

ST. SERVATIUS, BISHOP OF TONGRES.

HE gave St. Athanasius during his banishment, a friendly and honourable reception, strenuously defended his cause, and the Catholic faith, especially in the council of Sardica; resisted the Arians at Rimini, and laboured much in preventing the ill consequences with which the Church was threatened by the misconduct of the bishops in that council, through the fraud of the Arians. St. Gregory of Tours relates that he foretold that the Huns would invade Gaul, and implored the divine mercy to avert that scourge by watching, fasting, prayers, and many tears, and by a pilgrimage to Rome to the tomb of St. Peter. This penitential journey he undertook in the year 382, that he might obtain the patronage of the apostles in behalf of his people, for whom he never ceased to implore the divine mercy by watching, fasting, and prayer, accompanied with tears. But he was informed by a revelation that God had determined to punish the sins of that nation, which calamity, like Ezechias, he was assured his eyes should never behold. Thereupon, weeping, he hastened back to Tongres, where he shortly after sickened and died, on the 13th of May, 384, having been bishop about thirty-seven years, not fifty-six, as is affirmed in the new edition of Moreri.

St. Gregory testifies that miracles drew many to his tomb, and that a church was erected over it. His body remains in the noble collegiate church in Maestricht, except some small portions distributed in other places. The city of Tongres was shortly after plundered, and left in ruins by Attila, since which time, it retains nothing of its ancient splendour. Some pretend that St. Servatius removed his episcopal see to Maestricht a little before his death: but it is certain that translation was only made in the following century, after the city of Tongres was destroyed by Attila. See the works of St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Tours, Hist. Francor. &c. in Henschenius, p. 210.