

ST SEVERIN, ARCHBISHOP OF COLOGN, C.

His name is famous in the annals of the church. By his learning and zeal, not only his own diocess, but also that of Tongres was purged from the venom of the Arian heresy, about the year 390. St. Gregory of Tours tells us that St. Severin knew by revelation the death and glory of St. Martin, at the time of his departure. He led an angelical life, and died soon after St. Martin, in 400. His life written by Fortunatus, mentioned by St. Gregory of Tours is the best. See St. Greg. of Tours, De Glor. Conf. c. 45, et l. 8.; Mirac. St. Martin, c. 4.

ANOTHER ST. SEVERIN, OR SURIN, B.

Is honoured this day as patron of Bordeaux, which see he governed under St. Amand. He is said by some to have been the same with the foregoing Archbishop of Cologne, who, resigning that see, retired to Bordeaux, his native city; but others distinguish them, and think the latter came to Bordeaux from some part of the East. See St. Greg. of Tours, loc. cit. Baillet; and Gall. Christ. Nova, t. 2, p. 789.

OCTOBER XXIV.

SAINT PROCLUS, CONFESSOR,

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

From his writings, Liberatus, c. 10. Socrates, l. 7, c. 28, 41, 45. Chron. Paschal. Marcellin. in chron. &c. See Orsi, t. 13 and 14.

A. D. 447.

St. PROCLUS was a native of Constantinople, and was very young when he was made a reader of that church. The service of the church did not hinder him from closely following his studies, and he was some time a disciple of St. Chrysostom, and his secretary. Atticus ordained him deacon and priest. After his death, many pitched upon Proclus as the fittest person to be placed in that important see: but Sisinnius was chosen, who ordained Proclus archbishop of Cyzicus, metropolis of the Hellespont. The inhabitants of that city being unwill-

ling to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the bishop of Constantinople, refused to receive him, and chose Dalmatius, a monk. Proclus, therefore, continued at Constantinople, where he got a great reputation by his preaching. Upon the demise of Sisiniius, in 427, many again cast their eyes upon him as the most worthy of that dignity; but others alleged that he had been chosen bishop of another see, and that translations were forbidden by the canons. Nestorius, who was raised to that dignity, advanced his errors at first covertly, but at length openly. St. Proclus courageously maintained the truth against him, and, in 429, preached a sermon (which is the first among his printed homilies) to show that the Blessed Virgin ought to be styled the Mother of God. Nestorius, who was present, publicly contradicted him in the church. When that heresiarch was deposed in 431, Maximian was chosen to succeed him, those that were for St. Proclus being overruled by the above-mentioned exception; but after Maximian's death, in 434, this saint, who had never been able to take possession of the see of Cyzicus, was promoted to that of Constantinople. The mildness with which he treated even the most obstinate among the Nestorians, Arians, and other heretics, was a distinguishing part of his character; (1) though he strenuously supported the Catholic faith, and kept a correspondence, and lived in close union and friendship with the pope, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and John of Antioch. The Armenian bishops consulted him about the doctrine and writings of Theodorus, bishop of Mopsuestia, who was then dead, and whose name was in reputation in those parts. St. Proclus answered them in 436, by his tome to the Armenians, which is the most famous of his writings. In it he condemned the doctrine mentioned as savouring of Nestorianism, and expounded the article of the incarnation. Without naming Theodorus, who was dead in the communion of the church, he exhorted them to adhere to the doctrine of St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen, whose names and works were in particular veneration among them. Others carried on this contest with greater warmth; and some would needs have had the names of Theodorus, Theodoret and Ibas, condemned; which was the origin of the dispute of the three chapters. John of Antioch wrote to St.

(1) Socrnt. l. 7, c. 41. 42.

Proclus in the same year, 436, against the doctrine of some who seemed to him to confound the two natures in Christ; which error was soon after openly advanced by Eutyches.

The letters of St. Proclus, which are extant, regard chiefly the disputes of that age concerning the incarnation; and of the twenty homilies of this father, which were published at Rome by Riccardi in 1630, and by F. Combefis: (1) the last is a fragment of a sermon in praise of St. Chrysostom; the first, fifth, and sixth, are upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose title of Mother of God he justly extols: the rest turn chiefly upon the mysteries of Christ, and principal festivals of the year. The style of this father is concise, sententious, and full of lively witty turns, more proper to please and delight than to move the heart. This sort of composition requires much pains and study; and though this father was very successful in this way, is not to be compared to the easy natural gravity of St. Basil, or the sweet style of St. Chrysostom. The first part of the year 447 is memorable for a dreadful earthquake which was felt from place to place, during six months, in divers parts of Egypt and the East, especially near the Hellespont, and in Bithynia, in Phrygia, and at Antioch in Syria. The earth shook like a ship abandoned to the mercy of the winds, and tossed by the fury of the waves worked up by a storm. Amidst the ruins of many stately buildings men ran to and fro almost distracted with fear and horror, not being able to find any place of refuge or security. At Constantinople the inhabitants wandered in the fields; and, with the rest, the emperor Theodosius the Younger, and all his courtiers. St. Proclus, with his clergy, followed his scattered flock, and ceased not to comfort and exhort them amidst their afflictions, and to implore the divine mercy with them. The people continually answered by a triple repetition of this prayer: "Have mercy on us, O Lord." Theophanes(2) and other Greek historians tell us that a child was taken up into the air, and heard angels singing the Trisagion or triple doxology; which gave occasion to St. Proclus to teach the people to sing it in these words: Holy God, holy strong, holy immortal, have mercy on us." It is at least agreed that St. Proclus with the people used this prayer, and that

(1) In Auctar. Bibl. Patr

(2) Chron. p. 64.

thereupon the earthquakes ceased. This trisagion was inserted by him in the divine office, which the Greek Church uses to this day.* The heretics in the East by various additions to this trisagion, corrupted the sense by their errors. Peter Fullo, the Eutychian patriarch of Antioch, referring the whole trisagion to Christ alone, added these words: "Who suffered for us," meaning that there was but one person in Christ, and that his divinity itself suffered. Other heretics corrupted it divers ways. Several Catholics understood the whole of Christ; which is arbitrary, though, by the church, it is meant of God in three persons, as St. Ambrose observes; but prayers directed immediately to any of the three persons are addressed to the Trinity, all the persons being one God. To curb the rashness of heretics it

* The Trisagion or Sanctus, sung in the preface of the mass, is of much greater antiquity. The seraphim were heard by Isaiah thrice repeating, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, and by this doxology, praising in heaven the strong and immortal, who subsists one God ever adorable in three persons. (Isa. vi.) It is from heaven that the church has borrowed this hymn, where St. John assures us that the saints sing it for all eternity. (Apoc. iv. 8.) The preface and Sanctus occur in all the most ancient liturgies, and are mentioned by Tertullian, (l. de Orat.) St. Cyprian, (l. de Orat. Domin.) St. Cyril of Jerusalem, (Catech. Myst. 5,) the Apostolical Constitutions, (l. 5, c. 16,) St. Dionysius, (Hierar. Eccl. c. 3,) St. Gregory of Nyssa, (Or. de non differ. Bapt.) St. Chrysostom, (Hom. 14, in Eph. 19, in Mat. &c.) the Sacramentaries of Gelasius and St. Gregory, St. Anastasius the Sinaite, (ed. Combefits,) &c. See Dom Claude de Vert, Explic. des Cérémonies de l'Eglise, t. 1, p. 118, and F. Le Brun, Explic. des Cérémonies de la Messe, t. 1, pp. 384, 400. Certain modern Greeks say St. Proclus made some alterations in certain parts of the liturgy, which St. Chrysostom is said in the *Mensa* to have abridged or revised, and which bears to this day the name of that father, and is certainly the ancient liturgy of the church of Constantinople. By the authority and means of the patriarchs of this see, it is long since received in general use in the whole Greek church, except that on certain festivals the liturgy of St. Basil, which has longer collects for those days, is made use of; and the liturgy of St. James is still used on certain days, though very rarely, in the church of Jerusalem, of which it was certainly the ancient liturgy; on which account it bears the name of St. James, who was the first bishop of that see. It agrees with that explained by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, except in a few slight things, which differences seem introduced since that father's time. The only alteration which St. Proclus seems to have introduced in the liturgies of Constantinople, adopted into that of Jerusalem, seems to be the addition of the trisagion, not, as most writers mistake, that commonly called the Sanctus in the preface, as appears from what is said above; but another which the Greeks have adopted, and prefixed to the lectures of the gospel, and which consists in these words: "*Agios O Theos, agios ischyros, agios athanatos, eleison imas.*" "Holy God, holy strong, holy immortal, have mercy on us." See Le Brun, t. 2, pp. 352 and 396, also t. 3, and Renaudot, Goar, &c.

was forbidden in the council in Trullo, in 692, to make any addition to the trisagion.(1) The Orientals ascribe to St. Proclus the last revision of the liturgies both of St. Chrysostom (or of the church of Constantinople) and of St. James (or of the church of Jerusalem.) Our saint is styled by St. Cyril, "A man full of piety, perfectly skilled in ecclesiastical discipline, and a strict observer of the canons." Pope Sixtus III. gives him the like praises, and Vigilius(2) calls him the most learned of prelates. St. Proclus died on the 24th of October in 447, the same year in which the earthquakes had happened. His name is placed in the Greek Menologies, and in the Muscovite Calendar.(3)

How many great, how many learned, how many once holy men have with Nestorius suffered shipwreck before the end of their course! At the sight of such examples, who does not tremble for himself? If we know ourselves, we shall be persuaded that no one is weaker and frailer than we are. Can any creature be more unworthy of the divine mercy than we who have repaid the greatest graces and favours with continual sloth and the basest infidelities? When, therefore, we read of the fall or sins of others, we ought to turn our eyes upon ourselves; to adore the divine mercy which has still borne with us, and is yet ready with stretched-forth arms to embrace us: to shake off our sloth in the practice of virtue, enter upon a fervent penitential life, and without ceasing, call upon God in fear and humility. He is our strength and support, who is almighty and most willing and desirous to save us, if our wilful wretchedness and pride stand not in the way. He alone can effectually remove these obstacles: humble prayer and compunction will not fail to obtain this constant grace. To neglect these means is to perish.

SAINT FELIX, B. M.

IN the beginning of Dioclesian's persecution, great numbers among the Christians had the weakness to deliver up the sacred books into the hands of the persecutors that they might be burnt. Many even sought by false pretences to extenuate or excuse the enormity of this crime, as if it ever could be lawful

(1) Conc. in Trull. c. 3.

(2) St. Ambr. l. 3, de Spir. Sanct. c. 18.

(3) See Jos. Assemani in Calend. Univ. t. 6, p. 317 and 368.