

It may peradventure be marvelled of some, reading the history of these so terrible persecutions above specified, why God the Almighty, Director of all things, would suffer his own people and faithful servants, believing in his own and only begotten Son Jesus, so cruelly to be handled, so wrongfully to be vexed, so extremely to be tormented and put to death, and that the space of so many years together, as in these foresaid persecutions may appear. To the which admiration I have nothing to answer, but to say with the words of Hierom, We ought not to be moved with this iniquity of things, to see the wicked to prevail against the body; forsomuch as in the beginning of the world we see Abel the just to be killed of wicked Cain, and afterward Jacob being thrust out, Esau to reign in his father's house: in like case the Egyptians with brick and tile afflicted the sons of Israel; yea, and the Lord himself, was he not crucified of the Jews, Barabbas the thief being let go? Time would not suffice me to recite and reckon up how the godly in this world go to wreck, the wicked flourishing and prevailing. Briefly, howsoever the cause hereof proceedeth, whether for our sins here in this life, or how else soever; yet this is to us, and may be to all men, a sufficient stay, that we are sure these afflictions and persecutions of God's people in this world not to come by any chance or blind fortune, but by the provident appointment and forewarning of God. For so in the old law, by the affliction of the children of Israel, he hath prefigured these persecutions of his Christians. So by the words of Christ's own mouth in the gospel he did forewarn his church of these troubles to come. Again, neither did he suffer these so great afflictions to fall upon his servants before that he had premonished them sufficiently by special revelation in the Apocalypse of John his servant; in the which Apocalypse he declared unto his church before, not only what troubles were coming at hand towards them, where and by whom they should come, but also in plain number, if the words of the prophecy be well understood, assigneth the true time, how long the said persecutions should continue, and when they should cease.

Thus having at large discoursed these horrible persecutions past, and heavy afflictions of Christian martyrs; now, by the grace of God, coming out of this Red Sea of bloody persecution, leaving Pharaoh and his host behind, let us sing gloriously to the worthy name of our God, who, through the blood of the Lamb, after long and tedious afflictions, at length hath visited his people with comfort, hath tied up Satan short, hath sent his meek Moses, (gentle Constantine I mean,) by whom it hath so pleased the Lord to work deliverance to his captive people, to set his servants at liberty, to turn their mourning into joy, to magnify the church of his Son, to destroy the idols of all the world, to grant life and liberty (and would God also not so much riches) unto them which before were the abjects of all the world; and all by the means of godly Constantine, the meek and most Christian emperor, of whose divine victories against so many tyrants and emperors, persecutors of Christ's people, and, lastly, against Licinius, in the year of our Lord three hundred twenty and four, of whose other noble acts and prowesses, of whose blessed virtues and his happy birth and progeny, part we have comprehended before, part now remaineth (Christ willing) to be declared.

This Constantine was the son of Constantius the emperor, a good and virtuous child of a good and virtuous father, born in Britain, (as saith Eutropius,) whose

mother was named Helena, daughter indeed of King Coilus; although Ambrosius, in his funeral oration of the death of Theodosius, saith she was an inn-holder's daughter. He was a most bountiful and gracious prince, having a desire to nourish learning and good arts, and did oftentimes use to read, write, and study himself. He had marvellous good success and prosperous achieving of all things he took in hand, which then was (and truly) supposed to proceed of this, for that he was so great a favourer of the Christian faith; which faith, when he had once embraced, he did ever after most devoutly and religiously reverence, and commanded by especial commission and proclamation, that every man should profess the same religion throughout all the Roman monarchy. The worshipping of idols, (whereunto he was addict by the allurements of Fausta his wife, insomuch that he did sacrifice to them,) after the discomfiture of Maxentius in battle, he utterly abjured; but his baptism he deferred even unto his old age, because he had determined a journey into Persia, and thought in Jordan to have been baptized.

As touching his natural disposition and wit, he was very eloquent, a good philosopher, and in disputation sharp and ingenious. He was accustomed to say, That an emperor ought to refuse no labour for the utility of the commonwealth; yea, and to adventure the mangling of his body for the remedy thereof; but if otherwise it may be holpen, to cherish the same. This do Aurelius, Victor, Pomponius Letus, and Ignatius write of him. And Ælius Lampridius saith, writing upon the life of Heliogabalus, that Constantine was wont to say, that an empire was given by the determinate purpose of God, that he to whom it was given should so employ his diligence, as he might be thought worthy of the same at the hands of the Giver; which same saying also Augustine noteth in his third book against Cresconius.

He first entered into the empire by the mercifulness of God, minding, after long waves of doleful persecution, to restore unto his church peace and tranquillity, in the year of our Lord three hundred and eleven, as Eusebius accounteth in his chronicle. His reign continued, as Eutropius affirmeth, thirty years, Letus saith thirty and two years, lacking two months. Great peace and tranquillity enjoyed the church under the reign of this good emperor, which took great pain and travail for the preservation thereof. First, yea, and that before he had subdued Licinius, he set forth many edicts for the restitution of the goods of the church, for the revoking of the Christians out of exile, for taking away the dissension of the doctors out of the church, for the setting of them free from public charges, and such like, even as the copy of his constitutions hereunder declareth, which Eusebius in his tenth book and fifth chapter repeateth in this wise.

"Victor Constantinus Maximus Augustus, to our loving subjects inhabiting throughout the east parts, sendeth greeting. The thing itself, which in the sure and most firm law of nature is contained, doth give unto all men (even as God hath ordained the same) sufficient perceivance and understanding, both of such things as man ought to foresee, as also what things presently he ought to meditate. Neither is there any thing therein to be doubted of such as have their minds directed to the scope or mark of perfect understanding; so that the perfect comprehending of sound reason, and the perceivance thereof, be compared with the knowledge of God, being the true and perfect virtue. Wherefore let no wise man be troubled, although he sees divers men of divers dispositions; for wisdom, which springeth of virtue, cannot abide or acquaint herself with fond idiots, unless that (on the other side) the malice of perverse filthiness prolong her days, and cause the same idiocy to survive. Wherefore assuredly the crown and price of virtue lieth open unto all men, and the most mighty God ordereth

the judgment of the same. I undoubtedly (as manifestly as possible is) will endeavour myself to testify and confess unto you all the hope which is in me. I think verily that the emperors which before this time have lately been, even for their tyranny had the empire taken from them; and my father, only exercising and using all meekness and lenity in his affairs, calling upon God the Father with great devotion and humility, hath been exalted to the same; and all the rest, as men wanting their wits, and in comparison as savage beasts, rather did give themselves to like cruelty, than to any lenity and gentleness towards their subjects: which tyranny, every one for his time being muzzled, utterly subverted the true and infallible doctrine; and so great malice was there kindled in their breasts, that when all things were in peaceable tranquillity, they made and raised most cruel and bloody intestine or civil wars. It is credibly informed us, that in those days Apollo gave answers, but not by any man's mouth, but out of a certain cave and dark place, (saying,) that he was much disquieted by those that were the just men and livers upon the earth, so that he could or would not for them declare the truth of such things as others demanded. And hereby it came to pass that such false divinations were given from the golden tables in Apollo's temple. And this thing did his prophetic priest complain of, when he took up again the hair of his head, that other had contemptuously cast down; and said, that the neglecting of his divination was the cause of so many evils amongst men. But let us see what was the end hereof. We now boldly, and without all fear, invoke and worship the omnipotent God. When I was a child, I heard that he which then was chief emperor of Rome, unhappy, yea, most unhappy man, being seduced and brought into error by his soldiers, curiously inquired who were those just men upon the earth that Apollo meant. And one of his priests, which was near about him, made answer that they were the Christians. This answer unto him, being as delectable as honey unto the mouth, drew the sword (given unto him to be a revenger of evil-doers and malefactors) against the professors of the irreprehensible sanctimony and religion; and straightway he gave forth a commission, (to bloody homicides, as I may well call them,) and gave commandment to all the judges that they should endeavour themselves, with all the cunning they had, to the devising of more grievous and sharper punishments against the poor Christians. Then, then I say, a man might have seen how greatly the honest professors of that religion were molested with cruelty, and daily suffered no small injuries and contumelies, and that also they suffered and sustained the same with such temperance, as though they had had no injuries at all done unto them; which temperance and patience of theirs was the cause why the furious citizens were the more mad and raging against them. What fires, what tortures, what kind of torments were there, but they, without respect either of age or sex, were enforced to feel them?

Then did the earth, without doubt, herself bewail her children, and the round world, which containeth all things, being sprinkled and imbrued with their blood, made doleful lamentation for them, and the day itself, provoked to mourn, was made amazed for them. But what is this to purpose? Now the very barbarous nations rejoice for their sakes which received and harboured them, when they were afraid and fled from us, keeping them, as it were, in most loving and amiable captivity; and they saved not only their lives, but also were a defence for their religion. And now also the Roman nation remembereth and hath before their eyes this blame and spot, which the Christians that were of that time worthily gave unto them, when they by them were banished (as unfit members of their commonwealth) amongst the barbarous people. What needeth to make further rehearsal of the mourning lamentation which the heathen people themselves throughout the world made for the pitiful murder and slaughter of them? After this it came to pass that they which were authors of all these

mischiefs died also, and were committed for their reward to the most filthy and horrible dungeon of hell. They being so entangled with intestine and civil wars, left alive neither name nor kinsman of their own; which thing undoubtedly had not chanced unless the wicked divinations of Apollo's oracles had deceived and bewitched them. To thee therefore now I pray, o most mighty God, that thou wilt vouchsafe to be merciful, and pardon all the east parts and inhabitants of the same, being oppressed with calamity; and that by me thy servant thou wilt of thy goodness help and relieve the same. And these things rashly crave I not at thy hands, O Lord, most mighty and holiest God of all. For I being persuaded by the only oracles, have both begun and also finished wholesome and profitable things; and further, by the bearing and showing of thine ensign, have overcome a mighty and strong host; and when any necessity of the commonwealth (to my charge committed) requireth thereunto, (following those signs and tokens of thy virtues,) I boldly go forth and fight against mine enemies: and for this cause have I sacrificed my soul unto thee, purified and cleansed both with thy love and fear. Yea, truly, thy name do I sincerely love, and thy power do I reverence, which by many tokens and wonders hast showed and confirmed thereby my belief and faith. Therefore will I do my endeavour, and bend myself thereunto, that I may re-edify thy most holy house, which those wicked and ungodly emperors have with so great ruin laid waste; thy people do I desire to bring and establish in firm peace and tranquillity, and that for the public utility of all the inhabitants of the earth. Those which yet err, and are out of the way, enjoy the benefit of peace and quietness with and amongst the number of the faithful sort; for I trust the restitution of the like society and participation may be a means to bring them also that err into the perfect way of verity. Let none therefore be grievous one unto another, but what every man thinkest best, that let him do; for such as are wise ought thoroughly to be persuaded that they only mean to live holily, and as they should do, whom the Spirit of God moveth to take their delight and recreation in reading his holy will; and if others wilfully will go out of the way, cleaving to the synagogues of false doctrine, they may at their own peril. As for us, we have the most worthy house or congregation of God's verity, which he according to his own goodness and nature hath given us. And this also we wish unto them, that with like participation and common consent they may feel with us the same delectation of mind. For this our religion is neither new, nor newly invented, but it is as old as we believe the creation of the world to be, and which God hath commanded to be celebrated with such worship as both seemed and pleased him; but all living men are liars, and are deceived with divers and sundry illusions, Thou, O God, for Christ thy Son's sake, suffer not this wickedness again to root: thou hast set up a clear burning light, that thereby as many as thou hast chosen may come unto thee; these thy miracles approve the same. It is thy power that keepeth us in innocency and fidelity. The sun and the moon run their appointed course. Neither yet in ranging-wise wander the stars to what place of the world they list themselves. The days, years, months, and times keep their appointed turns. The earth abideth firm and unmovable at thy word; and the wind at the time (by thee directed) stormeth and bloweth. The streaming watery floods ebb in time according as they flow. The raging sea abideth within her bounded limits: and for that the ocean sea stretcheth out herself in equal length and breadth with the whole earth, this must needs be wrought with some marvellous workmanship of thine own hand. Which thing, unless it were at thy will made and disposed, without all doubt so great difference and partition between would ere this time have brought utter ruin and destruction, both to the life of man, and to all that belongeth to man beside. Which for that they have such great and huge conflicts amongst themselves, as also the invisible spirits have, we give thanks, O Lord most

mighty, God of all gods, that all mankind hath not been destroyed thereby. Surely even as greatly as thy benignity and gentleness is manifested by divers and sundry benefits bestowed upon us, so much also is the same set forth and declared in the discipline of thy eternal word to those that be heavenly wise, and apply themselves to the attainment of sincere and true virtue. But if any such there be that little regard or have but small respect unto the consideration thereof, let them not blame or lay a fault in others that do the same; for that physic whereby health is obtained is manifestly offered unto all men. Now therefore let no man go about to subvert that which experience itself doth show (of necessity) to be pure and good. Let us therefore altogether use the participation of this benefit bestowed upon us, that is to say, the benefit of peace and tranquillity, setting apart all controversy. And let no man hurt or be prejudicial to his fellow for that thing wherein he thinketh himself to have done well. If by that which any man knoweth and hath experience of he thinketh he may profit his neighbour, let him do the same; if not, let him give over and remit it till another time: for there is a great diversity betwixt the willing and voluntary embracing of religion, and that when a man is thereunto enforced and coacted. Of these things have I made a more large discourse than indeed the scope of mediocrity requireth; especially because I would not have my faith (touching the verity) to be hid; for that I hear there be some which complain that the old accustomed haunting of their temples, and that the power of such darkness is cut off and taken away. Which thing surely I would take in better part, were it not that the violent rebellion of flagitious error were so fixed in many men's hearts, whereby they thirst after the utter subversion of the commonwealth and empire."

Such was the goodness of this emperor Constantine, or rather such was the providence of Almighty God toward his church in stirring him up, that all his care and study of mind was set upon nothing else but only how to benefit and enlarge the commodities of the same. Neither was it to him enough to deliver the church and people of God from outward vexation of foreign tyrants and persecutors. No less beneficial was his godly care also in quieting the inward dissensions and disturbance within the church, among the Christian bishops themselves; according as we read of Moses, the deliverer of the Israelites, in agreeing the brethren together when he saw them at variance, *Exod. ii.* No less also did his vigilant study extend in erecting, restoring, and enriching the churches of God in all cities, and in providing for the ministers of the same. And therefore, writing to Anilinus his chief captain, declareth his will and mind to him in letters concerning the goods which did appertain to the churches of the Christians, that he should procure vigilantly for the same, that all such goods, houses, and gardens, belonging before to the right of churches, should again be restored in all speedy wise, and that he therein might be certified with speed, &c.

Moreover, he, writing to the said Anilinus in another letter, signifieth unto him in this effect: that forso much as the contempt of God's reverend religion is and hath been ever the greatest decay to the name and people of Rome, as contrarily the maintaining and reverencing the same hath ever brought prosperity to all commonwealths; therefore he in consideration thereof hath taken that order, and giveth to him in charge, that through that province where he hath to do, which was in Africa, where Cecilianus was bishop, he should there see and provide that all such ministers and clerks, whose vocation was to serve in the church, should be freed and exempted from all public duties and burdens, whereby they being so privileged, and all impediments removed which should hinder their divine ministration, thereby the common utility of the people might the better flourish, &c.

Furthermore, the said Constantine in another letter, writing to Miltiades, bishop of Rome, and to Marcus, declareth in his letters to them how Cecilianus, bishop of Carthage, hath been accused unto him by divers of his colleagues and fellow bishops. Wherefore his will is, that the said Cecilianus, with ten bishops his accusers, with ten other his defendants, should repair up to him at Rome; where, in the present assistance of the foresaid Miltiades, Rheticus, Maternus, Marinus, and of other their fellow colleagues, the cause of Cecilianus might be heard and rightly examined, so that all schism and division might be cut off from among them, where in the fervent desire of Constantine to peace and unity may well appear.

Upon the like cause and argument also he writeth to Chrestus, bishop of Syracusa; being so desirous to nourish peace and concord in the church, that he offereth to him, with his under ministers and three servants, his free carriage to come up to him unto the council of other bishops, for the agreeing of certain matters belonging to the church.

He writeth also another letter to the forenamed Cecifianus, bishop of Carthage.

To the provinces likewise of Palestina and those parts about he directeth his edict in the behalf of the Christians, for the releasing of such as were in captivity, and for the restoring again of them which had sustained any loss in the former persecution before, and for the refreshing of such as heretofore had been oppressed with any ignominy or molestation for their confession sake; declaring in the said edict how that this whole body, life, and soul, and whatsoever is in him, he oweth to God and to the service of him, &c.

Moreover, another letter he writeth to Eusebius, for the edifying of new Christian churches, and restoring of them which had been wasted before by foreign enemies. And after he had collected the synod of Nice for the study of peace and unity of the church, he writeth upon the same to Alexander and Arius. In which his letters he most lamentably uttered the great grief of his heart, to see and hear of their contention and division, whereby the peace and common harmony of the church was broken, the synod provoked and resisted, the holy people of the Lord divided into parts and tumults, contrary to the office of good and circumspect men, whose duty were rather to nourish concord and to seek tranquillity. And though in some small points and light trifles they did disagree from others; yet the example of philosophers might teach them, who, although in some parts of a sentence or piece of a question some might dissent from others, yet in the unity of their profession they did all join as fellows together. In like case were it their duty in such fruitless questions (or rather pieces of questions) to keep them in the conceptions of their minds in silence unto themselves, and not to bring them forth into public synods, to break therefore from the communion of the reverend council; declaring, moreover, in the said epistle, the first origin and occasion of this their contentious dissension to rise upon vain and trifling terms, vile causes, and light questions, and pieces rather of questions; about such matters as neither are to be moved, nor to be answered unto being moved; more curious to be searched, and perilous to be expressed, than necessary to be inquired. Wherefore, by all manner of means, he doth labour them, doth entreat them, and persuade them, not only with reasons, but also with tears and sighing sobs, that they would restore peace again unto the church, and quietness to the rest of his life, (which otherwise would not be sweet unto him,) and they would return again to the communion of the reverend council; who, in so doing, should open his way and purposed journey into the east parts, which otherwise, hearing of their discord and dissension, would be sorry to see

with his eyes that which grieveth him now to hear with his ears: with much more in the same epistle contained, but this is the effect of the whole. Thus much I thought summarily to comprehend, whereby the divine disposition and singular gentle nature of this meek and religious Constantine might more notoriously appear to all princes, for them to learn by his example what zeal and care they ought to bear toward the church of Christ, and how gently to govern, and how to be beneficial to the same.

Many other edicts and epistles, written to other places and parties, be expressed at large in the second book of Eusebius, *De Vita Constantini*, wherein the zealous care and princely beneficence of this noble emperor toward the church of Christ may appear; whereof in a brief recapitulation such specialties we have collected as here followeth

First, he commanded all them to be set free whosoever, for the confession of Christ, had been condemned to banishment, or to the mines of metal, or to any public or private labour to them inflicted. Such as were put to any infamy or shame among the multitude, he willed them to be discharged from all such blemish of ignominy. Soldiers, which before were deprived either of their place, or put out of their wages, were put to their liberty, either to serve again in their place, or quietly to live at home. Whatsoever honour, place, or dignity had been taken away from any man should be restored to them again. The goods and possessions of them that had suffered death for Christ, howsoever they were alienated, should return to their heirs or next of kin, or, for lack of them, should be given to the church. He commanded, moreover, that only Christians should bear office; the other he charged and restrained, that neither they should sacrifice, nor exercise any more divinations and ceremonies of the Gentiles, nor set up any images, nor keep any feasts of the heathen idolaters. He corrected, moreover, and abolished all such unlawful manners and dishonest usages in the cities as might be hurtful any ways to the church; as the custom that the Egyptians had in the flowing of Nilus, at what time the people used to run together like brute beasts, both men and women, and with all kind of filthiness and sodomitery to pollute their cities in celebrating the increase of that river. This abomination Constantine extinguished, causing that wicked order called Androgyne to be killed; by reason whereof the river afterward (through the benefit of God) yielded more increase in his flowing, to the greater fertility of the ground, than it did before.

Among the Romans was an old law, that such as were barren, having no fruit of children, should be amerced of half their goods. Also, that such as being above the years of twenty and five unmarried, should not be numbered in the same privileges with them that were married, neither should be heirs to them, to whom, notwithstanding, they were next in kin. These laws, because they seemed unreasonable, (to punish the defect of nature or gift of virginity by man's law,) he abrogated and took away. Another order was among the Romans, that they which made their wills, being sick, had certain prescribed and conceived words appointed to them to use, which, unless they followed, their wills stood in no effect. This law also Constantine repealed, permitting to every man in making his testament to use what words or what witnesses he would. Likewise, among the Romans, he restrained and took away the cruel and bloody spectacles and sights, where men were wont with swords one to kill another. Of the barbarous and filthy fashion of the Arethusians in Phœnicia I have mentioned before, where they used to expose and set forth their virgins to open fornication before they should be married; which custom also Constantine removed away. Where no churches were, there he commanded new to be made; where any were decayed, he commanded them to be repaired; where any were

too little, he caused them to be enlarged, giving to the same great gifts and revenues, not only of such tributes and taxes coming to him from certain sundry cities, which he transferred unto the churches, but also out of his own treasures. When any bishops required any council to be had, he satisfied their petitions; and what in their councils and synods they established, being godly and honest, he was ready to confirm the same.

The armour of his soldiers which were newly come from the Gentiles he garnished with the arms of the cross, whereby they might learn the sooner to forget their old superstitious idolatry. Moreover, like a worthy emperor, he prescribed a certain form of prayer, instead of a catechism, for every man to have, and to learn how to pray and to invoke God. The which form of prayer is recited in the fourth book of Eusebius.

"We acknowledge thee only to be our God, we confess thee to be our King, we invoke and call upon thee, our only helper; by thee we obtain our victories, by thee we vanquish and subdue our enemies, to thee we attribute whatsoever present commodities we enjoy, and by thee we hope for good things to come: unto thee we direct all our suits and petitions, most humbly beseeching thee to conserve Constantine our emperor and his noble children in long life to continue, and to give them victory over all their enemies, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

In his own palace he set up a house peculiar for prayer and doctrine, using also to pray and sing with his people. Also in his wars he went not without his tabernacle appointed for the same. The Sunday he commanded to be kept holy of all men, and free from all judiciary causes, from markets, marts, fairs, and all other manual labours, only husbandry excepted; especially charging that no images or monuments of idolatry should be set up.

Men of the clergy and of the ministry in all places he endued with special privileges and immunities; so that if any were brought before the civil magistrate, and listed to appeal to the sentence of his bishop, it should be lawful for him so to do, and that the sentence of the bishop should stand in as great force as if the magistrate or the emperor himself had pronounced it.

But here is to be observed and noted, by the way, that the clerks and ministers, then newly creeping out of persecution, were in those days neither in number so great, nor in order of life of the like disposition to these in our days now living.

No less care and provision the said Constantine also had for the maintenance of schools pertaining to the church, and to the nourishing of good arts and liberal sciences, especially of divinity; not only with stipends and subsidies furnishing them, but also with large privileges and exemptions defending the same, as by the words of his own law is to be seen and read as followeth: "Physicians, grammarians, and other professors of liberal arts, and doctors of the law, with their wives and children, and all other their possessions which they have in cities, we command to be freed from all civil charges and functions, neither to receive foreign strangers in provinces, nor to be burdened with any public administration, nor to be cited up to civil judgment, nor to be drawn out or oppressed with any injury. And if any man shall vex them, he shall incur such punishment as the judge at his discretion shall award him. Their stipends moreover and salaries we command truly to be paid them, whereby they may more freely instruct others in arts and sciences," &c.

Over and besides this, so far did his godly zeal and princely care and provision extend to the church of Christ, that he commanded and provided books and volumes of the Scripture diligently and plainly to be written and copied out, to remain in public churches to the use of posterity. Whereupon, writing to Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, in a special letter, he willeth him with all diligence to procure fifty volumes of parchment well bound and compacted, wherein he should cause to be written out of the Scripture, in a fair legible hand, such things as he thought necessary and profitable for the instruction of the church, and alloweth him for that business two public ministers: he also writeth concerning the same to the general of his army, to support and further him with such necessaries as thereunto should appertain, &c.

In viewing, perusing, and writing this story, and in considering the Christian zeal of this emperor, I wish that either this our printing and plenty of books had been in his days, or that this so heroical heart toward Christian religion, as was in this so excellent monarch, might something appear in inferior princes reigning in these our printing days, &c.

The liberal hand of this emperor, born to do all men good, was no less also open and ready toward the needy poverty of such which either by loss of parents or other occasions were not able to help themselves; to whom he commanded and provided due supplies both of corn and raiment to be ministered out of his own coffers, to the necessary relief of the poor men, women, children, orphans, and widows.

Finally, among all the other monuments of his singular clemency and munificence, this is not to be pretermitted; that through all the empire of Rome, and provinces belonging to the same, not only he diminished such taxes, revenues, and impost as publicly were coming to him, but also clearly remitted and released to the contributors the fourth part of the same.

This present place would require something to be said of the donation of Constantine, whereupon, as upon their chiefest anchor-hold, the bishops of Rome do ground their supreme dominion and right over all the political government of the west parts, and the spiritual government of all the other seas and parts of the world. Which donation to be falsely feigned and forged, and not to proceed from Constantine, many arguments might here be inferred, if leisure from other matters would suffer me.

For that no ancient history, nor yet doctor, maketh any mention thereof.

Nauclerus reporteth it to be affirmed in the history of Isidorus. But in the old copies of Isidorus no such thing is to be found.

Gratianus, the compiler of the decrees, reciteth that decree, not upon any ancient authority, but only under the title of Palea.

Gelasius is said to give some testimony thereof, in Dist. 15. Sancta Romana. But that clause of the said distinction touching that matter in the old ancient books is not extant.

Otho Phrysingensis, who was about the time of Gratian, after he hath declared the opinion of the favourers of the papacy, affirming this donation to be given of Constantine to Silvester the pope, induceth consequently the opinion of them that favour the empire, affirming the contrary.

How doth this agree, that Constantine did yield up to Silvester all the political dominion over the west, whenas the said Constantine at his death, dividing the empire

to his three sons, gave the west part of the empire to one, the east part to the second, the middle part to the third?

How is it like that Theodosius after them, being a just and a religious prince, would or could have occupied the city of Rome, if it had not been his right, but had belonged to the pope, and so did many other emperors after him?

The phrase of this decree, being conferred with the phrase and style of Constantine in his other edicts and letters above specified, doth nothing agree.

Seeing the papists themselves confess that the decree of this donation was written in Greek, how agreeth that with truth, whenas both it was written, not to the Grecians, but to the Romans, and also Constantine himself, for lack of the Greek tongue, was fain to use the Latin tongue in the Council of Nice?

The contents of this donation (whosoever was the forger thereof) doth bewray itself: for if it be true which there is confessed, that he was baptized at Rome of Silvester, and the fourth day after his baptism this patrimony was given, (which was before his battle against Maximinus or Licinius, in the year of our Lord three hundred and seventeen, as Nicephorus recordeth,) how then accordeth this with that which followeth in the donation, for him to have jurisdiction given over the other four principal sees of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem? whenas the city of Constantinople was not yet begun before the death of Maximinus or Licinius, and was not finished before the eight and twentieth year of the reign of Constantine, in the year of our Lord three hundred thirty and nine; or if it be true as Hierom counteth, it was finished the three and twentieth year of his reign, which was the year of our Lord three hundred thirty and four, long after this donation by their own account.

Furthermore, where in the said constitution it is said that Constantine was baptized at Rome of Silvester, and thereby was purged of leprosy, the fable thereof agreeth not with the truth of history, for so much as Eusebius, Hieronymus, Socrates, Theodorus, Sozomenus, do all together consent that he was baptized not at Rome, but at Nicomedia; and that moreover, as by their testimony doth appear, not of Silvester, but of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia; not before his battle against Maximinus or Licinius, but in the thirty-first year of his reign, a little before his death.

Again, whereas Constantine in this donation appointed him to have the principality over the other four patriarchal sees, that maketh Constantine contrary to himself; who in the Council of Nice afterward agreed with other bishops, that all the four patriarchal sees should have equal jurisdiction, every one over his own territory and precinct.

And thus hast thou (beloved reader) briefly collected the narration of the noble acts and heavenly virtues of this most famous emperor Constantine the Great; a singular spectacle for all Christian princes to behold and imitate, and worthy of perpetual memory in all congregations of Christian saints; whose fervent zeal and piety in general to all congregations, and to all the servants of Christ, was notable, but especially the affection and reverence of his heart toward them was admirable, which had suffered any thing for the confession of Christ in the persecutions before; them had he principally in price and veneration, insomuch that he embraced and kissed their wounds and stripes, and their eyes, being put out. And if any such bishops or any other ministers brought to him any complaints one against another, (as many times they did,) he would take their bills of complaint and burn them before their faces; so studious and zealous was his mind to have them agree, whose discord was to him more grief

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than it was to themselves. All the virtuous acts and memorable doings of this divine and renowned emperor to comprehend or commit to history, it were the matter alone of a great volume; wherefore, contented with these above premised, because nothing of him can be said enough, I cease to discourse of him any further.

And here an end of these lamentable and doleful persecutions of the primitive church, during the space of three hundred years, from the passion of our Saviour Christ, till the coming of this Constantine; by whom, as by the elect instrument of God, it hath so pleased his Almighty Majesty, by his determinate purpose, to give rest after long trouble to his church, according to that St. Cyprian declareth before to be revealed of God unto his church, that after darkness and stormy tempest should come peaceable, calm, and stable quietness to his church, meaning this time of Constantine now present. At which time it so pleased the Almighty, that the murdering malice of Satan should at length be restrained, and himself tied up, through his great mercy in Christ, to whom therefore be thanks and praise now and for ever. Amen.

**THE SECOND BOOK
CONTAINING
THE NEXT THREE HUNDRED YEARS FOLLOWING
WITH SUCH THINGS SPECIALLY TOUCHED AS HAVE
HAPPENED IN ENGLAND FROM THE TIME OF KING
LUCIUS TO GREGORIUS, AND SO AFTER TO THE
TIME OF KING EGBERT.**

17. The Church in Britain before the Coming of the Saxons

By these persecutions hitherto in the book before precedent thou mayst understand, (Christian reader,) how the fury of Satan and rage of men have done what they could to extinguish the name and religion of Christ; for what thing did lack that either death could do, or torments could work, or the gates of hell could devise, all was to the uttermost attempted. And yet all the fury and malice of Satan, all the wisdom of the world and strength of men, doing, devising, practising what they could, notwithstanding the religion of Christ (as thou seest) hath had the upper hand; which thing I wish thee greatly (gentle reader) wisely to note and diligently to ponder in considering these former histories. And because thou canst not consider them, nor profit by them, unless thou do first read and peruse them; let me crave, therefore, this much at thine hands, to turn and read over the said histories of those persecutions above described, especially above all the other histories of this present volume, for thine especial edification, which I trust thou shalt find not unworthy the reading.

Now because the tying up of Satan giveth to the church some rest, and to me some leisure to address myself to the handling of other stories, I mind therefore (Christ willing) in this present book, leaving awhile the tractation of these general affairs pertaining to the universal church, to prosecute such domestical histories as more nearly concern this our country of England and Scotland done here at home, beginning first with King Lucius, with whom the faith first began here in this realm, as the sentence of some writers doth hold. And forsomuch as here may rise, yea, and doth rise, a great controversy in these our popish days, concerning the first origin and planting of the faith in this our realm, it shall not be greatly out of our purpose somewhat to stay and say of this question; Whether the church of England first received the faith from Rome or not? The which although I grant so to be, yet, being so granted, it little availeth the purpose of them which would so have it. For be it that England first received the Christian faith and religion from Rome, both in the time of Eleutherius their bishop, one hundred and eighty years after Christ; and also in the time of Augustine, whom Gregory sent hither six hundred years after Christ; yet their purpose followeth not thereby, that we must therefore fetch our religion from thence still, as from the chief well-head and fountain of all godliness. And yet, as they are not able to prove the second, so neither have I any cause to grant the first; that is, that our Christian faith was first derived from Rome, which I may prove by six or seven good conjectural reasons. Whereof the first I take of the testimony of Gildas, our countryman, who in his history affirmeth plainly, that Britain received the gospel in the time of Tiberius the emperor, under whom Christ suffered. And saith, moreover, that Joseph of Arimathea, after dispersion of the Jews, was sent of Philip the apostle from France to Britain, about the year of our Lord 63, and here remained in this land all his time; and so with his fellows laid the first foundation of Christian faith among the British people, whereupon other preachers and teachers coming afterward, confirmed the same and increased it.

The second reason is out of Tertullian, who living near about, or rather somewhat before, the time of this Eleutherius, in his book *Contra Judæos*, manifestly importeth the same, where the said Tertullian, testifying how the gospel was dispersed abroad by the sound of the apostles; and there reckoning up the Medes, Persians, Parthians, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, Jewry, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia,

Egypt, Pamphulia, with many more, at length cometh to the coast of the Moorians, and all the borders of Spain, with divers nations of France; and there amongst all other reciteth also the parts of Britain, which the Romans could never attain to, and reporteth the same now to be subject to Christ: as also reckoneth up the places of Sarmatia, of the Danes, the Germans, the Scythians, with many other provinces and isles to him unknown; in all which places (saith he) reigneth the name of Christ, which now beginneth to be common. This hath Tertullian. Note here how, among other divers believing nations, he mentioneth also the wildest places of Britain to be of the same number; and these in his time were christened, who was in the same Eleutherius's time, as is above said. Then was not Pope Eleutherius the first which sent the Christian faith into this realm, but the gospel was here received before hi time, either by Joseph of Arimathea, as some chronicles record, or by some of the apostles, or of their scholars, which had been here preaching Christ before Eleutherius wrote to Lucius.

My third probation I deduct out of Origen, whose words be these, *Britanniam in Christianam consentire religionem*. Whereby it appeareth that the faith of Christ was scattered here in England before the days of Eleutherius.

For my fourth probation I take the testimony of Beda, where he affirmeth that in his time, and almost a thousand years after Christ, here in Britain Easter was kept after the manner of the east church, in the full of the moon, what day in the week soever it fell on, and not on the Sunday, as we do now. Whereby it is to be collected that the first preachers in this land have come out from the east part of the world, where it was so used, rather than from Rome.

Fifthly, I may allege the words of Nicephorus, where he saith that Simon Zelotes did spread the gospel of Christ to the west ocean, and brought the same unto the isles of Britain.

Sixthly, may be here added also the words of Petrus Cluniacensis, who, writing to Bernard, affirmeth that the Scots in his time did celebrate their Easter, not after the Roman manner, but after the Greeks, &c. And as the said Britons were not under the Roman order in the time of this abbot of Cluniack, so neither were they nor would be under the Roman legate in the time of Gregory, nor would admit any primacy of the bishop of Rome to be above them.

For the seventh argument, moreover, I may make my probation by the plain words of Eleutherius; by whose epistle, written to King Lucius, we may understand that Lucius had received the faith of Christ in this land before the king sent to Eleutherius for the Roman laws; for so the express words of the letter do manifestly purport, as hereafter followeth to be seen. By all which conjectures it may stand probably to be thought, that the Britons were taught first by the Grecians of the east church, rather than by the Romans.

Peradventure Eleutherius might help something, either to convert the king, or else to increase the faith then newly sprung among the people; but that he precisely was the first, that cannot be proved. But grant he were, as indeed the most part of our English stories confess, neither will I greatly stick with them therein; yet what have they got thereby when they have cast all their gain? In few words, to conclude this matter, if so be that the Christian faith and religion was first derived from Rome to this our nation by Eleutherius, then let them but grant to us the same faith and religion which then was taught at Rome, and from thence derived hither by the said Eleutherius, and we will desire no more; for then neither was any universal pope above

all churches and councils, which came not in before Boniface's time, which was four hundred years after; neither any name or use of the mass, the parts whereof how and by whom they were compiled hereafter in this book following appeareth to be seen. Neither any sacrifice propitiatory for the scouring of purgatory was then offered upon hallowed altars, but only the communion frequented at Christian tables, where oblations and gifts were offered as well of the people as of the priests to God, because they should appear neither empty nor unkind before the Lord, as we may understand by the time of Cyprian. Neither was then any transubstantiation heard of, which was not brought in before a thousand years after. Neither were then any images of saints departed set up in churches; yea, a great number of the saints worshipped in this our time were not as yet born, nor the churches wherein they were worshipped were yet set up, but came in long after, especially in the time of Irenæus. Priests' marriage was then as lawful (and no less received) as now; neither was it condemned before the days of Hildebrand, almost a thousand years after that. Their service was then in the vulgar tongue, as witnesseth Hierom; the sacrament ministered in both kinds, as well to lay men as to priests, the witness whereof is Cyprian. Yea, and temporal men which would not then communicate at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas,

were not then counted for Catholics, the pope's own distinction can testify. In funerals, priests then flocked not together, selling trentals and diriges for sweeping of purgatory; but only a funeral concion was used, with psalms of praises and songs of their worthy deeds, and alleluia sounding on high, which did shake the gilded ceilings of the temple, as witnesseth Nazianzen, Ambrose, with Hierom, &c.

In the supper of the Lord and at baptism no such ceremonies were used as now of late have been intruded; insomuch that, as in this story is showed hereafter, both Augustine and Paulinus baptized then in rivers, not in hallowed fonts, as witnesseth Fabianus. The portues of Sarum, of York, of Bangor, with matins and even-song of the day; again, neither the orders and religions of monks and friars were yet dreamed of, to the space almost of a thousand years after, &c. So that, as I said, if the

papists would needs derive the faith and religion of this realm from Rome, then let them set us and leave us there where they had us; that is, let them suffer us to stand content with that faith and religion which then was taught and brought from Rome by Eleutherius, (as now we differ nothing from the same,) and we will desire no better. And if they will not, then let the wise reader judge where the fault is, in us or them, which neither themselves will persist in the antiquity of the Romish religion, which they so much boast of, neither will they permit us so to do.

And thus much by the way to satisfy the foresaid objection, whereby we may have now a more ready passage into the order and course of the history. Being therefore granted unto them which they so earnestly stick upon, that the Christian faith and religion of this realm was brought from Rome, first by Eleutherius, then afterward by Augustine: thus write the chronicles of that matter.

Now, to proceed in order of the story, briefly to touch the state of the foresaid land of Britain between the time of King Lucius and the entering of the Saxons, who were the kings thereof, and in what order they succeeded, or rather invaded, one after another, this catalogue here under written will specify.

KINGS OF BRITAIN FROM THE TIME OF LUCIUS TILL THE COMING OF
THE SAXONS.

Lucius, a Briton.

Severus, a Roman.

Bassianus, a Roman by the father.

Cerausius, a Briton.

Alectus, a Roman.

Asclepiodotus, a Briton.

Coilus, a Briton.

Constantius, a Roman.

Constantinus, a Briton by the mother, named Helena, who being the daughter of Coilus, and married to Constantius, father of Constantinus, is said to make the walls first of London, also of Colchester, much about the year of our Lord 305, and born in Britain.

Octavius, a Gewissian.

Maximianus, a Roman born, but his mother a Briton.

Gratianus, a Roman.

Constantius, a Briton by the mother.

Constans, a Roman by the father.

Vortigernus, a Gewissian or Briton.

Vortimerus, a Briton.

Vortigernus, again.

By this table may appear a lamentable face of a commonwealth so miserably rent and divided into two sorts of people, differing not so much in country as in religion: for when the Romans reigned, they were governed by the infidels; when the Britons ruled, they were governed by Christians. Thus what quietness was or could be in the church in so unquiet and doubtful days may easily be considered.

Albeit notwithstanding all these foresaid heathen rulers of the Romans which here governed, yet (God be praised) we read of no persecution, during all these ten persecutions above mentioned, that touched the Christian Britons, before the last persecution only of Dioclesian and Maximianus Herculeus, which here then exercised much cruelty. This persecution, as it was the last among the Roman Christians, so it was the first of many and divers that followed after in this church and realm of England; whereof we will hereafter treat, (Christ willing,) as order of the matter shall leave us. In the mean time, this rage of Dioclesian, as it was universally through all the churches in the world fierce and vehement, so in this realm of Britain also, it was so sore that, as all our English chronicles do testify and record, all Christianity almost in the whole land was destroyed, churches were subverted, all books of the Scriptures burned, many of the faithful, both men and women, were slain. Among whom the first and chiefest was Albanus, then Julius, Aaron, and Amphibalus, of whom sufficiently hath been said before. What were the others, or how many they were that suffered beside, stories make no rehearsal. And thus much thereof.

Now as concerning the government of these above-named kings of Britain, although I have little or nothing to note which greatly appertaineth to the matter of this ecclesiastical history, yet this is not to be passed over. First, how in the order of these kings cometh Constantine, the great and worthy emperor, who was not only a Briton

born by his mother Helena, being King Coilus's daughter, but also by the help of the Britons' army, (under the power of God,) which the said Constantine took with him out of Britain to Rome, obtained with great victory peace and tranquillity to the whole universal church of Christ, having three legions with him out of this realm of chosen and able soldiers, whereby the strength of the land was not a little impaired and endangered, as afterwards in this story followeth.

After him likewise Maximian, following his steps, took with him also (as stories record) all the power and strength which was left, and whatsoever he could make of able and fighting men, to subdue France; besides the garrisons which he had out with him before, sending for more to the number of a hundred thousand soldiers at once to be sent to him out of Britain into France. At which time also Conanus his partner, being then in France, sent over for virgins from Britain to the number of eleven thousand; who, with Ursula, the prince Dionet's daughter, being shipped over, many perished in the sea, some were taken of the infidels marching upon the borders; with whom, because they would not be polluted, all were destroyed, being miserably dispersed, (some one way, some an other,) so that none escaped.

Thus poor Britain, being left naked and destitute on every side, as a maimed body without might or strength, was left open to its enemies, not able to succour itself without help of foreign friends; to whom they were then constrained to fly, especially to the Romans, to whom the Britons sent this word or message: *Ætio ter consuli gemitus Britannorum. Repellunt nos barbari ad mare: repellit nos mare ad barbaros. Hinc oriuntur duo sunerum genera, quia aut jugulamur, aut submergimur.* But the Romans then began to forsake them, whereby they were in nearer danger to be oppressed by Gwanus and Melga, had not Gwetelinus, the archbishop of London, made over to Lesser Britain, and, obtaining there help, had brought Constantine the king's brother to rescue his country against the infidels. This Constantine was brother to Aldroenus, king of Little Britain, and father to Constance, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uter, who after reigned kings in Britain.

Thus by the means of the good archbishop and Constantine the state of the religion and realm of Britain was in some mean quiet and safety, during the time of the said Constantine, and of the good archbishop. But as the realm of Britain almost from the beginning was never without civil war, at length came wicked Vortigern, who, cruelly causing Constance his prince to be murdered, ambitiously invaded the crown; who then, fearing the other two brethren of Constans, which were Aurelius and Uter, being then in Little Britain, did send over for the aid of the Saxons, being then infidels; and not only that, but also married with an infidel, the daughter of Hengist, called Rowen. Whereupon the said Vortigern, not long after, by the said Hengist and the Saxons, was with like treachery dispossessed of his kingdom, and the people of Britain driven out of their country, after that the Saxons had slain of their chief nobles and barons at one meeting (joining together subtlety with cruelty) to the number of two hundred seventy and one; some stories say four hundred and sixty. This wicked act of the Saxons was done at Almesbury, or at a place called Stonehenge. By the monument of which stones there hanging, it seemeth that the noble Britons there were buried.

This fabulous story of the Welchmen, of bringing these stones from Ireland by Merlin, I pass over. Some stories record that they were slain, being bid to a banquet. Others say that it was done at a talk or assembly, where the Saxons came with privy knives, contrary to promise made; with the which knives they, giving a privy

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watchword in their Saxon speech, Neme your sexes, slew the Britons unarmed. And thus far concerning the history of the Britons.

18. The Entering and Reigning of the Saxons in the Realm of England.

This was the coming in first of the Angles or Saxons into this realm, being yet unchristened and infidels, which was about the year of our Lord, as William Malmsbury testifieth, four hundred sixty and nine, the captains of whom were Hengist and Horsa. Although the said Hengist and Saxons at their first coming, for all their subtle working and cruel attempt, had no quiet settling in Britain, but were driven out divers times by the valiantness of Aurelius Ambrosius and his brother Uter above mentioned, who reigned after that among the Britons; yet, notwithstanding, they were not so driven out but that they returned again, and at length possessed all, driving the Britons (such as remained) into Cambria, which we call now Wales. Hengist (as some chronicles record) reigned three and forty years, and died in Kent. Galfridus in suo Britannico, saith, that he was taken in war by Aurelius Ambrosius, and beheaded at Coningsburgh, after he had reigned nine and thirty years.

After the death of Hengist, his son Osca reigned four and twenty years, leaving his son Octa, to whose reign, with his son Imenricus, histories do attribute three and fifty years, who also were slain by Uter Pendragon.

The Saxons, after they were settled in the possession of England, distributed the realm among themselves first in seven parts, every part to have his king; that is, the first to be the king of Kent; the second to be king of Sussex and Southerie, holding his palace at Cicester; the third king was of Westsex; the fourth king of Essex; the fifth king was of the East Angles, that is, of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk; the sixth king of Merceland, or Mercia, and in his kingdom were contained the countries of Lincoln, Leicester, Huntingdon, Northampton, Oxford, Derby, Warwick, &c. The seventh king had all the countries beyond Humber, and was called king of Northumberland.

Now followeth the description of the British kings, reigning with the Saxons in like manner.

Although the miserable Britons thus were bereaved of their land by the cruel subtlety of the Saxons; yet were they not so driven out or expelled, but that a certain kingdom remained among them in some part of the land, namely, about Cornwall, and the parts of Cambria, which is divided in two parts; South Wales, called Demetia, and North Wales, called Venedocia. The said Britons moreover, through the valiant acts of their kings, some times reigned also in other countries, displacing the Saxons, and recovering again their own, sometimes more, sometimes less, till the time of Carecius, whenas the Britons, being deposed by Gormundus, (whose help they themselves sent for out of Ireland against Carecius their wicked king,) utterly lost their land and kingdom; being thence driven utterly into Wales and Cornwall, in the year of our Lord 570.

In the reign of Ethelbert, which was then the fifth king of Kent, the faith of Christ was first received of the Saxons, or Englishmen, by the means of Gregory bishop of Rome, in manner and order as here followeth, out of old histories collected and recorded.

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First then, to join the order of our history together, the Christian faith, first received of King Lucius, endured in Britain till this time, near upon the season of four hundred years and odd; when by Gormundus Africanus, (as is said,) fighting with the Saxons against the Britons, it was near extinct in all the land during the space of about forty-four years. So that the first springing of Christ's gospel in this land was in the year of our Lord 180. The coming of the Saxons was in the year 449, or 469.

19. The Coming of Austin

In the year then 598, Austin being sent from Gregory, came into England: the occasion whereupon Gregory sent him hither was this.

In the days of Pelagius, bishop of Rome, Gregory chancing to see certain children in the marketplace of Rome, (brought thither to be sold out of England,) being fair and beautiful of visage, demanded out of what country they were. And understanding they were heathenish, out of England, lamented the case of the land, being so beautiful and angelical, so to be subject under the prince of darkness. And asking moreover out of what province they were, it was answered, out of Deira, a part of North Saxons; whereof, as it is to be thought, that which we now call Deirham taketh its name. Then he, alluding to the name of Deira, These people (saith he) are to be delivered tie Dei ira, which is, from God's wrath. Moreover, understanding the king's name of that province to be Alle, (above mentioned,) alluding likewise to his name, There (saith he) ought Alleluia to be sung to the living God. Whereupon he being moved and desirous to go and help the conversion of that country, was not permitted of Pelagius and the Romans for that time to accomplish his desire. But afterward, being bishop himself next after Pelagius, he sent thither the foresaid Austin, with other preachers, near about to the number of forty. But by the way, how it happened I cannot say, as Austin with his company were passing in their journey, such a sudden fear entered into their hearts, that (as Antoninus saith) they returned all. Others write that Austin was sent back to Gregory again, to release them of that voyage so dangerous and uncertain, amongst such a barbarous people, whose language they neither knew, nor were able to resist their rudeness. Then Gregory, with pithy persuasions confirming and comforting him, sent him again with letters both to the bishop of Arelatensis, willing him to help and aid the said Austin and his company in all whatsoever his need required. Also other letters he directed to the foresaid Austin unto his fellows, exhorting them to go forward boldly to the Lord's work; as by the tenor of the said epistle here following may appear.

"Gregory, the servant of God's servants, to the servants of the Lord. Forsomuch as it is better not to take good things in hand, than after they be begun to think to revolt back from the same again; therefore now you may not nor cannot, dear children, but with all fervent study and labour must needs go forward in that good business which, through the help of God, you have well begun. Neither let the labour of your journey nor the slanderous tongues of men appal you, but that with all instance and fervency ye proceed and accomplish the thing which the Lord hath ordained you to take in hand, knowing that your great travail shall be recompensed with reward of greater glory hereafter to come. Therefore, as we send here Austin to you again, whom also we have ordained to be your governor; so do you humbly obey him in all things, knowing that it shall be profitable so for your souls, whatsoever at his admonition ye shall do. Almighty God with his grace defend you, and grant me to see in the eternal country the fruit of your labour; that although I cannot labour as I would with you, yet I may be found partaker of your retribution, for that my will is good to labour in the same fellowship with you together. The Lord God keep you safe, most dear and well-beloved children. Dated the tenth before the kalends of August, in the reign of our sovereign lord Mauricius most virtuous emperor, the fourteenth of his empire."

Thus they, imboldened and comforted through the good words of Gregory, sped forth their journey till they came at length to the isle of Thanet, lying upon the east side of Kent. Near to the which landing-place was then the manory or palace of the king, not far from Sandwich, (eastward from Canterbury,) which the inhabitants of the isle then called Richbourgh; whereof some part of the ruinous walls is yet to be seen. The king then reigning in Kent was Ethelbert, as above appeareth, the fifth king of that province; who at that time had married a wife a French woman, being christened, named Berda, whom he had received of her parents upon this condition, that he should permit her, with her bishop committed unto her, called Lebardus, to enjoy the freedom of her faith and religion; by the means whereof he was more flexible, and sooner induced to embrace the preaching and doctrine of Christ. Thus Austin, being arrived, sent forth certain messengers and interpreters to the king; signifying that such a one was come from Rome, bringing with him glad tidings to him and all his people of life and salvation, eternally to reign in heaven with the only true and living God for ever, if he would so willingly hearken to the same, as he was gladly come to preach and teach it unto him.

The king, who had heard of this religion before by means of his wife, within a few days after cometh to the place where Austin was, to speak with him; but that should be without the house, after the manner of his law. Austin against his coming, as stories affirm, erected up a banner of the crucifix, (such was then the grossness of that time,) and preached to him the word of God. The king, answering again, saith in effect as followeth: The words be very fair that you preach and promise; nevertheless, because it is to me uncouth and new, I cannot soon start away from my country law, wherewith I have been so long inured, and assent to you. Albeit, yet notwithstanding for that ye are come (as ye say) so far for my sake, ye shall not be molested by me, but shall be right well entreated, having all things to you ministered necessary for your supportation. Besides this, neither do we debar you, but grant you free leave to preach to our people and subjects, to convert whom ye may to the faith of your religion.

When they had received this comfort of the king, they went with procession to the city of Dorobernia, or Canterbury, singing Allelujah with the Litany, which then by Gregory had been used at Rome in the time of the great plague reigning then at Rome, mentioned in old stories. The words of the Litany were these: *Deprecamur te Domine in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a civitate ista, et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccavimus, Alleluja*: that is, We beseech thee, O Lord, in all thy mercies, that thy fury and anger may cease from this city, and from thy holy house, for we have sinned, Allelujah. Thus they entering into the city of Dorobernia, the head city of all that dominion at that time, where the king had given them a mansion for their abode; there they continued preaching and baptizing such as they had converted in the east side of the city in the old church of St. Martin, (where the queen was wont to resort,) unto the time that the king was converted himself to Christ. At length, when the king had well considered the honest conversation of their life, and moved with the miracles wrought through God's hand by them, he heard them more gladly, and, lastly, by their wholesome exhortations and example of godly life he was by them converted and christened in the year above specified, 586, and the six and thirtieth year of his reign. After the king was thus converted, innumerable other daily came in and were adjoined to the church of Christ, whom the king did specially embrace, but compelled none; for so he had learned, that the faith and service of Christ ought to be voluntary, and not coacted. Then he gave to Austin a place for the bishop's see at Christ's Church in Dorobernia, and builded the abbey of St. Peter and Paul in the

east side of the said city, where after Austin and all the kings of Kent were buried, and that place is now called St. Austin.

In this while Austin sailed into France unto the bishop Arelatensis, called Ethereus, by him to be consecrated archbishop by the commandment of Gregory, and so was. Also the said Austin sent to Rome Laurentius, one of his company, to declare to Gregory how they had sped, and what they had done in England; sending withal to have the counsel and advice of Gregory concerning nine or ten questions, whereof some are partly touched before.

The tenor of his questions or interrogations, with the answers of Gregory to the same, here follow in English briefly translated.

The first interrogation.

My first question, reverend father, is concerning bishops, how they ought to behave themselves toward their clerks; or, of such oblations as the faithful offer upon the altar, what portions or dividends ought to be made thereof?

The answer.

How a bishop ought to behave himself in the congregation the Holy Scripture testifieth, which I doubt not but you know right well, especially in the Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, wherein he laboureth to inform the said Timothy how to behave his conversation in the house of the Lord. The manner is of the see apostolic to warn and charge all such as be ordained bishops, of all their stipend, or that which is given to make four partitions: one to the bishop for hospitality and receiving comers in, another to the clergy, the third to the poor, the fourth to the repairing of the churches. But because your brotherhood, instructed with rules of monastical discipline, cannot live separated from your clerks about you, therefore in the English church (which now, through the providence of God, is brought to the faith of Christ) you must observe this insitution concerning your conversation, which was in the first fathers in the beginning of the primitive church; among whom there was not one which counted any thing to be his own proper of all that he did possess, but all was common among them.

The second interrogation.

I desire to know and to be instructed whether clerks, that cannot contain, may marry; and if they do marry, whether then they ought to return to the secular state again or no?

The answer.

If there be any clerks out of holy orders which cannot contain, let them have their wives, and take their stipends or wages without. For we read it so written of the foresaid fathers, that they divided to every person according as their work was. Therefore, as concerning the stipend of such, it must be provided and thought upon. And they must be also holden under ecclesiastical discipline, to live a godly conversation, to employ themselves in singing psalms, and to refrain their tongue, heart, and body (by the grace of God) from all things unseemly and unlawful. As for the vulgar and common sort, which live after the common condition of men, to describe what partitions to make, what hospitality to keep, or what works of mercy to exhibit, to such I have nothing to say, but to give (as our Master teacheth) in all our deeds of mercy of that which aboundeth: Of that (saith he) which aboundeth, or is overplus, give alms, and, behold, all things be clean unto you.

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The third interrogation.

Seeing there is but one faith, how happeneth it then the ceremonies and customs of churches to be so divers; as in the church of Rome there is one custom and manner of mass, and the French church hath another?

The answer.

The custom of the church of Rome, what it is you know, wherein you remember that you have been brought up from your youth; but rather it pleaseth me better, that whether it be in the church of Rome, or any French church, where ye find any thing that seemeth better to the service and pleasing of God, that ye choose the same, and so infer and bring into the English church (which is yet new in the faith) the best and choicest things chosen out of many churches; for things are not to be beloved for the place sake, but the place is to be beloved for the things that be good; wherefore such things as be good, godly, and religious, those choose out of all churches, and induce to your people, that they may take root in the minds of Englishmen.

The fourth interrogation.

I pray you, what punishment judge you for him that shall steal or pilfer any thing out of the church?

The answer.

This your brotherhood may soon discern by the person of a thief, how it ought to be corrected. For some there be that, having sufficient to live upon, yet do steal. Others there be which steal of mere necessity. Wherefore, considering the quality and difference of the crime, necessary it is that some be corrected by loss of goods, some by stripes, some others more sharply, and some more easy; yea, and when sharper correction is to be executed, yet that must be done with charity, and with no fury; for in punishing offenders this is the cause and end wherefore they are punished, because they should be saved, and not perish in hell-fire. And so ought discipline to proceed in correcting the faithful, as do good fathers in punishing their children, whom both they chasten for their evil, and yet, being chastened, they look to have them their heirs, and think to leave them all they have, notwithstanding they correct them sometimes in anger. Therefore this charity must be kept in mind; and in the correction there is a measure to be had, so that the mind never do any thing without the rule of reason. Ye add, moreover, with what recompence of measure those things ought to be required again which be stolen out of churches? But God forbid that the church should ever require again with increase that which is lost in outward things, and to seek her gain by endamaging others.

The fifth interrogation.

Item, Whether two brethren may marry two sisters, being far off from any part of kindred?

The answer.

This in no part of Scripture is forbidden, but it may well and lawfully be done.

The sixth interrogation.

Item, To what degree of kindred may the matrimony of the faithful extend with their kindred, or whether it is lawful to marry with the step-mother and her kinsfolks?

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The answer.

A certain terrene law amongst the old Romans doth permit, that either brother or sister, or the son and daughter of two brethren, may marry together. But by the experience we learn that the issue of such marriage doth never thrive nor come forward. Also the holy law of God forbiddeth to reveal the turpitude of thy blood or kindred. Wherefore necessary it is that in the third or fourth degree the faithful may lawfully marry; for in the second (being an unlawful) they must needs refrain. To be coupled with the step-mother is utterly abominable, for it is written in the law, Thou shalt not reveal the turpitude of thy father. Forsomuch then as it is so written in the law, And they shall be two in one flesh; the son then that presumeth to reveal the turpitude of his step-mother, which is one flesh with his father, what doth he then but reveal the turpitude of his own father? Likewise it was forbidden and unlawful to marry with thy kinswoman, which by her first marriage was made one flesh with thy brother; for the which cause John the Baptist also lost his head, and was crowned a martyr; who, though he died not for the confession of Christ, yet forsomuch as Christ saith, I am the truth, therefore, in that John Baptist was slain for the truth, it may be said his blood was shed for Christ.

The seventh interrogation.

Item, Whether such as so be coupled together in filthy and unlawful matrimony ought to be separated, and denied the partaking of the holy communion?

The answer.

Because there be many of the nation of English men which, being yet in their infidelity, were so joined and coupled in such execrable marriage, the same, coming now to faith, are to be admonished hereafter to abstain from the like; and, that they know the same to be a grievous sin, that they dread the dreadful judgment of God, lest for their carnal delectation they incur the torments of eternal punishment. And yet notwithstanding they are not to be secluded therefore from the participation of Christ's body and blood, lest we should seem to revenge those things in them which they before their baptism through ignorance did commit. For in this time the holy church doth correct some faults more fervently; some faults she suffereth again through mansuetude and meekness; some wittingly and willingly she doth wink at and dissemble, that many times the evil which she doth detest through bearing and dissembling she may stop and bridle. All they, therefore, which are come to the faith must be admonished that they commit no such offence. Which thing if they do, they are to be deprived of the communion of the Lord's body and blood. For like as in them that fall through ignorance, their default in this case is tolerable; so in them again it is strongly to be ensued, which, knowing they do naught, yet fear not to commit.

The eighth interrogation.

Item, In this I desire to be satisfied, after what manner I should deal or do with the bishops of France and of Britain?

The answer.

As touching the bishops in France, I give you no authority or power over them. For the bishops of Aralas, or Orleans, hath by the old time of our predecessors received the pall, whom now we ought not to deprive of his authority. Therefore when your brotherhood shall go unto the province of France, whatsoever ye shall have there to do with the bishop of Orleans, so do, that he lose nothing of that which he hath

found and obtained of the ancient ordinance of our fore-elders. But as concerning the bishops of Britain, we commit them all to your brotherhood, that the ignorant may be taught, the infirm by persuasion may be confirmed, the wilful by authority may be corrected.

The ninth interrogation.

Whether a woman being great with child ought to be baptized? Or after she hath children, after how long time she ought to enter into the church? Or else, that which she hath brought forth, lest it should be prevented with death, after how many days it ought to receive baptism? All which things must be declared and opened to the rude multitude of Englishmen.

The answer.

The childing or bearing woman, why may she not be baptized, seeing that the fruitfulness of the flesh is no fault before the eyes of Almighty God? For our first parents in Paradise, after they had transgressed, lost their immortality by the just judgment of God, which they had taken before. Then because Almighty God would not mankind utterly to perish, because of his fall, (although he lost now his immortality for his trespass,) yet, of his benign pity, left, notwithstanding, to him the fruit and generation of issue. Wherefore the issue and generation of man's nature, which is conserved by the gift of Almighty God, how can it be debarred from the grace of holy baptism?

As concerning the churching of women, after they have travailed, where ye demand after how many days they ought to go to the church, this you have learned in the old law, that for a man-child thirty-three days, after a woman-child sixty and six days, be appointed her to keep in; albeit this you must take to be understood in a mystery. For if she should, the hour after her travail, enter into the church to give thanks, she committed therein no sin; for why? the lust and pleasure of the flesh, and not the travail and pain of the flesh, is sin. Therefore, if we forbid the woman after her labour to enter into the church, then what do we else but count the same punishment given unto her for sin? Therefore for the woman after her labour to be baptized, either that which she hath travailed forth, (if present necessity of death doth so require,) yea, in the selfsame hour, either she that hath brought forth, either that which is born in the same hour when it is born, to be baptized we do not forbid.

But now there is a lewd and naughty custom risen in the condition of married folks, that mothers do contemn to nurse their own children which they have borne, but set them to other women out to nurse, which seemeth only to come of the cause of incontineny; for while they will not contain themselves, therefore they put from them their children to nurse, &c.

To return now to the story again. Gregory, after he had sent these resolutions to the questions of Austin, sendeth, moreover, to the church of England more coadjutors and helpers, as Melitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Ruffianus, with books and such other implements as he thought necessary for the English church. He sendeth moreover to the foresaid Austin a pall with letters, wherein he setteth an order between the two metropolitan sees, the one to be at London, the other to be at York. Notwithstanding he granted to the said Austin, during his life, to be the only chief archbishop of all the land; and after his time, then to return to the two foresaid sees of London and York, as is in the same letter contained, the tenor whereof here followeth in his own words, as ensueth.

" To the reverend and virtuous brother Augustine, his fellow bishop, Gregorius the servant of the servants of God. Although it be most certain that unspeakable rewards of the heavenly King be laid up for all such as labour in the word of the Almighty God; yet it shall be requisite for us to reward the same also with our benefits, to the end they may be more encouraged to go forward in the study of their spiritual work. And forsomuch now as the new church of Englishmen is brought to the grace of Almighty God, through his mighty help and your travail, therefore we have granted to you the use of the pall, only to be used at the solemnity of your mass; so that it shall be lawful for you to ordain twelve bishops, such as shall be subject to your province. So that hereafter always the bishop of the city of London shall be ordained and consecrated by his own proper synod; and so to receive the pall of honour from the holy and apostolic see, wherein I here (by the permission of God) do serve. And as touching the city of York, we will send also a bishop thither, whom you may think meet to ordain. So that if that city, with other places bordering thereby, shall receive the word of God, he shall have power likewise to ordain twelve bishops, and have the honour of a metropolitan; to whom also, if God spare me life, I intend by the favour of God to send a pall; this provided, that notwithstanding he shall be subject to your brotherly appointment. But after your decease, the same metropolitan so to be over the bishops whom he ordereth, that he be in no wise subject to the metropolitan of London after you. And hereafter, betwixt these two metropolitans of London and York, let there be had such distinction of honour, that he shall have the priority which shall in time first be ordained. With common counsel, and affection of heart, let them go both together, disposing with one accord such things as be to be done for the zeal of Christ. Let them forethink and deliberate together prudently, and what they deliberate wisely let them accomplish concordly, nor jarring nor swerving one from the other. But as for your part, you shall be endued with authority, not only over those bishops that you constitute, and over the other constituted by the bishop of York; but also you shall have all other priests of whole Britain subject unto our Lord Jesus Christ, to the end that through your preaching and holiness of life they may learn both to believe rightly, and to live purely, and so in directing their life, both by the rule of true faith and virtuous manners, they may attain, when God shall call them, the fruition and kingdom of heaven. God preserve you in health, reverend brother. The tenth before the kalends of July, in the reign of our sovereign lord Mauricius most virtuous emperor."

Besides this, the said Gregory sendeth also another letter to Melitus, concerning his judgment what is to be done with the idolatrous temples and fanes of the Englishmen newly converted, which fanes he thinketh not best to pluck down, but to convert the use thereof, and so let them stand. And likewise of their sacrifices and killing of oxen, how the same ought to be ordered, and how to be altered, disputing by the occasions thereof of the sacrifices of the old Egyptians, permitted of God unto the Israelites, the end and use thereof being altered, &c.

He sendeth also another letter to the foresaid Austin, wherein he warneth him not to be proud or puffed up for the miracles wrought of God by him in converting the people of England, but rather to fear and tremble, lest so much as he were puffed up by the outward work of miracles, so much he should fall inwardly through the vain-glory of his heart; and therefore wisely exhorteth him to repress the swelling glory of heart, with the remembrance of his sins rather against God, whereby he rather hath cause to lament than to rejoice for the other. Not all the elect of God (saith he) work miracles, and yet have they their names written in the book of life. And therefore he should not count so much of those miracles done, but rather rejoice with the disciples of Christ,

and labour to have his name written in the book of life, where all the elect of God be contained; neither is there any end of that rejoicing. And whatsoever miracles it hath pleased God by him to have been done, he should remember they were not done for him, but for their conversion, whose salvation God sought thereby, &c.

Item, he directed another epistle to King Ethelbert, as is expressed at large in the Chronicle of Henry Huntington; in the which epistle, first, he praiseth God, then commendeth the goodness of the king, by whom it pleased God so to work such goodness of the people. Secondly, exhorteth him to persist and continue in the godly profession of Christ's faith, and to be fervent and zealous in the same; in converting the multitude, in destroying the temples and works of idolatry, in ruling and governing the people in all holiness and godly conversation, after the godly example of the emperor Constantine the Great. Lastly, comforting him with the promises of life and reward to come with the Lord that reigneth and liveth for ever; premonishing him besides of the terrors and distresses that shall happen, though not in his days, yet before the terrible day of God's judgment. Wherefore he willeth him always to be solicitous for his soul, and suspectful of the hour of his death, and watchful of the judgment, that he may be always prepared for the same when that judgment shall come. In the end he desireth him to accept such presents and gifts which he thought good to send unto him from Rome, &c.

Austin thus receiving his pall from Gregory, as is above said, and now of a monk being made an archbishop, after he had baptized a great part of Kent, he afterward made two archbishops, or metropolitans, by the commandment of Gregory, as witnesseth Polychron., one at London, another at York.

Melitus, of whom mention is made before, was sent especially to the East Saxons in the province of Essex, where after he was made bishop of London under Sigebert, king of Essex; which Sigebert, together with his uncle Ethelbert, first builded the church and minster of St. Paul in London, and appointed it to Melitus for the bishop's see. Austin (associate with this Melitus and Justus through the help of Ethelbert) assembled and gathered together the bishops and doctors of Britain in a place which, taking the name of the said Austin, was called Austin's Oak. In this assembly he charged the said bishops, that they should preach with him the word of God to the Englishmen, and also that they should among themselves reform certain rites and usages in their church, specially for keeping of their Eastertide, baptizing after the manner of Rome, and such other like. To these the Scots and Britons would not agree, refusing to leave the custom which they so long time had continued, without the assent of them all which used the same. Here the stories both of Beda, Cestrensis in Polychron., Huntingtonensis, Iornalensis, Fabianus, and others more, write of a certain miracle wrought upon a blind Englishman; whom when the Britons could not help, Austin kneeling down, and praying, restored the blind man to sight before them all, for a confirmation (as these authors say) of his opinion in keeping of Easter. But concerning the credit of this miracle, that I leave to the authors of whom I had it.

Then Austin gathered another synod, to the which came seven bishops of Britain, with the wisest men of that famous abbey of Bangor. But first they took counsel of a certain wise and holy man amongst them what to do, and whether they should be obedient to Austin or not. And he said, If he be the servant of God, agree unto him. But how shall we know that? said they. To whom he answered again, If he be meek and humble of heart, by that know that he is the servant of God. To this they said again, And how shall we know him to be humble and meek of heart? By this,

(quoth he,) seeing you are the greater number, if he, at your coming into your synod, rise up and courteously receive you, perceive him to be a humble and a meek man. But if he shall contemn and despise you, being (as ye are) the greater part, despise you him again. Thus the British bishops, entering into the council, Austin, after the Romish manner, keeping his chair, would not remove. Whereat they, being not a little offended, after some heat of words, in disdain and great displeasure departed thence. To whom then Austin spake, and said, that if they would not take peace with their brethren, they should receive war with their enemies; and if they disdained to preach with them the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer by their hands the revenge of death. Which not long after so came to pass by the means of Ethelfride, king of Northumberland; who being yet a pagan, and stirred with a fierce fury against the Britons, came with a great army against the city of Chester, where Brocmaile, the consul of that city, a friend and helper of the Britons' side, was ready with his force to receive him. There was at the same time at Bangor, in Wales, an exceeding great monastery, wherein was such a number of monks, as Galfridus with other authors do testify, that if the whole company were divided into seven parts, in every of the seven parts were contained not so few as three hundred monks; which all did live by the sweat of their brows, and labour of their own hands, having one for their ruler, named Dino. Out of this monastery came the monks of Chester to pray for the good success of Brocmaile, fighting for them against the Saxons. Three days they continued in fasting and prayer. When Ethelfride, the foresaid king, seeing them so intentive to their prayers, demanded the cause of their coming thither in such a company, and when he perceived it was to pray for their consul, Then, (saith he,) although they bear no weapon, yet they fight against us, and with their prayers and preachings they persecute us. Where upon, after that Brocmaile, being overcome, did fly away, the king commanded his men to turn their weapons against the silly unarmed monks, of whom he slew the same time, or rather martyred, eleven hundred; only fifty persons of that number did fly and escape away with Brocmaile, the rest were all slain. The authors that write of this lamentable murder declare and say how the forespeaking of Austin was here verified upon the Britons; which, because they would not join peace with their friends, he said should be destroyed of their enemies. Of both these parties the reader may judge what he pleaseth; I cannot see but both together were to be blamed. And as I cannot but accuse the one, so I cannot defend the other. First, Austin in this matter can in no wise be excused; who being a monk before, and therefore a scholar and professor of humility, showed so little humility in this assembly to seven bishops and an archbishop, coming at his commandment to the council, that he thought scorn once to stir at their coming in. Much less would his Pharisaical solemnity have girded himself, and washed his brethren's feet after their travel, as Christ our great Master did to his disciples; seeing his lordship was so high, or rather so heavy, or rather so proud, that he could not find in his heart to give them a little moving of his body, to declare a brotherly and a humble heart. Again, the Britons were as much or more to blame, who so much neglected their spiritual duty in revenging their temporal injury, that they denied to join their helping labour to turn the idolatrous Saxons to the way of life and salvation, in which respect all private cases ought to give place, and to be forgotten. For the which cause, although lamentable to us, yet no great marvel in them, if the stroke of God's punishment did light upon them, according to the words of Austin, as is before declared. But especially the cruel king in this fact was most of all to blame so furiously to fly upon them, which had neither weapon to resist him, nor yet any will to harm him. And so likewise the same or like happened to himself afterward. For so was he also slain in the field by Christian Edwin, who succeeded him, as he had slain the

Christians before, which was about the year of our Lord 610. But to return to Austin again, who, by report of authors, was departed before this cruelty was done: after he had baptized and christened ten thousand Saxons or Angles in the West river, that is called Swale, beside York, on a Christmas day, perceiving his end to draw near, he ordained a successor, named Laurentius, to rule after him the archbishop's see of Dorobernia. Where note, by the way, (Christian reader,) that whereas Austin baptized then in rivers, it followeth there was then no use of fonts. Again, if it be true that Fabian saith he baptized ten thousand in one day, the rite then of baptizing at Rome was not so ceremonial, neither had so many trinkets at that time as it hath had since; or else it could not be that he could baptize so many in one day.

In the mean season, about this time departed Gregory, bishop of Rome, of whom it is said, that of the number of all the first bishops before him in the primitive time he was the basest, of all them that came after him he was the best. About which time also died in Wales David, archbishop first of Kairleon, who then translated the see from thence to Menevia, and therefore is called David of Wales. Not long after this also deceased the foresaid Austin in England, after he had sat there fifteen or sixteen years; by the which count we may note it not to be true that Henry Huntington and others do witness, that Austin was dead before that battle of Ethelfride against the monks of Bangor. For if it be true that Polychronicon testifieth of this murder, to be done about the year of our Lord 609, and the coming of Austin first into the realm to be anno 596, then Austin, enduring sixteen years, could not be dead at this battle. Moreover, Galfridus Monumetensis declareth concerning the same battle, that Ethelbert, the king of Kent, being (as is said) converted by Austin to Christ's faith, after he saw the Britons to disdain and deny their subjection unto Austin, neither would assist him with preaching to the English nation; therefore stirred up he the foresaid Ethelfride to war against the Britons. But that seemeth rather suspicious than true, that he, being a Christian king, either could so much prevail with a pagan idolater, or else would attempt so far to commit such a cruel deed. But of uncertain things I have nothing certainly to say, less to judge.

20. The Conversion of the Saxons

About this present time above prefixed, which is anno 610, I read in the story of Ranulphus Cestren the writer of Polychronicon, of John the patriarch of Alexandria, whom, for His rare example of hospitality and bountifulness to the poor, I thought no less worthy to have place amongst good men, than I see the same now to be followed of few. This John, (being before belike a hard and sparing man,) as he was at his prayer, upon a time (it is said) there appeared to him a comely virgin, having on her head a garland of olive leaves, which named herself Mercy, saying to him, and promising, that if he would take her to wife, he should prosper well. This, whether it were true or not, or else invented for a morality, I would wish this flourishing damsel to be married to more than to this John, that she should not live so long a virgin as now she doth, because no man will marry her. But to return to this patriarch, who after that day (as the story recordeth) was so merciful and so beneficial, especially to the poor and needy, that he counted them as his masters, and himself as a servant and steward unto them; this patriarch was wont commonly twice a week to sit at his door all the day long, to take up matters, and to set unity where was any variance. One day it happened, as he was sitting all the day before his gate, and saw no man come, he lamented that all that day he had done no good; to whom his deacon, standing by, answered again, that he had more cause to rejoice, seeing he had brought the city in that order and in such peace, that there needed no reconcilment amongst them, Another time, as the said John the patriarch was at service, and reading the Gospel in the church, the people (as their used manner is) went out of the church to talk and jangle: he perceiving that, went out likewise, and sat amongst them; whereat they marvelled to see him do so. My children, (said he,) where the flock is, there ought the shepherd to be; wherefore either come you in, that I may also come in with you; or else if you tarry out, I will likewise tarry out together with you, &c.

As touching the acts and deeds of Gregory above mentioned, how he withstood the ambitious pride of John, patriarch of Constantinople, which would be the universal priest, and only chief bishop of all others, declaring him to be no less than the forerunner or antichrist that would take that name upon him, how and with what reasons he answered again the letters of the emperor Mauricius in that behalf; sufficient relation is made thereof in the first entry and beginning of this book. This Gregory, among many other things induced into the church, (the specialties whereof hereafter shall follow, Christ willing, more at large,) first began and brought in this title among the Roman bishops, to be called, Servant of the servants of God; putting them in remembrance thereby, both of their humbleness, and also of their duty in the church of Christ. Moreover, as concerning his act for the sole life of priests first begun, and then broken again; also concerning the order of Gregory's mass book to be received in all churches; hereof whoso lusteth to read more shall find the same in other places hereafter, namely, when we come to the time of Pope Adrian the First.

After the death of Gregory above mentioned, first came Sabinianus, who, as he was a malicious detractor of Gregory, and of his works, so he continued not long, scarce the space of two years. After whom succeeded next Bonifacius the Third, which albeit he reigned but one year, yet in that one year he did more hurt than Gregory, with so great labours, and in so many years, could do good before. For that which Gregory kept out he brought in; obtaining of Phocas, the wicked emperor, for him and his

successors after him, that the see of Rome above all other churches should have the pre-eminence, and that the bishop of Rome should be the universal head of all churches of Christ in Christendom; alleging for him this frivolous reason, that St. Peter had and left to his ancestors in Rome the keys of binding and loosing, &c. And thus began first Rome to take a head above all other churches by the means of Boniface the Third, who, as he lacked no boldness nor ambition to seek it, so neither lacked he an emperor fit and meet to give such a gift. This emperor's name was Phocas, a man of such wickedness and ambition, (most like to his own bishop Boniface,) that, to aspire to the empire, he murdered his own master, the emperor Mauricius, and his children. Thus Phocas, coming up to be emperor, after his detestable villany done, thinking to stablish his empire with friendship and favour of his people, and especially with the bishop of Rome, quickly condescended to all his petitions, and so granted him (as it is said) to be that he would, the universal and head bishop over all Christian churches. But as blood commonly requireth blood again, so it came to pass on the said Phocas. For as he had cruelly slain the lord and emperor Mauricius before, so he in like manner (of Heraclius the emperor succeeding him) had his hands and feet cut off, and so was cast into the sea. And thus wicked Phocas, which gave the first supremacy to Rome, lost his own. But Rome would not so soon lose his supremacy once given as the giver lost his life; for ever since from that day it hath holden, defended, and maintained the same still, and yet doth to this present day, by all force and policy possible. And thus much concerning Boniface, whom by the words of Gregory, we may well call the runner before antichrist. For as Gregory brought in their style, Servant of the servants of God. this Boniface brought into their heads first, We will and command, We enjoin and charge you, &c.

Mention was made a little before of Ethelbert, king of Kent, and also of Ethelfride, king of North Saxon or Northumbria. This Ethelbert, having under his subjection all the other Saxon kings unto Humber, after he had first received himself, and caused to be received of others, the Christian faith by the preaching of Austin, confirmed afterward in the same faith, amongst other costly deeds, with the help of Sigebert, king of Essex, his nephew, then reigning under him, began the foundation of Paul's church within the city of London, and ordained it for the bishop's see of London. For the archbishop's see, which beforetime had been at London, was by Austin and this Ethelbert, at the prayer of the citizens of Dorobernia, translated to the said city. Wherefore such authors as say that Paul's was builded by Sigebert say not amiss; which Sigebert was the king of Essex, in which province standeth the city of London. This Ethelbert also founded the church of St. Andrew in the city of Dorubres in Kent, now called Rochester, of one Rof, distant from Dorobernia four and twenty miles. Of this city Justus was bishop, ordained before by Austin. Moreover, the forenamed Ethelbert stirred up a dweller or citizen of London to make a chapel or church of St. Peter in the west end of London, then called Thorny, now the town of Westminster, which church or chapel was after by Edward the Confessor enlarged or new builded; lastly, of Henry the Third it was newly again reedified and made, as it is now, a large monastery, &c. After these Christian and worthy acts, this Ethelbert, when he had reigned the course of fifty and six years, changed this mortal life about the year of our Lord 616, whom some stories say to be slain in a fight between him and Ethelfride, king of North Saxons.

In the mean time the foresaid Ethelfride, king of Northumberland, after the cruel murder of the monks of Bangor, escaped not long unto his hire; for after he had

reigned four and twenty years he was slain in the field of Edwin, who succeeded in Northumberland after him.

This Edwin, being the son not of Ethelfride, but rather of Alla, was first a panim or idolater; afterward by Paulinus was christened, and the first christened king in Northumberland. The occasion of which his calling or conversion, as is in sundry stories contained, was this.

Edwin, being yet a pagan, married the daughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent, called Edelburge, a Christian woman, otherwise called Tace. But before this marriage, Edwin being yet young, Ethelfride the king, conceiving envy against him, persecuted him so sore, that he was forced to fly to Redwaldus, king of East Angles. The which Redwaldus, what for fear, what with bribes, being corrupted of Ethelfride, at length privily had intended to have betrayed Edwin. But as God's will was, Edwin having warning thereof by a secret friend of his, was moved to fly, and to save himself, being promised also of his friends to be safely conveyed away, if he would thereto agree. To whom Edwin said, Whither shall I fly, that have so long fleen the hands of mine enemies, through all provinces of the realm? And if I must needs be slain, I had rather he should do it than another unworthy person. Thus he, remaining by himself alone and solitary, sitting in a great study, there appeared unto him suddenly a certain stranger, to him unknown, and said, I know well the cause of thy thought and heaviness. What wouldst thou give him that should deliver thee out of this fear, and should reconcile King Redwald to thee again? I would give him (said Edwin) all that I ever could make. And he said again, And what if I make thee a mightier king than was any of thy progenitors? He answered again as before. Moreover, (saith he,) and what if he show thee a better kind and way of life, than ever was showed to any of thine ancestors before thee; wilt thou obey him and do after his counsel? Yea, (said Edwin,) promising most firmly with all his heart so to do. Then he, laying his hand upon his head, When (said he) this token happeneth unto thee, then remember this time of thy tribulation, and the promise which thou hast made, and the word which now I say unto thee. And with that he vanished out of his sight suddenly. After this so done, as Edwin was sitting alone by himself pensive and sad, his foresaid friend, which moved him before to fly, cometh to him, bidding him be of good cheer; for the heart (said he) of King Redwaldus, which had before intended thy destruction, is now altered through the counsel of the queen, and is fully bent to keep his promise with you, whatsoever shall fall thereupon. To make the story short, Redwaldus the king (although Fabian, following Henry Huntington, saith it was Edwin) with all convenient speed assembled an host, wherewith he suddenly coming upon Ethelfride, gave battle unto him about the borders of Mercia, where Ethelfride, king of Northumberland, with Reiner, Redwaldus's son, was slain in the field. By reason whereof Edwin was quietly placed in the possession of Northumberland.



Edwin and the stranger

After this, Quicelinus, with Kinegilsus his brother, kings of West Saxons, conspiring the death of Edwin, now king of Northumberland, upon envy and malice sent upon an Easter day a swordman, named Emmer, privily to slay the said Edwin. But one Lilla, the king's trusty servant, disgarnished of a shield or other weapon to defend his master, start between the king and the sword, and was stricken through the body and died, and the king was wounded with the same stroke.

After this, about Whitsuntide, the king assembled his host, intending to make war against the king of West Saxons, promising to Christ to be christened if he would give him the victory. He then proceeded to the battle against Quiceline and Kinegilsus, with Kenwolcus, and other enemies, who being all vanquished and put to flight, Edwin through the power of Christ returneth home victorious.

About the same season Pope Boniface the Fifth sent also to the said Edwin letters exhortatory, with sundry presents from Rome to him, and to Edelburge the queen; but neither would that prevail. Then Paulinus, seeing the king so hard to be converted, poured out his prayers unto God for his conversion; who the same time had revealed to him by the Holy Ghost the oracle above mentioned, which was showed to the king when he was with Redwaldus, king of the East Angles. Whereupon Paulinus, coming after to the king on a certain day, and laying his hand upon the king's head, asked him if he knew that token. The king hearing this, and remembering well the token, was ready to fall down at his feet. But Paulinus, not suffering that, did lift him up again, saying unto him, Behold, O king, you have vanquished your enemies, you have obtained your kingdom; now perform the third thing which you promised, that is, to receive the faith of Christ, and to be obedient to him. Whereupon the king, conferring with his council and his nobles, was baptized of Paulinus at York, with many of his other subjects with him. Insomuch that Coifie, the chief of the prelates of

his old idolatry, armed himself with his idolatrous bishops, and bestrode good horses, which before by their old law they might not do, nor ride but only a mare; and so destroyed all the altars of idolatry, and their temple of idols, which was at Godmundham, not far from York. And this was in the eleventh year of his reign.

From that time forth, during the life of Edwin, which was the term of six years more, Paulinus christened continually in the rivers of Gwenie and Swala, in both provinces of Deira, and in Bernicia, using the said rivers for his fonts, and preached in Lincolnshire, where he builded also a church of stone at Lincoln.

In this time was so great peace in the kingdom of Edwin after his conversion, that a woman laden with gold might have gone from the one side of the sea to the other, and no man molest her. Moreover, by the highway sides through all his kingdom he caused by every well or spring to be chained a dish or bowl of brass, to take up water for the refreshing of such as went by the way, which bowls of brass there remained safe, that no man touched them during all the life of the said Edwin. Such was then the tender care and study of Christian princes for the refreshing of their subjects. But that was then the brazen world, which now is grown to iron and lead.

This Edwin, who first brought in the faith in the north parts, continuing after his baptism six years, at len the was slain in battle by Cedwalla, king of the Britons, and by wicked Penda, king of the Mercians, with his son Offricus also, in the field called Hatfield.

This Paulinus was the first archbishop of York; and as he was of Justus, archbishop of Canterbury, ordained archbishop of the see of York; so he again, after the decease of Justus, ordained Honorius to be archbishop of Canterbury.

Paulinus, after the death of godly Edwin, seeing unmerciful Cedwalla or Cedwallon with his Britons, and wicked Penda with the idolatrous Mercians, to spoil the land in such sort, as they made no spare neither of age, nor sex, nor religion, was compelled to fly with Edelburge the queen, and Eufled her daughter, by water into Kent, where the said archbishop Paulinus remained bishop of Rochester the space of nineteen years. And so the church of Northumberland lacked a bishop for the space of thirty years after. Notwithstanding he left there one James his deacon, a good man, who continued there baptizing and preaching in the north parts, till that peace being recovered, and the number of the faithful increasing, the church came again to his stay.

By means of this Edwin, Erpwaldus, king of the East Angles, son to Redwaldus above mentioned, was reduced to Christ's faith.

After the decease of Edwin, and his son Offricke, both slain in battle, reigned Osricus and Eufridus, the one in Deira, the other in Bernicia. Osricus was the son of Elfricus, which was brother to Ethelfride. Eaufridus was the eldest son of Ethelfride; for Ethelfride had three sons, to wit, Eaufridus, Oswaldus, and Osricus. These two kings of Deira and Bernicia, Osricus and Eufride, being first christened in Scotland, after being kings, returned to their idolatry; and so in the year following were slain one after the other by the foresaid Cedwalla and wicked Penda.

After whom succeeded in Northumberland the second son of Ethelfride, named Oswaldus, having rule on both the provinces, as well Deira as Bernicia. Whereof when the foresaid Cedwalla (or Cadwallo) the Britain king had understanding, who before had made havoc of the Saxons, and thought to have rooted them utterly out of England, he kept King Penda, with a mighty host of the Britons, thinking to slay also Oswald as he had before slain his brother Eaufride and King Edwin before them. But

Oswald, when he was warned of the great strength of this Cedwall and Penda, made his prayers to God, and besought him meekly of help to withstand his enemy, for the salvation of his people. Thus, after Oswald had prayed for the saving of his people, the two hosts met in a field named Denesbury, some say Hevenfield, where was fought a strong battle. But, finally, the army and power of Penda and Cedwall, which were far exceeding the number of Oswald's host, was chased, and most part slain, of Oswald; after he reigned over the Britons two and twenty years, leaving after him a son, whom Gaufridus called Cadwaladrus, the last king of the Britons.

Of this Oswald much praise and commendation is written in authors for his fervent zeal in Christ's religion, and merciful pity towards the poor, with other great virtues more. As touching the miracles of St. Oswald, what it pleased the people of that time to report of him, I have not here to affirm. This I find in stories certain, that he being well and virtuously disposed to the setting forth of Christ's faith and doctrine, sent into Scotland for a certain bishop there called Aidanus, which was a famous preacher. The king at what time he was in Scotland banished had learned the Scottish tongue perfectly: wherefore as this Aidanus preached in his Scottish tongue to the Saxons, the king himself interpreting that which he had said, disdained not to preach and expound the same unto his nobles and subjects in the English tongue.

Moreover, towards the poor and needy his pity and tenderness was such, being notwithstanding of so high and princely calling, that upon a time, being then Easter-day, he sitting with the said Aidanus at meat, and served, after the manner of kings, in silver, there cometh to him one of the servitors, bringing him word that there was a great multitude of poor people sitting in the street, which desired some alms of the king. He, hearing this, commandeth not only the meat prepared for his table to be carried unto them, but also, taking a silver platter which stood before him, brake it in pieces, and sent it amongst them, and so relieved his poor subjects not only with the meat of his table, but with his dishes also. Aidanus the bishop, seeing this, and marvelling thereat, taketh him by the hand, wishing and praying in this wise: This hand (saith he) I pray God may continue and never putrify. What the stories say more concerning this hand of Oswald, I intend not to meddle further than simple, true, and due probability will bear me out. In those days, and partly by the means of the said Oswald, Kinigilsus, king of the West Saxons, was converted to Christ's faith; especially through the godly labour of Berinus, which was sent by Pope Honorius to preach in England, and was then made bishop of Dorchester. To whom Quicelinus, brother of Kinigilsus, after he had also received baptism of the said Berinus, gave to him the said city to make there his see. And, as Guido witnesseth, the said Quicelinus gave after to the bishop of Winchester seven miles' compass of land to build there the bishop's see, the which was accomplished and finished by Kenwalkus his son.

Of this Berinus, Malmesbury, Polychronicon, with divers other writers, do report a thing strange and miraculous; which, if it be a fable, as no doubt it is, I cannot but marvel that so many authors so constantly agree in reporting and affirming the same. The matter is this. This Berinus, being sent, as is said, by Honorius, to preach in England, promiseth him to travel to the uttermost borders thereof, and there to preach the gospel, where the name of Christ was never heard. Thus he, setting forward in his journey, passeth through France, and so to the sea-side; where he found a passage ready, and the wind served so fair, that he was called upon in such haste, that he had no leisure to remember himself to take all things with him which he had to carry. At length he was on the sea sailing, and almost in the middle course of his passage he remembered himself of a certain relic left behind him for haste, which Honorius had

given him at his coming out. Malmesburiensis calleth it Corporalia, which we call a corporal, or such a like thing, and what else enclosed within it I cannot tell. Here Berinus in great sorrow could not tell what to do; if he should have spoken to the heathen mariners to turn their course back again, they would have mocked him, and it had been in vain. Wherefore, as the stories write, he boldly steppeth into the sea, and, walking on foot back again, taketh with him that which was left behind, and so returneth to his company again, having not one thread of his garments wet. Of this miracle, or whether I should call it a fable rather, let the reader judge as he thinketh, because it is not written in the Scripture, we are not bound to believe it. But if it were true, it is then thought to be wrought of God, not for any holiness in the man or in the corporal, but a special gift for the conversion of the heathen, for whose salvation God suffereth oft many wonders to be done. This Berinus, being received in the ship again with a great admiration of the mariners, who were therewith converted and baptized, was driven at last by the weather to the coast of the West Saxons, where Kinigilsus and his brother Quicelinus above mentioned did reign. Which two kings the same time by the preaching of Berinus were converted and made Christian men, with the people of the country, being before rude and barbarous. It happened the same time when the foresaid kings should be christened, that Oswaidus, (mentioned a little before,) king of Northumberland, was then present, and the same day married Kinigilsus's daughter, and also was godfather to the king.

Thus Oswald, after he had reigned nine years in such holiness and perfectness of life as is above specified, was slain at length in the field called Marfield by wicked Penda, king of the Mercians; which Penda, at length after all his tyranny, was overcome and slain by Oswy, brother to Oswald, next king after Oswald of Northumberland, notwithstanding he had thrice the people which Oswy had. This Penda, being a panim, had three sons, Wolferus, Weda, and Egfridus. To this second son Weda Oswy had before time married his daughter, by consent of Penda his father; the which Weda, by help of Oswy, was made king of South Mercia, the which lordship is severed from North Mercia by the river of Trent. The same Weda, moreover, at what time he married the daughter of Oswy, promised to him that he would become a Christian man, which thing he performed after the death of Penda his father; but afterward, within three years of his reign, he was by reason of his wife slain. And after him the kingdom fell to Wolferus, the other brother, who, being wedded to Ermenilda, daughter of Ercombert, king of Kent, was shortly after christened; so that he is counted the first christened king of Mercia. This Wolferus conquered Kenwalcus, king of Kent, and got the Isle of Wight, which after he gave to Sigbert, king of the East Angles, upon condition he would be christened. And thus the East Angles, which before had expelled Melitus their bishop, as is declared, recovered again the christian faith under Sigbert their king, who, by the means of the foresaid Wolferus, was reduced and baptized by Finianus the bishop.

But to return again to Oswy, from whom we have a little digressed, of whom we showed before how he succeeded after Oswald in the province of Bernicia, to whom also was joined Oswine his cousin, over the province of Deira, and there, with his fellow Oswy, reigned the space of seven years. This Oswine was gentle and liberal to his people, and no less devout toward God; who, upon a time, had given to Aidanus, the bishop above mentioned, a princely horse, with the trappings, and all that appertained thereto, because he should not so much travel on foot, but sometimes ease himself withal. Thus Aidanus, the Scottish bishop, as he was riding upon his kingly horse, by the way meeteth him a certain poor man asking and craving his charity.

Aidanus, having nothing else to give him, lighted down, and giveth to him his horse trapped and gar nished as he was. The king understanding this, and not contented therewith, as he was entering to dinner with the said Aidanus, What meant you, father bishop, (said he,) to give away my horse I gave you unto the beggar? Had not I other horses in my stable that might have served him well enough, but you must give away that which of purpose was picked out for you amongst the chiefest? To whom the bishop made answer again, saying, or rather rebuking the king, What be these words, O king, (saith he,) that you speak? Why set you more price by a horse, which is but the foal of a horse, than you do by him which is the Son of Mary, yea, which is the Son of God? He said but this, when the king forthwith, ungirding his sword from about him, (as he was then newly come in from hunting,) falleth down at the feet of the bishop, desiring him to forgive him that, and he would never after speak word to him for any treasure he should afterward give away of his. The bishop seeing the king so meekly affected, he then taking him up, and cheering him again with words, began shortly after to weep and to be very heavy. His minister asking the cause thereof, Aidanus answered in his Scottish language, saying to him, I weep (saith he) for that this king cannot live long. This people is not worthy to have such a prince as he is to reign amongst them. And so as Aidanus said it came to pass. For not long after Oswy, the king of Bernicia, disdainng at him, when Oswine either was not able or not willing to join with him in battle, caused him traitorously to be slain. And so Oswy, with his son Egfride, reigned in Northumberland alone.

In the time, and also in the house, of this Oswy, king of Northumberland, was a certain man named Benedict, who was the bringer up of Bede from his youth, and took him to his institution when he was but seven years old, and so taught him during his life. This Benedict, or Benet, descending of a noble stock and rich kin, and in good favour with Oswy, forsook service, house, and all his kindred to serve Christ, and went to Rome, (where he had been in his lifetime five times,) and brought from thence books into monasteries, with other things which he thought then to serve for devotion. This Benedict, surnamed Bishop, was the first that brought in the art and use of glazing into this land, for before that glass windows were not known either in churches or in houses.

In the reign of the foresaid Oswy, and Egfride his son, was Botulphus, abbot, which builded in the east part of Lincoln an abbey. Also Aidanus, Finianus, and Colmannus, with three Scottish bishops of Northumberland, holy men, held with the Britons against the Romish order for the keeping of Easter day. Moreover, Cuthbertus, Jarumannus, Cedda, and Wilfridus lived the same time; whom, as I judge to be bishops of holy conversation, so I thought it sufficient here only to name them. As touching their miracles, wherefore they were made saints in the pope's calendar, seeing they are not written in the Gospel, nor in my creed, but in certain old chronicles of that age, so they are no matter of my faith: notwithstanding, as touching their conversation, this I read, and also do credit, that the clergy, both of Britain and England, at that time plied nothing that was worldly, but gave themselves to preaching and teaching the word of our Saviour, and followed the life that they preached by giving of good example. And over that, as our histories record, they were so void of covetousness, that they received no possessions or territories which were forced upon them.

About this season, or not much before, under the reign of Oswy and Oswine, kings of Northumberland, another synod or council was holden against the Britons and the Scottish bishops, for the right observing of Easter, at Sternhalt. At what time Agilbertus, bishop of West Saxons, came to Northumberland, to institute Wilfride

abbot of Ripon, where this question for Easter day began to be moved; for Colman, then bishop of Northumberland, followed not the custom of Rome, nor of the Saxons, but followed the Britons and the Scottish bishops, his predecessors in the same see before. Thus on the one side was Colman the archbishop of York, and Hilda the abbess of Sternhalt, which alleged for them the doings and examples of their predecessors, both godly and reverend bishops, as Aidanus, Finianus, archbishops of that see of York before them, and divers more, who had used always to celebrate the Easter from the fourteenth day of the first month till the eight and twentieth of the same. And specially for that St. John the evangelist at Ephesus kept and observed that day, &c. On the other side was Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, James, the deacon of Paulinus above mentioned, Wilfride, abbot of Ripon, and King Aifrid, Oswy's son, with his queen, holding on the same side. The full contents of which disputation here followeth, according as in the story of Beda at large is described, with their reasons and arguments on both sides, as ensueth, &c.

The question of Easter, and of shaving, and other ecclesiastical matters, being moved, it was determined that in the abbey which is called Sternhalt, of the which Hilda, a devout woman, was abbess, a convocation should be had, and this question there determined. To the which place came both the kings, the father and the son. Bishop Colman, with his clergy of Scotland, Agilbert, with Agathon and Wilfride, priests. James and Roman were on their sides; Hilda the abbess, with her company, were on the Scottish part, and the reverend bishop Cedda was appointed prolocutor for both parties in that parliament. King Oswy began first with an oration, declaring that it was necessary for such as served one God to live in one uniform order, and that such as looked for one kingdom in heaven should not differ in celebration of the heavenly sacraments, but should rather seek for the true tradition, and follow the same. This said, he commanded his bishop Colman to declare what the rite and custom was in this behalf that he used, and from whence it had the original. Then Colman, obeying his prince's commandment, said, The Easter which I observe I received of my ancestors that sent me hither a bishop, the which all our forefathers being men of God did celebrate in like manner; and lest it should be contemned or despised of any man, it is manifestly apparent to be the very same which the holy evangelist St. John (a disciple especially beloved of the Lord) did accustomedly use in all churches and congregations where he had authority. When Colman had spoken many things to this effect, the king commanded Agilbert to declare his opinion in this behalf, and to show the order that he then used, from whence it came, and by what authority he observed the same. Agilbert requested the king that his scholar Wilfride, a priest, might speak for him, inasmuch as they both with the rest of his clergy were of one opinion herein, and that the said Wilfride could utter his mind better and more plainly in the English tongue than he himself could. Then Wilfride at the king's commandment began on this sort, and said, The Easter which we keep we have seen at Rome, whereat the holy apostles Peter and Paul did live and teach, did suffer and were buried. The same also is used in Italy and in France; the which countries we have travelled for learning, and have noted it to be celebrated of them all. In Asia also and in Africa, in Egypt and in Greece, and finally in all the world, the same manner of Easter is observed that we use, save only by these here present with their accomplices, the Picts and the Britons; with the which two (and yet not altogether agreeing) they condescend and strive foolishly in this order against the universal world. To whom Colman replied, saying, I marvel you will call this order foolish, that so great an apostle as was worthy to lie in the Lord's lap did use, whom all the world doth well know to have lived most wisely. And Wilfride answered, God forbid that I should reprove St. John of folly, who kept the

rites of Moses's law according to the letter, (the church being yet Jewish in many points,) and the apostles not as yet able to abdicate all the observations of the law before ordained. As, for example, they could not reject images invented of the devil, the which all men that believe on Christ ought of necessity to forsake and detest, lest they should be an offence to those Jews that were amongst the Gentiles. For this cause did St. Paul circumcise Timothy, for this cause did he sacrifice in the temple, and did shave his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; all which things were done to none other purpose than to eschew the offence of the Jews. Hereupon also said James to Paul, Thou seest, brother, how many thousand Jews do believe, and all these be zealous (notwithstanding) of the law. Yet seeing the gospel is so manifestly preached in the world, it is not lawful for the faithful to be circumcised, neither to offer sacrifice of carnal things to God. Therefore John, according to the custom of the law, the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, did begin the celebration of the feast of Easter, nothing respecting whether it were celebrated in the sabbath or in any other ferial day. But Peter, when he preached at Rome, remembering that the Lord did arise from death on the first day after the sabbath, giving thereby a hope to the world of the resurrection, thought good to institute Easter on that day, and not after the use and precepts of the law, (that was,) the fourteenth day of the first month; even so John, looking for the moon at night, if it did arise, and the next day after were Sunday, which then was called the sabbath, then did he celebrate the Easter of the Lord in the evening, like as we use to do even at this day. But if Sunday were not the next day after the fourteenth day, but fell on the sixteenth day, or seventeenth, or on any other day unto the one and twentieth, he tarried always for it, and did begin the holy solemnity of Easter on the evening next before the sabbath. And so it came to pass, that Easter was always kept on the Sunday, and was not celebrated but from the fifteenth day unto the one and twentieth: neither doth this tradition of this apostle break the law, but fulfil the same. In the which it is to be noted, that Easter was instituted from the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, unto the one and twentieth day of the same month at evening; the which manner all St. John's successors in Asia after his death did follow, and the catholic church throughout the whole world. And that this is the true Easter, and only of all Christians to be observed, it was not newly decreed, but confirmed by the Council of Nice, as appeareth by the ecclesiastical history. Whereupon it is manifest that you (Colman) do neither follow the example of St. John, as ye think, nor of St. Peter, whose tradition you do willingly resist, nor of the church, nor yet of the gospel, in the celebration of Easter. For St. John, observing Easter according to the precepts of the law, kept it not on the first day after the sabbath; but you precisely keep it only on the first day after the sabbath. Peter did celebrate Easter from the fifteenth day of the moon to the one and twentieth day, but you keep Easter from the fourteenth unto the twentieth day; so that you begin Easter oftentimes the thirteenth day at night, of which manner neither the law nor the gospel maketh any mention. But the Lord in the fourteenth day either did eat the old passover at night, or else did celebrate the sacraments of the New Testament in the remembrance of his death and passion. You do also utterly reject from the celebration of Easter the one and twentieth day, the which the law hath chiefly willed to be observed; and therefore, as I said, in the keeping of Easter, you neither agree with St. John, nor with Peter, nor with the law, nor yet with the gospel. Then Colman again answered to these things; saying, Did then Anatholius, a godly man, and one much commended in the foresaid ecclesiastical story, against the law and the gospel, who writeth that the Easter was to be kept from the fourteenth day unto the twentieth? Or shall we think that Columba, our reverend father, and his successors, being men of

God, who observed the Easter after this manner, thd against the Holy Scripture? whereas some of them were men of such godliness and virtue, as was declared by their wonderful miracles. And I hereby (nothing doubting of their holiness) do endeavour to follow their life, order, and discipline. Then said Wilfride, It is certain that Anatholius was both a godly man, and worthy of great com mendation; but what have you to do with him, seeing you observe not his order? For he, following the true rule in keeping his Easter, observeth the circle of nineteen years; the which either you know not, or, if you do, you contemn the common order observed in the universal church of Christ. And, moreover, the said Anatholius doth so count the fourteenth day in the observation of Easter, as he confesseth the same to be the fifteenth day at night, after the manner of the Egyptians, and likewise noteth the twentieth day to be in the feast of Easter the one and twentieth in. the evening; the which distinction that you know not by this may appear, for that you keep the Easter on the thirteenth day before the full moon. Or otherwise I can answer you touching your father Columba and his successors, whose order you say you follow, moved thereto by their miracles, on this wise; that the Lord will answer to many that shall say in the day of judgment, that in his name they have prophesied, and cast out devils, and have done many miracles, &c., that he never knew them. But God forbid that I should say so of your fathers, because it is much better to believe well of those we know not than ill. Whereupon I deny not but they were the servants of God, and holy men, which loved the Lord of a good intent, though of a rude simplicity; and I think that the order which they used in the Easter did not much hurt them, so long as they had none amongst them that could show them the right observation of the same for them to follow. For I think, if the truth had been declared unto them, they would as well have received it in this matter as they did in others. But you and your fellows, if you refuse the order of the apostolical see, or rather of the universal church, which is confirmed by the Holy Scripture, without all doubt you do sin. And though your forefathers were holy men, what is their fewness, being but a corner of an island, to be preferred before the universal church of Jesus Christ dispersed throughout the whole world? And if Columba your father (and ours also, being of Christ Jesus) were mighty in miracles, is he therefore to be preferred before the prince of the holy apostles? to whom the Lord said, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Wilfride having thus ended his argument, the king said to Colman, Is it true that the Lord spake these things to St. Peter? And Colman answered, Yea. Then said the king, Can you declare any thing that the Lord gave to Colman? Colman answered, No. Then quoth the king, Do both of you agree and consent in this matter Without any controversy, that these words were principally spoken to Peter, and that the Lord gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven? And they both answered, Yea. Then concluded the king on this wise: Forsomuch as St. Peter is the door-keeper of heaven, I will not gainsay him; but in that I am able I will obey his orders in every point, lest when I come to the gates of heaven, he shut them against me.

Upon this simple and rude reason of the king the multitude eftsoons consented, and with them also Cedda was contented to give over; only Colman the Scot, being then archbishop of York, in displeasure left the realm, and departed into Scotland, carrying with him the bones of Aidanus. And thus much concerning this matter of Easter.

After the decease of Oswy, Egfride his son was king after him in Northumberland fifteen years. By this Egfride Cuthbert was promoted to the bishopric

of the Isle of Farne; and Wilfride, which before had been archbishop of York, was displaced through the means of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, and Cedda possessed that see. Wilfride, when he was put out, went to Rome, and complained of him to Agathon the bishop, and was well allowed in some things. But the king and Theodorus had there such proctors and friends, that he returned without speeding of his cause. Wherefore he returned into the South Saxons, and builded an abbey in Sileseie, and preached unto the South Saxons fifteen years. The king of the South Saxons at that time was Ethelwold, to whom we declared a little before that Wolferus, king of the Mercians, gave the Isle of Wight, upon condition that he would be christened, and so was baptized by Berinus; the said Wolferus being his godfather and son-in-law both in one day. Wherefore Wolferus, now being licensed by Ethelwold the king, preached unto his nobles and people of Southsax, and converted them to Christ. In the time of whose baptizing the rain, which before they lacked three years together, was given them plentifully, whereby their great famine slacked, and the country was made fruitful, which before was dried up with barrenness; insomuch that (as in some stories it is said) the people, penured with famine, would go forty together upon the rocks by the sea-side, and, taking hands together, would throw themselves down to the sea. Moreover, where they lacked before the art of fishing, the foresaid Wilfride taught them how with nets to fish.

And thus by process have we discoursed from time to time how and by what means the idolatrous people were induced to the true faith of Christ; of whom the South Saxons with the Isle of Wight were the last.

21. From the Conversion of the Saxons to the Coming of the Danes

After Egfride, who was slain in the Straits of Scotland, next succeeded Alfride his brother, and bastard son to Oswy, and reigned eighteen or nineteen years in Northumberland. This Alfride restored again the foresaid Wilfride to the see of York, whom his brother had before expelled, and put in Cedda. Notwithstanding the same king, within five years after, expelled the said Wilfride again, and so went he to Rome. But at length by Osricke, his successor, was placed again the archbishop of York, and Cedda was ordained by Theodorus, bishop of Mercia. The which province of Mercia the said Theodorus, archbishop of Canterbury, by the authority of the synod holden at Hatfield, did after divide into five bishoprics; that is, one to Chester, the second to Worcester, the third to Lichfield, the fourth to Cederna in Lindsey, the fifth to Dorchester, which was after translated to Lincoln.

Near about this time, in the year of our Lord 666, the detestable sect of Mahomet began to take strength and place. Although Polychronicon, differing a little in years, accounteth the beginning of this sect somewhat before, but the most diligent searchers of them which write now refer it to this year. Of this Mahomet came the kingdom of Agarens, (whom he after named Saracens,) to whom he gave sundry laws, patched of many sects and religions together: he taught them to pray ever to the south; and as we keep the Sunday, so they keep the Friday, which they call the day of Venus. He permitted them to have as many wives as they were able to maintain; to have as many concubines as they list; to abstain from the use of wine, except on certain solemn days in the year; to have and worship only one God omnipotent, saying that Moses and the prophets were great men, but Christ was greater, and greatest of all the prophets, as being born of the virgin Mary by the power of God, without man's seed, and at last was taken up to heaven, but was not slain, but another in his likeness for him, with many other wicked blasphemies in his law contained. At length this kingdom of the Saracens began to be conquered of the Turks, and in process of time wholly subdued to them.

But now to return again to the time of our English Saxons. In this mean season Theodorus was sent from Italy into England, by Vitellianus the pope, to be archbishop of Canterbury, and with him divers other monks of Italy, to set up here in England Latin service, masses, ceremonies, litanies, with such other Romish ware, &c. This Theodorus, being made archbishop and metropolitan of Canterbury, began to play the tyrant, placing and displacing the bishops at his pleasure. As for Cedda and Wilfride, archbishops of York, he thrust them both out, under the pretence that they were not lawfully consecrated, notwithstanding they were sufficiently authorized by their kings, and were placed against their wills. Wherefore Wilfride, as is before touched, went up to Rome, but could have no redress of his cause. Yet to show what modesty this Wilfride used against his enemy, being so violently molested as he was, because the words of his complaint are expressed in William Malmesbury, I thought here to express the same, both for the commendation of the party, and also for the good example of others, in case any such be whom good examples will move to well-doing. This Wilfride therefore, having such injury and violence offered unto him by the hands of Theodore, although he had just cause to do his uttermost, yet, in prosecuting his complaint, how he tempered himself, what words of modesty he used, rather to defend

his innocency, than to impugn his adversary, by this his suggestion offered up to the bishop of Rome may appear, whose words in effect were these: How it chanceth that Theodorus, the most holy and reverend archbishop, (myself being alive in the see, which I, though unworthy, did rule and dispose,) hath of his own authority, without the consent of any bishop, (neither having my simple voice agreeing to the same,) ordained three bishops, I had rather pass over in silence than to stir any further therein, be cause of the reverence of that man, and no less thought I it my duty so to do. The which man, for that he hath been directed by this see apostolical, I will not, nor dare not, here accuse, &c. Thus the cause of the said Wilfride, albeit it was sufficiently known in the court of Rome to be well allowed for just and innocent, yet it was not then redressed; in such estimation was this Theodorus then among the Romans. Upon this controversy of these two bishops I may well here infer the words of William Malmesbury, not unworthy in my mind to be noted, which be these in this Latin story: that is, In the which Theodore (saith he) the weak and miserable infirmity of man may be seen, and also lamented; considering, that although a man be never so holy, yet in the same man is something whereby it may be perceived that he hath not utterly put off all his stubborn conditions, &c.

In the time of this Theodorus, and by the means of him, a provincial synod was holden at Thetford, mentioned in the story of Bede; the principal contents whereof were these

First, That Easter day should be uniformly kept and observed through the whole realm upon one certain day, videlicet prima, 14. Luna mensis primi.

Secondly, That no bishop should intermeddle within the diocess of another.

Thirdly, That monasteries consecrated unto God should be exempt and free from the jurisdiction of the bishops.

Fourthly, That the monks should not stray from one place, that is, from one monastery to another, without the licence of their abbot; also to keep the same obedience which they promised at their first entering.

Fifthly, That no clergyman should forsake his own bishop, and be received in any other place, without letters commendatory of his own bishop.

Sixthly, That foreign bishops and clergymen coming into the realm should be content only with the benefit of such hospitality as should be offered them; neither should intermeddle any further with in the precinct of any bishop without his special permission.

Seventhly, That synods provincial should be kept within the realm at least once a year.

Eighthly, That no bishop should prefer himself before another, but must observe the time and order of his consecration.

Ninthly, That the number of bishops should be augmented as the number of the people increaseth.

Tenthly, That no marriage should be admitted but that which was lawful; no incest to be suffered; neither any man to put away his wife for any cause except only for fornication, after the rule of the gospel. And these be the principal chapters of that synod, &c.

In the next year following was the first general council kept at Constance, whereat this Theodore was also present under Pope Agatho, where marriage was permitted to Greek priests, and forbidden to the Latin. In this council the Latin mass was first openly said by John Portuensis, the pope's legate, before the patriarch and princes at Constantinople, in the temple of St. Sophie.

After the decease of Alfrid, king of Northumberland, (from whom it was digressed,) succeeded his son Osredus, reigning eleven years; after whom reigned Kenredus two years, and next Osricus after him eleven years.

In the time and reign of these four kings of Northumberland, King Jua or Juas reigned in Westsat, who, succeeding after Cadwallader, the last king of Britons, began his reign about the year of our Lord 689, and reigned with great valiantness over the West Saxons the term of thirty-seven years. Concerning whose acts and wars maintained against the Kentish Saxons and other kings, because I have not to intermeddle withal, I refer the reader to other chroniclers.

About the sixth year of the reign of this Jua, or Jue, Polychronicon and other make mention of one Cuthlacus, whom they call St. Cuthlake, a confessor, who about the four and twentieth year of his age, renouncing the pomp of the world, professed himself a monk in the abbey of Repingdon, and the third year after went to Crowland, where he led the life of an anchorite. In the which isle and place of his burying was builded a fair abbey, called afterward, for the great resort and gentle entertainment of strangers, Crowland the courteous. But why this Cuthlake should be. sainted for his doings I see no great cause, as neither do I think the fabulous miracles reported of him to be true; as where the vulgar people are made to believe that he enclosed the devil in a boiling pot, and caused wicked spirits to erect up houses, with such other fables and lying miracles. Among which lying miracles also may be reckoned that which the stories mention in the eleventh year of the reign of Jua, to be done of one Brithwald, or Brithelme, who, being dead a long season, was restored to life again, and told many wonders of strange things that he had seen, causing thereby great alms and deeds of charity to be done of the people; and so he, disposing of his goods given in three parts, went to the abbey of Mailroos, where he continued the rest of his life.

Moreover, about the sixteenth year of the said Jua, Etheldred, king of Mercia, after he had there reigned thirty years, was made a monk, and after abbot of Bardney.

And about the eighteenth year of the reign of Jue died the worthy and learned bishop Adelmus, first abbot of Malmesbury, afterwards bishop of Schirborne, of whom William Malmesbury writeth plenteously with great commendation, and that not unworthily, as I suppose; especially for the notable praise of learning and virtue in him above the rest of that time, (next after Bede,) as the great number of books and epistles, with poems, by him set forth will declare. Although concerning the miracles which the said author ascribeth to him: as, first, in causing an infant of nine days old to speak at Rome, to declare Pope Sergius, which was then suspected, the father of the said child; also in hanging his cassock upon the sunbeams; item, in making whole the altar stone of marble brought from Rome; item, in drawing a length one of the timber pieces, which went to the building of the temple in Malmesbury; item, in saving the mariners at Dover, &c: as concerning these and such other miracles, which William Malmesbury to him attributeth, I cannot consent to him therein; but think rather the same to be monkish devices, forged upon their patrons to maintain the dignity of their houses. And as the author was deceived (no doubt) in believing such fables himself, so may he likewise deceive us through the dexterity of his style and fine handling of the

matter, but that further experience hath taught the world now-a-days more wisdom in not believing such practices. This Adelmus was bishop of Schirborne, which see after was united to the see of Winton. In which church of Winchester the like miracles also are to be read of Bishop Adelwold and St. Swithin, whom they have canonized likewise for a saint.

St. John of Beverley, which was then bishop of York, died and was buried at the porch of the minster of Deirwood or Beverley. In the which porch it is recorded in some chronicles, that as the said John upon a time was praying, being in the porch of St. Michael in York, the Holy Ghost, in the similitude of a dove, sat before him upon the altar, in brightness shining above the sun. This brightness being seen of others, first cometh one of his deacons running unto the porch, who, beholding the bishop there standing in his prayers, and all the place replenished with the Holy Ghost, was stricken with the light thereof, having all his face burnt, as it were, with hot burning fire. Notwithstanding, the bishop by and by cured the face of his deacon again, charging them (as the story saith) not to publish what he had seen during his lifetime, &c. Which tale seemeth as true as that we read about the same time done of St. Egwine, in Polychron., abbot of Eusham, and bishop of Worcester, (then called Wicts,) who, upon a time, when he had fettered both his feet in irons fast locked for certain sins done in his youth, and had cast the key thereof into the sea, afterward a fish brought the key again into the ship, as he was sailing homeward from Rome.

But to leave these monkish fantasies, and return to the right course again of the story. In the time of this foresaid Jua began first the right observing of Easter day to be kept of the Picts and of the Britons. In the observation of which day (as is largely set forth in Bede and Polychronicon) three things are necessary to be observed: first, the full moon of the first month, that is, of the month of March; secondly, the dominical letter; thirdly, the equinoctial day, which equinoctial was wont to be counted in the East church, and especially among the Egyptians, to be about the seventeenth day of March. So that the full moon, either on the equinoctial day, or after the equinoctial day being observed, the next dominical day following that full moon is to be taken for Easter day. Wherein are diligently to be noted two things: first, the fulness of the moon must be perfectly full, so that it be the beginning of the third week of the moon, which is the fourteenth or fifteenth day of the moon; secondly, it is to be noted, that the said perfect fulness of the moon, beginning the third week, must happen either in the very evening of the equinoctial day, or after the equinoctial day; for else if it happen either on the equinoctial day before the evening, or before the equinoctial day, then it belongeth to the last month of the last year, and not to the first month of the first year, and so serveth not to be observed.

This rite and usage in keeping Easter day being received in the Latin church, began now to take place among the Picts and Britons, through the busy travail of Theodorus Cuthlacus, but namely of Elbert the holy monk, as they term him, and of Colfrid, abbot of Sirwin in Northumberland, which wrote to Narcanus, or Naitonus, the king of Picts, concerning the same; who also, among other things, writeth of the shaven crowns of priests, saying that it was as necessary for the vow of a monk, or the degree of a priest, to have a shaven crown for restraint of their lust, as for any Christian man to bless him against spirits when they come upon him. The copy of which letter, as it is in Bede, I have here annexed, not for any great reason therein contained, but only to delight the reader with some pastime, in seeing the fond ignorance of that monkish age: the copy of the letter thus proceeded.

"Concerning the shaving of priests, (whereof you writ also unto me,) I exhort you that it be decently observed, according to the Christian faith. We are not ignorant that the apostles were not all shaven after one manner, neither doth the Catholic church at this day agree in one uniform manner of shaving, as they do in faith, hope, and charity. Let us consider the former time of the patriarchs, and we shall find that Job, (an example of patience,) even in the very point of his afflictions, did shave his head; and he proveth, also, that in the time of his prosperity he used to let his hair grow. And Joseph, an excellent doctor and executor of chastity, humility, piety, and other virtues, when he was delivered out of prison and servitude, was shaven; whereby it appeareth that whilst he abode in prison he was unshaven. Behold, both these, being men of God, did use an order in the habit of their body one contrary to the other, whose consciences notwithstanding within did well agree in the like grace of virtues. But, to speak truly and freely, the difference of shaving hurteth not such as have a pure faith in the Lord, and sincere charity towards their neighbour; especially for that there was never any controversy amongst the catholic fathers about the diversity thereof, as there hath been of the difference of the celebration of Easter and of faith. But of all these shavings that we find, either in the church or elsewhere, there is none in mine opinion so much to be followed and embraced as that which he used on his head, to whom the Lord said, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And, contrariwise, there is no shaving so much to be abhorred and detested, as that which he used to whom the same St. Peter said, Thy money be with thee to thy destruction, because thou thinkest to possess the gift of God by thy money; therefore thy part and lot is not in this word. Neither ought we to be shaven on the crown only, because St. Peter was so shaven, but because Peter was so shaven in remembrance of the Lord's passion; therefore we that desire by the same passion to be saved must wear the sign of the same passion with him upon the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as every church that is made a church by the death of the Saviour doth use to bear the sign of the holy cross in the front, that it may the better by the defence of that banner be kept from the invasions of evil spirits, and by the often admonition thereof is taught to crucify the flesh with the concupiscence of the same; in like manner it behoveth such as have the vows of monks, and degrees of the clergy, to bind themselves with a stricter bit of continency for the Lord's sake. And as the Lord bare a crown of thorns on his head in his passion, whereby he took and carried away from us the thorns and pricks of our sins; so must every one of us, by shaving our heads, patiently bear and willingly suffer the mocks and scorns of the world for his sake, that we may receive the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to all that love him, and shall, by shaving their corporal crowns, bear the adversity and contemn the prosperity of this world. But the shaving which Simon Magus used, what faithful man doth not detest, together with his magical art? The which at the first appearance hath a show of a shaven crown, but if you mark his neck, you shall find it curtailed in such wise, as you will say it is rather meet to be used of the Simonists than of the Christians. And such (of foolish men) be thought worthy of the glory of the eternal crown; whereas indeed, for their ill living, they are worthy not only to be deprived of the same, but also of eternal salvation. I speak not this against them that use this kind of shaving, and live catholicly in faith and good works, but surely I believe there be divers of them be very holy and godly men; amongst the which is Adamnan the abbot and worthy priest of the Columbians; who, when he came ambassador from his country unto King Alfride, desired greatly to see our monastery, where he declared a wonderful wisdom, humility, and religion, both in his manners and words. Amongst

other talk, I asked him why he that did believe to come to the crown of life that should never have end, did use, contrary to his belief, a definite image of a crown on his head? And if you seek (quoth I) the fellowship of St. Peter, why do you use the fashion of his crown whom St. Peter did accurse, and not of his rather with whom you desire to live eternally? Adamnan answered, saying, You know right well, brother, though I use Simon's manner of shaving, after the custom of my country, yet do I detest and with all my heart abhor his infidelity. I desire notwithstanding to imitate the footsteps of the holy apostle as far forth as my power will extend. Then said I, I believe it is so; but then it is apparent you imitate those things which the apostle Peter did from the bottom of your heart, if you use the same upon your face that you know he did; for I suppose your wisdom understandeth that it is right decent to differ in the trimming your face or shaving from his whom in your heart you abhor. And, contrariwise, as you desire to imitate the doings of him whom you desire to have a mediator between God and you, so it is meet you imitate the manner of his apparel and shaving. Thus much said I to Adamnan, who seemed then well to like our churches; insomuch that he, returning into Scotland, reformed many of his churches there after our celebration, albeit he could not do so amongst the monks, with whom he had special authority. He endeavoured also to have reformed their manner of shaving, if he had been able. And now, O king, I exhort your Majesty to labour together with your people, over whom the King of kings and Lord of lords hath made you governor, to imitate likewise in all these points the catholic and apostolical churches. So shall it come to pass, that in the end of this your temporal kingdom, the most blessed prince of the apostles shall open you the gates of the heavenly kingdom, together with the other elect of God. The grace of the eternal King preserve you, most dearly beloved son in Christ, long time to reign over us, to the great tranquillity of us all."

When this letter was read before King Naiton, with other of his learned men, and diligently translated into his proper language, he seemed to rejoice very much at the exhortation thereof, insomuch as, rising up from among his noblemen, he kneeled on the ground, and gave God thanks that he had deserved to receive so worthy a present out of England, and so caused it forthwith by public proclamation to be written out, learned, and observed throughout all the province of the Picts, defacing the errors that had been used there by the space of seven hundred and four years. For all the ministers of the altar and all monks were shaven on the crown, and all the people rejoiced for the new discipline of the most blessed prince of the apostles St. Peter, which they had received.

By this monkish letter above prefixed, void of all Scripture, of all probation and truth of history, thou mayst note, gentle reader, how this vain tradition of shaven crowns hath come up, and upon how light and trifling occasion; which in very deed was none other but the dreaming fantasies of monks of that time, falsely grounded upon the example of Peter, when by no old monument of any ancient record they can ever prove either Peter or Simon Magus to have been shaven. Moreover, in the said letter also is to be noted, how the Scottish clergy at that season did wear no such priestly crowns as our English churchmen then did.

But to cut off this matter of shaving, more worthy to be laughed at than to be storied, let us now again return to the place at which we left King Jue, of whom William Malmesbury and Fabian in his chronicle do record, that when the foresaid Jue had ruled the West Saxons by the term of thirty-seven years, by the importunate persuasion and subtle policy of his wife Ethelburga, he was allured to go to Rome, there to be made a monk. Which Ethelburga, after she had a long time laboured him to

leave the world, and could not bring about her purpose, upon a season, when the king and she had rested them in a fair palace richly behanged, and were upon the years (*sic*). After whose departing the said Ethelburga his wife went unto Barking, seven miles from London, where in the nunnery of Barking, before of Erkenwald founded, she continued and ended the rest of her life, when she had been abbess of the piace a certain time.



A procession

Next unto the foresaid Osricus followed Celulfus, whom he had adopted, brother to Kenred above specified. This Celulfus, as he was himself learned, so were in his time divers learned men then flourishing in England, among whom was Beda, who unto the same King Celulfus offered his story, entituled The History of the English, not only to be ratified by his authority, but also to be amended by his knowledge and learning.

In the latter end of his Ecclesiastical History of England, this Beda testifieth of himself: "Thus much (by the help of God) I Beda, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of Peter and Paul at Wire, have compiled and digested concerning the

British history." And, proceeding further in this narration, declareth that he, being born in the territory of the said monastery, being of the age of seven years, was committed of his parents and friends to the tuition and education of Benedict, (of whom above relation is made,) and of Celfrid, abbots of the foresaid monastery. In the which place or monastery he continuing from that time forth all his life long, gave himself and all his whole study to the meditating of Holy Scripture. About nineteen years of his age he was made deacon, the thirtieth year of his age he was made priest. From the which time, to the age of nine and fifty years, he occupied himself in interpreting the works of the ancient fathers for his own use, and the necessity of others, and in writing of treatises, which came in all to the number of seven and thirty volumes, which he digested into threescore and eighteen books.

Some say that he went to Rome, either there to defend his books to be consonant to catholic doctrine; or else, if they should be found faulty, to amend and correct the same, as he should thereto be commanded. Albeit the reporter of this his life dare not certainly affirm that ever he was at Rome; but that he was invited and called thither to come, this epistle of Pope Sergius doth sufficiently prove; declaring, moreover, in what price and estimation Beda was accepted, as well in the court of Rome as in other places besides.

So notable and famous was the learning of this foresaid Beda, that the church of Rome (as by this letter appeareth) both stood in need of his help, and also required the same, about the discussing of certain causes and controversies appertaining to learning. Moreover, the whole Latin church at that time gave him the mastery in judgment and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. In all his explanations, his chiefest scope and purpose did ever drive to instruct and inform his reader, simply, and without all curiousness of style, in the sincere love of God and of his neighbour. As touching the holiness and integrity of his life, it is not to be doubted. For how could it be that he should attend to any vicious idleness, or had any leisure to the same, who, in reading and digesting so many volumes, consumed all his whole cogitations in writing upon the Scriptures? for so he testifieth of himself in the Third Book of Samuel, saying in these words, "If my treatises and expositions (saith he) bring with them no other utility to the readers thereof, yet to myself they conduce not a little thus, that while all my study and cogitation was set upon them, in the mean while of slippery enticements and vain cogitations of this world I had little mind." Thus in this travail of study he continued till the age of sixty-two years: at length, drawing to his latter end, being sick seven weeks together, besides other occupyings of his mind, and other studies which he did not intermit, he translated also the Gospel of St. John into English. At length, with great comfort of spirit, he departed this life, pronouncing many comfortable sayings to them that stood about him, upon Ascension day, the same year when Nothelinus was instituted archbishop of Canterbury. And thus much concerning the story of Beda.

This Celulfus, king of Northumberland, aforementioned, after he had reigned eight years, was made a monk in the abbey of Farne, otherwise called Lindefar, or Holy Island; where, by his means, licence was given to the monks of that house to drink wine or ale, which before, by the institution of Aidanus above mentioned, drunk nothing but milk and water. After whom succeeded Egbert his cousin, brother to Egbert (the same time being bishop of York) which brought again thither the pall that his predecessors had given up, since the time that Paulinus had left the see, and fled to Rochester, as is before declared. The said Egbert also erected a noble library in York, whose example I wish other bishops now would follow.

VOLUME 1

About the beginning of the reign of this Egbert was Cuthbert, archbishop of Canterbury, who collected a great synod of bishops and prelates, in the year of our Lord 747, in the month of September, near to the place called Clonesho. In the which synod assembled these decrees were enacted.

1. That bishops should be more diligent in seeing to their office, and in admonishing the people of their faults.
2. That they should live in a peaceable mind together, notwithstanding they were in place dissevered asunder.
3. That every bishop once a year should go about all the parishes of his diocess.
4. That the said bishops every one in his diocess should monish their abbots and monks to live regularly; and that prelates should not oppress their inferiors, but love them.
5. That they should teach the monasteries which the secular men had invaded, and could not then be taken from them, to live regularly.
6. That none should be admitted to orders before his life should be examined.
7. That in monasteries the reading of Holy Scripture should be more frequented.
8. That priests should be no disposers of secular business.
9. That they should take no money for baptizing infants.
10. That they should both learn and teach the Lord's Prayer and Creed in the English tongue.
11. That all should join together in their ministry after one uniform rite and manner.
12. That in a modest voice they should sing in the church.
13. That all holy and festival days should be celebrated at one time together.
14. That the sabbath day be reverently observed and kept.
15. That the seven hours canonical every day be observed.
16. That the rogation days, both the greater and lesser, should not be omitted.
17. That the feast of St. Gregory, and St. Austin our patron, should not be omitted.
18. That the fast of the four times should be kept and observed.
19. That monks and nuns should go regularly apparelled.
20. That bishops should see their decrees not to be neglected.
21. That the churchmen should not give themselves unto drunkenness.
22. That the communion should not be neglected of the churchmen.
23. Item, that the same also should be observed of laymen, as time required.
24. That laymen first should be well tried before they entered into monkery.
25. That alms be not neglected.
26. That bishops should see these decrees to be notified to the people.

27. They disputed of the profit of alms.
28. They disputed of the profit of singing psalms.
29. That the congregation should be constitute after the ability of their goods.
30. That monks should not dwell among laymen.
31. That public prayer should be made for kings and princes.

These decrees and ordinances, being thus among the bishops concluded, Cuthbert the archbishop sendeth the copy thereof to Boniface, which Boniface, otherwise named Winfride, an Englishman born, was then archbishop of Mentz, and after made a martyr, as the popish stories term him.

This Boniface being, as is said, archbishop of Mentz in the time of this foresaid synod, wrote a letter to Ethelbald, king of Merceland; which Ethelbald was also present in the same synod, of whom Beth maketh mention in his History, calling him proud Ethelbald, and the greatest of the Saxon kings in his time. First, this Ethelbald, after the departing of Celulfe into his monkery, invaded and spoiled the country of Northumberland. Moreover, he exercised mortal and horrible war a long space with Cudred, otherwise of some named Cuthbert, king of West Saxons. Furthermore, he with other Saxon kings so impugned the Britons, that from that time they never durst provoke the Saxons any more. At length the said Cudred, refusing the intolerable exactions of proud Ethelbald, doth encounter with him in battle; where, notwithstanding the great power that Ethelbald had to him adjoined, of the Mercians, of the East Saxons, of the East Angles, and of the Cantuarites; yet the said Cudred, through God's power, and the means of a certain valiant warrior, called Edelhim, a consul, overthrew the pride of Ethelbald, after a sore and terrible conflict. Which Ethelbald, notwithstanding, repairing his power again the next year after, renewed battle with the foresaid Cudred; in the which battle Ethelbald (after he had reigned one and forty years in Mercia) was slain by one Beorned, who after reigned in that part but a small time. For Offa, nephew to the said Ethelbald, expelled the said Beorned, and succeeded king in that province of Mercia, where he reigned nine and thirty years, of whom more followeth hereafter (the Lord Jesus speeding therein our purpose) to be declared, as place and time shall require. In the mean season, not to forget the letter before mentioned of Boniface, archbishop of Mentz, sent unto this Ethelbald, I thought the same not unworthy to be here inserted (at the least the effect thereof).

In this epistle is to be seen and noted, first, the corruption and great disorder of life which alway, from time to time, hath been found in these religious houses of nuns, whose professed vow of coacted chastity hath yet never been good to the church, nor profitable to the commonwealth, and least of all to themselves. Of such young and wanton widows St. Paul in his time complaineth, 1 Tim. v., which would take upon them the wilful profession of single life, which they were not able to perform, but, falling into damnable luxury, deserved worthily to be reprehended. How much better had it been for these lascivious nuns not to have refused the safe yoke of Christian matrimony, than to entangle themselves in this their superstitious vow of perpetual maidenhood, which neither was required of them, nor they were able to keep!

Secondly, no less are they also to be reprehended which maintained these superstitious orders of unprofitable nuns and of other religions. In the number of whom was this foresaid Boniface, otherwise called Winfride, who, although in this epistle he doth justly reprehend the vicious enormities both of secular and of religious persons; yet he himself is not without the same, or rather greater, reprehension, for that

he gave the occasion thereof in maintaining such superstitious orders of such lascivious nuns and other religions, and restraining the same from lawful marriage. For so we find of him in stories, that he was a great setter up and upholder of such blind superstition, and of all popery. Who, being admitted by Pope Gregory the Second, archbishop of Magunce, and endued with full authority legantine over the Germans, brought divers countries there under the pope's obedience, held many great councils, ordained bishops, builded monasteries, canonized saints, commanded relics to be worshipped, permitted religious fathers to carry about nuns with them a-preaching. Amongst all other, he founded the great monastery of Fulda, in Germany, of English monks, into the which no women might enter, but only Lieba and Tecla, two English nuns. Item, by the authority of the said Archbishop Boniface, which he received from Pope Zachary, Childericus, king of France, was deposed from the right of his crown, and Pipinus, betrayer of his master, was confirmed, or rather intruded in. From this Boniface proceeded that detestable doctrine which now standeth registered in the pope's decrees. Which in a certain epistle of his is this; that in case the pope were of most filthy living, and forgetful or negligent of himself, and of the whole Christianity, in such sort that he led innumerable souls with him to hell; yet ought there no man to rebuke him in so doing, for he hath (saith he) power to judge all men, and ought of no man to be judged again.

In the time of this archbishop, Pope Gregory the Second, also Gregory the Third, and Pope Zachary, and before these also Pope Constantine the First, wrought great masteries against the Greek emperors, Philippicus and Leo, and others, for the maintaming of images to be set up in churches. Of whom Philippicus lost both his empire and also his eyes. Leo, for the same cause likewise, was excommunicate of Gregory the Third. This Gregory the Third (so far as I can conjecture) was he that first wrote the four books of dialogues in Greek, falsely bearing the name of Gregory the First, which books afterward Zachary his successor translated out of Greek into Latin. Item, the said Gregory the Third first brought into the mass canon the clause for relics, beginning, *Quorum solennitates hodie in conspectu, &c.* Item, brought into the said canon the memorial, the offering and sacrifice for the dead; like as Zachary brought in the priest's vesture and ornaments, and as the foresaid Constantine also was the first that gave his feet to be kissed of the emperors. But to turn again into the course of our English story.

In the time of this Egbert, king of Northumberland, Sigebert, or Sigbert, reigned in West Saxony, a man of so cruel tyranny to his subjects, (turning the laws and customs of His forefathers after his own will and pleasure,) that when he was somewhat sharply advertised by one of his nobles, an earl, called Combranus, to change his manners, and to behave himself more prudently toward his people, he therefore maliciously caused him to be put to cruel death. Whereupon the said King Sigebert, continuing his cruel conditions, by his subjects conspiring against him, was put from his kingly dignity, and brought into such desolation, that, wandering alone in a wood without comfort, was there slain, even by the swineherd of the said earl whom before he had so wrongfully murdered, as partly is above touched. Whereby is to be seen the cruel tyranny of princes never to prosper well, without the just revenge both, of God and man.

This Sigebert being slain, in His place succeeded Kenulphus, in the year of our Lord 748, who, with the agreement of the West Saxons, was one of the chief doers against Sigebert his master. This Kenulphus kept strongly his lordship against Offa, and against the power of all his enemies, till at length after that he had reigned, as

Fabian saith, one and thirty years, he, resorting to a paramour which he kept at Merton, was there beset, and likewise slain, by the train and means of a certain kinsman of the foresaid Sigebert, named Clito or Cliton, in revengement of King Sigebert's death.

Moreover, in the reign of the foresaid Egbert, king of Northumberland, and in the eighth year of Kenulphus, king of West Saxons, Offa, after he had slain the tyrant Beorureclus, which before had slain Ethelbald, king of Mercia, and uncle to this foresaid Offa, reigned king of that province.

Of this Offa are told many notable deeds; which because they concern rather political affairs, and do not greatly appertain to the purpose of this ecclesiastical history, I omit here to recite; as his wars and victories against Egbert, king of the Northumbers, as also against Ethelred, king of East Angles. Item, against Egbert, king of Kent, otherwise called Wren, whom (as Fabian saith) he took prisoner, and led bound with him to Mercia. Malmesbury witnesseth otherwise this to be done, not by Offa, but by Kenulphus, as, Christ willing, hereafter shall appear. After these victories, Offa had such displeasure unto the citizens of Canterbury, that he removed the archbishop's see, and lands of Lambrieth, archbishop of Canterbury, (by the agreement of Pope Adrian,) unto Litchfield. He also chased the Britons or Welchmen into Wales, and made a famous ditch between Wales and the outer bounds of Mercia, or middle England, which was called Odfitch, and builded there a church, which long time after was called Offkirke. This Offa also married one of his daughters to Brightricus, that was a king of West Saxons. And for that in his time was variance between him and the Frenchmen, insomuch that the passage of merchants was forbidden; therefore he sent Alcuinus, a learned man, unto Charles the Great, then king of France, to commune the means of peace; which Charles had after that the said Alcuinus in great favour and estimation, and afterwards made him abbot of Turonia in France.

About the latter time of the reign of Offa, king of Mercia, Ethelbert, being then king of East Angles, (a learned and a right godly prince,) came to the court of Offa, provoked by the counsel of his nobles, to sue for the marriage of his daughter, well accompanied like a prince with his men about him. Whereupon the queen, conceiving a false suspicion, and fearing that which was never minded; that Ethelbert with his company, under the pretence and made matter of marriage, was come to work some violence against her husband, and the kingdom of Mercia; so she persuaded with King Offa and certain of her council that night, that the next day following Offa caused him to be trained into his palace alone from his company, by one called Guimbertus; who took him and bound him, and there struck off his head, which forthwith he then presented to the king and queen. And thus the innocent King Ethelbert was wrongfully murdered, about the year of our Lord 793; but not without a just revenge at God's hands. For, as the story recordeth, the foresaid queen, worker of this villany, lived not three months after, and in her death was so tormented, that she was fain to bite and rend her tongue in pieces with her own teeth. Offa understanding at length the innocency of this king, and the heinous cruelty of his fact, gave the tenth part of his goods to holy church; and to the church of Hereford, in the remembrance of this Ethelbert, he bestowed great lands. Moreover, he builded the abbey of St. Albans, with certain other monasteries besides. And so afterward he went up to Rome for his penance, where he gave to the church of St. Peter a penny through every house in his dominion, which was called commonly Rome-shot, or Peter pence, paid to the church of St. Peter; and there at length was transformed from a king to a monk, about the year of our Lord 794, with Kenredus, king of Northumberland, above mentioned, although some stories deny that he was a monk.

After Offa king of Mercia, when he had reigned nine and thirty years, succeeded his son Egfretus, who reigned but four months. This noble young man died not so much for offences of his own, as for that his father had spilled much blood to confirm him in his kingdom.

Next to which Egfretus succeeded Kenulphus in the said kingdom of Mercia, which Kenulphus, retaining the hatred of his predecessor against the inhabitants of Canterbury, made war upon them, where he took Egbert their king, otherwise called Wren, whom he bound and led prisoner to Mercia. Notwithstanding, shortly after being mollified with princely clemency in the town of Winchcombe, where he had builded the same time a church, upon the day when he should dedicate the same in the presence of thirteen bishops, and of Cutbert, whom he had placed in the same kingdom of Canterbury before, and ten dukes, and many other great estates, King Kenulphus brought the said Egbert, king of Kent, out of prison into the church, where he enlarged him out of imprisonment, and restored him to his place again. At the sight whereof, not only Cutbert the foresaid king rejoiced, but also all the estates and people being there present made such an exclamation of joy and gladness, that the church (and not only the church, but also the streets) rang withal, At which time such bountifulness of gifts and jewels was then bestowed, that, from the highest estate to the lowest, none departed without something given, according as to every degree was thought meet. Although Fabian referreth this story to King Offa, yet causes there be why I assent rather unto Malmesbury and to Polychronicon, which attribute the same to Kenulphus, the second king of Mercia after Offa.

A little before, in speaking of certain bishops of Rome, mention was made of Pope Constantine the First, Pope Gregory the Second, Pope Gregory the Third, and of Pope Zachary, which deposed Childerike, and set up Pipinus the French king, &c. Next after this Zachary, in order, followed Pope Stephen the Second, to whom the foresaid Pipinus, to gratify again the see of Rome for this their benefit showed to him, gave and contributed to the said see of Rome the exarchat or principedom of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and many other great possessions of Italy, with all the cities thereto adjoining unto the borders of Venice. And this donation of Pipin, no doubt, if the truth were rightly tried, should be found to be the same which hitherto falsely hath been thought to be the donation of Constantine. For else how could it be that the exarchat of Ravenna could belong all this while to the emperor of Constantinople, if Constantine before had given it and all Italy from the empire of the see of Rome?

Next to this Stephen the Second succeeded Paul the First, who, following his predecessors, thundered out great excommunication against Constantinus, the emperor of Constantinople, for abrogating and plucking down images set up in temples. Notwithstanding, this Constantine neglecting the pope's vain curses, persevered in his blessed purpose, in destroying idolatry, till the end of his life. Then came to be pope Constantinus the Second, a layman, and brother to Desiderius, the king of Lombardy; for the which cause he was shortly deposed, and thrust into a monastery, having his eyes put out.

In whose stead succeeded Stephen the Third, who ordained after that no layman should be pope; condemning moreover the Council of Constantinople the seventh for heretical, because in that Council the worshipping of images was reprov'd and condemned. Contrary to the which Council this pope not only maintained the filthy idolatry of images in Christian temples, but also advanced their veneration,

commanding them most ethnically to be incensed, &c. At this time Carolus Magnus, called Charles the Great, a little before mentioned, began to reign, by whom this pope caused Desiderius, the Lombard king, to be deprived.

Then, in this race of popes, after this Stephen the Third, cometh Adrianus the First, who likewise, following the steps of his fathers the popes, added and attributed to the veneration of images more than all the other had done before, writing a book for the adoration and utility proceeding of them, commanding them to be taken for laymen's calendars; holding moreover a synod at Rome against Felix, and all others that spake against the setting up of such stocks and images. And as Paul the First before him made much of the body of Petronilia, St. Peter's daughter; so this Adrian clothed the body of St. Peter all in silver, and covered the altar of St. Paul with a pall of gold. This Pope Adrian was he whom we declared in the former part of this treatise to ratify and confirm by revelation the order of St. Gregory's mass, above the order of St. Ambrose's mass; for unto this time, which was about the year of our Lord 780, the Liturgy of St. Ambrose was more used in the Italian churches. The story whereof, because it is registered in Durandus, Nauclerus, and Jacobus de Voragine, I thought here to insert the same to this especial purpose, for the reader to understand the time when this usual mass of the papists began first to be universal and uniform, and generally in churches to be received, Thus it followeth in the story by the foresaid authors set forth.

In times past, (saith he,) when the service which Ambrose made was more frequented and used in churches than was the service which Gregory had appointed, the bishop of Rome, then called Adrian, gathered a council together, in the which it was ordained that Gregory's service should be observed and kept universally. Which determination of the council Charles the emperor did diligently put in execution, while he ran about by divers provinces, and informed all the clergy, partly with threatenings, and partly with punishments, to receive that order. And, as touching the books of Ambrose's service, he burnt them to ashes in all places, and threw into prison many priests that would not consent and agree unto the matter. Blessed Eugenius the bishop, coming unto the council, found that it was dissolved three days before his coming. Notwithstanding, through his wisdom, he so persuaded the lord pope, that he called again all the prelates that had been present at the council, and were now departed by the space of three days. Therefore when the council was gathered again together, in this all the fathers did consent and agree, that both the mass books of Ambrose and Gregory should be laid upon the altar of blessed St. Peter the apostle, and the church doors diligently shut, and most warily sealed up with the signets of many and divers bishops. Again, that they should all the whole night give themselves to prayer, that the Lord might reveal, open, and show unto them by some evident sign or token which of these two services he would have used in the temples. Thus they, doing in all points as they had determined, in the morning opened the church doors, and found both the missals, or mass books, open upon the altar; or rather, (as some say,) they found Gregory's mass book utterly plucked asunder, one piece from another, and scattered over all the church. As touching Ambrose's book, they only found it open upon the altar in the very same place where they before laid it, This miracle Pope Adrian, like a wise expounder of dreams, interpreted thus, that as the leaves were torn and blown abroad all the church over, so should Gregory's book be used throughout the world. Whereupon they thought themselves sufficiently instructed and taught of God, that the service which Gregory had made ought to be set abroad and used throughout the

world, and that Ambrose's service should only be observed and kept in his own church of Mediolanum, where he some time was bishop.

Thus hast thou heard, brother reader, the full and whole narration of this mystical miracle, with the pope's exposition upon the same, which seemeth to be as true as that which Daniel speaketh of, how the idol Bel did eat up all the meat that was set before him all the night, Dan. xiv. Concerning the which miracle, I need not admonish thee to smell out the blind practices of these night crows, to blind the world with forged inventions instead of true stories. Albeit to grant the miracle to be most true and unfallible, yet, as touching the exposition thereof, another man beside the pope percase might interpret this great miracle otherwise, as thus: that God was angry with Gregory's book, and therefore rent it in pieces and scattered it abroad, and the other, as good, lay sound, untouched, and, at the least, so to be preferred. Notwithstanding, whatsoever is to be thought of this miracle, with the exposition thereof, thus the matter fell out, that Gregory's service had only the place, and yet hath to this day in the greatest part of Europe, the service of Ambrose being excluded. And thus much touching the great act of Pope Adrian for the setting up of the mass. By the relation whereof yet this know ledge may come to the reader, at least to understand how that commonly in Christian nations abroad as yet no uniform order of any missal or mass book was received, as hath been hitherto discoursed.

Now, from the popes, to return again to the emperors, from whence we digressed: like as Pipinus, the father of Charles, (as hath been before sufficiently told,) had given to the see papal all the principedom of Ravenna, with other donations, and revenues, and lands in Italy; so this Carolus, following his father's devotion, did confirm the same, adding moreover thereunto the city and dominion of Venice, Histria, the dukedom Forojuliense, the dukedom Spoletanum, and Beneventanum, and other possessions more, to the patrimony of St. Peter, making him the prince of Rome and of Italy. The pope, again to recompense his so gentle kindness, made him to be entitled Most Christian King, and made him a Roman patrician; moreover, ordained him only to be taken for emperor of Rome. For these, and other causes more, Carolus bare no little affection to the said Adrian above all other popes, as may well appear by a letter of Carolus Magnus sent to King Offa, what time the said Offa (as is above prefixed) sent to him Alcunius for en treaty of peace.

The cause why this Carolus writeth so favourably of Adrian, partly is touched before; partly also was, for that Caroloman, his elder brother, being dead, his wife, called Bertha, with her two children, came to Adrian to have them confirmed in their father's kingdom; whereunto the pope, to show a pleasure to Carolus, would not agree, but gave the mother, with her two children, and Desiderius, the Lombard king, with his whole kingdom, his wife and children, into the hands of the said Carolus, who led them with him captive into France, and there kept them in servitude during their life.

Thus Carolus Magnus being proclaimed emperor of Rome, through the preferment of Adrian and Pope Leo the Third, which succeeded next after him, the empire was translated from the Grecians, about the year of our Lord 801, unto the Frenchmen, where it continued about one hundred and two years, till the coming of Conradus and his nephew Otho, which were Germans; and so hath continued after them among the Almans unto this present time. This Charles builded so many monasteries as there be letters in the row of the A B C; he was beneficial chiefly to the churchmen, also merciful to the poor, in his acts valiant and triumphant, skilled in all

languages; he held a council at Francford, where was condemned the Council of Nice and Irene for setting up and worshipping images, &c.

Concerning which council of Nice, and things there concluded and enacted, (because no man shall think the detesting of images to be any new thing now begun,) thus I find it recorded in an ancient written history of Roger Hoveden: In the year of our Lord 792, Charles the French king sent a book containing the acts of a certain synod unto Britain, directed unto him from Constantinople. In the which book (lamentable to be told) many things inconvenient, and clean contrary unto the true faith, are there to be found; especially for that, by the common consent of almost all the learned bishops of the East church, not so few as three hundred, it was there agreed that images should be worshipped; which thing the church of God hath always abhorred. Against which book Albinus wrote an epistle substantially grounded out of the authority of Holy Scripture, which epistle, with the book, the said Albinus, in the name and person of our bishops and princes, did present to the French king.

And thus much by the way of Romish matters: now to return again to the Northumberland kings, where we left at Egbert; which Egbert (as is before declared) succeeded after Celulphus, after he was made monk. And likewise the said Egbert also, following the devotion of his uncle Celulphus, and Kenredus before him, was likewise shorn monk after he had reigned twenty years in Northumberland; leaving his son Osulphus after him to succeed. About which time, and in the same year, when Celulphus deceased in his monastery, which was the year of our Lord 764, divers cities were burnt with sudden fire, as the city of Wenta, the city of London, the city of York, Doncaster, with divers other towns besides. Who the first year of his reign, which was the year of our Lord 757, being innocently slain, next to him followed Mollo, otherwise called Adelwald, who likewise being slain of Alcredus, after he had reigned eleven years, departed. After Alcredus, when he had reigned ten years, was expelled out of his kingdom by his people. Then was Ethelbert, otherwise named Adelred, the son of the foresaid Mollo, received king of Northumberland; which Ethelbert or Adelred in like sort, after he had reigned five years, was expelled. After whom succeeded Alfwold, who likewise, when he had reigned eleven years, was unjustly slain. So likewise after him his nephew, and the son of Alcredus, named Osredus, reigned one year, and was slain. Then the foresaid Ethelbert, the son of Mollo, after twelve years' banishment, reigned again in Northumberland the space of four years, and was slain.

Thus, as you have heard, after the reign of King Egbert before mentioned, such trouble and perturbation was in the dominion of Northumberland, with slaying, expulping, and deposing their kings one after another, that after the murdering of this Edelred, above specified, none durst take the government upon him, seeing the great danger there upon ensuing. Insomuch that the foresaid kingdom did lay void and waste the space of three and thirty years together; after the term of which years this kingdom of Northumberland, with the kingdoms also of the other Saxons besides, came altogether into the hands of Egbert, king of West Saxons, and his progeny, and in the eight and twentieth year of the reign of the said Egbert; whereof more shall be said (Christ willing) hereafter, Of this troublesome and outrageous time of Northumberland people speaketh also the said learned man Alcuinus, otherwise called Albinus, in the same country born, writing out of France into England, and complaining of the same in divers his letters.

The same author, Alcuinus, writing unto the foresaid Edelred, king of Northumberland, maketh record of a strange sight which he himself did see the same time in the city of York; it rained blood; whereof his words which he wrote concerning the same unto the said King Edelred be these: What signifieth the rain of blood, which in time of Lent, in the city of York, the chief city of that dominion, and in the church of St. Peter, the chief of the apostles, we ourselves did see to fall from the church top, (the element being clear,) out of the north parts of the temple, &c. This wondrous sight, testified by Malmesburiensis, is thought of Fabian to happen in the second year of the reign of Brightricus, (as with the time doth well agree,) which was the year of our Lord 780, and is thought of some expositors to betoken the coming of the Danes into this land, which entered shortly after about seven years, in the ninth year of the reign of Brightricus, king of the West Saxons. Which Brightricus, in defence thereof, sent forth his steward of his household with a small company, which shortly was slain; but by the strength of the said Brightricus, and the other Saxons kings, they were compelled to void the land for that time, which was in the year 790, To this Brightricus King Offa, as is aforesaid, gave his daughter Edelburga to wife, by whom he at length was poisoned, beside certain other of his nobles, upon whom the said queen before him had practised the same wickedness. Who then after that fled over to Charles the Great into France; where she, being offered for her beauty to marry either to him or his son, because she chose rather his son, married neither the one, nor yet the other; but was thrust into a monastery, where she, then playing the harlot with a monk, was expelled from thence, and ended her life in penury and misery.

In the mean time, while this Edelburga was thus working her feats in England, Irene, empress of the Greeks, was as busy also for her part at Constantinople; who first, through the means of Pope Adrian, took up the body of Constantine, emperor of Constantinople, her own husband's father. And when she had burned the same, she caused the ashes to be cast into the sea, because he disannulled images. Afterwards, reigning with her son Constantine the Sixth, son to Leo the Fourth, (whom also we declared before to be excommunicated for taking away images,) being at dissension with him, caused him to be taken and laid in prison; who afterward, through power of friends, being restored to his empire again, at last she caused the same her own son to be cast into prison, and his eyes to be put out so cruelly, that within short space he died. After this the said Irenæus, bishop of Constantinople, held a council at Nicca, where it was decreed, that images should again be restored unto the church; which council after was repealed by another council holden at Francford by Charles the Great. At length she was deposed by Nicephorus, (who reigned after,) and was expelled the empire, who, after the example of Edelburga above mentioned, (condignly punished for her wickedness,) ended likewise her life in much penury and misery.

About the time when the foresaid Brightricus was poisoned by Edelburga his wife died also King Offa, which was about the year of our Lord 795, or (as some say,) 802. After which Offa (as is aforesaid) succeeded Egbert, then Kenulphus, after whom succeeded Kenelmus his son, who in his younger age was wickedly murdered by his sister Quinreda, and Askebertus, about the year of our Lord 819, and in the church of Winchcombe was counted for a holy martyr. After him succeeded his uncle Ceolulphus, whom Bernulphus in the first year of his reign expelled, and reigned in his place; who likewise in the third year of his reign was overcome and expelled by Egbert, king of the West Saxons, and afterward slain by the East Angles. And the kingdom of Mercia also ceased, and came into the hands of the West Saxons.

Hitherto I have brought (as thou seest, good reader) the confused and turbulent reigns of these seven Saxon kings, who after the expulsion of the Britons ruled and reigned asunder in sundry quarters of this land together, unto this present time of Egbert, king of the West Saxons, by whom it so pleased God to begin to reduce and unite all these scattered kingdoms into one monarchical form of dominion. Wherefore, as in the foresaid Egbert beginneth a new alteration of the commonwealth here in this land among the Saxons; so my purpose is (the Lord willing) with the same Egbert to enter a new beginning of my third book, after a brief recapitulation first made of such things as in this second book before are to be collected and noted, especially touching the monasteries builded, the kings who have entered the life and profession monastic; also queens, and queens' daughters, which the same time professed solitary life in monasteries which they or their ancestors had erected.

And thus hast thou, gentle reader, concerning the seven kingdoms of these Saxons, ruling all together in England, the course and order of their doings briefly described and discoursed unto thee, in such order as the matter, being so intricate, in such confusion and diversity of things incident together, would permit; following especially in this story hitherto the line of the Northumberland kings, as the other stories must follow the line of West Saxon kings. The which seven kingdoms of these said Saxons, after they had untruly expulsed and chased out the Britons from their land, like as they never were in quietness among themselves, reigning thus together till the time of this Egbert; so also after the reign of Egbert, the whole realm. being reduced into one regiment, no less were they impugned and afflicted by the Danes continually from time to time, till the last conquest of William the Norman. Thus it pleased God (ever lightly) to revenge with blood bloody violence, and the unjust dealings of men with just and like retribution. But of this let the Christian reader consider, as God's grace shall work in him. In the mean time, we, as much as in us did lie, satisfying the part of a historian, have thus hitherto set forth and declared concerning these seven foresaid kingdoms, first, the names and lineal descent of the kings severally by themselves, as by the table precedent may appear; then what were, the doings and acts of the same; how first, being pagans, they were converted to the Christian faith; what things in their time happened in the church; how many of them of kings were made monks; how devout they were then to holy church and to the churchmen, and especially to the church of Rome. But the churchmen then were much otherwise in life than afterward they declared themselves to be. Through which devotion of the said kings first came in the Peter pence or Rome-schots in this realm, as by Jue first in his dominion, then by Offa in his lordship, and afterwards by Adewulph brought in and ratified through the whole realm; where also is to be noted, that by the foresaid kings and queens of the said Saxons the most part of the greatest abbeys and nunneries in this realm were first begun and builded, as partly by the names of some here follow to be seen.

First, the church or minster of St. Paul in London was founded by Ethelbert, king of Kent, and Sigebert, king of Essex, about the year of our Lord 604.

The first cross and altar within this realm was first up in the north parts in Hevenfeeld, upon the occasion of Oswald, king of Northumberland, fighting against Cadwalla, where he in the same place set up the sign of the cross, kneeling and praying there for victory.

VOLUME 1

The church of Winchester was first begun and founded by Kinegilsus, king of Mercians, having nine miles about it; after finished by his son Kenwalcus, where Wine of Englishmen was first bishop, An. 636.

The church of Lincoln, first founded by Paulinus, bishop, An. 629.

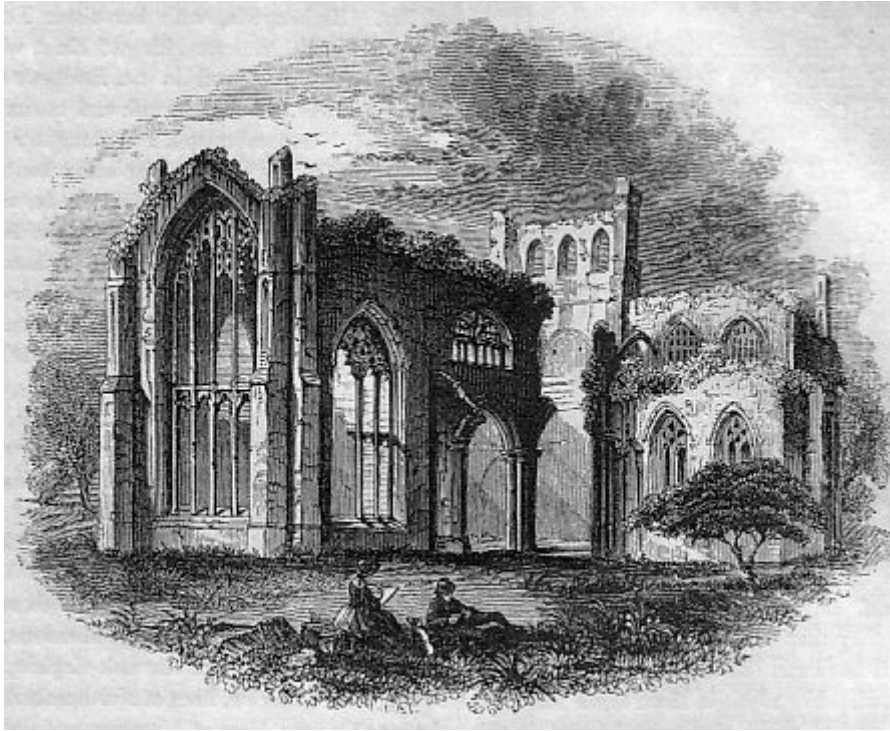
The church of Westminster, began first by a certain citizen of London, through the instigation of Ethelbert, king of Kent, which before was an isle of thorns, An. 614.

The common schools, first erected at Cambridge by Sigebert, king of East Angles, An. 636.

The abbey of Knovisburgh, builded by Furceus the hermit, An. 637.

The monastery of Malmesbury, by one Meldulphus, a Scot, about the year of our Lord 640, afterward enlarged by Agilbert, bishop of Winchester.

The monastery in Gloucester, first builded by Ofricus, king of Mercia, as Cestrensis saith; but, as William Malmesbury writeth, by Ulferus and Etheldred, brethren to Kineburga, abbess of the same house, An. 679.



A ruined Monastery

The monastery of Mailrose, by the flood of Twide, by Aidanus, a Scottish bishop.

The nunnery of Heorenton, by Hevi, who was the first nun in Northumberland.

The monastery of Heteseie, by Oswy, king of Northumberland, who also, with his daughter Elfred, gave possessions for twelve monasteries in the parts of Northumberland, An. 656.

The monastery of St. Martin in Dover, builded by Whitred, king of Kent.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

The abbey of Lestingy, by Ceadda, (whom we call St. Ced,) through the grant of Oswald, son to St. Oswald, king of Northumberland, An. 651.

The monastery of Whitby, called otherwise Stenhalt, by Hilda, daughter to the nephew of Edwin, king of Northumberland, An. 657.

Item, another monastery called Hacanos, not far from the same place, builded by the said Hilda the same year.

The abbey of Abbington, builded by Sissa, king of Southsex, An. 666.

Item, an abbey in the east side of Lincoln, called Joanno, by St. Botulph, An. 654.

The monastery in Ely, founded by Etheldred, or Etheldrida, daughter of Anna, king of East Angles, and the wife of Elfride, king of Northumberland, An. 674.

The monastery of Chertsey, in Sollthery, founded by Erkenwald, bishop of London, An. 674. thrown down by the Danes, after re-edified by King Edgar.

Item, the nunnery of Berking, edified by the said Erkenwaldus, bishop of London, about the same time.

The abbey of Peterborough, called otherwise Modehamsted, founded by King Ethelwald, king of the Mercians, An. 675.

Bardney abbey, by Ethelredus, king of the Mercians, An. 700.

Glastenbury, by Jua, king of the West Saxons, and after repaired and enriched by King Edgar, An. 701.

Ramsey, in the time of King Edgar, by one Auwinus, a nobleman, An. 973. King Edgar builded in his time forty monasteries, who reigned An. 901.

The nunnery of Winburn, builded by Cuthurga, sister to Ingilsus, King Jua's brother, An. 717.

The monastery of Sealesev, by the Isle of Wight, by Wilfridus, bishop of York, An. 678.

The monastery of Wincombe, by Kenulphus, king of the Mercians, An. 737.

St. Albans, builded by Offa, king of the Mercians, An. 755.

The abbey of Eusham, by Edwinus, bishop, An. 691.

Ripon, in the north, by Wilfridus, bishop, An. 709.

The abbey of Echlinghey, by King Alured, An. 891.

The nunnery of Shafteshury, by the same Aluredus, the same year.

Thus ye see what monasteries, and in what time, began to be founded by the Saxon kings, newly converted to the Christian faith, within the space of two hundred years; who, as they seemed then to have a certain zeal and devotion to God-ward, according to the leading and teaching that then was; so it seemeth again to me, two things to be wished in these foresaid kings: first, that they which began to erect these monasteries and cells of monks and nuns, to live solely and singly by themselves out of the holy state of matrimony, had foreseen what danger and what absurd enormities might and also did thereof ensue, both publicly to the church of Christ, and privately to their own souls; secondly, that unto this their zeal and devotion had been joined like

knowledge and doctrine in Christ's gospel, especially in the article of our free justification by the faith of Jesus Christ; because of the lack whereof, as well the builders and founders thereof, as they that were professed in the same, seem both to have run the wrong way, and to have been deceived. For albeit in them there was a devotion and zeal of mind that thought well in this their doing, which I will not here reprehend; yet the end and cause of their deeds and buildings cannot be excused, being contrary to the rule of Christ's gospel; forsomuch as they did these things seeking thereby merits with God, and for remedy of their souls, and remission of their sins, as may appear testified in their own records.

And this blind ignorance of that age, thus above prenoted, was the cause not only why these kings builded so many monasteries upon zealous superstition, but also why so many of them, forsaking their orderly vocation of princely regiment, gave themselves over to monastical profession, or rather wilful superstition. Concerning the names and number of which kings that were professed monks is sufficiently in the story before declared; the names of whom we showed to be seven or eight, within the space of these two hundred years. Such was then the superstitious devotion of kings and princes in that age; and no less also to be noted in queens' and kings' daughters, with other noble women of the same age and time; the names of whom it were too long here to recite. As Hilda, daughter to the nephew of Edwin, king of Northumberland, abbess of Ely. Erchengoda, with her sister Ermenilda, daughters of Ercombertus, king of Kent, which Erchengoda was professed in St. Bridget's order in France. Item, Edelberga, wife and queen to King Edwin of Northumberland, and daughter of King Anna, which was also in the same house of St. Bridget made a nun. Item, Etheldreda, whom we term St. Eldrid, wife to King Ecfride of Northumberland; who, being married to two husbands, could not be obtained to give her consent to either of them, during the space of twelve years, but would needs live a virgin, and was professed nun at Helings. Werburga was the daughter of Ulferus, king of Mercians, and made nun at Ely. Kinreda, sister of King Ulferus, and Kineswida her sister, were both nuns professed. Serburga, daughter of King Anna, king of Mercians, and wife of Ercombert, king of Kent, was abbess at Ely. Elfrida, daughter of Oswy, king of Northumberland, was abbess of Whitney. Mildreda, Milburga, and Milguida, all three daughters of Merwaldus, king of West Mercians, entered the profession and vow of nunnish virginity. Kineburga, wife of Aifride, king of Northumberland, and sister to Osricus, king of Mercians, and daughter of King Penda, was professed abbess of the monastery in Gloucester. Elflada, daughter of Oswy, king, and wife of Peda, son of King Penda, likewise enclosed herself in the same profession and vow of Romish chastity. Likewise Alfritha, wife to King Edgar, and Editha, daughter to the said Edgar, with Wolfrith her mother, &c. All which holy nuns, with divers more, the Romish Catholics have canonized for saints, and put the most part of them in their calendar, only because of the vow of their chastity solemnly professed. Concerning which chastity, whether they kept it or no, little I have to say against them, and less to swear for them. But whether they so kept it or not, if this gift of chastity which they professed were given them of God, small praiseworthy was it in them to keep it. And if it were not given them, I will not say here of them so much as hath been said of some other, which sufficiently have painted out to the world the demeanour of these holy votaries. But this I will say, that although they kept it never so perfectly, yet it is not that which maketh saints before God, but only the blood of Christ Jesus, and a true faith in him.

**THE THIRD BOOK.
FROM THE REIGN OF KING EGBERTUS UNTO THE
TIME OF WILLIAM CONQUEROR.**

A DESCRIPTION OF ENGLAND,

AS IT WAS DIVIDED IN THE SAXONS' TIME INTO SEVEN KINGDOMS.



Map of England under the Heptarchy

22. The Coming of the Danes

Now remaineth likewise, as before I did in describing the descent and diversity of the seven kings all together reigning and ruling in this land; so to prosecute in like order the lineal succession of them which, after Egbertus, king of the West Saxons, governed and ruled solely, until the conquest of William the Norman; first expressing their names, and afterwards importing such acts as in their time happened in the Church worthy to be noted. Albeit, as touching the acts and doings of these kings, because they are sufficiently and at large described, and taken out of Latin writers into the English tongue by divers and sundry authors, and, namely, in the history or chronicle of Fabian; I shall not spend much travail thereupon, but rather refer the reader unto him, or to some other, where the troublesome tumults between the Englishmen and the Danes at that time may be seen, whoso listeth to read them.

Here is to be noted, that before the reign of Edward the Confessor, the Danes obtained the crown under their captain Canutus, who reigned nineteen years. Haraldus Harefoot, son of Canutus, four years. Hardeknutus, son of Canutus, two years. Edward the Confessor, an Englishman, son of Etheldred, twenty-four years. Haraldus, son of Earl Goodwin, a usurper, one year. William Conqueror, a Norman.

In the reign of Brightric, a little before mentioned, about the year of grace 795, there was in his dominion a noble personage, of some called Egbert, of some Ethelbert, of some Ethelbright; who, being feared of the same Brightric, because he was of a kingly blood, and near unto the crown, was, by the force and conspiracy of the forenamed Brightric, chased and pursued out of the land of Britain into France, where he endured till the death of the said Brightric. After the hearing whereof, Egbert sped him quickly out of France unto his own country of Westsax, where he in such wise behaved himself that he obtained the regiment and governance of the kingdom.

Bernulph, king of Mercia above mentioned, with other kings, had this Egbert in such derision, that they made of him divers scoffing jests and scorning rhymes, all which he sustained for a time. But when he was more established in his kingdom, and had proved the minds of his subjects, and especially God working withal, he afterward assembled his knights, and gave to the said Bernulph a battle in a place called Elinden, in the province of Hampton; and notwithstanding in that fight was great odds of number, as six or eight against one, yet Egbert (through the might of the Lord, which giveth victory as pleaseth him) had the better, and won the field; which done, he seized that lordship into his hand; and that also done, he made war upon the Kentish Saxons, and at length of them in like wise obtained the victory. And, as it is in Polychronicon testified, he also subdued Northumberland, and caused the kings of these three kingdoms to live under him as tributaries, or joined them to his kingdom. This Egbert also won from the Britons, or Welchmen, the town of Chester, which they had kept possession of till this day. After these and other victories, he peaceably enjoying the land, called a council of his lords at Winchester, where by their advices he was crowned king and chief lord over this land, which before that day was called Britain; but then he sent out into all coasts of the land his commandments and commissions, charging straitly that, from that day forward, the Saxons should be called Angles, and the land Anglia.

About the thirtieth year of the reign of Egbert the heathenish people of the Danes, which a little before had made horrible destruction in Northumberland, and especially in the Isle of Lindefarne, where they spoiled the churches, and murdered the ministers, with men, women, and children, after a cruel manner, entered now the second time with a great host into this land, and spoiled the Isle of Sheppey, in Kent, or near to Kent; where Egbert, hearing thereof, assembled his people, and met with them at Carrum. But in that conflict he sped not so well as he was wont in times before, but with his knights was compelled to forsake the field. Notwithstanding in the next battle the said Egbert, with a small power, overthrew a great multitude of them, and so drave them back. The next year following the said Danes made their return into the land westward, where, joining with the Britons, by the help and power of them they assailed the lands of Egbert, and did much harm in many places of his dominion; so that after this day they were continually abiding in the realm of England, till the time of Hardicanute, last king of the Danes' blood, so that many of them were married to English women, and many Englishmen are descended of them.

And thus, as by the stories appear, this troublesome land of Britain, now called England, hath been hitherto by five sundry outward nations plagued. First, by the Romans; then by the Scots and Picts; thirdly, by the Saxons; fourthly, by the Danes, of whose outrageous cruelty and hostility our English histories do most exclaim and complain; fifthly, by the Normans, which I pray God be the last.

Then it followeth in the story, that the time of this persecution of the foresaid pagans and Danes continuing, King Egbert, when he had ruled the West Saxons, and over the more part of England, by the term of seven and thirty years, died, and was buried at Winchester, leaving to his son Ethelwolfe his kingdom, who first was bishop of Winchester, and after upon necessity made king, leaving withal and pronouncing this saying to his son: *Felicem fore si regnum, quod multa rexerat industria, ille consueta genti illi non interrumpet ignavia.*

Ethelwolfe, the son of Egbert, in his former age had entered into the order of subdeacon, as some others say, was made bishop of Winchester; but afterwards, being the only son of Egbert, was made king through the dispensation (as Fabian saith) of Pope Paschalis: but that cannot be, for Paschalis then was not bishop; so that by the computation of time it should rather seem to be Gregory the Fourth. This Ethelwolfe (as being himself once nuzzled in that order) was always good and devout to holy church and religious orders, insomuch that he gave to them the tithes of all his goods and lands in West Saxony, with liberty and freedom from all servage and civil charges. Whereof his chart instrument beareth testimony, proceeding in tenor much like to the donation of Ethelbaldus, king of Mercians above mentioned.

By the privileges and donations given by King Ethelwolfe to the clergy, it may appear how and when the churches of England began first to be endowed with temporalities and lands; also how their privileges and exemptions were enlarged; moreover, (and that which specially is to be considered and lamented,) what pernicious doctrine this was, wherewith they were led thus to set remission of their sins, and remedy of their souls, in this donation, and such other deeds of their donation, contrary to the information of God's word, and with no small derogation from the cross of Christ.

These things thus done within the realm, the said Ethelwolfe the king, taking his journey to Rome, with Alfred his youngest son, committed him to the bringing up of Pope Leo the Fourth, where he also re-edifieth the English school at Rome; which

being founded by King Offa, or rather by Jue, king of Mercians, (as in the Flowers of Histories is affirmed,) was lately, in the time of King Egbert his father, consumed with fire. Further and besides, this king gave and granted there unto Rome of every fire-house a penny to be paid through his whole land, as King Jue in his dominion had done before. Also he gave and granted yearly to be paid to Rome 300 marks; that is, to the maintaining of the light of St. Peter 100 marks, to the light of St. Paul 100 marks, to the use of the pope also another hundred. This done, he returning home through France, married there Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald, the French king, whom he restored afterward (contrary to the laws of West Saxons) to the title and throne of a queen. For before it was decreed among the West Saxons, (by the occasion of wicked Ethelburga, who poisoned Brightric, her own husband,) that after that no king's wife there should have the name or place of a queen.

This Ethelwolfe had especially about him two bishops whose counsel he was most ruled by, Swithin, bishop of Winchester, and Adelstan, bishop of Shireborne. Of the which two the one was more skilful in temporal and civil affairs, touching the king's wars, and filling of his coffers, and other furniture for the king. The other (who was Swithin) was of a contrary sort, wholly disposed and indined to spiritual meditation, and to minister spiritual counsel to the king, who had been schoolmaster to the king before. Wherein appeared one good condition of this king's nature, among his other virtues, not only in following the precepts and advertisements of his old schoolmaster, but also in that he, like a kind and thankful pupil, did so reverence his bringer up and old schoolmaster, (as he called him,) that he ceased not till he made him bishop of Winchester, by the consecration of Celnoch, then archbishop of Canterbury. But as concerning the miracles which are read in the church of Winchester of this Swithin, them I leave to be read together with the Iliads of Homer, or tales of Robin Hood.

This Gregory the Fourth, in this present chapter above mentioned, was the third pope which succeeded after Paschalis the First, being but four years betwixt them; which Paschalis succeeded after Stephen the Fourth, who followed after Leo the Third, next pope unto Adrian above in our history mentioned, where we treated of Charles the Great. From the time of that Adrian the First, unto Pope Adrian the Third, the emperors had some stroke in the election (at least in the confrmation) of the Roman pope. Notwithstanding, divers of these foresaid Popes in the mean time began to work their practices to bring their purpose about. But yet all their devices could take no full effect before the said Adrian the Third. as hereafter (Christ willing) shall be declared. So that the emperors all this while bare some rule in choosing the popes, and in assembling general councils. Wherefore by the commandment of Ludovicus the emperor, in the time of this Gregory the Fourth, a general synod was commenced at Aquisgrane, where it was decreed by the said Gregory and his assistants, First, That every church should have sufficient of his own proper lands and revenues to find the priests thereof, that none should need to lack or go about a-begging. That none of the clergy, of what order or degree soever he be, should use any vesture of any precious or scarlet colour neither shall wear rings on their fingers, unless it be when prelates be at mass, or give their consecrations. That prelates should not keep too great ports or families, nor keep great horses, use dice or harlots; and the monks should not exceed measure in gluttony or riot. That none of the clergy, being either anointed or shaven, should use either gold or silver in their shoes, slippers, or girdles, like to Heliogabalus. By this it may be conjectured what pomp and pride in those days was crept into the

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clergy. Moreover, by the said Pope Gregory the Fourth, at the commandment of Ludovicus, emperor, the feast of All Saints was first brought into the church.

After this pope, came Sergius the Second, which first brought in the altering of the pope's names, because he was named before Swine's Snout; which also ordained the Agnus thrice to be sung at the mass, and the host to be divided into three parts.

After him was Pope Leo the Fourth, to whom this King Ethelwolfe (as in this present chapter is above specified) did commit the tuition of his son Alured. By this Pope Leo the Fourth it came in, and was first enacted in a council of his, That no bishop should be condemned under threescore and twelve witnesses, according as ye see in the witnesses at the condemnation of Stephen Gardiner, orderly practised.

Also, contrary to the law of Gregory the Fourth, his predecessor, this pope ordained the cross (all set with gold and precious stones) to be carried before him, like a pope.

And here next now followeth and cometh in the whore of Babylon, (rightly in her true colours, by the permission of God, and manifestly without all tergiversation,) to appear to the whole world; and that not only after the spiritual sense, but after the very letter and the right form. For after this Leo above mentioned, the cardinals proceeding to their ordinary election. (after a solemn mass of the Holy Ghost, to the perpetual shame of them and of that see,) instead of a man pope, elected a woman to minister sacraments, to say masses, to give orders, to constitute deacons, priests, and bishops, to promote prelates, to make abbots, to consecrate churches and altars, to have the reign and rule of emperors and kings; and so she did indeed, called by name Joan the Eighth. This woman's proper name was Gilberta, (a Dutch woman of Magunce,) who went with an English monk out of the abbey of Fulda in man's apparel unto Athens, and after, through her dexterity of wit and learning, was promoted unto the popedom, where she sat two years and six months. At last openly, in the face of a general procession, she fell in labour and travail of child, and so died. By reason whereof the cardinals even to this day do avoid to come near by that street where this shame was taken. By Benedictus the Third, who succeeded next in the whorish see, was first ordained (as most writers do record) the dirge to be said for the dead. Albeit before him Gregory the Third had done in that matter worthily for his part already.

After him sat Pope Nicholas the First, who enlarged the pope's decrees with many constitutions, equalling the authority of them with the writings of the apostles. He ordained that no secular prince, nor the emperor himself, should be present at their councils, unless in matters concerning the faith, to the end that such as they judged to be heretics they should execute and murder. Also, that no lay men should sit in judgment upon the clergymen, or reason upon the pope's power. Also, that no Christian magistrate should have any power upon any prelate, alleging that a prelate is called god. Also, that all church service should be in Latin, yet, notwithstanding, dispensing with the Sclavonians and Polonians to retain still their vulgar language. Sequences in the mass were by him first allowed. By this pope priests began to be restrained and debarred from marrying; whereof Hulderike, Bishop of Ausbrough, (a learned and a holy man,) sending a letter unto the pope, gravely and learnedly refuteth and reclaimeth against his indiscreet proceedings touching that matter.

After this Pope Nicholas succeeded Adrianus the Second, Joannes the Ninth, Martinus the Second. After these came Adrian the Third, and Stephen the Fifth. By this Adrian it was first decreed, that no emperor after that time should intermeddle or

have any thing to do in the election of the pope. And thus began the emperor's first decay, and the papacy to swell and rise aloft. And thus much concerning Romish matters for this time.

Then to return where we left, touching the story of King Ethelwolfe. About the latter end of his reign the Danes, which before had invaded the realm in the time of King Egbert, as is above declared, now made their entry again, three and thirty ships arriving about Hampshire; through the barbarous tyranny of whom much bloodshed and murder happened here among Englishmen, in Dorsetshire, about Portsmouth, in Kent, in East Angle. in Lindsie, at Rochester, about London, and in Westsex, where Ethelwolfe the king was overcome, besides divers other kings and dukes, whom the Danes, daily approaching in great multitudes, in divers victories had put to flight. At length King Ethelwolfe, with his son Ethelbald, warring against them in Southery, at Okley, drave them to the sea; where they, hovering a space, after a while burst in again with horrible rage and cruelty, as hereafter (Christ willing) shall be declared, so much as to our purpose shall serve, professing in this history to write of no matters civil and political, but only pertaining to the church. The cause of this great affliction sent of God unto this realm thus I found expressed and collected in a Certain old written story, Which hath no name; albeit in all parts of his commendation I do not fully with him accord. The words of the writer be these.

"In the primitive church of the Englishmen religion did most clearly shine, insomuch that kings, queens, princes, and dukes, consuls, barons, and rulers of churches, incensed with the desire of the kingdom of heaven, labouring and striving among themselves to enter into monkery, into voluntary exile and solitary life. forsook all, and followed the Lord. Where, in process of time, all virtue so much decayed among them, that in fraud and treachery none seemed like unto them neither was to them any thing odious or hateful but piety and justice; neither any thing in price or honour, but civil war and shedding of innocent blood. Wherefore Almighty God sent upon them pagan and cruel nations, like swarms of bees, which neither spared women nor children, as Danes, Norwegians, Goths, Suevians, Vandals, and Frisians; who, from the beginning of the reign of King Ethelwolfe till the coming of the Normans, by the space near of two hundred and thirty years, destroyed their sinful land from the one side of the sea to the other, from man also to beast. For why? They, invading England oftentimes of every side, went not about to subdue and possess it, but only to spoil and destroy it. And if it had chanced them at any time to be overcome of Englishmen, it availed nothing, whenas other navies still with greater power in other places were ready, upon a sudden and unawares, to approach upon them"

Thus far have you the words of mine author, declaring the cause which provoked God's anger; whereunto may be adjoined the wickedness, not only of them, but of their forefathers also before them, who, falsely breaking the faith and promise made with the Britons, did cruelly murder their nobles, wickedly oppressed their commons, impiously persecuted the innocent Christians, injuriously possessed their land and habitation, chasing the inhabitants out of house and country; besides the violent murder of the monks of Bangor, and divers foul slaughters among the poor Britons, who sent for them to be their helpers. Wherefore God's just recompence falling upon them from that time, never suffered them to be quiet from foreign enemies till the coming of William the Norman, &c.

Moreover, concerning the outward occasions given of the Englishmen's parts, moving the Danes first to invade the realm, I find in certain stories two most specially

assigned. The one unjustly given, and justly taken. The other not given justly, and unjustly taken. Of the which two the first was given in Northumberland, by the means of Osbright, reigning under-king of West Saxons, in the north parts. This Osbright, upon a time journeying by the way, turned into the house of one of his nobles called Bruer; who having at home a wife of great beauty, (he being absent abroad,) the king after his dinner (allured with the excellency of her beauty) did sorely ill treat her; whereupon she being greatly dismayed, and vexed in her mind, made her moan to her husband on his return of this violence and injury received. Bruer, consulting with his friends, first went to the king, resigning into his hands all such service and possessions which he did hold of him: that done, he took shipping and sailed into Denmark, where he had great friends, and had his bringing up before; there, making his moan to Codrinus the king, desired his aid in revenging of the great villany of Osbright against him and his wife. Codrinus, hearing this, and glad to have some just quarrel to enter that land, levied an army with all speed; and preparing all things necessary for the same, sendeth forth Inguar and Hubba, two brethren, his chief captains, with an innumerable multitude of Danes, into England; who, first arriving at Holderness, there burnt up the country, and killed without mercy both men, women, and children whom they could lay hands upon. Then, marching towards York, entered their battle with the foresaid Osbright, where he, with the most part of his army, was slain. And so the Danes entered the possession of the city of York. Some others say, and it is by the most part of story writers recorded, that the chief cause of the coming of Inguar and Hubba, with the Danes, was to be revenged of King Edmund, reigning under the West Saxons over the East Angles in Norfolk and Suffolke, for the murdering of a certain Dane, being father to Inguar and Hubba, which was falsely imputed to King Edmund.



Battle between Danes and Saxons

In the mean season, King Ethelwolfe, as already noticed in this chapter, when he had chased the foresaid Danes from place to place, causing them to take the sea, he, in the mean while, departeth himself both from land and life, leaving behind him four sons, which reigned every one his order, after the decease of their father. The names of whom were Ethelbald, Ethelbright, Ethelred, and Alured.

King Ethelbald, the eldest son of Ethelwolfe, succeeding his father in the province of Westsax, and Ethelbright in the province of Kent, reigned both together the term of five years, one with the other. Ethelbald left this infamy behind him in stories, viz. for marrying his step-mother, wife to his own father, named Judith. After these two succeeded Ethelred, the third son, who, in his time, was so encumbered with the Danes, bursting in on every side, especially about York, (which city they then spoiled and burnt up,) that he in one year stood in nine battles against them, with the help of Alured his brother. In the beginning of this king's reign, the Danes landed in East England, or Northfolke and Suffolke. But (as Fabian writeth) they were compelled to forsake that country, and so took again shipping, and sailed northward, and landed in Northumberland, where they were met of the kings then there reigning, called Osbright and Ella, which gave to them a strong fight. But, notwithstanding, the

Danes, with the help of such as inhabited the country, won the city of York, and held it a certain season, as is above premised.

In the reign of this Ethelred the Northumberlanders, rebelling against the king, thought to recover again the former state of their kingdom out of the West Saxons' hand; by reason of which discord (as happeneth in all lands where dissension is) the strength of the English nation was not a little weakened, and the Danes the more thereby prevailed.

About the latter time of the reign of this Ethelred, which was about the year of our Lord 870, certain of the foresaid Danes, being thus possessed of the north country, (after their cruel persecution and murder done there, as partly is touched before,) took shipping from thence, intending to sail toward the East Angles, who by the way upon the sea met with a fleet of Danes, whereof the captains or leaders were named Inguar and Hubba; who, joining together in one counsel, made all one course, and lastly landed in East England, or Northfolke, and in process of time came to Thetford. Thereof hearing Edmund, then under-king of that province, assembled a host that gave to them battle. But Edmund and his company was forced to forsake the field; and the king with a few persons fled unto the castle of Framingham, whom the Danes pursued. But he in short while after yielded himself to the persecution of the Danes; answering in this manner to the messenger, that told him in the name of Inguar, prince of the Danes, which most victoriously (saith he) was come with innumerable legions, subduing both by sea and land many nations unto him; and so, now arrived in those parts, requireth him likewise to submit himself, yielding to him his hid treasures, and such other goods of his ancestors, and so to reign under him; which thing, if he would not do, he should (said he) be judged unworthy both of life and reign. Edmund, hearing of this proud message of the pagan, consulted with certain of his friends: and, among others, with one of his bishops, who was then his secretary; who, seeing the present danger of the king, gave him counsel to yield to the conditions. Upon this the king pausing a little with himself, at length rendered this answer; bidding the messenger go tell his lord in these words, that Edmund, a Christian king, for the love of temporal life, will not submit himself to a pagan duke, unless he before would be a Christian. Incontinent upon the same, the wicked and crafty Dane, approaching in most hasty speed upon the king, encountered with him in battle (as some say) at Thetford, where the king, being put to the worse, and pitying the terrible slaughter of his men, thinking with himself rather to submit his own person to danger than his people should be slain, did fly (as Fabian saith) to the castle of Framingham, or, (as mine author writeth,) to Halesdon, now called St. Edmundsbury, where this blessed man, being on every side compassed of his cruel enemies, yielded himself to their persecution. And for that he would not reny or deny Christ and his laws, they therefore most cruelly bound him unto a tree, and caused him to be shot to death; and, lastly, caused his head to be smitten from his body, and cast into the thick bushes which head and body at the same time by his friends was taken up, and solemnly buried at the said Halesdon, otherwise now named St. Edmundsbury. Whose brother, named Edwoldus. notwithstanding of right the kingdom fell next unto him,) setting apart the liking and pleasure of the world, became a hermit at the abbey of Cerum, in the county of Dorset.



The Death of St. Edmund

After the martyrdom of this blessed Edmund, when the cruel Danes had sufficiently robbed and spoiled that country, they took again their ships, and landed in Southery, and continued their journey till they came to the town of Reading, and there won the town with the castle, where, (as Cambrensis saith,) within three days of their coming thither, the foresaid Inguar and Hubba, captains of the Danes, as they went in purchasing of their preys or booties, were slain at a place called Englefeld. Which princes of the Danes thus slain, the rest of them kept whole together, in such wise that the West Saxons might take of them none advantage. But yet within few days after the Danes were holden so short, that they were forced to issue out of the castle, and to defend themselves in plain battle. In the which (by the industry of King Ethelred and of Alured his brother) the Danes were discomfited, and many of them slain; which discomfit made them fly again into the castle, and there he kept them for a certain time. The king then, committing the charge of them to Ethelwold, duke of Baroke, or Barkshire, so departed. But when the Danes knew of the king's departure, they brake suddenly out of their hold, and took the duke improvided, and slew him, and much of his people. And so, adjoining themselves with others that were scattered in the country, embattled them in such wise, that of them was gathered a strong host.

As the tidings hereof was brought unto King Ethelred, (which put him in great heaviness,) word also was brought the same time of the landing of Osrike, king of Denmark, who, with assistance of the other Danes, had gathered a great host, and were embattled upon Ashdon. To this battle King Ethelred, with his brother Alured, (forced by great need,) sped themselves to withstand the Danes. At which time the king a little staying behind, being yet at his service, Alured, which was come in before, had entered already into the whole fight with the Danes, who struck together with huge violence. The king being required to make speed, (he being then at service and meditations,) such was his devotion, that he would not stir out one foot before their service was fully complete. In this mean while the Danes so fiercely invaded Alured and his men, that they won the hill; and the Christian men were in the valley, and in

great danger to lose the whole field. Nevertheless, through the grace of God, and their godly manhood, the king, coming from his service with his fresh soldiers, recovered the hill of the infidels, and so discomfited the Danes that day, that in flying away not only they lost the victory. but most part also of them their lives. Insomuch that their duke, or king, Osrike, or Osege, and five of their dukes, with much of their people, were slain, and the rest chased unto Reading town.

After this the Danes yet reassembled their people, and gathered a new host; so that within fifteen days they met at Basingstoke, and there gave battle unto the king, and had the better. Then the king again gathered his men, which at that field were dispersed, and, with fresh soldiers to them accompanied, met the Danes within two months after at the town of Merton, where he gave them a sharp battle; so that much people were slain as well of the Christians as of the Danes, but in the end the Danes had the honour of the field, and King Ethelred was wounded, and therefore fain to save himself.

After these two fields thus won by the Danes, they obtained great circuit of ground, and destroyed man and child that would not yield to them. And churches and temples they turned to the use of stables, and other vile occupations.

Thus the king, being beset with enemies on every side, seeing the land so miserably oppressed of the Danes, his knights and soldiers consumed, his own land of West Saxons in such desolation, he being also wounded himself, but specially for that he, sending his commissions into Northumberland, into Mercia, and East Anglia, could have of them but small or little comfort, (because they through wicked rebellion were more willing to take the part of the Danes than of their king,) was sore perplexed therewithal, as other kings were both before him and after him at that time. So that, as Malmesbury witnesseth, they rather wished honestly to die, than with such trouble and sorrow to reign. And thus this king not long after deceased, when he had reigned (as Fabian saith) eight years, or, as Malmesbury writeth, but five years. During which time, notwithstanding his so great troubles and vexations in martial affairs, (as is in some stories mentioned,) he founded the house or college of canons at Excester, and was buried at the abbey of Winborne, or Woborne. After whose decease, for lack of issue of his body, the rule of the land fell unto his brother Alured.

23. Alfred the Great

Among the Saxon kings hitherto in this story afore mentioned, I find few or none to be preferred (or almost to be compared) to this Alured, or Alfred, for the great and singular qualities in this king, worthy of high renown and commendation; whether we behold in him the valiant acts and manifold travails which he continually from time to time sustained against his enemies in wars, during almost all the time of his reign, for the public preservation of his people: or whether we consider in him his godly and excellent virtues, joined with a public and tender care, and a zealous study for the common peace and tranquillity or the weal public; appearing as well in his prudent laws by him both carefully set forth, and with the like care executed, as also by his own private exercises touching the virtuous institution of his life: or, lastly, whether we respect that in him which, with equal praise, matches with both the other before; that is, his notable knowledge of good letters, with a fervent love and princely desire to set forth the same through all his realm, before his time both rude and barbarous. All which his heroical properties joined together in one prince, as it is a thing most rare, and seldom seen in princes now-a-days; so I thought the same the more to be noted and exemplified in this good king, thereby either to move other rulers and princes in these our days to his imitation, or else to show them what hath been in times past in their ancestors, which ought to be. and yet is not, found in them. Wherefore of these three parts, to discourse either part in order, first, we will begin to treat of his acts and painful travails sustained in defence of the realm public, against the raging tyranny of the Danes, as they be described in the Latin histories of Roger Hoveden and Huntingdon; whom Fabian also seemeth in this part some what to follow. King Alfred. therefore, the first of all the English kings, taking his crown and unction at Rome of Pope Leo the Fourth, (as Malmesbury and Polychronicon do record,) in the beginning of his reign, perceiving his lords and people much wasted and decayed by the reason of the great wars of Ethelred, had against the Danes, yet as well as he could gathered a strength of men unto him, and in the second month that he was made king he met with the Danes beside Wilton, where he gave them battle. But being far overmatched, through the multitude of the contrary part, was put there to the worse, although not without a great slaughter of the pagan army. Which army of the Danes, after that victory, by compaction made with King Alfred to depart out of his dominion of Westsax, removed from Reading to London, where they abode all that winter; where Halden, their king, truce with Burthred, king of Mercians, the next year following voided those parts, and drew to Lindsey, robbing and spoiling the towns and villages as they went, and holding the common people under their servage. From thence after to Repingdon, where they, joining with the three other kings of the Danes, (called Surdrim, Osketell, and Hamond,) grew thereby in mighty force and strength. Who, then dividing their army in two parts, the one half remained with Halden in the country of Northumberland, the residue were with the other three kings, wintering and sojourning all the next year at Grantbridge, which was the fourth year of King Alfred. In the which year King Alfred and his men had a conflict on the sea with six of the Danes' ships, of which one they took, the other fled away. In this year went Rollo the Dane into Normandy, where he was duke thirty years, and afterward was baptized in the faith of Christ, and named Robert. The foresaid army of the three Dane kings above mentioned from Grantbridge returned again to West Saxony, and entered the castle of Warrham; where Alfred with a sufficient power of men was ready to assault

them. But the Danes, seeing his strength, durst not attempt with him, but sought delays while more aid might come. In the mean season, they were constrained to entreat for a truce; leaving also sufficient pledges in the king's hand, promising moreover upon their oath to void the country of the West Saxons. The king, upon the surety, let them go. But they, falsely breaking their league, privily in the night brake out, taking their journey toward Excester. In which journey they lost sixscore of their small ships by a tempest at Sandwich (as Henry Huntington in his story recordeth). Then King Alfred followed after the horsemen of the Danes, but could not overtake them before they came to Excester, where he took of them pledges and fair promises of peace, and so returned. Notwithstanding the number of the pagans did daily more and more increase, insomuch (as one of my authors saith) that if in one day thirty thousand of them were slain, shortly after they increased double as many again. After this truce taken with King Alfred, the Danes then voided to the land of Mercia; part of that kingdom they kept themselves, part they committed to one Ceolulphus, upon condition that he should be vassal to them, and at their commandment, with his people, at all times.

The next year ensuing, which was the seventh year of the reign of Alfred, the Danes now having all the rule of the north part of England, from the river Thames, with Mercia, London, and Essex, disdained that Alfred should bear any dominion on the other side of Thames southward. Whereupon the foresaid three kings, with all the forces and strength they could make, marched toward Chippenham in Westsex with such a multitude, that the king with his people was not able to resist them; insomuch that the people which inhabited there, some fled over the sea, some remained with the king, divers submitted themselves to the Danes. Thus Alfred, being overset with multitude of enemies, and forsaken of his people, having neither land to hold, nor hope to recover that which he had lost, withdrew himself, with a few of his nobles about him, into a certain wood country in Sommersetshire, called Etheling; where he had right scant to live with, but such as he and his people might purchase by hunting and fishing. This Edeling, or Etheling, or Ethelingsey, standeth in a great marsh or moor, so that there is no access unto it without ship or boat, and hath in it a great wood called Selwood, and in the middle a little plain, about two acres of ground, in which isle is venison, and other wild beasts, with fowl and fishes, great plenty. In this wood King Alfred at his first coming espied a certain desert cottage of a poor swineherd, keeping swine in the wood, named Punwolphus; by whom the king then unknown was entertained and cherished with such poor fare as he and his wife could make him. For the which King Alfred afterward set the poor swineherd to learning, and made him bishop of Winchester.



King Alfred and the Cakes

In the mean season, while King Alfred accompanied with a few was thus in the desert wood, waiting the event of these miseries, certain stories record of a poor beggar, which there came and asked his alms of the king. And the night following he appeared to the king in his sleep, saying his name was Cutbert, promising (as sent from God unto him for his good charity) great victories against the Danes. But to let these dreaming fables pass, although they be testified by divers authors.

Notwithstanding the king in process of time was strengthened and comforted more, through the providence of God, respecting the miserable ruin of the Englishmen. First, the brother of King Halden the Dane before mentioned, coming in with three and thirty ships, landed about Devonshire; where by chance being resisted by a bushment of King Alfred's men, (who for their safeguard there lay in garrison,) were slain to the number of one thousand three hundred men, and their ensign called the raven was taken. Hovedenus in his book of Continuaciones writeth, that in the same conflict both Inguar and Hubba were slain among the other Danes. After this, King Alfred being better cheered, showed himself more at large; so that daily resorted to him men of Wiltshire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire, till that he was strongly accompanied.

Then the king put himself in a bold and dangerous venture. For he, apparelling him in the habit of a minstrel, (as he was very skilful in all Saxon poems,) with his instrument of music entered into the tents of the Danes, lying then at Eddendun; and in showing there his interlude and songs, espied all their sloth and idleness, and heard much of their counsel; and after, returning to his company, declared unto them the whole manner of the Danes. Shortly upon the same, the king suddenly in the night fell

upon the foresaid Danes, and distressed and slew of them a great multitude, chased them from that coast, Insomuch that through his strong and valiant assaults upon his enemies, out of his tower of Edeing newly fortified, he so encumbered them, that he clearly voided the country of them between that and Selwood. His subjects eftsoons, hearing of these his valiant victories and manful deeds, drew to him daily out of all coasts; who, through the help of God, and their assistance, held the Danes so short, that he won from them Winchester, and divers other good towns. Briefly, at length he forced them to seek for peace; the which was concluded upon certain covenants. Whereof one and the principal was, that the forenamed Gutrum their king should be christened. The other was, that such as would not be christened should depart and void the country.

Upon these covenants, first, the said Gutrum, the Danish prince, coming to Winchester, was there christened with twenty of his greatest dukes or nobles. Which Gutrum, King Alfred being his godfather at his baptism, named him Athelstan; who, after a certain season that he had feasted the said Danes, he, according to his promise before made, gave unto their king the country of East Anglia, containing Northfolke and Suffolke, and part of Cambridgeshire. Moreover, (as saith Polychronicon,) he granted to the Danes that were christened the country of Northumberland. So the residue that would not be christened departed the land, and sailed into France; where what vexation and harm they wrought the chronicles of France do partly comprehend.

King Athelstan thus having the possession of these countries, had all East Angles under his obedience. And albeit that he held the same province as in fee of the king, and promised to dwell there as his liege man; yet that notwithstanding he continued more like a tyrant, by the term of eleven years, and died in the twelfth year. During the which space King Alfred, having some more rest and peace, repaired certain towns and strongholds afore by the Danes impaired. Also he builded divers houses of religion, as the house of nuns at Shaftesbury. Another religious house at Etheling he founded. Another in Winchester, named the New Monastery. He endowed richly the church of St. Cuthbert in Durham. He sent also to India to pay and perform his vows to St. Thomas of Inde, which he made during the time of his distress against the Danes.

About the fifteenth year of the reign of Alfred the Danes, returning from France to England, landed in Kent, and so came to Rochester, and besieged that city; and there lay so long, that they builded a tower of timber against the gates of the city. But by strength of the citizens that tower was destroyed, and the city defended, till King Alfred came and rescued them. Whereby the Danes were so distressed, and so near trapped, that, for fear, they left their horses behind them, and fled to their ships by night. But the king, when he was thereof aware, sent after them, and took sixteen of their ships, and slew many of the said Danes. This done, the king returned to London, and repaired the same honourably, (as saith Hovedenus,) and made it habitable, which before was sore decayed and feebled by the Danes.

The third year after this, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of King Alfred, the foresaid Athelstan, the Danish king of Northfolke, (which by Alfred was christened before,) deceased. Not long after this, about the one and twentieth year of this king's reign, the Danes again landed in four places of this land; which was in East England, in the North, and in the West in two places. Before the landing of these Danes, it chanced King Alfred, hearing of the death of King Athelstan, and of other complaints of the Danes, was then in East England when these tidings came to him.

When King Alfred was hereof ascertained, forso much as some of the Danes were landed in that coast, thinking with themselves the further they went in those parts the less resistance to have, and the more speed, as they were wont to have before; Alfred, therefore, sending messengers in all haste to Ethelred, duke of Mercia, to assemble to him a host to withstand the Danes which landed in the West, made forth toward his enemies there, where he was in East Anglia, whom he pursued so sharply, that he drove them out from those parts. They then landed in Kent, whither the king with his people sped him, and in like manner drove the Danes from thence, without any great fight, so far as in our authors we can see. After this, again the Danes took shipping, and sailed into North Wales, and there robbed and spoiled the Britons, and from thence returned by the sea into East Anglia, with a hundred ships, and there rested them, forso much as the king then was gone westward.

The fourth host of the Danes the same year came to Chester, which at length they won; but then the country adjoining pressed so sore upon them, and besieged them so long, keeping themselves within the city, that at the last the Danes, wearied with the long siege, were compelled to eat their own horses for hunger. But by appointment at last they gave over the town, and went about by North Wales to Northumberland, which was about the three and twentieth year of King Alfred; which Alfred in the mean while with his host sped him thitherward. Then the Danes, leaving their strong holds and castles, garnished with men and victual, took again shipping, and set their course in such wise that they landed in Sussex, and so came to the port of Lewes; and from thence toward London, and builded a tower or castle near unto the river of Luy, twenty miles from London. But the Londoners, hearing thereof, manned out a certain number of men of arms, who, with the assistance of them of that country, put the Danes from that tower, and after beat it down to the ground. Soon after the king came down thither, and, to prevent the dangers that might ensue, commanded the river of Luy to be divided in three streams; so that where a ship might sail in times before, there a little boat might scantily row. From thence the Danes, leaving their ships and wives, were forced to fly that country, and took their way again toward Wales, and came to Quadrage, near to the river of Severn; where upon the borders thereof they builded them a castle, there resting themselves for a time, whom the king eftsoons with his army pursued. In the mean time, the Londoners at Luy, taking the Danes' ships, some of them they brought to London, the rest they fired. During all these three years, from the first coming of the Danes to Luy, England was afflicted with three manner of sorrows; with the Danes, with pestilence of men, and murrain of beasts. Notwithstanding which troubles the king manfully resisted the malice of his enemies, and thanked God always, what trouble soever fell to him, or unto his realm, and sustained it with great patience and humility. These three years overpast, the next following, which was the eight and twentieth of the reign of Alfred, the Danes divided their host, of whom part went to Northumberland, some to North folke, part sailed over to France, some other came to Westsax, where they had divers conflicts with the Englishmen, both by land, and especially upon the sea; of whom some were slain, many perished by shipwreck, divers others were taken and banded, and thirty of their ships were taken.

Not long after this, King Alfred, when he had reigned nine and twenty years and six months, changed this mortal life. And thus much (and more peradventure than will seem to this our ecclesiastical history appertaining) touching the painful labours and travails of this good king; which he no less valiantly achieved than patiently sustained for the necessary defence of his realm and subjects.

Now if there be any prince who listeth to see and follow the virtuous and godly disposition of this king, both touching the institution of his own life, and also concerning his careful government of the commonwealth, thus the histories of him do record: That at what time he being young, perceiving himself somewhat disposed to the vice of the flesh, and thereby letted from many virtuous purposes, did not as many young princes and kings' sons in the world be now wont to do, that is, to resolve themselves into all kind of carnal licence and dissolute sensuality, running and following without bridle whithersoever their licence given doth lead them (as therefore not without cause the common proverb reporteth of them, that kings' sons learn nothing else well but only to ride). Meaning thereby, that while princes and kings' sons, having about them flatterers, who bolster them in their faults, only their horses give to them no more than to any other; but if they sit not fast, they will cast them. But this young king, seeing in himself the inclination of his fleshly nature, minding not to give himself so much as he might take, but rather by resistance to avoid the temptation thereof, besought God that he would send to him some continual sickness, in quenching of that vice, whereby he might be more profitable to the public business of the commonwealth, and more apt to serve God in his calling.

Moreover, to behold the bountiful goodness joined with like prudence in this man, in the ordering and disposing his riches and rents, it is not unworthily to be recited how he divided his goods in two equal parts; the one appertaining to uses secular, the other to uses spiritual or ecclesiastical. Of the which two principal parts the first he divided into three portions: the first to the behoof of his house and family; the second upon the workmen and builders of his new works, whereof he had great delight and cunning; the third upon strangers. Likewise the other second half upon spiritual uses he did thus divide in four portions: one to the relieving of the poor; another to the monasteries; the third portion to the schools of Oxford, for the maintaining of good letters; the fourth be sent to foreign churches without the realm. This also is left in stories written to his commendation for his great tolerance and sufferance, that when he had builded the new monastery at Winchester, and afterward his son Edward had purchased of the bishop and the chapter a sufficient piece of ground for certain offices to be adjoined unto the same, and had given for every foot of ground *marcam auri pleni pendens*, (which was, as I think, a mark of gold or more,) yet Alfred therewithal was not greatly discontented to see his coffers so wasted.

Over and besides, how sparing and frugal he was of time, (as of a thing in this earth most precious,) and how far from all vain pastimes and idleness he was, this doth well declare, which in the story of William de Reg. and other writers is told of him. That he so divided the day and night in three parts, if he were not let by wars and other great business, that eight hours be spent in study and learning, and other eight hours he spent in prayer and almsdeeds, and other eight hours he spent in his natural rest, sustenance of his body, and the needs of the realm. The which order he kept duly by the burning of waxen tapers kept in his closet by certain persons for the same purpose.

How studious he was, and careful of the commonwealth, and maintenance of public tranquillity, his laws most godly set forth and devised by him may declare. Wherein especially by him was provided for the extirpating and abolishing of all theft and thieves out of the realm. Whereby the realm through his vigilant care was brought into such tranquillity, or rather perfection, that in every cross or turning way he made to be set up a golden brooch, at least of silver gilded, through his dominions, and none so hardy neither by day nor night to take it down. And no great marvel therein, if the realm in those days was brought into such an order, and that justice then was so well

ministered, when the king himself was so vigilant in overseeing the doings of his judges and officers. He was a vigilant inquisitor of the doings of his judges, and a strict punisher of their misdoings. He did diligently search out the doings of his officers, and especially of his judges; so that if he knew any of them to err, either through covetousness or unskilfulness, them he removed from their office.

And thus much concerning the valiant acts and noble virtues of this worthy prince, whereunto, although there were no other ornaments adjoining besides, yet sufficient were they alone to set forth a prince worthy excellent commendation. Now besides these other qualities and gifts of God's grace in him above mentioned, remaineth another part of his no little praise and commendation, which is his learning and knowledge of good letters, whereof he not only was excellently expert himself, but also a worthy maintainer of the same through all his dominions, where before no use of grammar or other sciences was practised in this realm, especially about the west parts of the land, where, through the industry of the king, schools began to be erected and studies to flourish. Although among the Britons, in the town of Chester in South Wales, long before that, in King Arthur's time, as Galfridus writeth, both grammar and philosophy, with other tongues, was then taught. After that some writers record, that in the time of Egbert, king of Kent, this island began to flourish with philosophy. About which time some also think that the university of Grantchester, near to that which now is called Cambridge, began to be founded by Beda; following this conjecture therein, for that Alcuinus, (before mentioned,) which after went to Rome, and from thence to France, in the time of Charles the Great, where he first began the university of Paris, was first trained up in the exercise of studies at the same school of Grantchester. Beda, writing also of Sigebert, king of East Angles, deelaireth how the said Sigebert, returning out of France into England, (according to the examples which he did there see,) ordered and disposed schools of learning, through the means of Felix, then bishop, and placed in them masters and teachers, after the use and manner of the Cantuarits. And yet before these times, moreover, it is thought that there were two schools or universities within the realm; the one Greek, at the town of Greglade, which afterward was called Kirklade; the other for Latin, which place was then called Latinlade, afterward Lethelade, near to Oxford.

But howsoever it chanced that the knowledge and study of good letters, being once planted in this realm, afterward went to decay; yet King Alfred deserveth no little praise for restoring or rather increasing the same. After whose time they have ever since continued, albeit not continually through every age in like perfection. But this we may see, what it is to have a prince learned himself, who, feeling and tasting the price and value of science and knowledge, is thereby not only the more apt to rule, but also to instruct and frame his subjects, from a rude barbarity to a more civil congruency of life, and to a better understanding of things, as we see in this famous prince to happen. Concerning whose first education and bringing up, although it was somewhat late before he entered any letter, yet such was the apt towardness and docility of his nature, that, being a child, he had the Saxon poems (such as were used then in his own tongue) by heart and memory. Who afterwards with years and time grew up in such perfection of learning and knowledge, insomuch that (as mine author saith) *nullus Anglonum fuerit vel intelligendo acutior, vel interpretando elegantior*. The which thing in him the more was to be marvelled, for that he was twelve years of age before he knew any letter. Then his mother, careful and tender over him, having by chance a book in her hand, which he would fain have, promised to give him the same, so that he would learn it. Whereupon he, for greediness of the book, eftsoons learned the letters, having

to his schoolmaster Pleimundus, after bishop of Canterbury. And so daily grew he more and more in knowledge, that at length, as mine author saith, a great part of the Latin library he translated into English, converting to the uses of his citizens a notable prey of foreign ware and merchandise, &c. Of which books by him and through him translated was Orosius, Pastorale Gregoril, the History of Beda, Boetius de Consolatione Philosophiæ. Also a book of his own making and in his own tongue, which in the English speech he called a Hand-book, in Greek called it Enchiridion, in Latin a Manual. Besides the History of Beda translated into the Saxons' tongue, he also himself compiled a story in the same speech, called The Story of Alfred, &c., which both books in the Saxons' tongue I have seen, though the language I do not understand. And as he was learned himself excellently well, so likewise did he inflame all his countrymen to the love of liberal letters, as the words of the story reporteth. He exhorted and stirred his people to the study of learning, some with gifts, some by threats; suffering no man to aspire to any dignity in the court except he were learned. Moreover, another story thus saith, speaking of his nobles: Also his nobles so much he did allure to the embracing of good letters, that they set all their sons to school; or if they had no sons, yet their servants they caused to be learned. Whereby the common proverb may be found not so common as true; Such as is the prince, such be the subjects. He began moreover to translate the Psalter in English, and had almost finished the same, had not death prevented him. In the prologue of the book entitled Pastorale Grego, thus he writeth; declaring the cause why he was so earnest and diligent in translating good books from Latin into English, showing the cause thereof why he so did, as followeth: The cause was, for that innumerable ancient libraries, which were kept in churches, were consumed with fire by the Danes; and that men had rather suffer peril of their life than to follow the exercises of studies; and therefore he thought thereby to provide for the people of the English nation, &c.

It is told of him, both in Polychronicon, Malmesbury, Jornalensis, and other stories more, whereof I have no names, that he, seeing his country (namely, westward) to be so desolate of schools and learning, partly to profit himself, partly to furnish his country and subjects with better knowledge, first sent for Grimbaldus, a learned monk, out of France, to come into England. Also he sent for another learned man out from the parts of Wales, whose name was Asserion, whom he made bishop of Shireborne. Item, out of Mercia he sent for Wenefrithus, bishop of Worcester, to whom he put the Dialogues of Gregory to be translated. But chiefly he used the counsel of Neotus, who then was counted for a holy man, an abbot of a certain monastery in Cornwall. By the advisement of which Neotus he sent for these learned men above recited; and also ordained certain schools of divers arts, first at Oxford, and also franchised the same with many great liberties. Whereof perhaps the school, now called the New College, (first then begun of this Neotus,) might take his name; which afterward peradventure the bishops of Winchester after a larger manner did re-edify and enlarge with greater possessions.

Moreover, among other learned men which were about King Alfred, histories make mention of Johannes Scotus, (a godly divine, and a learned philosopher,) but not that Scotus whom now we call Duns. For that Johannes Scotus came after this many years. This Johannes is described to be of a sharp wit, of great eloquence, and well expert in the Greek tongue, pleasant and merry of nature and conditions, as appeareth by divers his doings and answers. First, he, coming to France out of his own country of Scotland, by reason of the great tumults of war, was there worthily entertained, and for his learning had in great estimation of Carolus Calvus the French king; whom he

commonly and familiarly used ever to have about him, both at table and in chamber. Upon a time, the king sitting at meat, and seeing something (belike in this John Scot) which seemed not very courtly, cast forth a merry word, asking of him what difference there was betwixt a Scot and sot. Whereunto the Scot, sitting over against the king somewhat lower, replied again suddenly, rather than advisedly, (yet merrily,) saying, *Mensa tantum*, that is, The table only; importing thereby himself to be the Scot, and so calling the king a sot by craft. Which word how other princes would have taken of stomach I know not; but this Charles, for the great reverence he bare to his learning, turned it but to a laughter among his nobles, and so let it pass.

Another time the same king, being at dinner, was served with a certain dish of fish, wherein were two great fishes and a little one. After the king had taken thereof his repast, setting down to Johannes Scotus the foresaid fish, to distribute unto the other two clerks, sitting there with him; which were two tall and mighty persons, he himself being but a little man. Johannes taketh the fish, of the which the two great he taketh and carveth to himself; the little fish he reacheth to the other two. The king perceiving his division thus made, reprehended the same. Then Jobannes, whose manner was ever to find out some honest matter to delight the king, answered to him again, proving his division to stand just and equal. For here (saith he) be two great and a little, pointing to the two great fishes and himself; and likewise here again is a little one and two great, pointing to the little fish and two great persons. I pray you, (saith he,) what odds is there, or what distribution can be more equal? Whereat the king with his nobles being much delighted laughed merrily.

At the request of this Charles, surnamed Bald, the French king, this Scotus translated the book of Dionysius, entitled *De Hierarchia*, from Greek into Latin, word for word. He wrote also a book *On the Body and Blood of the Lord*, which was afterward condemned by the pope.

The same Johannes Scotus, moreover, compiled a book of his own, giving it a Greek title, Πηρι φυσικων δαιρεδεν [Greek: *peri physikon daireden*] that is, *Concerning Natural Distinctions*. In which book (as saith my foresaid author) is contained the resolution of many profitable questions; but so that he is thought to follow the Greek church rather than the Latin, and for the same was counted of some to be a heretic, because in that book some things there be which in all points accord not with the Romish religion. Wherefore the pope, writing to the said King Charles of this Scotus, complaineth, as in his own words here followeth:

Relation hath been made unto our apostleship, that a certain man, called Johannes, a Scottishman, hath translated the book of Dionysius the Areopagite, of the names of God, and of the heavenly orders, from Greek into Latin. Which book, according to the custom of the church, ought first to have been approved by our judgment; namely, seeing the said John (albeit he be said to be a man of great learning and science) in time past hath been noted by common rumour to have been a man not of upright or sound doctrine in certain points, &c. For this cause the said Scotus, being constrained to remove from France, came into England, allured (as some testify) by the letters of Alured or Alfred, of whom he was with great favour entertained and conversant a great space about the king, till at length (whether before or after the death of the king it is uncertain) he went to Malmesbury, where he taught certain scholars a few years; by the which scholars at last most im piously he was murdered and slain with their penknives, and so died, as stories say, a martyr, buried at the said monastery of Malmesbury.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

King Alfred, having these helps of learned men about him, and no less learned also himself, passed over his time not only to great utility and profit of his subjects, but also to a rare and profitable example of other Christian kings and princes for them to follow. This foresaid Alfred had by his wife, called Ethelwitha, two sons, Edward and Ethelward; and three daughters, Elfleda, Ethelgora, and Ethelguida; whom he set all to their books and study of liberal arts, as my story testifieth. First, Edward his eldest son succeeded him in the kingdom; the second son Ethelward died before his father; Ethelgora, his middle daughter, was made a nun; the other two were married; the one in Merceland, the other to the earl of Flanders. Thus King Alfred, the valiant, virtuous, and learned prince, after he had thus Christianly governed the realm the term of nine and twenty years and six months, departed this life, Nov., and lieth buried at Winchester, A.D. 901. Of whom this I find moreover greatly noted and commended in history, and not here to be forgotten, for the rare example thereof, touching this Alfred, that wheresoever he was, or whithersoever he went, he bare always about him in his bosom or pocket a little book containing the Psalms of David, and certain other orisons of his own collecting. Whereupon he was continually reading or praying whensoever he was otherwise vacant, having leisure thereunto,

In the story of this Alfred, a little above mention was made of Pleimundus, schoolmaster to the said Alfred, and also bishop of Canterbury, succeeding Etheredus, there bishop before him; which Pleimundus governed that see the number of thirty and four years. After Pleimundus succeeded Athelmus, and sat twelve years. After him came Ulfelmus thirteen years. Then followed Odo, a Dane, born in the said see of Canterbury, and governed the same twenty years, being in great favour with King Ethelstan, King Edmund, and Edwin, as in process hereafter, (Christ willing,) as place and order doth require, shall more at large be expressed.

23. King Edward the Elder

After the reign of the famous King Alfred, his son Edward succeeded, surnamed the Elder; where first is to be noted, that before the conquest of the Normans, there were in England three Edwards: first, this Edward the Elder; secondly, Edward the Martyr; third, Edward the Confessor; whereof hereafter (by the grace of Christ) shall follow in order, as place shall give to be declared. This Edward began his reign the year of our Lord 901, and governed the land right valiantly and nobly four and twenty years. In knowledge of good letters, and learning he was not to be compared to his father, otherwise in princely renown, in civil government, and such-like martial prowess, he was nothing inferior, but rather excelled him; through whose valiant acts first the principdom of Wales and kingdom of Scotland, with Constantine, king thereof, were to him subdued. He adjoined moreover to his dominion the country of East Anglia, that is, of Norfolk, Suffolke, and Essex. All Merceland also he recovered, and Northumberland, out of the hands of the Danes. In all his wars he never lightly went without victory. The subjects of his provinces and dominions were so inured and hardened in continual practice and feats of war, that when they heard of any enemies coming, (never tarrying for any bidding from the king or from his dukes,) straightways they encountered with them, both in number and in knowledge of the order of war excelling always their adversaries. So was the coming and assaulting of their enemies to the people and common soldiers but a trifle, and to the king only derision. Among other adversaries which were busy, rather than wise, in assailing this king, was one called Clito Ethelwoldus. a young man, King Edward's uncle's son, who first occupying the town of Winborne, (taking thence a nun with him, whom then he had married,) fled by night to Northumberland, to adjoin himself unto the Danes, who was made chief king and captain over them. Then, chased from thence, he fled over into France; but shortly, returning again into England, he landed in East England, where the said Clito, with a company of Danes of that country gathered to him, destroyed and pillaged much of the country about Crekinford and Crikeland. And so passing over Thames, after he had spoiled the land there to Bradenstocke, returned again to Norfolk and Suffolke, where he, meeting with an ambushment of Kentishmen, which dragged and tarried after the main host of Edward, contrary to his commandment, enclosed them in, and slew the most part of them. Soon after the two hosts, meeting together between the two ditches of St. Edmund's land, after a long fight, Clito with many of the Danes were slain, and the remnant were constrained to seek for peace, which upon certain conditions and under a tribute was to them granted.

In process, about the twelfth year of his reign, the Danes repenting them of their covenants, and minding to break the same, assembled a host, and met with the king in Staffordshire, at a place called Totenhall, and soon after at Wodnefield, at which two places the king slew two kings, two earls, and many thousands of Danes that occupied the country of Northumberland.

Thus the importunate rage of the Danes being assuaged, King Edward having now some leisure given from wars to other studies, gave his mind to the building or repairing of cities, towns, and castles, that by the Danes were razed, shattered, and broken. As first of Chester, which city he double enlarged to that it was before, compassing the castle within the walls of the same, which before stood without. That done, the king builded a strong castle at Hereford, in the edge of Wales. Also, for the

strengthening of the country, he made a castle at the mouth of the water of Aven, and an other castle at Buckingham, and the third fast thereby upon the river of Ouse. Moreover, he builded or re-edified the towns of Tocester and Wigmor, and destroyed the castle that the Danes had made at Demesford. Likewise upon the river of Trent, against the old town of Nottingham, he builded a new town on the south side, and made a bridge over the river between the said two towns. Also by the river of Merce he builded a city or town in the north end of Mercia, and named it Thilwall, and after repaired the city of Manchester, that sore was defaced with wars of the Danes.

In this renewing and building of towns and castles, for the more fortifying of his realm, his sister Elfleda, daughter of King Alfred, and married to the duke of Mercia, (as is afore mentioned,) was no small helper. Of this Elfleda it is firmly of writers affirmed, that she being (as is said) married to Ethelred, duke of Mercia, after she had once assayed the pains of women in travailing with her child, so much she abhorred ever after the embracing of her husband, that it seemed to her (she said) not seemly for a noblewoman to use such fleshly liking, whereof so great sorrow and travail should ensue. And yet, notwithstanding, the same Elfleda, for all her delicate tenderness in eschewing the natural passion which necessity giveth to women, was so hardy in warlike dangers which nature giveth not to women, that, fighting against the Danes, (so venturous she was of stomach,) four of her next knights, which were guardians of her body, were slain fast by her. This Elfleda, among her other noble acts, whereby she deserved praise, was a great helper and stirrer up of her brother Edward, who builded and newly repaired many castles and towns, as Tamworth, besides Litchfield, Stafford, Warwike, Shrewesbury, Watrisbury, Eldsbury, besides Chester in the forest now destroyed. Also in the north end of Mercia, upon the river of Merce, a castle called Rimcorne; also a bridge over Severne, named Brimmisbury bridge.

As touching the laws and statutes of this Edward, as also of his father Alfred, made before him, I omit here to record them for length of matter and waste of time; yet, notwithstanding, this admonition by the way I thing good to note, that in those days of these ancient kings reigning in England, the authority then both of conferring bishoprics and spiritual promotions, and also of prescribing laws as well to the churchmen as to the laity, and of ordering and intermeddling in matters merely spiritual, was then in the hands of kings ruling in the land, and not only in the hand of the pope, as appeareth by the laws of Alfred.

By the laws and other such-like constitutions of King Alfred it appears, that the governance and direction of the church in those days depended not upon Monsieur le Pope of Rome, but upon the kings which here in their time (under the Lord) did govern the land. To this also the example of King Edward's time gives testimony; which Edward, with Picimundus, (above mentioned,) archbishop of Canterbury, and with other bishops in a synod assembled, assigned and elected seven bishops in seven metropolitan churches of the realm. Which were, the first Fridelstan, the second Adelstan, the third Werstan, the fourth Adeleme, the fifth Edulfus, the sixth Dernegus, the seventh Kenulphus; in which election the king's authority seemed then alone to be sufficient, &c.

This Edward (as in the beginning was said) reigned twenty-four years, who had three wives, Egwin, Elfled, and Ethelwid. Of Egwin he had his eldest son, Adelstan, who next succeeded in the kingdom, and a daughter, married after to the duke of Northumberland. Of Elfled he received two sons, to wit, Ethelwald and Edwin, and six daughters. Ethelwald was excellently well seen in all knowledge of learning, much

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resembling both in countenance and conditions his grandfather Alfred, and died soon after his father. Of his six daughters, two of them, Elfled and Ethelhilda, were made nuns, the other four were married; Edgina to Charles the French king in his father's time; Ethilda, by King Ethelstan, was married to Hugo, the son of Duke Robert. Edgitha and Algina were both sent to Henricus, prince of Almains. Of which two sisters, the second the said Henricus married to his son Otho, who was the first emperor of the Almains. The other sister, which was Edgitha, the foresaid Henricus married unto a certain duke, about the border of the Alps in Italy. Of his third wife, Ethelwid, he received two sons, Edmund and Edred, which both reigned after Adelstan; and two daughters, Egburga, whom he made a nun, and Eadguina, who was married unto Ludo vicus, prince of Aquitania in France. These sons and daughters King Edward thus brought up: his daughters he set to spinning, and to the needle; his sons he set to the study of learning, to the end, that they, being at first made philosophers, should be the more expert thereby to govern the commonwealth.

24. King Ethelstan

Ethelstan, or Adelstan, after the death of Edward his father, began his reign in England, and was crowned at Kingston. He was a prince of worthy memory, valiant and wise in all his acts, nothing inferior unto his father Edward; in like worldly renown of civil government, joined with much prosperous success, in reducing this realm under the subjection of one monarchy. For he both expelled the Danes, subdued the Scots, and quieted the Welchmen, as well in North Wales as also in Cornwall. The first enemy against this Ethelstan was one Elfredus, who, with a faction of seditious persons, conspiring against the said Ethelstan at Winchester, incontinently, after the death of his father, went about to put out his eyes. Notwithstanding, the king escaping that danger, through the help of God, was at that time delivered. Elfred upon the same being accused, fled to Rome, there before the pope to purge himself by his oath. Who being brought to the church of St. Peter, and there swearing (or rather forswearing) himself to be clear, which indeed was guilty thereof, suddenly upon his oath fell down; and so being brought to the English house in Rome, within three days after departed. The pope sending word unto King Ethelstan, whether he would have the said Elfred buried among Christians or no? at length, through the persuasions of his friends and kinsfolks, it was concluded that he should be buried in Christian burial. This story, although I find it in no other writers mentioned, but only in the Chronicles of Guliel. lib. de Regib., yet forsomuch as it beareth the witness and words of the king himself, as testified in an old deed of gift, given to the monastery of Malmesbury, I thought the same the more to be of credit.

In the second year of the reign of King Ethelstan, for a unity and a peace to be had between the king and the Danes of Northumberland, he married to Sithericus, their king, his sister, whereof mention is made before; but shortly after, within one year, this Sithericus died. After whose death King Ethelstan seized that province into his own hands, putting out the son of the foresaid Sithericus, called Alanus, who with his brother Godfridus fled, the one into Ireland, the other unto Constantine, king of the Scots. And when he had thus accorded with the Danes of Northumberland, he shortly made subject unto him Constantine, king of Scots. But the said Constantine conducted himself so lowly to the king, that he restored him to his former dignity, saying that it was more honour to make a king than to be a king.

Not long after the said Constantine, king of Scots, did break covenant with King Ethelstan; wherefore he assembled his knights, and made towards Scotland, where he, subduing his enemies, and bringing them again unto due subjection, turned into England with victory. Here, by the way, in some story writers (who, forgetting the office of historians, seem to play the poets) is written and recorded for a marvel, that the said Ethelstan, returning out of Scotland into England, came to York, and so into the church of St. John of Beverley, to redeem his knife, which before he had left there for a pledge at his going forth. In the which place he praying to God, and to St. John of Beverley, that he might leave there some remembrance whereby they that came after might know that the Scots by right should be subdued to the English men, smote with a sword (they say) upon a great hard stone standing near about the castle of Dunbar, that with the stroke thereof the stone was cut a large ell deep (with a lie no less deep also than was the stroke in the stone). But of this poetical or fabulous story, albeit Polychronicon, Fabian, Jornalensis, and others more constantly accord in the same, yet

in Guliel. and Henricus no mention is made at all. But peradventure he that was the inventor first of this tale of the stone was disposed to lie for the whetstone; wherefore in my mind he is worthy to have it.

Of like truth and credit seemeth also to be this that foiloweth, about the same year and time, under the reign of King Ethelstan, being the eighth year of his reign, of one Bristanus, bishop of Winchester, who succeeded Frichstanus in the same see, and governed that bishopric four years. This Bristanus, being a devout bishop in prayer and contemplation, used much among his solitary walks to frequent late the churchyard, praying for the souls there, and all Christian souls departed. Upon a time the said Bristanus, after his wonted manner, proceeding in his devotions, when he had done, came to *Requiescant in pace*. Whereunto suddenly a great multitude of souls, answering together with one voice, said, Amen. Of this miracle, albeit I have not much to say, (hasting to other matters,) yet this question would I ask of some indifferent papist, which were not wilful, but of ignorance deceived; Whether this multitude which here answered Amen, were the souls of them buried in the churchyard or not? If yea, then how were they in purgatory what time they were heard in that place answering Amen? except we should think purgatory to be in the churchyard at Winchester, where the souls were heard then so many answering and praying, Amen. And yet this story is testified by the accord of writers of that time, Guiel., Polyebro., Hovedenus, Jornalensis, and others more. Much like miracles and prophecies also we read of Elphegus which succeeded him; but because we haste to other things let these fables pass.

Ye heard a little before how King Ethelstan, after the death of Sithericus, king of Northumberland, seized that land or province into his own hand, and put out his son Alanus; who after, flying into Scotland, married one of the daughters of Constantine king of Scots. By whose stirring and exhortation he gathered a company of Danes, Scots, and others, and entered the mouth of Humber with a strong navy of six hundred and fifteen ships.

Whereof King Ethelstan, with his brother Edmund, having knowledge, prepared his army, and at length joined in fight with him and his people at a place called Brimambruch, or Brimford; where he, fighting with them from morning till evening, after a terrible slaughter on both sides (as the like hath not been seen lightly in England) had the victory. In the which battle were slain five small and under-kings, with Constantine king of Scots, and twelve dukes, with the most part of all the strangers which at that time they gathered to them. Here also our writers put in another miracle in this battle, how King Ethelstan's sword miraculously fell into his sheath, through the prayer of Odo, then archbishop of Canterbury.

After this victory thus obtained of the Danes and Scots, King Ethelstan also subdued (or at least quieted) the North Britons, whom he conventing together at Hertford, (or thereabouts,) forced them to grant unto him, as a yearly tribute, twenty pounds of gold, three hundred pounds of silver, and of heads of neat five and twenty hundred, with hawks and dogs, to a certain number. This done, he went to Exeter, and there likewise subduing the South Britons about Exeter and Cornwall, repaired the walls of Exeter with sufficient strength, and so returned.

Among these victorious and noble acts of this king, one blot there is of him written and noted, wherein he is as much worthy to be reprehended as in the other before to be commended, (that is,) the innocent death and murder of his brother Edwin. The occasion thereof was this. King Edward afore named, their father, in the

time of his youth, coming by a certain village or grange where he had been nursed and brought up of a child, thought of courtesy to go to see how his nurse did, where he, entering into the house, espied a certain young damsel, beautiful, and right seemly attired, Egwina by name. This Egwina before, being a poor man's daughter, had a vision by night, that of her body sprang such a bright light of the moon, that the brightness thereof gave light to the realm of England; by reason whereof she was taken into the foresaid house, and daintily brought up instead of their own daughter, for hope of some commodity to ensue thereby, as afterward it came to pass. For King Edward, (as is declared,) coming into the house, and ravished with the beauty of the maiden, begat of her the same night this Ethelstan. Wherefore the said Ethelstan, being thus basely born of Egwina, the first wife to Edward, (as is said,) before he was married to her, and fearing his next brother Edwin, which was rightly born, (especially being stirred thereunto through the sinister suggestion of his butler,) did cast such displeasure to the foresaid Edwin his brother, being yet but young, that (notwithstanding his innocent submission and purgation made against his accusers) he caused him to be set in an old rotten boat in the broad sea, (only with one esquire with him,) without any tackling or other provision to the same. Where the young; and tender prince, being dismayed with the rage of winds and of the floods, and now weary of his life, cast himself overboard into the sea, and so was drowned. Notwithstanding the esquire shifting for himself as he could, and recovering the body of his master, brought it to Sandwich, where it was buried.



The death of Edwin

Which done, the king afterwards, coming to the remembrance of himself, was stricken with great repentance the space of seven years together, and at length was revenged of him that was the accuser of his brother. This accuser (as is said) was the king's cup-bearer, who (as God the righteous Judge of all things would have it) upon a certain solemn feast, bearing the cup unto the king, chanced in the middle of the floor to stumble with one foot, helping and recovering himself with the other, saying in these words Thus one brother (as you see) helpeth another. These words being thus

spoken in the hearing of the king, so moved his mind, that forthwith he commanded the false accuser of his brother to be had out to execution. Whose just recompence I would wish to be a warning to all men, what it is to sow discord between brother and brother.

King Ethelstan (besides his seven years' lamentation for this act) builded the two monasteries of Midleton and of Michlenes for his brother's sake, or (as the stories say) for his soul. Whereby it may appear what was the cause most special in those days of building monasteries, to wit, for releasing the sins both of them departed and them alive; which cause, how it standeth with the grace and verity of Christ's gospel, and of his passion, let the Christian reader try and examine with himself. This cruel fact of the king towards Edwin caused him afterward to be more tender and careful towards his other brethren and sisters left in his hands unmarried. Which sisters, as is partly in the chapter before declared, he richly bestowed in great marriages; as one to the king of Northumberland, Sithericus; another he gave unto Lewis, king of Aquitania; the third to Henricus, duke of Almaine, for his son Otho, who was the first emperor of the Germans. Whereby it is to be understood that the empire at this time began first to be translated from France (where it remained about one hundred years and a half) unto Germany, where it hath ever since continued.

The fourth of his sisters being a virgin of singular beauty, Hugo the French king required to be given unto him, sending to King Ethelstan precious and sumptuous presents, such as were not before seen in England. Among the which presents and gifts, besides the rare odours of sundry savours and fine spices; and besides the precious and costly gems, namely, of smaragds of most redolent green; besides also many and great coursers and palfrey richly trapped; especially of one jewel, (as writers make mention,) which was a certain vessel finely and subtilly made of the precious stone onychinus, so radiantly wrought, that in it appeared the lively corn growing, and men's images walking, &c. Over and besides was sent also the sword of Constantine the Great, with the name of the possessor written in golden letters; where in the haft of the same, all beaten in gold, was one of the iron nails wherewith our Saviour on the cross was nailed, of the verity whereof I am not disposed at this present much to say what I suspect; but that this in the ecclesiastical story of Eusebius is evident, that two of the foresaid nails of Christ were spent on the bridle of Constantine, the third he cast into the sea in a raging tempest. Wherefore, if Christ were nailed with four nails, perhaps this nail might be one. If he were nailed but with three, I see not how this story can stand with other stories, neither how this fourth nail can stand with the truth. Among the rest moreover was the spear (as is reported) wherewith the side of our Saviour was opened, which also the said Constantine was wont to carry in the field against his enemies, with a portion likewise of the holy cross enclosed in crystal; also a part of the crown of thorn in like manner enclosed, &c. Of the which relics part was given to Winchester, part to the church of Malmesbury, where King Ethelstan was buried. As this king was endued and enlarged by the gift of God (the setter up and disposer of all kings) with great victories of worldly renown, having under his subjection both Scots and Britons, and the whole monarchy of the land; so he devised divers good and wholesome laws for the government of the same, as well concerning the state of the orders ecclesiastical, as also of the secular or lay people. Whereby it is to be understood, that the usurped power of the bishop of Rome did not then extend itself so largely, nor so proudly to derogate from the authority of kings and princes, but that every one in his own dominion had (under God, and not under the pope) the doing of all matters within the same his dominion contained, whether they were causes

temporal or spiritual, as by the decrees and constitutions of this king (and also of other, as well before him as after him) may evidently be testified.

The said Ethelstan besides prescribed other constitutions also, as touching tithes giving, where he saith and proclaimeth, I Ethelstan, king, charge and command all my officers through my whole realm to give tithes unto God of my proper goods, as well in living cattle as in the corn and fruits of the ground, and that my bishops likewise of their proper goods, and mine aldermen, and my officers and headmen, shall do the same. Item, this I will, that my bishops and other headmen do declare the same to such as be under their subjection, and that to be accomplished at the term of St. John the Baptist. Let us remember what Jacob said unto the Lord, Of all things that thou givest to me I will offer tithes unto the Lord, &c. Also what the Lord saith in the Gospel of St. Matthew, To him that hath it shall be given, and he shall abound. We must also consider how terrible it is written in books, that if we will not offer our tenths, from us nine parts shall be taken away, and only the tenth part shall be left us, &c.

Among his other laws and ordinances, to the number of thirty-five, divers things he comprehended, pertaining as well to the spiritual as also to the temporal jurisdiction.

Out of the laws of this king first sprang up the attachment of thieves, that such as stole above twelve-pence, and were above twelve years old, should not be spared.

And thus much briefly concerning the history of King Ethelstan, and things in his time done; who reigned about the space of sixteen years. And because he died without issue, therefore after him succeeded his brother Edmund, the year of our Lord 940, who reigned six years.

25. King Edmund

Edmund, the son of Edward the Elder by his third wife, (as is declared,) and brother of Ethelstan, being of the age of twenty years, entered his reign, who had by his queen Elgina two sons, Edwin, and Edgarus, surnamed Pacifiens, which both reigned after him as followeth. This Edmund continued his reign six years and a half. By him were expelled the Danes, Scots, Normans, and all foreign enemies out of the land. Such cities and towns which before were in the possession of strangers, as Lincolne, Nottingham, Derby, Stafford, and Leicester, he recovered out of their hands. Thus the realm, being cleared of foreign power for a time, then the king set his study and mind in the redressing and maintaining the state of the church; which all stood then in building of monasteries, and furnishing of churches either with new possessions, or with restoring the old which were taken away before. In the time of this Edmund, this I find in an old written story borrowed of William Cary, a citizen of London, a worthy treasurer of most worthy monuments of antiquity. The name of the author I can not allege, because the book beareth no title, lacking both the beginning and the latter end; but the words thereof faithfully recited be these: In the time of this king, there was a scattering or dispersion made of the monks out of the monastery of Eusham, and canons substituted in their place, through the doing of Athelmus and Ulricus, laymen, and of Osulfus, bishop. &c.

Where, as concerning this matter between monks and others of the clergy, first it is to be understood, that in the realm of England heretofore, before time of Dunstan, the bishops' sees and cathedral churches were replenished with no monks, but with priests and canons, called then clerks, or men of the clergy. After this beginneth to rise a difference or a sect between these two parties in strictness of life and in habit; so that they which lived after a strict rule of holiness were called monks, and professed chastity, that was, to live from wives, (for so was chastity then defined in those blind days,) as though holy matrimony wore no chastity, according as Paphnutius did well define it in the Council of Nice. The other sort, which were no monks, but priests or men of the clergy so called, lived more free from those monkish rules and observances, and were then commonly (or at least lawfully) married, and in their life and habit came nearer to the secular sort of other Christians. By reason whereof great disdain and emulation was among them, insomuch that in many cathedral churches, whereas priests were before, there monks were put in; and, contrary, sometime whereas monks were intruded, there priests and canons again were placed, and monks thrust out; whereof more shall appear here after (by time grace of Christ) when we come to the life of Dunstan. In the mean time, something to satisfy the cogitation of the reader, which peradventure either is ignorant, or else would know of the first coming in of monks into this realm and church of England in the Saxons' time; this is to be noted, according as I find in old chronicles, namely, in time Latin History of Gulielm. de gestis Pontificum Anglorum, recorded touching the same. About this time of King Edmund, or shortly after, when hardness and strictness of life, joined with superstition, was had in veneration, and counted for great holiness; men therefore, either to win public fame with men, or merits with God, gave themselves to lead a strict life, thinking thereby (the stranger their conversation was, and the further from the common trade of vulgar people) the more perfect to be towards God and man. There was at that time (and before that) a monastery in France named Floriake,

after the order and rule of Benedict; from the which monastery did spring a great part of our English monks, who being there professed, and afterward returning into England, did congregate men daily to their profession. And so, partly for strangeness of their rule, partly for outward holiness of their strict life, partly for the opinion of holiness that many had of them, were in great admiration, not only with the rude sort, but with kings and princes, who founded their houses, maintained their rules, and enlarged them with possessions. Among the which order of monks coming from Floriake especially was one Oswaldus, first a monk of Floriake, then bishop of Worcester and York, a great patron and setter up of monkery. Touching the which Oswaldus, William in his book *De Pontific.*, writing of his history, hath these words: It was a common custom at that time among English men, that if any good men were well affected or minded toward religion, they went to the monastery of blessed St. Benedict in France, and there received the habit of a monk, whereupon the first origin of this religion began, &c. But of this Oswald, bishop of York, and Dunstan, bishop of Canterbury, and Ethelwald, bishop of Winchester, how they replenished divers monasteries and cathedral churches with monks, and how they discharged married priests and canons out of their houses, to plant in monks in their cells, more shall be spoken (by the grace of Christ) hereafter. Now let us return again to the matter where we left, of King Edmund; who, besides his noble victories against his enemies, and recovering the cities above expressed into his own hands, did also subdue the province of Cumberland. And after he had put out the eyes of the two sons of Dunmail, king of Cumberland, he committed the governance thereof to Malcolm, king of the Scots, upon promise of his trusty service and obedience, when the king should stand in any need of him. In the time of this king Dunstan was not yet archbishop of Canterbury, but only abbot of Glastenbury; of whom many fabulous narrations pass among the writers, importing more vanity than verity, whereof this is one of the first. What time Edgarus called Pacificus was born, Dunstan being the same time abbot of Glastenbury, (as the monkish fables dream,) heard a voice in the air of certain angels singing after this tenor, and saying, Now peace cometh to the church of England in the time of this child and of our Dunstan, &c. This I thought to recite, that the Christian reader might the better ponder with himself the impudent and abominable fictions of this Romish generation. But of the same mint also they have forged, how the said Dunstan should hear the angels sing the *Kyrie-leson*, used to be sung at even-song in the church. Which is as true as that the harp, hanging in a woman's house, played by itself the tune of the anthem called *Gaudent in caelis*, &c. What would not these deceivers feign in matters something likely, which in things so absurd and so inconvenient shame not to lie and to forge so impudently and also so manifestly? Through the motion of this Dunstan King Edmund builded and furnished the monastery of Glastenbury, and made the said Dunstan abbot thereof.

Concerning the end and death of this king sundry opinions there he. Alfridus and Marianus say, that while this King Edmund endeavoured himself to save his sewer from the danger of his enemies, which would have slain him at Pulcher church, the king, in parting of the fray, was wounded, and died shortly after. But Gulielmus de Regibus, lib. 2, saith, That the king being at a feast at Pulcher church upon the day of St. Augustine, spied a felon sitting in the hall, named Leof, whom he before for his felony had exiled; and, leaping over the table, did fly upon him, and plucked the thief by the hair of the head to the ground. In which doing the felon with a knife wounded the king to the death, and also with the same knife wounded many other of the king's servants, and at length was all to behewed, and died forthwith.

By the laws of King Edmund (ordained and set forth, as well for the redress of church matters as also of civil regiment) it may appear that the state, both of causes temporal, and likewise spiritual, appertained then to the king's right, (the false pretended usurpation of the bishop of Rome notwithstanding,) as by these laws is to be seen; where he, by the advice of his lords and bishops, did enact and determine concerning the chastity and pure life of ecclesiastical ministers, and such as were in the orders of the church, with the penalties also for them which transgressed the same.

Item, for tithes to be paid for every Christian man, and for the church fees, and alms fees, &c.

Item, for deflouring of women professed, which we call nuns, &c.

Item, for every bishop to see his churches repaired of his own proper charge, and boldly to admonish the king whether the houses of God were well maintained, &c.

Item, for flying into the church for sanctuary, &c. Item, concerning cases and determinations, spousal or matrimonial, &c.

All which constitutions declare what interest kings had in those days in matters, as well ecclesiastical as others, within their dominion; and that not only in disposing the ordinances and rites, such as appertained to the institution of the church, but also in placing and setting bishops in their sees, &c.

In the time of this Edmund was Ulstanus, archbishop of York, and Odo, archbishop of Canterbury; which Odo being a Dane born, (as is before touched,) was promoted to that see by King Ethelstan, for that (as they say) he being first bishop of Wilton, and present with King Ethelstan in the field against Analanus before mentioned, what time the said Ethelstan had lost his sword, he, through his intercession up to heaven, did see a sword from heaven come down into the sheath of the king. Whereof relation being made unto the king by the foresaid bishop, Ethelstan upon the same was so affected towards Odo, that not only he counted him for a patron of his life, but also made him primate of Canterbury after the decease of Ulfelmus. This Odo was the first, from the coming of the Saxons till his time, which was archbishop of Canterbury, being no monk. For all the other before him were of the profession of monks, of whom a great part had been Italians unto Berctualdus. Notwithstanding, this Odo, being also a stranger born, after he was elected into the bishopric, to answer to the old custom of others before him, sailed over into France, and there at Floriake (after the usual manner above mentioned of Englishmen) received the profession and habit of monkish religion, as saith my foresaid author. And like as the said Odo first, being no monk, was made archbishop of Canterbury; so also Olstanus, the same time being bishop of York and of Worcester, differed from divers his predecessors before him in profession and habit; of whom the forenamed author thus writeth in his third book, speaking of Ulstanus: *Qui sanctitate discrepabat et habitu*, that is, He differed in sanctimony and in habit. Whereby it is to be collected, that in those days was a difference in habit and garment, not only between monks and bishops, but also between one bishop and another; albeit what difference it was yet I do not find. But I return again to Odo, who, by the description of his manners, might seem not to be the worst that occupied that place, were it not that our lying histories, feigning false miracles upon him, '(as they do of others,) make him indeed to seem worse than he was. As where they imagine that he should see from heaven a sword fall into the scabbard of King Ethelstan. Item, where he should cover and defend the church of Canterbury with his prayers from rain. And also where he should turn the bread of the

altar (as the writer termeth it) into lively flesh, and from flesh into bread again, to confirm the people, which before doubted in the same. Where note again, good reader, that albeit this miracle were true, as no doubt it is untrue, yet is it to be noted that in those days was a great doubt amongst Englishmen of the popish sacrament, and that transubstantiation was not received into the Christian creed. The like judgment is to be given also of that, where our English writers, testifying of the same Odo, say that he should prophesy long before of Dunstan to be his successor in the church of Canterbury. But to let these fantasies and idle stories pass, this which we find of Odo his own writing is certain, that the said Odo, in the reign of King Edmund, had a synod commenced of the chief prelates and clergy in his time, to whom he directed a pastoral letter.

Odo continued bishop the space of twenty years. After whom Elsinus was elected and ordained by the king to succeed through favour and money; but in going to Rome for the pope's pall, in his journey through the Alps, he decayed and died for cold. Whereupon succeeded Dunstan, as in time and place (by the leave of Christ) followeth to be declared.

This Edmund gave to St. Edmund the martyr before mentioned the town of Bredrichcehworth, which is now called St. Edmundsbury, with great revenues and lands appertaining to the same. But concerning the frivolous miracles which our monkish story writers here feign of this good Edmund, by the way, (or rather out of the way,) I let them pass.

And thus much concerning the reign of King Edmund, who, after he had reigned six years and a half, was slain, as is said, at Pulcherchurch, and buried at Glastenbury of Dunstan; leaving behind him two children, Edwin and Edgar, by his wife Elgina. But because the foresaid children were yet young and under age, therefore Edred, brother to King Edmund, and uncle to the children, governed as protector about the space of nine years and a half, till Edwin the eldest son came to age. This Edred with great moderation and fidelity to the young children behaved himself, during the time of his government. In his time Dunstan was promoted, through the means of Odo the archbishop, from abbot of Glastenbury to be bishop of Worcester, and after of London. By the counsel of this Dunstan, Edred was much ruled, and too much thereto addicted; insomuch that the foresaid Edred is reported in stories to submit himself unto much fond penance and castigations, inflicted to him of the said Dunstan. Such zealous devotion was then in princes, and more blind superstition in bishops. And here again is another miracle as fantastical as the other before, forged of Dunstan. When Edred being sick sent for Dunstan to be his confessor, Dunstan by the way heard a voice declaring to him before, that Edred was already departed, at the declaring whereof Dunstan's horse fell immediately dead under him.

Edwin, the eldest son of King Edmund afore mentioned, after his uncle Edred, began his reign about the year of our Lord 955, being crowned at Kingston by Odo the archbishop of Canterbury. Of this Edwin it is reported of divers writers, that the first day of his coronation, sitting with his lords, he brake suddenly from them, and entered a secret chamber, to the company of a certain woman whom he inordinately retained, (being, as some say, another man's wife,) whose husband he had before slain, as others say, being of his alliance, to the great misliking of his lords, and especially of the clergy. Dunstan was yet but abbot of Glastenbury; who, following the king into the chamber, brought him out by the hand, and accused him to Odo the archbishop, causing him to be separate from the company of the foresaid party; by the which Odo

the king was for his fact suspended out of the church. By reason whereof the king, being with Dunstan displeased, banished him his land, and forced him for a season to fly into Flanders, where he was in the monastery of St. Amandus. About the same season the monastical order of Benedict monks, or black monks, (as they were called,) began to multiply and increase here in England. Insomuch that where beforetime other priests and canons had been placed, there monks were in their rooms set in, and the secular priests (as they then were called, or canons) put out. But King Edwin, for that displeasure he bare to Dunstan, did so vex all the order of the said monks, that in Malmesbury, Glastenbury, and other places more, he thrust out the monks, and set in secular priests in their stead.

Notwithstanding, it was not long but these priests and canons were again removed, and the said monks in their stead restored, both in the foresaid houses, and in divers other churches cathedral besides, as in the next story of King Edgar (Christ willing) shall more at large appear.

In fine, King Edwin being hated, by reason of certain his demeanours, of all his subjects, (especially the Northumbrians and Mercians,) was by them removed from his kingly honour, and his brother Edgar in his stead received; so that the river of Thames divided both their kingdoms. Which Edwin, after he had reigned about the term of four years, departed, leaving no heir of his body. Wherefore the rule of the land fell unto Edgar, his younger brother.

26. King Edgar

Edgar, the second son of Edmund and brother to Edwin, being of the age of sixteen years, began his reign over the realm of England in the year of our Lord 959, but was not crowned till fourteen years after; the causes whereof hereunder follow (Christ willing) to be declared. In the beginning of his reign he called home Dunstan, whom King Edwin before had exiled. Then was Dunstan, which before was abbot of Glastenbury, made bishop of Worcester, and then of London. Not long after, this Odo, the archbishop of Canterbury, deceased, after he had governed that church twenty-four years. After whom Brithilinus, bishop of Winchester, first was elected; but because he was thought not sufficient to furnish that room, Dunstan was ordained archbishop, the other sent home again to his old church. Where note, by the way, how in those days the donation and assigning of ecclesiastical dignities remained in the king's hand, only they set their pall from Rome, as a token of the pope's confirmation. So Dunstan, being by the king made archbishop, took his journey to Rome for his pall of Pope John the Thirteenth, which was about the beginning of the king's reign. Thus Dunstan obtaining his pall, shortly after his return again from Rome, entreateth King Edgar that Oswaldus (who, as is said, was made monk at Floriake, and was nephew to Odo, late bishop of Canterbury) might be promoted to be bishop of Worcester, which thing to him was granted. And not long after, through the means of the said Dunstan, Ethelwoldus, (whom stories do feign to be the great patron of monkery,) first monk at Glastenbury, then abbot of Abendon, was also made bishop of Winchester. Of this Ethelwold Gulielmus recordeth, that what time he was a monk in the house of Glastenbury, the abbot had a vision of him, which was this: How that there appeared to him in his sleep a certain great tree, the branches whereof extended throughout all the four quarters of the realm, which branches were all covered with many little monks' cowls, where in the top of the tree was one great master cowl, which, in spreading itself over the other cowls, enclosed all the rest; which master cowl in the tree top mine author in the interpretation applleth to the life of this Ethelwold. Of such prodigious fantasies our monkish histories be full, and not only our histories of England, but also of the heathen stories of the Gentiles be stuffed with such kind of dreams of much like effect.

Of such a like dream we read of the mother of Ethelstan, how the moon did spring out of her womb, and gave light to all England. Also of King Charles the emperor, how he was led by a thread to see the torments of hell. Likewise of Furceus the hermit, mentioned in the third book of Beda, who saw the joys of heaven, and the four fires that should destroy the world; the one of lying, for breaking our promise made at baptism; the second fire was of the covetous, the third of dissension, the fourth was of the fire of impiety and wrongful dealing. Item, in like sort of the dream of Dunstan and of the same Ethelwold, to whom appeared the three bishops, Bristanus, Birmus, and Swithinus, &c. Of the dream of the mother of this Ethelwold, who, being great with him, did see a golden eagle fly out of her mouth, &c. Of the dream likewise, or the vision, of King Edgar concerning the falling of the two apples, and of the pots, one being full of water, the other empty, &c. Also of King Edward the Confessor, touching the ruin of the land by the conqueror of the Normans, We read also, in the history of Astyages, how he dreamed of Cyrus, and likewise of many other dreams in the books of the monks, and of the ethnic writers. For what cannot either the idle vanity of man's head, or the deception of the lying spirit, work by man, in foreshowing

such earthly events as happen commonly in this present world? But here is a difference to be understood between these earthly dreams, speaking of earthly things and matters of human superstition; and between other spiritual revelations sent by God, touching spiritual matters of the church pertaining to man's salvation, But to our purpose, by this dream, and by the event which followed after, it may appear how and by what means the multitude of monks began first to swarm in the churches of England; that is, in the days of this Edgar, by the means of these three bishops, Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald. Albeit Dunstan was the chiefest ringleader of this race, yet Ethelwold, being now bishop of Winchester, and Oswald bishop of Worcester, were not much behind for their parts. By the instigation and counsel of these three foresaid, King Edgar is recorded in histories to build either new out of the ground, or to re-edify monasteries decayed by the Danes, more than forty. As the house of Ely, Glastenbury, Abbington, Burga by Stamford, Thorney, Ramsey, Wilton, Wenton, Winchcombe, Thamstoke in Devonshire, with divers more. In the setting up and building of the which the foresaid Ethelwold was a great doer and a founder under the king. Moreover, through the motion of this Dunstan and his fellows, King Edgar in divers great houses and cathedral churches, where prebendaries and priests were before, displaced the priests, and set in monks. Whereof we read in the Chronicles of Roger Hoveden, in words and form as followeth: Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, who was then one of the king's council, did urge the king chiefly to expel clerks out of monasteries, and in their rooms to bestow monks and nuns, &c. Thus the secular priests, being put to their choice, whether to change their habit or to leave their rooms, departed out of their houses, giving place for other better men to come in. Then the houses and monasteries of religious men through all the realm went up apace, &c.

After the king's mind was thus persuaded and incited by these bishops to advance monkery, then Oswaldus, bishop of Worcester, and also made archbishop of York after the decease of Oskitellus, (as Hoveden writeth,) having his see in the cathedral church there of St. Peter, began first with fair persuasions to assay the minds of the canons and priests, whether they could be content to change their profession and to be made monks, or no. Which when he saw it would not take effect, he practised this policy with them: Near to the said church of St. Peter, within the churchyard, be erected another church of our Lady, which when he had replenished with monks, there he continually frequented, there he kept, there he sat, and was ever there conversant. By reason whereof the other church was left naked and desolate, and all the people gathered there where the bishop was. The priests seeing themselves to be left and neglected both of the bishop and of the people, to whom nothing remained but shame and contempt, were driven of shame either to relinquish the house, (such as would not enter the monkish profession,) or else to become monks, such as had nothing else to stay upon. After the like superstition (although not after the same subtlety) did Ethelwold also drive out the canons and priests from the new monastery in Winchester, afterward called Hida, and placed his monks. So in Oxford and in Mildune, with divers other places more, the secular priests with their wives were expelled, to give place to monks. The cause whereof is thus pretended in certain story writers, whom I see also Fabian to follow; for that the priests and clerks were thought slack and negligent in their church service, and set in vicars in their stead, while they lived in pleasure, and misspent the patrimony of the church after their own lust. Then King Edgar gave to the vicars the same land which before belonged to the prebendaries; who also not long after showed themselves as negligent as the others. Wherefore King Edgar, (as mine authors write,) by the consent of Pope John the Thirteenth, voided clearly the priests, and ordained there monks. Although certain of

the nobles, and some of the prelates, were therewith not well contented, as in the chapter following may partly appear.

But forso much as we have entered into the mention of monks and nuns, and of their profession, which I see so greatly in our monkish stories commended, lest perhaps the simple reader may be deceived thereby, in hearing the name of monks in all histories of time to be such an ancient thing in Christian life, (even from the primitive church after the apostles' time,) both commonly recited and well received, therefore to help the judgment of the ignorant, and to prevent all error herein, it shall not be unprofitable, in following the present occasion here given, (by way of a little digression,) to intermeddle somewhat concerning the original institution of monks, what they were in the old time which were called Monachi, wherein the monks of the primitive time did differ from the monks of the middle time, and from these our monks now of this later age; moreover, wherein all these three do differ from priests, (as we call them,) and from men of the clergy. Wherefore to answer to the superstitious scruple of such, which allege the old antiquity of the name and title of monks, first, I grant the name and order of monks to be of old continuance, during near from the time of three hundred years after Christ. Of whom divers old authors do record, as Augustinus, Hieronymus, Basilius Magnus, who was also himself one of the first institutors and commendators of that superstition, Chrysostomus, Nazianzenus, Euagrius, Sozomenus, Dionysius, and divers others. In the number of these monks (which then were divided into hermits or anchorites, and into Cœnobites) were Antoninus, Paulus, Johannes, with divers other recluses. Among the which was Hierom, Basil, Macharius, Isidorus, Pambus, Nilammon, Simeon, with infinite others, both in Palestina, Syria, Thebaide, Mesopotamia, in Egypt, in Africa, and in Scythia. Insomuch that Cassianus maketh mention of a certain monastery in Thebaide, wherein were above five thousand monks under the government of one abbot. And here also in England mention is made before of Bangor, wherein were two thousand and two hundred monks under one man's ruling, in the year of our Lord 596. Whereby it appeareth that monks were then, and two hundred years before, in the primitive time of the church. But what monks these were is to be considered; such as either by tyranny of persecution were driven into solitary and desert places; or else such as, not constrained of any, but of their own voluntary devotion, (joined with some superstition among, for the love they had unto spiritual contemplation, and for hatred of the wicked world,) withdrew themselves from all company, either having nothing to themselves proper, or else all things common with others. And all these were then nothing else but laymen; of which laymen there were two sundry sorts, one of the vulgar and common people, which only were partakers of the sacraments; the other, in following a monastical kind of life, were called monks, (being nothing but laymen,) leading a more severe and stricter trade of life than the others, as appears from the following words of Augustine, "One thing pertaineth to monks, another thing unto them of the clergy; they of the clergy feed their flock, I am fed," &c. Also the same appeareth likewise by the fourth canon of the Council of Chaleedon, where it is provided that monks should not intermeddle with matters of the church.

By these foresaid authors alleged, it is evident that monks in the former age of the church, albeit they lived a solitary life, yet they were then no other but only laymen, differing from priests, and differing from the other monks which succeeded them afterwards in the middle age of the church, and that in three points: First, they were tied and bound to no prescript form either of diet or apparel, or any thing else, as we may see testified by the words of St. Augustine. And Sozomen, speaking of the

monks of the same time, which in cities had separate mansions from others, saith, Some live in cities, so behaving themselves as seeming nothing worth, and they differed nothing from the multitude, &c. The second point wherein they were discrepant from the later monks was, in that they remained no other but in the order of laymen, (only being of it stricter life than the rest,) and had nothing to do in matters and charges ecclesiastical; which was afterward broken by Pope Boniface the Fourth, as followeth (the Lord willing) to be seen and said. Thirdly, the foresaid monks of that age, albeit the most part of them lived sole and single from wives, yet some of them were married; certes none of them were forbidden or restrained from marriage. Of such as were married speaketh Athanasius; who saith that he knew both monks and bishops married men, and fathers of children, &c.

And yet the said monks of the old time, though they were better then the other which followed them, yet all that notwithstanding, superstition with them and among them began then to creep into the church through the crafty subtlety of Satan, and all for the ignorance of our free justification by faith in Jesus Christ. Examples do declare the vain and prodigious superstition of these monastical sort of men; which examples do not lack, if leisure rather did not lack to bring them in. But two or three shall suffice for many, which I purpose (the Lord willing) here to insert, to the intent the mind of the godly reader may the better consider and understand how shortly after the time of Christ and his apostles the doctrine of Christian justification began to be forgotten, true religion turned to superstition, and the price of Christ's passion to be obscured through the vain opinion of men's merits, &c. A certain abbot named Moses thus testifieth of himself in the collations of Cassianus, that he so afflicted himself with much fasting and watching, that some times for two or three days together, not only he felt no appetite to eat, but also had no remembrance of any meat at all, and by reason thereof was driven also from sleep. Insomuch that he was caused to pray to God but for a little refreshing of sleep to be given him some piece of the night. In the same author mention is made of a certain old man, a hermit, who because he had conceived in himself such a purpose never to eat meat without he had some guest or stranger with him, sometime was constrained to abstain five days together until Sunday, while he came to the church, and there brought some stranger or other home with him.

Two other examples yet more will I add out of the said Cassianus, to declare how the subtlety of Satan, through superstition and false colour of holiness, blindeth the miserable eyes of such, which rather attend men's traditions than the word of God. In the fortieth chapter of the said author, in his book De Gastrimargia, is told of a certain abbot named Joannes, in the desert wilderness of Seythia, who sent two of his novices with figs unto one that was sick in the wilderness eighteen miles off from the church. It chanced these two young novices, missing the way, wandered so long in the wild forest or wilderness, and could not find the cell, that for emptiness and weariness, they waxed faint and tired; and yet rather would they die than taste the figs committed to them to carry, and so did; for shortly after they were found dead, their figs lying whole by them.

Another story he also reciteth of two monastical brethren, who making their progress in the desert of Thebaide, purposed with themselves to take no sustenance but such as the Lord himself should minister unto them. It happened as they were wandering desolate in the desert, and fainting al most for penury, certain Mazises, a kind of people by nature fierce and cruel, notwithstanding being suddenly altered into a new nature of humanity, came forth, and of their own accord offered bread unto

them; which bread the one thankfully received as sent of God; the other, as counting it sent of man, and not of God, refused it, and so for lack perished.

Hereunto might I also annex the story of Mucius, who, to declare his obedience, did not stick at the commandment of his abbot to cast his son into the water, not knowing whether any were appointed there ready to rescue him from drowning; so far were the monks in those days drowned in superstition. What is this but for man's traditions and commandments to transgress the commandment of God, which saith, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God? What man is so blind that seeth not by these, and infinite examples more, what pernicious superstition hath begun by reason of this monkery, almost from the beginning, to creep into the church? Whereat I cannot marvel enough, seeing that age of the church had in it so many learned doctors, who not only did approve and allow these monastical sects of life, but also certain themselves were the authors and institutors of the same, yea, and of men's traditions made the service of God. In number of whom may be reckoned Basilius Magnus, and Nazianzenus, who, with immoderate austerity, did so pluck down themselves, that when they were called to the office of bishops, they were not able to sustain the labour thereof.

After these foresaid monks of that time above rehearsed followed other monks of the middle age of the church, who, as in multitude, so also in superstition increasing, began by little and little from their desolate dens in the vast wilderness to approach more near to great towns, where they had solemn monasteries founded by kings and queens, and king's daughters, and other rich consuls, as is partly before touched, and the causes also touched withal for the which they were first founded. All these impious and erroneous titles and causes we find alleged in stories, as in Malmesburiensis, Jornalensis, Henricus, and others more, In which histories I also note, that the most part of these aforesaid monasteries were erected first upon some great murder, either by war in the field, or privately committed at home, as shall well appear to them that read their books whom I have alleged. But to return to our monks again, who (as is said) first began to creep from the cold field into warm towns and cloisters, from towns then into cities, and at length from their close cells and cities into cathedral churches, (as here appeareth by this story of King Edgar,) where, not only they did abound in wealth and riches, (especially these monks of our later time,) but much more did swim in superstition and Pharisaiical hypocrisy, being yoked and tied in all their doings to certain prescript rules and formal observances; in watching, in sleeping, in eating, in rising, in praying, in walking, in talking, in looking, in tasting, in touching, in handling, in their gestures, in their vestures; every man apparelled not as the proper condition of others would require, nor as the season of the year did serve, but as the coacted rules and order of every sect did enforce them. The number of which sects was infinitely divers; some, after Basilius's rule, went in white; some, after Benet's rule, in black; some Cluniacensis, first set up by Otho in the time of this King Edgar, wearing after the rule of Benet's order; some, after Hierome's rule, leather-girdled, and coped above their white coat; some Gregorians, copper-coloured; some De valle umbrosa, grey monks; some Grandimontenses, wearing a coat of mails upon their bare bodies, with a black cloak thereupon; some Cistercians, who had white rochets on a black coat; some Celestines, all in blue, both cloak, cowl, and cap; some charter monks, wearing haircloth next their bodies; some Flagellants, going barefoot in long white linen shirts, with an open place in the back, where they beat themselves with scourges on the bare skin every day before the people's eyes, till the blood ran down, saying that it was revealed to them by an angel, that in so scourging themselves,

within thirty days and twelve hours they should be made so pure from sin, as they were when they first received baptism; some starred monks; some Jesuits, with a white girdle and russet cowl. Briefly, who can reckon the innumerable sects and disguised orders of their fraternities? some holding of St. Benet, some of St. Hierome, some of St. Basil, some of St. Bernard, some of St. Bridget, some of St. Bruno, some of St. Lewis, as though it were not enough for Christians to hold of Christ onmly. So subject were they to servile rules, that no part of Christian liberty remained among them; so drowned and sunk in superstition, that not only they had lost Christ's religion, but also almost the sense and nature of men. For where men naturally are and ought to be ruled by the discreet government of reason in all outward doings, wherein one rule can serve for all men; the circumstance of time, place, person, and business being so sundry and divers; contrary, among these, no reason, but only the knock of a bell, ruled all their doings; their rising, their sleeping, their praying, their eating. their coming in, their going out, their talking. their silence; and altogether like insensible people. either not having reason to rule themselves, or else as persons ungrateful to God, neither enjoying the benefit of reason created in them, nor yet using the grace of Christ's liberty, whereunto he redeemed them.

Thus thou seest, gentle reader, sufficiently declared what the monks were in the primitive time of the church, and what were the monks of the middle age, and of these our later days of the church. Whereunto join this withal, that where the monks of elder time (as is said) were mere lay men, and no spiritual ministers; afterward Bonifacius the Fourth made a decree, anno 606, that monks might use the office of preaching, of christening, of hearing confessions, and also of absolving them of their sins, &c. So then monks, who in the beginning were but laymen, and no spiritual ministers, forbidden by the general Council of Chalcedon (as is above related) to intermeddle with matters ecclesiastical, afterward, in process of time, did so much encroach upou the office of spiritual ministers, that at length the priests were discharged out of their cathedral churches, and monks set in their places; because that monks in those days, leading a stricter life, and professing chastity, had a greater countenance of holiness among the people than the priests, who then in the days of King Edgar had wives, (at least so many as would,) no law forbidding them to the contrary, till the time of Hildebrand, now called Gregory the Seventh, whereof more shall be said (Christ willing) in the book next following.

And thus much by the way as touching the order and profession of monks. Now to turn in again from whence we digressed, (that is,) to the matter of King Edgar, who following the counsel and leading of Dunstan, and the foresaid Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, was somewhat thereby inclined to superstition; but otherwise of his own nature well given to all virtues and princely acts, worthy of much commendation and famous memory. So excellent was he in justice, and sharp in correction of vices, (as well in his magistrates as other subjects,) that never before his days was less felony by robbers, nor less extortion or bribery by false officers. Such provinces and lordships as were not yet come under the king's subjection he united and adjoined to his dominion; and so made one perfect monarchy of the whole realm of England, with all the islands and borders about the same. Such as were wicked he kept under, he repressed them that were rebels, the godly he maintained, he loved the modest, he was devout to God, and beloved of his subjects, whom he governed in much peace and quietness. And as he was a great seeker of peace, so God did bless him with much abundance of peace and rest from all wars; so that, as the story recordeth of him, he neither tasted of any privy treason among his subjects, nor of any invasion of foreign

enemies. So studious he was of the public profit of his realm, and fruitful in his government, that, as the said story testifieth of him, no year passed in all the time of his reign, wherein he did not some singular and necessary commodity for the commonwealth, &c. A great maintainer he was of religion and learning, not forgetting herein the footsteps of King Alfred, his predecessor. Among his other princely virtues, this chiefly is to be regarded, that whereas other princes commonly in much peace and quietness are wont to grow into a dissolute negligence of life, or oblivion of their charge committed unto them; this king, in continuance of peace, (that notwithstanding,) kept ever with him such a watch and a vigilant severity, joined with a seemly clemency, that I cannot here but recite the witness of our story writers, testifying of his diligent care over the commonwealth: That he would suffer no man, of what degree of nobility soever he were, to dally out his laws without condign punishment, &c. And the same author adds, In all his time there was neither any privy picker nor open thief, but he that, in stealing other men's goods, would venture and suffer (as he was sure) the loss of his own life.

Moreover, as the studious industry of this prince was forward in all other points, so his prudent provision did not lack in this also, in driving out the devouring and ravening wolves throughout all his land. Wherein he used this policy, in causing Ludwallus, prince or king of Wales, to yield to him yearly by way of tribute three hundred wolves. By means whereof, within the space of four years after, in England and Wales might scantily be found one wolf alive.

This Edgar, among other of his politic deeds, had in readiness three thousand six hundred ships of war to scour the seas in the summer time; whereof one thousand two hundred kept the east seas, as many defended the west side; again, as many were on the south seas, to repulse the invasion of foreign enemies. Moreover, in winter season, the use and manner of this virtuous king was this: during all the time of his life, to ride over the land in progress, searching and inquiring diligently (to use here the words of mine author) how his laws and statutes by him ordained were kept, and that the poor should suffer no prejudice, or be oppressed any manner of ways by the mightier, &c. Briefly, as I see many things in this worthy prince to be commended, so this one thing in him I cannot but lament, to see him, like a phoenix, to fly alone, that of all his posterity so few there be that seek to keep him company. And although I have showed more already of this king than I think will well be followed, yet this more is to be added to the worthiness of his other acts, that whereas, by the multitude of the Danes dwelling in divers places of England, much excessive drinking was used, whereupon ensued drunkenness and many other vices, to the evil example and hurt of his subjects; he therefore, to prevent that evil, ordained certain cups, with pins or nails set in them, adding thereunto a law, that what person drank past the mark at one draught should forfeit a certain penny, whereof one half should fall to the accuser, and the other half to the ruler of the borough or town where the offence was done.

It is reported of this Edgar by divers authors, that about the thirteenth year of his reign, he being at Chester, eight kings, (called in histories *sub reguli*,) to wit, petty kings, or under kings, came and did homage to him. Of whom the first was the king of Scots, called Kinadius, Macolinus of Cumberland, Mackus or Mascusinus, king of Monia, and of divers other islands, and all the kings of Wales, the names of whom were Dufnall, or Dune waldus, Sifresh, Huwall, Jacob, Ulkel, Juchel. All which kings, after they had given there fidelity to Edgar, the next day following (for a pomp or royalt) he entered with these aforesaid kings into the river of Dee; where he, sitting in a boat, took the rule of the helm, and caused these eight kings, every person taking an

oar in his hand, to row him up and down the river to and from the church of St. John unto his palace again, in token that he was master and lord of so many provinces.

And thus ye have heard hitherto, touching the commendation of King Edgar, such reports as the old monkish writers thought to bestow upon him, as upon the great patron of their monkish religion, who had builded so many monasteries for them as were Sundays in the year, (as some say,) or, as Edmer reporteth, but forty and eight.

Now, on the other side, what vices in him were reigning let us likewise consider, according as we find in the said authors described, which most write to his advancement. Whereof the first vice is noted to be cruelty, as well upon others, as namely upon a certain earl, being of his secret council, called Ethelwold. The story is this: Ordgarus, duke of Devonshire, had a certain daughter named Elfrida, whose beauty being highly commended to the king, he being inflamed therewith, sent this foresaid Ethelwold (whom he specially trusted) to the party, to see and to bring him word again; and if her beauty were such as was reported, willing him also to make the match between them. Ethelwold well viewing the party, and seeing her beauty no thing inferior to her fame, and thinking first to serve his own turn, told all things contrary unto the king. Whereupon the king, withdrawing his mind other wise, in the end it came to pass that Ethelwold himself did marry her.

Not long after, the king understanding further by the complaints and rumours of certain how he was prevented and beguiled, set a fair face upon the matter before Ethelwold; and merrily jesting with him, told him how he would come and see his wife, and indeed appointed the day when he would be there. Ethelwold the husband, perceiving this matter to go hardly with him, made haste to his wife, declaring to her the coming of the king, and also opening the whole order of the matter how he had done; desiring her of all love, as she would save his life, to disgrace and deform herself with garments and such attire as the king might take no delighting in her. Elfrida hearing this, what did she, but, contrary to the request of her husband and promise of a wife, against the king's coming, trimmed herself at the glass, and decked her in her best array. Whom when the king beheld, he was not so much enamoured with her as in hatred with her husband, who had so deceived him. Whereupon the king shortly after, making as though he would go to hunt in the forest of Harwood, sent for Ethelwold to come to him under the pretence of hunting, and there ran him through and slew him. After this, the bastard son of Ethelwold coming to him, the king asked him how he liked that hunting; who answered again, that which pleaseth the king ought not to displease him; for the death of which Ethelwold Elfrida afterward builded a monastery of nuns in remission of sins.

Another fault which Malmesbury noteth in him was the coming in of strangers into this land, as Saxons, Flemings, and Danes, whom he with great familiarity retained to the great detriment of the land, as the foresaid story of Malmesbury recordeth, whose words be these: Whereby it happened that divers strangers out of foreign countries, allured by his fame, came into the land, as Saxons, Flemings, and Danes also, all which he retained with great familiarity. The coming of which strangers bred great damage to the realm, and therefore is Edgar justly blamed in stories, &c. With the which reprehension the Saxon stories also do agree.

The third vice to him objected was, his incontinent and lascivious lust in deflouring maids, as first of a duke's daughter being a nun, and a virgin named Wilfrida, or Wilstrud; of which Wilfrida was born Editha, a bastard daughter of Edgar. Also of another certain virgin in the town of Andevar, who was privily conveyed into

his bed by this means: The lascivious king coming to Andevar, not far from Winchester, and thinking to have his pleasure of a certain duke's daughter, of whose beauty he heard much speaking, commanded the maid to be brought unto him. The mother of the virgin, grieving to have her daughter made a concubine, secretly by night conveyed to the king's bed, instead of her daughter, another maiden, of beauty and favour not uncomely; who in the morning rising to her work, and so being known of the king what she was, had granted unto her of the king such liberty and freedom, that of a servant she was made mistress both to her master, and also to her mistress.

Another concubine he had also besides these aforesaid, which was Egelfleda, or Efreda, called Candida, the white daughter of Duke Ordmere, (as Guliel. Malmsbur. recordeth,) she being also a professed nun, of whom he begot Edward in bastardy; for the which he was enjoined by Dunstan seven years' penance. After which penance being complete, then he took to him a lawful wife, (as Malmsb. saith,) Elfritha, the mother of Edmund and Ethelred, or otherwise called Egelred, whereof more shall be said (the Lord willing) hereafter.

Over and besides all these vices noted and objected to King Edgar in our monkish story writers, I also observe another no less, or rather greater, vice than the other afore recited, which was, blind superstition and idolatrous monkery brought into the church of Christ, with the wrongful expulsi^on of lawfull married priests out of their houses. Where upon what inconveniences ensued after in this realm, especially in the house of the Lord, I leave it to the consideration of them which have heard of the detestable enormities of those religious votaries; the occasion whereof first and chiefly began in this Edgar, through the instigation of Dunstan and his fellows, who after they had inveigled the king, and had brought him to their purpose, they caused him to call a council of the clergy; where it was enacted that the canons of divers cathedral churches, collegin^{er}s, parsons, vicars, priests, and deacons, with their wives and children, either should give over that kind of life, or else give room to monks, &c. For execution of which decree two principal visitors were appointed, Athelwold or Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, and Oswald, bishop of Worcester, as is partly before touched.

And thus much concerning the history of King Edgar, and of such things as in his time happened in the church; which Edgar, after he had entered into the parts of Britain to subdue the rebellion of the Welchmen, and there had spoiled the country of Glamorgan, and wasted the country of Odo, within ten days after, when he had reigned the space of sixteen years, he died, and was buried at Glastenbury, leaving after him two bastards, to wit, Editha and Edward, and one son lawfully begotten, named Ethelred, or otherwise by corruption called Egelred, for Edmund the elder son died before his father.

You heard before how King Edgar is noted in all stories to be an incontinent liver in deflouring maids and virgins. Of which virgins three notoriously are expressed in authors, to wit, Ulstrude, or Ulfride; the second was the duke's maid at Andevar, near to Winchester; the third was Elfled, mother of Edward, for the which Elfled he was stayed and kept back from his coronation by Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, the space of seven years; and so the said king, beginning his reign in the sixteenth year of his age, being the year of the Lord 959, was crowned at his age one and thirty, A.D. 974, as in the Saxon chronicle of Worcester church may be proved. For the more evident declaration of which matter, concerning the coronation of the king restrained, and the presumptuous behaviour of Dunstan against the king, and his penance by the

said Dunstan enjoined, ye shall hear both Osberne, Malmesburiensis, and other authors speak in their own words as followeth: *Perpetrato itaque in virginem velatam peccato*, &c. After that Dunstan had understanding of the king's offence perpetrated with the professed nun, and that the same was blazed amongst the people, with great ire and passion of mind he came to the king, who seeing the archbishop coming, eftsoons of gentleness arose from his regal seat towards him, to take him by the hand and to give him place. But Dunstan refusing to take him by the hand, and with stern countenance bending his brows, spake after this effect of words (as stories import) unto the king: You that have not feared to corrupt a virgin maid handfast to Christ, presume you to touch the consecrated hands of a bishop? You have defiled the spouse of your Maker, and think you by flattering service to pacify the friend of the bridegroom? No, sir, his friend will not I be which hath Christ to his enemy, &c. The king, terrified with these thundering words of Dunstan, and compuncted with inward repentance of his sin perpetrated, fell down with weeping at the feet of Dunstan; who, after he had raised him up from the ground again, began to utter to him the horribleness of his fact; and finding the king ready to receive whatsoever satisfaction he would lay upon him, enjoined him this penance for seven years' space, as followeth: That he should wear no crown all that space, that he should fast twice in the week, he should distribute his treasure left to him of his ancestors liberally unto the poor, he should build a monastery of nuns at Sbaftsbury; that as he had robbed God of one virgin through his transgression, so should he restore to him many again in times to come, Moreover, he should expel clerks of evil life (meaning such priests as had wives and children) out of churches, and place convents of monks in their room, &c.

It followeth then in the story of Osberne, that when the seven years of the king's penance were expired, Dunstan calling together all the peers of the realm, with bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastical degrees of the clergy, in the public sight of all the multitude set the crown upon the king's head at Bath, which was the one and thirtieth year of his age, and the thirteenth year of his reign; so that he reigned only but three years crowned king. All the other years besides Dunstan belike ruled the land as he listed. Furthermore, as touching the son of the said Elfled, thus the story writeth: The child also which was gotten of the harlot he baptized in the holy fountain of regeneration, and so giving his name to be called Edward, did adopt him to be his son, &c.

By the which narration of Osbern, agreeing also with the story of the Saxon book above mentioned, is convinced a double untruth or error, either negligently overseen, or of purpose dissembled in our later monkish story writers, as in Malmesbury, Matth. Paris, Matth. Westm., and others besides. Who, to conceal the fault of King Edgar, or to bear with Dunstan's fact, in setting up Edward for the maintenance of their monkish order, first, do falsely affirm, that Editha, the daughter of Ulfride, was born after Edward, and that for her this penance was enjoined to King Edgar. Which neither is nor can be so, as in process hereafter (the Lord willing) shall appear.

Secondly, they are deceived in this, that they affirm King Edgar to have two wives, and that Elfleda, the mother of Edward, was not a professed nun indeed, but dissembled so to be to avoid the violence of the king; whereas, indeed, the truth of the story both giveth her to be a nun, and her son to be base, and she herself never to be married unto the king.

After the death of Edgar, no small trouble arose amongst the lords and bishops for succession of the crown; the principal cause whereof rose upon this occasion, as by the story of Simon of Durhann and Roger Hoveden is declared. Immediately after the decease of the king, Alferus, duke of Mercia, and many other nobles which held with Ethelred, the only right heir and lawful son of Edgar, misliking the placing and intruding of regular orders into churches, and the thrusting of the secular priests, with their wives and children, out of their ancient possessions, expelled the abbots and monks, and brought in again the foresaid priests with their wives. Against whom certain other there were on the contrary part that made resistance, as Ethelwin, duke of East Angles, Elfwoldus, his brother, and the Earl Brithnothus, saying in a council together assembled, that they would never suffer the religious monks to be expelled and driven out of the realm, which held up all religion in the land; and thereupon eftsoons levied an army, whereby to defend by force the monasteries, such as were within the precinct of East Anglia.

In this hurly-burly amongst the lords, about the placing of monks and putting out of priests, rose also the contention about the crown, who should be their king; the bishops and such lords as favoured the monks seeking to advance such a king as they knew would incline to their side; so that the lords, thus divided, some of them would have Edward, and some consented upon Egelred the lawful son. Then Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, and Oswald, archbishop of York, with other their fellow bishops, abbots, and divers other lords and dukes, assembled in a council together. In the which council Dunstan, coming in with his cross in his hand, and bringing Edward before the lords, so persuaded them, that in the end Edward, by Dunstan's means, was elected, consecrated, and anointed for their king.

And thus hast thou, good reader, the very truth of this story, according to the writing of authors of most antiquity which lived nearest to that age, as Osbern and others; which Osbern, living in the days of William the Conqueror, wrote this story of Dunstan through the motion of Lanfranc, and allegeth, or rather translateth, the same out of such Saxon stories as were written before his time. Besides which Osbern, we have also for witness hereof Nicholas Trivet, in his English story written in French, and also Joannes Paris in his French story written in the Latin tongue, where he plainly calleth Edward, no lawful son. Whereunto add, moreover, the testimony of Vincentius and Antoninus, who in plain terms likewise report the same.

Now, having laid the foundation for the truth and ground of this matter, let us come to examine how truly our later writers do say, which write that Editha, and not Edward, was the child for whom Dunstan enjoined to the king seven years penance; and also how truly they report Edward to be a lawful heir, and Elfred to be a lawful wife to King Edgar.

For, first, touching Editha, this is confessed by the said writers themselves, that she was of good years at what time Edgar her father was enjoined his penance. After the which seven years of his penance expired, he lived at the most but three years and a half, which seven years and three years and a half do make in all but ten years and a half. But now the said authors themselves do grant, that she was made abbess by her father, he being then alive. And how can this then stand with her legend, which saith that she was not less than fifteen years of age? By which account it must needs fall out, that she could not be so little as five years old before the birth of that child for whom the king did penance.

And thus much touching Editha. Now in like manner to consider of the time of Edward. First, this by all writers is granted, that he was slain in the fifteenth year of his age. Which years do well agree to that child which King Edgar begat in bastardy, and for the which he did his penance; for the more evidence whereof, let us come to the supputation of the years in this sort.

First, the penance of the king after the birth of this child lasted seven years. Then the king after the same lived three years and a half. After whose death Edward reigned other three years and a half, which in all make the full sum of fourteen years. About the count of which age, the said Edward going on his fifteenth year by their own reckoning, was slain.

And thus have ye by manifest demonstration proved by the right casting of the years, after their own grant and reckoning, that Editha, daughter of Ulfride, in no case can be the child which was born after Edward, and for whom the king was enjoined penance; but that Edward rather was born after Editha, and was the child for whom the penance was enjoined, contrary to the opinion commonly received in the church, which for ignorance of the story hath hitherto holden Edward to be a holy martyr, and right heir unto the crown. Which error and opinion how it first sprang, and by whom, albeit it pertain not to my story to discuss, yet were it no hard matter to conjecture.

First, after that Dunstan and Oswald, with other bishops, abbots, and certain lords and dukes of that faction, for the maintenance of monkery, had advanced Edward to be king, against Queen Alfrith, mother of Ethelred, and Alferus, duke of Mercia, and certain other nobles which held the contrary side of the priests against the monks; in process of time the monks that came after to write stories, perceiving Dunstan to be reputed in the Church of Rome for a holy saint, and the said King Edward for a holy martyr, and partly also to bolster up their own religion of monkery so much as they could, to the intent therefore that they might save both the credit of Dunstan and of the king, and especially bearing favour to their own religion, and partly that the reputation of the Church of Rome should not be distained by opening the truth of this matter, either they did not see, or would not confess herein what they knew; but rather thought best to blanch the story, and colourably to hide the simple truth thereof, making the people falsely believe that Elfleda, the mother of Edward, was wife to King Edgar, and Edward to be lawfully born, and also that Editha was born after Edward, and to be the child for which the king was enjoined penance. All which is false, and contrary both to the order of time above declared, and also to the plain words of Malmesbury, which speaking of King Edgar's last concubine, saith in plain words, He had a concubine whom he loved entirely, keeping true faith of his bed to her alone, until the time he married for his lawful wife Elfrid, the daughter of Duke Ordgar, &c. Whereby we have to understand, that whatsoever concubine this was which Malmesbury speaketh of, certain it is that Edgar lived in whoredom till the time he married his lawful wife. Furthermore, and finally to conclude, beside these arguments and allegations above recited, let this also be perpended, how the said Dunstan with his complices, after the killing of King Edward, leaving the right heir of the crown, (which was Ethelred,) went about (as Capgrave and their own legend confesseth) to set up Editha, the other bastard, to possess the crown; but that she, more wise than her brother Edward, refused the same. Whereby what is to be thought of the doings of Dunstan, and what should be the cause why he preferred both Edward and Editha to the crown, rather than the lawful heir, I leave to all indifferent readers thereof to judge.

27. King Edward the Martyr

After that Dunstan and his fellows had thus set up Edward for their king, they were now where they would be, supposing all to be sure on their side, and that they had established the kingdom of monkery for ever, through the help of the young king, and the duke of East Angles, and certain other nobles whom they had drawn to their part. Howbeit this matter passed not so well with them as they hoped. For shortly after the coronation of this young king, Alferus, duke of Mercia, who followed much the deeds of the queen, with other great men, stoutly standing on the contrary side, drove out the monks from the cathedral churches which King Edgar before had set in, and restored again the priests, (as Ranulphus saith,) with their concubines; but in the History of the Library of Jornall I find it plainly expressed, with their wives. The words of the very author be these: Alferus, duke of Mercia, with other great men more, drove out the monks from the great monasteries whom King Edgar had there set in before, and restored again the priests with their wives.

Whereby it doth evidently appear that priests in those days were married, and had their lawful wives. The like before that in King has's time is plain, that bishops then had wives and children, as appeareth by the words of the law then sent forth, extant in the History of the said JornaLensis.

Now to the purpose again of our matter, which is to declare how the duke and nobles of England expelled the monks out of the monasteries after the death of King Edgar; whereof let us hear what the monkish story of the abbey of Crowland recordeth: The monks being expelled out of certain monasteries, the clerks again were brought in, who distributed the manors or farms of the said monasteries to the dukes and lords of the land, that they, being obliged to them, should defend them against the monks. And so were the monks of Evesham thrust out, and the secular clerks placed, and the lands of the church given to the lords; with whom the queen, the king's step-mother, holding the same time, took part also with the said clerks against the king. On the contrary part stood the king and the holy bishops taking part with the monks. Howbeit the lords and peers of the realm, staying upon the favour and power of the queen, triumphed over the monks, &c.

Thus, as much ado there was through all quarters of the realm about the matter among the lords, so arose no less contention between the priests and monks of England. The priests, com plaining to the king and Dunstan, said for themselves that it was uncomely, uncharitable, yea, and unnatural, to put out an old known dweller for a new unknown; and that God was not pleased that that should be taken from the ancient possessor which by God was given him; neither that it could be of any good man accepted, to suffer any such in jury to be done, lest peradventure the same thing wherein he was prejudicial to another might after revert and redound upon himself at length. The monks, on the other side, said for their part, that Christ allowed neither the old dweller nor the newcomer, nor yet looked upon the person, but whoso would take the cross of penance upon him, and follow Christ in virtuous living, should be his disciple.

These and such other were the allegations of the monks, But whether a monk's cowl or a wifeless life make a sufficient title to enter into other men's possessions or no, I refer it to the judgment of the godly. The troublous cares in marriage, the

necessary provision for housekeeping, the virtuous bringing up of children, the daily helping of poverty and bearing of public charges, with other manifest perturbations and cumbrances daily incident unto matrimony, might rather appear to godly wise men to come nearer to the right cross of penance than the easy and loitering idleness of monkery. In the end, upon this controversy was holden a council of bishops and other of the clergy. First, at Reading, or at Winchester, (as Guliel. saith,) where the greater part both of the nobles and commons judged the priests to have great wrong, and sought by all means possible to bring them again to their old possessions and dignities. Jornalensis here maketh rehearsal of an image of the crucifix, or a rood, standing upon the Frater wall where the council was holden. To this rood Dunstan requireth them all to pray, being belike not ignorant of some spiritual provision beforehand. In the midst of their prayer the rood (or else some blind monk behind it in a trunk) through the wall is reported to speak these words: *Absit hoc ut fiat, absit hoc ut fiat: judicatis bene, mutaretis non bene*. In remembrance whereof these verses were written under the rood's feet:

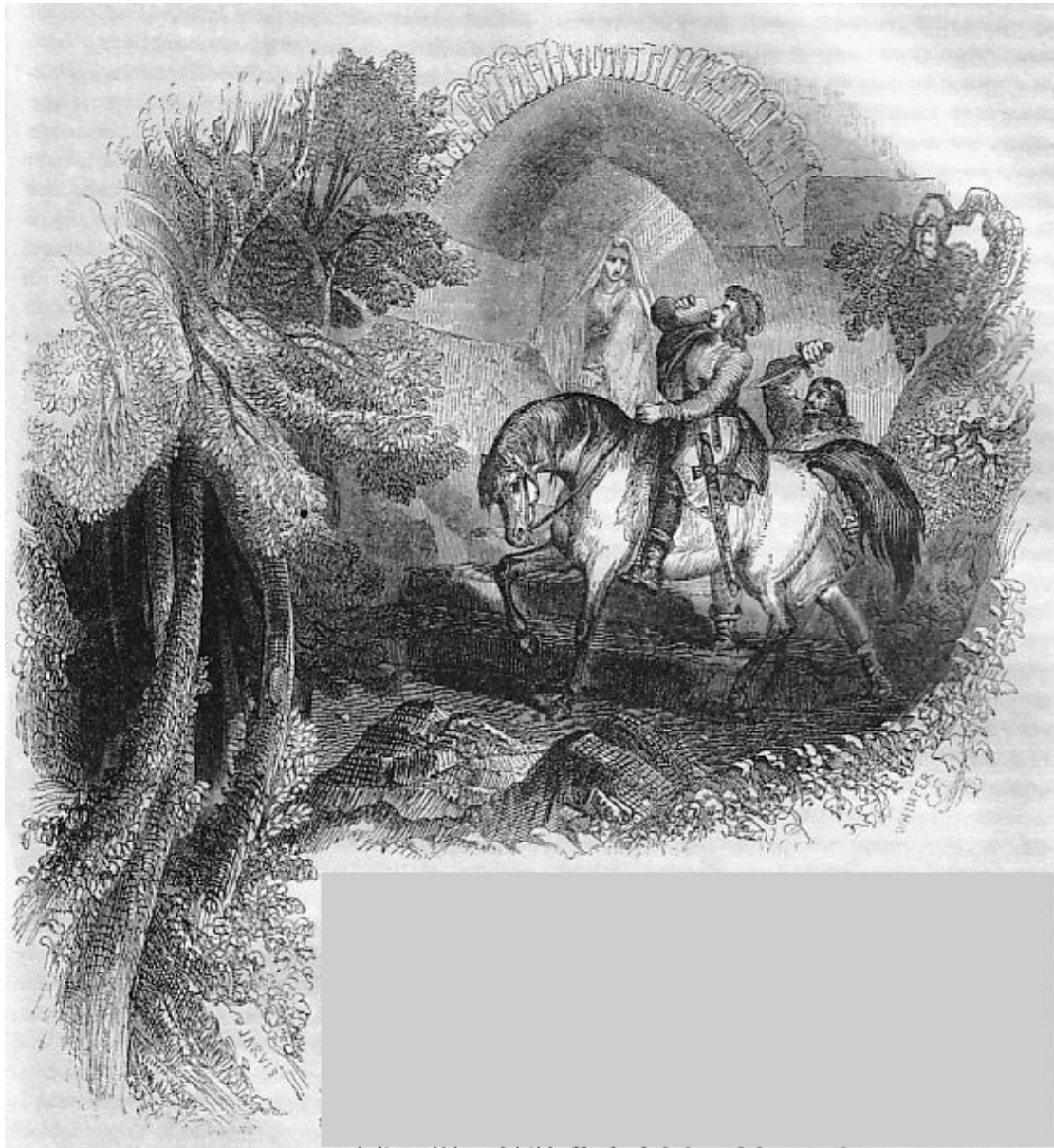
*Humano more crux præsens edidit ore,
Cælitus affata, quæ perspicis hic subarata,
Absit ut hoc fiat, et cætera tunc memorata.*

Of this Dunstanical, or rather Satanical, oracle, Henry maketh no mention, nor Ranulphus, nor yet Hovedenus, nor Fabian, in their histories. Gulielmus in his book *De Regibus* reporteth it, but by hearsay, in these words, saying, *Aliæ literæ decent, &c.* Wherefore the less it seemeth to be of credit. Albeit if it were of credible truth, yet it proveth in this matter nothing else but Dunstan to be a sorcerer, as Polydor Virgil also himself seemeth to smell something in this matter.

Notwithstanding, for all this yet the strife ceased not; insomuch that a new assembly of the clergy and other was appointed after at a place called the Street of Calve, where the council was kept in an upper loft. In this council many grievous complaints were objected (as Malmesbury saith) against Dunstan; but yet he kept his opinion, and would not there remove from that which he began to maintain. And while they were in great contention and argument which way should be admitted and allowed, (if it be true that in the stories is written,) suddenly the joists of the loft failed, and the people with the nobles fell down, so that certain were slain, and many hurt. But Dunstan (they say, only standing upon a post of the floor which remained unbroken) escaped without danger. Which thing, whether it so happened to portend before the ruin of the realm and of the nobles (as Henry Huntington doth expound it) which after ensued by the Danes, or whether it was so wrought by Dunstan's sorcery, (as was not impossible,) or whether it were a thing but feigned of the monkish writers, and not true; all this I leave to the readers, to think therein what them liketh. The stories say further that upon this the matter ceased, and Dunstan had all his will.

These things thus done at Calve, it happened not long after the same, that King Edward, whom the writers describe to be a virtuous and a meek prince, much pitiful and beneficial to the poor, about the fourth year of his reign came upon a season from hunting in the forest alone, without the company of his servants, to the place in the west country where Alfrith his mother, with her son Egelred, did lie. When the queen the mother was warned of his coming by her men, anon she calleth a servant of hers which was of her special trust, opening to him all her conceived counsel, and showing him all points how and what to do for the accomplishing of her wicked purpose. Which thing so done, she made towards the king, and received him with all courtesy, desiring him to tarry that night; but he in like courtesy excused himself, and for speed

desired to see his brother, and to drink upon his horse sitting, the which was shortly brought.



The Murder of King Edward the Martyr

Now while the cup was at his mouth, the servant of the queen (being informed) struck him in the body with a long two-edged dagger. After the which stroke the king took the horse with the spurs, and ran toward the way where he supposed to meet with his company, but he bled so sore that, with faintness, he fell from his horse, his one foot being in the stirrup. By reason whereof he was drawn of his horse over fields and lands till he came to a place named Corifgate, where he was found dead; and for that neither the manner of his death nor yet he himself was known to be the king, he was buried unhonourably at the town of Warham, where the body remained the space of three years, and then after was taken up by Duke Alfer above mentioned, and with pomp and honour accordingly was removed to the minster of Shaftsbury, and there bestowed in the place called Edwardstow. Many tales run (more perchance than be

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true) concerning the finding and taking up of his body, which our most common histories ascribe to miracles and great wonders wrought about the place where the king was buried. As, first, how a poor woman born blind received her sight by the means of St. Edward, there where he did lie. Also how a pillar of fire from heaven descended over the place of his burial. Then how the foresaid Queen Alfrith, taking her horse to go to the place, was stopped by the way, that neither her horse could be driven by any means, nor she herself on foot was able to approach near to the place where the corpse of St. Edward was. Furthermore, how the said queen, in repentance of her fact, afterward builded two nunneries, one at Amesbury, by Salisbury, the other at Werewell, where she kept herself in continual repentance all the days of her life. And thus, as ye have heard, was this virtuous young King Edward murdered when he had reigned almost four years, leaving no issue behind him, whereby the rule of the land fell to Egelredus, his brother.

But here by the way is to be noted (upon the name of this Edward) that there were three Edwards before the conquest. The first was King Edward the Senior; the second, King Edward the Martyr, which was this king; the third was King Edward called the Confessor, whereof here after shall follow (Christ willing) to be declared.

28. King Egelred or Ethelred, "The Unready"

King Edward thus being murdered, as is aforesaid, the crown fell next to Egelred, his younger brother, and son to King Edgar by the foresaid Queen Alfrith, as we have declared. This Egelred had a long reign given him of God, which dured the term of eight and thirty years, but very unfor tunate and full of great miseries; and he himself (by the histories) seemeth to be a prince not of the greatest courage to govern a common wealth. Our English stories writing of him, thus report of his reign, that in the beginning it was ungracious, wretched in the middle, and hateful in the latter end. Of this Egelred it is read, that when Dunstan the archbishop should christen him, as he did hold him over the font, something there happened that pleased not Dunstan, whereupon he sware, By the mother of Christ, he will be a prince untoward and cowardly. I find in William of Malmesbury, that this Egelred, being of the age of ten years, when he heard of his brother Edward to be slain, made such sorrow and weeping for him, that his mother, falling therewith in a rage, took wax candles, (having nothing else at hand,) wherewith she scourged him so sore, (well near till he swooned,) that after the same he could never abide any wax candles to burn before him. After this, about the year of our Lord 981, (the day of his coronation being appointed by the queen the mother, and the nobles,) Dunstan the archbishop of Canterbury, (who first refused so to do,) with Oswald archbishop of York, were enforced to crown the king, and so they did at Kingston. In doing whereof the report of stories goeth, that the said Dunstan should say thus, prophesying, unto the king: that forsomuch as he came to the kingdom by the death of his brother, and through the conspiracy of the wicked conspirators and other English men, they should not be without bloodshedding and sword, till there came a people of an unknown tongue, and should bring them into thraldom, neither should that trespass be cleansed without long vengeance, &c.

Not long after the coronation of this king, a cloud was seen throughout the land, which appeared the one half like blood, and the other half like fire, and changed after into sundry colours, and vanished at the last in the morning. Shortly after the appearance of this cloud, in the third year of his reign, the Danes, arriving in sundry places of the land, first spoiled Southampton, either slaving the inhabitants, or leading them captive away. From thence they went to the Isle of Thanet, then they invaded Chester, from thence they proceeded to Cornwall and Devonshire, and so to Sussex, where in those coasts they did much harm, and so retired to their ships again. Roger Hoveden, writing hereof, saith, that London the same time, or (as Fabian saith) a great part of London, was consumed with fire. About this time fell a variance between the foresaid Egelred and the bishop of Rochester; insomuch that he made war against him, and besieged the city. And notwithstanding that Dunstan required the king, sending him admonishment, to give over for the sake of St. Andrew; yet continued he his siege, till the bishop offered him a hundred pounds of gold; which he received, and so departed. The Danes seeing the discord that then was in the realm, and especially the hatred of the subjects against the king, rose again, and did great harm in divers places of England; insomuch that the king was glad to grant them great sums of money for peace to be had. For the assurance of which peace, Analaffe, captain of the Danes, became a Christian man, and so returned home to his country, and did no more harm. Besides these miseries before recited, a sore sickness of the bloody flux and hot fevers

fell among the people, whereof many died; with a like murrain also among the beasts. Moreover, for lack of justice, many thieves, rioters, and bribers were in the land, with much misery and mischief.

About the eleventh year (some say the ninth year) of this king's reign died Dunstan. After whom succeeded Ethelgarus, or, as Jornalensis writeth, Stilgarus. After him Elfricus, as affirmeth Gulielmus; but, as Polydorus saith, Siricius. After him Elfricus came; but Siricius, after the mind of Gulielmus; but Polydore saith Aluricius, then Elphegus, &c.

About the same time, in the year of our Lord 995, Aldunus, bishop, translated the body of St. Cuthbert from Chester (which first was at a northern island, next at Rochester) to Durelme, or Dunelme. Where upon the bishop's see of Dunelme first began.

Not long after the death of Dunstan, the Danes again entered England in many and sundry places of the land; in such sort, that the king was to seek to which coast he should go first to withstand his enemies. But in conclusion, for the avoiding of more harm, he was compelled to appease them with great sums of money. But when that money was spent, they fell to new robbing of the people, and assailing the land in divers places, not only about the country of Northumberland, but also besieged the city of London at the last. But being from thence repelled by the manhood of the Londoners, they strayed to other countries adjoining, as to Essex, Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire, burning and killing wheresoever they went; so that, for lack of a good head or governor, many things in the land perished. For the king gave himself to the vice of lechery, and polling of his subjects, and disinherited men of their possessions, and caused them to redeem the same again with great sums of money; for he paid great tributes to the Danes yearly, which was called Danegelt. Which tributes so increased, that from the first tribute of ten thousand pounds, it was brought at last in process of five or six years to forty thousand pounds. The which yearly (until the coming of St. Edward, and after) was levied of the subjects of this land.

To this sorrow moreover was joined hunger and penury among the commons, insomuch that every one of them was constrained to pluck and steal from others. So that, what for the pillage of the Danes, and what by inward thieves and bribers, this land was brought into great affliction. Albeit the greatest cause of this affliction (as to me appeareth) is not so much to be imputed to the king as to the dissension among the lords themselves, who then did not agree one with another. But when they assembled in consultation together, either they did draw divers ways; or if any thing were agreed upon any matter of peace between the parties, soon it was broken again; or else if any good thing were devised for the prejudice of the enemy, anon the Danes were warned thereof by some of the same counsel. Of whom the chief doers were Edrike, duke of Mercia, and Alfrike, the admiral or captain of the ships, who betrayed the king's navy to the Danes. Wherefore the king apprehended Alfagarus son of the said Alfrike, put out his eyes, and so did he after to the two sons of Duke Edrike in like manner.

The Danes, thus prevailing more and moreover the Englishmen, grew in such pride and presumption, that when they by strength caused the husbandmen to ear and sow the land, and to do all other vile labour belonging to the house, they would sit at home, holding the wife at their pleasure, with daughter and servant. And when the husbandman came home, he should scantily have of his own, as his servants had; so that the Dane had all at his will and fill, faring of the best, when the owner scantily had his fill of the worst. Thus the common people, being of them oppressed, were in such

fear and dread, that not only they were constrained to suffer them in their doings, but also glad to please them, and called every one of them, in the house where they had rule, Lord Dane. Which word after (in process of time, when the Danes were voided) was, for despite of the Danes, turned of the Englishmen to a name of opprobry, that when one Englishman would rebuke another, he would for the more part call him Lurdane.

And thus hitherto (through the assistance of Christ) we have brought this history to the year of our Lord 1000. During now and continuing these great miseries upon this English nation, the land being brought into great ruin by the grievous tributes of the Danes, and also by sustaining the manifold villanies and injuries, as well by them as by other oppressions within this realm; this year, which was the year of our Saviour 1000, this Egelred, through the counsel of certain his familiars about him, in the one and twentieth year of his reign began a matter, which was occasion, either given by the one, or taken by the other, of a new plague to ensue upon the Saxons, who had driven out the Britons before; that was in joining with the Normans in marriage. For the king this year above said, for the more strength (as he thought) both of him and the realm, married Emma, the daughter of Richard, duke of Normandy. Which Richard was the third duke of the Normans, and the first of that name. By reason of which marriage King Egelred was not a little enhanced in his own mind; and, by presumption thereof, sent secret and strict commissions to the rulers of every town in England, that, upon St. Brice's day, at an hour appointed, the Danes should be suddenly slain. And so it was performed, which turned after to more trouble.

After that tidings came into Denmark of the murder of those Danes, anon after, Swanus, king of Denmark, with a great host and navy, landed in Cornwall; where, by treason of a Norman named Hugh, which by favour of Queen Emma was made earl of Devonshire, the said Swanus took Exeter, and after beat down the walls. From thence, proceeding further into the land, they came to Wilton and Shirebome, where they cruelly spoiled the country, and slew the people. But anon Swanus, hearing that the king was coming to him with the power of his land, took his ships and went round to Northfolke; where, after much wasting of that country, and spoiling the city of Norwich, and burning the town of Thetford, and destroying the country thereabout, at length Duke Uskatell met him and beat him, and slew many of the Danes. Wherefore Swanus for that year returned to Denmark, and there made great provision to re-enter the land again the next year following; and so did, landing at Sandwich about the five and twentieth year of the reign of King Egelred, and there spoiled that country. And as soon as he heard of any host of Englishmen coming toward him, then he took shipping again. So that when the king's army sought to meet him in one coast, then would he suddenly land in another. And when the king provided to meet with him upon the sea, either they would feign to flee, or else they would with gifts blind the admiral of the king's navy. And thus wearied they the Englishmen, and in conclusion brought them into extreme and unspeakable misery. Insomuch that the king was fain to take peace with them, and gave to King Swanus thirty thousand pounds. After which peace thus made, Swanus returned again to Denmark.

But this peace continued not long. For the year next following, King Egelred made Edricus above mentioned duke of Mercia, who was subtle of wit, glossing and eloquent of speech, untrusty, and false to the king and the realm. And soon after one Turkillus (a prince of the Danes) landed in Kent with much people, and there did such harm, that the Kentish men were fain to make peace with great gifts, and so thence departed. But this persecution of the Danes (in one country or other in England) never

ceased, nor the king did ever give to them any notable battle. For when he was disposed to give them battle, this Edricus would ever counsel him to the contrary; so that the Danes ever spoiled and robbed, and waxed rich, and the Englishmen ever poor and bare.

After this, Swanus being in Denmark, and hearing of the increase of his people in England, brake his covenants before made, and with a great army and navy, in most defensible wise appointed, landed in Northumberland, proclaimed himself to be king of this land. Where, after much vexation, when he had subdued the people, and caused the earl with the rulers of the country to swear to him fealty, he passed the river of Trent to Ganishurgh, and to Northwatling Street, and subduing the people there forced them to give him pledges; which pledges he committed with his navy unto Canutus his son to keep, while he went further into the land; and so with a great host came to Mercia, killing and slaying. Then he took by strength Winchester and Oxford, and did there what him liked. That done, he came toward London, and hearing the king was there, passed by the river Thames, and came into Kent, and there besieged Canterbury, where he was resisted the space of twenty days. At length, by treason of a deacon, called Almaricus, (whom the bishop had preserved from death before,) he won it, and took the goods of the people, and fired the city, and tithed the monks of St. Augustine's abbey (that is to mean, they slew nine by cruel torment, and the tenth they kept alive as for their slave). So they slew there of religious men to the number of nine hundred persons; of other men, women, and children, they slew above eight thousand. And, finally, when they had kept the bishop Elphegus in strait prison the space of seven months, because he would not condescend to give unto them three thousand pounds; after many vilanies unto him done, they brought him to Greenwich, and there stoned him to death.

King Egelred, in the mean time, fearing the end of this persecution, sent his wife Emma, with his two sons Alfred and Edward, to the duke of Normandy, with whom also he sent the bishop of London. The Danes proceeded still in their fury and rage, and when they had won a great part of West Saxony, they returned again to London. Whereof the Londoners hearing, sent unto them certain great gifts and pledges. At last the king, about the five and thirtieth year of his reign, was chased unto the Isle of Wight, and with a secret company he spent there a great part of the winter; and, finally, without cattle or comfort, sailed into Normandy to his wife. Swanus being ascertained thereof, (inflamed with pride,) reared exceeding impositions upon the people. And among other he required a great sum of money of St. Edmund's lands, which the people there claiming to be free from kings' tributes, denied to pay. For this Swanus entered the territory of St. Edmund, and wasted and spoiled the country, despising the holy martyr, and menacing also the place of his sepulture. Wherefore the men of that country, fearing his tyranny, fell to prayer and fasting, so that shortly after Swanus died suddenly, crying and yelling among his knights. Some say that he was stricken with the sword of St. Edmund, whereof he died the third day after.

In fear whereof Canutus, his son, which ruled as king after his father, granted them the freedom of all their liberties; and, moreover, ditched the land of the said martyr with a deep ditch, and granted to the inhabitants thereof great freedoms, quitting them from all task or tribute; and after builded a church over the place of his sepulture, and ordained there a house of monks, and endowed them with rich possessions. And after that time it was used, that kings of England, when they were crowned, sent their crowns for an offering to St. Edmund's shrine, and redeemed the same again afterwards with a condign price.

When King Egelred heard of the death of Swanus, he made provision, and returned into England. For whose sudden coming Canutus, being unprovided, fled to Sandwich, and there cutting off the noses and hands of the pledges, which his father left with him, sailed into Denmark; who the next year returned again with a great navy, and landed in the south country. Wherefore the eldest son of King Egelred, called Edmund Ironside, made provision, with the aid of Edrike, duke of Mereia, to meet him. But Edrike, feigning himself sick, came not, but deceived him. For, as it was after proved, Edrike had promised his allegiance to Canutus. By reason whereof Canutus entered the country of West Saxon, and forced the people to be sworn unto him, and to give him pledges. In this season, King Egelred, being at London, was taken with great sickness, and there died, and was buried in the north side of Paul's church, behind the quire, after he had reigned unprosperously thirty and six years; leaving after him his said eldest son Edmund Ironside, and Alfred, and Edward, which which were in Normandy, sent thither before, as is above rehearsed. This Egelred, although he was miserably impugned and vexed of his enemies, yet he, with his council, gave forth wholesome laws, whereof there is one parcel, containing good rules and lessons for all judges and justices to learn and follow.

Of this King Egelred I find noted in the book of Roger Hoveden, that he deposed and deprived from all possessions a certain judge or justicer named Walgeatus, the son of one Leonet, for false judgment and other proud doings, whom, notwithstanding, he loved above all others.

29. Kings Edmund Ironside, Canute and Hardeknout

After the death of Egelred, variance fell between the Englishmen for the election of their king. For the citizens of London, with certain other lords, named Edmund, the eldest son of Egelred, (a young man of lusty and valiant courage,) in martial adventures both hardy and wise, who could very well endure all pains; wherefore he was surnamed Ironside. But the more of the lords favoured Canute the son of Swanus, especially the abbots, bishops, and men of the spirituality, which before had sworn to his father. By means whereof between these two martial princes were fought many great battles, first in Dorsetshire, where Canute was compelled to fly the field. And after that they fought another battle in Worcestershire, so sore that none could tell who had the better, but either for weariness, or for lack of day, they departed one from the other, and on the next morrow fought again; but then Canute was compelled to forsake the field. After this they met in Mercia, and there fought again, where Edmund, (as stories say,) by the treason of that false Edrike duke of Mercia. (whom he before had received to favour,) had the worse. Thus many great conflicts there were between these two princes. But upon a season, when the hosts were ready to join, and a certain time of truce was taken before battle, a knight of the party of Edmund stood up upon a high place, and said these words:

"Daily we die, and none hath the victory; and when the knights be dead on either part, then the dukes compelled by need shall accord, or else they must fight alone. And this kingdom is not sufficient for two men, which sometimes sufficed seven, But if the covetousness of lordship in these twain be so great, that neither can be content to take part and live by the other, nor the one under the other, then let them fight alone that will be lords alone. If all men fight still, at the last all men shall be slain, and none left to be under their lordship, nor able to defend the king that shall be against strange enemies and nations."

These words were so well allowed of both the hosts and princes, that both were content to try the quarrel between them two only. Then the place and time was appointed where they both met in sight of both hosts. And when either had assayed other with sharp swords and strokes, first by the motion of Canute (as some write) hastily they were both agreed, and kissed each other to the comfort of both hosts. And shortly after they agreed upon partition of the land; and after that, during their lives, they loved as brethren. Soon after, a son of wicked Edricus, by the mind (as appeared afterward) of his father, espied when King Edmund was at the draught, and with a spear (some say with a long knife) thrust him into the fundament, whereof the said Edmund shortly after died, after that he had reigned two years. He left behind him two sons, Edmund and Edward, whom Edrike, the wicked duke, after the death of their father, took from their mother, (not knowing yet of the death of Edmund her husband,) and presented them to King Canute, saluting him in these words, *Ave rex solus*. Thus Canute, after the death of Edmund Ironside, was king alone of the whole realm of England, and afterward, by the advice of his council, he sent the foresaid sons of Edmund Ironside to his brother Swanus, king of Sweveland, to be slain, who, abhorring that deed, sent them to Salomon, king of Hungary, where Edmund, being married to the king's daughter, died; Edward was married to Agatha, daughter of his brother Henry the fourth, emperor.

When Canute was established in the kingdom, he called a parliament at London, where (among other things there debated) it was propounded to the bishops, barons, and lords of the parliament there present, whether that, in the composition made between Edmund and Canute, any special remembrance was made for the children or brethren of Edmund, for any partition of any part of the land. Whereunto the English lords, falsely flattering the foreign king, and speaking against their own minds, as also against their native country, answered and said, Nay; affirming moreover with an oath (for the king's pleasure) that they to the uttermost of their powers would put off the blood of Edmund in all that they might. By reason of which answer and promise they thought (many of them) to have purchased with the king great favour. But by the just retribution of God it chanced far otherwise. For many of them, or the most part, (such especially as Canute did perceive to be sworn beforetime to Edmund and his heirs, and also considering that they were native Englishmen,) he mistrusted and disdained ever after. Insomuch that some he exiled, a great sort he beheaded, and some by God's punishment died suddenly. Among whom wicked Edrike also, the traitor, (although with his sugared words he continued a while in the king's favour,) at length escaped not condign reward for his deceivable dealing. For (as the history of Jornalensis recordeth) as the king was in his palace beyond Thames, this Edrike, (being belike accused, or else suspected of the king before,) coming unto him, began to reckon up his benefits and labours bestowed for his sake. First, in forsaking and betraying Egelred, then in slaying King Edmund his son, with many such other deeds more, which all for his sake he had done. Well, saith the king, thou hast here rightly judged thyself, and worthily thou shalt die for slaying thy natural prince, and my sworn brother. And so commanded him to be bound immediately hand and foot, and to be thrown into the Thames. Some stories say, that when he had saluted the king with, Hail, king alone, and showed him the slaying of Edmund, Canute (promising that he would make him therefore higher than all the lords of the realm) commanded his head to be stricken off, and to be set upon London bridge, and his body to be cast into the town ditch; and thus with shame ended he his wretched life, as all they commonly do which with like dissimulation seek the destruction of their prince, and of their country.

This Canute (shortly after the death of King Edmund) exiled Edmund by the counsel of Edrike, who was brother unto King Edmund, called Rex runkonnn, The king of churls. But afterward he was reconciled again to the king's favour, and lastly slain by certain of the king's secretaries or servants. Also through the counsel of the said Edrike, and of Emma his wife, he sent the two sons of Edmund Ironside (Edmund and Edward) to his brother Swanus, king of Denmark, to be slain, as is abovesaid.

In this mean time, Swanus king of Denmark, brother to Canute, died. Wherefore that land fell to Canute, which anon after sailed thither, and took thereof possession. And after he had set it in an order, he returned into England, and married Emma, late wife before of Egelred, and by her had a son called Hardeknight, or Hardeknoutus. Moreover, this Canute assembled a parliament at Oxford, where it was agreed that Englishmen and Danes should hold the laws made by King Edgar, because they were thought so good and reasonable above any other laws.

Thus the Danes being in England began by little and little to be Christian men. And Canute went to Rome, and so, returning again to England, governed that land the space of twenty years, leaving after him two sons, Harold and Hardeknoutus; which Hardeknoutus was made king of Denmark in his father's time.

Harold, (called Harefoot for his activity and swiftness,) son to Canute by Elgina his first wife, began his reign over England in the year 1039. Of him is little left in memory, (for he reigned but four years,) save that he banished his step mother Emma, and took her goods and jewels from her.

Hardeknoutus, being king of Denmark, and second son to Canute by his last wife Emma, was next king of England. in the time of these Danish kings, there was one Godwin, an earl, in England, which had been before in great favour with Canute, for his acts done in Denmark against the Norwegians; and afterward married the sister (some say the daughter) of Canute. This Godwin was of a cruel and subtle wit, as he declared no less by the two sons of King Egelred. For when these two aforesaid (whose names were Alfred and Edward) came from Normandy into England, to visit their mother Emma, and brought with them a great company of Normans, this Godwin, (having a daughter called Godith, whom he thought to marry to Edward, and set him up to be king,) to bring his purpose about, used this practice, that is, to persuade King Hardeknout and the lords not to suffer those Normans to be within the realm for jeopardy, but rather to punish them for example; by which means he gat authority to order the matter himself. Wherefore he met them on Guild Down, and there most wretchedly murdered, or rather martyred, the most number of the Normans, and that innocently. For as Swanus before had tithed the monks of Canterbury; so he, with the cruel company of English soldiers, slew nine of the said Normans, and saved the tenth. And yet, passing the fury of Swanus, (as not contented with that tyranny,) he tithed again the said tithe, and slew every tenth knight, and that by cruel torment, as winding their guts out of their bodies, as writeth Ranulphus. And, among others, he put out the eyes of the elder brother Alfredus, and sent him to an abbey of Ely; where he, being fed with bread and water, endured not long after. Of some writers it was recorded, that he was there slain with the forenamed torment, and that Edward was conveyed by some other unto his mother; who, fearing the treason of Godwin, sent him soon over the sea into Normandy again. This cruel fact of Godwin and his men against the innocent Normans, whether it came of himself, or of the king's setting on, seemeth to me to be the cause why the justice of God did shortly after revenge the quarrel of these Normans, in conquering and subduing the English nation by William the Conqueror, and the Normans which came with him. For so just and right it was, that as the Normans, coming with a natural English prince, were murdered of Englishmen; so afterward the Englishmen should be slain and conquered by the Normans, coming with a foreign king, being none of their natural country.

Then it followeth in the story, that this King Canute, or Hardeknout, when he had reigned two years, (being merry at Lambeth,) suddenly was stricken dumb, and fell down to the ground, and within eight days after died without issue of his body; who was the last that reigned in England of the blood of the Danes.

This foresaid Godwin had by the daughter of Canute his wife but one son, which was drowned. Of his second wife he received six sons, to wit, Swanus, Harold, Tostius, Wilmot, Sirth, or Surth, and Leofric, with one daughter called Goditha, which after was married to King Edward the Confessor.

Concerning the story of this Alfred, I find it something otherwise reported in our English chronicles, that it should be after the death of Hardeknout; forsomuch as the earls and barons, after his death, assembled and made a council, that never after any of the Danes' blood should be king of England, for the despite that they had done to Englishmen. For evermore before, if the Englishmen and the Danes had happened to

meet upon a bridge, the Englishmen should not be so hardy to move a foot, but stand still till the Danes were passed forth. And moreover, if the Englishmen had not bowed down their heads to do reverence unto the Danes, they should have been beaten and defiled. For the which despites and villanies they were driven out of the land after the death of Hardeknot; for they had no lord that might maintain them. And after this manner avoided the Danes out of England, that they never came again.

The earls and barons, by their common assent and counsel, sent unto Normandy for these two brethren, Alfred and Edward; intending to crown Alfred the elder brother, and to make him king of England. And to this the earls and barons made their oath; but the Earl Godwin of Westsax (falsely and traitorously) thought to slay these two brethren as soon as they came into England, to the intent that he might make Harold his son king; which son he had by his wife Hardeknot's daughter, that was a Dane. And so this Godwin went privily to Southampton, to meet there with the two brethren at their landing. And thus it fell, that the messengers that went (saith mine author) into Normandy found but only Alfred the elder brother. For Edward his younger brother was gone to Hungary, to speak with his cousin the outlaw, which was Edmund Ironside's son.

When Alfred had heard these messengers, and perceived their tidings, he thanked God, and in all haste sped him to England, arriving at Southampton. There Godwin the false traitor (having knowledge of his coming) welcomed and received him with much joy, pretending to lead him unto London, where the barons waited for to make him king, and so they together passed forth toward London. But when they came to Guild Down, the traitor commanded all his men to slay all that were in Alfred's company which came with him from Normandy; and after that, to take Alfred, and to lead him into the Isle of Ely, where they should put out both his eyes; and so they did. For they slew all the company that were there, to the number of twelve gentlemen, which came with Alfred from Normandy; and after that they took Alfred, and in the Isle of Ely they executed their commission.

That done, they opened his body, took out his bowels, set a stake into the ground, and fastened an end of his bowels thereunto, and with needles of iron they pricked his tender body, thereby causing him to go about the stake till that all his bowels were drawn out. And so died this innocent Alfred or Alured, being the right heir of the crown, through treason of wicked Godwin. When the lords of England heard thereof, and how Alfred, that should have been their king, was put to death through the false traitor Godwin, they were wondrous wroth; and swore between God and them, that he should die a worse death than did Edrike, which betrayed his lord, Edmund Ironside; and would immediately have put him to death, but that the traitor fled thence into Denmark, and there held him four years and more, and lost all his lands in England.

Another Latin story I have, (bearing no name,) which saith that this coming in of Alfred and the Normans was in the time of Harold, Canute's son. And how Godwin (after he pretended great amity to them) suddenly in the night came upon them at Gilford, and after he had tithed the Normans, sent Alfred to Harold at London; who sent him to the Isle of Ely, and caused his eyes to be put out.

And thus much of Canute, and of his sons, Harold and Hardecnute, Besides these two sons, Canute had also a daughter named Gunilda, married to Henricus the emperor. Of whom some write, that she being accused to the emperor of spouse-breach, and having no champion or knight that would fight for her, (after the manner

of that country,) for trial of her cause, a certain little dwarf or boy, whom she brought with her out of England, (stirred up of God,) fought in her cause against a mighty big German of a monstrous greatness, which silly dwarf, cutting by chance the sinews of his leg, after struck him to the ground, and so cut off his head, and saved the life of the queen, if it be true that Gulielmus and Fabianus reporteth.

Of this Canute it is storied, that he following much the superstition of Achelnot, archbishop of Canterbury, went on pilgrimage to Rome, and there founded an hospital for English pilgrims. He gave the pope precious gifts, and burdened the land with a yearly tribute, called the Rome-shot. He shrived the body of Berinus, and gave great lands and ornaments to the cathedral church of Winchester; he builded St. Benet's in Northfolke, which was before an hermitage. Also St. Edmunsbury, which King Athelstan before ordained for a college of priests, he turned to an abbey of monks of St. Benet's order.

Henricus, archdeacon of Huntington, maketh mention of this Canute, as doth also Polydore, that he, after his coming from Rome, walking upon a time by the port of Southampton, but, as Polydore saith, and Fabian affirmeth the same, that it was by the Thames side of London, when his flatterers coming about him, began to exalt him up with high words, calling him a king of all kings, (most mighty,) who had under his subjection both the people, the land, and also the sea: Canute revolving this matter in his mind, (whether for pride of his heart exalted, or whether to try and refel their flattering words,) commanded his chair of state to be brought to the sea side, at what time it should begin to flow. Polydore saith that no seat was brought; but sitting upon his garments, being folded together under him, there charged and commanded the floods, arising and coming towards his feet, that they should touch neither him nor his clothes. But the water, keeping its ordinary course, came nearer and nearer; first to his feet, and so growing higher, began to wash him well-favouredly. Wherewith the king abashed, and partly also afraid, started back, and looking to his lords; Lo, (saith he,) ye call me such a mighty king, and yet can I not command back this little water to stay at my word, hot it is ready to drown me. Wherefore all earthly kings may know that all their powers be but vain, and that none is worthy to have the name of a king but He alone which hath all things subject to the power and authority of his word, which is the Lord of heaven and earth, the Creator above of all things, the Father of our Christ and Lord, who with him for ever is to be glorified; him let us worship and extol for our King for ever. After this, (as histories witness,) he never suffered the crown to come upon his head, but went to Winchester, or (as some say) to Canterbury: but both those may be true; for his going to Canterbury was to acknowledge that there was a Lord much higher and of more power than he himself was, and tmerewithal to render up his crown for ever. With that, Egelnothus, archbishop of Canterbury, informed him of the image of the crucifix before mentioned, which dissolved the matter between married priests and life of monks, and did many other miracles more, being then at Winchester. Wherewith the king, provoked to go to Winchester to the rood, there resigned up his regal crown, and made the rood king over all the land.

Here is also to be noted in this Canute, that although (as is said) he condescended in the beginning of his reign upon King Edgar's laws; yet after, in process of time, he set forth peculiar laws of his own. Among which divers there be that concern as well causes ecclesiastical as also temporal. Whereby it may appear, that the government of spiritual matters did not depend then of the bishop of Rome; but appertained to the lawful authority of the temporal prince, no less than of matters

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and causes temporal. As, for example, by the ordinances of the aforesaid Canute may be well considered.

And here an end of the Danish kings. Now to the English kings again, whose right line cometh in again in Edward here following.

30. King Edward the Confessor

Forsomuch as God of his mercy and providence, who is only the maker of heirs, thought it so good, after the woeful captivity of this English nation, to grant now some respite of deliverance, in taking away the Danish kings without any issue left behind them; who reigning here in England, kept the English people in miserable subjection about the space of eight and twenty years, and from their first landing in the time of King Brightricus wasted and vexed this land the term of 255 years. Now their tyranny here coming to an end, the next election and right of the crown fell (as appertained) to Edward, the younger son of King Egelred and Emma, a mere Englishman; who had been now long banished in Normandy, as is above declared; a man of gentle and soft spirit, more applicable to other men's counsels than able to trust to his own; of nature and condition so given from all war and bloodshed, that being in his banishment, he wished rather to continue all his life long in that private estate, than by war or bloodshed to aspire to any kingdom. This Edward, after the death of Canute the Second, or Hardicanute, being sent for of the lords into Normandy, to take possession of the realm, although he something mistrusted the unconstant and fickle heads of Englishmen, (yet having sufficient pledges laid for him in Normandy,) came over, accompanied with a few Normans, and not long after was crowned at Winchester, in the year 1043, by Edsius, then archbishop of Canterbury. And not long after that he married Goditha, or Edithy, daughter of Earl Godwin, whom he entreated after such sort, that he neither put her from his bed, nor yet dealt with her fleshly. Whether it were for hate of her kin, (as most like it was,) or for love of chastity, it remaineth uncertain. But most writers agree, that he continued his life without offence with women; for the which he is highly exalted among our story writers, and called holy King Edward. After he had thus taken upon him the government of the realm, he guided the same with much wisdom and justice the space of four and twenty years, lacking two months; from whom issued (as out of a fountain) much godliness, mercy, pity, and liberality toward the poor, gentleness and justice toward all men, and in all honest life he gave a virtuous example to his people. He discharged the Englishmen of the great tribute called Danegelt, which beforetime was yearly levied to the great impoverishing of the people. He subdued the Scots and the Welchmen, which in their borders began to rebel against him. In much peace he continued his reign, having no foreign enemy to assault him; albeit, as some chronicles do show, certain Danes and Norwegians there were which intended to set upon England. But as they were taking shipping, there was brought to them first one bowl, then another, of mead, or methe, to drink for a good voyage. Thus one cup coming after another, after drink came drunkenness, after drunkenness followed jangling, of jangling came strife, and strife turned unto stripes; whereby many were slain, and the other returned to their home again. And thus the merciful providence of the Lord despatched that journey.

In the time of this Edward, Emma his mother was accused to be familiar with Alwin the bishop of Winchester; upon which accusation (by counsel of Earl Godwin) he took from her many of her jewels, and caused her to be kept some deal more strictly in the abbey of Warwell, and the bishop committed to the examination of the clergy, Polydore saith they were both in prison at Winchester, where she sorrowing the dishonour both of herself and the bishop, and trusting upon her conscience, desireth

them of justice, offering herself ready to abide any lawful trial, yea, although it were with the sharpest.

Then divers of the bishops made labour to the king for them both, and had obtained, had not Robert, then archbishop of Canterbury, stopped the suit. Who, not well contented with their labour, said unto them, My brethren, how dare you defend her which is no woman, but a beast? She hath defamed her own son the king, and taken her lecherous leman the bishop. And if it be so, that the woman will purge the priest, who shall then purge the woman, that is accused to be consenting to the death of her son Alfred, and procured venom to the poisoning of her son Edward? But whether she be guilty or guiltless, if she will go barefooted for herself four steps, and for the bishop five, continually upon nine ploughshares fire hot, then if she escape harmless, he shall be assoiled of this challenge, and she also.

To this she granted: the day was appointed, at which day the king and a great part of his nobles were present, except only Robert the archbishop. This Robert had been a monk of a house in Normandy, and a helper of the king in his exile; and so, by the sending for of the king, came over, and was made, first bishop of London, after archbishop of Canterbury. Then was she led blindfold unto the place between two men, where the irons lay burning hot, and passed the nine shares unhurt. At last saith she, Good Lord, when shall I come to the place of my purgation? When they then opened her eyes, and she saw that she was past the pain, she kneeled down, giving God thanks.

Then the king repented, (saith the story,) and restored unto her that he had before taken from her, and asked her forgiveness. But the archbishop fled into Normandy.

Near about this time, about the tenth year of his reign, fell passing great snow from the beginning of January to the seventeenth day of March. After which ensued a great mortality of men, murrain of cattle; and by lightning the corn was wonderfully blasted and wasted,

Not long after this, a certain carl of Bologne, who had married King Edward's sister, came into England; through the occasion of whom, when execution should be done upon the citizens of Dover, for a fray between them and the earl's men, variance happened between King Edward and Earl Godwin, who, perceiving that he could not withstand the king's malice, (although he gathered a great company to work therein what he could,) fled into Flanders, and was outlawed with his five sons. King Edward repudiated his wife, the daughter of the said Godwin: but the second year after, by mediators, he was reconciled to the king again, and called from banishment, and for his good bearing he gave for pledges his two sons, Biornon and Tostius, which were sent to the duke of Normandy, there to be kept.

During the time of the outlawry of Godwin, William, bastard duke of Normandy, came with a goodly company into England to see King Edward, and was honourably received. To whom the king made great cheer, and at his return enriched him with great gifts and pleasures; and there (as some write) made promise to him, that if he died without issue, the said William should succeed him in the kingdom of England.

In this king's reign lived Marianus Scotus the story writer. As concerning the end of Earl Godwin, the cruel murderer of Alfred, and of the Normans, although divers histories diversly do vary, yet in this the most part do agree, that as he sat at the table

with King Edward at Windsor, it happened one of the cup-bearers, one of Earl Godwin's sons, to stumble and recover again, so that he shed none of the drink, whereat Godwin laughed, and said how the one brother had sustained the other. With which words the king calling to mind his brother's death that was slain by Godwin, beheld the earl, saying, So should my brother Alfred have holpen me, had not Godwin been. Godwin then, fearing the king's displeasure to be newly kindled, after many words in excusing himself, said, So might I safely swallow this morsel of bread, as I am guiltless of the deed. But as soon as he had received the bread, forthwith he was choked. Then the king commanded him to be drawn from the table, and so was conveyed by Harold his son to Winchester, and there buried.

About the thirteenth year of this king's reign, the said King Edward sent Aldred, bishop of Worcester, to the emperor Henricus the Fourth, praying him that he would send to the king of Hungary, that his cousin Edward, son of Edmund Ironside, might come into England, forsomuch as he intended to make him king after him, which was called Edward outlaw. The which request was fulfilled, so that he came into England with his wife Agatha, and with his children, to wit, Edgar Adeling, Margaret, and Christina. But the year after his return into this realm this Edward deceased at London, and was buried at Winchester, or, as Jornalensis saith, at Paul's church in London. After whose decease the king then received Edgar Adeling his son as his own child, thinking to make him his heir. But fearing partly the unconstant mutability of the Englishmen, partly the pride and malice of Harold the son of Godwin, and of others, (perceiving thereby that he could not bring that his purpose so well to pass,) directed solemn ambassadors unto William duke of Normandy, his kinsman, admitting and assigning him to be his lawful heir, next to succeed after him to the crown.

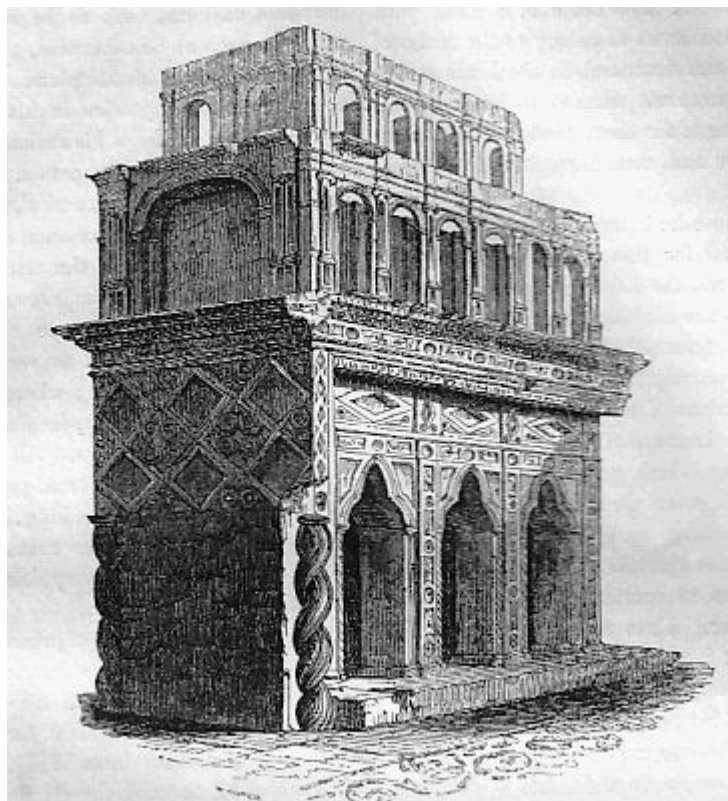
After the death of Godwin, Harold his son waxed so in the king's favour, that he ruled the most and greatest causes of the realm, and was lieutenant of the king's army, who, with his brother Toston, or Tostius, (sent by the king against the Welchmen,) subdued their rebellion. But afterward such envy grew between these two brethren, for that Tostius saw his brother Harold so greatly advanced in the king's favour, that at Hertford the said Tostius slew all his brother's men. Whom, when he had cut in pieces, he powdered their quarters and mangled parts in barrels of salt, vinegar, wine, and other liquors. That done, he made a power against his brother Harold (being king) with the aid of certain Danes and Norwegians, and fought a battle with him in the north, as after shall follow (God willing) to be seen. So ungracious were these wicked children of Earl Godwin, that if they had seen any fair mansion or manor place, they would slay the owner thereof with all his kindred, and enter the possession thereof themselves.

At length it came in the mind of this Harold to sail over the sea (as Polydor saith) unto Normandy, to see his brother Wilnotus, as also his cousin Hacus, whom the king had sent thither to be kept for pledges, as ye heard before. Polydore saith these pledges were Tosto and Biornon; but that cannot be, for Tostius was then in England. But, as Henricus archdeacon of Huntington saith, his journey was into Flanders, as seemeth more like. For it is not to be thought that Harold, who was a doer in the cruel murder of Alfred, and of the Normans, would venture into Normandy; and therefore more like it is that his sailing was into Flanders. But as the story proceedeth, he, being in the course of his sailing, was weather driven by tempest into the province of Pountith, where he was taken as prisoner, and sent to Duke William of Normandy, to whom he was made to swear that he in time following should marry his daughter; and

that, after the death of King Edward, he should keep the land of England to his behoof, according to the will and mind of Edward, (after some writers,) and so to live in great honour and dignity next unto him in the realm. This promise faithfully made to the duke, Harold returneth into England, with his cousin Hucus, the son of his brother Swanus, being delivered unto him. But Wilnot, brother of Harold, the duke keepeth still for performance of the covenants. Thus Harold, I say, returning home, showeth the king all that he had done in the foresaid matters, wherewith the king was well contented. Whereby it may be gathered that King Edward was right well willing that Duke William should reign after him, and also it seemeth not unlike but that he had given him his promise thereunto before.

Among all that were true and trusty to King Edward of the English nobility, none had like commendation, as had Leofric, earl of Mercia and of Chester. This Leofric purchased many great liberties for the town of Coventry, and made it free of all manner of things, except only of horse, which freedom there was obtained by means of his wife Godina, by riding (as the fame goeth) after a strange manner through the town. This Leofricus, with his wife Godina, builded also the abbey of Coventry, and endowed the same with great lands and riches.

You heard a little before of the coming over of Edward called the outlaw, son of King Edmund Ironside, whom King Edward had purposed to have made king after him: but soon after his coming over he deceased at London. This Edward had by his wife Agatha a son and a daughter, called Edgar Adeling, and Margaret. Which Margaret, being afterward married to the king of Scots, was the mother of Matild, or Mawd, the queen of England, and of David, king of Scots, &c.



The Tomb of Edward the Confessor

This virtuous and blessed King Edward, after he had reigned three and twenty years and seven months, died, and was buried in the monastery of Westminster, which he had greatly augmented and repaired; but afterward was more enlarged, after this form which it hath now, by Henry the Third, son of King John.

They that write the history of this king here make mention of a dream or revelation that should be showed to him in time of his sickness; how that because the peers and bishops of the realm were servants, not of God, but of the devil, God would give this realm to the hand of others. And the king desired utterance to be given him, that he might declare the same to the people, whereby they might repent. It was answered again, that neither would they so do; or yet if they did, it should be given to another people. But, because it is a dream, I let it pass.

Divers laws were before in divers countries of this realm used, as the law first of Dunuallo Melmucius, with the laws of Mercia, called Mercenelaga; then the laws of West Saxon kings, as of Jue, Offa, Alfred, &c., which was called West Saxenelaga; the third were the laws of Canute, and of Danes, called Danelaga. Of all these laws, which before were diversly in certain particular countries used and received, this Edward compiled one universal and common law for all people through the whole realm, which were called King Edward's laws; which laws, being gathered out of the best and chiefest of the other laws, were so just, so equal, and so serving the public profit and wealth of all estates, that, mine authors say, the people long after did rebel against their heads and rulers to have the same laws again, (being taken from them,) and yet could not obtain them.

Furthermore, I read and find in Matthew Paris, that when William the Conqueror at his coming in did swear to use and practise the same good laws of Edward, for the common laws of this realm, afterward (being established in his kingdom) he forswore himself, and placed his own laws in their room, much worse and obscurer than the other were, &c.

Notwithstanding, among the said laws of Edward, and in the first chapter and beginning there of, this I find among the ancient records of the Guildhall in London: The office of a king, with such other appurtenances as belong to the realm of Britain, set forth and described in the Latin style which I thought here not unmeet to be expressed in the English tongue for them tmat understood no Latin. The tenor and meaning whereof thus followeth.

The king, because he is the vicar of the highest King, is appointed for this purpose, to rule thie earthly kingdom, and the Lord's people, and above all things to reverence his holy church, to govern it, and to defend it fronn injuries; to pluck away wicked doers, and utterly to destroy them. Which unless he do, the name of a king agreeth not unto him, but he loseth the name of a king, as witnesseth Pope John; to the which pope Pipinus and Carolus his son (being not yet kings, but princes under the French king, being not very wise) did write demanding this question, whether the kings of France ought so to continue, having but only the name of a king. Unto whom Pope John an swereth again, that it was convenient to call them kings which vigilantly do defend and govern the church of God and his people, following the saying of King David the psalmograph; He shall not dwell in my house which worketh pride, &c.

Moreover, the king by right and by his office ought to defend and conserve fully and wholly in all ampleness, without diminution, all the lands, honours, dignities, rights, and liberties of the crown of his kingdom. And frnther, to reduce into their

pristine state all such things as have been dispersed, wasted, and lost, which appertain to his kingdom. Also the whole and universal land, with all islands about the same in Norway and Denmark, be appertaining to the crown of his kingdom, and be of the appurtenances and dignity of the king; making one monarchy and one kingdom, which sometime was called the kingdom of Britain, and now the kingdom of England; such bounds and limits as is above said be appointed and limited to the name of this kingdom.

Moreover, in the foresaid laws of this King Edward, it followeth in the same book, where the foresaid Edward, describing the office of a king, addeth in these words: A king, saith he, ought above all things to fear God, to love and to observe his commandments, and cause them to be observed through his whole kingdom. He ought also to keep, cherish, maintain, and govern the' holy church within his kingdom, with all integrity and liberty, according to the constitutions of his ancestors and predecessors, and to defend the same against all enemies, so that God above all things he honoured, and ever be before his eyes. He ought also to set up good laws and customs, such as be wholesome and approved; such as be otherwise, to repeal them, and thrust them out of his kingdom. Item, he ought to do judgment and justice in his kingdom, by the counsel of the nobles of his realm, All these things ought a king in his own person to do, taking his oath upon the evangelist, and the blessed relics of saints, swearing in the presence of the whole state of his realm (as well of the temporality as of the spirituality) before he be crowned of the archbishops and bishops. Three servants the king ought to have under him as vassals; fleshly lust, avarice, and greedy desire; whom if he keep under as his servants and slaves, he shall reign well and honourably in his kingdom. All things are to be done with good advisement and premeditation; and that properly belongeth to a king. For hasty rashness bringeth all things to ruin, according to the saying of the Gospel, Every kingdom divided in itself shall be desolate, &c.

After the duty and office of princes thus described, consequently followeth the institution of subjects, declared in many good and necessary ordinances very requisite and convenient for public government. Of the which laws William the Conqueror was compelled, through the clamour of the people, to take some, but the most part he omitted, contrary to his own oath at his coronation, inserting and placing the most of his own laws in his language, to serve his purpose; and which as yet to this present day in the Norman language do remain. Now (the Lord willing) let us proceed in the story as in order followeth.

31. King Harold

Harold, the second son of Earl Godwin, and last king of the Saxons, notwithstanding that divers of the nobles went with Edgar Adeling, the next heir after Edmund Ironside; yet he through force and might contemning the young age of Edgar, and forgetting also his promise made to Duke William, took upon him to be king of England, An. 1066. When Harold Harefagar, son of Canaute, king of Norway and Denmark, heard of the death of King Edward, he came into England with three hundred ships or more; who then joining with Tostius, brother to the said Harold, king of England, entered into the north parts, and claimed the land after the death of Edward, But the lords of the country arose, and gave them battle, notwithstanding the Danes had the victory. And therefore Harold, king of England, prepared toward them in all haste, and gave them another strong battle, and there had the victory, where also Harold the Dane was slain by the hand of Harold, king of England; and Tostius was also slain in the battle. After this victory, Harold waxed proud and covetous, and would not divide the prey to his knights that had deserved it, but kept it to himself; where by he lost the favour of many of his knights and people.

In this mean time, William, duke of Normandy, sent embassage to Harold, king of England, admonishing him of the covenants that were agreed between them; which was, to have kept the land to his use after the death of Edward. But because that the daughter of Duke William (that was promised to Harold) was dead, Harold thought him thereby discharged, and said that such a nice foolish promise ought not to be holden (concerning another's land) without the consent of the lords of the same; and especially for that he was thereunto for need or for dread compelled.

Upon these answers received, Duke William, in the mean while that the messengers went and came, gathered his knights, and prepared his navy, and had the assent of the lords of his land to aid and assist him in his journey. And over that, sending unto Rome to Pope Alexander, concerning his title and voyage into England, the pope confirmeth him to the same, and sent unto him a banner, willing him to hear it in the ship wherein himself should sail. Thus Duke William, being provided of all things concerning his journey, sped him to the sea side, and took shipping at the haven of St. Valery. where he tarried a long time ere he might have a convenient wind, for the which his soldiers murmured, saying it was a wilfulness, and a thing displeasing God, to desire to have another man's kingdom by strength, and namely, when God was against it in sending contrary wind, &c. At the last, the wind shortly after came about, and they took shipping with a great company, and landed at Hastings in Sussex.

For three causes Duke William entered this land to subdue Harold. One was, for that it was to him given by King Edward his nephew. The second was to take wreak for the cruel murder of his nephew Alfred, King Edward's brother, and of the Normans. which deed he ascribed chiefly to Harold. The third was, to revenge the wrong done to Robert, archbishop of Canterbury. which was exiled by the means and labour of Harold, in the time of King Edward.

Thus, while Harold was in the north, Duke William made so great speed, that he came to London before the king; out of which he was holden, till he made good surety that he and his people should pass through the city without tarrying; which promise he well observing, passed the bridge, and went over to Sussex, from whence

he sent a monk unto Harold, and proffered him three manner of ways. First, either to render to him the possession of the land, and so to take it again of him under tribute, reigning under him; secondly, or else to abide and stand to the pope's arbitrement betwixt them both; or, thirdly, to defend this quarrel in his own person against the duke, and they two only to try the matter by dint of sword, without any other bloodshedding.

But Harold refused all these offers, saying it should be tried by dint of swords, and not by one sword and so gathered his people and joined battle with the Normans, in the place where afterward was builded the abbey of Battle in Sussex. In the beginning of which fight the Englishmen kept them in good array, like to vanquish the Normans; wherefore Duke William caused his men to give back, as though they fled, whereby the Englishmen followed fast, and broke their array. Then the Normans, fiercely giving a charge upon them, in conclusion obtained the victory through the just providence of God. Where King Harold, who before had murdered Alfred, the true heir of the crown, with his company of Normans, so cruelly, was now wounded of the Normans in the left eye with an arrow, and thereof incontinent died; although Gerardus saith he fled away to Chester, and lived after that a monk in the monastery of St. James. Which is not like, but rather that he was there slain after that he reigned nine months, and was buried at Waltham (which proveth that he died not at Chester); and so was he the last that reigned in England of the blood of Saxons, the which continued (to reckon from Hengistus's first reign in Kent) by the space of 591 years; and if it be reckoned from the years of the West Saxons, then it endureth the space of 565 years.

This Duke William and King Edward were by the father's side cousin-germans removed. For Richard the first of that name, which was the third duke of Normandy after Rollo, was father to Duke Richard the second of that name, and brother to Emma, mother to King Edward. Which I take Richard the Second was father to Duke Robert, this Duke William's father.

**THE FOURTH BOOK,
CONTAINING ANOTHER THREE HUNDRED YEARS,
FROM WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR TO THE TIME OF
JOHN WICKLIFFE,
WHEREIN IS DESCRIBED THE PROUD AND
MISORDERED REIGN OF ANTICHRIST BEGINNING
TO STIR IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.**

32. William the Conqueror

WILLIAM, duke of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror, base son of Duke Robert, the sixth duke of Normandy, and nephew unto King Edward, after the foresaid victory obtained against Harold and the Englishmen, was received king over the realm of England, not so much by assent, as for fear and necessity of time. For else the Londoners had promised their assistance to Edgar Atheling to the uttermost of their power. But being weakened and wasted so greatly in battles before, and the duke coming so fast upon them, and fearing that they could not make their party good, submitted themselves. Whereupon the said William (of a duke made a king) was crowned upon Christmas day, in the year of our Lord 1067, by the hands of Aldredus, archbishop of York; forasmuch as at that time Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was absent, or else durst not or would not come in the presence of the king.

William thus being crowned, did reign over the realm of England the space of one and twenty years and one month, with great severity and cruelty toward the Englishmen, burdening them with great tributes and exactions; which was, to pay of every hide of ground containing twenty acres six shillings. By means whereof certain parts of the land rebelled, and specially the city of Exeter, But at last William overcame them, and won the city, and punished them grievously. But, for that and for other stern deeds of William, divers of the lords departed into Scotland; wherefore he kept the other lords that tarried the straiter, and exalted the Normans, giving to them the chief possessions of the land. And forsomuch as he obtained the kingdom by force and dint of sword, he changed the whole state of the governance of this commonwealth, and ordained new laws at his own pleasure, profitable to himself, but grievous and hurtful to the people; abolishing the laws of King Edward, whereunto notwithstanding he was sworn before to observe and maintain them. For the which great commotions and rebellions remained long after among the people (as histories record) to have the said laws of King Edward revived again.

About the third year of his reign, Harold and Canute, sons of Swanus, king of Denmark, entered into the north country. The Normans within York, fearing that the Englishmen would aid the Danes, fired the suburbs of the town. Whereof the flame was so big, and the wind so strong, that it reached the city, and burnt a great part thereof, with the minster of St. Peter, where, no doubt, many worthy works and monuments of books were consumed. In the time whereof the Danes, by the favour of some of the citizens, entered the city, and slew more than three thousand of the Normans. But not long after, King William chased them out, and drave them to their ships, and took such displeasure with the inhabitants of that country, that he destroyed the land from York to Durham, so that nine years after the province lay waste and unmanured, only except St. John's land of Beverly; and the people thereof were so strictly kept in penury by the war of the king, that (as our English story saith) they eat rats, cats, and dogs, with other vermin.

Also in the fourth year of this king, Malcolm, king of Scots, entered into Northumberland, and destroyed the country, and slew there many of the people, both of men, women, and children, after a lamentable sort, and took some prisoners. But within two years after King William made such war upon the Scots, that he forced Malcolm their king to do him homage.

And thus much concerning the outward calamities of this realm under this foreign conqueror, which is now the fifth time that the said land, with the inhabitants thereof, hath been scourged by the hand of God. First, by the Romans in the time of Julius Cæsar; then by the Scots and Picts (as hath been showed); afterward by the Saxons. Again, the Saxons or Englishmen did not enjoy the possession of Britain with long quiet, but were brought in as much subjection themselves under the Danes as they had brought the Britons before, (and even much more,) insomuch that through all England, if an Englishman had met a Dane upon a bridge, he might not stir one foot, before the Lord Dane (otherwise Lurdane) were past; and then if the English man had not given low reverence to the Dane at his coming by, he was sure to be sharply punished, as above hath been declared. This subjection continued almost from the reign of King Ethelwolfus, two hundred and thirty years, till the reign of King Edward. And yet the indignation of God thus ceased not, but stirred up the Normans against them, who conquered and altered the whole realm after their own purpose; insomuch that besides the innovation of the laws, coins, and possessions, there was almost in no church of England any English bishop, but only Normans and foreigners placed through all their diocess. To such misery was this land then brought, that not only of all the English nobility not one house was standing, but also it was thought reproachful to be called an Englishman. This punishment of God against the English nation writers do assign diversly to divers causes, (as partly before is touched,) of whom some assign this to be the cause, as followeth in the words of the story: "That whereas kings and queens, dukes and prelates, in the primitive time of the English church, were ready for religion to forsake either liberty or country, and give themselves to a solitary life; in process of time they grew to such dissoluteness, that they left no other realm like unto them in iniquity," &c. Again, some writing of the vision of King Edward, a little before the invasion of the Normans, testify how the king, reporting of his own vision, should hear that, for the great enormity and misbehaviour of the head dukes, bishops, and abbots of the realm, the kingdom should be given to the hand of their enemies, after the decease of him, for the space of one hundred years and one day. Which space was also seen by William the Conqueror, to be one hundred and fifty years; and that his progeny so long should continue. Again, some writers, treating of this so great wrath of God upon the English people, declare the cause thereof as followeth: "Like as the Englishmen did subdue the Britons, (whom God proposed for their deservings to exterminate,) and them unjustly did dispossess of their land; so they should likewise be subdued and scourged with a double persecution, first by the Danes, and after by the Normans." Moreover, to these injuries and iniquities done and wrought by the Englishmen, hitherto recited, let us add also the cruel villany of this nation, in murdering and tithing the innocent Normans before; who, coming as strangers with Alfred, the lawful heir of the crown, were despitefully put to death. Which seemeth to me no little cause why the Lord (whose doings be always just and right) did suffer the Normans so to prevail. By the coming in of the which Normans, and by their quarrel unto the realm, three things we may note and learn. First, to consider and learn the righteous retribution and wrath of God from heaven upon all iniquity and unrighteous dealing of men. Secondly, we may thereby note what it is for princes to leave no issue or sure succession behind them. Thirdly, what dangers often do chance to realms publicly by foreign marriage with other princes, &c.

In the same fourth year of this king, between Easter and Whitsuntide, was holden a solemn council of the clergy of England at Winchester. At the which were present two cardinals sent from Pope Alexander the Second, Peter and John. In this council, the king being there himself present, were deposed divers bishops, abbots, and

priors, (by the means of the king,) without any evident cause, to the intent his Normans might be preferred to the rule of the church, as he had preferred his knights before to the rule of the temporality, thereby to stand in more surety of the land. Amongst whom also Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was put down for three causes against him pretended.

The first was, for that he had holden wrongfully that bishopric, while Robert the archbishop (above mentioned) was living.

The second was, for that he had received the pall of Benedict V., bishop of Rome. Which Benedict, for buying his popedom, had been deposed, as is showed before.

The third cause was, for that he occupied the said pall without licence and lawful authority of the court of Rome.

Then Stigand well proved the benevolence of King William. For whereas before the king seemed in friendly countenance to make much of him, and did unto him great reverence, then he changed all his mildness into sternness, and excused himself by the bishop of Rome's authority. So that in the end Stigand was deprived of his dignity, and kept in Winchester as a prisoner during his life. This Stigand is noted for a man so covetous and sparing, that when he would take nothing of his own, and swearing that he had not a penny, yet, by a key fastened about his neck, was found great treasure of his under the ground.

At the same time was preferred to the archbishopric of York Thomas, a Norman, and canon of Baion.

At which time also Lanfranc, abbot of Cadomonency, (a Lombard, and Italian born.) was sent for, and made archbishop of Canterbury; between which two archbishops about their consecration first began a contention, for giving and taking the oath of obedience; but that contention was at that time appeased by the king; and Thomas was contented to subscribe to the archbishop of Canterbury's obedience.

After this, it followed within short space that the said Lanfranc, and Thomas, archbishop of York, who first builded the minster of York, and gave possessions thereunto, came to Rome with Remigius, bishop of Dorchester, for their palls, as the manner was; without which no archbishop nor bishop could be confirmed, although their election were never so lawful. This pall must be asked nowhere but of the pope or his assigns, and that within three months; also it must be asked not faintly, but mightily. Which, as it was a chargeable thing to other nations, (especially such as were far from Rome,) so it was no small gain to the Romish see, as they did order it. For although at the beginning the pall was given without money according to the decree, or for little, as percase in this time of Lanfranc; yet in process of years it grew to such excess, that where the bishopric of Mentz was wont to give to Rome but ten thousand florins, afterward it arose so, that he which asked his confirmation could not obtain it without twenty thousand. And from thence it exceeded to five and twenty thousand, and at length to seven and twenty thousand florins; which sum Jacobus, archbishop of Mentz, was pressed to pay, a little before the Council of Basil; insomuch that the said Jacobus, at his departing, (which was within four years after,) said that his death did not so much grieve him, as to remember his poor subjects, which should be constrained to pay so terrible a fine for the pope's pall. Now by this what riseth to the pope in whole Germany, containing in it above fifty bishoprics, it may be easily conjectured. Lanfranc thus coming to Rome, with the other two bishops, he. for the

estimation of his learning, obtained of Alexander two palls; one of honour, the other of love. He obtained for the other two bishops also their confirmation. At which time, they being there present before Alexander, the controversy began first to be moved (or rather renewed) for the primacy betwixt the two metropolitans, that is, betwixt the archbishop of Canterbury and the archbishop of York, whether of them should have pre-eminence above the other; for Canterbury challenged to himself the prerogative and primacy over whole Britain and Ireland: the which contention continued a long season betwixt these two churches, and was often renewed in the days of divers kings after this; as in the reign of Henry the First, betwixt Thurstious of York and Radulphus of Canterbury. And again, in the seven and twentieth year of the said king, at his second coronation; for Radulphus would not suffer the first coronation to stand, because it was done by the bishop of York, without his assent. Also in the reign of Henry the Second, where Pope Alexander made a letter decretal betwixt these two metropolitans for bearing the cross in the year 1159. Also another time, in the reign of the said king, betwixt Richard of Canterbury and Roger of York. Again, about the year of our Lord 1170, when Thomas Becket, hearing the king to be crowned of Roger, bishop of York, complained thereof grievously to Pope Alexander the Third. At another time, in the year 1176, betwixt Richard and the said Roger, whether of them should sit on the right hand of Cardinal Hugo in his council at London. Moreover, in the beginning of the reign of King Richard, in the year 1190, betwixt Baldwinus of Canterbury and Godfridus of York.

Now to proceed in the story hereof. After this question was brought (as is said) to the pope's presence, he (not disposed to decide the matter) sent them home into England, there to have their cause determined. Whereupon they speeding themselves from Rome to England in the year 1070, and in the sixth year (as is said) of this William, brought the matter before the king and the clergy at Windsor. Whereon Lanfranc, first alleging for himself, brought in, from the time of Austin to the time of Beda, (which was about 140 years,) how that the bishop of Canterbury had ever the primacy over the whole land of Britain and Ireland; how he kept his councils divers times within the precincts of York; how he did call and cite the bishops of York thereto; whereof some he did constitute, some he did excommunicate, and some he did remove; besides also he alleged divers privileges granted by princes and prelates to the primacy of that see.

To this Thomas, archbishop of York, replieth again, and, first beginning with the first original of the Britons' church, declareth in order of time.

The Britons, first possessors of this kingdom of Britain, which endured from Brutus and Cadwaladar 2076 years, under a hundred and two kings, at length received the Christian faith in the year 162. In the time of Lucius their king, Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, sent Faganus and Damianus, preachers, unto them; at which time after their conversion, they assigned and ordained in the realm eight and twenty bishops, with two archbishops, Theonus, the archbishop of London. and Theodosius, archbishop of York. Under those bishops and archbishops the church of Britain was governed after their conversion almost three hundred years, till at length the Saxons, being then infidels, with Hengistus their king, subduing the Britons by fraudulent murder, invaded their land, which was about the year of our Lord 440. After this, the Britons being driven into Cambria, (which we now call Wales,) the Saxons overrunning the land, divided themselves into seven kingdoms. And so, being infidels and pagans, continued till the time that Gregory, bishop of Rome, sent Austin to preach unto them; who coming first to Dover, being then the head city of Kent, called in Latin

Dorobernia, and there planting himself, converted first the king of Kent, called Edelbertus, who had then subdued certain other kings unto Humber. By reason whereof Austin was made archbishop of Dover, by the appointment of Gregorius I., who sent him certain palls with his letter from Rome. as before is expressed. Which letter being recited, then Thomas, expounding upon the same, beginneth to declare for himself, how the meaning of Gregory in this letter was, to reduce the new church of Saxons or Englishmen to the order that was in the old time among the Britons; that is, to be under two metropolitans, one of London, the other of York; for so the church was ordered in the time of the Britons, as is before declared. Notwithstanding. he giveth to Austin this prerogative during his lifetime, to have authority and jurisdiction, not only over his twelve bishops, but upon all other bishops and priests in England. And after his decease, then these two metropolitans, London and York, to oversee the whole clergy, as in times past amongst the Britons: whom he joineth together after the death of Austin to constitute bishops. and to oversee the church. And that he so meaneth London to be equal in authority with York, it appeareth by four arguments. First, that he willeth London to be consecrate by no bishop, but of his own synod. Secondly, in that he willeth no distinction of honour to be betwixt London and York, but only according to that as each one of them is elder in time. Thirdly, for that he matcheth these two together in common council, and with one agreement to consent together in doing and disposing such things as they shall consult upon in the zeal of Christ Jesus; and that in such sort, that one should not dissent nor discord from the other. What meaneth this, but that they should govern together, whom he would not to dissent together? Fourthly, where he writeth, that the bishop of York should not be subject to the bishop of London: what meaneth this, but that the bishop of London should be equivalent with the metropolitan of York, or rather superior unto him?

And thus he expounded the meaning of Gregory to be in the foresaid letter. To whom Lanfranc again answereth, that he was not the bishop of London, and that the question pertained not to London. Thomas replieth, having on his part many fautors, that this privilege was granted by Gregory to Austin alone, to have all other bishops subject to him; but after his decease there should be equality of honour betwixt London and York, without all distinction of priority, save the only priority of time should make superiority between them. And although Austin translated the see from London to Kent; yet Gregory, if his mind had been to give the same prerogative to the successors of Austin, (which he gave to him,) would expressly have uttered it in the words of his epistle, writing thus to Austin: That which I give to thee, Austin, I give also and grant to all thy successors after thee. But in that he maketh here no mention of his successors, it appeareth thereby that it was not his mind so to do.

To this Lanfranc argueth again: If this authority had been given to Austin alone, and not to his successors, it had been but a small gift, proceeding from the apostolic see to his special and familiar friend; especially seeing also that Austin in all his life did constitute no bishop of York, neither was there any such bishop to be subject to him. Again, we have privileges from the apostolic see which confirm this dignity in the successors of Austin, in the same see of Dover. Moreover, all Englishmen think it both right and reason to fetch the direction of well living from that place, where first they took the sparkle of right believing. Further, whereas you say that Gregory might have confirmed with plain words the same thing to the successors of Austin which he gave unto him, all that I grant; yet, notwithstanding, this is nothing prejudicial to the see of Canterbury. For if you know your logic, that which is true in the whole, is also true in the part; and what is true in the more, is also true in the less.

Now the Church of Rome is as the whole, to whom all other churches be as parts thereof; and as *homo*, mankind, is genus, the general, in a certain respect, to all his *individua*, to all particular persons, yet in every particular person lieth the property of the general; so, in like manner, the see of Rome in a certain respect is the general and the whole to other churches, and yet in every particular church is contained the whole fulness of the whole Christian faith. As the church of Rome is greater than all churches, that which is wrought in it ought to work in the less churches also; so that the authority of every chief head of the church ought to stand also in them that do succeed, unless there be any precise exception made by name. Wherefore, like as the Lord said to all bishops of Rome the same thing which he said to Peter, so Gregory in like manner said to all the successors of Austin that which he said to Austin. So thus I conclude: likewise as the bishop of Canterbury is subject to Rome, because he had his faith from thence; so York ought to be in subjection to Canterbury, which sent the first preachers thither. Now, whereas you allege that Gregory would Austin to be resident at London, that is utterly uncertain. For how is it to be thought that such a disciple would do contrary to the mind of such a master? But grant (as you say) that Austin removed to London, what is that to me, who am not bishop of London? Notwithstanding, all this controversy ceasing betwixt us, if it shall please you to come to some peaceable composition with me, (all contention set apart,) you shall find me not out of the way, so far as reason and equity shall extend.

With these reasons of Lanfranc Thomas gave over, condescending that his province should begin at Humber. Whereupon it was then decreed, that York from that time should be subject to Canterbury in all matters appertaining to the rites and regiment of the catholic church; so that wheresoever within England Canterbury should or would hold his council, the bishop of York should resort thither with his bishops, and be obedient to his decrees canonical.

Provided, moreover, that when the bishop of Canterbury should decease, York should repair unto Dover, there to consecrate with others the bishops that should be elect. And if York should decease, his successors should resort to Canterbury, or else where the bishop of Canterbury should appoint, there to receive his consecration, making his profession there, with an oath of canonical obedience. Thomas being content withal, Lanfranc the Italian triumpheth with no small joy, and putteth the matter forthwith in writing, that the memory thereof might remain to the posterity of his successors. But yet that decree did not long stand. For shortly after the same scar, so superficially cured, burst out again. Insomuch that in the reign of King Henry the First, A.D. 1121, Thurstinus, archbishop of York, could not be compelled to swear to the archbishop of Canterbury; and yet notwithstanding by the letters of Calixtus the second was consecrated without any profession made to the said bishop, with much more matter of contention, all which to recite it were too long. But this I thought to commit to history, to the intent men might see the lamentable decay of true Christianity amongst the Christian bishops, who, inflamed with glorious ambition, so contended for honour, that without mere forcement of law no modesty could take place.

Of such-like contentions among prelates of the clergy for superiority, we read of divers in old chronicles, as in the history entitled *Chronicon Hirsseldense*, where is declared a bloody conflict which twice happened in the church of Goslaria, between Hecelon. bishop of Hildesheime, and Wederatus, bishop of Fulda, and all for the superior place, who should sit next to the emperor; the emperor himself being there present, and looking on them, and yet not able to stay them.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

Thus I have described the troublous contention between Lanfranc and Thomas, metropolitan of York in the days of Alexander; of which controversy. and of the whole discourse thereof, Lanfranc writeth to Pope Alexander.

In the story before of King Egelred was declared, about the year of our Lord 1016, how the bishops of Lindisfarne, otherwise named Holy Land, in the flood of Tweed, was translated to Durham; so likewise in the days of this Lanfrancus, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1076, divers bishops' sees were altered and removed from townships to greater cities. As the bishopric of Selesse was removed to Chichester; out of Cornwall to Exeter; from Wells to Bath; from Shireborne to Salisbury; from Dorchester to Lincoln; from Litchfield to Chester; which bishopric of Chester Robert being the bishop, reduced from Chester to Coventry. Likewise after that, in the reign of William Rufus, A.D. 1095, Herbert, bishop of Thetford, from thence reduced the see to Norwich.



Dover

As concerning Dover and Canterbury, whether the see was likewise translated from the town of Dover to the city of Canterbury in the time of Theodorus, or whether Canterbury by old time had the name of Dorobernia, (as the letter of Lanfranc to Pope Alexander above mentioned doth pretend,) I find it not in histories expressly defined; save that I read by the words of William, being yet duke of Normandy, charging then Harold to make a well of water for the king's use in the castle of Dorobernia, that the said Dorobernia then was taken for that which we now call Dover; but whether Dorobernia and the city of Canterbury be both one or divers, the matter is not great. Notwithstanding this I read in the Epistle of Pope Bonifacius to King Ethelbert, as also to Justinus, archbishop; in the Epistle of Pope Honorius to Bishop Honorius; of Pope Vitalianus to Theodorus; of Pope Sergius to King Ethelred, Alfred, and Adulphus, and

to the bishops of England: likewise of Pope Gregory the Third to the bishops of England; of Pope Leo to Athelard, archbishop of Canterbury; of Formosus to the bishops of England; and of Pope John to Dunstan; that the name of Dorobernia and of Canterbury indifferently are taken for one matter.

In this time, (and by the procuring of this Lanfranc,) the ninth year of this king, a council was holden at London, where, among the acts thereof, these were the principal things concluded.

First, for the order of sitting, that the archbishop of York should sit on the right hand, and the bishop of London on the left hand; or, in the absence of York, London should have the right, and Winchester the left, hand of the archbishop of Canterbury sitting in council.

2. The second, that bishops should translate their sees from villages into cities. whereupon those sees above named were translated.

3. That monks should have nothing in proper; and if any so had, he dying unconfessed should not be buried in the churchyard.

4. That no clerk or monk of any other diocess should be admitted to orders, or retained without letters commendatory or testimonial.

5. That none should speak in the council except bishops and abbots, without leave of the arch-metropolitans.

6. That none should marry within the seventh degree with any, either of his own kindred or of his wives departed.

7. That none should either buy or sell any office within the church.

8. That no sorcery or any divination should be used or permitted in holy church.

9. That no bishop nor abbot, nor any of the clergy, should be at the judgment of any man's death or dismembering, neither should be any favourer of the said judicants.

Moreover, in the days of this Lanfranc, divers good bishops of the realm began to take part with priests against the monks, in displacing these out of their churches, and to restore the married priests again; insomuch that Walkelmus, bishop of Winchester, had placed above forty canons instead of monks for his part; but this godly enterprise was stopped by stout Lanfranc, the Italian Lombard. This lusty prelate sat nineteen years; but at his latter end he was not so favoured of William Rufus, and died for sorrow. Although this Italian Frank, being archbishop, had little leisure to write, yet something he thought to do to set out his famous learning, and wrote a book against Berengarius, entitling it, *Opus Scintillarum*. The old church of Canterbury he plucked down, and builded up the new.

33. Hildebrand (Pope Gregory the Seventh)

After the death of Pope Alexander II. above mentioned, next unto him followed Hildebrand, surnamed Gregory the Seventh. This Hildebrand, as he was a sorcerer, so was he the first and principal cause of all this perturbation that is now, and hath been since his time, in the church; by reason that through his example all this ambition, stoutness, and pride entered first into the Church of Rome, and hath ever since continued. For before Hildebrand came to Rome, working there his feats, setting up and displacing what bishops he listed, corrupting them with pernicious counsel, and setting them against emperors; under pretence of chastity destroying matrimony, and under the title of liberty breaking peace and resisting authority; before this I say the Church of Rome was in some order, and bishops quietly governed under Christian emperors, and also were defended by the same; as Marcellus, Miltiades, and Silvester were subdued, and under obedience to Constantine, An. 340; Siricius to Theodosius, An. 388; Gregorius to Mauricius, An. 600; Hilarius to Justinian, An. 528; Adriaanus and Leo to Carolus Magnus, An. 801; Paschalis and Valentius to Ludovicus Pius, An. 830; Sergius II. to Lotharius, An. 840; Benedictus the Third, and Johannes the Ninth, unto Ludovicus, son of Lotharius, An. 856. But against this obedience and subjection Hildebrand first began to spurn, and by his example taught all other bishops to do the like.

Insomuch that at length they wrought and brought to pass, that it should be lawful for a few courtesans and cardinals (contrary to ancient ordinance and statutes decretal) to choose what pope they list, without any consent of the emperor at all. And whereas before it stood in the emperor's gift to give and to grant bishoprics, archbishoprics, benefices, and other ecclesiastical preferments within their own limits, to whom they list; now the popes, through much wrestling, wars, and contention, have extorted all that into their own hands, and to their assignees; yea, have plucked in all the riches and power of the whole world, and, not content with that, have usurped and prevailed so much above emperors, that as before no pope might be chosen without the confirmation of the emperor; so now no emperor may be elected without the confirmation of the pope, taking upon them more than princes, to place or displace emperors at their pleasure for every light cause; to put down or set up when and whom they listed; as Fredericus Primus, for holding the left stirrup of the pope's saddle, was persecuted almost to excommunication. The which cause moveth me to strain more diligence here, in setting out the story, acts, and doings of this Hildebrand, from whom, as the first patron and founder, sprang all this ambition and contention about the liberties and dominion of the Romish church; to the intent that such as cannot read the Latin histories may understand in English the original of evils, how and by what occasion they first began, and how long they have continued.

And, first, how this Hildebrand hitherto had behaved himself, before he was pope, I have partly declared. For though he was not yet pope in name, yet he was then pope indeed, and ruled the popes and all their doings as him listed. Item, what ways and fetches he had attempted, ever since his first coming to the court of Rome, to magnify and maintain false liberty against true authority; what practice he wrought by councils; what factions and conspiracies he made in stirring up popes against emperors, striving for superiority; and what wars followed thereof, I have also expressed. Now let us see further (by the help of Christ) the worthy virtues of this

princely prelate, after he came to be pope, as they remain in histories of divers and sundry writers described.

Hitherto the bishops of Rome have been elected by voices and suffrages of all sorts and degrees, as well of the priests and the clergy as of the nobility, people, and senate, all conventing and assembling together. And this election so I find to stand in force, if so be it were ratified and confirmed by the consent of Roman emperors, who had authority to call and to assemble all these, as well as bishops, together unto councils as case required. Under the authority and jurisdiction of these emperors were contained, both in Germany, France, Italy, and through the whole dominion of Rome, all patriarchs, bishops, masters of churches and monasteries, by the decree of councils, according to the old custom of our ancestors, as is declared in a certain story in the Life of Carolus Magnus. The holy and ancient fathers (like as Christ our Lord with his disciples and apostles both taught and did) honoured and esteemed their emperors as the supreme powers next under God in earth, set up, ordained, elected, and crowned of God, above all other mortal men, and so counted them and called them their lords. To them they yielded tribute, and paid their subsidies; also prayed every day for their life. Such as rebelled against them, they took as rebels and resisters against God's ordinance and Christian piety. The name of the emperor then was of great majesty, and received as given from God. Then these fathers of the church never intermeddled nor entangled themselves with politic affairs of the commonwealth; much less occupied they martial arms and matters of chivalry. Only in poverty and modesty was all their contention with other Christians, who should be poorest and most modest among them. And the more humbleness appeared in any, the higher opinion they conceived of him. The sharp and two-edged sword they took, given to the church of Christ, to save, and not to kill; to quicken, and not to destroy; and called it the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the life and light of men, and revoketh from death to life, making of men gods; of mortal, immortal. Far were they from that, to thrust out any prince or king (though he were never so far out of the way, yea, an Arian) from his kingdom, or to curse him, to release his subjects from their oath and their allegiance, to change and translate kingdoms, to subvert empires, to pollute themselves with Christian blood, or to war with their Christian brethren for rule and principality. This was not their spirit and manner then, but rather they loved and obeyed their princes. Again, princes loved them also like fathers and fellow princes with them of the souls of men. Now this Gregorius the Seventh, otherwise named Hildebrand, trusting upon the Normans, which then ruffled about Apulia, Calabria, and Campania, trusting also upon the power of Machtilda, a stout woman there about Rome; and partly, again, bearing himself bold for the discord among the Germans first of all others (contrary to the manner of elders) contemning the authority of the emperor, invaded the cathedral see of Rome, vaunting himself as having both the ecclesiastical and temporal sword committed to him by Christ, and that fulness of power was in his hand to bind and loose what so he listed. Whereupon thus he presumed to occupy both the regiments, to challenge all the whole dominion, both of the east and west church, yea, and all power to himself alone; abiding none to be equal, much less superior, unto him; derogating from others, and arrogating to himself, their due right and honour; setting at light Cæsars, kings and emperors, and who thus reigned by his own God-a-mercy. Bishops and prelates, as his underlings, he kept in awe, suspending and cursing, and chopping off their heads, stirring up strife and wars, sowing of discord, making factions, releasing oaths, defeating fidelity and due allegiance of subjects to their princes. Yea, and if he had offended or injured the emperor himself, yet notwithstanding he ought to be feared, as he himself glorieth in a certain epistle, as one that could not err, and had

received of Christ our Saviour, and of Peter, authority to bind and unbind at his will and pleasure. Priests then in those days had wives openly and lawfully, (no law forbidding to the contrary,) as appeareth by the deed and writings of their chapter seals and donations, which were given to temples and monasteries, wherein their wives also be cited with them for witness, and were called presbyterissæ. Also for bishops, prelates, parsons of churches, governors of the clergy, masters of monasteries, and religious houses; all these were then in those times in the emperor's ordination, to assign by voice or consent to whom he would. Now these two things this Pope Gregorius could not abide; for the which two causes only was all his striving and driving from his first beginning to abolish the marriage of priests, and to translate the authority imperial to the clergy. For to this scope only tended all his labour, practices, and devices, as appeared before in the Council of Lateran under Pope Nicholas, and also in the Council of Mantua under Alexander, making their marriage heresy, and the other to be simony. And that which before he went about by others, now he practiseth by himself, to condemn ministers that were married for Nicolaitans, and to receive any spiritual regiment of secular persons for simony; directing forth his letters upon the same to Henricus the emperor, to dukes, princes, powers, tetrarchs; namely, to Berchtoldus, to Rodolphus of Swevia, to Whelpo, Adalberon, and their wives; item, to bishops, archbishops, priests, and to all the people; in the which letters he denounceth them to be no priests so many as were married, forbid men to salute them, to talk, to eat, to keep company with them, to pay them tithes, or to obey them if they would not be obedient to him. Amongst all others, he directed special letters to Ottho, bishop of Constance, concerning this matter. But Ottho, perceiving the ungodly and unreasonable pretence of Hildebrand, would neither separate them that were married from their wives, nor yet forbid them to marry which were unmarried, &c.

The copy of the letter of Hildebrand sent to the bishop of Constance against priests' marriages.

Gregory, bishop, servant of servants of God, to the clergy and laity, both more and less, within the diocess of Constance, salutation and benediction. We have directed to our brother Ottho, your bishop, our letters exhortatory; wherein we enjoined him, according to the necessity of our duty, by the authority apostolical, that he should utterly abolish out of his church the heresy of simony, and also should cause with all diligence to be preached the chastity of priests. But he, neither moved with reverence of St. Peter's precept, nor yet with the regard of his duty, neglected to do these things, whereunto we so fatherly have exhorted him; incurring thereby a double offence, not only of disobedience, but also of rebellion, in that he hath gone and done clean contrary to our commandment; (yea, rather the commandment of blessed St. Peter); so that he hath permitted his clergy, not only such as had wives, not to put them away, but also such as had none, to take unto them. Whereupon we being truly informed thereof, and grieved there with, have directed to him another letter, declaring the motion of our displeasure and indignation. In which letters also we have cited him up to our council at Rome, there to appear and give account of his disobedience, in the audience of the whole synod. And now therefore we thought it best to signify this to you, our dear children, whereby in this behalf we might the better provide for your health and salvation. For if your bishop shall continue so obstinately to repngn and resist against our commandment, he is not meet to sit over you, &c. Wherefore these shall be to command you, and all them that be obedient to God, and to blessed St. Peter, by our apostolical authority, that if this your bishop shall persist in his

obstinacy, you that be his subjects hereafter give to him no service nor obedience. For the which thing doing we here discharge you before God and your souls. For if your bishop shall seem contrary to the decrements and injunctions apostolical, we, through the apostolical authority of St. Peter, discharge and absolve you from the band of your allegiance to him. So that if you be sworn to him, so long as he is a rebel against God and the apostolic seat, we loose you from the peril of your oath, that you shall not need to fear therein any danger," &c.

Otho, bishop of Constance, thus being cited, whether he did appear personally himself, I do not read. Thus I read and find, that in the said council holden at Rome, Hildebrand, with other bishops of Rome, did then enact, among many others, these three things most special. First, that no priest hereafter should marry. Secondly, that all such as were married should be divorced. Thirdly, that none hereafter should be admitted to the order of priesthood, but should swear perpetual chastity, &c. This council of Rome being ended, forthwith the act of Hildebrand concerning the single life of priests was proclaimed and published in all places, and strait commandment given to bishops to execute the same.

The copy of his bull sent into Italy and Germany.

Gregory the pope, otherwise Hildebrand, the servant of the servants of God, sendeth the apostles' blessing to all them within the kingdoms of Italy and Germany that show their true obedience to St. Peter. If there be any priests, deacons, and subdeacons that still will remain in the sin of fornication, we forbid them the church's entrance, by the omnipotent power of God, and by the authority of St. Peter, till time they amend and repent. But if they persevere in their sin, we charge that none of you presume to hear their service; for their blessing is turned into cursing, and their prayer into sin, as the Lord doth testify to us by his prophets, I will turn your blessing, &c."

The bishops of France, being called upon daily with the pope's letters, were compelled to obey the decree of the council; but the residue of the clergy manfully and stoutly withstanding the pope's decree and enforcement of their bishops, would not agree, but repined thereat, and said that the council did manifestly repugn against the word of God, and that the pope did take from priests that which both God and nature had given them; and therefore that person to be a heretic, and author of a wicked doctrine, which ruled and governed, not by the Spirit of God, but by Satan. The decree and act set forth to tend directly against the word of God, and the saying of Christ, All men have not the gift and capacity of this word. Item, to be against the sound doctrine of St. Paul, writing these words: As concerning virginity, I have no commandment of the Lord, &c. Again, He that can not otherwise live continently, let him marry. Item, that it was against the canons both of the apostles and of the Nicene Council. Moreover, that it was against the course of nature which he required, that men, being sequestered from their natural wives and women, should be coacted to live as angels; that is, to perform that which nature doth not give. And therefore the bishop therein did open a pernicious window to uncleanness and to fornication. In sum, giving up their answer, thus they concluded, that they had rather give up their benefices, than to forsake their natural and lawful wives against the word of Christ. And, finally, if married priests could not please them, they should call down angels from heaven to serve the churches. But Hildebrand, nothing moved, neither with honest reason, nor with the authority of Holy Scripture, nor with the determination of the Nicene Council, nor any thing else, followeth this matter; calleth upon the bishops still, with his letters and legates doth solicit their minds, accuseth them of negligence and dastardness,

threateneth them with excommunication, unless they cause their priests to obey his decree enjoined them. Whereupon a great number of bishops, for fear of the pope's tyranny, laboured the matter with their priests by all means possible to bereave them of their accustomed matrimony.

Amongst other, the archbishop of Mentz, perceiving this act of taking away priests' marriage might breed him no little trouble, talketh with his clergy gently, admonisheth them of the pope's mind and decree, and giveth them half a year's respite to deliberate upon the case; exhorting them diligently to show themselves obedient to the pope and to him, and to grant with good-will that which at length (will they nill they) they must needs be forced unto, and therefore of their own accord to stand content therewith, lest the pope should be compelled to attempt ways of sharper severity. The time of deliberation expired, the archbishop assembleth his clergy at Erpsford, the month of October, and there willeth them, according to the pontifical decree, either to abjure for ever all matrimony, or else to renounce their benefices and ecclesiastical livings. The clergy again defend themselves against the pope's decree with Scriptures, with reason, with the acts of general councils, with examples of ancestors, by divers strong arguments, declaring the pope's decree not to be constant, nor ought to take effect. But the archbishop said he was compelled so of the pope, and could not otherwise do, but to execute that which was enjoined him.

The clergy, seeing that no reason, nor prayer, nor disputation would serve, laid their heads together, consulting among themselves what was best to be done. Some gave counsel not to return again to the synod, some thought it good to return and to thrust out the archbishop from his see, and to give him due punishment of death for his deserving, that by the example of him others may be warned here after never to attempt that thing any more, to the prejudice of the church, and the rightful liberty of ministers. After that this was signified to the archbishop by certain spies that were amongst them, what the clergy intended to do, the archbishop, to prevent and salve the matter, sendeth to the priests, as they were coming out, certain messengers, bidding them be of hope, and to return again to the metropolitan, and they should have that should content their minds. So, being persuaded, they come again to the council. The bishop promiseth he would do his endeavour what he could to revoke and turn the mind of the bishop of Rome from that sentence, willing them in the mean time to continue as they had done in their cure and ministry. The next year following, Hildebrand, the soldier of Satan, sendeth his legate (a certain bishop called Curiensis) unto the archbishop of Mentz, and assembled there a council. In the which the archbishop again proposeth the matter, commanding all the clergy, under pain of the pope's curse, there perpetually either to renounce their wives or their livings. The clergy defended their cause again with great constancy. But when no defence could take place, but all went by tyranny and mere extortion, it burst in the end to an uproar and tumult, where the legate and the archbishop, being in great danger, hardly escaped with their lives, and so the council brake up. By this schism and tumult it followed that the churches after that, in choosing their priests, would not send them to the bishops (the enemies and suppressors of matrimony) to be confirmed and inducted, but did elect them within themselves, and so put them in their office without all leave or knowledge of the bishops, who then agreed and were determined to admit no priests but such as should take an oath of perpetual singleness, never to marry after. And thus first came up the oath and profession of single priesthood. Notwithstanding, if other nations had followed the like constancy and concord of those German ministers, the devilish drift and decree of this Hildebrand (or rather hellbrand) had been frustrate and

avoided. But this greediness of livings in weak priests made them to yield up their godly liberty to wicked tyranny. Yet this remaineth in these Germans to be noted, what concord can do in repressing the inordinate requests of evil bishops, if they constantly stand to the truth, and hold together. And thus much for banishing of matrimony. Now let us proceed to the contests between wicked Hildebrand and the godly emperor. But before, by the way of digression, it shall not be much from the purpose to touch a little of the properties of this pope, as we find them described in certain epistles of Benno, a cardinal, writing to other cardinals of Rome; which Benno lived in the same time of Hildebrand, and detecteth the prodigious acts and doings of this monstrous pope.

First, declaring that he was a sorcerer most notable, and a necromancer, an old companion of Sylvester, of Laurentius and Theophylactus, called otherwise Benedictus Nonus. Amongst others, Benno Cardinalis writeth this history of him: "How upon a certain time this Gregorius, coming from Albanus to Rome, had forgot behind him his familiar book of necromancy, which he was wont commonly to carry always with him. Whereupon remembering himself, entering the port of Lateran, he calleth two of his most trusty familiars to fetch the book, charging them at no hand to look within it. But they being so restrained, were the more desirous to open it, and to peruse it, and so did. After they had read a little the secrets of the Satanical book, suddenly there came about them the messengers of Satan, the multitude and terror of whom made them almost out of their wits. At length, they coming to themselves, the spirits were instant upon them to know wherefore they were called up, wherefore they were vexed; quickly (said they) tell us what ye would us to do, or else we will fall upon you, if ye retain us longer. Then spake one of the young men to them, bidding them go and pluck down yonder walls, pointing unto certain high walls there nigh to Rome, which they did in a moment. The young men, crossing them for fear of the spirits, (scarce recovering themselves,) at length came to their master." And it followeth moreover in the epistle of the said Benno to the cardinals:

"We have made mention to you before of divers colleges of the Church of Rome which refused to communicate with him; as Leo, then archpriest of the cardinals, Benno, Ugobaldus, Johannes the cardinal, Peter, chancellor and cardinal, being all instituted before this Hildebrand. These three also being consecrated by him, that is, Natro, Innocentius, and Leo, forsook him, cursing the detestable errors which he held. In like case Theodinus, whom he constituted archdeacon, and other cardinals more, Johannes surnamed Primicerius, Petros Oblationarius, with all that appertained to them, saving one only man. And now, when this Hildebrand saw that the bishops also would forsake him, he called unto him the laymen, and made them privy of his council, thinking thereby to separate the bishops, that they should have no conference with the cardinals. After that he called together those bishops; and being guarded with bands of laymen, he enforced the bishops, partly for fear, and partly for his menacing words, to swear unto him, that they should never disagree unto that which he would have done, that they should never defend the king's quarrel, and that they should never favour or obey the pope that should in his stead be instituted. Which thing being done, he sent them, by means of the prince of Salernites, into Campania; and thus did he separate them from the company of the cardinals, and from the city of Rome. And not only the bishops, but also the priests of the city and clerks of inferior orders, as also the laymen, he bound by their oaths, that at no time nor for any cause they should condescend unto the king.

"As soon as Pope Alexander was dead, which died somewhat before night, the same day, contrary to the canons, he was chosen pope of the laymen. But the cardinals subscribed not to his election. For the canons prescribed (under pain of cursing) that none should be chosen pope before the third day after the burial of his predecessor. But he (by sinister means thus climbing to the see) removed the cardinals of the said see from being of the council. But with what persons he consulted night and day Rome well heard and saw. And he now putting the cardinals from his council, his life, faith, and doctrine no man could accuse or bear witness of; whereas in the canons is commanded, that in every place wheresoever the pope is should be with him three cardinals being priests, and two deacons, because of his ecclesiastical testimony and style of verity; of which canonical decree you heard, gentle reader, before. He violently wrested the sacred Scriptures to cover his falsehood, which kind of idolatry, how great it is, manifestly through all the Scripture appeareth. Contrary to the minds and counsel of the cardinals, and besides the determinate order of pronouncing judgment by the canons, he rashly did excommunicate the emperor, being in no synod solemnly accused before. The sentence of which excommunication, after rehearsal of these presents, shall also be manifested (Christ willing); to the which excommunication," saith Benno, "none of the cardinals would subscribe. As soon as he arose out of his seat papal to excommunicate the emperor, the same seat (being made but a little before with big timber) suddenly by the appointment of God was rent and shivered in pieces; so that all men might plainly understand what and how great and terrible schisms that lubber had sown against the church of Christ, against the seat of St. Peter, and how cruelly he had dispersed the chair of Christ, in defiling the laws of the church, ruling by might and austerity in that his so perilous and presumptuous excommunication.

"In the description of the same excommunication he inserteth those things wherein he himself erred, when he absolved the emperor being unjustly excommunicate, and the bishops also communicating with him; and to the uttermost thus cutting and mangling the unity of the church, and those that communicated with them, did as much as in him lay to make two churches.

"Also the same bold merchant commanded that the cardinals should fast, to the intent that God would reveal whose opinion was better (whether of the church of Rome or of Berengarius) touching the controversy of the Lord's body in the sacrament. And hereby he proved himself to be a manifest infidel, for that in the Nicene Council it is written, He that doubteth is an infidel.

"Further, he sought for a sign to establish his faith concerning the article of the Lord's body; as did Gregory to confirm the woman's faith, when the consecrated bread was transubstantiated into the form of a fleshly finger. He also sent two cardinals (Attones and Cunones) unto Anastase, that with the archpriest of the same church they should begin a fast of three days' space, and that every of them (every day during those three days) should say over the Psalter, and sing masses, that Christ would show unto them some such-like sign of his body as he did to the foresaid Gregory; which thing they could not see.

"The emperor was wont oftentimes to go to St. Mary's church in the Mount Aventine to pray. Hildebrand, when he had by his espials searched out and knew all the doings of the emperor, caused the place where the emperor was accustomed (either standing or prostrate on his face) to pray to be marked, and for money be hired a naughty pack' (like himself) to gather and lay together a heap of great stones directly

over the place in the vault of the church where the emperor would stand, that in throwing the same down upon his head he should slay the emperor. About which purpose as the hireling hasted, and was busy, removing to the place a stone of great hugeness and weight, it broke the plank whereon it lay; and the hireling standing thereupon, both together fell down from the roof to the pavement of the church, and with the same was dashed all in pieces. And after the Romans had understanding of the handling of this matter, they fastened a rope to one of the feet of this hireling, and caused him to be drawn through the streets of the city three days together in example to others. The emperor notwithstanding, according to his wonted clemency, caused him to be buried.

"Johannes, bishop of Portua, (being one of the secret council of Hildebrand,) came up into the pulpit of St. Peter, and amongst other things, in the hearing both of the clergy and people, said, Hildebrand and we have committed such a deed and so horrible, for the which we are all worthy to be burned alive, (meaning of the sacrament of the body of Christ,) which sacrament Hildebrand, when he thereof inquired a divine answer against the emperor, and it would not speak, threw into the fire and burned it, contrary to the persuasion of the cardinals that were there present, and would have resisted the same.

"In the second holy-day in the Easter week, when the clergy and the people were assembled at St. Peter's church to hear mass, after the Gospel, he went up into the pulpit, as he was in his pontifical attire, and in the presence of divers bishops and cardinals (a great company both of the senate and the people of Rome being gathered together) openly preached (among many other words of divination) that the king, whose name was Henry, should die (without all peradventure) before the feast of St. Peter next ensuing; or else at leastwise that he should be so dejected from his kingdom, that he should not be able any more to gather together above the number of six knights. This he preached to the bishops and cardinals, and all that were present, crying out of the pulpit in these words: Never accept me for pope any more, but pluck me from the altar, if this prophecy be not fulfilled by the day appointed. About the same time he went about by help of privy murderers to kill the emperor, but God preserved him. And many there were even at that time which thought Pope Hildebrand to be guilty, and to be the deviser of the treason, because that then he (before the deed put in execution) presumed of the death of the king, being by him falsely prophesied of before; which words of his wounded many men's hearts. And it came to pass that Hildebrand by his words was openly condemned in the congregation, which (as is said) gave judgment of himself to be no pope, neither that he would be counted for pope any longer, but thought to be both a belier and a traitor, unless that before the feast of St. Peter next coming the emperor should die, or else should be deprived of all kingly honour, insomuch as he should not be able to make above six knights on his part. And thus by the appointment of God it came to pass, that by his own mouth he was condemned for a heretic.

"Thus saith the Lord: The prophet who of arrogancy will prophesy in my name those things I have not commanded him, or else will prophesy in the name of other gods, let him be slain. And if, thou shalt say with thyself, How shall I know what thing it is that the Lord hath not commanded to be spoken? this token shalt thou have to know it by: whatsoever things the prophet in the name of God shall prophesy, and the same come not to pass, that mayest thou be sure the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath imagined through the haughtiness of his own mind, and therefore thou shalt not be afraid of him.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

"When the time was expired that Hildebrand in his divination had set, and that neither the king was dead, neither the power of the empire impaired, and fearing lest by the words of his own mouth he should be reprehended and condemned, subtly he turned his tale, saying, and persuading the ignorant people, that he meant not of the body of the king, but of his soul; as though the soul of the king had lost all, saving six of his knights or soldiers, or else had been dead during that space: and thus by these sleights he beguiled the ignorant people. About such prophets St. Gregory Ezekiel saith, Between true prophets and false this difference there is, that true prophets, if they speak any thing upon their own mind, they be soon rebuked; but the false prophets, both they tell lies, and not having the spirit of truth, they persevere in their falsity.

"Over and beside, the said Hildebrand judged to death three men before they were convict, or else confessed their crime, without the sentence of any secular judge, and caused them to be hanged upon a pair of gallows, over against the church of St. Peter, in a place called Palatiolum, without any delay or advisement, contrary to the laws, which command that every public offender should have thirty days' space before he be put to execution. Which thing even amongst the pagans is in use and observed, as teacheth the authority of St. Ambrose, and the martyrdom of holy Marcellianus and Marcus.

"He cast Centius, the son of Stephen the alderman, into prison, being before his trusty friend; and in a vessel, being thick set with sharp nails, he tormented him to the point of death, who, after he was escaped, apprehended the said Hildebrand. Of this apprehension, before he was set at liberty, he openly forgave all the conspirators. Which thing afterwards, contrary to his fidelity, he brake and revenged, and caused Centius, to whom he had for given all offences, to be taken, and hanged him and nine of his men upon the gallows before St. Peter's porch.

"There was at the apprehension of Pope Hildebrand, a certain widow's sons, to whom (and others more for their penance) he enjoined a year's banishment. Which time being run out, the widow, in token of more ample satisfaction, thinking there by to have appeased the mind of Hildebrand, put a halter about her son's neck, and drawing her son by the rope unto the foot of Hildebrand, said, My lord pope, at your hands will I receive again my son, which one whole year hath endured banishment and other penance by your holiness enjoined. Then the said Hildebrand for that instant, because of those which were with him in company, (dissembling his wrath,) delivered her her son very churlishly, saying, Get thee hence, woman, I bid thee, and let me be in rest. After this he sent his officers, and apprehended the widow's son, and gave commandment to the justices to put him to death; who all together making answer, said that they could no more condemn or meddle with him, for that he had for his crime committed appealed once to the pope, and endured the banishment, and done the penance by him enjoined. Hereupon this glorious Hildebrand, displeased with the judges, caused the foot of the widow's son to be cut off, making neither repentance, nor the laws and ordinances, to be of any estimation with him; and thus his foot being cut off, he died within three days after with the pain thereof. Many other wicked deeds did this Hildebrand, upon whom the blood of the church crieth vengeance, shed by the sword. (that is,) the miserable treachery of his tongue; for which things (and that justly) the church refused to communicate with him."

Another epistle of Benno to the cardinals.

"To the reverend fathers of the Church of Rome, and to his beloved in Christ, and to his brethren that shall for ever be beloved, Benno, the cardinal of the Church of Rome, wisheth faithful service, health, and communion with the servants of the catholic church. Of the which communion, discipline, and power he vainly braggeth, that by the presumption of his authority shall unjustly bind or loose any manner of person. And he doth unjustly bind, whatsoever be he, that curseth any man (being willing to make satisfaction, and bewailing his boldness, being also unconvict, and not confessing the crime); but rather, cursing that party in vain, he curseth and condemneth himself, turning his weapon upon his own person to his destruction. O strange and new-found treachery proceeding from the sanctuary! nay, rather from him which as high priest seemeth to rule the church, and to be a judge over the judges."

Hildebrand was earnestly in hand with the emperor, that he should deprive those bishops which came in by simony. The emperor (thinking, as a zealous prince, that this commission had proceeded from the throne of God) without delay obeyed the same, and forthwith, without any consideration or judicial order, deprived certain bishops, and thought that by this his obedience to Hildebrand he offered an acceptable sacrifice to God, not knowing the crafty handling of him. But Hildebrand then again placed those whom the emperor for simony at his commandment had before deposed, and those whom by that means he made to bear a hateful heart to the emperor he reconciled again unto himself in great familiarity; and by many and great oaths taken Of them, for their fidelity towards him, he promoted them above all the rest. And thus, by these pranks, the imperial seat of the king being shortly after impaired, and destitute almost of friends, he craftily purchasing the friendship and favour of the greatest princes, the better to bring his matters to pass, suddenly again, without any lawful accusation, without any canonical vocation, without all judicial order, he excommunicated the emperor, (so obedient always unto him,) and set the princes of the empire all against him. And notwithstanding (as the apostle saith) that no man ought to circumvent his brother in his business, as much as in him lay he rather mortified and killed him than brotherly corrected him. Thus the emperor, being many ways circumvented, as excommunicated besides the canonical order, and by the consent and counsel of Hildebrand spoiled of the greatest part of his imperial honour, and overcharged with great wars and slaughters of his own subjects, in vain desired and sued to have the canon read and heard, causing him by force and violence at Canusium, in the presence of Hildebrand, to accuse himself by his own confession.

Say you now, (I pray you,) all such as love justice, and love not to lean either upon the left hand, or else the right hand, in the favour of any person; say your minds, whether that such a confession, being forced upon never so poor a man, (much more upon an emperor,) ought at such a time to be prejudicial or not? or whether he, which extorted the same confession, is guilty of the canon? or else he which, being so perversely judged, suffered the injury of a most perverse judge? Which also most patiently and publicly suffered this violence with lamentable affliction upon his bare feet, clothed in thin garments, in the sharp winter, which never was used, and was three days together at Canusium made a spectacle both of angels and men, and a ludicrous mocking-stock to that proud Hildebrand. Never trust me, if that fourteen cardinals, the archdeacon himself, and he that is called Primicerius, being all wise and religious men, besides many other of the clerks of Lateran, (to the judgment and privilege of whose holy seat the whole world is obedient,) weighing and considering

his intolerable apostacy, departed not from participating, and refused communicating with him.

This glorious Hildebrand, and his affinity, by their new authority breaking the decrees of the Chalcedon council, not only in words, but also in public writings, have agreed that it is tolerable both to baptize and communicate being out of the church of God; and how blind these men were, and also what heretics they be, their own writings do declare. What a mischief is this? (saith Benno,) they presume to judge of the church which swarm themselves in all errors, who also esteem the verity but as a lie; and lest their poisoned falsehood both in words and writings should appear, they have, like subtle poisoners, (the sooner to deceive,) mixed honey therewithal. A lie, saith St. Augustine, is every thing pronounced with the intent of deceiving of others.

It were too long and tedious here to recite all the detestable doings and diabolical practices of conjurings, charms, and filthy sorceries, exercised between him, and Laurentius, and Theophylact, otherwise named Pope Benedict the Ninth, whereof a long narration followeth in the foresaid epistle of Benno to the cardinals to be seen, to whom the reader may repair, whoso hath either leisure to read or mind to understand more of the abominable parts and devilish acts of this Hildebrand.

About what time Hildebrand was made pope, Henricus the Fourth, emperor, was encumbered and much vexed with civil dissension in Germany, by reason of certain grievances of the Saxons against him and his father Henricus the Third. Where upon the matter growing to sedition, sides were taken, and great wars ensued betwixt Otho, duke of Saxony, and Henricus the emperor. This busy time seemed to Hildebrand very opportune to work his feats, whose study and drift was ever from the beginning to advance the dominion of the Romish seat above all other bishops, and also to press down the authority of the temporal rulers under the spiritual men of the church. And although he went about the same long before, by subtle trains and acts set forth concerning simony; yet now he thought more effectually to accomplish his purposed intent, after that he was exalted thither where he would be. And therefore now bearing himself the bolder, by the authority of St. Petes throne, first he began to pursue the act set out by his predecessor, as touching simony, cursing and excommunicating, whoso ever they were, that received any spiritual living or promotion at laymen's hands, as also all such as were the givers thereof. For this he called then simony, that under that colour he might defeat the temporal powers of their right, and so bring the whole clergy at length to the lure of Rome. And forso much as the emperor was the head, thinking first to begin with him, he sendeth for him by letters and legates to appear in the Council of Lateran at Rome. But the emperor, busied in his wars against the Saxons, had no leisure to attend to councils. Notwithstanding Gregorius the pope proceedeth in his council, rendering there the cause and reason before the bishops why he had excommunicated divers of the clergy, as Herman, bishop of Bamberge, counsellor to the emperor, and other priests more, for simony. And there moreover in the said council he threateneth to excommunicate likewise the emperor himself, and to depose him from his regal kingdom, unless he would renounce the heresy of simony, and do penance. The council being ended, Guibertus, archbishop of Ravenna, persuaded with one Centius (a Roman, the captain's son, whom the pope had excommunicated) to take the emperor's part against the pope; who watching his time in the temple of St. Mary, upon Christmas day in the morning, taketh the pope, and putteth him fast in a strong tower. The next day the people of Rome, hearing this, harness themselves with all expedition to help the bishop, whom when they loosed out of prison, they besieged the house of Centius, and plucked it

down to the ground; his family, having their noses cut off, were cast out of the city; Centius himself, escaping, fled to the emperor. Guibert the archbishop, pretending good will to the pope, departed from Rome, who likewise had wrought with Hugo Candidus, cardinal, and with Theobaldus, archbishop of Millain, also with divers other bishops about Italy, to forsake the pope, and take the emperor's part. Gregory the pope, called Hildebrand, bearing the conspiracy, layeth the sentence of excommunication upon them all, and depriveth them of their dignity. The emperor being moved (not unworthily) with the arrogant presumption of the proud prelate, called together a council at Wormes. In which council all the bishops, not only of Saxony, but of all the whole empire of Germans, agree and conclude upon the deposition of Hildebrand, and that no obedience hereafter should be given to him. This being determined in the council, Roulandus, a priest of Parmen, was sent to Rome with the sentence, who in the name of the council should command Gregory to yield up his seat, and also charge the cardinals to resort to the emperor for a new election of another pope. The tenor of the sentence sent by Roulandus was this.

The sentence of the Council of Wormes against Hildebrand.

"Forsomuch as thy first ingress and coming in hath been so spotted with so many perjuries, and also the church of God brought into no little danger through thine abuse and newfangledness; moreover, because thou hast defamed thine own life and conversation with so much and great dishonesty, that we see no little peril or slander to rise thereof; therefore the obedience, which yet we never promised thee, here after we utterly renounce, and never intend to give thee. And as thou hast never taken us yet for bishops, (as thou hast openly reported of us,) so neither will we hereafter take thee to be apostolic. Vale."

Gregory the pope, tickled with this sentence, first condemneth it in his Council of Lateran with excommunication. Secondly, depriveth Sigifridus, archbishop of Mentz, of his dignities and ecclesiastical livings, with all other bishops, abbots, and priests, as many as took the emperor's part. Thirdly, accuseth Henricus the emperor himself, depriveth him of his kingdom and regal possession, and releaseth all his subjects of their oath of allegiance given unto him, after this form and manner.

The tenor of the sentence excommunicatory against Henricus the emperor by Hildebrand.

"O blessed St. Peter, prince of the apostles, bow down thine ears, I beseech thee, and hear me thy servant, whom thou hast brought up even from mine infancy, and hast delivered me until this day from the hands of the wicked, which hate and persecute me, because of my faith in thee. Thou art my witness, and also the blessed mother of Jesus Christ, and thy brother St. Paul, fellow partner of thy martyrdom, how that I entered this function not willingly, but enforced against my will; not that I take it so as a robbery lawfully to ascend into this seat; but because that I had rather pass over my life like a pilgrim or private person, than for any fame or glory to climb up to it. I do acknowledge (and that worthily) all this to come of thy grace, and not of my merits, that this charge over Christian people, and this power of binding and loosing, is committed to me. Wherefore, trusting upon this assurance for the dignity and tuition of holy church in the name of God omnipotent, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, I do here depose Henry, the son of Henry once the emperor, from his imperial seat and princely government, who hath so boldly and presumptuously laid hands upon thy church. And furthermore, all such as heretofore have sworn to be his subjects, I release them of their oath, whereby all subjects are bound to the allegiance of their princes.

For it is meet and convenient that he should be void of dignity which seeketh to diminish the majesty of thy church. Moreover, for that he hath contemned my monitions, tending to his health and wealth of his people, and hath separated himself from the fellowship of the church, (which he, through his seditions, studieth to destroy,) therefore I bind him by virtue of excommunication, trusting and knowing most certainly that thou art Peter, in the rock of whom (as in the true foundation) Christ our King hath built his church."

The emperor, thus assaulted with the pope's censure, sendeth abroad his letters through all nations to purge himself, declaring how wrongfully and against all right he was condemned. The princes of Almany, partly fearing the crack of the pope's thunderclap, partly again rejoicing that occasion was renewed to rebel against the emperor, assembled a commencement, where they did consult and so conclude to elect another emperor, and so fall from Henry, unless the pope would come to Germany, and he would there be content to submit himself and obtain his pardon.

Wherein is to be considered the lamentable affections of the Germans in those days, so to forsake such a valiant emperor, and so much to repute a vile bishop. But this was the rudeness of the world then, for lack of better knowledge. The emperor, seeing the chief princes ready to forsake him, promiseth them with an oath, that if the pope would repair to Germany, he would ask forgiveness.

Upon this the bishop of Triers was sent up in commission to Rome, to entreat the pope to come into Germany. The bishop (at the instance of the legate and of the princes) was content. He entered into Germany, thinking to come to Augusta. After he was come to Vercellos, the bishop of that city (being the chancellor of Italy, and desirous to disturb peace for the old grudge he had to the emperor) falsely persuaded with the pope, that he was certain the emperor was coming with a mighty great army against him, counselling him therefore to provide betimes for his own safeguard in some stronger place. Whereby the pope's mind being altered, he retired back to Canusium or Canossus, a city being subject to Matilda, a countess of Italy, where he should not need to fear the emperor.

Henricus understanding the false fear of the pope, and of his retire to Canusium, incontinent (coming out of Spire with his wife and his young sun, in the deep and sharp of winter) resorteth to Canossus. All his peers and nobles had left him for fear of the pope's curse, neither did any accompany him. Wherefore the emperor, being not a little troubled, (laying apart his regal ornaments,) came barefooted with his wife and child to the gate of Canossus, where he from morning to night (all the day fasting) most humbly desireth absolution, craving to be let in to the speech of the bishop. But no ingress might be given him once within the gates. Thus he continuing three days together in his petition and suit, at length answer came, that the pope's majesty had yet no leisure to talk with him. The emperor, nothing moved therewith, that he was not let into the city, patient and with a humble mind abideth without the walls, with no little grievance and painful labour; for it was a sharp winter, and all frozen with cold. Notwithstanding, yet through his importunate suit at length it was granted, through the entreating of Matilda, the pope's paramour, and of Arelaus, earl of Sebaudia, and the abbot of Cluniack, that he should be admitted to the pope's speech. On the fourth day being let in, for a token of his true repentance, he yielded to the pope's hands his crown, with all other ornaments imperial, and confessed himself unworthy of the empire, if ever he do against the pope hereafter, as he hath done before, desiring for that time to be absolved and forgiven. The pope answereth, he will

neither forgive him, nor release the bond of his excommunication, but upon conditions. First, to promise that he shall be content to stand to his arbitrament in the council, and to take such penance as he shall enjoin him; also that he shall be prepared and ready to appear, in what place or time the pope shall appoint him. Moreover, that he, being content to take the pope judge of his cause, shall answer in the said council to all objections and accusations laid against him, and that he shall never seek any revengement herein. Item, that he (though he be quit and cleared therein) shall stand to the pope's mind and pleasure, whether to have his kingdom restored or to lose it. Finally, that before the trial of his cause, he shall neither use his kingly ornaments, sceptres, or crown, nor usurp the authority to govern, nor to exact any oath of allegiance upon his subjects, &c. These things being promised to the bishop by an oath, and put in writing, the emperor is only released of excommunication. The tenor of the writing is this:

The form and tenor of the oath which Henricus made to the pope.

"I Henricus, king, after peace and agreement made to the mind and sentence of our Lord Gregorius the Seventh, promise to keep all covenants and bonds betwixt us, and to provide that the pope go safely wheresoever he will, without any danger either to him or to his retinue; especially in all such places as be subject to our empire. Nor that I shall at any time stay or hinder him, but that he may do that belongeth to his function, where and whensoever his pleasure shall be. And these things I bind myself with an oath to keep."

Thus the matter being decided betwixt them, after the pope's own prescribement, the emperor taketh his journey to Papia. The pope with his cardinals did vaunt and triumph with no little pride that they had so quailed the emperor, and brought him on his knees to ask them forgiveness. Yet notwithstanding, mistrusting themselves, and misdoubting time, what might befall them hereafter if fortune should turn, and God give the emperor to enjoy a more quiet kingdom; therefore, to prevent such dangers betime, they study and consult privily with themselves how to displace Henry clean from his kingdom, and how that device might safely be conveyed. They conclude and determine to derive the empire unto Rodulphus, a man of great nobility amongst the chiefest states of Germany; and also to incite and stir up all other princes and subjects (being yet free and discharged from their oaths) against Henry, and so by force of arms to expel the emperor out of his kingdom. To bring this purpose the better to pass, legates were sent down from the pope, Sigehardiis, patriarch of Aquilia, and Altimanus, bishop of Padway, which should persuade through all France, that Henry the emperor was rightfully excommunicated, and that they should give to the bishop of Rome their consents in choosing Rodulphus to be emperor. This being done, there was sent to the said Rodulph, duke of Suevia, a crown from the pope with this verse:

The Rock gave the crown to Peter,
Peter giveth it to Rodulph.

Here, by the way of digression, (to make a little gloss upon this barbarous verse,) two notable lies are to be noted. One where he lieth upon Christ, the other where he lieth upon St. Peter. First, that Christ gave any temporal diadem to Peter, it is a most manifest lie, and against the Scriptures, whenas he would not take it being given to himself, and saith his kingdom is not of this world. Again, where be saith that Peter giveth it to Rodulph, here he playeth the poet, for neither had Peter any such thing to give; and if he had, yet he would not have given it to Rodulphus from the right heir; neither is it true that Peter did give it, because Hildebrand gave it. For it is no

good argument, Hildebrand did give it, ergo, Peter did give it; except ye will say, Hildebrand stirred up great wars and bloodshed in Germany, ergo, Peter stirred up great wars in Germany. So Peter neither could, nor would, nor did give it to Rodulphus, but only Hildebrand the pope; who after he had so done, he gave in commandment to the archbishop of Mentz and of Cullen to elect this Rodulphus for emperor, and to anoint him king, and also to defend him with all force and strength they might.

While this conspiracy was in hand, Henricus the emperor was absent, and the pope's ambassadors with him also. In the mean space, Rodulphus was elected emperor, unknown to Henry. Upon this cometh the bishop of Stausborough unto the emperor, certifying him what was done. He, suspecting and seeing the stomach and doings of the Saxons so bent against him, mustereth his men with expedition, and marcheth forward to defend his right; but first sendeth to Rome, (trusting upon the league betwixt him and his pope,) and requireth the bishop to proceed with his sentence against Rodulphus, for the rebellious invasion of his empire. But the bishop, minding nothing less, sendeth word again, that it was not right to condemn any person, his cause being not heard; thus under pretence of the law colouring his unlawful treachery. Henricus, thus disappointed and forsaken on every side, with his men about him attempted battle against Rodulphus. In which battle a marvellous great slaughter was on both sides, but the victory on neither part certain; so that both the captains yet challenged the empire. After the battle and great murder on both sides, they both sent to Rome, to know of the pope's determination, to whether of them two he judged the right title of the empire to appertain. The bishop commandeth them both to break up their armies, and depart the field, promising that he shortly would call a council where this matter should be disputed; in the mean time they should cease from war. But before the messengers returned again, (their armies being refreshed,) they had another conflict together, but not victory got on either part. Thus both the captains being wearied in wars, the Romish beast, the bishop, which was the cause thereof, perceiving whither these cruel wars would tend, to the great calamity not only of the Germans, but also of other nations, (trusting to find another way to help Rodulphus and his adherents,) sendeth down a commission by Otho, archbishop of Trevers, Bernardus, deacon, and Bernardus, abbot of Massilia; to whom he gave in charge that they should call together a council or sitting in Almany, and that there it should be defined to whether part the empire should pertain, by most right and public consideration; promising that what they should therein determine he (looking upon the matter through the authority of God omnipotent, and of St. Peter, and St. Paul) would ratify the same. Moreover, for that no let nor impeachment should happen to the legates by the way, he giveth with them letters to the princes and nations of Germany; whereof the contents be declared briefly in Platina, if any list to read them.

But the emperor would not so permit the legates to have any council within Germany, except they would first deprive Rodulphus of his kingdom. The legates, considering that to be against the drift and intention of the pope, returned again from whence they came. The pope hearing this, and seeing his purpose was so disappointed by the emperor, draweth out another excommunication against him, and again bereaveth him of his kingdom; sending about his letters excommunicatory throughout all places, thinking thereby to further the part of Rodulphus the better.

Furthermore, Hildebrand interdicteth and deposeth also Guibertus, archbishop of Ravenna, for taking the emperor's part; commanding all priests to give no manner of

obedience to him, and sendeth thither to Ravenna another archbishop with full authority.

After and upon this, Henricus and Rodulphus, to try the matter by the sword, coped together in battle, not without bloodshed, where Henricus, by the favour of God, against the judgment of Hildebrand, had the victory. Rodulphus, there greatly wounded in the conflict, was had out of the army, and carried to Hyperbolis, where he commanded the bishops and chief doers of his conspiracy to be brought before him. When they came, he lifted up his right hand, in which he had taken his deadly wound, and said, This is the hand which gave the oath and sacrament unto Henricus my prince, and which through your instigation so oft hath fought against him in vain; now go and perform your first oath and allegiance to your king, for I must to my fathers; and so died. Thus the pope gave battle, but God gave the victory.

Henricus (after his enemy being thus subdued, and wars being ceased in Germany) forgat not the old injuries received of Hildebrand, by whom he was twice excommunicated and expelled from his kingdom, and three days making humble suit (yea, and that in sharp winter) could find no favour with him. Besides that, he incited moreover and aided his enemy against him. Wherefore he calleth to gether a council or assembly of divers bishops of Italy, Lombardy, and Germany, at Brixia, 1083, where he purged himself, and accused the bishop Hildebrand of divers crimes, to be a usurper, perjured, a necromancer and sorcerer, a sower of discord; complaining moreover of wrongs and injuries done by the bishop and Church of Rome, in that the Church of Rome preferred the bishop before him; when that his father, being emperor before him, had enthronized and set in divers and sundry bishops there by his assignment, without all others' election. And now this bishop, contrary to his oath and promise made, thrust in himself without the will and knowledge of him, being their king and magistrate. For in the time of his father, Henricus the Third, this Hildebrand with other bound themselves with a corporal oath, that so long as the emperor and his son, now being king, should live, they should neither themselves presume nor suffer any other to aspire to the papal seat, without the assent and ap probation of the foresaid emperors; which now this Hildebrand, contrary to his corporal oath, had done. Wherefore the foresaid council with one agreement condemned this Gregory, that he should be deposed.

This being enacted and sent to Rome, they elected Guibertus, archbishop of Ravenna, in the place of Hildebrand, to govern the Church of Rome, named Clemens the Third. But when Hildebrand neither would give over his hold, nor give place to Clement, the emperor, gathering an army to send to Italy, came to Rome to depose Gregory, and to place Clement. But Hildebrand, sending to Matilda the countess before mentioned, required her (in remission of all her sins) to withstand Henry the emperor, and so she did. Notwithstanding Henricus

prevailing came to Rome, where he besieged the city all the Lent, and after Easter got it, the Romans being compelled to open the gates unto him; so he coming to the temple of St. Peter, there placeth Clement in his papacy. Hildebrand straight flieth into Adrian's tower with his adherents, where he being beset round about at length sendeth for Robert Guiscardus his friend, a Norman. In the mean time, while Robertus collecteth his power, the abbot of Cluniake, conferring with Gregory, exhorteth him to crown Henricus emperor in Lateran. Which if he would do, the other promiseth to bring about that Henry should depart with his army into Germany; whereunto the people of Rome also did likewise move him. To whom Gregory answered, that he was

content so to do, but upon condition that the emperor would submit himself to ask pardon, to amend his fault, and to promise obedience. The emperor, not agreeing to those conditions, went to Senas, taking Clement, new stalled pope, with him.

After the return of the emperor, the foresaid Robert Guiscardus, approaching with his soldiers, burst in at one of the gates, and spoileth the city; and not long after delivereth Hildebrand out of his enemies' hands, and carried him away to Campania, where he, not long continuing after, died in exile.

Antonius writeth, that Hildebrand, as he did lie a dying, called to him one of his chief cardinals, bewailing to him his fault and disorder of his spiritual ministry, in stirring up discord, war, and dissension; whereupon he desired the cardinal to go to the emperor, and desire him of forgiveness, absolving from the danger of excommunication both him and all his partakers, both quick and dead.

Thus hast thou, gentle reader, the full history of Pope Gregory the Seventh, called Hildebrand, which I have laid out more at large, and desire thee to mark, because that from this pope, if thou mark well, springeth all the occasions of mischief, of pomp, pride, stoutness, presumption, and tyranny, which since that time hath reigned in his successors hitherto, in the cathedral church of the Romish clergy. For here came first the subjection of the temporal regiment under the spiritual jurisdiction; and emperors, which before were their masters, now are made their underlings. Also here came in the suppression of priests' marriage, as is sufficiently declared. Here came in moreover the authority of both the swords spiritual and secular into spiritual men's hands. So that Christian magistrates could do nothing in election, in giving bishoprics or benefices, in calling councils, in hearing and correcting the excesses of the clergy; but only the pope must do all. Yea, moreover, no bishop nor pastor in his own parish could excommunicate or exercise any discipline amongst his flock, but only the pope challenged that prerogative to himself. Finally, here came in the first example to persecute emperors and kings with rebellion and excommunication, as the clergy themselves hereafter do testify and witness in proceeding against Paschalis. Thus these notes being well observed, let us (by the grace of Christ) now repair again to our country history of England.

34. Summary of the Reign and Character of William I.

About the death of Pope Hildebrand (or not long after) followed the death of King William the Conqueror, in the year 1090, after he had reigned in England the space of one and twenty years and ten months. The cause of his sickness and death is said to be this: For that Philip the French king upon a time (jesting) said that King William lay in childbed, and nourished his fat belly. To this the foresaid William, hearing thereof, answered again, and said, when he should be churched, he would offer a thousand candles to him in France, wherewithal the king should have little joy. Whereupon King William in the month of July (when the corn, fruit, and grapes were most flourishing) entered into France, and set on fire many cities and towns in the west side of France. And lastly, coming to the city of Meaux, where he burning a woman, being as a recluse in a wall enclosed, (or, as some say, two men anchorites enclosed,) was so fervent and furious about the fire, that with the heat, partly of the fire, partly of the time of the year, thereby he fell into sickness, and died upon the same.

By the life and acts of this king it may appear true, as stories of him report, that he was wise, but guileful; rich, but covetous; a fair speaker, but a great dissembler; glorious in victory and strong in arms, but rigorous in oppressing whom he overcame, in levying of tasks passing all others. Inso much that he caused to be enrolled and numbered in his treasury every hide of land, and owner thereof; what fruit and revenues surmounted of every lordship, of every township, castle, village, field, river, and wood, within the realm of England. Moreover, how many parish churches, how many living cattle, there were, what and how much every baron in the realm could dispend, what fees were belonging, what wages were taken, &c. The tenor and contents of which taskment yet remaineth in rolls. After this tasking or numbering, which was the year before his death, followed an exceeding murrain of cattle, and barrenness of the ground, with much pestilence and hot fevers among the people, so that such as escaped the fever were consumed with famine. Moreover, at the same season, among certain other cities, a great part of the city of London, with the church of Paul's, was wasted with fire in the year of our Lord 1085.



In hunting and in parks the foresaid king had such pleasure, that in the country of Southampton, by the space of thirty miles, he cast down churches and townships, and there made the New Forest; loving his deer so dearly, as though he had been to them a father, making sharp laws for the increasing thereof, under pain of losing both the eyes. So hard he was to Englishmen, and so favourable to his own country, that there was no English bishop remaining, but only Wolstan of Worcester, who being commanded of the king and Lanfranc to resign up his staff, partly for inability, partly for lack of the French tongue, refused otherwise to resign it, but only to him that gave it, and so went to the tomb of King Edward, where he thought to resign it, but was permitted to enjoy it still; so likewise in his days there was almost

no Englishman that bare office of honour or rule in the land. Inasmuch that it was half a shame at that time to be called an Englishman. Notwithstanding he some deal favoured the city of London, and granted unto the citizens the first charter that ever they had, written in the Saxon, with green wax sealed, and contained in few lines.

Among his other conditions, this in him is noted, that so given he was to peace and quiet, that any maiden being laden with gold or silver might pass through the whole realm without harm or resistance. This William in his time builded two monasteries; one in England, at Battle in Sussex, where he won the field against Harold, called the abbey of Battle; another besides, named Barmondsey, in his country of Normandy.

A little above mention was made of the bishop's see of Shireborne, translated from thence to Salisbury. The first bishop of Salisbury was Hirmannus, a Norman, who first began the new church and minster of Salisbury. After whom succeeded Osmundus, who finished the work, and replenished the house with great living, and much good singing. This Osmundus first began the ordinary which was called *Secundum usum Sarum*, An. 1076. The occasion whereof was this, as I find in an old story book entitled Eulogium. A great contention chanced at Glastenbury between Thurstanus the abbot and his convent, in the days of William the Conqueror. Which Thurstanus the said William had brought out of Normandy from the abbey of Cadonum, and placed him abbot of Glastenbury. The cause of this contentious battle was, for that Thurstanus contemning their choir service, then called the use of St. Gregory, compelled his monks to the use of one of William, a monk of Fiscam in Normandy. Whereupon came strife and contentions amongst them, first in words, then from words to blows, after blows then to armour. The abbot, with his guard of harnessed men, fell upon the monks, and drave them to the steps of the high altar, where two were slain, eight were wounded with shafts, swords, and pikes. The monks, then driven to such a strait and narrow shift, were compelled to defend themselves with forms and candlesticks, wherewith they did wound certain of the soldiers. One monk there was, (an aged man,) who, instead of his shield, took an image of the crucifix in his arms for his defence, which image was wounded in the breast by one of the bow-men, whereby the monk was saved. My story addeth more, that the striker incontinent upon the same fell mad; which savoureth of some monkish addition besides the text. This matter being brought before the king, the abbot was sent again to Cadonum, and the monks by the commandment of the king were scattered in far countries. Thus, by the occasion hereof, Osmundus, bishop of Salisbury, devised that ordinary which is called the use of Sarum, and was afterward received in a manner through all England, Ireland, and Wales. And thus much for this matter, done in the time of this Kind William.

Which William after his death, by his wife Matildis, or Maud, left three sons, Robert Courtsey, to whom he gave the duchy of Normandy; William Rufus, his second son, to whom he gave the kingdom of England; and Henry the third son, to whom he left and gave treasure; and warned William to be to his people loving and liberal, Robert to be to his people stern and sturdy.

In the history called *Jornalensis*, it is reported of a certain great man, who about this time of King William was compassed about with mice and rats, and flying to the midst of a river; yet when that would not serve, came to the land again, and was of them devoured. The Germans say that this was a bishop, who, dwelling between Cullen and Mentz, in time of famine and dearth, having store of corn and grain, would

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not help the poverty crying to him for relief, but rather wished his corn to be eaten up of mice and rats. Wherefore, being compassed with mice and rats, (by the just judgment of God,) to avoid the annoyance of them, he builded a tower in the midst of the river of Rheine (which yet to this day the Dutchmen call Rats' Tower); but all that would not help, for the rats and mice swam over to him in as great abundance as they did before, of whom at length he was devoured.

35. William Rufus

William Rufus, the second son of William the Conqueror, began his reign in the year of our Lord 1088, and reigned thirteen years, being crowned at Westminster by Lanfranc; who, after his coronation, released out of prison, by the request of his father, divers English lords, which before had been in custody. It chanced that, at the death of William the Conqueror, Robert Courtsey his eldest son was absent in Almany, who, hearing of the death of his father, and how William his younger brother had taken upon him the kingdom, was therewith greatly moved; insomuch that he laid his dukedom to pledge unto his brother Henry, and with that good gathered unto him an army, and so landed at Hampton, to the intent to have expelled his brother from the kingdom. But William Rufus hearing thereof sent to him fair and gentle words, promising him surrender and subjection, as to the more worthy and elder brother; this thing only requiring, that seeing he was now in place and possession, he might enjoy it during his life, paying to him yearly three thousand marks, with condition that which of them overlived the other should enjoy the kingdom. The occasion of this variance between these brethren wrought a great dissension between the Norman lords and bishops, both in England and in Normandy. Insomuch that all the Norman bishops within the realm almost rebelled against the king, taking part with Duke Robert, except only Lanfranc, and Wolstan, bishop of Worcester, above mentioned, an Englishman; who for his virtue and constancy was so well-liked and favoured of his citizens, that (imboldden with his presence and prayer) they stoutly maintained the city of Worcester against the siege of their enemies, and at last vanquished them with utter ruin. But Duke Robert at length by the advice of his council (hearing the words sent unto him, and wagging his head thereat, as one conceiving some matter of doubt or doubleness) was yet content to assent to all that was desired, and so returned shortly after into Normandy, leaving the bishops and such others in the briers, which were in England, taking his part against the king.

This Rufus was so ill liked of the Normans, that between him and his lords was oft dissension. Wherefore (well near) all the Normans took part against him; so that he was forced of necessity to draw to him the Englishmen. Again, so covetous he was, and so immeasurable in his tasks and takings, in selling benefices, abbeys, and bishoprics, that he was hated of all Englishmen.

In the third year of this king died Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury; from whose commendation and worthiness, as I list not to detract any thing, (being so greatly magnified of Polydorus his countryman,) so neither do I see any great cause why to add any thing thereto. This I think, unless that man had brought with him less superstition, and more sincere science into Christ's church, he might have kept him in his country still, and have confuted Berengarius at Rome. After the decease of Lanfranc, the see of Canterbury stood empty four years.

After the council of Lanfranc above mentioned, wherein was concluded for translating of bishops' sees from villages into head cities; Remigius, bishop of Dorchester, (who, as ye heard, accompanied Lanfranc unto Rome,) removed his bishop's see from Dorchester unto Lincoln, where he builded the minster there situate upon a hill within the said city of Lincoln. The dedication of which church Robert, archbishop of York, did resist, say ing that it was builded within the ground of his

precinct. But after, it had his Romish dedication by Robert Blevet, next bishop that followed. By the same Remigius also was founded the cloister or monastery of Stow, &c.

In the fourth year of this king great tempests fell in sundry places of England, specially at Winchcombe, where the steeple was burned with lightning, the church wall burst through, the head and right leg of the crucifix, with the image of our lady on the right side of the crucifix, thrown down, and such a stink left in the church, that none might abide. At London the force of the weather and tempest overturned six hundred houses. In which tempest the roof of Bow-church was hurled up in the wind, and by the vehemency thereof was pitched down a great deepness into the ground.

King William, (as ye have heard,) an exceeding poller, or ravener rather, of church goods, after he had given the bishopric of Lincoln to his chancellor, Robert Blevet above minded, began to cavil; avouching the see of Lincoln to belong to the see of York; till the bishop of Lincoln had pleased him with a great sum of money of five thousand marks, &c.

And as nothing could come in those days with out money from the king, so Herbert Losinga, paying to the king a piece of money, was made bishop of Thetford, as he had paid a little before to be abbot of Ramsey. Who likewise, the same time removing his see from Thetford to the city of Norwich, there erected the cathedral church with the cloister in the said city of Norwich, where he furnished the monks with sufficient living and rents of his own charges, besides the bishop's lands. After ward, repenting of his open and manifest simony, he went to Rome, where he resigned into the pope's hands his bishopric, but so that incontinent he received it again. This Herbert was the son of an abbot called Robert, for whom he purchased of the king to be bishop of Winchester.

Ye heard a little before of the death of Pope Hildebrand, after the time of which Hildebrand the German emperors began to lose their authority and right in the pope's election, and in giving of benefices. For next after this Hildebrand came Pope Victor, by the setting up of Matilda, and the duke of Normandy, with the faction and retinue of Hildebrand, who likewise showed himself stout against the emperor. But God gave the shrewd cow short horns. For Victor being poisoned (as some say in his chalice) sat but one year and a half. Notwithstanding the same imitation and example of Hildebrand continued still in them that followed after. And like as the kings of Israel followed most part the steps of Jeroboam, till the time of their desolation; so for the greatest part all popes followed the steps and proceedings of this Hildebrand, their spiritual Jeroboam, in maintaining of false worship, and chiefly in upholding the dignity of that see, against all rightful authority, and the lawful kingdom of Zion. In the time of this Victor began the order of the monks of Charterhouse, through the means of one Hugo, bishop of Gracionople, and of Bruno, bishop of Cullen.

Next to Victor sat Urban the Second, by whom the acts of Hildebrand were confirmed, and also new decrees enacted against Henry the emperor. In this time were two popes at Rome, Urbanus, and Clemens the Third, whom the emperor set up. Under Pope Urban came in the white monks of the Cistereian order, by one Stephen Harding, a monk of Shireborne, (an Englishman,) by whom this order had his beginning in the wilderness of Cistry, with in the province of Burgoin, as witnesseth Cestrensis. Others write that this Harding was the second abbot of that place, and that it was first founded by the means of one Robert, abbot of Molism in Cestercium, a forest in Burgundy, A.D. 1098, persuaded perchance by Harding; and afterwards, in

the year of our Lord 1135, it was brought into England by a certain man called Espeke, which builded an abbey of the same order called Merinale. In this order the monks did live by the labour of their hands; they paid no tithes nor offerings, they wore no fur nor lining, they wore red shoes, their cowls white, and coats black, all shorn save a little circle, they ate no flesh but only in their journey. Of this order was Bernardus, &c.

This Urban held divers councils; one at Rome, where he excommunicated all such lay persons as gave investiture of any ecclesiastical benefice; also all such of the clergy as abjected themselves to be underlings or servants to lay persons for ecclesiastical benefices, &c.

Another council he held at Cleremount in France, where among other things the bishop made an oration to the lords being there present, concerning the voyage and recovering the Holy Land from the Turks and Saracens. The cause of which voyage first sprang by one Peter, a monk or hermit, who being in Jerusalem, and seeing the great misery of the Christians under the pagans, made thereof declaration to Pope Urban, and was therein a great solicitor to all Christian princes. By reason where of, after the foresaid oration of Pope Urban, thirty thousand men (taking on them the sign of the cross for their cognizance) made preparation for that voyage, whose captains were Godfrey, duke of Loraine, with his two brethren, Eustace and Baldwin, the bishop of Pody, Bohemund, duke of Puel, and his nephew Tancredus, Raimund, earl of St. Egidius, Robert, earl of Flanders, and Hugh le Grand, brother of Philip the French king. To whom also was joined Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, with divers other noblemen, with the foresaid Peter the hermit, who was the chief causer of that voyage.

At that time many of the said noblemen laid their lands and lordships to mortgage to provide for the forenamed voyage; as Godfrey, duke of Loraine, who sold the dukedom of Boulogne to the bishop of Eburone for a great sum of money. Also Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, laid his dukedom to pledge to his brother William, king of England, for ten thousand pounds, &c.

Thus the Christians, which passed first over Bosphorus, having to their captain Peter the hermit, (a man perchance more devout than expert to guide an army,) being trapped of their enemies, were slain and murdered in great numbers among the Bulgars, and near to the town called Civitus.

When the nobles and the whole army met together at Constantinople, (where Alexius was emperor,) passing over by Hellespontus going to Jerusalem, they took the cities of Nicea, Eraclea, Tarsis, and subdued the country of Cicilia, appointing the possession thereof to certain of their captains.

Antioch was besieged, and in the ninth month of the siege it was yielded to the Christians by one Pyrrhus; about which season were fought many strong batties, to the great slaughter and desolation of the Saracens, and not without loss of many Christian men. The governance of this city was committed to Bohemund, duke of Puell, whose martial knighthood was often proved in time of the siege thereof.

And not long after, Corbona, master of the Persians' chivalry, was vanquished and slain, with a hundred thousand infidels. In which discomfiture were taken fifteen thousand camels.

Jerusalem, on the nine and thirtieth day of the siege, was conquered by the Christians. Robert also, duke of Normandy, was elect to be king thereof. Howbeit he

refused it, hearing of the death of King William Rufus of England; wherefore he never sped well in all his affairs after the same. Then Godfrey, captain of the Christian army, was proclaimed the first king of Jerusalem. At the taking of the city was such a murder of men, that blood was congealed in the street the thickness of a foot. Then after Godfrey reigned Baldwin his brother; after him Baldwin the second nephew; then Gaufridus, duke of Gaunt, and after him Gaufridus his son, by whom many great battles there were fought against the Saracens, and all the country thereabout subdued, save Ascalon, &c. And thus much hitherto touching the voyage to the Holy Land. Now to our own land again.

About this time (as Matt. Parisiensis writeth) the king of England favoured not much the see of Rome, because of their impudent and unsatiable exactions which they required; neither would he suffer any of his subjects to go to Rome, alleging these words, because they follow not the steps of Peter, hunting for rewards; neither have they the power and authority of him, whose holiness they declare themselves not to follow, &c.

By the same Urbanus the seven hours, which we call *Septem horas canonicas*, were first instituted in the church.

Item, by this pope was decreed, no bishop to be made but under the name and title of some certain place.

Item, that matins and hours of the day should every day be said.

Also every Saturday to be said the mass of our Lady, and all the Jews' sabbath to be turned to the service of our Lady, as in the Council of Turon, to the which service was appointed the anthem, *Ora pro populo, interveni pro clero, intercede pro de voto fœmineo sexu.*

Item, all such of the clergy as had wives to be deprived of their order.

Item, to be lawful for subjects to break their oath of allegiance with all such as were by the pope excommunicate.

Item, not to be lawful both for husband and wife to christen one child both together; with many more matters.

In the sixth year of this king's reign, Malcolme, king of Scots, which former times before had made great slaughter of old and young in the north parts, as is before showed, burst into Northumberland with all the power he could make, and there by the right judgment of God was slain, with his son Edward, and also Margaret his wife, sister to Edgar Adeling above minded, a virtuous and devout lady, within three days after.

The same year he gave the archbishopric of Canterbury (after that he had detained the same in his own hands four years) to Anselm, abbot of Beck in Normandy.

This Anselm was an Italian, in the city of Augusta born, and brought up in the abbey of Beck, in Normandy; where he was so strict a follower of virtue, that (as the story recordeth) he wished rather to be without sin in hell, than in heaven with sin. Which saying and wish of his (if it were his) may seem to proceed out of a mind, neither speaking orderly according to the phrase and understanding of the Scripture, nor yet sufficiently acquainted with. the justification of a Christian man. Further, they

report him to be so far from singularity, that he should say it was the vice which thrust the angels first out of heaven, and man out of paradise.

Of this Anselm it is moreover reported, that he was so ill-willing to take the archbishopric, that the king had much ado to thrust it upon him; and he was so desirous to have him take it, that the city of Canterbury (which before Lanfranc did hold but at the king's good will and pleasure) he gave now to Anselm wholly, which was about the year of our Lord 1093. But as desirous as the king was then to place the said Anselm, so much did he repent it afterward, seeking all manner of means to defeat him if he might. Such strife and contention rose between them two for certain matters, the ground and occasion whereof first was this:

After that Anselm had been thus elected to the see of Canterbury, before he was fully consecrate, the king communed with him (assaying by all gentle manner of words to entreat him) that such lands and possessions of the church of Canterbury as the king had given and granted to his friends since the death of Lanfranc, they might still enjoy the same as their own lawful possessions through his grant and permission. But to this Anselm in no case would agree. Whereupon the king, conceiving great displeasure against him, did stop his consecration a great season; till at length in long process of time the king, enforced by the daily complaints and desires of his people and subjects for lack of an archbishop to moderate the church, was constrained to admit and authorize him unto them. Thus Anselm with much ado taking his consecration, and doing his homage to the king, went to his see of Canterbury. And not long after the king sailed over to Normandy.

About this time there were two striving in Rome for the popedom, as is afore touched, Urbanus and Guibertus; divers realms diversely consenting, some to the one, some to the other. England, taking part with their king, was rather inclined to Guibertus, called Clement the Third; but Anselm did fully go with Urbanus, making so his exception with the king, entering to his bishopric. After the king was returned again from Normandy, the archbishop cometh to him, and asked leave to go to Rome, to fetch his pall of Pope Urban; which when he could not at first obtain, he maketh his appeal from the king to the pope. Whereat the king being justly displeased, chargeth the archbishop with breach of his fealty, contrary to his promise made; that is, if he without his licence should appeal either to Urban or to any other pope. Anselm answereth again, that it was to be referred unto some greater council, where it is to be disputed, whether this be to break a man's allegiance to a terrene prince, if he appeal to the vicar of St. Peter. And here much arguing and contending was on both sides. The king's reason proceedeth thus: The custom (saith he) from my father's time hath been in England, that no person should appeal to the pope without the king's licence. He that breaketh the customs of the realm violateth the power and crown of the kingdom. He that violateth and taketh away my crown is a traitor and enemy against me, &c. To this Anselm replieth again: The Lord (saith he) easily discusseth this question, briefly teaching what fidelity and allegiance we ought to give unto the vicar of St. Peter, where he saith, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, &c. And to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind in earth, it shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou loosest in earth, shall be loosed in heaven, &c. Again, to them all in general he saith, He that heareth you heareth me; and whoso despiseth you despiseth me. And in another place, He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye. On the other side, what duty we owe to the king, he showeth also: Give (saith he) to the emperor what belongeth to the emperor, and to God give that which to God belongeth. Wherefore in such things as

belong to God I will yield, and must yield by good right and duty, my obedience to the vicar of St. Peter; and in such things as belong again to terrene dignities of my prince, in those I will not deny to him my faithful help and counsel, so far as they can extend.

Thus have ye the grounded arguments of this prelate to stand so stiffly against his prince, where unto peradventure was joined also some piece of a stubborn heart. But in this conclusion none of his fellow bishops durst take his part, but were all against him; namely, William, bishop of Duresme, to whom Anselm thus protesteth, saying, Whosoever he were that would presume to prove it any breach of allegiance or fealty to his sovereign, if he appealed to the vicar of St. Peter, he was ready to answer at all times to the contrary. The bishop of Duresme answered again, that he which would not be ruled by reason must with force be constrained, &c. The king, having on his part the agreement of the bishops, thought to deprive the archbishop both of his pastoral see, and to expel him out of the realm. But he could not perform his purpose; for Anselm, as he was ready to depart the realm, said, whensoever he went, he would take his office and authority with him, though he took nothing else. Whereupon that matter was deferred till a longer time. In the mean season the king had sent privily two messengers unto Pope Urban, to entreat him to send his pall to the king, for him to give it where he would. Which messengers by this time were returned again, bringing with them from Rome Gualter, bishop of Alban, the pope's legate, with the pall to be given unto Anselm. This legate, first landing at Dover, from thence came privily (unknown to Anselm) to the king; declaring and promising, that if Urban was received pope in England, whatsoever the king required to be obtained, he by his privilege from the apostolical see would ratify and confirm the same; save only that when the king required of the legate that Anselm might be removed, the legate thereunto would not agree, saying that it was impossible to be obtained, that such a man as he, being lawfully called, should be expelled without manifest cause. In conclusion, so it followed, that although he could not obtain his request of the legate, yet the legate so wrought with the king, that Urban was proclaimed lawful pope throughout all the realm.

Then were sent to Anselm certain bishops to move and prove his mind, declaring what charges and pains the king had been at in his behalf to procure the pall for him from Rome, which otherwise would have stood him in great expenses, and that all this the king had done for his sake. Wherefore it were good reason and convenient that he (to gratify the king) should something condescend to his request again. But with all this Anselm, the stout archbishop, would not be moved. Wherefore the king, seeing none other remedy, was compelled to grant unto him the full right of his archbishopric. And so the day appointed when the pall should be brought to Canterbury, (being carried with all solemnity in a thing of silver,) the archbishop, with a great concourse of people, came forth barefoot with his priestly vestments, after a most goodly manner, to meet the same; and so being brought in, it was laid upon the altar, while Anselm (spreading over his shoulders his popish vestments) proceeded unto his popish mass.

Thus agreement being made between the king and the bishop, so long as it would hold, it happened the year following the king with his army entered into Wales, to subdue such as there rebel led against him. After the victory gotten, the king returned home again with triumph; to whom Anselm thought to have come to congratulate his prosperous success. But the king prevented him by messengers, laying to the bishop's charge both the small number and the evil service of his soldiers

sent to him at his need. At the hearing hereof, all the hope of Anselm was dashed, who at the same present had thought to have obtained and done many great matters with the king touching the state of the church. But here all turned contrary to his expectation; insomuch that he was charged, against the next court of parliament, to make his answer. But he avoided that by appealing to Rome. Wherefore he made his suit and friends to the king for licence to go to the pope. Unto the which suit the king answered again, that he should not go, neither was there any cause for him so to do; for that both he knew him to be of so sound a life, that he had done no such offence whereof he needed to crave absolution at Rome, neither was there any such lack of science and knowledge that he needed to borrow any counsel there: insomuch (saith the king) I dare say Pope Urban rather hath to give place to the wisdom of Anselm, than Anselm to have need of Urban. Wherefore as he hath no cause to go, so I charge him to tarry. And if he continue in his stubbornness still, I will assuredly seize upon his possessions, and convert his archbishopric into my coffers; for that he transgresseth and breaketh his fidelity and obeisance, promising before to observe all the customs of my kingdom. Neither is it the fashion in this realm, that any of my nobles should go to Rome without my sending. And therefore let him swear unto me, that he shall neither for any grievance appeal hereafter to the see of Rome, or else let him void my realm.

Against these words of the king Anselm, thinking not best to reply again by any message, but by word of mouth, coming himself personally to the king, he placeth himself (after his order) on the right hand of the prince, where he made his reply unto the message sent to him by the king. Whereas you say I ought not to go to Rome either in regard of any trespass, or for abundance of counsel and knowledge in me, (albeit I grant neither of them to be true,) yet what the truth is therein I refer it to the judgment of God. And whereas ye say that I promised to keep and observe your customs, that I grant, but with a condition, so far to keep them, and such of them to observe, as were consonant to the laws of God, and ruled with right and equity. Moreover, whereas ye charge me with breach of my fidelity and allegiance, for that contrary to your customs I appeal to the see apostolic, (my reverence and duty to your sovereignty reserved,) if another would say it, that is untrue. For the fidelity and obeisance that I owe to thee, O king, I have it of the faith and fidelity of God, whose vicar St. Peter is, to whose seat I do appeal. Further, whereas ye require me to swear, that I shall for no cause hereafter at any time appeal to Rome, I pronounce openly that a Christian prince requireth such an oath of his archbishop unjustly. For if I should forswear St. Peter, I should deny Christ. And when I shall at any time deny Christ, then shall I be content and ready to stand to the satisfaction of my transgression to you, for asking licence to go to Rome. And peradventure when I am gone, the goods of the church shall not so serve your temporal desires and commodities as ye ween for. At these words of the bishop the king and his nobles were not a little incensed; they defending again, that in his promise of observing the king's customs, there was neither condition nor any clause put in, either of God or right. Nowise? said Anselm. If so be that in your customs was neither mention made of God nor of right, whereof was there mention then? For God forbid that any Christian should be bound to any customs which go contrary to God and to right. Thus on both sides passed much altercation between them.

At length the king, after many threatening words, told him he should carry nothing out of the realm with him. Well, said the bishop, if I may neither have my horse nor garments with me, then will I walk on foot; and so addressed him toward his

journey, (all the other bishops forsaking him,) whereof none would take his part; but if he came to them for counsel, they said he was wise enough, and needed not their counsel, as who for his prudence knew best what was to be done, as also for his holiness was willing and able to persecute the same that he did know. As for them, they neither durst nor would stand against the king their lord; whose favour they could not lack, for the peril that might happen both to themselves and their kindred. But for him, because he was both a stranger, and void of such worldly corruption in him, they willed him to go forward as he had begun; their secret consent he should have, but their open voice they would not give him. Thus Anselm, remaining at Dover fifteen days tarrying for wind, at last sped him toward his passage. But his packing being secretly known in the court, the king's officer, William Warlwast, prevented his purpose, searching by the king's commandment all his trusses, coffers, satchels, sleeves, purse, napkin, and bosom for letters, and for money, and so let him pass. Who, sailing into France, first rested awhile at Lyons, from thence came to Rome to Pope Urban, according to the tenor and form of a certain epistle of his; wherein among many other things in the same epistle contained, these words he writeth to Pope Paschalis, the third year after his banishment, after the death of Urban, and a little before the death of the king.

"To the lord and reverend father Paschalis, high bishop, Anselm, servant of the church of Canterbury, offereth due subjection from his heart, and prayers, if they can stand in any stead.

"I see in England many evils, whose correction belongeth to me, and which I could neither amend, nor suffer without mine own fault. The king desireth of me, that under the name of right I should consent to his pleasures, which were against the law and will of God. For he would not have the pope received nor appealed unto in England without his commandment; neither that I should send a letter unto him, or receive any from him, or that I should obey his decrees. He suffered not a council to be kept in his realm now these thirteen years, since he was king. In all these things, and such like, if I asked any counsel, all my suffragan bishops of his realm denied to give me any counsel, but according to the king's pleasure. After that I saw these and such other things that are done against the will and law of God, I asked a licence of him to go to Rome unto the see apostolical, that I might there take counsel for my soul, and the office committed unto me. The king said that I offended against him for the only asking of licence; and propounded to me, that either I should make him amends for the same as a trespass, (assuring him never to ask his licence any more to appeal to the pope at any time here after,) or else that I should quickly depart out of his land. Wherefore, choosing rather to go out of the land than to agree to so wicked a thing, I came to Rome, as you know, and declared the whole matter to the Lord Pope. The king by and by (as soon as I went out of England) invaded the whole archbishopric, and turned it to his own use, taxing the monks only with bare meat, drink, and cloth. The king, being warned and desired of the Lord Pope to amend this, contemned the same, and yet continueth in his purpose still. And now is the third year since I came thus out of England, and more. Some men, not understanding, demand why I did not excommunicate the king. But the wiser sort, and such as have understanding, counsel me that I do not this thing; because it belongeth not unto me both to complain and to punish. To conclude, I was forewarned by my friends that are under the king, that mine excommunication (if it should be done) would be laughed to scorn and despised," &c.

By these here above prefixed, appeareth how Anselm, the archbishop, coming unto Rome, made his complaint to Pope Urban of the king; and how the pope, writing unto the king in the behalf of Anselm, his letters and commandments were despised. And now to our story. In the mean time, while the pope's letters were sent to the king, Anselm was bid to wait about the pope to look for answer back. Who perceiving at length how little the king reputed the pope's letters, began to be weary of his office, desiring the pope that he might be discharged thereof; but the pope in no case would thereto consent, charging him upon his obedience, that wheresoever he went, he should bear with him the name and honour of the archbishop of Canterbury. Whereunto Anselm again said his obedience he neither durst nor would refuse, as who for God's cause was ready to suffer whatsoever should happen, (yea, though it were death itself,) as he thought no less would follow thereof. But what should we think, saith he, is there to be done, where justice not only taketh no place, but is utterly oppressed? And whereas my suffragans do not only not help (for dread) the righteous cause, but also for favour do impugn the same. Well, (saith the pope,) as touching these matters, we shall sufficiently provide at the next council to be holden at Baion, whereat I will you the same time and place to be present.

When the time of the council was come, Anselm amongst others was called for, who, first sitting in an utter side of the bishops, afterwards was placed at the right foot of the pope. Whereupon the same place after him was appointed to the successors of the see of Canterbury, in every general council, by the decree of Pope Urban, to sit at the right foot of the pope. In this said council great stir and much reasoning there was against the Grecians, concerning the matter and order of proceeding of the Holy Ghost. Where is to be noted, that the Greek Church hath of long time dissented from the Latin Church in many and sundry points, to the number of twenty, or almost twenty-nine, articles, as I have them collected out of the register of the church of Hereford; whereof like as occasion hereafter may serve (God willing) for a further and more ample tractation to be made; so here, by the way, partly I mean to touch some.

The first is, Wherein the Greek Church differeth from the Latin.

The articles wherein the Greek Church altereth from the Latin or Romish Church are these:

1. They are not under the obedience of the Church of Rome, because that the Church of Constantinople is not subject, but equal to the same.
2. They hold that the bishop of the apostolic see of Rome hath not greater power than the four patriarchs. And whatsoever the pope doth beside their knowledge, or without their approbation, it is of no value.
3. Item, they say whatsoever hath been done or concluded since the second general council, is of no full authority; because from that time they recount the Latins to be in error, and to be excluded out of the holy church.
4. Item, they hold the eucharist consecrated by the Church of Rome not to be the very body of Christ. Also where the Romish Church doth consecrate in unleavened bread, they consecrate in bread leavened.
5. Item, they say that the Romish Church doth err in the words of baptism, for saying, I baptize thee; when they should say, Let this creature of God be baptized, &c.

6. They hold, moreover, to be no purgatory, nor that the suffrages of the church do avail the dead, either to lessen the pain of them that be destinate to hell, or to increase the glory of them that be ordained to salvation.

7. Item, they hold that the souls out of the bodies departed (whether they have done good or evil) have not their perfect pain nor glory; but are reserved in a certain place till the day of judgment.

8. Item, they condemn the Church of Rome for mixing cold water in their sacrifice.

9. Item, they condemn the Church of Rome, for that as well women as priests anoint children (when they baptize them) on both shoulders.

10. Item, they call our bread *panagia*.

11. Item, they blame the Church of Rome for celebrating their mass on other days besides Sun days, and certain other feasts appointed.

12. Also in this the Greek Church varieth from the Latin; for they have neither cream, nor oil, nor sacrament of confirmation.

13. Neither do they use extreme unction, or anointing, after the manner of the Roman Church, expounding the place of St. James of the spiritual infirmity, and not corporal.

14. Item, they enjoin no satisfaction for penance, but only that they show themselves to the priests, anointing them with simple oil, in token of remission of sins.

15. Item, only on Maundy Thursday they consecrate for the sick, keeping it for the whole year after, thinking it to be more holy on that day consecrated than upon any other. Neither do they fast any Saturday through the whole year, but only on Easter-eve.

16. Item, they give but only five orders, as of clerks, subdeacons, deacons, priests, and bishops; whereas the Roman Church giveth nine orders, after the nine orders of angels.

17. Moreover, the Greeians in their orders make no vow of chastity, alleging for them the fifth canon of Nice. I, N., priest, or deacon, will not forsake my wife for honesty sake.

18. Item, every year the Grecians use upon certain days to excommunicate the Church of Rome and all the Latins as heretics.

19. Item, among the said Grecians they are excommunicate that beat or strike a priest. Neither do their religious men live in such priestly chastity as the Roman priests do.

20. Item, their emperor amongst them doth ordain patriarchs, bishops, and other of the clergy, and deposeth the same at his pleasure; also he giveth benefices to whom he listeth, and retaineth the fruits of the same benefices as pleaseth him.

21. Item, they blame the Latin Church, because they eat no flesh, eggs, and cheese on Fridays, and do eat flesh on Saturdays.

22. Item, they hold against the Latin men for celebrating without the consecrated church, either in the house or in the field; and fasting on the sabbath day;

and for permitting menstruous women to enter into the church before their purifying; also for suffering dogs and other beasts to enter into the church.

23. The Grecians use not to kneel in all their devotions, yea, not to the body of Christ, (as the register termeth it,) but one day in the whole year; saying and affirming, that the Latins be goats and beasts, for they are always prostrating themselves upon the ground in their prayers.

24. The Grecians moreover permit not the Latins to celebrate upon their altars. And if it chance any Latin priest to celebrate upon their altar, by and by they wash their altar, in token of abomination and false sacrifice. And diligently they observe, that whensoever they do celebrate, they do but one liturgy or mass upon one altar or table that day.

25. Item, they dissent from the Church of Rome touching the order and manner of the proceeding of the Holy Ghost.

These articles, wherein is declared the difference between the East and West Church, of the Grecians and Romans, as I found them articulated and collected in an ancient and authentical register of the church of Hereford; so I thought here to insert them, and leave them to the consideration of the reader. Other four articles more in the same register be there expressed, concerning simony, usury, not with them forbidden; and touching also their emperor, and how they teach their children to hurt or damnify by any manner of way the Latin priests, &c. Which articles, for that either they seem not truly collected out of their teachings, or else not greatly pertinent to the doctrine of religion, I overpass them. To the purpose now of our story again.

When certain of these above prefixed were moved in the foresaid council to be discussed, namely, concerning the assertion of proceeding of the Holy Ghost, and concerning leavened bread in the ministration of the Lord's supper, Anselm, as is above said, was called for, who, in the tractation of the same articles, so bestirred him in that council, that he well liked the pope and them about him, as mine author recordeth. Whereupon, touching the matter of unleavened bread, how indifferently he seemed there to reason, and what he writeth to Waltram, bishop of Nurenburch, thereof ye shall hear by a piece of his letter sent to the said bishop, the copy whereof ensueth.

Anselm, servant to the church of Canterbury, to Waltram, bishop of Nurenburch.

"As concerning the sacrifice, in which the Grecians think not as we do, it seemeth to many reasonable catholic men that which they do not to be against the Christian faith; for both he that sacrificeth unleavened and leavened sacrificeth bread. And where it is read of our Lord, (when he made his body of bread,) that he took bread and blessed, it is not added unleavened or leavened. Yet it is certain that he blessed unleavened bread, (peradventure,) not because the thing that was done required that, but because the supper, in which this was done, did give that. And whereas in another place he called himself and his flesh bread, because that as man liveth temporally with this bread, so with that bread he liveth for ever, he saith not unleavened or leavened, because both alike are bread; for unleavened and leavened differ not in substance, as some think; like as a new man afore sin, and an old man rooted in the leaven of sin, differ not in substance. For this cause, therefore, only he might be thought to call himself and his flesh bread, and made his body of bread, because that this bread (unleavened or leavened) giveth a transitory life; and his body giveth everlasting life, not for that it is either leavened or unleavened. Al though it be

a commandment in the law to eat unleavened bread in the passover, where all things are done in a figure, that it might be declared that Christ, whom they looked for, was pure and clean; and we that should eat his body were admonished to be likewise pure from all leaven of malice and wickedness. But now, after we are come from the old figure to the new truth, and eat the unleavened flesh of Christ, that old figure in bread (of which we make that flesh) is not necessary for us. But manifest it is to be better sacrificed of unleavened than of leavened," &c.

To this letter I have also adjoined another epistle of his to the said Waltram, appertaining to matters not much unlike to the same effect, wherein he treats touching the variety and divers usages of the sacraments in the church; whereby such as call and cry for so much uniformity in the church, may note peradventure in the same something for their better understanding.

A piece of another letter of Anselm to the said Waltram, bishop of Nurenburgh.

"To the reverend father and his friend, Waltram, by the grace of God, the worshipful bishop of Nurenburgh, Anselm, the servant of the church of Canterbury, greeting, &c.

"Your worship complaineth of the sacraments of the church, that they are not made every where after one sort, but are handled in divers places after divers sorts. And truly, if they were ministered after one sort, and agreeing through the whole church, it were good and laudable. Yet notwithstanding, because there be many diversities which differ not in the sum of the sacrament, in the strength of it, or in the faith, or else can be gathered into one custom, I think that they are rather to be borne with in agreement of peace, than to be condemned with offence. For we have this from the holy fathers, that if the unity of charity be kept in the catholic faith, the diversity of customs hurteth no thing. But if it be demanded whereof this diversity of customs doth spring, I perceive no other cause thereof but the diversity of men's wits, which although they differ not in strength and truth of the thing, yet they agree not in the fitness and comeliness of the ministering. For that which one judgeth to be meeter, oftentimes another thinketh less meet; wherefore not to agree in such diversities, I think it not to swerve from the truth of the thing."

Then in the story it followeth, after long debating and discussing of these matters in the council, when they had given forth their determination upon the same, and the pope had blasted out his thundering excommunications against the Grecians, and all that took their part; at length were brought in the complaints and accusation against the king of England. Upon the hearing whereof, Pope Urban with his adherents was ready to proceed in excommunication against the king. But Anselm kneeling before the pope, after he had first accused his king, then after obtained for him longer time to be given upon further trial.

Thus the council breaking up, the pope, returning again to Rome, directeth down his letters to the king, commanding him that Anselm, with all his partakers, (in speedy wise.) should be revested again into his archbishopric, and all other possessions thereunto appertaining. To this the king sendeth answer again by messengers; who, coming to the pope, declared in the king's behalf on this wise: that the king their master did not a little marvel what came in his mind to command Anselm to be revested and reseated again into his former archbishopric; seeing he told him before plainly, that if he went out of England without his leave, he would so do unto him. Well, (saith the pope,) have ye no other matter against Anselm but only

this? No (quoth they). And have ye taken all this travail (saith the pope) to come hither so far to tell me this, that the primate of your country is therefore disseized and dispossessed, because he hath appealed to the see and judgment apostolical? Therefore if thou lovest thy lord, speed thee home and tell him, if he will not be excommunicated, that he quickly revest Anselm again to all that he had before. And lest I make thee to be hanged for thy labour, look to thy term, and see that thou bring me answer again from him into this city against the next council, the third week after Easter. The messenger or speaker, being somewhat astonied at the bearing of this so tragical answer, thinking yet to work something for his king and master, came secretly to the pope, saying that he would confer a certain mystery from his king privately with his Holiness between them two. What mystery that was, or what there passed from the king to the pope and the court of Rome, mine author doth not show; but so cunningly that mystery was handled, that, with a full consent both of the pope and all the court of Rome, a longer day was given, from Easter to Michaelmas, and the pope's choleric heat so assuaged, that when the council came, (which then was holden at St. Peter's church in Rome,) albeit great complaints were then denounced against the king; yet such favour was found, that he took no harm. Only the sentence of excommunication was there pronounced against such lay persons as gave investiture of churches, and them that were so invested. Also against them that do consecrate such, or which give themselves in subjection to laymen for ecclesiastical livings, as is before touched, &c.

This council being finished, the archbishop seeing the unstedfastness of the pope, (which pleased him but a little,) took his journey to Lyons, where he continued his abode a long time, till the death first of Pope Urban, then after of the king.

Of this King William many things be diversely recorded, some to his commendation, and some to his discommendation; whereof this is one, which some will ascribe to hardiness, but I rather to rashness in him. As this king upon a time was in his disport of hunting, suddenly word came to him that Cenourona (a city in Normandy) was besieged. The king, without longer tarrying or advisement, took the straight way toward the sea-side, sending to his lords that they should follow after. They, being come to his presence, advised him to stay till the time his people were assembled; but he would not be stayed, saying, that such as him loved (he knew) would follow him shortly, and so went to take ship. The shipmaster, seeing the weather so dark and cloudy, was afraid, and counselled the king to tarry till the wind did turn about, and the weather more favourable. But the king, persisting in his journey, commanded him to make all the speed he might for his life; saying, that he never heard that any king yet was ever drowned. And so passed the sea in safety, and came to Normandy.

The thirteenth year of his reign the said King William, having the same time in his hand three bishoprics, Canterbury, Winchester, and Sarum; also twelve abbeyes in farm; as he was in his disport of hunting in the New Forest, by glancing of an arrow (shot of a knight named Walter Tirrel) was wounded to death, and so speechless was carried to Westminster, and there was buried. Where also is to be noted, that Richard, the cousin-german of King William, and son to Duke Robert his brother, was likewise slain in the foresaid forest. See the just hand of God upon kings usurping wrongfully upon other men's grounds, as did William the Conqueror, their father, in making this New Forest, plucking down divers churches and townships the compass of thirty miles about. Here therefore appeareth, that although men cannot revenge, yet God revengeth either in them, or in their posterity, &c. This king, as he always used

concubines, so left he no issue legitimate behind him. His life was such, that it is hard for a story, that should tell the truth, to say whether he was more to be commended or reprov'd. Among other vices in him, especially is to be rebuked in him unmeasurable and unreasonable covetousness; insomuch that he coveted (if he might) to be every man's heir. This one example of a liberal and princely nature I find in him; that upon a time, when a certain abbot of a place was dead, there came to his court two monks of the same house, who before had gathered much money, and made their friends to the king, and offer'd large offers, either of them to be promoted to that dignity. There was also the third monk of the same place, which of meekness and humility followed the other two, to the intent that upon him, whom the king had admitted for abbot, he should give attendance, and as his chaplain with him return. The king called before him the two monks severally, of whom the one outproffer'd the other. As the king cast his eye aside, he espied the third monk standing by, supposing that his coming had been also for the like cause. Then the king, calling him, asked what he would do, whether he would give more than his brethren had offer'd to be abbot? He answered to the king, and said that he neither had nor would (if he might) offer any penny for it, by any such unlawful mean.

When the king had well pondered this third monk's answer, he said that he was best worthy to be abbot, and to have the rule of so holy a charge; and so gave unto him that benefice without taking any penny.

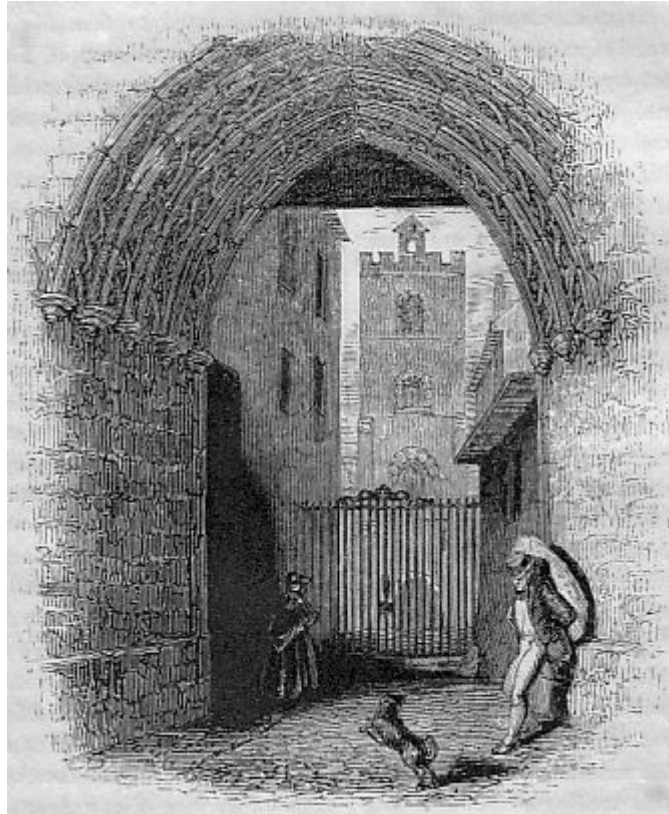
Urban, bishop of Rome, who (as is said) succeeded after Victor, ruled the Church of Rome about the space of twelve years; and amongst his other acts he excommunicated the emperor Henry, the fourth of that name, as a man not much devout to that see of Rome, But yet a worthy and victorious prince he was; in whom, albeit some vice perchance might be noted, yet none such wherefore any prelate or minister of Christ ought to excite his subjects to rebel against public authority of God appointed. This emperor Henry the Fourth was by four popes severally excommunicate; first by Hildebrand, by Victor, Urban, and Paschal. Which excommunication wrought so in the ignorant and blind hearts of the people, that many (as well of the nobles as of the multitude, contrary to their sworn allegiance) rebelliously conspired against their king and emperor. In number of whom, amongst the rest, was one certain earl named Ludovicus, to whom Waltram, bishop of the church of Nurenburgh, (a godly and faithful man, as appeareth,) doth write letters of fatherly admonition, exhorting and instructing him in the office of obedience. Unto the which letters he likewise doth answer again by cavilling sophistication, and by mere affection, rather disposed to discord, than seeking sincerity of truth.

After the time of this King William, the name of kings ceased in the country of Wales among the Britons, since King Ris, who in the reign of this king, the year of our Lord 1093, was slain in Wales.

36. Henry I.

Henry, the first of that name, the third son of William the Conqueror, succeeding his brother Rufus, began his reign in England the year of our Lord 1100; who, for his knowledge and science in the seven liberal arts, was surnamed Clerk, or Beauclerk. In whom may well appear how knowledge and learning doth greatly conduce to the government and administration of any realm or country. At the beginning he reformed the state and condition of the clergy, released the grievous payments, reduced again King Edward's laws, with emendation thereof; he reformed the old and untrue measures, and made a measure after the length of his arm; he greatly abhorred excess of meats and drinks; many things misused before his time he reformed, and used to vanquish more by counsel than by sword. Such persons as were nice and wanton he secluded from his court. This man (as appeareth) little favoured the usurped power of the bishop of Rome. Soon after he was king, he married Matild, or Maud, daughter of Malcolme, king of Scots, and of Margaret his wife, daughter of Edward the outlaw, as is before specified, being a professed nun in Winchester; whom, notwithstanding, (without the pope's dispensation,) he married by the consent of Anselm; by the which Maud he received two sons, William and Richard, and two daughters, Maud and Mary, which Maud afterward was married to Henry, the fifth emperor, &c.

In the second year of his reign, Robert his elder brother, duke of Normandy, being occupied in the Christian wars against the Turks, and being elect (as you heard) king of Jerusalem, hearing of the death of Rufus, refused the kingdom thereof; for the which (as is thought) he never sped well after. Thus the said Robert leaving off the Lord's business, and returning into Normandy, made there his preparation, and came over into England with a great host, to challenge the crown; but by mediation of the lords, it was agreed upon that Robert should have yearly during his life three thousand marks, as was likewise promised him before by King Rufus his brother; and whether of them overlived the other, to be the other's heir. And thus Robert departed again into Normandy, to the great discontentation of his lords there. But in few years after, the forenamed tribute of three thousand marks, through the means of Queen Maud, was released to the king his brother. In process of time, variance falling between King Henry and the said Robert his brother; at length Robert in his war was taken prisoner, and brought over into England, and was put into the castle of Cardiff in Wales, where he continued as prisoner while he lived.



A Gateway

In this time, as about the third year of this king, the hospital of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield was founded, (by means of a minstrel belonging unto the king, named Rajer,) and after it was finished by Richard Whittington, alderman and mayor of London. This place, or Smithfield, was at that day a lay-stall of all ordure or filth, and the place where the felons and other transgressors of the king's laws were put to execution.

Divers strict laws were by this king provided, especially against thieves and felons, that whosoever taken in that fault, no money should save them from hanging.

Item, that whoso did counterfeit false money, should have both his eyes and nether parts of his body cut off.

Item, in the same council was decreed an order for priests to be sequestered from their wives, which before were not forbidden.

Item, it was then decreed, that monks and priests should bear no rule over lay persons.

Item, it was then decreed concerning broidering of hair, and wearing of garments.

Item, that the secret contract between a young lad and a young maid should not stand; with other things more concerning the excommunication of sodomites, &c.

In the story of William Rufus before was declared how Anselm, the archbishop of Canterbury, departing out of the realm, went unto the pope; who, after the death of King William, was sent for again by the foresaid King Henry, and so

returned again, and was at the council of the king at Westminster, where the king in the presence of the lords, as well temporal as spiritual, ordained and invested two bishops, Roger, bishop of Salisbury, and Roger, bishop of Hereford. During which parliament or council of the king, Anselm in his convocation deposed and displaced divers abbots and other prelates from their rooms and dignities; either for that they lawfully came not by them. or uprightly did not administer the same.

After this council, and the other before set forth by Anselm, Herbert, bishop of Norwich, had much ado with the priests of his diocese; for they would neither leave theft wives, nor yet give over their benefices. Whereupon he wrote to Anselm, the archbishop, for counsel, what was to be done therein. Which Anselm required him (as he did others more the same time by writing) to persuade the people of Northfolke and Suffolke. that as they professed Christianity. they should subdue them as rebels against the church, and utterly drive both them and their wives out of the country, placing monks in their rooms, as by the epistles of the said Anselm doth appear. Whereof certain parcels shall hereafter (by the grace of Christ) ensue, for the better evidence of this and the other his acts above recited.

The like business also had Gerard, the archbishop of York, in depriving the priests of his province from their wives; which thing with all his excommunications and thunderings he could hardly bring about. Upon this ruffling of Anselm with married priests were rhyming verses made to help the matter withal, when reason could not serve.

About the end of the third year of this king, which was by computation of our Lord 1103, a variance fell between King Henry and Anselm, the occasion whereof was this. Ye heard a little before how Henry the foresaid king had of his own authority invested two bishops, one Roger, which was chancellor, bishop of Salisbury; and another bishop of Hereford. Besides them divers also he invested, and divers other like things took he upon him in the ecclesiastical state, which he might lawfully do, God's word allowing well the same; but because he was restrained by the bishop of Rome, and forbidden so to do, this Anselm swelled, fretted, and waxed so mad, that he would neither consent to it, neither yet confirm them, nor communicate nor talk friendly with them, whom the king had instituted and invested; but opprobriously called them abortives, or children of destruction; disdainfully rebuking the gentle king as a defiler of religion and polluter of their holy ceremonies; as witnesseth Polydorus. With this uncomely outrage the king was much displeased, (as he might full well,) and required Gerard, the archbishop of York, (as he owed him allegiance,) to consecrate them; who without delay did so, well performing the same; saving that one William Gifford, to whom the king had given the bishopric of Winchester, refused to take his consecration by the hands of the archbishop of York. For the which cause the king (worthily with him offended) deprived him both of bishopric and goods, and banished him the realm.

Moreover, the king required of Anselm, the archbishop of Canterbury, to do unto him homage, after the manner of his ancestors. Also it was asked of the said Anselm, whether that he would be with the king in giving investitures, as Lanfranc his predecessor was with his father. To whom Anselm said, that he promised not at any time that he would enter into this order, to keep the law or custom of his father, as Lanfranc did. Moreover, as concerning homage to be done to the king, that he refused; alleging the censures of the pope's excommunication, who, in his Council of Rome a little before, had given forth open sentence of excommunication upon all such lay

persons (whatsoever they were) that should from henceforth confer or give any spiritual promotions; also upon them that received them at their hands, either yet should consecrate any such receivers. Moreover, he accursed all them that for benefices or other ecclesiastical promotions should subject themselves under the homage or service of any great man, king, prince, duke, or earl of the laity. For it was unseemly, (said the pope,) and a thing very execrable, that the hands which were converted into so high a working, as was granted to no angel, (that is, to create Him with their crosses which created all, and to offer up the same before the sight of the Father for the salvation of the whole world,) should be brought to such a slavery, as to be subject to those filthy hands, which both day and night are polluted with shameful touchings, robberies, and bloodshed, &c. This decree of Pope Urban Anselm alleging for himself, denied to subject himself to the king's homage, fearing (as he said) the pope's excommunication. Upon this, messengers were sent to Rome on both parts unto the pope, (then Paschalis,) who, stoutly standing to the steps and determinations of Urban his predecessor, would in no case yield to the king's investing.

In the mean time, while there was long disputation on both sides for investing, the nobles of the realm contended, that investings did belong to the king's dignity; wherefore the king, calling for Anselm again, required him either to do homage to him, or else to void his kingdom. To whom Anselm replying again, required the pope's letters to be brought forth, and, according to the tenor thereof, so the matter to be decided. For now the messengers were returned from Rome with the pope's answer, altogether bearing with Anselm. Then said the king, What have I to do with the pope's letters? I will not forego the liberties of my kingdom for any pope. Thus the contention continued between them. Anselm saith, he would not out of the realm, but depart home to his church, and there see who would offer him any violence; and so did. Not long after, message came from the king to Anselm, requesting him, after a gentle sort, to repair to the king's presence again, to set an end of the controversy begun; whereunto Anselm granted and came. Then were new ambassadors sent again to the pope, that he would something qualify and moderate (or rather abolish) the straitness of the Roman decree before mentioned. On the part of Anselm went two monks, Baldwin and Alexander. On the king's behalf were sent two bishops, Robert, bishop of Lichfield, and Herbert, bishop of Norwich, with the king's letters written unto the pope.

The second letter of the king in sending about the pall was well taken of all the court of Rome, which (as mine author saith) procured such favour to Gerard, archbishop of York, and bringer thereof, that no complaint of his adversaries afterwards could hurt him with the pope. Notwithstanding he was accused grievously for divers things, and specially for not standing to the consecration of Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury.

Polydore in his eleventh book of his English history affirmeth, that Anselm also went up to Rome with Gerard about the same cause. But both the premises and sequel of the story argue that to be untrue, for what need the two monks to be sent up on Anselm's side, if he had gone up himself? Again, how could the pope write down by the said messengers to Anselm, if he had there been himself present? For so proceedeth the story by the narration of Malmesbury and others.

After the ambassadors (thus on both sides sent up to Rome) had laboured their cause with instant suit, one against the other, the pope, glad to gratify the king, (yet loth to grant his request, being against his own profit, and therefore more inclining to

Anselm's side,) sendeth down his letters to the said Anselm, signifying that he would not repeal the statutes of his holy fathers for one man's pleasure; charging him, moreover, not only not to yield in the cause of investing, but constantly to adhere to the foresaid decreement of Pope Urban his predecessor, &c. Besides this letter to Anselm, he directed also another to the king himself; which letter, mine author saith, the king suppressed and did not show, only declaring by word of mouth what the ambassadors had said unto him from the pope. Which was, that he permitted unto him the licence of investing, upon condition that in other things he would execute the office of a good prince, &c. To this also the testimony of the two bishops above minded did accord; which made the matter more probable. But the two monks on the other side replied again, bringing forth the letter of Anselm to the contrary, &c. To them was answered again, that more credit was to be given to the degree and testimony of the bishops than to theirs. And as for monks, they had no suffrage nor testimony (said they) in secular matters, and therefore, they might hold their peace. But this is no secular matter, said Baldwin, abbot of Ramsey. Whereunto the nobles again of the king's part answered, saying that he was a good man, and of such demeanour as they had nothing to say against him, neither would if they might; but yet both human and Divine reason taught them so, to yield more credit and confidence to the testimony of three bishops than of two monks. Whereby may well appear that Anselm at that time went not with them. Then Anselm, seeing the king and his peers how they were set, and hearing also the testimony of the three bishops, against whom he saw he could not prevail; and also having the pope's seal, which he saw to be so evident on the contrary side; made his answer again, that he would send to Rome for a more certainty of truth. Adding moreover, that he neither would nor durst give over his cause, though it should cost him his life, to do or proceed against the determination of the Church of Rome, unless he had a perfect warrant of absolution from thence for his discharge. Then was it agreed by the king and his nobles, that he should not send, but go himself to Rome. And much entreaty was made, that he would take that journey in hand himself, in his own person, to present himself to the pope for the peace of the church and of his country. And so at length by persuasion he was content, went to Rome, and spake with the pope. In short time after followeth also the king's ambassador, (William Warlwast,) new elect bishop of Exeter, who there pleading on the king's side for the ancient customs of the realm, and for the king's right of investing, &c., first declared how England of a long continuance had ever been a province peculiar to the Church of Rome, and how it paid duly his yearly tribute unto the same. Inferring moreover how the king, as he was of nature very liberal, so also of courage a prince stout and valiant. Then what a shame would he think it should be to him, (as it were indeed,) if he, who in might and dignity far exceeded all his progenitors, should not defend and maintain the liberties and customs by them procured. Wherefore he desired the pope to see to the matter, so as might stand both with the king's honour, and also with his own profit and advantage; who otherwise no doubt should lose a great piece of money out of the realm, unless he did remit some thing of the severity of his canons and laws decretal.

With these and such other like persuasions to the same effect the court of Rome was well contented, agreeing that the king's request ought with all favour to be granted. But the pope and Anselm sat still marking their doings. The ambassador, supposing their silence to be half a yielding unto him, added moreover and said, that the king, no not for the crown of his realm, would lose the authority of investing or admitting his prelates within his dominion. Whereunto the proud pope answering again burst out in these words; Nor I (said he) for the price of this head (as thou

sayest) will lose the giving of spiritual promotions in England, and confirming it with an oath, (Before God, saith he, I speak it,) know it for a certain, &c. Then it followeth in the story of Malmesbury, With this word of the pope the minds of the rest were changed. The king's attorney also was therewith dashed, who notwithstanding yet brought to pass, that certain of the king's customs, used before of his father, were released unto him. At the which time in the same court it was decreed, that (the king only, which had invested them, being excepted) the other, which were invested by the king, should be excommunicated; the absolution and satisfaction of whom was left to Anselm the archbishop.

Thus Anselm, being dismissed from Rome, took his journey toward England. But the ambassador, pretending to go to St. Nicholas, remained behind, to see whether he could win the pope's mind to the king's purpose. Which when he saw it would not be, he overtaketh Anselm by the way, at Placentia, and opened to him the king's pleasure. The king (saith he) giveth to you in charge and commandment, that if you will come to England, and there behave yourself to him as your predecessors did to his father, you should be received and retained in the realm accordingly; if not, you are wise enough, (saith he,) ye know what I mean, and what will follow, &c. And so with these words parting from him, he returned again to the king.

In the mean while, great business there was, and much posting went to and fro between the king, the archbishop, and the pope, but nothing was done; for neither would the pope agree to the king, neither would the king condescend to the archbishop. At last the archbishop, seeing by no means he could prevail against the king, thought to revenge himself by excommunication, and so went about the same. The king, having word thereof by the Countess Adela his sister, desireth her to come to him into Normandy, and bring Anselm with her; whereupon (through the means of the countess) reconciliation was made, and the archbishop was restored to his former possessions again. Only his return into England was deferred, because he would not communicate with those whom the king had invested. So the king took his passage over into England, and Anselm made his abode at the abbey of Becke.

Then were ambassadors again directed unto Rome, William Warlwast, and Baldwin above named, abbot of Ramsey, who at length concluded the long controversy between the king and the pope upon this agreement, that the king should take homage of the bishops elect, but should not deal with investing them by staff and ring, &c. While the ambassadors were thus in their suit at Rome, divers complaints were daily brought from England to Anselm against the priests and canons, who in his absence, contrary to the late council holden at London, received their wives unto their houses again, and so were permitted by the king, paying him certain money for the same. Anselm, (the sore enemy against lawful marriage,) grieved therewith, addresseth his letters unto the king, requiring him to refrain from any more taking of such exactions; declaring moreover and affirming, that the offences of all such ecclesiastical ministers must be corrected by the instance of bishops, and not of laymen. To this the king answereth gently again by letters, tempering himself; how he purposed shortly to come over into Normandy, and if he had done any thing amiss, either in these or other things, he would reform it by his obedience.

It was not long after, (the messengers being now returned from Rome,) but the king, as he had promised, sped him into Normandy, where he, warring against his brother Robert, brought both him and the country of Normandy at the last under his subjection. But first meeting with Anselm at the abbey of Becke, he covenanted and

agreed with him in all such points as the archbishop required. As, first, that all his churches which before were made tributary unto King William his brother, now should remain free from all tribute. Item, that he should require nothing of the said churches or provinces in the time of the seat being vacant. Moreover, concerning such priests and ministers as had given money to the king for their company with their wives, it was agreed that they should surcease from all ecclesiastical functions the space of three years, and that the king should take no more after such manner. Item, that all such goods, fruits, and possessions, as had been taken away before from the archbishopric, should be restored at his coming again into England, &c.

This Anselm, the stout champion of popery and superstition, after this victory gotten upon the king, for the which he so long fought, with joy and triumph saileth into England, having all his popish requests obtained. Where first he flieth like a lion upon the married priests, contrary to the word of God, divorcing and punishing that by man's authority which the eternal and Almighty God had coupled. Next, he looketh to them which did hold any church by farm under the king. Against simony likewise, and against them that married within the seventh degree, he proceedeth with his full pontifical authority.

Shortly after, as King Henry had finished his war in Normandy, and with victory returned again into England, about the sixth year of his reign, Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, (by the permission of the king,) assembled a great council at Westminster in London of the clergy and prelates of England.

In the which (by the bishop of Rome's authority) he so wrought with the king, that at length (albeit, as the story saith, not without great difficulty) it was newly confirmed and enacted, that no temporal man after that day should make investiture with cross, or with ring, or with pastoral book. In this council, sundry and divers injunctions were given forth to priests and deacons, as divers other synodal acts also by the same Anselm had been concluded in other councils before. And because here falleth in mention of the acts synodal concluded in the time of this Anselm, I thought here good to pack them all in one general heap together, as we find them in Malmesbury, and in other sundry authors scatteringly recited.

The first thing decreed by this Anselm in his synodal councils was touching the fault of simony, whereby divers both bishops and abbots (as is aforesaid) were at the same time deposed; and laymen forbidden to confer any ecclesiastical promotion.

Also it was decreed, that no bishop should bear any office in secular men's business or meetings. And that such should not go apparelled as the laymen did, but should have their vestures decent and meet for religious persons. And that in all places they should never go without some to bear witness of their conversation.

Item, that no archdeaconries should be let out to farm.

Item, that no archdeacon should be under the degree of a deacon.

Item, that no archdeacon, priest, deacon, subdeacon, colligener, nor canon, should from thence marry a wife, nor yet keep her, if he had been married to one before.

Item, that every subdeacon, being under the degree of a canon, (after the profession of chastity marrying a wife,) should be subject to the same rule.

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They ordained also that a priest keeping company with his wife should be reputed unlawful, and that he should say no mass; and if he said mass, he should not be heard.

They charged that none should be admitted to orders from that time forward, from the degree of a subdeacon, unless he did profess chastity.

That priests' sons should not claim by heritage the benefices of their fathers, as the custom had always been before.

Item, that no spiritual person should sit in any secular office, as to be procurators or judges of blood.

Item, that priests should not resort to taverns or banquets, nor sit drinking by the fire-side.

That the garments of priests should be of one colour, and that their shoes should be decent.

Item, that monks, or any other of the clergy, (if they forsook their order,) either should come again, or be excommunicated.

Item, that the men of the clergy should wear broad crowns.

Item, that no tithes should be given but to the church.

Item, that no churches or prebends should be bought.

That no new chapels should be made without consent of the bishop.

That no church should be hallowed before the necessary provision were made for the priest and for the church to be maintained.

That abbots should set forth no men to war, and that they must both sleep and eat in the same house with their monks, unless some great necessity do let.

Item, that monks do enjoin no penance to any man without the knowledge of his abbot. And that their abbots may give no licence therein, but only for such persons whose charge they have of soul.

That no monks should be godfathers, nor nuns godmothers.

That monks should have no lordships to farm.

Item, that monks should take no churches but by the bishop; neither should so spoil and oppress the churches given unto them with their rents, that sufficient were not left for the ministers of the same.

That privy contracts between man and woman without witness should not stand, but be frustrate, if each party do go from the contract.

Item, that such of the clergy as wear long hair be so rounded, that part of their ear appear, and that their eyes be not covered.

Item, that there be no matrimonial connexion within the seventh degree of kindred, nor to continue if they be married, but the marriage to be broken. And if any, being privy to that incest, do not detect the same, he to be guilty of the same crime.

Item, that no funeral or buryings be without their own parish church, so that the priest thereof do lose that which to him is due.

FOXES' BOOK OF MARTYRS

Item, that no man upon any new-fangled rashness do attribute any reverence or opinion of holiness to dead men's bodies, to fountains, or to any other thing, (as the use hath been in times past,) without authority of the bishop.

Item, that no buying and selling be used hereafter in England of men, as of other cattle.

Item, after the restraint of priests' marriage, when filthy practices began to come in the place thereof, then were they forced also to make an act for that, which was this:

With a grievous curse we condemn both them that are guilty of ungracious vices and sins, and them also that willingly assist them, or be wicked doers with them in the same, till such time as they may deserve absolution by penance and confession.

So that whatsoever he be that is noised or proved to be of this wickedness, (if he be a religious person,) be shall from thenceforth be promoted to no degree of honour, and that which he hath shall be taken from him.

If he be a lay person, he shall be deprived of all his freedom within the land, and be no better than a foreigner.

And because it shall be known the absolution of such as be secular to belong only to bishops, it was therefore enacted, that on every Sunday, in every parish church of England, the said excommunication should be published, &c.

But mark in this great matter what followed. For, as Ranulphus Cestrensis witnesseth, this grievous general curse was soon called back again by the suit of certain, which persuaded Anselm that the publication or opening of that vice gave kindlings to the same in the hearts of lewd persons, ministering occasion of more boldness to them to do the like. And so to stop the occasion of filthy uncleanness, the publication thereof was taken away; but the forbidding and restraint of priests' lawful marriage (which chiefly was the cause thereof) remained still. And thus ever since horrible vices remained in the clergy, both for lack of marriage more used, and for lack of publication less punished.

Besides all these synodal acts above comprehended, and given out by Anselm in his councils before, here also in this present council at Westminster, in the year of this king aforesaid, he also directed other new injunctions to the priests.

First, that they and their wives should never more meet in one house, neither yet have dwelling in their territories.

Item, that the priests, deacons, and subdeacons should keep no woman in their house, unless they were of their next kin.

Item, for such as had dissevered themselves from the society of their wives, yet for some honest cause they had to commune with them, they might, so it were without door, and with two or three lawful witnesses.

Item, if any of them should be accused by two or three witnesses, and could not purge himself again by six able men of his own order, (if he be a priest,) or, if he be a deacon, by four, or, if he be a subdeacon, by two, then he should be judged a transgressor of the statutes, deprived of his benefice, and be made infamous, or be put to open reproach of all men.

Item, he that rebelled, and in contempt of this new statute held still his wife, and presumed to say mass, upon the eighth day after (if be made not due satisfaction) should be solemnly excommunicated.

Item, all archdeacons and deacons to be straitly sworn not to wink or dissemble at their meetings, nor to bear with them for money. And if they would not be sworn to this, then to lose their offices without recovery.

Item, such priests as forsaking their wives were willing to serve still and remain in their holy order, first must cease forty days from their ministrations, setting vicars for them in the mean time to serve, and taking such penance upon them as by their bishop should be enjoined them.

Thus have ye heard the tedious treatise of the life and doings of Anselm, how superstitious in his religion, how stubborn against his prince, he was, what occasion of war and discord he ministered by his complaints, (if they had been taken,) what zeal without right knowledge, what fervency without cause, he pretended, what pains without profit he took. Who if he had bestowed that time and travail in preaching Christ at home to his flock, which he took in gadding to Rome to complain of his country, in my mind he had been better occupied. Moreover, what violent and tyrannical injunctions he set forth of investing and other things ye have heard; but specially against the lawful and godly marriage of priests. Wherein what a vehement adversary he was here may appear with these minutes or pieces extracted out of his letters, which we have here annexed, in form and effect as followeth.

A letter of Anselm.

"Anselm, archbishop, to his brethren and dearest sons, the lord prior and others at Canterbury.

"As concerning priests, of whom the king commanded that they should have both their churches and their women as they had in the time of his father, and of Lanfranc, archbishop; both because the king hath revested and reseized the whole archbishopric, and because so cursed a marriage was forbidden in a council in the time of his father and of the said archbishop, boldly I command by the authority which I have by my archbishopric, not only within my archbishopric, but also throughout England, that all priests which keep women shall be deprived of their churches and ecclesiastical benefices."

A letter of Pope Paschalis to Anseirn.

"Paschal, bishop, servant of God's servants, to his reverend brother Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, greeting and apostolical blessing.

"We believe your brotherhood is not ignorant what is decreed in the Romish Church concerning priests' children. But because there is so great multitude of such within the realm of England, that almost the greater and better part of the clerks are reckoned to be on this side; therefore we commit this dispensation to your care. For we grant these to be promoted to holy offices by reason of the need at this time, and for the profit of the church, (such as learning and life shall commend among you,) so that yet notwithstanding the prejudice of the ecclesiastical decree to be taken heed to hereafter"

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

Another letter of Anselm for investing.

"To the reverend lord and loving father Paschal, high bishop, Anselm, servant of Canterbury church, due subjection and continual prayers.

"After that I returned to my bishopric in England, I showed the apostolical decree; which I, being present, heard in the Romish council. I. That no man should receive investing of churches at the king's hand, or any lay person, or should become his man for it, and that no man should presume to consecrate him that did offend herein. When the king and his nobles, and the bishops themselves, and others of the lower degree, heard these things, they took them so grievously, that they said they would in no case agree to the thing, and that they would drive me out of the kingdom, and forsake the Romish Church, rather than keep this thing. Wherefore, reverend father, I desire your counsel by your letter."

Another letter of Anselm.

"Anselm, archbishop, to the Reverend Gudulphus, bishop, and to Arnulphus, prior, and to William, archdeacon of Canterbury, and to all in his diocess, greeting.

"William our archdeacon hath written unto me, that some priests that be under his custody (taking again their women that were forbidden) have fallen unto the uncleanness from the which they were drawn by wholesome counsel and commandment. When the archdeacon would amend this thing, they utterly despised with wicked pride his warning and worthy commandment to be received. Then he, calling together many religious men and obedient priests, excommunicated worthily the proud and disobedient, that bestly despised the curse, and were not afraid to defile the holy ministry as much as lay in them."

Unto these letters above prefixed I have also adjoined another of the said Anselm, touching a great ease of conscience, of a monk's whipping of himself. Wherein may appear both the blind and lamentable superstition of those religious men, and the judgment of this Anselm in the same matter.

Another letter of Anselm.

"Anselm, archbishop, to Bernard, monk of the abbey of St. Warburg, greeting and prayer.

"I heard it said of your lord abbot, that thou judgest it to be of greater merit, when a monk either beateth himself, or desireth himself to be beaten of another, than when he is beaten (not of his own will) in the chapter by the commandment of the prelacy. But it is not so as you think. For that judgment that any man commandeth to himself is kingly. But that which he suffereth by obedience in the chapter is monkish. The one is of his own will, the other is of obedience, and not of his own will. That which I call kingly, kings and rich proud men are willing to be done to themselves. But that which I call monkish, they take, not commanding, but obeying. The kingly is so much easier, by how much it agreeth to the will of the sufferer. But the monkish is so much the more grievous, by how much it differeth from the will of the sufferer. In the kingly judgment, the sufferer is judged to be his own; in the monkish, he is proved not to be his own. For although the king or rich man, when he is beaten, willingly showeth himself humbly to be a sinner; yet he would not submit himself to this humbleness at any other's commandment, but would withstand the commander with all his strength. But when a monk submitteth himself to the whip humbly in the chapter at the will of the prelate, the truth judgeth him to be of so much greater merit, by how

much be humbleth himself more, and more truly, than the other. For he humbleth himself to God only, because he knoweth his sins. But this man humbleth himself to man for obedience. But he is lowlier that humbleth himself both to God and man for God's cause, than he which humbleth himself to God only, and not to God's commandment. Therefore if he that humbleth himself shall be extolled; ergo, be that more humbleth himself shall be more exalted. And where I said, that when a monk is whipped, it differeth from his will; you must not so understand it, as though he would not patiently bear it with an obedient will, but because by a natural appetite he would not suffer the sorrow. But if ye say, I do not so much, fly the open beating for the pains (which I feel also secretly) as for the shame; know then that he is stronger that rejoiceth to bear this for obedience sake. Therefore be thou sure that one whipping of a monk by obedience is of more merit than innumerable whippings taken by his own mind. But whereas he is such, that always he ought to have his heart ready without murmuring obediently to be whipped, we ought to judge him then to be of a great merit, whether he be whipped privily or openly," &c.

And thus much concerning Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury; whose stout example gave no little courage to Thurstinus and Becket his successors, and others that followed after, to do the like against their kings and princes, as in process hereafter by the grace of Christ shall appear.

About this time two famous archbishops of Mentz, being right virtuous and well-disposed prelates, were cruelly and tyrannously dealt withal, and treated by the bishop of Rome; their names were Henry and Christian. This Henry, having intelligence that he was complained of to the pope, sent a learned man (as special friend of his) to excuse him, named Arnold, one for whom he had done much, and promoted to great livings and promotions. But this honest man Arnold, in stead of an excuser, became an accuser, bribing the two chieftest cardinals with good gold; by which means he obtained of the pope those two cardinals to be sent as inquisitors, and only doers in that present ease. The which (coming to Germany) summoned the said Henry, and deposed him of his archbishopric, (for all he could do either by law or justice,) substituting in his place the foresaid Arnold, upon hope (truly) of the ecclesiastical gold. Whereupon that virtuous and honourable Henry (as the story telleth) spake unto those his perverse judges on this wise: If I should appeal unto the apostolic see for this your unjust process had against me, perhaps the pope would attempt nothing more therein than ye have, neither should I win any thing by it, but only toil of body, loss of goods, affliction of mind, care of heart, and missing of his favour.

Wherefore I do appeal unto the Lord Jesus Christ, as to the most high and just Judge, and cite you before his judgment, there to answer me before the high Judge. For neither justly nor godly (but by corruption, as it pleaseth you) you have judged. Whereunto they scoffingly answered, Go you first, and we will follow. Not long after (as the story is) the said Henry died. Whereof the said two cardinals having intelligence said one to the other jestingly, Behold, he is gone before, and we must follow according to our promise. And verily they said truer than they were aware of; for within a while they died in one day. For the one, sitting upon a jakes to ease himself, voided out all his entrails into the draught, and miserably ended his life. The other, gnawing off the fingers of his hands, and spitting them out of his mouth, (all deformed in devouring himself,) died. And in like wise, not long after the end of these men, the foresaid Arnold (most horribly) in a sedition was slain; and certain days (lying stinking above the ground unburied) lay open to the spoil of every rascal and

harlot. The historiographer in declaring hereof crieth upon the cardinals in this manner: O ye cardinals, ye are the beginning and authors hereof. Come ye hither therefore, come ye hither, and heap and carry unto your countries the devil, and offer yourselves to him with that money, whereof ye have been most gluttonous and insatiable.

About the same time and year when King Henry began his reign Pope Paschalis entered his papacy, succeeding after Urbanus, about the year of our Lord 1100, nothing swerving from the steps of Hildebrand his superior. This Paschalis being elected by the cardinals, after that the people had cried thrice, St. Peter hath chosen good Rainerus, he then putting on a purple vesture, and a tire upon his head, was brought upon a white palfrey into Lateran, where a sceptre was given him, and a girdle put about him, having seven keys, with seven seals hanging thereupon for a recognisance or token of his sevenfold power, according to the sevenfold grace of the Holy Ghost, of binding, loosing, shutting, opening, sealing, resigning, and judging, &c. After this Paschalis was elected pope, Henry the Fourth, the foresaid emperor, (of courage most valiant, if the time had served thereto,) thought to come up to Italy, to salute the new pope. But, understanding the pope's mind bent against him, he changed his purpose. In the mean time, Paschalis, to show himself inferior to Hildebrand in no point, began first to depose all such abbots and bishops whom the emperor had set up. Also he banished Albertus, Theodoricus, and Maginuiphus, striving at the same time for the papacy. I spake before of Guibert, whom Henry the emperor had made pope against Hildebrand. Against this Guibert Paschalis made out an army; who, being put to flight, not long after departed.

About the same time, A.D. 1101, the bishop of Fluence began to teach and to preach of antichrist then to be born and to be manifest, as Sabellicus testifieth; whereupon Paschalis assembling a council put to silence the said bishop, and condemned his books. In this council at Treves, priests that were married were condemned for Nicolaitans. Item, according to the decree of Hildebrand, all such, of what degree or estate soever they were, (being laymen,) that gave any ecclesiastical dignities, were condemned of simony. Furthermore, the statute of priests' tithes there he renewed, counting the selling away thereof as a sin against the Holy Ghost. Concerning the excommunication and other troubles that Hildebrand wrought against Henricus, the fourth emperor, it is declared sufficiently before. This excommunication Paschalis the pope renewed afresh against the said Henry. And not only that, but also conventing the princes of Germany unto a general assembly, set up his own son against him, causing the bishop of Mentz, of Cullen, and of Wormes to deprive him of his imperial crown, and to place his son Henricus the Fifth in his father's kingdom, and so they did. Coming to the place at Hilgshem, first they required his diadem, his purple, his ring, and other ornaments pertaining to the crown, from him. The emperor demandeth the cause, being then excommunicate and void of friends. They pretending again (I can not tell what) for selling of bishoprics, abbacies, and other ecclesiastical dignities for money; also alleging the pope's pleasure, and of other princes. Then required he first of the bishop of Mentz, (and likewise of the other two, whom he had preferred to their bishoprics before,) asking them in order if he had received of them any penny for his promoting them to their dignities. This, when they could not deny to be so, Well, (saith he) and do you requite me again with this? with divers other words of exhortation, admonishing them to remember their oath and allegiance to their prince. But the perjured prelates, neither reverencing his majesty, nor moved with his benefits, nor regarding their fidelity, ceased not for all this, but first plucked from him

(sitting in his throne) his crown imperial, then disrobed him, taking from him his purple and his sceptre. The good emperor, being left desolate and in confusion, saith to them, Let God see and judge. Thus leaving him, they went to his son to confirm him in his kingdom, and caused him to drive his father out. Who then being chased of his son, (having but nine persons about him,) did fly by the dukedom of Limburgh, where the duke, being then in hunting, perceiving and hearing of him, made after to follow him. The emperor fearing no other but present death, (for he had displaced the same duke before out of his dukedom,) submitted himself, craving of him pardon, and not revengement. The duke full of compassion, and pitying his estate, not only remitted all his displeasure, but also received him to his castle. Moreover, collecting his soldiers and men of war, he brought him to Cullen, and there he was well received. His son hearing this besieged the city of Cullen. But the father, by night escaping, came to Leodium, where resorted to him all such as were men of compassion and of constant heart. Insomuch that his power, being strong enough, he was now able to pitch a field against his enemies, and so did; desiring his friends, that if he had the victory, they would spare his son. In fine, (the battle joined,) the father had the victory, the son was put to flight, many being slain on both sides. But shortly after the battle renewed again, the son prevailed, the father was overcome and taken. Who then, being utterly dispossessed of his kingdom, was brought to that exigent, that, coming to Spire, he was fain to crave of the bishop there (whom he had done much for before) to have a prebend in the church; and for that he had some skill of his book, he desired to serve in our Lady's choir. Yet could he not obtain so much at his hand, who swore by our Lady he should have none there. Thus the woeful emperor (most unkindly bandied and repulsed on every side) came to Leodium, and there for sorrow died, after he had reigned fifty years; whose body Paschalis, after his funeral, caused to be taken up again, and to be brought to Shires, where it remained five years unburied.

After the decease of this emperor Henry the Fourth, his son, Henricus the Fifth, reigned the space of twenty years. Who, coming to Rome to be crowned of the pope, could not obtain it before he would fully assent to have this ratified, that no emperor should have any thing to do with the election of the Roman bishop, or with other bishoprics. Besides that, (about the same time,) such a stir was made in Rome by the said bishop, that if the emperor had not defended himself with his own hands, he had been slain. But as it happened, the emperor having the victory, amongst many other Romans, (which were partly slain, partly taken in the same skirmish,) he taketh also the pope, and leadeth him out of the city; where he intendeth with him upon divers conditions, both of his coronation, and of recovering again his right and title in the election of the pope, and of other bishops; whereunto the pope assenting, agreed to all. So the emperor (being crowned of Paschalis) returned again with the pope to Rome.

All the conditions between the emperor and the pope (so long as the emperor remained at Rome) stood firm and ratified. But as soon as the emperor was returned again to Germany, forthwith the pope, calling a synod, not only revoked all that he had agreed to before, but also excommunicated Henricus the emperor, as he had done his father before, reproving the former *privilegium* for *pravilegium*. The emperor, returning from Rome to France, there married Mathild, daughter to King Henry. Who then bearing what the pope had done, (grieved not a little,) with all expedition marched to Rome, and putteth the pope to flight, and finally placeth another in his stead. In the mean time, the bishops of Germany (the pope's good friends) slept not their business, incensing the Saxons all that they might against their Cæsar; inso much that a great commotion was stirred up, and it grew at length to a pitched field; which

was fought in the month of February, by the wood called Sylva Catulaira, in the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and fifteen.

The emperor, seeing no end of these conflicts, (unless he would yield to the pope,) was fain to give over, and forego his privilege, falling to a composition not to meddle with matters pertaining to the pope's election, nor with investing, nor such other things belonging to the church and churchmen. And thus was the peace between them concluded, and proclaimed to no small rejoicing of both the armies, then lying by Wormes, near the river of Rhene.

In the time of this Paschalis lived Bernardus, called Abbas Claravallensis, in the year 1108, of whom sprang the Bernardine monks.

About what time the city of Worcester was consumed almost all with fire, A.D. 1109.

All this while Henricus the emperor had no issue, (having to wife Mathildis, the daughter of Henry the First, king of England,) and that by the just judgment of God, as it may appear. For as he, having a father, persecuted him by the pope's setting on, contrary to the part of a natural son; so God's providence did not suffer him to be the father of any child naturally to love him, or to succeed him.

After the death of Paschalis, A.D. 1118, succeeded Pope Gelasius, chosen by the cardinals, but without the consent of the emperor, whereupon rose no little variance in Rome. And at length another pope was set up by the emperor called Gregorius the Eighth, and Gelasius driven away into France, and there died. After whom came Calixtus the Second, (chosen likewise by a few cardinals, without the voice of the emperor,) who, coming up to Rome to enjoy his seat, first sent his legate into Germany to excommunicate the emperor Henricus, who then having divers conflicts with his fellow Pope Gregorius, at length drave him out of Rome. At this time by this occasion great disputation and controversy was between the emperor and the pope's court, whether of them in dignity should excel the other.

In conclusion, the emperor being overcome so much with the vain reasons of the pope's side, and fearing the dangerous thunderbolt of his curse, (talking with princes, and persuaded by his friends,) was fain to condescend to the unreasonable conditions of the pope. First, to ratify his election, notwithstanding the other pope (whom the said emperor had set up) yet was alive. Secondly, that he should resign up his right and title in matters pertaining to the election of the pope, and investiture of bishops.

This being done and granted, and the writings thereof set up in the church of Lateran, for a triumph of the emperor thus subdued, the pope maketh out after Gregorius, his fellow pope, being then in a town called Sutrium; which being besieged and taken, Gregorius also was taken. Whom Calixtus the pope setting upon a camel (his face to the camel's tail) brought him so through the streets of Rome, holding the tail in his hand instead of a bridle; and afterward, being shorn, he was thrust into a monastery.

Amongst many other acts done by this glorious pope, first he established the decrees of the papal see against this emperor. He brought in the four quarter fasts, called Ember days.

By the same Calixtus the order of monks, called Præmonstratenses, were brought in.

Further, by him it was decreed to be judged for adultery, if any person (by his lifetime) had put from him either bishopric or benefice, grounding upon this scripture of St. Paul to the Romans: "The wife is bound to the law of her husband, so long as the husband liveth; after he is dead, she is loose from the law of her husband," &c.

Item, the same Calixtus, holding a general council at Rhemis, decreed that priests, deacons, and subdeacons should put away their concubines and wives; and whosoever was found to keep his wife, should be deprived of benefice, and all other ecclesiastical livings.

And thus much of the Roman matters. Now to our country story again, After the death of Anselm before mentioned, (who deceased the year of Christ 1109, after he had been in the see sixteen years,) the church of Canterbury stood void five years, and the goods of the church were spent to the king's use. And when he was prayed to help the church, that was so long without a pastor, his answer was, pretending that as his father and brother had accustomed thereto to set the best tried and approved men that might be found, so to the intent that he might do the same, (in choosing such, which either should equal the former examples of them before, or at least follow their footsteps as near as they could,) he took therein the more time and leisure. And so with shift of answer he delayed out the time, while he had filled his coffers with the commodities of that benefice. The same year (after the death of Anselm) the king converted the abbey of Ely to a bishopric, which before was under the bishopric of Lincoln, placing there Henry, bishop Bangor, the first bishop of that see. And as of late years before this divers wonders were seen, as stars falling from heaven so thick that they could not be numbered. at the setting forth of the Christians to the Holy Land; a blazing star over Constantinople; a spring boiling out blood (seen at Finchamsted in Berkshire) three weeks together, A.D. 1090; after that, the firmament appearing so red as it had been all on fire; also two full moons appearing together, one in the east, the other in the west, (on Maundy Thursday,) with a blazing star in the same year appearing about the taking of Duke Robert, having a white circle enclosing it, A.D. 1106; also with an eclipse of the sun darkened after that: so likewise about this present year, A.D. 1110, was seen the flood of Trent, about Nottingham, so dried up from morning to three of the clock at afternoon, that men might go over it dryshod. Also in Shrewsbury a great earthquake happened, and after that followed a sharp winter, great murrain of beasts, and pestilence of men, as Gualterus Gisburnensis recordeth. Moreover, the same author mentioneth, that about the same year the like voiding of water also happened in the flood of Medway; and in the Thames (between the bridge and the tower, and under the bridge, from midnight to the next evening) was so great an ebb, that an innumerable sort of people and children waded over, scarce knee deep in the water, the sea withdrawing his tide ten miles from his accustomed course. In the which year also, as the said author and Jornalensis do testify, the city of Worcester by casualty was consumed with fire; also the city of Chester, A.D. 1114.

The next year following, Rodulphus, bishop of Rochester, (an Englishman,) was promoted to be archbishop of Canterbury, and Thurstinus, the king's chaplain, was elected archbishop of York. Who being content to receive his benediction or consecration of the see of Canterbury; yet, because he refused to make his profession of obedience to the same see, he was by the king deprived of his dignity.

Then Thurstin (by the instigation of certain his clerks at York) took his journey to Rome; who, there making his complaint to Pope Paschalis, brought with him a letter from the pope to the king, where, among other words, was contained as followeth:

"We hear and understand, that the archbishop elect of the church of York (a discreet and industrious man) is sequestered from the church of York; which standeth against both Divine justice, and the institution of holy fathers. Our purpose is, that neither the church of Canterbury should be impaired, nor again that the church of York should suffer any prejudice; but that the same constitution, which was by blessed Gregory (the apostle of the English nation) set and decreed between those two churches, should remain still in force and effect unviolated. Wherefore, as touching the foresaid elect, let him be received again by any means, as right and meet it is, unto his church. And if there be any question between the foresaid churches, let it be handled and decided in your presence, both the two parties being there present."

Upon the occasion of this letter, a solemn assembly there was appointed at Salisbury, about the hearing of this controversy. The variance between these two prelates still increased more and more. Rodolph, archbishop of Canterbury, in no case would yield or condescend to give imposition of hands unto him, unless he would make his profession of obedience. Thurstin again said, he would willingly receive and embrace his benediction; but as touching the profession of his subjection, that he would not agree unto. Then the king, declaring his mind therein, signified unto Thurstin, that, without his subjection and obedience professed to the archbishop of Canterbury, he should not enjoy his consecration to be archbishop of York. Whereunto Thurstin, nothing replying again, renounced his archbishopric, promising, moreover, to make no more claim unto it, nor to molest them that should enjoy it.

Shortly after this, it happened that Pope Paschalis died; after whom, as is above rehearsed, succeeded Pope Gelasius, who lived not past a year, and died in France. Whereupon the cardinals (which then followed the said Pope Gelasius unto Cluniack) created another pope of their choosing, whom they called Calixtus the Second. The other cardinals which were at Rome did choose another pope, called Gregory, as mention before is made; about which two popes much stir there was in Christian realms. As this Calixtus was remaining in France, and there calling a general council at Rheims, as ye heard before, Thurstin, the archbishop of York, desired licence of the king to go to the council, purposing there to open the cause of his church, which eftsoons he obtained; first promising to the king that he should there attempt nothing that should be prejudicial to the church of Canterbury. In the mean time, the king had sent secret word unto the pope, by Rodolph and other procurators, that in no case he would consecrate Thurstin. Yet, notwithstanding the faithful promise of the pope made to the king, so it fell out, that the said pope, through the suit of his cardinals, whom Thurstinus had won to him, was inclined to consecrate him, and gave him the pall. For this deed the king was sore discontented with Thurstin, and warned him the entry of his land.

In this council at Rheims, (above mentioned,) where were gathered four hundred and thirty-four prelates, these five principal acts were concluded.

1. That no man should either buy or sell any bishopric, abbotship, deanery, archdeaconship, priesthood, prebendship, altar, or any ecclesiastical promotion, or benefice, orders, consecration, church hallowing, seat or stall within the choir, or any office ecclesiastical, under danger of excommunication, if he did persist.

2. That no lay person should give investiture, or any ecclesiastical possession; and that no spiritual man should receive any such at any layman's hand, under pain of deprivation.

3. That no man should invade, take away, or detain the goods or possessions of the church; but that they should remain firm and perpetual, under pain of perpetual curse.

4. That no bishop or priest should leave any ecclesiastical dignity or benefice to any by way of inheritance. Adding moreover, that for baptism, chrism, anointing, or burial, no money should be exacted.

5. Item, that all priests, deacons, and subdeacons should be utterly debarred and sequestered from company of their wives and concubines, under pain of excluding from all Christian communion.

The acts thus determined were sent eftsoons to Henricus the emperor, to see and try, before the breaking up of the council, whether he would agree to the canonical elections, free consecration, and investing of spiritual persons, and to other acts of the said council. The emperor maketh answer again, that he would lose nothing of that ancient custom which his progenitors had given him. Notwithstanding, because of the authority of the general council, he was content to consent to the residue, save only the investing of ecclesiastical function to be taken from him, to that he would never agree. Upon this, at the next return of the pope to the council, the emperor was appointed to be excommunicated. Which thing, when divers of the council did not well like, and therefore did separate themselves from the rest; the pope applying against them the multitude of the seventy disciples, which were offended at the Lord, when he taught them of eating of his flesh and blood, and therefore divided themselves from him, declaring moreover to them, how they which gathered not with him scattered, and they that were not with him were against him; by these and such-like persuasions reduced them again to his side; and so by that council Henricus the emperor was excommunicated.

It was not long after but the pope came to Gisortium, where Henry king of England resorted to him, desiring and also obtaining of him, that he would send henceforth no legate, nor permit any to be sent from Rome to England, unless the king himself should so require, by reason of some occasion of strife, which else could not be otherwise decided by his own bishops at home. The cause why the king required this of the pope was, for that certain Roman legates had been in England a little before, to wit, one Guido, and another Roman named Anselmus, and another also called Petrus, who had spoiled the realm of great treasure, as the accustomed manner of the proud pope's legates is wont to be. Also he required of the pope, that he might use and retain all the customs used before of his forefathers in England and in Normandy.

To these petitions the pope did easily consent, requiring again of the king, that he would license Thurstiaus, the archbishop above minded, to return with favour into his realm. But that the king utterly denied, unless he would profess subjection to the church of Canterbury, as his predecessors had done before; and excused himself by his oath which he before had made. To this the pope answered again, that he, by his authority apostolical, both might and would also easily dispense with him for his promise or oath. Then the king said that he would talk with his council thereof, and so send him an answer of his mind. Which answer was this, that for the love and request of the pope, he was content that Thurstinus should re-enter his realm, and quietly enjoy his prelateship, upon this condition, that he would (as his predecessors did) profess his subjection to the church of Canterbury. Otherwise, (said he,) so long as he was king, he should never sit archbishop of the church of York. And thus ended that meeting between the king of England and the pope for that time.

FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS

The year following after that, which was A.D. 1120, the foresaid Pope Calixtus directeth his letters for Thurstin to the king, and to Rodulph, archbishop of Canterbury. In which epistle, by his full power apostolical, he doth interdict both the church of Canterbury and the church of York, with all the parish churches within the same cities, from all Divine service, from the burial also of the dead, except only baptizing of children, and absolution of them that lie dying; unless, within a month after the receipt of the same, Thurstin (without any exaction of subjection made) were received and admitted to the see of York, and that the king likewise should doubtless be excommunicated, except he would consent unto the same. Whereupon Thurstin, for fear of the pope's curse, was immediately sent for and reconciled to the king, and was placed quietly in his archiepiscopal see of York.

It followed not long after (within two years) Rodulph, archbishop of Canterbury, departed, in whose see succeeded after him Gulielmus de Turbine. About which time (in the seven and twentieth year of the king's reign) the grey friars, by procuring of the king, came first into England, and had their house first at Canterbury. About the same season, or a little before, the king called a council at London, where the spirituality of England (not knowing to what purpose it was required) condescended to the king to have the punishment of married priests; by reason of which grant (where of the spirituality afterwards much repented) the priests, paying a certain sum to the king, were suffered to retain their wives still, whereby the king gathered no small sum of money. At this time began first the foundation of the monastery called Gisburne in Cleveland.

It was above touched, how Matild, or Maud, daughter to King Henry, was married to Henry the Fifth, emperor; who, after the decease of the said emperor her husband, returned about this present time with the imperial crown to her father in Normandy, bringing with her the hand of St. James. For the joy whereof the king builded the abbey of Reading, where the said hand was reposed. This Matild was received by the said council to be next heir to the king her father in possession of the English crown, for lack of issue male. And soon after upon the same she was sent over to Normandy, to marry with Geoffrey Plantagenet, earl of Anjou, of whom came Henry the Second, who (after Stephen) was King of England. And about this time also was founded the priory of Norton, in the province of Chester, by one William the son of Nichelle. In the story of Polychronicon, Jornalensis, and Polydore it is declared, how the king was troubled greatly with three sundry visions appearing unto him by night. The first was of a great multitude of husbandmen of the country, which appeared to fly upon him with their mattocks and instruments, requiring of him his debt which he did owe unto them. In the second, he saw a great number of soldiers and harnessed men to come fiercely upon him. In the third, he saw a company of prelates and churchmen, threatening him with their bishops' staves, and fiercely approaching upon him. Whereupon (being dismayed) in all haste he ran and took his sword to defend himself, finding there none to strike; who afterward, asking counsel concerning these visions, was monished by one of his physicians, (named Grimbald,) by repentance, alms, and amendment of life to make some atonement to God, and to his country whom he offended. Which three vows thus being made, the next year after he went to England, where he, being upon the seas in a great tempest with his daughter Matild, remembered there his three vows. And so, coming to the land, (for performance of the same,) first released unto the commons the Danegelt which his father and his brother before had renewed. Secondly, he went to St. Edmundsbury, where he showed great benefits to the churchmen. Thirdly, he procured justice to be

administered more rightly throughout his realm, &c. Also he ordained and erected a new bishopric, at Carlisle.

In the three and thirtieth year of the king's reign, (as witnesseth a certain author,) a great part of the city of London, with the church of St. Paul, was burned with fire in Whitsun-week.

After Calixtus, (whose story and time is before discoursed,) succeeded Pope Honorius the Second; notwithstanding that the cardinals had elected another, yet he by the means of certain citizens obtained the papacy, A.D. 1125. About the second year of his induction (as is to be read in Mat. Paris.) there was a certain legate of his, called Johannes Cremensis, sent down to England from the pope, for the redress I cannot well tell whereof. But indeed the chiefest purpose of his coming, as of all others after him in those days, was to fill their pouches with English money, as may further appear by their proceedings. This legate coming then with the pope's letters, directed both into England and into Scotland, after he had well refreshed himself in bishops' houses, and amongst the abbots, at length resorted to London, where he assembled the whole clergy together, inquired of priests' concubines, otherwise called their wives, and made thereupon a statute in the said synod of London, after this tenor: "To priests, deacons, subdeacons, and canons, we do utterly inhibit, by authority apostolical, all manner society and conversation with all kind of women, except only their mother, sister, or aunt, or such whereof can rise no suspicion. And whosoever shall be found to violate this decree, being convict thereof, shall sustain thereby the loss of all that he hath by his order. Moreover, amongst kindred, or such as be joined in affinity, we forbid matrimony unto the seventh generation." But see how God worketh against such ungodly proceedings. The next night after it happened the same cardinal (ruffling and revelling with his concubines) to be apprehended in the same vice, whereof he had so strictly given out precepts the next day before, to the no little slander and shame, as Matthew Paris doth write, of the whole clergy.

Unto this time lived Henricus the Fifth, emperor, after he had reigned twenty years, dying without issue, as is before mentioned. Next after Henricus the imperial crown came unto Lotharius, duke of Saxon, in the year one thousand one hundred twenty and seven.

Certain histories make mention of one Arnulphus, in the time of this Pope Honorius the Second. Some say he was archbishop of Lugdune, as Hugo, Platina, Sabellicus. Tritemius saith he was a priest, whose history, as it is set forth in Tritemius, I will briefly in English express. About this time, saith he, in the days of Honorius the Second, one Arnulphus, priest, a man zealous and of great devotion, and a worthy preacher, came to Rome; which Arnulphus in his preaching rebuked the dissolute and lascivious looseness, incontinency, avarice, and immoderate pride of the clergy, provoking all to follow Christ and his apostles in their poverty rather, and in pureness of life. By reason whereof this man was well accepted, and highly liked of the nobility of Rome for a true disciple of Christ; but of the cardinals and the clergy he was no less hated than favoured of the other. Inso much that privily in the night season they took him and destroyed him. This his martyrdom, saith he, was revealed to him before from God by an angel, he being in the desert, when he was sent forth to preach; whereupon he said unto them publicly with these words: I know (saith he) ye seek my life, and know you will make me away privily; but why? Because I preach to you the truth, and blame your pride, stoutness, avarice, incontinency, with your unmeasurable greediness in getting and heaping up of riches, therefore you be displeased with me. I

take here heaven and earth to witness, that I have preached unto you that which I was commanded of the Lord. But you contemn me and your Creator, who by his only Son hath redeemed you. And no marvel if you seek my death, being a sinful person, preaching unto you the truth, whenas if St. Peter were here this day and rebuked your vices, which do so multiply above all measure, you would not spare him neither. And as he was expressing this, with a loud voice he said moreover, For my part, I am not afraid to suffer death for the truth's sake; but this I say unto you, that God will look upon your iniquities, and will be revenged. You, being full of all impurity, play the blind guides to the people committed unto you, leading them the way to hell: a God he is of vengeance. Thus the hatred of the clergy being incensed against him for preaching truth, they conspired against him, and so, laying privy wait for him, took him and drowned him, Sabellieus and Platina say they hanged him.

In the second time of the General Councils imprinted at Cullen, is mentioned a certain book called Opus Tripartitum, written, as the author supposeth, about four hundred years ago, either of this Arnulphus, or just about the same time. In this book the writer complaineth of many enormities and abuses in the church. First, of the number of holy-days, declaring what occasions of vice grew thereby, according unto the common saying of courtezans and naughty women, which say they profit more in one holy-day than in fifty other days besides.

Item, he complaineth of the curious singing in cathedral churches, whereby many be occasioned to bestow much good time, yea, many years about the same, which otherwise they might give to the learning of better sciences.

Likewise he complaineth of the rabble and the multitude of begging friars, and religious men and professed women, showing what great occasion of idle and uncomely life cometh thereof.

Also of the inconsiderate promotion of evil prelates, and of their great negligence in correcting and reforming the evil demeanour of the people.

Item, of the great wantonness and lasciviousness in their servants and families, concerning their excessive wearing of apparel.

Item, he complaineth also of the outrageous and excessive gains that prelates and other under them take for their seal, especially of officials, scribes, and such like; which give out the seal they care not how, nor wherefore, so they may gain money.

He complaineth, in like manner, that prelates be so slack and negligent in looking to the residents in their benefices.

Further, he lamenteth the rash giving of benefices to parsons, vicars, and curates, not for any godliness or learning in them, but for favour, or friendship, or intercession, or else for hope of some gain, whereof springeth this great ignorance in the church.

After this, he noteth in prelates, how they waste and expend the goods of the church in superfluties, or upon their kinsfolks, or other worse ways, which should rather be spent on the poor.

Next, in the tenth chapter he complaineth, for that, through the negligence of men of the church, (especially of the Church of Rome,) the books and monuments of the old councils, and also of the new, are not to be found; which should be reserved and kept in all cathedral churches.

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Item, that many prelates be so cold in doing their duties. Also he reproacheth the unchaste and voluptuous demeanour of ecclesiastical persons by the example of storks, whose nature is, (saith he,) that if any of their company, leaving his own mate, joineth with any other, all the rest lieth upon him, whether it be he or she, beate and plucketh his feathers off: what then, said he, ought good prelates to do to such a person of their company, whose ifithness and corrupt life both defileth so many, and stinketh in the whole church?

Again, forsomuch as we read in the book of Esdras, that he, purging Israel of strange women, began first with the priests; so now likewise in the purging and correcting of all sorts of men, first the purgation ought to begin with these, according as it is written by the prophet Ezekiel; "Begin first with the sanctuary."

Moreover, how that in the time of Philip, king of France, the whole realm was interdicted, for that the king had but one woman instead of his wife, which was not his wife by law. And again, seeing in these our days the king of Portugal hath been sequestered from his dominion, by the authority of the church, being thought not sufficient to govern: what then ought to be said to that prelate who abuseth other men's wives, virgins, and nuns, which also is found unable and insufficient to take upon him the charge of souls?

About the year of our Lord 1128, the orders of the knights of Rhodes, or of St. John, also the order of Templars, rose up.

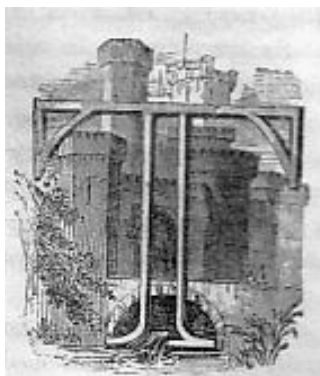
After Honorius, next in the same usurpation succeeded Pope Innocentius the Second, A.D. 1130. But as it was with his predecessors before him, that at every mutation of new popes came new perturbations, and commonly never a pope was elected but some other was set up against him (sometimes two, sometimes three popes together); so likewise it happened with this Innocentius; for after he was chosen, the Romans elected another pope, named Anacletus. Betwixt these two popes there was much ado, and great conflicts, through the partaking of Rogerius, duke of Sicile, taking Anacletus's part against Innocentius, until Lotharius the emperor came; who, rescuing Innocentius, drove Rogerius out of Italy. Our stories record, that King Henry was one of the great helps in setting up and maintaining this Pope Innocentius against Anaeletus.

Amongst many other things, this pope decreed that whosoever did strike a priest or clerk, being shaven, he should be excommunicated, and not be absolved, but only of the pope himself.

37. King Stephen

About the time of doing these things, being the year of our Lord 1135, King Henry being in Normandy, as some say, by taking there a fall from his horse, as others say, by taking a surfeit in eating lampreys, fell sick and died, after he had reigned over the realm of England five and thirty years and odd months; leaving for his heirs Matilda the empress his daughter, with her young son Henry, to succeed after him; to whom all the prelates and nobility of the realm were sworn. But, contrary to their oath made to Maud in the presence of her father before, William, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the nobles of the realm, crowned Stephen, earl of Bologne, and sister's son to King Henry, upon St. Stephen's day in Christmas week; which archbishop the next year after died, being, as it was thought, justly punished for his perjury. And many other lords, which did accordingly, went not quit without punishment. In the like justice of punishment is numbered also Roger, bishop of Salis bury; who, contrary unto his oath, being a great doer in the coronation of Stephen, was apprehended of the same king, and miserably, but justly, extermined.

A certain written English story I have, which addeth more, and saith, that King Stephen, having many foes in divers quarters keeping their holds and castles against him, went then to Oxford, and took the bishop of Salisbury, and put a rope about his neck, and so led him to the castle of Vies, that was his, and commanded them to render up the castle, or he would slay and hang their bishop. Which castle being given up, the king took the spoil thereof. The like also he did unto the bishop of Lincoln, named Alexander; whom in like manner He led in a rope to a castle of the bishop's, that was upon Trent, and had them deliver up the castle, or else he would hang their lord before the gate. Long it was before the castle was given Up; yet at length the king obtaining it, there entered and took all the treasure of the bishop, &c. Roger Hoveden and Fabian alleging a certain old author, whom I cannot find, referreth a great cause of this perjury unto one Hugh Bigot, steward sometime with King Henry. Who, immediately after the death of the said Henry, came into England, and before the said archbishop, and other lords of the land, took wilfully an oath, and swore that he was present a little before the king's death, when King Henry admitted for his heir (to be king after him) Stephen his nephew, forsomuch as Maud his daughter had discontented him. Whereunto the archbishop, with the other lords, gave too hasty credence. But this Hugh, saith he, scaped not unpunished, for he died miserably in a short time after. Albeit all this may be supposed rather to be wrought not without the practice of Henry, bishop of Winchester, and other prelates by his setting on, which Henry was brother unto King Stephen, &c.



HUS, when King Stephen contrary unto his oath made before to Maud, the empress, had taken upon him the crown, (as is above said,) he swore before the lords at Oxford, that he would not hold the benefices that were voided, and that he would remit the Danegelt, with many other things, which after he little performed. Moreover, because he dreaded the coming of the empress, he gave licence to his lords, every one to build upon his own ground strong castles or fortresses, as they liked. All the time of his reign he was vexed with wars, but especially with David,

king of the Scots, with whom he was at length accorded; but yet the Scottish king did him no homage, because he was sworn to Maud, the empress. Notwithstanding, yet Henry, the eldest son to King David, did homage to King Stephen. But he, after repenting thereof, entered into Northumberland with a great host, and burnt and slew the people in most cruel wise, neither sparing man, woman, nor child. Such as were with child they ripped, the children they tossed upon their spears' points, and laying the priests upon the altars, they mangled and cut them all to pieces, after a most terrible manner. But by the manhood of the English lords and soldiers, and through the means of Thurstin, archbishop of York, they were met withal, and slain a great number of them, and David their king constrained to give Henry his son hostage for surety of peace. In the mean time, King Stephen was occupied in the south countries, besieging divers castles of divers bishops and other lords, and took them by force, and fortified them with his knights and servants, to the intent to withstand the empress, whose coming he ever feared.

About the sixth year of his reign, Maud, the empress, came into England out of Normandy, and by the aid of Robert, earl of Gloucester, and Ranuiph of Chester, made strong war upon King Stephen. In the end whereof the king's party was chased, and himself taken prisoner, and sent to Bristow, there to be kept in sure hold. The same day when King Stephen should join his battle, it is said in a certain old chronicle before minded, that he being at the mass, (which then the bishop of Lincoln said before the king,) as he went to offer up his taper, it brake in two pieces. And when the mass was done, (or what time the king should have been houseled,) the rope, whereby the pix did hang, did break, and the pix fell down upon the altar.[Note: The word "housel" is employed to denote the giving or receiving the eucharist. It is derived from "host," the consecrated wafer, which again is derived from the Latin *hostia*, a sacrifice.]

After this field, the queen, King Stephen's wife, (lying then in Kent,) made great labour to the empress and her council to have the king delivered and put into some house of religion, but could not obtain it. Also the Londoners made great suit to the said empress to have and to use again St. Edward's laws, and not the laws of her father, which were more strict and strange unto them than the other. Which, when they could not obtain of her and her council, the citizens of London, being therewith discontented, would have taken the empress; but she, having knowledge thereof, fled privily from London to Oxford. But then the Kentish men and Londoners, taking the king's part, joined battle against the empress; where the foresaid Robert. earl of Gloucester, and base brother to the empress, was taken, and so by exchange both the king and the Earl Robert were delivered out of prison. Then Stephen, without delay, gathering to him a strong army, straitly pursued the foresaid Matild, or Maud, with her friends, besieging them in the castle of Oxford. In the siege whereof fell a great snow and frost so hard, that a man well laden might pass over the water; upon the occasion whereof the empress, bethinking herself, appointed with her friends and retinue clothed in white sheets and so issuing out by a postern gate, went upon the ice over Thames, and so escaped to Walingford. After this. the king, (the castle being gotten.) when he found not the empress, was much displeased, and molested the country about divers ways. In conclusion, he pursued the empress and her company so hard, that he caused them to fly the realm, which was the sixth year of his reign.

The second year after this. which was the eighth year of his reign, there was a parliament kept at London, unto the which all the bishops of the realm resorted, and there denounced the king accursed, and all them with him that did any hurt to the

church, or to any minister thereof. Where upon the king began somewhat to amend his conditions for a certain space; but afterward (as my story saith) was as ill as he was before; but what the causes were my author maketh no relation thereof, &c. To return again to the story, the empress, compelled, as is said, to flee the realm, returned again into Normandy to Geoffrey Plantagenet, her husband. Who, after he had valiantly won and defended the duchy of Normandy against the puissance of King Stephen a long time, ended his life, leaving Henry his son to succeed him in that dukedom. In the mean while Robert, earl of Gloucester, and the earl of Chester, who were strong of people, had divers conflicts with the king, insomuch that at a battle at Wilton between them the king was well near taken, but yet escaped with much pain.

It was not long after, but Eustace, son to King Stephen, who had married the French king's sister, made war on Duke Henry, of Normandy, but prevailed not. Soon after, the said Henry, duke of Normandy, (in the quarrel of his mother Maud,) with a great puissance entered into England, and at the first won the castle of Malmesbury, then the tower of London, and afterward the town of Nottingham, with other holds and castles, as of Walingford and other more. Thus between him and the king were fought many battles, to the great annoyance of the realm. During which time Eustace the king's son departeth. Upon the occasion whereof the king caused Theobald, (which succeeded next after William above mentioned,) archbishop of Canterbury, to make means to the duke for peace, which upon this condition between them was concluded, that Stephen, during his lifetime, should hold the kingdom, and Henry in the mean time to be proclaimed heir apparent in the chief cities throughout the realm. These things thus concluded, Duke Henry taketh his journey into Normandy, (King Stephen and his son William, bringing him on his way,) where William the king's son, taking up his horse before his father, had a fall, and brake his leg, and so was had to Canterbury. The same year King Stephen about October (as some say for sorrow) ended his life, after he had reigned nineteen years perjuredly.

As Theobald succeeded after William, archbishop of Canterbury, so in York, after Thurstin, succeeded William, which was called St. William of York, who was poisoned in his chalice by his chaplains.

In the time of this king, and about the sixteenth year of his reign, Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, and legate to the pope, did hold a council at London. In the which council first began new found appeals from councils to the pope, found out by Henry, bishop of Winchester. For, as the words of an historian do record, "Appellations before were not in use in England, till Henry, bishop of Winchester, being then the pope's legate, brought them cruelly in, to his own hurt. For in that council thrice appeal was made to the bishop of Rome."

In the time of King Stephen died Gratian, a monk of Bonony, who compiled the book called The Pope's Decrees. Also his brother, Peter Lombard, bishop of Paris, which is called the Master of Sentences, compiled his four books of the Sentences. These two brethren were the greatest doers in finding out and establishing this blind opinion of the sacrament, that the only similitude of bread and wine remained, but not the substance of them; and this they call the spiritual understanding of the mystery. And therefore no marvels if the sun in those days were seen black and dim.

Some also affirm, that Petrus Comestor, writer of the scholastical history, was the third brother to these above named.

In the same time and reign of the said King Stephen was also Hugo, surnamed De Sancto Victore. About the which time (as Polychronicon reciteth) lived and died Bernardus Clarevallensis.

The author of the history called Jornalensis maketh also mention of Hildegare, the nun and prophetess in Almany, to have lived in the same age. Concerning whose prophecy against the friars, here after (by the grace of Christ) more shall be said, when we come to recite the order and number of friars and religious men crept into the church of Christ.

We read moreover of one named Johannes de Temporibus, which by the affirmance of some of our old histories lived three hundred and sixty-one years, (servant once to Carolus Magnus,) and in the reign of Stephen, king of England, died.

In the days also of this king, and by him, was builded the abbey of Feversham, where his son and he were buried. He builded the monastery of Finerneis and of Fomitance, the castle of Walingford, with a number of other castles more.

During the time of the said King Stephen, in the year of our Lord 1144, the miserable Jews crucified a child in the city of Norwich.

Much about the same time came up the order of the Gilbertines, by one Gilbert, son to Jacoline, a knight of Lincolnshire.

Mention hath been made before of certain English councils holden in the time of this king, where it was (in one of them under Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury) decreed that bishops should live more discreetly; should teach their flock more diligently; that reading of Scriptures should be frequented more usually in abbeys; that priests should not be rulers of worldly matters; and that they should learn and teach the Lord's Prayer and Creed in English.

Matthew Paris writeth, how Stephen, king of England, in these days reserved to himself the right and authority of bestowing spiritual livings, and in vesting prelates, in the year 1133.

At which time also Lotharius the emperor began to do the like, in recovering again the right and privilege taken away from Henricus his predecessor, had not Bernard given him contrary counsel.

Here came into the church the manner of cursing with book, bell, and candle, devised in the Council of London, holden by William, bishop of Winchester, under Celestinus, which succeeded after Innocentius, A.D. 1144.

Also Lotharius succeeded in the imperial crown Conradus, the nephew of Henricus the Fifth, aforementioned, A.D. 1138, who only amongst many emperors is not found to receive the crown at the pope's hand.

In the days of this emperor, who reigned fifteen years, were divers popes, as Celestinus the Second, Luscius the Second, Eugenius the Third, at which time the Romans went about to recover their former old manner of choosing their consuls and senators. But the popes, then being in their ruff, in no case would abide it; whereupon arose many commotions, with much civil war amongst them. Insomuch that Pope Lucius (sending for aid to the emperor, who otherwise letted at that time could not come) armed his soldiers, thinking to invade them, or else to destroy them in the senate-house. But this coming to their knowledge before, the people was all in array, and so much ado was amongst them. Pope Lucius being also amongst them in the

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fight, (well pelted with stones and blows,) lived not long after. Likewise Pope Eugenius after him, A.D. 1145, pursuing the Romans for the same matter, first did curse them with excommunication; after, when he saw that would not serve, he came with his host, and so compelled them at length to seek his peace, and to take his conditions, which were these; that they should abolish their consuls, and take such senators as he by his papal authority should assign them.

Then followed Anastasius the Fourth, and after him Adrian the Fourth, an Englishman, by his name called Breakspear, belonging once to St Albans. This Adrianus kept great stir in like sort with the citizens of Rome for abolishing their consuls and senate, cursing, excommunicating, and warring against them with all power he could make, till the time he removed the consuls out of their office, and brought them all under his subjection. The like business and rage he also stirred up against Apulia, and especially against the empire, blustering and thundering against Fredericus the emperor, as (the Lord granting) you shall hear anon, after we have prosecuted such matter as necessarily appertineth first to the continuation of our English story.

38. Henry II

Henry, the second of that name, the son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, and of Maud the empress, and daughter of King Henry the First, began his reign after King Stephen, and continued five and thirty years. The first year of his reign he subdued Ireland; and not long after, Thomas Becket was made by him lord chancellor of England. This king cast down divers castles which were erected in the time of King Stephen. He went into the north parts, where he subdued William, king of Scotland, who at that time held a great part of Northumberland, unto Newcastle upon Tyne, and joined Scotland to his own kingdom, from the south ocean to the north isles of Orkneys. Also he put under his dominion the kingdom of Wales, and there felled many great woods, and made the ways plain. So that by his great manhood and policy the seigniory of England was much augmented with the addition of Scotland, Ireland, the Orkney Isles, Britain, Poictou, and Guienne. Also he had in his rule Normandy, Gascony, Anjou, and Chinon; also Auvergne and the city of Thoulouse he won, and were to him subject. Over and besides (by the title of his wife Eleanor, daughter to the earl of Poictou) he obtained the Pyrenees in Spain; so that we read of none of his progenitors which had so many countries under his dominion.

In England were seen in the firmament two suns, and in Italy appeared three suns by the space of three hours in the west; and the year following appeared three moons, whereof the middle moon had a red cross overthwart the face, whereby was betokened (by the judgment of some the great schism that after fell among the cardinals for the election of the bishop of Rome; or else rather the business between Frederic the emperor and the popes, whereof partly now incidently occasion giveth us to discourse, after that I have first written of Gerhardus and Dulcious Navarensis; who in their time, according to their gift, did earnestly labour and preach against the Church of Rome, defending and maintaining, that prayer was not more holy in one place than in another; that the pope was antichrist; that the clergy and prelates of Rome were reprobate, and the very whore of Babylon prefigured in the Apocalypse. Peradventure these had received some light of knowledge of the Waldenses, who at length with a great number of their followers were oppressed and slain by the pope. And although some inconvenient points of doctrine and dishonesty in their assemblies be against them alleged of some, yet these times of ours do teach us sufficiently what credit is to be given to such popish slanders, forged rather upon hatred of true religion than upon any judgment of truth. Illyricus, in his book *De Testibus*, referreth the time of these two to the year of our Lord 1218; but, as I find in the story of Robert Guisburne, these two, about the year of our Lord 1158, brought thirty with them into England, who by the king and the prelates were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm, and after (as Illyricus writeth) were slain by the pope.

39. Quarrel between the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and the Papacy

And now (according to my promise premised) the time requireth to proceed to the history of Frederic the First, (called Barbarossa,) successor unto Conradus in the empire, who marched up to Italy to subdue there certain rebels. The pope hearing that, came with his clergy to meet him by the way, in a town called Sutrium, thinking by him to find aid against his enemies. The emperor seeing the bishop, lighteth from his horse to receive him, holding the stirrup to the prelate on the left side, when he should have held it on the right, whereat the pope showed himself somewhat grieved. The emperor smiling, excused himself; that he was never accustomed to hold stirrups. And seeing it was done only of good will, and of no duty, the less matter was what side of the horse he held. The next day, to make amends again to the bishop, the emperor sending for him received him, holding the right stirrup unto the prelate, and so all the matter was made whole, and he the pope's white son again.

After this, as they were come in and sat together, Adrian the pope beginneth to declare unto him, how his ancestors before him, such as sought unto the see of Rome for the crown, were wont always to leave behind them some special token or monument of their benevolence for the obtaining thereof, Carolus Magnus in subduing the Lombards, Otho the Berengarians, Lotharius the Normans, &c. Wherefore he required some benefit to proceed likewise from him unto the Church of Rome, in restoring again the country of Apulia to the Church of Rome. Which thing if he would do, he for his part again would do that which appertained unto him to do; meaning in giving him the crown, for at that time the popes had brought the emperors to fetch their crown at their hands.

Frederic, with his princes, perceiving that unless he would of his own proper costs and charges fetch in again Apulia out of Duke William's hands, he could not speed of the crown, was fain to promise to all that the pope required, and so the next day after was crowned.

This done, the emperor returneth into Germany, to refresh his army and his other furnitures, for the subduing of Apulia. In the mean while Adrian, not thinking to be idle, first giveth forth censures of excommunication against William, duke of Apulia. Besides, not content with this, he sendeth also to Emmanuel, emperor of Constantinople, incensing him to war against the foresaid William. The duke perceiving this, sendeth to the pope for peace, promising to restore to him whatsoever he would.

But the pope, through the malignant counsel of his cardinals, would grant to no peace, thinking to get more by war. The duke, seeing nothing but war, prepareth himself with all expedition to the same. To be brief, making all his power out of Sicilia, he arrived at Apulia, and there putteth the emperor Emmanuel to flight. This done, he proceedeth to the city of Bonaventure, where the pope with his cardinals were looking for victory. He, planting there his siege, so straitly pressed the city, that the pope with his cardinals were glad to entreat for peace, which they refused before. The duke granted unto their peace upon certain conditions, that is, that neither he should invade such possessions as belonged to Rome, and that the pope should make him king of both Sicilies. So the matter was concluded, and they departed. The bishop, coming

to Rome, was no less troubled there about their consuls and senators, insomuch that when his curses and excommunications could not prevail nor serve, he was fain to leave Rome, and removed to Ariminum.

The emperor, all this while sitting quietly at home, began to consider with himself how the pope had extorted from the emperors his predecessors the investing and enduing of prelates; how he had pilled and polled all nations by his legates, and also had been the sower of seditions through all his empire. He began therefore to require of all the hishops of Germany homage, and oath of their allegiance; commanding also the pope's legates, if they came into Germany without his sending for, not to be received. Charging, moreover, all his subjects that none of them should appeal to Rome. Besides this, in his letters he set and prefixed his name before the pope's name; whereupon the pope, being not a little offended, directed his letters to the foresaid Frederic, emperor, after this tenor and form as followeth.

The copy of Adrianus the pope's letters to Frederic the emperor.

"Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to Frederic, emperor, health and apostolical benediction. The law of God, as it promiseth to them that honour father and mother long life, so it threateneth the sentence of death to them that curse father and mother. We are taught by the word of truth, that every one the which exalteth himself shall be brought low. Whrefore (my well-beloved son in the Lord) we marvel not a little at your wisdom, in that you seem not to show that reverence to blessed St. Peter, and to the holy Church of Rome, which you ought to show. For why? In your letters sent to us, you prefer your own name before ours; wherein you incur the note of insolency, yea rather, (to speak it,) of arrogancy. What should I here recite unto you the oath of your fidelity, which you aware to blessed St. Peter and to us, and how you observe and keep the same? Seeing you so require homage and allegiance of them that be gods, and all the sons of the High God, and presume to join their holy lands with yours, working contrary to us; seeing also you exclude, not only out of your churches, but also out of your cities, our cardinals, whom we direct as legates from our side; what shall I say then unto you? Amend therefore, I advise you, amend; for while you go about to obtain of us your consecration and crown, and to get those things you have not, I fear much your honour will lose the things you have. Thus fare ye well."

The answer of Frederic, the emperor, to the pope.

"Frederic, by the grace of God, Roman emperor, ever Augustus, unto Adrian, bishop of the Roman church, and unto all such that be willing to cleave unto those things which Jesus began to work and teach, greeting. The law of justice giveth to every person accordingly that which is his. Neither do we derogate from our parents; of whom, according as we have received this our dignity of the imperial crown and governance, so in the same kingdom of ours we do render their due and true honour to them again. And forsomuch as duty in all sorts of men is to be sought out, let us see first in the time of Constantine (Silvester then being bishop of Rome) what patrimony or regality he had of his own due to him that he might claim. Did not Constantine of his liberal benignity give liberty, and restored peace unto the church? And what soever regality or patrimony the see of your papacy hath, was it not by the donation of princes given unto them? Revolve and turn over the ancient chronicles, (if either you have not read or neglected that we do affirm,) there it is to be found. Of them which be gods by adoption, and hold our lordships of us, why may we not justly require their homage, and their sworn allegiance, whenas he which is both your Master and ours (taking nothing of any king or any man, but giving all goodness to all men) payed toll and

tribute for him and Peter unto Cæsar? giving you example to do the like. And therefore he saith to you and all men, "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart," &c. Wherefore either render again your lordships and patrimonies which ye hold of us; or else, if ye find them so sweet unto you, then give that which is due to God unto God, and that which is due to Cæsar unto Cæsar. As for your cardinals, we shut them out both of churches and cities, for that we see them not preachers, but prollers; not repairers of peace, but rakers for money; not pillars and upholders of the church, but pollers insatiable of the world, and moilers of money and gold. What time we shall see them to be other men, (such as the church requireth them to be,) members and makers of peace, shining forth like lights to the people, assisting poor and weak men's causes in the way of equity, &c., then shall they find us prepared and ready to relieve them with stipends, and all things necessary. And whereas you infer such questions as these unto secular men, (little conducing to religion,) you incur thereby no little note and blemish of your humility, (which is keeper of all virtues,) and of your mansuetude. Therefore let your fatherhood beware and take heed, lest in moving such matters as seem to us unseemly for you, ye give thereby offence to such as depend of your word (giving ear to your mouth, as it were to an evening shower); for we cannot but tell you of that we hear, seeing now the detestable beast of pride doth creep into the seat of Peter, providing always (as much as we may by God's grace) for the peace of the church. Fare ye well."

Upon this Adrian the pope directeth out a bull against Frederic, excommunicating him with public and solemn ceremonies. Moreover, conspiring with William, duke of Apulia, he sought all manner of ways to infest the emperor, and to set all men against him, especially the clergy. Amongst many other writing to Hillinus, bishop of Trivers, to Arnulphus, bishop of Mentz, and to Frederic, bishop of Cullen, he seeketh first to make them of his side.

Much trouble had good Fredericus with this pope; but much more with the other that followed. For this pope continued not very long, the space only of four years and odd months. About whose time rose up the order of the hermits by one William, once duke of Aquitania, and afterward a friar. This Adrianus, walking with his cardinals abroad to a place called Anagnia, or Arignanum, (as Volateran calleth it,) chanced to be choked with a fly getting into his throat, and so was strangled; who, in the later time of his papacy, was wont to say, that there is no more miserable kind of life in the earth, than to be pope, and to come to the papacy by blood, that is, (said he,) not to succeed Peter, but rather Romulus, who, to reign alone, did slay his brother.

Although this Adrian was bad enough, yet came the next much worse, one Alexander, the third of that name, who yet was not elect alone; for beside him the emperor with nine cardinals (albeit Sabellicus saith but with three) did set up another pope, named Victor the Fourth. Between these two popes rose a foul schism and great discord, and long continued. Insomuch that the emperor, being required to take up the matter, sent for them both to appear before him, that in hearing them both he might judge their cause the better. Victor came, but Alexander (disdaining that his matter should come in controversy) refused to appear. Whereupon the emperor, with a full consent of his bishops and clergy about him, assigned and ratified the election of Victor to stand, and so brought him into the city, there to be received and placed. Alexander flying into France, accused them both, sending his letters to all Christendom against them, as men to be avoided and cast out of all Christian company. Also to get him friends at Rome, by flattery and money he got on his side the greatest part of the city, both to the favouring of him, and to the setting up of such

consuls as were for his purpose. After this, Alexander coming from France to Sicily, and from thence to Rome, was there received with much favour, through the help of Philip the French king. The



emperor, hearing this rebellion and conspiracy in Rome, removed with great power into Italy, where he had destroyed divers great cities. Coming at length to Rome, he required the citizens that the cause betwixt the two popes might be decided, and that he which had the best right might be taken. If they would so do, he would restore again that which he took from them before. Alexander mistrusting his part, and doubting the wills of the citizens, (having ships ready prepared for him from William, duke of Apulia,) fetched a course about to Venice.

To declare here the difference in histories, between Blondus, Sabellicus, and the Venetian chroniclers, with other writers, concerning the order of this matter, I will overpass. In this most do agree, that the pope being at Venice, and required to be sent of the Venetians to the emperor, they would not send him. Whereupon Fredericus the emperor sent thither his son Otho, with men and ships well appointed, charging him not to attempt any thing before his coming. The young man, more hardy than circumspect, (joining with the Venetians,) was overcome; and so taken, was brought out into the city. Hereby the pope took no small occasion to work his feats.

The father, to help the captivity and misery of his son, was compelled to submit himself to the pope, and to entreat for peace. So the emperor, coming to Venice, (at St. Mark's church, where the bishop was, there to take his absolution,) was bid to kneel down at the pope's feet.

The proud pope, setting his foot upon the emperor's neck, said the verse of the Psalm, "Thou shalt walk upon the adder and on the basilisk, and shalt tread down the lion and the dragon." To whom the emperor answering again, said, Not to thee, but to Peter. The pope again, Both to me and to Peter. The emperor, fearing to give any occasion of further quarrelling, held his peace, and so was absolved, and peace made between them. The conditions whereof were these. First, that he should receive Alexander for the true pope. Secondly, that he should restore again to the Church of Rome all that he had taken away before. And thus the emperor, obtaining again his son, departed.

Here, as I note in divers writers a great diversity and variety touching the order of this matter. (of whom some say that the emperor camped in Palestina before he came to Venice, some say after,) so I marvel to see in Volateran (so great a favourer of the pope) such a contradiction, who in his two and twentieth book saith, that Otho, the emperor's son. was taken in this conflict, which was the cause of the peace between his father and the pope. And in his three and twentieth book again saith, that the emperor himself was taken prisoner in the same battle; and so afterwards (peace concluded) took his journey to Asia and Palestina. This pope, in the time of his papacy, (which continued one and twenty years,) kept sundry councils both at Turo and at Lateran, where he confirmed the wicked proceedings of Hildebrand, and others his predecessors; as to bind all orders of the clery to the vow of chastity; which were not greatly to be reprehended, if they would define chastity aright. For who so liveth not a chaste life (saith he) is not fit to be a minister. But herein lieth an error full of much

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blindness, and also peril, to think that matrimony immaculate (as St. Paul calleth it) is not chastity, but only a single life, that they esteem to be a chaste life.

END OF VOLUME 1