

tin, by Gregory XIII., in 1572, at the solicitation of St. Charles Borromeo, who exceedingly promoted this holy institute. The first monastery of this Order in France was founded at Paris, in 1611, by Madame Magdalen l'Huillier, by marriage, de Sainte-Beuve. Before this, the pious mother, Anne de Xaintonge of Dijon, had instituted in Franche-Compte, in 1606, a religious congregation of Ursulines for the like purpose, which is settled in many parts of France, in which strict inclosure is not commanded.

Nothing, whether in a civil or religious view, is more important in the republic of mankind than a proper and religious education of youth, nor do any establishments deserve equal attention and encouragement among men with those which are religiously and wisely calculated for this great end. Yet, alas! is anything in the world more neglected either by parents at home, or by the wrong methods which are too frequently pursued in the very nurseries which are founded for training up youth? A detail would be too long for this place. There is certainly no duty which requires more virtue, prudence, and experience, or which parents, tutors, masters, mistresses, and others are bound more diligently to study in its numberless branches.* But it is the height of our misfortune, that there is scarcely a person in the world, howsoever unqualified, who does not think it an easy task, and look upon himself as equal to it; who is not ready to undertake it without reflection; and who consequently is not supinely careless both in studying and discharging its obligations; though no employment more essentially requires an extensive knowledge of all duties, of human nature, and its necessary accomplishments; the utmost application, attention, and patience; the most consummate prudence and virtue, and an extraordinary succour of divine light and grace.

ST. HILARION, ABBOT.

HILARION was born in a little town called Tabatha, five miles to the south of Gaza; he sprang like a rose out of thorns, his

* Read Fenelon, *Sur l'Education des Filles*; and another older French book, printed in English, in 1678, under this title, *The Christian Education of Children*; and Dr. Gobinet's *Instructions of Youth*; also, his treatise of *The Imitation of the holy Youth of J. C*

parents being idolaters. He was sent by them very young to Alexandria to study grammar, when, by his progress in learning, he gave great proofs of his wit, for which, and his good temper and dispositions, he was exceedingly beloved by all who knew him. Being brought to the knowledge of the Christian faith he was baptized, and became immediately a new man, renouncing all the mad sports of the circus, and the entertainments of the theatre, and taking no delight but in the churches and assemblies of the faithful. Having heard of St. Antony, whose name was famous in Egypt, he went into the desert to see him. Moved by the example of his virtue, he changed his habit, and staid with him two months, observing his manner of life, his fervour in prayer, his humility in receiving his brethren, his severity in reproving them, his earnestness in exhorting them, and his perseverance in austerities; but not being able to bear the frequent concourse of those who resorted to St. Antony to be healed of diseases or delivered from devils, and being desirous to begin to serve God like St. Antony in perfect solitude, he returned with certain monks into his own country. Upon his arrival there, finding his father and mother both dead, he gave part of his goods to his brethren, and the rest to the poor, reserving nothing for himself. He was then but fifteen years of age, this happening about the year 307. He retired into a desert seven miles from Majuma, towards Egypt, between the sea-shore on one side, and certain fens on the other. His friends forewarned him that the place was notorious for murders and robberies; but his answer was, that he feared nothing but eternal death. Everybody admired his fervour, and extraordinary manner of life. In the beginning of his retirement certain robbers who lurked in those deserts asked him, what he would do if thieves and assassins came to him? He answered: "The poor and naked fear no thieves." "But they may kill you," said they. "It is true," said the holy man, "and for this very reason I am not afraid of them, because it is my endeavour to be always prepared for death." So great fervour and resolution in one so young and so tender as our saint, was both surprising and edifying to all who knew him. His constitution was so weak and delicate that the least excess of heat or cold affected him very sensibly; yet his whole clothing consisted only of a

piece of sackcloth, a leather coat, which St. Antony gave him, and an ordinary short cloak. Living in solitude he thought himself at liberty to practise certain mortifications, which the respect we owe to our neighbour makes unseasonable in the world. He cut his hair only once a year, against Easter; never changed any coat till it was worn out, and never washed the sackcloth which he had once put on, saying: "It is idle to look for neatness in a hair shirt."

At his first entering on this penitential life he renounced the use of bread; and for six years together his whole diet was fifteen figs a day, which he never took till sunset. When he felt the attacks of any temptation of the flesh, being angry with himself, and beating his breast he would say to his body: "I will take order, thou little ass, that thou shalt not kick; I will feed thee with straw instead of corn; and will load and weary thee, that so thou mayest think rather how to get a little bit to eat than of pleasure." He then retrenched part of his scanty meal, and sometimes fasted three or four days without eating; and when after this he was fainting, he sustained his body only with a few dried figs, and the juice of herbs. At the same time praying and singing he would be breaking the ground with a rake, that his labour might add to the trouble of his fasting. His employment was digging or tilling the earth, or, in imitation of the Egyptian monks, weaving small twigs together with great rushes in making baskets, whereby he provided himself with the frugal necessities of life. When he felt himself weary, and ready to faint with labour, he said to his body, while he took his little refecton of figs or some wild herbs: "If thou wilt not labour, thou shalt not eat; and seeing thou eatest now, prepare thyself again to work." He knew a great part of the holy scripture by heart, and always recited some parts of it after he had said many psalms and prayers; he prayed with as great attention and reverence as if he had seen with his eyes our Lord present with whom he spoke. During the first four years of his penance he had no other shelter from the inclemencies of the weather than a little hovel or harbour which he made himself of reeds and rushes which he found in a neighbouring marsh, and which he had woven together. Afterwards he built himself a little cell which was still to be seen in St. Jerom's

time: it was but four feet broad, and five in height; and was a little longer than the extent of his body, so that a person would have rather taken it for a grave than a house. During the course of his penance he made some alteration in his diet, but never in favour of his appetites. From the age of twenty-one. he for three years lived on a measure which was little more than half a pint of pulse, steeped in cold water, a-day; and for the three next years his whole food was dry bread with salt and water. From his twenty-seventh year to his thirty-first he ate only wild herbs and raw roots; and from thirty-one to thirty-five, he took for his daily food six ounces of barley bread a-day, to which he added a few kitchen herbs, but half boiled, and without oil. But perceiving his sight to grow dim, and his body to be subject to an itching, with an unnatural kind of scurf and roughness, he added a little oil to this diet. Thus he went on till his sixty-fourth year, when conceiving by the decay of his strength that his death was drawing near, he retrenched even his bread, and from that time to his eightieth year, his whole meal never exceeded five ounces. When he was fourscore years of age there were made for him little weak broths or gruels of flour and herbs, the whole quantity of his meat and drink scarcely amounting to the weight of four ounces. Thus he passed his whole life: and he never broke his fast till sunset, not even upon the highest feasts, or in his greatest sickness. It is the remark of St. Jerom, that slothful Christians too easily make old age and every other pretence a plea to be the more remiss in their penance; but fervour made St. Hilarion contrive means to redouble his austerities in his decrepit age, as the nearer the prospect of certain death grew, and the shorter time remained for his preparation. His long life is chiefly ascribed to his regularity, moderate labour, and great abstemiousness. It is a proverb which the experience of all ages confirms, that to eat long, a person ought to eat little.

Any one who considers the condition of man in this state of trial, and the malice of the enemy of our salvation, will easily conceive that our saint did not pass all these years, nor arrive at so eminent a degree of virtue and sanctity without violent temptations and assaults from the infernal spirit: in all which he was victorious by the assistance of omnipotent grace. Some-

times his soul was covered with a dark cloud, and his heart was dry and oppressed with bitter anguish: but the deader heaven seemed to his cries on such occasions, the louder and the more earnestly he persevered knocking. To have dropped the shield of prayer under these temptations would have been to perish. At other times his mind was haunted, and his imagination filled with impure images, or with the vanities of the theatre and circus. These most painful assaults the hermit repulsed with watchfulness, prayer, severe mortifications, and hard labour. The adversary thus worsted, renewed the attack under various other forms, sometimes alarming the saint with great variety of noises, at other times endeavouring to affright him with hideous appearances and monstrous spectres. When all this terrible artillery proved too weak, he shifted the scene, and presented him again with all that could delight and charm the senses. The phantoms of the enemy St. Hilarion dissipated by casting himself upon his knees, and signing his forehead with the cross of Christ; and being enlightened and strengthened by a supernatural grace he discovered his snares, and never suffered himself to be imposed upon by the artifices by which that subtle fiend strove to withdraw him from holy prayer, in which the saint spent the days and great part of the nights. After the departure of the vanquished enemy, the saint found his soul filled with unspeakable peace and joy, and in the jubilation of his heart sung to God hymns of praise and thanksgiving, saying: *He hath cast the horse and the horseman into the sea; some trust in their chariots, and some in their horses, &c.* From his victories themselves he learned to be more humble, watchful, and timorous.

St. Hilarion had spent above twenty years in his desert when he wrought his first miracle. A certain married woman of Eleutheropolis, who was the scorn of her husband for her barrenness, sought him out in his solitude, and by her tears and importunities prevailed upon him to pray that God would bless her with fruitfulness; and before the year's end she brought forth a son. A second miracle much enhanced the saint's reputation: Elpidius, who was afterwards prefect of the prætorium,⁽¹⁾ and his wife Aristeneta, returning from a visit of de-

(1) Emmian. Marcel. 1. 21.

voition they had made to St. Antony to receive his blessing and instructions, arrived at Gaza, where their three children fell sick, and their fever proving superior to the power of medicines they were brought to the last extremity, and their recovery despaired of by the physicians. The mother, like one distracted, addressed herself to Hilarion, who, moved by her tears, went to Gaza to visit them. Upon his invoking the holy name of Jesus, by their bedside, the children fell into a violent sweat, by which they were so refreshed as to be able to eat, to know their mother, and kiss the saint's hand. Upon the report of this miracle many flocked to the saint, desiring to embrace a monastic life under his direction. Till that time neither Syria nor Palestine were acquainted with that penitential state: so that St. Hilarion was the first founder of it in those countries, as St. Antony had been the founder of it in Egypt. Among other miraculous cures, several persons possessed by devils were delivered by our saint. The most remarkable were Marisitas, a young man of the territory about Jerusalem, so strong that he boasted he could carry seven bushels of corn: and Orion, a rich man of the city of Aila, who, after his cure, pressed the saint to accept many great presents, at least for the poor. But the holy hermit persisted obstinately to refuse touching any of them, bidding him bestow them himself. St. Hilarion restored sight to a woman of Facidia, a town near Rino-corura, in Egypt, who had been blind ten years. A citizen of Majuma, called Italicus, who was a Christian, kept horses to run in the circus against a Duumvir of Gaza, who adored Marnas, which was the great idol of Gaza, that word signifying in Syriac, Lord of men.(1) Italicus, knowing that his adversary had recourse to spells to stop his horses, came to St. Hilarion, by whose blessings his horses seemed to fly, while the others seemed fettered; upon seeing which the people cried out, that Marnas was vanquished by Christ. This saint also delivered a girl in Gaza whom a young man had inspired with a frantic passion of love, by certain spells, and magical figures engraved on a copper-plate, which he had put under the door, bound with a thread. It was pretended that the effect depended upon this charm, and could not be broken but by the removal of the charm: but St. Hilarion would

(1) Bochart, *Canaan*, l. 2, c. 12. Calmet, &c.

not suffer either the young man or the spell, or mark of witchcraft to be sought after, saying, that in order to drive away the devil it was not necessary to destroy the charm, or give credit to his words, which are always deceitful: and he delivered the girl, though the spell continued under the threshold. A native of Franconia in Germany, one of the guards of Constantius, of those called, from their white garments, Candidati, being possessed by an evil spirit, came from court with a great attendance, having letters from the emperor to the governor of Palestine. This man with his numerous train went from Gaza to visit St. Hilarion, whom he found walking on the sands saying his prayers. The saint, who understood his errand, commanded the devil, in the name of Christ to depart, and the Frank was immediately delivered. Through simplicity he offered the saint ten pounds of gold: St. Hilarion presented him one of his barley loaves, saying, that they who wanted no other food, despised gold like dirt. From the model which our saint set, a great number of monasteries were founded all over Palestine. St. Hilarion visited them all on certain days before the vintage. In one of these visits, seeing the Saracens assembled in great numbers at Eleusa, in Idumæa, to adore Venus, he shed abundance of tears to God for them. Many sick persons of this nation had been cured, and demoniacs delivered by our saint, who was, on that account, well known by them, and they asked his blessing. He received them with mildness and humility, conjuring them to adore God rather than stones. His words had such an effect upon them, that they would not suffer him to leave them till he had traced the ground for laying the foundation of a church for them, and till their priest, who then wore a garland in honour of their idols, was become a catechumen.

St. Hilarion was informed by revelation in Palestine, where he then was, of the death of St. Antony. He was then about sixty-five years old, and had been for two years much afflicted at the great number of bishops, priests, and people that were continually resorting to him; by which his contemplation was interrupted. At length, regretting the loss of that sweet solitude and obscurity, which he formerly enjoyed, he resolved to leave that country, to prevent which the people assembled to the number of ten thousand to watch him. He told them he would

neither eat nor drink till they let him go: and seeing him pass seven days without taking any thing, they left him. He then chose forty monks who were able to walk without breaking their fast, (that is, without eating till after sunset,) and with them he travelled into Egypt. On the fifth day he arrived at Pelesium; and in six days more at Babylon, in Egypt. Two days after, he came to the city Aphroditon, where he applied himself to the deacon Baisanes, who used to let dromedaries to those who had desired to visit St. Antony, for carrying water which they had occasion for in that desert. The saint desired to celebrate the anniversary of St. Antony's death, by watching all night in the place where he died. After travelling three days in a horrible desert they came to St. Antony's mountain, where they found two monks, Isaac and Pelusius, who had been his disciples, and the first his interpreter. It was a very high steep rock, of a mile in circuit, at the foot of which was a rivulet, with abundance of palm-trees on the borders. St. Hilarion walked all over the place with the disciples of St. Antony. Here it was, said they, that he sang, here he prayed, there he laboured, and there he reposed himself when he was weary. He himself planted these vines, and these little trees; he tilled this piece of ground with his own hands; he dug this basin with abundance of labour, to water his garden, and he used this hoe to work with several years together. St. Hilarion laid himself upon his bed, and kissed it as if it had been still warm. The cell contained no more space in length and breadth than what was necessary for a man to stretch himself in to sleep. On the top of the mountain, (to which the ascent was very difficult, turning like a vine,) they found two cells of the same size, to which he often retired to avoid a number of visiters, and even the conversation of his own disciples; they were hewn in a rock, nothing but doors being added to them. When they came to the garden, "Do you see," said Isaac, "this little garden planted with trees and pot-herbs? About three years since a herd of wild asses coming to destroy it, he stopped one of the first of them, and striking him on the sides with his staff, said: 'Why do you eat what you do not sow?' From that time forward they only came lither to drink, without meddling with the trees or herbs." St. Hilarion asked to see the place where

he was buried. They carried him to a bye place ; but it is uncertain whether they showed it to him or not ; for they showed no grave, and only said, that St. Antony had given the strictest charge that his grave should be concealed, fearing lest Pergamius, who was a very rich man in that country, should carry the body home, and cause a church to be built for it.

St. Hilarion returned from this place to Aphroditon, and retiring with only two disciples into a neighbouring desert, exercised himself with more earnestness than ever in abstinence and silence ; saying, according to his custom, than he then only began to serve Jesus Christ. It had not rained in the country for three years, that is, ever since the death of St. Antony, when the people, in deep affliction and misery, addressed themselves to St. Hilarion, whom they looked upon as St. Antony's successor, imploring his compassion and prayers. The saint, sensibly affected with their distress, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and immediately obtained a plentiful rain. Also many labourers and herdsmen who were stung by serpents and venomous beasts, were perfectly cured by anointing their wounds with oil which he had blessed and given them. Though oil be the natural and sovereign antidote against poison, these cures by his blessing were esteemed miraculous. The saint, seeing the extraordinary honours which were paid him in that place, departed privately towards Alexandria, in order to proceed to the desert of Oasis. It not being his custom to stop in great cities, he turned from Alexandria, into Brutium, a remote suburb of that city, where several monks dwelt. He left this place the same evening, and when these monks very importunately pressed his stay, he told them that it was necessary for their security that he should leave them. The sequel showed that he had the spirit of prophecy ; for that very night armed men arrived there in pursuit of him, with an order to put him to death. When Julian the Apostate ascended the throne, the pagans of Gaza obtained an order from that prince to kill him in revenge of the affront he had put upon their god Marnar, and of the many conversions he had made ; and they had sent this party into Egypt to execute the sentence. The soldiers, finding themselves disappointed at Brutium, said he well deserved the character of a magician which he had at Gaza. The

saint spent about a year in the desert of Oasis, and finding that he was too well known in that country ever to lie concealed there, determined to seek shelter in some remote island, and, going to Paretonium in Lybia, embarked there with one companion for Sicily. He landed at Pachynus, a famous promontory on the eastern side of the island, now called Capo di Passaro. Upon landing he offered to pay for his passage and that of his companion, with a copy of the gospels which he had written in his youth with his own hand: but the master, seeing their whole stock consisted in that manuscript and the clothes on their backs, would not accept of it; he even esteemed himself indebted to this passenger, who by his prayers had delivered his son, who was possessed by a devil, on board the vessel. St. Hilarion, fearing lest he should be discovered by some oriental merchants if he settled near the coast, travelled twenty miles up the country, and stopped in an unfrequented wild place; where, by gathering sticks, he made every day a fagot, which he sent his disciple, whose name was Zanan, to sell at the next village, in order to buy a little bread. Devils in possessed persons soon discovered him, and the saint freed them, and cured many sick persons; but constantly refused all presents that were offered him, saying, *freely ye have received, freely give.* (1) Hesychius, the saint's beloved disciple, had sought him in the East and through Greece, when, at Methone, now called Modon, in Peloponnesus, he heard that a prophet had appeared in Sicily, who wrought many miracles. He embarked, and arrived at Pachynus; and, inquiring for the holy man at the first village, found that every body knew him: he was not more distinguished by his miracles than by his disinterestedness; for he could never be prevailed upon to take any thing, not so much as a morsel of bread, from any one.

St. Hilarion was desirous to go into some strange country, where not even his language should be understood. Hesychius therefore carried him to Epidaurus in Dalmatia, now Old Ragusa, the ruins of which city are seen near the present capital of the republic of that name.* Miracles here again defeated

(1) Matt. x. 8.

* This Epidaurus is not to be confounded with two towns of that name in Peloponnesus, one of which was famous for the worship of Esculapius.

the saint's design of living unknown. St. Jerom relates that a serpent of an enormous size devoured both cattle and men, and that the saint, having prayed, commanded this monster to come into the midst of a pile of wood prepared on purpose; then set fire to it, so that this pernicious creature was burnt to ashes. He also tells us, that when the most dreadful earthquake mentioned by historians, both ecclesiastical and profane, (1) happened in the year 365, in the first consulship of Valentinian and Valens, the sea on the coast of Dalmatia swelled so high as to overflow the land, and threaten to overwhelm the whole city of Epidaurus. The affrighted inhabitants in a crowd brought Hilarion to the shore, as it were to oppose him as a strong wall against the furious waves. The saint made three crosses in the sand, then stretched forth his arms towards the sea; and to the astonishment of all, its billows stopped, and rising up like a high mountain, returned back. St. Hilarion, seeing it impossible to live there unknown, fled away in the night in a small vessel to the island of Cyprus. Being arrived there he retired to a place two miles from Paphos. He had not been there three weeks when such as were possessed with devils in any part of the island began to cry out that Hilarion, the servant of Jesus Christ, was come. He expelled the evil spirits, but, sighing after the tranquillity of closer retirement, considered how he could make his escape to some other country; but the inhabitants watched him that he might not leave them. After two years, Hesychius persuaded him to lay aside that design, and retire to a solitary place which he had found, twelve miles from the shore, not unpleasantly situated, among very rough and craggy mountains, where there was water with fruit trees, which advice the saint followed, but he never tasted the fruit. Here he lived five years, and wrought several miracles. The sweetness and spiritual advantages which he reaped from heavenly contemplation made him trample under his feet all earthly considerations, and make it the great object of his desires in this life to labour incessantly to purge his soul more and more from all stains and imperfections by tears of compunction, and

(1) See on this earthquake St. Jerom, in Chron. Euseb. Anno 2, Valentiniani; and in Isa. i. 15. Orosius, l. vii. c. 32. Socrates, l. iv. 3. Idat. in Fastis. Chron. Paschale. Amm. Marcell. l. xxvi.

other practices of penance, and to imitate on earth, as much as possible, the happy employment of the blessed in heaven. St. Jerom mentions that though he lived so many years in Palestine, he never went up to visit the holy places at Jerusalem but once; and then staid only one day in that city. He went once that he might not seem to despise that devotion; but did not go oftener, lest he should seem persuaded that God, or his religious worship, is confined to any particular place.⁽¹⁾ His chief reason, doubtless, was to shun the distractions of populous places that, as much as possible, nothing might interrupt the close union of his soul to God. The saint, in the eightieth year of his age, whilst Hesychius was absent, wrote him a short letter with his own hand in the nature of a last will and testament, in which he bequeathed to him all his riches, namely, his book of the gospels, his sackcloth, hood and little cloak. Many pious persons came from Paphos to see him in his last sickness, hearing he had foretold that he was to go to our Lord. With them there came a holy woman named Constantia, whose son-in-law and daughter he had freed from death by anointing them with oil. He caused them to swear that as soon as he should have expired, they would immediately commit his corpse to the earth, apparelled as he was, with his hair-cloth, hood, and cloak. His distemper increasing upon him, very little heat appeared to remain in his body, nor did any thing seem to remain in him of a living man besides his understanding, only his eyes were still open. He expressed his sense of the divine judgments, but encouraged his soul to an humble confidence in the mercy of his Judge and Redeemer, saying to himself: "Go forth, what dost thou fear? go forth, my soul, what dost thou apprehend. Behold it is now near threescore and ten years that thou hast served Christ: and art thou afraid of death?" He had scarcely spoken these words but he gave up the ghost, and was immediately buried as he had ordered.

If this saint trembled after an innocent, penitential, and holy life, because he considered how perfect the purity and sanctity of a soul must be to stand before him who is infinite purity and infinite justice; how much ought tepid, slothful, and sinful

(1) St. Hier. ep. 49, fol. 13, ad Paulin. t. 4, par. 2, p. 564, Ed. Ben.

Christians to fear? Whilst love inflames the saints with an ardent desire of being united to their God in the kingdom of pure love and security, a holy fear of his justice checks and humbles in them all presumption. This fear must never sink into despondency, abjection, or despair; but quicken our sloth, animate our fervour, and raise our courage; it must be solicitous, not anxious or pusillanimous; and, whilst we fear from whatever is in us, love and hope must fill our souls with sweet peace and joy, and with an entire confidence in the infinite mercy and goodness of God, and the merits of our divine Redeemer. St. Hilarion died in 371, or the following year, being about eighty years of age; for he was sixty-five years old at the death of St. Antony. Hesychius, who was in Palestine, made haste to Cyprus upon hearing this news, and, pretending to take up his dwelling in the same garden, after ten months, found an opportunity of secretly carrying off the saint's body into Palestine, where he interred it in his monastery, near Majuma. It was as entire as it was when alive, and the clothes were untouched. Many miracles were wrought, both in Cyprus and Palestine, through his intercession, as St. Jerom assures us. Sozomen mentions his festival to have been kept with great solemnity in the fifth age.⁽¹⁾ See his life written by St. Jerom before the year 392, (Ed. Ben. t. 4, part 2, p. 74); Pagi ad ann. 372, Fleury, t. 2.

ST. FINTAN, SURNAMED MUNNU, ABBOT, IN IRELAND

BEING descended of the noble family of Nial, he forsook the world in his youth, and was desirous to consecrate himself to God in the great monastery of Hij, under the discipline of St. Columba; but God, for greater designs, prevented the execution of that project, and Fintan, after St. Columba's death, sailed back to Ireland, and founded a great monastery called, from him, Teach-Munnu, in the south part of Leinster, in the land of Kinselach: he was famous for his virtues, miracles, and disciples. The annals of Tigernach place his death in 634, on the 31st of October. He is commemorated in the old Scottish Breviary under the name of St. Mundus, abbot. See Usher,

(1) Soz. 1. 3, c. 14; 1. 5, c. 9. 19.